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Cover photo

A train carrying military trucks in Khust, Transcarpathia (1916)
Fortepan / Magyar Műszaki és Közlekedési Múzeum / Archívum / Negatívtár / Pölös István gyűjteménye

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Róbert Balogh and Miklós Mitrovits

Special Editors of the Issue

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Introduction

Central European Horizons, 3, no. 1–2 (2023) (2023)

The new issue of *Central European Horizons* discusses two themes the consequences of repressive violence on the long-term political conditions in Central Europe, and the consequences of wars on individual lives and on localities.

Luca Lecis offers a specific example of how the idea of Central Europe emerged and shaped intellectual milieus and institutions during the period of Cold War. Focusin on György Sebestyén's oevre an activities in Austria. Lecis tell s that in Austria, the East gradually became an increasingly central topic within intellectual debate in Austria. Several journals foregrounded a transnational heritage of the 'Danube region' and Sebestyén had an important role in this scene.

In his study based on his explorations in a wide range of the archives related to the politics of the former Czechoslovakia, Miklós Mitrovits foregrounds aspects of the history of post-1956 Hungary highlighting both the fragility of the newly imposed regime and the Central European dimensions of the regime change. Namely, the material and financial support that the Czechoslovakian regime provided made the János Kádár's government viable in its earliest days in 1956 and in 1957.

István Miklós Balázs shows that although it is a key political tool today, the violence during martial law took a backseat during the democratic transition in Poland in 1989. He argues that contemporary indifference or glancing aside in this regard had much to do with Polish society prioritizing economic well-being after decades of experiencing material deprivation. Balázs also points out, however, that there were relevant actors that found negotiation with the party state morally unacceptable already in the mid- and late1980s. If one takes these points further, the following questions emerge: can currently operating parties exploit the questionable pragmatism of the opposition involved in the round table discussion to the extent that it actually undermines democratic institutions functioning in Central European countries? Or, will the questioning of the transition and its institutions lead to a more grounded democracy in the region?

Here, in Central Europe, war is closer to us and impacts our minds more than at any time since 1956. Through a close look at historical cases, the second section of the current issue of *Central European Horizons* highlights those impacts of war and military violence that do not often make it to the news.

Róbert Szabó's paper talks of an aspect of the impact of wars that rarely comes to the focus of historical studies despite its prominence for everyday life: how can one continue education in a region that had been hit by war and where the the policies of the state are still centered on the interests of the military. What can the case of the aftermath of the 1916 Romanian-Hungarian war in Transylvania tell us about the possible factors?

Gábor Csikós offers an interdisciplinary view of the post-1945 from the angle of a specific branch of medicine: psychiatry. Through reading the files of several patients the author brings together the way the development of notions used within psychiatry interacted with the taboos that the state socialist regime established and how this interaction made its way into patient files and into the lives of contemporaries.

Róbert Balogh takes the reader outside Central Europe to show that industrialization for military purposes changes the landscape of hinterlands for the long term. The paper on the history of the city of Jamshedpur during World War II also tells how the issue of discipline weighs on life in cities that become crucial for military supply, and how this eventually impacts human bodies.

We received so many submissions on the two themes that the current journal issue discusses that we decided to include some of the papers in the next *Central European Horizons*.

Editors

Vienna, the Mariahilfer Strasse (1971) - Fortepan / Urbán Tamás

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"Mitteleuropa's unique spiritual power has to flow into the common European culture": György Sebestyén and cultural policies in Austria in the 1970s and 1990s

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Abstract

Austria's 'perpetual neutrality', the price paid in 1955 for its independence and the withdrawal of Soviet troops, was the starting point of the Austrian 'lone course' to Mitteleuropa, carried out mainly thanks to the efforts of both political and intellectual actors. The fortunes of Austrian cultural policies received a considerable boost in the mid-Fifties, thanks to the efforts of Budapest-born Austrian writer and journalist György Sebestyén, who was to play a key role in the various stages of the Mitteleuropa process, favouring a transnational bond in the Danube region, which in the 1980s led Austria back into the middle of the action unfolding along and beyond its Eastern borders. By exploring Austria's cultural diplomacy with East-Central Europe from the 1950s to the 1990s, this article uses archival and press sources to show how political and intellectual Austrian elites constantly and skilfully developed a new 'transnational scenario' in Mitteleuropa (even though the Iron Curtain constituted a fearsome border regime cutting the Alpine country off from its traditional neighbours). This not only projected a new positive image of their country, veering between culture and dialogue, but also built new partnerships to buttress Austria as a cultural pioneer in the pan-European context.

Keywords

Mitteleuropa, Central Europe, intellectual history, Austria

Luca Lecis

"Mitteleuropa's unique spiritual power has to flow into the common European culture"

György Sebestyén and cultural policies in Austria in the 1970s and 1990s

Introduction

Europe, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Central Europe, East-Central Europe: these are apparently simple geographical designations of certain regions but behind them lie complex systems of cultural, historical, political, and phenomenological attributions, which may all vary greatly depending on the era and the viewpoint of the observer. Any attempt at a clear definition seems particularly hopeless in the case of Central Europe. However – or perhaps precisely because of this – an intensive and quite effective discourse on this issue began in the early 1980s, which broke open the fossilised East-West paradigm and which can be regarded as an intellectual precursor of the political turning point of 1989. This discourse began with a particular self-location: Central Europe. This region was seen as culturally close and related to the West, but politically it was inevitably linked to the East.[1]

Identitarian issues constitute a privileged field for intellectual reflection and the issue of East-Central Europe has always held a special place in the Danubian consciousness, especially since the 19th century, when cultural movements began to stimulate an identitarian debate over a possible East-Central European mode of thought[2],

1 Cf. Chołuj, "Die Renaissance des Begriffes Mitteleuropa"

2 On this issue, see Janowski, 'Multiple Sonderwegs'. Troebst, *Erinnerungskultur Kulturgeschichte Geschichtsregion*; Schultz and Natter, *Imagining Mitteleuropa*, Miller, "Central Europe*",* 85–89, Jaworski, "Ostmitteleuropa".

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with the subsequent considerations for Austria following the First World War. In the aftermath of World War I a widespread feeling of loss affected all the people who had once lived in the Habsburg territories. As Milan Dubrović (Austrian journalist, and editor, one of the greatest representatives of Viennese modernism) recalled, quite a few intellectuals clung to an Austrian idea (i.e., national identity) that was "superior to a feeling of togetherness among the peoples in the Danubian states", since, to quote Adolf Storfer[3], "Austria wasn't a geographical concept, but a state of mind"[4].

After 1945 great changes took place in the political boundaries and cultural landscape of Europe, which altered perceptions of what the extent of East-Central Europe could be, even though, historically speaking, in the German world ('German' to be understood here as meaning 'of the German language'), the term Mitteleuropa refers to a uniformly wide band running across Europe in a north-south direction[5]. It was conceived of as an area with its own physiognomy, and characterised by common features, such as the "feeling of belonging to a community of destiny"[6] suspended (geographically speaking) between the West and Russia, between the Prussian North and the Mediterranean South, and defined by the predominance of the German language as its lingua franca, or more precisely as the 'Esperanto of the Slavs'[7].

At that time, Mitteleuropa as a topographical term included seven independent states: Austria, Czechoslovakia, both "Germanies" (the Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany), Hungary, Poland, and Switzerland. In addition, if observed from a broader and historical-economic perspective, it also included two Italian regions (Friuli Venezia Giulia and Trentino Alto Adige), two components of the Repub-

3 Adolf Joseph Storfer (1888–1944) was an Austrian journalist, etymologist, and psychoanalyst born and raised in Siebenbürgen (Transylvania) into a wealthy Jewish family, and who was director of the *Wiener Psychoanalytischen Verlags* (1925–1932). In 1938, he fled to Australia. *Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon* 328.

4 Quite a few of us [writers] who came from Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary or Croatia have suppressed the lost war from our consciousness, clinging to an Austrian idea that is superior to reality and the sense of unity among the peoples of the Danube states. "Austria is not a geographical concept, but a state of mind", declared Adolf Storfer. Dubrović, *Veruntreute Geschichte,* 32.

5 The term Mitteleuropa was thus used by Hassel in 1819 in a comprehensive German geographical reference work, including the German states, Austria–Hungary, Switzerland and the Italian peninsula. See Gaspari, Cannabich and Hassel (eds.), *Vollständiges Handbuch,* Vol. I, t. II, 38.

6 Reszler, "La signification présente", 30.

7 This supposition was envisaged for the first time by Naumann, *Mitteleuropa*, 101.

lic of Yugoslavia (Slovenia and Croatia), and Northern Romania[8]. This, for example, was how the idea of Mitteleuropa would be understood later during the so-called 'Duino Talks', organized from September 1983 by the "Giuliano-Dalmati Association around the world", with the collaboration of the 'Coudenhove-Kalergi Foundation' and funding from the Italian Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (the first meeting, held in Trieste, was on the theme of 'The European significance of Mitteleuropa')[9].

By the mid-1980s the issue of Mitteleuropa had become the subject of intense debate particularly among intellectuals, thanks to the relative liberalisation which, as Catherine Horel, points out "enabled intellectuals in Central Europe to meet and also to make contact with exiled compatriots"[10]. The history of the Danube region was consequently reassessed, and the Habsburg regime largely rehabilitated in the light of historical events subsequent to the collapse of its Empire. This led to the strengthening of cultural relationships between Austrians, Slavic peoples, Hungarians and Italians, and provided fresh stimulus for reflecting on Austria's role in East-Central Europe. Prime examples of this reawakening, for instance, are to be found in the works of the Czech

8 According to Karl Sinnhuber, attempts at the classification of Mitteleuropa should consider at least four aspects: Middle Europe as a topographical term (here used in its original meaning, indicating the position of an area); Middle Europe as a physical region, based on a single physical criterion or several criteria; Middle Europe as a concept with an historical or political bias; Middle Europe as a geographical region delimited by means of both physical nature and cultural elements. As a matter of fact, Sinnhuber underlined that, "it is possible to use the 'vague' term Middle Europe in a clear and unmistakeable manner provided we express precisely which kind of Middle Europe we mean. 'Middle Europe as a topographical term' and 'Middle Europe in a physical sense' remain unchanged by historical events. 'Middle Europe in a political sense' depends on the political situation at a given time, and at least for the moment has ceased to exist. 'Middle Europe as a geographical region' is still with us, although its extent has become smaller, but it is still a geographical entity worthy of being studied not as a mere group of states, but as a geographical subject of more lasting character: a geographical region". Sinnhuber, "Central Europe – Mitteleuropa – Europe Centrale". 37.

9 The 'Duino Talks' launched a season of high-profile cultural events and meetings, in which Austria, and Vienna in particular, on account of its central position, inevitably became the centre of cross-border cultural activism; in particular the '"Vienna Festival Symposia' (*Wiener Festwochen- Symposien*, 1986), a conference organised in the Austrian capital in January 1987, on the subject of 'Europa and Mitteleuropa', the 'Donauraum- symposium', held the following June at the Benedictine abbey in Melk, and the subsequent second meeting of the Duino Talks in 1987. Rathkolb and Stadler (Eds.), *Verdrängte Kultur.* On the historiographical debate on Central Europe as a term, see also Górny, "Użyteczność i granice" 801–808; Müller, "Where and When Was (East) Central Europe?", Müller, "Southeastern Europe as a Historical Meso-region*."* Janowski, "Pitfalls and Opportunities."

10 Horel, "The rediscovery of Central Europe in the 1980s", 25.

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novelist Milan Kundera (1929–2023), and the Hungarian writer and journalist György Konrád (1933–2019), who: inspired by the Austrian exhibition 'Dream and Reality. Vienna 1870–1930' displayed at the Künstlerhaus[11], started to write about the 'dream' of Central Europe[12]. The then Vice-Mayor of Vienna, Erhard Busek (ÖVP), was among the first to grasp the importance for the capital city and for Austria of being seen as a 'political alternative': the 'Austrianisation' of Mitteleuropa could be achieved despite the Soviet control over Eastern countries, since Austria, Busek argued, could "get a chance for its future" in, and with Central Europe[13]. There again, as Wendelin Ettmayer (ÖVP's deputy and diplomat, seconded to head the office of Alois Mock, later Austrian foreign minister) emphasised, a deep "sense of togetherness" could be achieved, regardless of the prevailing 'quality' of relations between the Great Powers while increasing the room for manoeuvre across the ideological blocs in the centre of Europe[14].

Hence, the message instilled was a newly discovered concept of East-Central Europe, an expression coined to define a space characterised by an extreme divisiveness – brought about by the sovietisation of East Central Europe in the wake of the Second World War – but which nevertheless belonged together culturally, socially, and economically in the deep structures of historical development of the Danube Region[15].

These political, and cultural dynamics were to provide the basis for a new transregional cooperation at the core of Europe, promoted and actively supported by György Sebestyén with his cultural and journalistic mission through the journals *Pannonia* (1973), and later *Morgen* (1977). Sebestyén launched both magazines to help realise his cultural and political plans, and they were published thanks to economic and financial support guaranteed by the Funds of the regional government of Upper Austria. *Morgen* was seen as a prestigious cultural medium by the local political class, i.e., that of Lower Austria (Niederösterreich), where the revitalisation and enhancement of a rich cross-border identity heritage were considered to be a primary form of cultural promotion (later culminating in the so-called *Drosendorfer Manifest* of 1980). Despite being

11 Russel, "Art: Vienna Festival Exhibitions".

12 Luif, "Forum on 'Central Europe'", 97.

13 Busek and Brix, *Projekt Mitteleuropa*, 173.

14 Ettmayer, *Plädoyer für Mitteleuropa,* 52.

15 Here it was especially meant as a wider Central European region. For a deeper, and broader analyse on this topic, see Troebst, "Geschichtsregion".

actively and sufficiently supported, *Morgen* did not have fortune on its side: ten years later it was still languishing on the national publishing scene, and by 1986–87 it was in a precarious commercial and financial condition[16].

Cultural policies 'beyond' the Iron Curtain

Any discussion of exchanges between East and West in Europe during the Cold War evokes the idea of a nearly impossible kind of cooperation between States divided by the Iron Curtain. This inevitably means that relationships in a wider, broader transregional context – that would be able to overcome the ideological borders through a shared idea of Mitteleuropa (Central Europe) – have often been seen as the legacy of a distant past. This was in spite of the fact that the political concept of cross-border cooperation was a fixture in international, intellectual debate, particularly in Austria, thanks to the special relationship which for centuries had bonded the Alpine country – even in its current form, created after the dissolution of the Dual imperial monarchy (Cisleitania) – to the East-Central European countries.

16 In order to find a long-term solution to the magazine's economic crisis, which was draining substantial public funds, the NÖ- Fund's board met in March 1987. At this meeting, the honorary president of the board, Andreas Maurer, proposed a reduction of the annual grant, but the suggestion was rejected by the general director of the Fund, Walter Wolfsberger. In his opinion, a cultural newspaper such as 'Morgen' should always be subsidised to prevent it from shutting down. An eventual drastic measure was also discarded by another member of the board, Franz Albrecht Metternich-Sandor (pp. 4–6). Likewise, another critic of Sebestyén's management was former Lower Austria Governor and board member Andreas Maurer (ÖVP, 1966–1981): in his opinion, the magazine's management and editorial board were excessively elitist and unwilling to open up to younger staff who were consequently precluded from holding positions of trust which, if granted, could have helped the magazine to open up to new trends. The discussion was closed by the president Rudolf Gruber. After admitting that, on account of political expediency, no changes could be made to the magazine board, he contacted the *Landeshauptmann* Siegfried Ludwig (ÖVP, 1981–1992) to discuss a possible redistribution of the funds and to examine the possibility of a merger between 'Morgen' and other local cultural information publications (pp. 6–8). *Protokoll des Kuratoriums des NÖ- Fonds*, 9 March 1987 (Vienna), typescript, in Literaturarchiv (LIT) der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB), Wien, Nachlass György Sebestyén, Sign. 120/S/109/22-23.

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The spirit of the idea of Mitteleuropa was somehow revitalised in 1953, after Stalin's death. Indeed, not long after his death was announced, in May, the idea of cross-border cooperation brought together Austrian, Czech, Hungarian, Croatian, and Slovenian representatives in Bad Reichenhall (an Alpine Bavarian town very close to the Austrian border, not far from Salzburg), where they decided to establish the 'Research Institute for the Issues of the Danube Region' (*Forschungsinstitut für die Fragen des Donauraumes*, FID, later renamed 'Donauraum-Institut')[17]. Its foundation owes much to the commitment of an Austrian diplomat and the former head of the political department in the Austrian foreign ministry, Theodor von Hornbostel[18]. Its main goal was the development of cultural, scientific, and intellectual cross-border exchanges. The institute's founding father and first chairman, Hornbostel recognised the need for academic research into this strategic cross-border region, i.e., the Danube basin, and a decade later, his opening speech, given at the Annual Conference in Salzburg, commemorated this:

'The purpose of the Institute is the study of the social, ethical, historical, legal, cultural, political, and economic problems of the Danube Region, to discuss them in speeches and writing and to work out practical proposals for solutions, which are to serve the demand of (should promote the) peaceful cooperation of the European peoples in general, and that of the Danube region in particular'. The Research Institute should, thus, be in a privileged position to continue the scientific traditions of the former monarchy in those areas where solutions are still needed after its end and in those areas where problems remain unsolved to this day. This applies first and foremost to the national question in the Danube region. Based on this decision of Bad Reichenhall, the Institute was also given the task of dealing with the new problems that arose in the Danube region after 1918 and 1945, above all the question of Austria's international position, the economic relations between the Danube states and, more recently, the ideological development under the communist governments in the Danube region. Politics is only one subject of the Institute's research[19].

17 See Großmann, *Die Internationale der Konservativen.* 126–127.

18 For a biographical portrait of Hornbostel, as well as for a deeper analysis of his work within the scientific institution, see Dörner and Dörner-Fazeny, *Theodor von Hornbostel.* 179–187.

19 The purpose of the Institute is to study the social, ethical, historical, legal, cultural, political and economic problems of the Danube region, to discuss them in oral and written form, and to work out practical solutions which should serve the demand for peaceful cooperation between the peoples of Europe in general and the Danube region in particular. The Research Institute should thus be in a position to continue the scientific traditions of the former monarchy, where solutions are still needed after the end of the monarchy and where problems

The struggle for a peaceful and united Europe was, indeed, its main task, but achieving this goal remained a long way off, since the Iron Curtain separated peoples and countries in the Danube region, and the countries of post-war Europe found themselves in very different political and economic conditions.

The 'Donauraum-Institut' was the first, and the only (for at least three decades) scientific institution in Austria specifically dedicated to research on the Danube region, on both sides of the border. From 1956 onwards, it published the results of this research in its 'own journal, entitled "Der Donauraum. Zeitschrift des Forschungsinstitutes für Fragen des Donauraumes" ('The Danube Region. Journal of the Research Institute for Questions of the Danube Region')[20]. Ever since, the Institute has tirelessly promoted activities and conferences to maintain a high level of discussion on a possible transnational cooperation[21].

1956 was a year of critical transformations and constitutes a turning point in the history of Europe. Not only did the celebrated Hungarian revolution plunge the broader East-Central European scenario into chaos, heightening the conflictual dynamics of post-1945 European history to a new level and proving itself to be meaningful for the wider context of the Cold War and for East-West relationships, but it also thrust new

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remain unsolved to this day. This applies first and foremost to the national question in the Danube region. No less important is the fact that, on the basis of the Bad Reichenhall decision, the Institute was given the task of dealing with the new problems that arose in the Danube region after 1918 and 1945, above all the question of Austria's international position, the economic relations between the Danube states and, more recently, the ideological developments under the communist governments in the Danube region. *Politics* is *only one* of the themes of the Institute's research. Hornbostel, "Bücher und Zeitschriften". 257.

20 Quoting Schlenger, "the Research Institute for Danube Region Issues, which was founded two years ago in Salzburg and is chaired by Theodor Hornbostel, has converted its previous newsletter into a quarterly journal, which has enabled it to expand the scope and content of its communications. The Secretary General of the Institute in charge is Peter Berger. According to Hornbostel, the journal serves the 'task' and the 'ideal goal' of conveying 'the results of research in a factual manner to circles scattered over all continents who are interested in the manifold problems that the Danube region, with its diverse peoples, has always posed and will continue to pose in the present and future, and, in addition, to provide references to relevant publications and news'. The first issue gives rise to the hope that the editor and the editorial staff will succeed in fulfilling this task. Since not only Slovakia and Moravia, but also Bohemia is included in the Danube region, the readers of the *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* will also learn a lot about their field of interest from the new quarterly". Schlenger, Der Donauraum, 304.

21 See "Tagung des Forschungsinstitutes für Fragen des Donauraumes", 530, and Berger, "Jahrestagung des Forschungsinstitutes für den Donauraum", 152–153.

actors onto the stage in the European intellectual debate, especially in Austria, due to its unavoidable proximity to the Hungarian border.

As a matter of fact, Austria, and Vienna in particular, was an important destination for a number of exiles, several of whom were intellectuals[22], escaping from the dictatorship in Budapest[23]. Among these exiles stands the pivotal figure and multifaceted character of György Sebestyén[24].

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22 Notable among them is Paul Lendvai, a Jewish intellectual born in Hungary (1929) who, like Sebestyén, was an Austrian citizen, journalist, and author. In 1973, he founded the quarterly magazine 'Europäische Rundschau', laying the foundations for the beginning of a public political debate on the idea of an East-Central European consciousness. A common status and a harmony of views strongly linked to the Central European Danube area and to the political and intellectual heritage shared by Austria and Hungary, therefore, inform two of the main interpreters of the Austrian cultural debate of the 1970s and 1980s.

23 According to Austrian diplomats, the events occurring in Budapest were "an explosion of nationalist circles (namely the Petőfi circle, an intellectual circle within the framework of the Communist Youth League, which opposed Rákosi), within the party against the Rákosi regime". In fact, it was pointed out, it was "writers and intellectuals who led the opposition, and not the workers", since "the working class was not brought up with an active fighting spirit". *Die Opposition gegen Rákosi* (Budapest, 29 June 1956), in ÖStA, AdR, BKA/AA, II-pol, Ungarn 3, Zl. 104-Pol/56 (GZl. 511.185-pol/56). Moreover, Austria's behaviour was strongly criticised, as stated in the diplomatic reports from the Austrian embassy in Moscow, which underline the Soviet resentment toward the Viennese Chancellery's policies. In a secret dispatch (1 December 1956), Norbert Bischoff, Austrian ambassador in Moscow, highlighted Khrushchev's 'disappointment' with "Austria's use of its neutrality" in solving the Hungarian refugee crisis. ÖStA, AdR, BKA/AA, II-pol, Ungarn 3c, Zl. 791.362-Pol/56 (GZl. 511.190-pol/56). Granville, "Of Spies, Refugees and Hostile Propaganda", 62–90. For a historical overview of Hungary's fate as a Soviet satellite, see Borhi, *Hungary in the Cold War*.

24 György Sebestyén (born Budapest, 30 October 1930, died Vienna, 6 June 1990) was a writer, novelist, director, and journalist. He studied ethnology and philosophy in Hungary and by 1947 he was active as a literary and theatre reviewer in Budapest, part of the so-called revolutionary Petőfi-circle. As one of Imre Nagy's supporters, he had to flee to Austria in 1956. He wrote many novels and short stories, including *Die Türen schließen sich* (1957 'The doors close'), *Der Mann im Sattel* (1961, 'The man in the Saddle'), *Thennberg oder Versuch einer Heimkehr* (1969, 'Thennberg or The Attempt at a Homecoming'), *Der Faun im Park* (1972, 'The Faun in the Park'), *Albino* (1984), *Die Werke der Einsamkeit* (1986, 'The Works of Solitude'). From 1973 Sebestyén was the editor of the 'Pannonia', magazine and, from 1977, of the cultural magazine 'Morgen'. Originally on the far left politically, he later adopted more moderate positions. Ackerl and Weissensteiner, *Österreichisches Personenlexikon,* 443. For a more extensive portrait, see Schramm and Sebestyén (ed.), *György Sebestyén.* Also, see his autobiography, Sebestyén, *Vorläufige Behausungen.*

Sebestyén was born and raised in Budapest and grew up speaking two languages. A passionate communist in his early years, he then became a critic of the regime prior to the uprising of the Hungarians against the Soviet dictatorship, before fleeing to Austria after the uprising was suppressed[25]. In Vienna, Sebestyén was quickly accepted into the circle of the up-and-coming generation of local authors, such as Heimito von Doderer, Alexander Lernet-Holenia and George Saiko (which also included, among others, Herbert Eisenreich, Milo Dor, Reinhard Federmann, Peter von Tramin, Herbert Zand, Humbert Fink), and established himself as a flamboyant narrator, writer, journalist and theatre critic. He became an Austrian citizen in 1963 and from the mid-Seventies onwards he adopted a new approach to the issue of Mitteleuropa: from 1973 to 1990 he published the magazine *Pannonia*, which soon became an organ for cultural cooperation in Central Europe. Numerous authors from the Eastern Bloc, including many from the Soviet Union, contributed to the journal.

Sebestyén was one of the first European authors to deal with and address the Hungarian uprising of 1956 on a literary level: his personality emerges through the pages of his novel '*Die Türen schließen sich*'[26] and it is clear that, as a result of the positive combination of Austrian and Hungarian cultures, which are so different but nevertheless intimately linked, he was endowed with a unique awareness and attitude. This pushed him to encourage various cultural initiatives in order to bring together two realities that, despite their geographical proximity, were politically distant. He was deeply convinced of a different idea of Europe since, as highlighted by Helmut Niederle, Sebestyén, he "dreamed of a Europe of an unlimited interchange of opinions, a continent of open borders"[27].

25 For an autobiographical recollection, see *Warum ich für den Pen-Club bin. Ein Weltverband der Einsamkeiten…*, in "Die Furche", 15 November 1975. Also, see LIT, Nachlass György Sebestyén (120/98), 4.3.2.36, 120/s/90, Pannonia betreffend, *Lebenslauf* (Wien, 6 March 1967). *Die Opposition gegen Rákosi* (Budapest, 29 June 1956), in ÖStA, AdR, BKA/AA, II-pol, Ungarn 3, Zl. 104-Pol/56 (GZl. 511.185-pol/56): "Meanwhile Stalin's shadow began to lose its impact within the public opinion, the political opposition against Rákosi started to take courage and appears always more and more organised (….). A new element emerged within the party, which in Hungarian political life has played a significant role, and which is now emerging as the fiercest enemy of Rákosi, namely authors, writers, journalists and intellectuals".

26 Sebestyén, *Die Türen schließen sich*. On this topic, see Maurer, "Hingerichtet und wir leben noch".

27 György Sebestyén had a dream of a Europe of free exchange, a continent of open borders. See Niederle, "György Sebestyén und der österreichische Pen", 77.

The Budapest-born journalist was a convinced supporter of both a new approach to Austrian cultural policy and the importance of 'regional policies', particularly regarding border areas with linguistic minorities, such as Lower Austria and Burgenland, considered, on Austrian soil, as being the most closely interconnected regions with the macro-theme of the Danube region[28].

Sebestyén was a strong advocate of the need to strengthen regionalism and democratic federalism and promoted the setting-up of working groups to discuss and intervene in culture and the economy, and to encourage cross-border relations between regional areas with a similar background, such as Bavaria and the north-eastern regions of Italy (with particular attention to foreign workers from other northern parts of the country historically linked to the Austrian cultural heritage). On a more concrete level, it was necessary to promote the establishment of inner circles, a founding principle, for example, behind the constitution of the 'Ethnic Group Institute' (*Volksgruppen-Institut*) in Hornstein (at that time the largest municipality in Burgenland with Croatian speaking inhabitants in 1976), the 'Institute for Comparative Cultural History of the Austrian Ethnic Groups' (*Institut für vergleichende Kulturgeschichte der österreichischen Volksgruppen*, 1983), as well as the 'Donaufestival' (1988)[29].

He symbolises the beginning of a different approach toward the Danubian issue, characterised by an alternative approach to East-West conflicts, and bringing important changes in the Mittel Europe debate. With his cultural and political commitment,

28 The Magyar presence in Austria was mainly concentrated in Burgenland, which was where the only officially recognised institution for the tutelage of this minority, the 'Burgenland Hungarian Cultural Association' was active (*Burgenländische Ungarische Kulturverein*). From 1968 onwards it published an annual information sheet, *Őrség*, promoted and directed by Janos Moór, and later by Ferenc Galambos. It often addressed the problems of protecting a community that was constantly shrinking due to the reduction in the number of members of the Hungarian community. Data is difficult to quantify, due to the lack of statistical information. In the last census mentioned by the magazine, 1981, question of mother tongue of the population was not included in conclusions about the social composition of the population. "Pannonia" stated: "the Magyar minority in the last sixteen years has been reduced by 62.8% compared to the other minority communities present in Austria (28.6% South Tiroleans, 56.1% Ladin)". Tüskés, "Strahlungen einer kleinen Welt." Pannonia no. 2 (1988): 13–14. For a wider overview on the history of German minority in the region, see Sparwasser, *Identität im Spannungsfeld von Zwangsmigration und Heimkehr*, Márkus, "Behandlung der deutschen Minderheit Ungarns während und nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg." 247–268.

29 His considerations and suggestions can be found here: Sebestyén, *Zur Kulturpolitik in Niederösterreich. Einige grundsätzliche Erwägungen und Anregungen* (28.07.1986), LIT 120/S/109/9-20.

Sebestyén stood up for East-West understanding and stimulated the discussion about Central Europe anew.

Meanwhile, in 1958, on behalf of Heinrich Drimmel, Minister of Education (ÖVP), a young researcher who would go on to be appointed professor, Richard Plaschka founded the 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Ost- und Südosteuropaforschung' (Working Group for East and South-East European Studies, renamed 'Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropainstitut'). Nonetheless, the idea of Mitteleuropa struggled to acquire popularity among Austrians, with motivated reasoning playing its part in its lack of credibility among the public, since it was almost certainly still interpreted as a vestige of a by then distant past. Even so, a number of politicians, mainly People's Party representatives (Fritz Bock, Alois Mock, and Erhard Busek) did not hesitate in their speeches, albeit occasionally, to emphasize the need to develop deeper cooperation with the countries of the Eastern Bloc.

The East-Central European idea was therefore not a marginal issue, but neither was it a central one. The primary concern for Austrian politicians on both sides of the political spectrum, namely the ÖVP and the SPÖ, was to avoid raising an excessive outcry over the idea of Mitteleuropa, which would inevitably have been viewed negatively by the Great Powers, irritating their 'sensibilities', as it could be inevitably considered, if not as a 'revanchist claim', then at least a symptom of an aspiration to feed a still unsatiated Pan-Germanist yearning[30].

In any case, Austria's neutral status (since 1955) made it possible to create a space for mediation and communication with the countries beyond the Iron Curtain. Thus, cross-border cultural circulation facilitated the revival of interactions between Austrian cultural players and their East-Central European counterparts, which had never been entirely severed in the decades following the outbreak of the Cold War. Thus, from the mid-1950s onwards, cultural interchanges with Eastern European countries were actively promoted, first and foremost with Hungary, considered "the weakest link in the chain of satellite cities" of the Kremlin[31]. In June,1956, for example, the "Vienna

30 Marjanović, "L'idée d'Europe centrale", 73–76. Marjanović has highlighted how, in the wider composite intellectual milieu, the first traces of a revival of the Mitteleuropa idea were envisioned in Italy in the early 1960s, with the publication of a study by Claudio Magris, then a young Germanist from Trieste, entitled 'The Habsburg myth in modern Austrian literature'. See Magris, *Il mito asburgico.*

31 Statement made by the Austrian ambassador in Budapest, Walther Peinsipp. *Die Wachenablösung in Budapest* (27 July 1956), in ÖStA, BMfaA, AdR/II, Pol/56, Ungarn 3b.

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Boys Choir" performed in Budapest; as noted by the Austrian embassy in Hungary, the *Wiener Sängerknaben,* this group, once depicted as a "symbol of the capitalist decadence", was now portrayed differently by the Hungarian press and welcomed, "thanks to the political distension", as a "significant step toward (a better) Austrian–Hungarian relationship". Shortly after this, another important step was officially taken, this time by the Hungarian government: on the occasion of Mozart's bicentenary the Austrian envoy to Budapest Walther Peinsipp[32] was invited to attend the inauguration of a Mozart exhibition in Budapest[33].

These interchanges were later intensified from the early 1970s onwards, both on the musical scene – see, for instance, the road show by the Vienna Philharmonic (*Wiener Philharmoniker*), which toured the major cities and capitals of the so-called Eastern Bloc (Prague, Budapest, Wroclaw, Brno and Bratislava)[34] – and in the area of communications; see for instance the collaboration proposed by the Austrian state television (ÖRF) to start a partnership with the Czechoslovak state television[35].

The mid-1970s marked another important opportunity for Austria to strengthen its neighbourhood policy, not only at the federal level: as underlined by Marjanović, it was implemented on a transregional basis with the establishment of the 'Alps–Adriatic' working group (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpe–Adria*, ARGE) in November 1978[36]. The main goals of this group, instituted as a transnational community between the Alpine regions of Bavaria (Germany), Carinthia, Styria, Tyrol, and Burgenland (Austria), Friuli Venezia Giulia, with Trieste (Italy), Slovenia and Croatia (Yugoslavia), were to jointly discuss and coordinate issues that were in the interest of the members, in order to develop

32 Peinsipp (1906–1990) – later better known as the 'Austrian Hero of Budapest' – headed the Austrian diplomatic representation in Budapest as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary between 1956 and 1962. Follner, *Österreichs Spitzendiplomaten,* 354–356.

33 *Die Wiener Sängerknaben in Budapest* (26 June, 1956), and *Mozart-Ausstellung in Budapest* (27 June, 1956), in ÖStA, BMfaA, AdR/II, Pol/56, Ungarn, K1.

34 For a recollection of that period, see the memoirs of Paul Twaroch, General Secretary of Austrian State television from 1970 to 1978, *Das Land der Böhmen mit der Seele suchend. Begegnung mit den Nachbarn*, in "Morgen", N. 36 (1984), pp. 198–200. Also, see the diplomatic reports dispatched by the Austrian Federal Foreign Minister to its embassies located in Eastern Bloc countries, in ÖStA, BMfaA, AdR/II, Pol/60-70.

35 Knobl, "Mit dem Osten reden", 3. Also, see Marjanović, *L'idée d'Europe centrale,* 75–78.

36 Marjanović, *Die Mitteleuropa,* 85. and onwards.

cooperation and exchange in the Alps–Adriatic area in the fields of culture, economy, environment, spatial planning and energy problems, communication and transportation, tourism and sports, and to strengthen the Central European cultural identity[37]. On the one hand, then, an increasingly vivid and multifaceted debate was taking place on cross-border interactions, even though the Danube basin and adjacent areas were then unconditionally affected by the clash between the superpowers. On the other hand, however, the ideological conflict neither discouraged nor slowed down the various attempts to create a space that would guarantee at least a limited margin of manoeuvre.

A crucial moment in the history of relations between Austria and its Eastern neighbouring countries, still under Soviet control, is represented by the 1980s. This is when a clear political awareness emerged within the Vienna Chancellery of the valuable work that could be accomplished in the wider international context, namely a cultural policy capable of advancing a new strategic vision of the idea of a shared Mitteleuropa, based on a common ideal, values and identity heritage.[38]

In addition, we must also take into account the long tradition of using landscapes for national representation, strictly connected with the nation-building processes of the last centuries, which played, of course, a significant, political role in the national symbol systems of the region. The Austrian case is particularly remarkable, since it shows the prominent role landscape can play in both national and transregional identity constructions. As Tobias Schweiger has pointed out, "wherever the production of 'homeland' is involved in Austria, landscape (also) is part of the game".[39]

37 This cooperation favoured a gradual introduction of the term Alps–Adriatic region as a geographic description of the territory. Moreover, at the beginning of the 1980s, when the Austrian province of Burgenland and some Western Hungarian counties joined the group [on this issue, see Jurić-Pahor, "The Alps–Adriatic Region"*,* 189–191. The geographic term Alps–Adriatic–Pannonian region was introduced to better specify the area of the Working Group. Klemenčič, "Indigenous National/Ethnic Minorities", 10.

38 On this topic, see Graf and Meisinger (Eds.), *Österreich im Kalten Krieg,* 283 onwards. On the diversity of the Habsburg Monarchy and the national question, see, among others, Csáky, "Die Vielfalt der Habsburgermonarchie".

39 "überall dort, wo es in Österreich (auch) um die Produktion von "Heimat" geht, ist Landschaft mit im Spiel". Schweiger, "*Zur Repräsentation von 'Landschaft'",* 401. Also see Breuss, Liebhart and Pribersky, *Österreichische Identitäten*, 34–37.

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The 'Program of the Foreign Cultural Conference of the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs' (*Programm der Auslandskulturtagung des Bundesministeriums für auswärtige Angelegenheiten* was an exemplary initiative launched by the Austrian ministry of foreign affairs led by Alois Mock and was of great relevance on account of its political repercussions, The initiative was headed by Bernhard Stillfried – one of the formative figures in Austrian foreign cultural policy in the 1970s and the 1980s, head of the Cultural Policy Section of the ministry – starting in September 1988.[40] As the Cabinet of the Federal ministry (now renamed 'Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs') emphasised in its own Yearbook of 1988 (in the section on "Cultural Policy Abroad and International Scientific cooperation"), Austrian foreign cultural policy "has a special mediating function, especially in publicising and promoting contemporary artistic and scientific work in Austria". Increased Austrian involvement in international cooperation in Europe, including and especially between East and West, meant that the Vienna Chancellery increased its specific engagement in cultural and scientific relations with its neighbouring countries to the East:

The entry into a new phase of cooperation with these states – stated the Cabinet of Foreign Affairs – is signalled by the expansion of Austrian cultural representations in this region: in December an agreement was signed on the establishment of cultural institutes in Prague and Vienna and a second cultural envoy has already been sent to Prague. The staff of the Cultural Institute in Budapest will be increased in order to support the preparations for the planned World Exhibition Vienna–Budapest and to participate in the design of the cultural framework programme[41].

40 Bernhard Stillfried (1925–2011), distinguished and decorated diplomat, historian, and anthropologist, began his career as a programme assistant for the BBC European Service in London (1953–58) and was later appointed head of the Cultural Department for the Middle East (1958–1974); Stillfried directed the Austrian Cultural Institute in London (1975–1986) and was head of the Cultural Policy Section of the Foreign Ministry (1986–1990), also serving as consultant to Foreign Minister Alois Mock. For a portrait of Stillfried, see Erschen, *Stillfried.*

41 Jahrbuch der österreichischen Außenpolitik, *Außenpolitischer Bericht, 1988*, 304–305. The report continued: "An essential part of this year's *Auslandskulturtagung* (Foreign Cultural Conference) was the panel discussion on the topic '1918–1988. Austria and its Neighbours. From Disintegration to Cooperation': this discussion saw the participation of renowned representatives from the CSSR, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Italy. In order to promote the desired expansion of cultural cooperation in the Danube region, a 'Danube Region Working Group' (*Arbeitskreis Donauregion*) was set up in June on the initiative of the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs. The group counts among its members a number of personalities from the fields of culture and science. The goal and task of the committee is to counsel

Through an original initiative promoted at the end of the 1980s by the Section for Cultural Relations Abroad of the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), Austrian libraries and cultural centres were established in the then still communist states of East-Central and South-East Europe, an act that showed, before the international political changes, a unique sense of foresight. Moreover, Stillfried, who was working as a consultant to the foreign minister Alois Mock at the time, set up a lectorate program for Austrian literature and history and for the dissemination of Austrian–German heritage in Austrian libraries in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc, at the latter's request from 1989 onwards[42].

As regards personal relations and specific personalities, it is worth acknowledging the important role of Wolfgang Petritsch, for the SPÖ, and Erhard Busek, for the ÖVP, in the international debate over transnational-transregional partnership, and in establishing Austria as a trusted part of the multilevel networking processes that were taking place at that time at a broader level. Since the Kreisky Era in the 1970s, there had already been some attempts in the ranks of the ÖVP's opposition to establish contacts with the increasingly active opposition groups in the neighbouring states of East-Central Europe, especially on the part of the party's foremost exponent of urbane liberalism, Erhard Busek (then a Viennese town councillor, and later vice-chancellor in the grand SPÖ–ÖVP coalition, as well as chairman of the Austrian People's Party). A key

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the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in its efforts to deepen contacts in this region. The activities of the working group have already been fruitful for the Austrian foreign cultural programme. For example, this group's proposals were the basis for the symposium entitled 'Austria–Hungary. Example of a Neighbourhood in Europe' held in Budapest, a commemorative event in Görz (Gorizia) with the participation of the Austrian Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and an Italian minister on the subject of '1918–1988: Italy and Austria. A new chapter of common history', as well as meetings of journalists in Prague and Belgrade with the motto of eliminating mutual prejudices. In its activities abroad, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs can currently count upon 10 cultural institutes and more than 80 professional representative authorities, 13 of whom have their own officials for cultural agendas. Austria can make use of a variety of media for the presentation of its art and science: exhibitions, musical and literary events, donations of books, artistic workshops, academic events in the form of lectures, seminars, symposia, sponsorships, etc. It is quite in keeping with these intentions that a large proportion of these events is carried out in cooperation with foreign partners". *Ibid*.

42 In 1993, at Mock's request, Bernhard Stillfried voluntarily took over the management of the newly founded *Österreich-Kooperation*, which assisted in the supervision of the 'Austrian Libraries'.

participant in the 'Mitteleuropa' debates of the 1980s[43], as Minister for Science and Research (1989–1994) he was responsible for crucially important changes in higher education, paving the way for a European, shared model[44].

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Pannonia

Central to the Austrian second post-war political and cultural debate was a political stance oriented towards an East-Central Europe that lay within the borders of the former Danube Monarchy, despite the difficult situation emerging after 1945 (with the military occupation of the country and its 'hybrid' political position, like a Western spur on the edge of the Iron Curtain). However, the East gradually also became an increasingly central topic within intellectual debate in Austria and the focus of various periodicals that were committed to highlighting a transnational identity heritage of the 'Danube region', which had been historically particularly relevant for Austrian-German history. Nevertheless, in a period distinguished by the enormous contrasts of a still divided Europe, the first Austrian journal to express and consistently advocate a tangible yearning for understanding between Central-European nations was *Pannonia* magazine, which described itself as a means of bridging the gap[45]. As *Pannonia* stated in its first issue, "the aim of the journal is to promote encounters between different peoples and cultures in Europe"[46].

György Sebestyén, a Budapest-born journalist, was the project creator, founder, and editor-in-chief of the magazine *Pannonia* (full title: *Pannonia. Magazin für Mitteleuropa* from December 1973 to 6 June 1990 (the date of his death) and, from 1974, of the

43 On the debate over whether Central Europe is an ephemeral phenomenon or a historical fact, see Mozetič, "Mythos Mitteleuropa". Maier, "Wessen Mitteleuropa?", 171–192, and 193–210.

44 On this topic, see Leidenfrost, "The Demise of 'Minoritenplatz-Schleicherei'", 283–319. A more detailed description can be found in: Hummer, Vom "Europäischen Hochschulraum'".

45 On the political concept of Austria's traditional 'bridging function' between East and West especially in the 1970s-1980s, see Gehler and Graf (eds.), *Europa und die deutsche Einheit,* 117–139; Gehler, "'Europe', Europeanisations and their Meaning"; Fröhlich-Steffen, *Die Österreichische Identität im Wandel*, Gehler, *Der lange Weg nach Europa* 213–425 (vol. 2). Angerer, "*Für eine Geschichte der österreichischen Neutralität".* 702–708.

46 *Pannonisches* (Editorial), in "Pannonia", n. 1 (December 1973), 4.

Magazin für Europäische Zusammenarbeit – 'Pannonia. Magazine for Central-Europe', and later 'Magazine for European Cooperation')[47]. He provided the regional East-Central European discourse with a forum in which not only authors, artists and journalists on both sides of the blocs[48], but also politicians, actively participated[49].

His main goal was to satisfy a spiritual need in the Pannonia region, a demand for a permanent peace movement. This way of thinking was a result of the situation prevailing at the time, i.e., the Cold war, and aimed to bring together Austrians, Slavic peoples of different cultures, Hungarians and (North-East) Italians, whom, over the centuries, had lived side by side in a specific area, the Danube basin, that is to say the various inhabitants who were linked together by their cultural uniqueness. According to Anton Fennes, "György Sebestyén wanted to create a magazine in which the situation (of East-Central Europe) was reflected, in which an exemplary model was presented and displayed. He wanted to do something against national Fanaticism and against prejudice, he did not want to talk about peace, but to strengthen it through the presence of this magazine"[50].

47 The magazine was printed and published in Eisenstadt, the provincial capital of Burgenland (the easternmost Austrian state, near to the Hungarian border) by the publishing house Rötzer; its editor-in-chief was György Sebestyén, while Erich Schimmerl (and, two years later, Walter Wächtler) was the editor-in-chief. A quarterly magazine (its starting price was 35 Austrian schillings), "Pannonia" was registered (as number 17) in the section on culture, art, philology, and society of the Austrian press. Verband Österreichischer Zeitungsherausgeber und Zeitungsverleger (ed.), *Österreichs Presse Werbung Graphik*, Handbuch 22 (1974), 313.

48 Almost all the members of the editorial board, belonged to a close circle of collaborators. They included (in alphabetical order): Tschingis Ajtmatow, Jurij Archibow, Sergej Barusdin, Karl Bednarik, Ivan Boldizsár, Rudolf Chmel, Moritz Csáky, Iwajlo Ditschew, Anton Dontschew, Stephan Hermlin, Ivan Ivanji, Heinz Kahlau, Márton Kalász, Zoran Konstantinović, Zlatko Krasni, Claudio Magris, Christoph Meckel, Leopold Melichar, Helmut Stefan Milletich, Assen Nejkow, János Nemes, Jürgen Heinrich Petersen, Margit Pflagner, Rado Pytlik, Ignacy Rutkiewicz, Waclaw Sadkowski, Erich Schimmerl, Günter Unger, Peter Vujka, Richard Winger, Peter Zajac. Cf. Esterhammer, Gaigg, and Köhle, *Handbuch österreichischer,* 749–756.

49 On the number and nature of Sebestyén's personal interactions with representatives of the Austrian and Central-East European intellectual élites, see the Hungarian-born Austrian journalist-writer's numerous exchanges of letters, now accessible in Teilnachlass György Sebestyén, Wienbibliothek, Handschriftensammlung, ZPH-681/2.1-2.3 (Archivbox 2, Korrespondenzen).

50 "György Sebestyén wollte eine Zeitschrift machen, in der sich die Lage widerspiegelte, in der das Modellhafte vorgestellt und reflektiert wurde. Er wollte etwas gegen nationalen

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Since this long-term and clearly challenging task was carried out in Austria, it was therefore quite reasonable that, within the Alpine country, the ideal base camp from which to start this mission was Burgenland, Austria's easternmost state that is closely linked to Hungarian and Slavic culture. Sebestyén deserves credit for contributing to opening a gap in the Iron Curtain: together with Alois Mock and Fred Sinowatz[51], he was among the first to recognise the remarkable opportunity to cut though the Curtain through activity in the fields of culture, art, and literature. Significantly, since the early 1970s, the Austrian journalist and author had revived the term 'Pannonia' with the purpose of giving a transborder area (namely the Danubian basin district) its own identarian distinctiveness which had long been lacking.

According to Sebestyén, in order to pursue its goals, *Pannonia* had marked out a clear approach for dealing with the transnational question: firstly, it seems important to me to reduce the resentments in the Danube region, not by contumeliousness (offending), but by a truthful presentation of the intellectual processes in these countries. One should not talk about internationalism, but make it happen where one is. Secondly, this part of Europe is an area in which many minor peoples, (and) very different ethnic groups live in very different social models.[52]

The quarterly, published in Eisenstadt, immediately became an essential point of reference for all forms of transregional cooperation[53] in many different fields, such as cultural exchange, tourism, energy management, transport and spatial planning and sci-

Fanatismus und gegen Vorurteilte tun und er wollte nicht über den Frieden reden, sondern ihn durch die Existenz dieser Zeitschrift stärken". Fennes, "Das Burgenland als Medienlandschaft.", 256.

51 Fred Sinowatz (1929–2008), historian and politician, was born and raised in Burgenland, the only child of a working-class family. He joined the Socialist Party (SPÖ) after graduating from high school and was active in the Socialist Students, becoming the chairman of the local SPÖ organisation in 1957. He entered the provincial parliament in 1961, and a year later was appointed provincial party secretary. In 1971 Bruno Kreisky brought Sinowatz into his cabinet as Federal Minister for Education and the Arts (1971–1983), and, in January 1981, he became Vice-Chancellor. After Bruno Kreisky's resignation, he was proposed for the chancellorship and took over the chairmanship of the SPÖ (1983). He was Austrian Federal Chancellor from 24 May 1983 to 16 June 1986, announcing his resignation on 9 June 1986, after the defeat of the SPÖ candidate Kurt Steyrer in the Federal Presidential election, and, two years later, he resigned from political office and retired to private life.

52 Rösicke, "Die geistige Vorgänge im Donauraum"

53 For a broader reflection on the transregional connections, see Castryck-Naumann, "Introduction".

entific research. As a result of Sebestyén's efforts and through the literary contributions and essays that appeared in it *Pannonia* served as a stimulator of Central-East European intellectual life, carrying out an important role in cultural mediation. Sebestyén hired correspondents from Eastern Europe to write for the magazine, setting up bases in Berlin, Budapest, Krakow, Ljubljana, Moscow, Warsaw, and Zagreb; this international editorial team allowed *Pannonia*, regardless of the Iron Curtain which divided Europe, to become a mirror image of the Eastern European situation. Among others, they included Gerd Bacher (1925–2015, Austrian journalist), Thomas Bernhard (1931–1989, Austrian writer, dramaturge and poet), Elias Canetti (1905–1994, Bulgarian-born British German-language writer, novelist, playwright), Milo Dor (1923–2005, Serbian-born Austrian writer, translator, and poet member of the so-called 'Group 47'), Albert Drach (1902–1995, Austrian–Jewish writer), Ingeborg Drewitz (1923–1986, German writer and academic), Jeannie Ebner (1918–2004, Austrian writer), Franz Endler (1937–2002, Austrian music critic and cultural journalist), Gertrud Fussenegger (1912–2009, Austrian writer, and author), Alexander Giese (1921–2016 Austrian cultural-journalist, and author), Michael Guttenbrunner (1919–2004, Austrian poet), Stephan Hermlin (1915–1997, German writer), Ivan Ivanji (1929, Serbian author, personal interpreter of the Yugoslavian president Tito, Secretary General of the Yugoslav Writers' Union, 1982–88), Ernst Jandl (1925–2000, Austrian experimental poet), Robert Jungk (1913–1994, German–Jewish-born journalist), Hermann Kesten (1900–1996, Galician-born German novelist), Claudio Magris (1939, Italian writer, translator, and academic), Ernst Wolfram Marboe (1938–2012, Austrian journalist, and author), Friederike Mayröcker (1924–2021, Austrian poet and writer) Andreas Okopenko (1930–2010, Austrian writer, and member of the so-called 'Wiener Gruppe', along with Jandl and Mayröcker), Hugo Portisch (1927–2021, Austrian journalist), Ernst Schönwiese (1905–1991, Austrian writer, and poet), Friedrich Torberg (1908–1979, Austrian writer, and translator), Hans Weigel (1908–1991, Austrian writer, and drama critic), Erik G. Wickenburg (1903–1998, Austrian journalist, and writer), and Dorothea Zeemann (1909–1993, Austrian writer).

For Sebestyén, and for all those intellectuals close to 'Pannonia's' circle, renewing a 'new' solidarity that would be able to prevail over the ideological borders that had become demarcation lines not only between West and East, but also between democracy and Communist dictatorship, between freedom of speech, and censorship and

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suppression of human rights, meant fighting alongside those on the other side of the Iron Curtain who longed for more democracy and freedom. In a nutshell, the challenge was to build, alongside people from both sides of the 'wall' who yearned for rights and freedom of thought, a new living dimension for all human beings that respected people and their individual rights and beliefs, a new approach based not just on ideological conflicts, but on a common peaceful coexistence among all Europeans.

That Sebestyén could engage in this form of constructive action and cooperation based on open dialogue and a transnational confrontation was thanks to the development of a comprehensive, political consensus among all the Austrian parties. The Budapest-born journalist could count on a large group of convinced key members of the political establishment, both local, and national figures, united by the desire to keep a 'window open' on the fenced-in courtyard of East-Central Europe. These figures included: Erhard Busek (deputy mayor and city councillor of Vienna, deputy to the National Council, *Nationalrat*, Minister of Education, Science and Research, Vice-Chancellor, 1991–1995), Siegfried Ludwig (Governor of Lower Austria, *Niederösterreich*, 1981–1992), Jörg Mauthe (city councillor of Vienna, cultural director of the party), Alois Mock (deputy to the *Nationalrat*, chairman of the People's Party, Minister of Education and of Foreign Affairs, Vice-Chancellor, 1987–1989), Theodor Piffl-Perčević (deputy to the *Nationalrat*, Minister of Education), for the Christian-conservative People's Party (ÖVP); Hertha Firnberg (deputy to the *Nationalrat*, Minister of Science), Heinz Fischer (deputy, and later president, 1990–2002, of the *Nationalrat*, Minister of Science, future Austrian Federal President, 2004–2016), Leopold Gratz (Mayor of Vienna, 1973–1984, Minister of Foreign Affairs, President of the *Nationalrat*, 1986–1989), Theodor Kery (Governor of Burgenland, 1966–1987), Bruno Kreisky (deputy to the *Nationalrat*, chairman of the Socialist Party, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Chancellor, 1970–1983), Fred Sinowatz (Minister of Education and Arts, 1971–1983, Vice-Chancellor, Chancellor, 1983–1986), and Helmut Zilk (Minister of Education and Arts, 1983–1984, Mayor of Vienna, 1984–1994), for the Socialist Party (SPÖ); the independent Rudolf Kirchschläger (diplomat, Minister of Foreign Affairs, twice Federal President of Austria, 1974–1986), and, for the Freedom Party, Friedrich Peter (Chairman of the Party, FPÖ, 1958–1978). Although coming from distinct perspectives, they all addressed the problem of identity in East-Central Europe, related to the Austrian borders and its relationships with neighbouring states, both in Western Europe, and in the Danube Basin.

The pan-European magazine's sections, subjects and editorial content shifted over the years, demonstrating its open and consistent focus on cultural, social, political, and economic changes, both in Austrian and in Central European society.

In the third issue of 1974 an article appears in which Sebestyén takes the Cypriot conflict as a starting point to 'warn' the international community about the risks of a nationalistic policy and to show how, in contrast, dialogue between the different territorial components and between different cultures, such as the culturally united Greek and Turkish, can generate peace[54]. The fight against nationalism is the thread running through many articles, therefore, and can be linked to the dramatic 'Swabians affair'[55].

Clearly, *Pannonia*'s focus on Hungary was constant since the very first issues: not only because of the inevitable, understandable, and emotional motives of the editor-in-chief, but also on account of the deep and lasting ties between Austria and Hungary that have been woven over centuries, consolidated by a long tradition of Magyar German-language journalism, dating back to the third decade of the 18th century[56]. It is precisely in the wake of this tradition that Sebestyén's work of promoting dialogue followed. Furthermore, this was exactly the intention behind the decision to publish, for the first time ever, several special issues of *Pannonia*, including a number of foreign magazines, fully translated into German. An edition of the Warsaw literary magazine 'Odra' came out in 1979[57], the first time a magazine from the Eastern Bloc was publicised in Austria. The same happened a few months later, in Autumn, with the publication of the Hungarian literary monthly 'Uj Irás'[58]. In Spring 1981 the magazine started a section specifically dedicated to Russian literature, an initiative launched following the invitation of an

54 Sebestyén, "Nicosia! Nicosia!", See also Lachs, "Viele Nationen, eine einzige Geschichte".

55 On Swabian refugees, and on the special relationship which bound Austria to Hungary, see Riesz, "Letze Chance Wiedersehen".

56 See, for instance, Rényi, "Auf den Spuren des "Pester Lloyd".

57 On the special edition of *Pannonia* in the cultural monthly *Odra*, see *Sonderdruck der Pannonia. Odra, Monatsschrift für Kultur, Wroclaw, Polen*, in "Pannonia", no. 1 (Spring 1979), 49–81.

58 The monthly *Uj Irás* (New Script), was published for the first time in a 22-page special edition within the 3/1979 (Autumn) issue of *Pannonia*. It received good reviews – besides notable praise for the Austrian magazine for its editorial policy – from the Hungarian weekly *Budapester Rundschau* (17 December 1979). The *Budapester Rundschau*, a 12-page political-economic-cultural weekly in the German language, provided all the news and current affairs, successes, and political and economic problems "which affect the people living between the Danube and the Thiess".

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Austrian delegation to Moscow (the previous May), led by Sebestyén and composed of the Burgenland editor Rudolf Walter Rötzer, and by a Hungarian journalist who was the head of the Budapest editorial office, Janos Nemes[59]. Such achievements were made possibly not only thanks to Sebestyén's dedication, but also to editorial offices abroad and an internationally staffed editorial committee, fundamental to continuing the work of networking in the Mitteleuropa area.

In several of the articles appearing in *Pannonia*, albeit from different viewpoints and perspectives, there is an insistence on the importance of maintaining and continuing to strengthen the special relations between Austria and Hungary, where, despite the troubled past, there was still a strong presence of Swabians, the German-speaking minority, estimated at 200,000, in the autumn of 1981[60].

The orientation towards an East-Central Europe that lay within the borders of the former Danube Monarchy was also found in other periodicals, but hardly any of them treated the subject as consistently as the magazine *Pannonia*, under its editor-in-chief Sebestyén.

The desire for 'understanding among nations' was confronted with the enormous contrasts of a still divided Europe, but this was the very reason why the journal saw itself as a means of bridging the gap. This was a challenging task indeed, but then again, Austria itself played a substantial role, almost certainly thanks to its special, international legal status, which made the Alpine country, as the author Michael Scharang put it, "the spiritual Cold Pole of Central Europe".

59 Cf. the report published in the monthly publication edited by the Cultural Office of the Soviet Embassy in Vienna, in Strachow, "Sowohl ein Kochbuch", 48.

60 Danube Swabians, or Danube Germans, is a collective term for the Germans who emigrated to the lands of the Hungarian Crown from the end of the 17th to the second half of the 19th century, settling in areas located along the middle course of the Danube in the Pannonian Plain. The settlements remained imperial crown land until the end of the 19th century, while the remaining but larger Danube Swabian settlement areas were incorporated into the Hungarian county administration. Nevertheless, after the Second World War, tens of thousands of Danube Swabians were expelled from Batschka, Slavonia, Syrmia and Banat and fled mainly to Germany and Austria, while in Hungary, half of the Hungarian Germans were expelled. The remaining Danube Swabians were marginalised, dispossessed, and, in many cases, deported to the Soviet Union. Cf. Seewann and Portmann, *Donauschwaben.* Hausleitner, *Die Donauschwaben 1868–1948.*

Pannonia hosted several political, economic, and cultural contributions, and in addition, literary or literature-related texts took up a large part of its issues. The number and importance of authors from all the East European countries was considerable; literary figures from Burgenland or other regions of Austria added to the overall picture, rather than standing in the foreground, except for Milo Dor and György Sebestyén. The promotion of foreign literature, chiefly East-Central European literature, was in a sort of shared custody with the International Pen-Club: one of its aims, as a matter of fact, was the cultural promotion of literature and bilateral and multilateral exchanges[61].

Possibly inspired by the Pen Charter – which affirmed that "literature (although national in origin) knows no frontiers and must remain common currency among people (and between nations) in spite of political or international upheavals"[62] – Sebestyén

61 This happened especially from the late 1950s onwards, when the Fund for Intellectual Freedom (FIF) was launched by the Hungarian-born British novelist, journalist, and critic, Arthur Koestler, later becoming the Fund for Exiled Writers (FEW). Organised in Germany, the U.S.A (New York), France (Paris), and of course, in England (London), the FIF, thanks to its London branch, worked with Pen in jointly promoting an important campaign for Hungarian refugees in the mid-1950s. Later, a resolution passed by a ballot during the 31st Congress in Rio (1960) led to the founding of the International Writers' Fund, under the administration of Pen (the first director was David Carver, while a small group of international writers served as honorary chairs). The Fund supported the professional development of writers worldwide, via financial support for publishing, and attendance at congresses.

62 Forged amidst the harsh realities of World War II, the Charter of Pen International was definitively approved and ratified at the 20th International Pen Congress held in Copenhagen (Denmark) on 3 June 1948. Two resolutions had been previously presented at the first Congress after WWII (1946, in Stockholm): the first urged PEN members 'to champion the ideals of one humanity living at peace in one world'; the second addressed the issue of censorship, sparking a lively debate on the wording and scope of the resolution, until the Congress in Zurich (1947), when delegates eventually came to an agreement, and the resolution became the foundation of the fourth article of the PEN Charter, entirely approved by the Assembly of Delegates at the Congress of 1948. The other three articles of the association are as follows: 2. In all circumstances, and particularly in time of war, works of art, the patrimony of humanity at large, should be left untouched by national or political passion; 3. Members of Pen should at all times use what influence they have in favour of good understanding and mutual respect between nations and people; they pledge themselves to do their utmost to dispel all hatreds and to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace and equality in one world; 4. Pen stands for the principle of unhampered transmission of thought within each nation and between all nations, and members pledge themselves to oppose any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which they belong, as well as throughout the world wherever this is possible. Pen is committed to a free press and opposes arbitrary censorship in times of peace. It believes that the necessary advance of the world towards a more highly organised political and economic order renders the

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ought to be considered a forerunner in drawing attention to the writers and authors of East-Central Europe, together with Ernst Schönwiese.

Since his election to succeed Alexander Lernet-Holenia as President of the Austrian Pen-Club on 20 December 1972[63], Schönwiese had become one of the most relevant contributors to an opening towards the Danubian countries of the Mitteleuropa area[64]. Nonetheless, at the beginning of the 1970s, a bitter dispute broke out within the inner circles of the Austrian authors and writers' Association in Vienna and Graz, when several Styrian authors tried to establish a second recognised branch of the Pen Club, an 'autonomous Pen Centre' with its own headquarters in Graz (which they saw as an antipole to the conservative headquarters in Vienna)[65]. This was an attempt on the part of these dissenters to express their diversity and the need to unite with the purpose of intervening in Austria's cultural and political events, especially in the face of the monopoly of power exercised in the official Austrian literary system by the Pen Club, which was repeatedly accused of being "a symbol of the conservative cultural establishment in this country"[66]. The attempt was unsuccessful, however, and the application to establish a second Austrian Pen club was repeatedly rejected by PEN International[67], and despite

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free criticism of governments, administrations, and institutions imperative. Moreover, since freedom implies voluntary restraint, its members pledge themselves to oppose such evils of a free press as mendacious publication, deliberate falsehood and the distortion of facts for political and personal ends. See, https://www.englishpen.org/the-pen-charter/ (viewed on 30 December 2020).

63 Founded in June 1923, the Austrian Pen-Club is the oldest authors' association in Austria. In 1938, with the annexation of the Alpine country to the German Reich, the local Pen-Club was dissolved and its assets confiscated. Re-established in 1947, thanks to the initiative of Robert Neumann, General Secretary of the Austrian Pen-Club in exile (Free Austrian Pen-Club, founded in 1939 in London), its first post-war president was Franz Theodor Csokor, until his death in 1969. His successors were: Alexander Lernet-Holenia (1969–1972), Ernst Schönwiese (1972–1978), Fritz Habeck (1978–1980), Erik G. Wickenburg (1980–1988, vice-presidents Sebestyén, Franz Richter, Hellmuth A. Niederle, Ingrid Weiser) and György Sebestyén (1988-1990).

64 "Informationen des Österreichischen Pen-Clubs", no. 1 (1973), 24. Also, see Richter, "Brücke über dem Abgrund."

65 Cf. LIT, Nachlass György Sebestyén, 120/S.109/24, fasc. *Materialsammlung PEN*.

66 "Der derzeitig österreichische Pen ein Symbol des konservativen Kulturbetriebes hierzulande ist", in *Gegen Kultur Konservatismus*, "Volksstimme", 3 November 1987.

67 The undersigned were: Ernst Jandl (Wien, President), Christine Haidegger (Salzburg, vice president), Joseph Haslinger (Wien, Vice President and General Secretary), Heimrad Bäcker (Linz, vice president), Marie-Thérèse Kerschbaumer (Wien, Vice President), Friederike

conciliatory efforts by Sebestyén and Schönwiese[68], shortly after, as a sign of protest against the policy of the Pen Club, the "separatists" (including Peter Handke, Alfred Hrdlicka and Ernst Jandl), founded the "Graz Authors' Assembly"(Grazer Autorenversammlung, February–March 1973).[69]

In addition, Sebestyén – who was later elected President of the Austrian PEN Club (1988), led the authors and writers' association on a new course, albeit for a short time (he died two years later after a long illness that had not, however, prevented him from working), creating a cultural network open to new trends, which he gradually expanded to include publishers, painters, photographers, and theatre actors – revealing himself to be a tireless cultural entrepreneur. Indeed, Sebestyén worked simultaneously on several fronts, in order to give transversality to his ever-widening network of contacts: these ranged from frequent collaborations with the Viennese Catholic weekly 'Die Furche'[70],

Mayröcker (Wien), Elfriede Gersti (Wien), Gerhard Rühm (Wien–Köln), Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler (Wien), Friedrich Achleitner (Wien), Peter Handke (Wien), Peter Turrini (Wien), Barbara Frischmuth (Wien), Leo Navratil (Klosterneuburg), Michael Sharang (Wien), Alfred Kolleritsch (Graz), Wolfgang Bauer (Gratz), Erich Fried (Wien-London), Robert Jungk (Salzburg), Hans Hollein (Wien), Klaus Hoffer (Graz), Ernst Borneman (Scharten, OÖ), Franz Innerhofer (Graz), Elfriede Jelinek (Wien), Helmut Qualtinger (Wien), Alfred Hrdlicka (Wien). *Letter from Graz Convention of Authors to Francis King* (International Pen Committee in London), 4 April 1986, in LIT, Nachlass György Sebestyén, 120/S.109/24, fasc. *Materialsammlung PEN*, pp.1–4. Also, see Roland Innerhofer, *Die Grazer Autorenversammlung (1973–1983). Zur Organisation einer "Avantgarde"*, Böhlau, Wien–Köln–Graz 1985.

68 On the internal debate within the Austrian Pen club and the efforts to mediate the dispute, see Sebestyén, *Studien zur Literatur*, 136.

69 The split, caused by the Viennese literary avant-garde (originating from the so-called 'Vienna Group'), was encouraged by the following authors (founding members of the new association): Friedrich Achleitner, Hans Carl Artmann, Christian Ludwig Attersee, Josef Bauer, Wolfgang Bauer, Heimrad Bäcker, Joe Berger, Gerald Bisinger, Otto Breicha, Günter Brus, Franz Buchrieser, Helmut Eisendle, Gustav Ernst, Valie Export, Gunter Falk, Barbara Frischmuth, Elfriede Gerstl, Friedrich Geyrhofer, Reinhard P. Gruber, Franz Haderer, Peter Handke, Wilhelm Hengstler, Fritz Herrmann, Klaus Hoffer, Ernst Jandl, Gert Jonke, Kurt Kalb, Franz Kaltenbeck, Alfred Kolleritsch, Peter Kraml, Wolfgang Kudrnofsky, Hubert Fabian Kulterer, Fritz Lichtenauer, Anestis Logothetis, Peter Matejka, Friederike Mayröcker, Otto Mühl, Günther Nenning, Hermann Nitsch, Heidi Pataki, Cora Pongracz, Reinhard Priessnitz, Peter Rosei, Gerhard Roth, Gerhard Rühm, Michael Scharang, Hans Scheugl, Alfred Schmeller, Ernst Schmidt jr., Waltraud Seidlhofer, Harald Sommer, Michael Springer, Dominik Steiger, Peter Vujica, Peter Weibel, Peter Weiermair, Oswald Wiener, Helmut Zenker. For a comprehensive overview of the 'Vienna Group', see Schmatz, "Viennese Actionism and the Vienna Group", 59–60, and 69–73.

70 On this collaboration by the multifaceted author, see the heartfelt commemoration: Deutsch,

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to activity with the socialist mayor of Vienna, Helmut Zilk; from the governors of Lower Austria Andreas Mauer and Siegfried Ludwig, of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), to the 'strong man' of Burgenland, Alfred Sinowatz (minister and later Chancellor), and his party's companion and governor of the region, Theodor Keri (SPÖ).

It should be stressed, then, that the Hungarian-born Austrian journalist was successful in implementing Article 2 of 'Pen International Rules', which, in paragraph 1, reads: "Pen Centres shall consist of those professional writers, duly elected to membership, who aim at promoting friendly cooperation between writers in every country in the interests of literature, freedom of expression and international good-will"[71].

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"Von unendlicher Neugier". "He has written dozens of books, screenplays, countless forewords and epilogues, magazine and newspaper essays, he has worked as a critic and commentator, dramaturge, translator and editor, he has worked as an editor and director. He brought "Pannonia" and "Morgen" to life. This European from Austria, this Austrian from Hungary, who perhaps had to run for his life in 1956, but certainly had to run for the freedom of his thinking, not only worked tirelessly before this term existed as a sign of quality, but above all he linked it with his own work".

71 LIT, Nachlass György Sebestyén, 120/S/109/24, fasc. Materialsammlung PEN (International Pen, International Rules, March 1950).

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Pod praporem leninismu
k novým vítězstvím v boji za mír a soci

Prague, Wenceslas Square (Václavské námestí), Marchers in front of the Tribune on 1 May 1956 - Fortepan / Bauer Sándor

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The role of Czechoslovakia in the Revolution of 1956 and in the consolidation of the Kádár regime

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Abstract

Czechoslovakia's attitude to the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 is a little-known story. Papers published in the past three decades have presented only the reaction of the Czechoslovakian and Slovakian political leaders.

This study promises more than that. It is the first attempt to present, in a complex way, not only the documents of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) and Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS), but also the documents of the Czechoslovak People's Army, the Interior Ministry and the economic documents, in order to show how Czechoslovakia reacted to the Hungarian Revolution and how it helped the Hungarian government headed by János Kádár, which was formed after the suppression of the Revolution, in the process of consolidation.

This study provides a synthesis of thousands of pages documents from the archives of Prague and Bratislava relating to the events of the Hungarian Revolution.

Keywords

Hungarian revolution of 1956, Hungarian-Czechoslovakian relations, Soviet Union, communism, Kádár regime, economic relations, Cold war

Miklós Mitrovits

The role of Czechoslovakia in the Revolution of 1956 and in the consolidation of the Kádár regime

The international context of the revolution of 1956 is rather well known. Historians have been particularly interested in the behaviour of the Soviet Union, especially the decision-making process within the Kremlin.[1] Some attention has also been paid to the reactions of other neighbouring countries to the uprising. Hungarian–Yugoslavian and Hungarian–Romanian relations have engaged the attention of researchers since these two countries played an active role in developments in Hungary.[2] However, Hungarian–Czechoslovakian relations have not received as much attention. To address this lack, this paper benefits from some recent publications that are especially valuable due to their focus on primary sources.[3] The studies that are available mainly discuss the impact

1 See the Hungarian translation of the most important Soviet sources: Gál, Hegedüs B., Litván, and Rainer M., eds., *A „Jelcin-dosszié."*, Szereda and Sztikalin, eds., *Hiányzó lapok*. Hegedűs B., Kende, Litván, Rainer M. and S. Varga, eds. *Döntés a Kremlben*. In English, see Békés, Malcolm Byrne and M. Rainer, *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution*.

2 The most relevant collections of documents about Hungarian–Yugoslavian and Hungarian–Romanian relations in 1956–1958 were published in Hungarian, see: Ormos, Vida, Kiss and Ripp, eds., *Magyar–jugoszláv kapcsolatok*., Méliusz, ed., *Magyar–román kapcsolatok*, Nagy, *Snagovi jegyzetek*. Key literature on Hungarian–Romanian relationships in 1956 and afterwards: Tismaneanu, Stalinism for all Seasons., Bottoni, *Stalin's Legacy in Romania*.

3 The most widely read account of the events of the year 1956 in Czechoslovakia is: Blaive, *Promarněná příležitost*. However, this primarily talks of domestic affairs and says little about the ways the KSČ responded to the Hungarian revolution. An even more recent study is: Simon and Michálek et al. *Revolúcia v susedstve.* Also, in Hungarian language, Simon ed., *Az 1956-os forradalom visszhangja Csehszlovákiában*. For more on the echo of the revolution of 1956 in Czechoslovakia see: Janek, *"Czechoslovakia and the Hungarian Revolution in 1956"* Bencsik, "Csehszlovákia és Magyarország 1956-ban." Tůma, "The Impact of the Hungarian Revolution on Czechoslovakia, 1956–1968". On the reactions within

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of the revolution on Czechoslovak politics and society, especially on the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. It is not common knowledge that Czechoslovak politics had a profound impact on how Hungarian politics unfolded. Having analysed Czech and Slovak archival material, one may conclude that Czechoslovakia – after the Soviet Union – played a central role in stabilizing János Kádár's regime. The assistance it provided in the domains of politics, the economy and internal investigation significantly contributed to the restoration of "socialist order" and to establishing the new outline of politics in Hungary.

This paper takes a complex approach and in addition to presenting the way the revolution affected the Czechoslovakian political leadership it also analyses their response and the outcome of the measures they took.[4] Both the events of 1956 and the subsequent emergence of the Kádár regime were transnational historical processes in the East-Central-European region.

Preventing a revolution: the countermeasures of the KSČ

Czechoslovakia differed from the other East Central European Stalinist-type state socialist states in many ways. Two factors need to be highlighted that had a bearing on the events discussed here. First, it is necessary to recognize the importance of the fact that Klement Gottwald, the Stalinist leader, had died in 1953, shortly after Stalin. The second factor was the *c*omparatively better economic conditions of the country.

1) The party got rid of its Stalinist leader, Gottwald, with his natural death. The other leading Stalinist figure, Rudolf Slánský, was executed during Gottwald's rule. It is important to add that the newly elected leaders – Antonín Novotný, who became the first secretary of the party, Viliam Široký who was elected prime minister, and Antonín Zápotocký who was appointed to be the head of state – had already occupied key positions in the Gottwald regime. Thus, at first, they tried to emphasize signs of transformation. The separation of these posts was a necessity, but this decision pushed

the Slovak party leadership see: Pešek, "Maďarské udalosti roku 1956 a Slovensko"; Kiss, "1956 ősze Szlovákiában", Marušiak, "Az 1956-os magyar forradalom és Szlovákia".

4 Here I would like to express my special thanks to Péter Bencsik. Between 2015 and 2018 we conducted joint research in Czech and Slovak archives, and as a result of this work we published more than 300 documents in Hungarian translation, see: Bencsik and Mitrovits eds., *„A Szovjetunióval örök időkre és soha máshogy!"*

the leadership towards taking collective decisions in place of the much-criticized cult of a single leader. Criticism of Gottwald did not begin right away, and there was even an attempt to construct a cult of personality for him with quasi "religious" devotion. However, in February 1956, when Nikita Khrushchev launched his campaign against the cult of Stalin, the Czechoslovak leaders were able to claim that they had already established a collective leadership immediately after Stalin's death. At the same time, they did not intend to take De-Stalinization further (such as by admitting the Stalinist crimes and rehabilitating its victims) since most of them had been personally involved in the terror of the previous years. Therefore, when De-Stalinization appeared on the agenda in 1956, they blamed everything on Gottwald and Slánský.

2) The better economic conditions and higher standards of living compared to other state socialist countries were also superficial phenomena. However, the growing social tensions only sparked protest demonstrations when the leadership announced a "monetary reform". In reality, this reform involved nationalizing the savings held by individual households. The reaction of Czechoslovak society was straightforward. There were protests in hundreds of settlements, including Plzeň. The party leadership put these uprisings down violently, employing units of the Ministry of the Interior and the military to supress them. They also drew conclusions about this popular reaction. They declared that the policies of a "new phase" would be launched and introduced measures to improve standards of living in subsequent years.[5] The impact of the latter could already be felt in 1954, during the 10th congress of the KSČ. So much so that the leadership decided to halt the "new stage" and was returning to previous policies.

Despite the two factors mentioned above, Czechoslovakian leadership, just like their Polish, Hungarian, East German or Bulgarian counterparts, were also concerned about various manifestations of social unrest and tried to prevent them. The workers' unrest of 1953 was a recent memory both in Czechoslovakia and in the German Democratic Republic (DDR). Moreover, decisions taken at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (KPSS) and the secret speeches that Nikita Khrushchev delivered about Stalin's sins had begun to mobilize the societies of East Central European countries.

5 Mitrovits, "The First Phase of De-Stalinization," 188.

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In February 1956, members of the delegation of the KSČ were confident when they arrived at the 20th Congress of the KPSS. Only a few weeks had passed since the first meeting (27–28 January) of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact had been held in Prague. However, Novotný received signals that made him rewrite his speech that would have included a section on the greatness of Stalin which the KSČ Political Bureau (PB) had approved of. Instead, he chose to spoke about the efficiency of collective leadership.[6]

The KSČ quickly adapted to the new situation and made use of the opportunity that the modified leadership structure created. By August, they had managed to stabilize their situation and kept voices of dissent under control. In April some writers had voiced dissent, while in May, university students spoke up and sometimes protested openly, but none of these groups managed to win the support of wide sections of Czechoslovak society, unlike in Poland and in Hungary, in the second half of the year. The country's leadership responded by expressing moderate self-criticism then attacked the initiatives that came from below. Fabricated court cases from the Stalinist era were not reviewed, and rehabilitation of political opponents was unthinkable. Moreover, the leadership blamed Slánský as the mastermind of the terror even though he himself fell victim to a show trial. While in Hungary, one of the most notable victims of the show trials, László Rajk, was rehabilitated and received a proper and public second funeral, this could not have happened in Czechoslovakia in the same period. The KSČ could afford to take such an approach because there was no charismatic personality, like Władysław Gomułka in Poland or Imre Nagy in Hungary, behind whom internal opposition could have rallied.[7]

The KSČ leadership called a party conference instead of a congress for the summer of 1956. It was an achievement in itself that the leadership managed to refuse demands for an extraordinary congress to which local party organizations could have elected representatives. Importantly, it was the right of district level party organizations to appoint the delegates that would take part in the national party meeting. The leadership argued that there was no need to change the policies that the party had been following

6 See the draft of Novotný's planned speech in National Archives (Národní Archiv) of the Czech Republic (hereafter NA), fond (f.) 1261/0/11, svazek (sv.) 83. archivní jednotka (aj.) 101/8. See Novotný's actual speech in Rudé právo (Prague), 17 February 1956.; More details see: Pernes, *Krize komunistického režimu*. 128–172.

7 For more details of the political events in Czechoslovakia see: Matthews, *Majales*., and McDermott and Sommer, *The 'Club of Politically Engaged Conformists'?*

until then, as the collective leadership was able to solve the problems that had arisen, thus, there was no need to hold a congress. Accordingly, the first speakers at the conference claimed that the congress of 1954 had taken the right direction. Eventually, the meeting introduced some measures of decentralization but the Plzen decrees issued by the leadership ordering decrease of prices in the shops more than once before the end of the year proved to be more important.[8]

The political line that the KSČ followed differed from that the approach which the Polish and the Hungarian communist parties adopted in several aspects. In Hungary, the political struggle between Imre Nagy and Mátyás Rákosi caused swings between De-Stalinization and Re-Stalinization. The events of 23 October 1956 thus released social tensions that had built up for some time. By October 1956, when political change began in Poland and the revolution started in Hungary, the Czechoslovakian party leadership had consolidated its position and attempted to take advantage of the unclear conditions in neighbouring countries to showcase the success of its own policies and to gain support by playing on the fears of the public.

The KSČ and the Hungarian revolution

Despite all its efforts to prevent social unrest, the leadership of KSČ could not be certain that Czechoslovakian society would not swing into action due to impulses that might cross the border. It was not only the workers' uprising in Poznań that were a source of concern. Groups of intellectuals and media channels such as the Petőfi Circle in Hungary and the newspaper *Po Prostu* in Poland) kept intellectuals in a state of fermentation and the influence of these movements permeated into the society at large in Hungary and Poland. Hence, it is not surprising that the leadership of KSČ closely followed the developments in neighbouring countries and tried to prevent these from influencing the domestic situation.

The leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia observed the events in the Hungarian People's Republic (MNK) with apprehension and exceptional interest from the very beginning. On 24 October, KSČ General Secretary Antonín Novotný accepted an invitation from the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,

8 Zápotocký's speech in NA, f. 1481/0/3, sv. 4., aj. 38.; Novotný's speech in NA, f. 1261/0/43, inv. č. 100., ka 67., and NA, f. 1481/0/3, sv. 4., aj. 39.

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Nikita Khrushchev, to visit Moscow, where he attended a meeting of the Presidium of the KPSS Central Committee and was therefore able to gain first-hand background information regarding the initial Soviet military intervention in Hungary the previous day. KPSS officials had originally invited Novotný and other leaders of the socialist camp to Moscow in order to discuss the changes that had taken place within the leadership of the Polish United Workers' Party, although the situation in Warsaw had stabilized in the meantime and the uprising that had begun in Hungary on 23 October thus became the main item on the agenda of the meeting.

With General Secretary Novotný away in Moscow, President Antonín Zápotocký chaired a session of the Political Bureau of the KSČ Central Committee, during which Interior Minister Rudolf Barák presented a report[9] on the situation in Hungary and those in attendance held a brief round of deliberations. Zápotocký declared during this convocation of the PB in Prague that "the situation is serious—our positions have weakened." The Czechoslovak head of state furthermore emphasized that public opinion must be informed and that the KSČ must strengthen its connection to the masses. Zdeněk Fierlinger expressed support for Zápotocký's views, while Viliam Široký and Jaromír Dolanský strongly criticized the leadership of the Hungarian Working People's Party (MDP) and issued anxious assessments of the situation. Nearly all of the KSČ Political Bureau members present at the meeting expressed their unease. Fierlinger asserted that the events in Hungary would entail unpleasant consequences, although he added that "we will see if they weaken us or not. Maybe this will strengthen agreement [within the socialist camp], assuming that we overcome the difficulties. [...] We will see the degree to which the new regime is capable of overcoming the difficulties and containing reaction." PB members agreed that they must establish contact with the Polish and Hungarian leaders and work closely with the KPSS because they could achieve nothing without Soviet assistance.[10]

9 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 120, a.j. 147/zápis.

10 We could not find documentation regarding the deliberations that took place during this meeting of the KSČ Political Bureau. However, they are quoted in the following book: *Kaplan, Kronika komunistického Československa,* 440–441. One should note that the latter book erroneously states that KSČ General Secretary Novotný and Interior Minister Barák presented an oral account of the events in Hungary at a PB meeting on 23 October. This meeting actually took place on 26 October. Also on the latter date, Barák ordered all Interior Ministry sections to place themselves in a state of full alert by 28 October. Kaplan's book otherwise contains exceptionally valuable source materials regarding the period from 1953–1956.

During this session of the KSČ Political Bureau, the PB endorsed an order issued by Interior Minister Barák (order no. 108/1956) commanding all Interior Ministry entities to put themselves in a state of readiness and to exhibit "unity of action and the highest degree of vigilance." This order specified a 50-percent state of readiness for both the police and other armed security detachments in the Slovak regions.[11] The PB also adopted a resolution calling for the body to provide the KSČ with information regarding the events in Hungary and to draw attention to the party's proper political course.[12]

One hour after the beginning of the KSČ PB meeting in Prague, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS) convened in Bratislava and in accord with the resolution of the national party composed a telegram informing the regional and district committees of the KSS of the events taking place in Hungary. The KSS Political Bureau also prohibited the distribution in Slovakia of newspapers and periodicals published in Hungary[13] and ordered that the People's Militias be placed on high alert.

The thinking of Czechoslovak leaders regarding the events in Hungary had already begun to take a definite shape by 24 October. The KSČ Political Bureau declared in a resolution that party policy had been correct because it had never diverged from the political course adopted at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and had steadfastly maintained the unity of the party and the working class and the close connection between the party and the people. Moreover, KSČ policy strove to continually increase the standard of living in the country, to fortify and develop people's democracy, strengthen its friendship with the Soviet Union, mobilize the masses and improve the productivity of the centrally planned economy. According to the KSČ

11 Tajný rozkaz ministra vnitra, ročník 1956, číslo 105 in Security Service Archive (Archiv bezpečnostních složek) Prague (hereafter ABS), A6/3-1047, Sign.: TRMV-105/1956.

12 Informing the masses was naturally to the task of the party and the secretaries of the regional and district committees. On 24 October, 1956, neither Rudé právo, the official newspaper of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, nor Új Szó, the Hungarian-language newspaper of the Communist Party of Slovakia, carried any information about the events taking place in Hungary. The first news of the uprising appeared on 25 October, when newspapers reported that "counterrevolutionary forces" had launched an unsuccessful putsch.

13 Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Október, rok. 1956, k. 932. in Slovak National Archives (Slovenský národný archív), Bratislava (hereafter SNA). The Secretariat of the Communist Party of Slovakia had already decided on 19 October, 1956, to subject the distribution in Slovakia of newspapers and periodicals published in Hungary to prior approval from party press authorities. SNA, Sekretariát ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok 1956, k. 143.

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resolution, should the party fail to clearly define this political course it would lead to internal power struggles and as in Hungary provide counterrevolutionary forces with the opportunity to organize a putsch aimed at removing the country from the socialist camp. However, some Czechoslovak leaders expressed optimism at this time. Interior Minister Rudolf Barák, for example, declared in his previously mentioned secret order that "the attempt of the imperialists to provoke upheaval is destined to fail."

On the same day, the commander of the Second Military District (Slovakia and some territories in Moravia), Colonel Václav Vitanovský, who also served as the head of the ČSLA general staff operational department, flew to Bratislava in order to inspect the situation along the Czechoslovak–Hungarian border. The next day, the National Defence Minister, General Bohumír Lomský ordered that "units of the army and units belonging to the Interior Ministry be placed in a state of readiness in accordance with orders aimed at maintaining calm and order and the security of the state borders."[14]

The General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Antonín Novotný returned to Prague from Moscow early in the morning of 25 October. Later on that same day, Novotný presented the results of his talks in Moscow to the KSČ Political Bureau. He told the PB that the KPSS's General Secretary, Khrushchev had essentially confirmed the assessment of the KSČ that events similar to those taking place in Hungary could be avoided through the continual increase in living standards: "They won't listen to malignant voices if their bellies are full." The party general secretary noted with satisfaction that Khrushchev had cited Czechoslovakia (ČSR) as a positive example.[15]

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia leaders also took every possible measure to prevent even the slightest disturbance from taking place in the country. They placed particular emphasis on forestalling possible agitation on the impending anniversary of the foundation of the Czechoslovak state on 28 October, 1918, an interwar-period red-letter holiday on which communist security services had always prepared for possible mass demonstrations. The commanding officer in charge of public security placed Interior Ministry Directorate VII on full alert beginning at 1 p.m. on 26 October and ordered that 75 percent of its personnel patrol the streets of Prague from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. until further notice.[16] On this same date, Interior Minister Barák issued secret order no.

14 Military History Archive (Vojenský historický archive), Prague (Hereafter VHA Praha), MNO 1956, k. 465, sg. 2/8.

15 NA, f. 1261/0/44, ka. 133, inv. č. 305. sign. 124.

16 ABS, Rozkaz náčelníka VII. správy MV, ročník 1956, číslo 25, H-669-3.

110/1956 stating that "even the smallest provocation among reactionary elements under the influence of the events in Hungary must be prevented." Barák therefore ordered all Interior Ministry units to go on full alert from 1 p.m. on 27 October to 10 p.m. on 28 October.[17] Later on 27 October, the KSČ Political Bureau adopted a resolution containing this order.[18] Also on that day, Barák issued secret order no. 112/1956 instructing all Interior Ministry units to maintain access to sufficient arms and ammunition and for all members of these units to carry the prescribed amount of ammunition for their service weapons.[19]

At the same time similar measures were taken not only in the Interior Ministry but also in the army. On 26 October, the Chief of Staff of Czechoslovak People's Army, Colonel General Václav Kratochvíl described the measures that had been taken in the Second Military District during a meeting with the Minister of National Defence, Bohumir Lomský and members of his advisory council.[20] Colonel General Kratochvíl stated that the 560-kilometer southern border of Slovakia had been divided into six sectors. Kratochvíl reported that the 30-kilometer section of the border on the right bank of the river Danube around the Bratislava bridgehead had received the greatest reinforcement – 1,022 ČSLA and Interior Ministry troops operating under the authority of the commander of the 4th Infantry Division, with 24 tanks, four 76mm guns and three self-propelled guns.[21]

On 29 October, Czechoslovak People's Army Colonel General Kratochvíl and Lieutenant General Jaroslav Dočkal, who served as the head of the ČSLA operational directorate, issued a report warning that "counterrevolutionary forces" may attempt to incite insurrection in Czechoslovakia:

17 ABS, Tajný rozkaz ministra vnitra, ročník 1956, číslo 107, A6/3-1049, Sign.: TRMV-107/1967.

18 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 119, a.j. 146/4.

19 ABS, Tajný rozkaz ministra vnitra, ročník 1956, číslo 109, A6/3-1051, Sign.: TRMV-109/1956.

20 VHA Praha, MNO – sekretariát ministra 1956, k. 3. Sign.: 1/10.

21 The decision to concentrate ČSLA forces around the Bratislava bridgehead was based on the need to defend the most important city in Slovakia as well as on the fact that a large group of Hungarian insurgents had attacked Czechoslovak border guards near Mosonmagyaróvár on 26 October. VHA Praha, MNO 1956, k. 476. sg. 001474.

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The possibility that counterrevolutionary forces will attempt to infiltrate our territory and spread the uprising to Slovak regions cannot be excluded. It is also possible that counterrevolutionary groups will be driven onto our territories in the process of their liquidation. In this case, the enacted measures will not be sufficient.[22]

One of the members of Minister of National Defence Bohumír Lomský's advisory council declared during an extraordinary meeting on 29 October that "voices supporting territorial demands vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia have begun to surface among the insurgents." Nevertheless, Lomský rejected the idea of ordering a partial mobilization because "this would arouse the sentiment that we are mobilizing against the Hungarian People's Republic."[23]

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia did not adopt an official position towards the government led by Prime Minister Imre Nagy that had come to power in Hungary on 24 October, although it explicitly qualified the events taking place on the streets of Budapest as a *counterrevolution*. As early as 24 October, directives approved at a session of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Slovakia Central Committee referred to "counterrevolutionary bands," "counterrevolutionary elements" and "counterrevolutionary speech." While the contents of a report that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau adopted on this same date are unknown, one may presume that the KSČ PB articulated many of the same ideas regarding the uprising in Hungary in this document as the Slovak branch of the party did in its directives. Articles published in Czechoslovak newspapers on 25 October referred to the events in Hungary as an attempted "counterrevolutionary putsch" in accordance with the established positions of the KSČ and KSS. On 26 October, the commanding officer in charge of public security in Prague issued an order that characterized the Hungarian uprising as a "counterrevolution."

The Czechoslovak communist interpretation of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution greatly magnified and exaggerated the extremely marginal role that fascist elements and members of the Horthy-era political élite had played in the uprising. KSČ and KSS rethoric regarding the revolution referred repeatedly to "reactionary elements," "belligerent rogues," "counts," "émigrés," "Horthyite-fascist officers" "landowners," "capitalist exploiters," "old failed parties," "complete anarchy," "tumult," "street demonstrations," "bloodshed," and "the merciless depredations of [private] property." Czechoslovak par-

22 VHA Praha, MNO 1956, k. 476. sg. 001474.

23 VHA Praha, MNO – sekretariát ministra 1956, k. 3. Sign.: 1/10.

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ty officials concluded that the establishment of a "fascist dictatorship" via the "counter-revolution" in Hungary would result in the reemergence of territorial revisionism in the country. This notion was to form one of the primary elements of official Czechoslovak propaganda.[24] It is important to note that there was no political program or even slogans during the protest demonstrations of 23 October 1956 or later that called for reconstituting the pre-war regime. That is, the return of the Horthy-regime was not on the agenda of the revolutionaries.[25] The political program of the revolution was essentially a leftist one (as it was founded on the idea of workers' self-governance) and, due to the Soviet intervention, it was also a movement for independence. The purpose of the Czechoslovakian propaganda was to incite fear among Czechs and Slovaks. Presenting the situation in Hungary to the Czechoslovak public as it actually was would not have produced the desired outcome for the regime. The leaders of the KSČ calculated that Czech and Slovak society despises the pre-World War II Hungarian regime and if they project the revolution as a revisionist project they would win over the support of society.

On 2 November 1956, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia's General Secretary, Antonín Novotný and the ČSR Prime Minister Viliam Široký met in Bucharest with the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Nikita Khrushchev, [26] who informed them that the Presidium of the KPSS Central Committee had decided to intervene militarily in Hungary. After returning to Prague later that same day, Novotný immediately convened a meeting of the KSČ Political Bureau at which he and Široký notified the PB members that the Soviet Union was preparing to suppress the "counter-revolution" in Hungary by force. The members of the Political Bureau agreed that "they [the Soviets] should take all necessary measures in order to preserve the people's democratic system in Hungary; in case of need, [the KSČ PB] will not only sanction these measures, but will actively participate in their implementation as well."[27]

24 The ethno-nationalist interpretation of the events of 1956 was also dominant in Romania. Both regimes gave this as reason for the repressive measures against the Hungarian minority.

25 The sole exception was the speech by Cardinal József Mindszenty demanding the restitution of large estates. However, Mindszenty did not actually influence the way the revolution unfolded.

26 Czech and Slovak academic literature often erroneously states that this meeting took place in Moscow. See Bílek and Pilát, "Bezprostřední reakce československých politických," 502, and Marušiak, "Az 1956-os magyar forradalom és Szlovákia," 67.

27 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 120, a.j. 151/1.

A day after the KSČ's leaders learned that the Soviets were preparing to intervene militarily in Hungary, ČSLA Chief of Staff Václav Kratochvíl issued order no. 1 calling for the deployment of military units to defensive border positions located in the Second Military District. Colonel General Kratochvíl's order signalled the beginning of the redeployment of ČSLA forces in the district and their reinforcement through the call-up of 15,000 Czech and Slovak reservists over the following four days.[28] This fortification of the Hungarian-Slovak border in fact represented one aspect of the first coordinated military operation based on the 1955 Warsaw Pact: along with the reinforcement of Romanian People's Army units stationed along the Hungarian-Romanian frontier, it was designed to prevent "counterrevolutionaries" from crossing into neighbouring Eastern Bloc states during the Soviet invasion of Hungary.[29]

On 3 November, ČSR President Antonín Zápotocký delivered a radio address during which he naturally made no reference to the impending Soviet military intervention in Hungary, although for the first time he employed certain rhetorical devices that came to constitute a completely independent narrative about the events that were taking place south of the border. Zápotocký declared at the very beginning of his speech that "The counterrevolution raging in neighbouring Hungary over the past few days has instigated fascist white terror against the working people." The president of Czechoslovakia then identified the instigators of the "counterrevolution" in Hungary:

> Reactionary elements, belligerent rogues, counts, fascists and various other émigrés who fled from Hungary in 1945 in order to escape the Soviet army and later on in order to elude the wrath of the people are slowly sneaking back into the country from the West. Horthyite-fascist officers have begun to make noise within the army.[30]

The first rhetorical element of President Zápotocký's address that subsequently became a fundamental component of KSČ and KSS propaganda about the 1956 Hungarian Revolution was its portrayal of the "working people" as the passive victims of "white terror." Party officials consciously omitted any reference to the role that workers had played in the revolution, particularly their participation in the spontaneously formed

28 Bílek, Dufek, Fidler, Pilát, Selner and Šlosar, eds., *Vojenská a další opatření Československa*. 86–89.

29 Bílek and Pilát, "Bezprostřední reakce československých politických a vojenských organů na povstání v Maďarsku," 507–508. See more: Michálek and Štefanský, *The Age of Fear*. 259–262.

30 NA, f. 1261/0/35, sv. 34. a.j. 1023. Új Szó (Bratislava), 5 November 1956.

workers' councils that had helped put an end to the Hungarian Working People's Party monopoly on power in Hungary. The second element of Zápotocký's speech that became an essential component of Czechoslovak party propaganda regarding the revolution was its depiction of former members of the Horthy régime who had returned to Hungary from exile, that is, fascists who had fled to the West following the Second World War, as the leaders of the uprising. The purpose of such propaganda was to arouse fear among Czechoslovak citizens – many of whom maintained vivid memories of interwar Hungarian revisionism, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in the years 1938–1939 and Regent Miklós Horthy's entry into the city of Kassa/Košice on horseback following the annexation of southern Slovakia by Hungary via the First Vienna Award in November of 1938 – in order to increase their support for KSČ policies.[31]

On 4 November, the defence minister's advisory council formulated the following policy statement during another extraordinary meeting:

> As long as Hungarian units do not cross the frontier, Interior Ministry organizations will be responsible for border security working in the closest possible cooperation with units of the army. The moment the state borders are transgressed, the commanders of the divisions and regiments will assume control and responsibility in their own zones.

Moreover, this policy called for "opening fire" on Hungarian aircraft that entered Czechoslovak airspace if they did not respond to warnings.

Four Soviet generals participated in this meeting during which they transmitted a request by the USSR's Minister of Defence, Marshal Georgy Zhukov that the ČSLA lend the Soviet army ammunition for 100mm anti-tank guns and 122mm howitzers and an additional 10 tons of fragmentation ammunition.[32] Also on 4 November, the Czechoslovak Minister of National Defence, Lomský ordered that ČSLA units stationed in the Second Military District be placed at a 50-percent state of readiness.

31 See David's speech to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, Rudé právo (Prague), 7 November 1956; Rudolf Barák' speech at the mass meeting in Brno, 7 November 1956. ABS, A2/1-1979; Viliam Široký's speech at the mass meeting in Prauge, Rudé právo (Prague), 8 November 1956; Viliam Široký's speech at the National Assembly, Rudé právo (Prague), 2 December 1956.

32 VHA Praha, MNO – sekretariát ministra 1956, k. 3. Sign.: 1/10. (see: 97. dok.); and VHA Praha, MNO 1956, k. 476. sg. 001474.

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The KSS assisting the propaganda of the Kádár regime

The situation that developed in Hungary as a result of the revolution presented the Communist Party of Slovakia, specifically its General Secretary, Karol Bacílek, with the most significant challenge it had ever faced. This challenge stemmed partially from the fact that the "opposition faction" of the Slovak intelligentsia that had coalesced around the Union of Slovak Writers weekly *Kultúrny život*—specifically the periodical's chief editor Juraj Špitzer, former KSS Central Committee Political Bureau member Ondrej Pavlík, writers' union secretary Ctibor Štítnický and poet Ivan Kupec, some of whom were regarded as the "Slovak Imre Nagy"—had refused to accept all of the resolutions that the KSČ had adopted at its summer 1956 party conference and continued to demand the rehabilitation of the victims of the Stalinist purge such as Vladimír Clementis, Gustáv Husák and the associates of the latter. By the autumn of 1956, the KSS leadership had sensed the prevailing mood and planned to put an end to this opposition. The General Secretary of the KSS, Bacílek, who was also a member of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau, therefore convened a meeting of the KSS PB on 18 October and in the presence of KSČ General Secretary Novotný called for a campaign against improper viewpoints. The KSS Political Bureau then adopted a resolution stipulating that Juraj Špitzer be dismissed as editor-in-chief of *Kultúrny život*.[33]

The KSS leadership also feared that revolutionary attitudes could spread into Czechoslovakia from Hungary as a result of the ease with which the border between the two countries could be crossed, the large number of Hungarians living in Slovakia and the distribution in the ČSR of newspapers and periodicals published in Hungary. Before the October uprising, between 3.5 million and 4 million copies of 220 such newspapers and periodicals were distributed in Czechoslovakia.[34] Readers could either subscribe to these publications or purchase them at newsstands and post offices. KSS leaders were particularly concerned about the content published in the Hungarian Writers' Union weekly *Irodalmi Újság* and, later on, the Hungarian Working People's Party daily news-

33 Following the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the consolidation of the post-revolution Kádár régime in Hungary, the Communist Party of Slovakia Political Bureau decided in April 1957 not to dismiss Špitzer from his post as chief editor of Kultúrny život after all. Cf. Marušiak, "Slovakia and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution," 95.

34 Cf. SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933; and SNA, Sekretariát ÚV KSS, rok 1956, k. 154.

paper *Szabad Nép*. On 19 October, 1956, the Communist Party of Slovakia Political Bureau therefore decided to make the distribution of newspapers and periodicals published in Hungary contingent upon authorization from the party press authority, which "will not permit inappropriate things to appear," and furthermore prohibited the dissemination of that day's issue of *Szabad Nép*.[35] On 23 October, the press authority again banned the distribution of that day's issue of *Szabad Nép* in Czechoslovakia—this time because the MDP daily had published an unabridged translation of the speech that Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) General Secretary Władysław Gomułka had delivered to the Eighth Plenary Session of the PZPR Central Committee a few days previously. On 24 October, the KSS Political Bureau prohibited the further distribution of newspapers and periodicals from Hungary.[36]

As a result of this measure, the availability of the Hungarian press in Czechoslovakia was limited to a few periodicals dealing with technology, science and art that were obtainable exclusively at the Orbis Publishing House's foreign press shop in Bratislava. Orbis provided only a few prominent subscribers with a very limited number of Hungarian political dailies and weeklies—e.g., 47 copies of the daily newspaper *Népszabadság* that was founded in November 1956, 24 copies of the literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom* launched in May 1957 and 12 copies of *Népakarat*, the temporary successor of the trade-union newspaper *Népszava*. It was only much later, on 19 June, 1957, that the KSS Political Bureau decided to ease these restrictions.[37]

On 16 November, 1956, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Slovakia decided to compensate for the drastic restriction of access to the press published in Hungary by authorizing the launch by the Cultural Association of Hungarian Workers of Czechoslovakia (CSEMADOK) of a new Hungarian-language weekly entitled *A Hét* with a circulation of 11,000 copies.[38] In addition to permitting CSEMADOK to publish this 24-page cultural journal, the KSS PB increased the circulation of the following Hungarian-language periodicals: the daily newspaper *Új Szó* from 50,000 copies to 70,000 copies; the women's biweekly magazine *Dolgozó Nő* from 15,000 copies to

35 SNA, Sekretariát ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok 1956, k. 143.

36 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Október, rok. 1956, k. 932.

37 See 36. dok.

38 Former Új Szó editor Viktor Egri was appointed to serve as editor-in-chief of this new weekly. SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, December, rok. 1956, k. 934.

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19,000 copies; the agricultural weekly *Szabad Földműves* from 13,000 copies to 17,000 copies; and the youth weekly *Új Ifjúság* from 6,000 copies to 10,000 copies.[39]

However, the KSS leadership not only prevented the Hungarians of Slovakia from obtaining newspapers and periodicals published in Hungary and provided them with publications that disseminated "correct viewpoints," but also strove to propagate the party's own interpretation of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution among the Hungarian population living south of the border. The Hungarian-language radio station in Rimaszombat (Rimavská Sobota, Slovakia)[40] and the special issues of the Bratislava daily *Új Szó* that were published specifically for distribution in Hungary beginning on 28 October, 1956, played a significant role in this undertaking.

On 29 October, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Slovakia established two control centres—one for organizational purposes and the other for supervising propaganda operations. The PB appointed the Central Committee department chairmen Eugen Turzo and Matej Petrina to lead the organizational control centre and the propaganda control centre, respectively, and CSEMADOK President Gyula Lőrincz[41] to serve as the collective director of both organizations. Furthermore, the KSS Political Bureau established party offices at the following locations in order to provide support for operations along the Czechoslovak–Hungarian border: Révkomárom (Komarno); Párkány (Štúrovo); Ipolyság (Šahy); Fülek (Fiľakovo); Rozsnyó (Rožňava); Szepsi (Moldava nad Bodvou); and Kassa (Košice).[42]

39 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933.

40 Hungarian-language broadcasts reached the territory of Hungary from six radio stations in Slovakia—two large ones and four smaller ones. SNA, Predsednictvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933.

41 The Cultural Association of Hungarian Workers of Czechoslovakia functioned under rigorous party oversight. On 29 October, 1956, Csemadok publicly condemned the Hungarian revolution. This condemnation was then published in Új Szó the following day. This denunciation of the uprising in Hungary prompted around ten percent of the members of Csemadok to withdraw from the organization. However, the majority of Hungarians living in Slovakia reacted passively to news of the revolution—to the satisfaction of the party leadership. On the response of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, see the following works: Szesztay, *Nemzetiségi kérdés a Kárpát-medencében*, 36–44 and 66–73; Simon, "A szlovákiai magyarok és az 1956-os forradalom," 41–55. and 85–92; and Popély, *Fél évszázad kisebbségben*, 218–223.

42 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933.

The PB of the KSS also formed a 40-member group of Hungarian-speaking functionaries that was intended to facilitate communication between the party leadership and regional and district officials and to conduct agitation at the local level. As a result of personal connections, the KSS Central Committee was able to provide the party's lower echelons with precise information and implement organizational measures.[43]

The newspaper *Új Szó* was the official Hungarian-language daily of the KSS Central Committee. Beginning in 1955, the subservient CC member Ferenc Dénes served as the editor-in-chief of *Új Szó*, while a group of four to five people operating under the strict supervision of the party headquarters determined the newspaper's content—most of which consisted of strictly censored Czechoslovak News Agency (ČTK) reports and Hungarian-language translations of articles from the previous day's issue of *Rudé právo*. Very few independently written articles appeared in *Új Szó*.[44] On 29 October, 1956, the KSS Political Bureau retroactively approved the publication of special issues of *Új Szó* intended for distribution in Hungary.[45] A total of 25 such special issues of *Új Szó* were published during the periods from 28 October 28 to 11 November and from 20 November–2 December with an average circulation of 50,000 copies. These editions of *Új Szó* were not, however, identified as special issues and displayed the same volume and number as the regular edition of the newspaper. Many of the articles published in the special issues of *Új Szó* distributed in Hungary were identical to those that appeared in the "mother publication" and thus reflected the official positions of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Both editions of *Új Szó* cost 30 fillér, the subunit of the Hungarian forint and the Hungarian-language name for the subunit of the Czechoslovak koruna (*haléř* in Czech and *halier* in Slovak). In addition to the special issues of *Új Szó*, around 20,000 copies of four issues of the youth periodical *Új Ifjúság* and 3,000 copies of one issue of the women's magazine *Dolgozó Nő* and 10,000 copies of two KSS Central Committee–drafted Hungarian-language leaflets were distributed in Hungary.[46]

43 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, December, rok. 1956, k. 934 and SNA, ÚV KSS, Zasadnutia plén, 12–13. 12. 1956, k. 1836.

44 Popély, "Az Új Szó szerepvállalása," 5–18.

45 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933.

46 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, December, rok. 1956, k. 934.

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KSS party workers of Hungarian ethnicity illegally transported these publications across the border into Hungary, primarily to the northern counties of Győr-Sopron, Komárom, Nógrád and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén. KSS leaders attempted to convince themselves that Hungarians in Hungary would be interested in Hungarian-language publications and radio transmissions from Slovakia.[47] However, most Hungarians living south of the border in fact rejected the Czechoslovak party propaganda disseminated via these print and broadcast media.[48] Party committees from the Nitra, Banská Bystrica and Košice (Nyitra, Besztercebánya and Kassa, respectively, in Hungarian) regions of southern Slovakia nevertheless dispatched several dozen operatives per day to the northern counties of Hungary[49] in order to conduct agitation, collect intelligence, perform reconnaissance and advise local communists.

In addition to conducting propaganda in both Czechoslovakia and Hungary, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its regional affiliate in Slovakia enacted measures aimed at coordinating the operations of the state security services, the police and the army at the time of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. During the first days of the uprising, representatives from the KSČ, the KSS, the security services and the army established a joint staff with its headquarters at the office of KSS General Secretary Karol Bacílek in Bratislava. A Stalinist member of the KSČ Political Bureau, Bruno Köhler served as the leader of this staff, which also included Major General Dittrich, Deputy Interior Minister Josef Kudarna and the head of the Interior Ministry's Bratislava regional directorate, Josef Houska.[50] The most important initiatives of this staff, which essentially exercised the functions of the Political Bureau, were subject to approval from the Secretariat of

47 See, for example, Augustín Michalička's report to the Communist Party of Slovakia Political Bureau on 9 November, 1956 (SNA, Predsednictvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933) and Július Bielik's account of the 17 November, 1956, meeting between members of the KSS PB and writers from Slovakia (SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, December, rok. 1956, k. 935).

48 One report described this attitude thus: "I do not completely share the opinion that our newspapers helped so effectively. A really strong anti-Soviet mood prevailed there [in Hungary]. If our newspapers began with news about the Soviet Union, many people immediately ripped them up" (SNA, Predsednictvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933). Czechoslovak News Agency reporters also described the anti-Czechoslovak atmosphere in Hungary at this time to members of the Communist Party of Slovakia Political Bureau. NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 122, a.j. 155/22.

49 See Marušiak, "Az 1956-os magyar forradalom és Szlovákia," 70.

50 Ibid, p. 66.

the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Central Committee in order to ensure unity of action throughout the country.[51]

Both the KSČ and the KSS played a role in the consolidation of the János Kádár–led government that came to power in Hungary following the suppression of the 1956 revolution. On 17 December, 1956, the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Hungary, István Major stated in a telegram that the Central Committee of the post-revolutionary successor party of the MDP, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP), had requested that the second volume of the *Fehér Könyv* (White Book)[52] be printed in the ČSR. The *Fehér könyv* presented the Kádárist narrative of what it characterised as the counterrevolutionary events that had taken place in Hungary in October 1956. The book presented facts and photos that the Hungarian state security service had gathered along with distorted or fabricated stories. The publication aimed to prove that the revolutionary events were actually anti-Socialist and counterrevolutionary and, thus to justify Soviet military intervention and confirm the legitimacy of Kádár's government. Until 1989, these publications constituted the foundation of the official narrative about the birth of the Kádár regime. Therefore, these books were of the utmost importance for Kádár and his circle.

István Major claimed in the telegram that printing the second volume of the book in Czechoslovakia was necessary for the following reason: "They [members of the MSZMP Central Committee] said that the printing-house workers are sabotaging the publication of the *Fehér könyv*. This is why it took one month to publish the first volume." The ambassador noted that the MSZMP Central Committee had stipulated that 150,000 copies of the 64-page book be printed on 60-gram rotary paper.[53]

On 21 December, 1956, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Central Committee Secretariat decided to undertake the task of printing the second volume of the *Fehér könyv*. The KSČ CC Secretariat ordered 13 tons of the paper that would be required, which was delivered in early January 1957. However, on 16 January, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Provisional Central Committee (PCC) informed the Secretariat

51 See the report that Karol Bacílek presented at the December 1956 plenary session of the Communist Party of Slovakia Central Committee in SNA, ÚV KSS, Zasadnutia plén, 12–13. 12. 1956, k. 1836.

52 See *Ellenforradalmi erők a magyar októberi eseményekben*.

53 Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí), Prague (hereafter AMZV), Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 6.

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that the book would be longer than previously planned, thus its printing would require an additional 19 tons of paper. Károly Kiss, a member of the MSZMP Provisional Central Committee, subsequently requested in a letter that the third volume of the *Fehér könyv* also be printed in Czechoslovakia. Kiss noted that the printing of this volume of the book would require 40 tons of paper.[54]

On 13 February, 1957, the KSS Political Bureau recommended that the KSČ Secretariat authorize the acquisition of the 19 additional tons of paper needed to print the second volume of the *Fehér könyv* and approve the request for 40 tons of paper to print the third volume of the book. The KSS PB also decided on this date to send the initial 30,000 copies of the second volume of the *Fehér könyv* to Budapest along with a KSS delegation led by Pavol Tonhauser that would be traveling to the city on 16 February.[55]

In addition to delivering these copies of the *Fehér könyv*, Tonhauser and the Director of the KSS Agitprop Department, Matej Petrina met with Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party General Secretary János Kádár and other high-ranking MSZMP functionaries such as Antal Apró, Oszkár Betlen, István Szirmai and Károly Kiss in the course of their three-day visit to Budapest. These officials agreed during their consultations from 16–18 February to organize a series of meetings between the members of the KSS Central Committee and the MSZMP Provisional Central Committee in Budapest at the end of the month. MSZMP officials also asked Tonhauser and Petrina to ensure that the remaining 69,400 copies of the second volume of the *Fehér könyv* be delivered as soon as possible and requested that the previously stipulated 40 tons of paper be sent directly to Budapest so that the third volume of the book could be printed there rather than in Czechoslovakia.[56]

Communist Party of Slovakia General Secretary Bacílek sent a report regarding the talks that had taken place in Budapest to the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Novotný and asked him for permission to hold the requested meetings

54 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Február–Marec, rok. 1957, k. 941. The official daily newspapers of the KSČ and the KSS both published a series of lengthy articles regarding the *Fehér könyv* in December 1956. *Rudé pravo* published it in three instalments that appeared on 14, 15 and 16 December and *Új Szó* did so in six instalments that appeared under the title "The Depredations of the Counterrevolutionary Forces in Hungary" (Ellenforradalmi erők garázdálkodása Magyarországon) between 15 December and 21 December.

55 SNA, Predsedníctvo ÚV KSS, Február–Marec, rok. 1957, k. 941.

56 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 131, a.j. 171/11.

between the KSS CC and the MSZMP PCC.[57] On 5 March, 1957, the KSČ Political Bureau authorized this conference, which was eventually held between 3 May and 5 May. The five members of the KSS Central Committee delegation that travelled to Budapest for the consultations—Pavel Tonhauser, Matej Petrina, František Dvorský, Augustín Michalička and Václav Moravec—also visited the Ganz Works during their stay in the city and attended an official dinner in the company of several members of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Provisional Central Committee members, including János Kádár, György Marosán, Antal Apró and Sándor Rónai at which the MSZMP general secretary expressed his appreciation for the assistance that Czechoslovakia had provided Hungary. At the end of the three-day visit, the MSZMP PCC representatives who had participated in the talks—Károly Kiss, Miklós Somogyi, József Sándor, József Prieszol and Sándor Jakab—proposed the publication of a joint declaration expressing their gratitude for the support that the KSS had furnished "during the counterrevolutionary events in October." However, the Communist Party of Slovakia delegation rejected this proposal.[58] Presumably, they did so because they had reasons not to admit that they had helped. First, the leaders could not estimate how far the Hungarian minority living in Czechoslovakia sympathized with the revolution. Second, although the standards of living were higher in Czechoslovakia than they were in Hungary, the government did not want society to know that they had provided food to "rebelling Hungarians" when Czechoslovakia had their own economic issues.

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The role of KSČ in the political consolidation of the Kádár-regime

On 15 November 1956, an eight-member ČSR government delegation composed of the following officials arrived in Hungary: Prime Minister Viliam Široký; Minister of Health Josef Plojhar; Local Economy Minister Josef Kyselý; Deputy Foreign Minister Ladislav Šimovič; Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Alois Hloch; State Construction Industry Committee President Emanuel Šlechta; trade representative Jan Bušniak; and academic and United Agricultural Cooperatives President Ivan Málek.

Prime Minister Široký was the first head of government to make an official visit to Hungary following the Soviet intervention on 4 November that had put an end to the revolution that had begun in Budapest 12 days earlier. The political situation had not yet

57 Ibid.

58 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 142, a.j. 185, bod 12.

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stabilized in the country by the time of the Czechoslovak government delegation's visit, as Ambassador Major reported in telegrams he sent home on 13, 14 and 15 November, asserting on the first of these dates that "the government does not enjoy the support of the broader masses."[59] The Interior Ministry Directorate station chief at the Czechoslovak embassy in Budapest, Ladislav Křováček (Děkan)[60], also sent reports to Prague describing the continued political unrest in Hungary, claiming that he had witnessed manifestations of extreme nationalism and revisionist sentiment in the country following the Soviet intervention.[61]

Široký and the other members of the Czechoslovak government delegation wanted to meet the MSZMP general secretary in person, in order to gain a better understanding of his viewpoints and to demonstrate to the world that the countries of the socialist camp supported the new leadership of Hungary that had come to power with the help of the Soviet Union.[62] During his talks with the Široký-led delegation, Kádár recounted the events that had taken place in Hungary between 23 October and 4 November, often distorting or intentionally ignoring the facts surrounding his activities during this period. Kádár told the members of the Czechoslovak delegation that the failure of former Hungarian Working People's Party First Secretary Mátyás Rákosi to recognize his own mistakes even after the Twentieth Congress of the KPSS and the ability of the MDP leader to dupe Soviet officials into maintaining their support for him had been the primary causes of Imre Nagy's rise to power and the increase in anti-Soviet sentiment in Hungary even within the party intelligentsia.[63] The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party general secretary falsely claimed that he had served as an intermediary between the party and the demonstrators on the day of 23 October and had participated in a collective decision to request a Soviet military intervention on the evening of that date. Kádár also made the unfounded assertion during his meeting with the Czechoslovak government officials that the "counterrevolution" had been "an action based on a precise military

59 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 6. (Major 0439).

60 His pseudonym was "Nezval".

61 ABS, f. I.S-8, reg. sz. 80353/000, č. l. 38-39. "Nezval" sent his reports to Colonel Jaroslav Miller, who then forwarded them to the Interior Minister, Rudolf Barák.

62 Delegations from the German Democratic Republic and Romania subsequently made official visits to Budapest as well.

63 For more details regarding Kádár's statements to the Czechoslovak government delegation, see AMZV, Politické zprávy II. (1945–1977), Budapešť 1956.

plan." The MSZMP leader obviously intended by making these misrepresentations to obscure the reality that he had been a member of the first Nagy government formed after the outbreak of the revolution and to exempt him from the necessity of explaining why he had dissolved the Hungarian Working People's Party.[64]

In a moment of candour, Kádár presented the Czechoslovak government officials with a frank assessment of the first Soviet intervention that began on 24 October, claiming in much the same way as Tito had during his speech in Pula that this intervention had failed to quell the unrest in Budapest because "the uprising's base of support had broadened [. . .] the people believed that they were defending state sovereignty by fighting against the Soviet units."[65] The MSZMP general secretary claimed that Imre Nagy and the members of his cabinet had adopted the democratic slogans of the insurgency because they knew that they would lose power in an election conducted via secret ballot and thus had to remain loyal to the demands of the street. Kádár said that counterrevolutionary groups organized abroad, specifically former gendarmes and "Horthyite officers" who "had been under arms for eight years in West Germany," had infiltrated Hungary via Austria and transformed the legitimate national movement into a "chauvinist counterrevolution."

This interpretation was also presented in the decision that the Central Committee of the MSZMP made on 5 December 1956. This false narrative served to excuse the Soviet military intervention and legitimize the Kádár regime. The Czechoslovak leaders also subsequently adopted this interpretation and eagerly utilized it to describe the uprising in Hungary.

In the course of his deliberations with the Czechoslovak government officials, Kádár attempted to separate the working class from the "counterrevolution," which the MSZMP general secretary claimed "began during the final stages of the Imre Nagy government"—thus after he had left the cabinet and gone to Moscow in order to request that the Soviets intervene to defend socialism in Hungary. This argument revealed that Kádár was in a difficult situation. Kádár acknowledged that "neither the party nor the

64 Kádár's duplicity regarding his actions during the uprising had little impact on Novotný, who had learned the true reasons for the Soviet military interventions in Hungary during his consultations with Khrushchev in Moscow on 24 October and in Bucharest on 2 November.

65 On 11 November, 1956, Tito expressed his opinions regarding the Hungarian uprising and the essence of the Soviet system during an address to League of Communists of Yugoslavia activists in the Istrian port city of Pula. Népszabadság, 17 November 1956.

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trade union exercises any impact over a significant portion of the Budapest working class," although he attributed this lack of authority to deception and the armed intimidation of the workers.

Following Kádár's discourse, Czechoslovak Prime Minister Široký repeated almost verbatim the speech that KSČ officials had already delivered several times at locations throughout the ČSR. Široký criticized the Hungarian Working People's Party's leaders for failing to utilize the opportunities that had emerged as a result of the Twentieth Congress of the KPSS, which had thus resulted in factional strife within the MDP and alienated the party from the masses. The Czechoslovak head of government declared that the forces of "reaction" and "counterrevolutionary" groups that had previously been active in Hungary following the overthrow of the Soviet Republic in 1919 and were at this time operating in the service of international imperialism had exploited this division between the Party and the people in order to gain the allegiance of the masses through appeals to their legitimate discontent in an attempt to detach the country from the socialist camp and transform the region into a hotbed of conflict. Široký showed no interest in the reality of the complex political conditions that prevailed in Hungary in November 1956, focusing entirely on the international repercussions of the stifled uprising and the need to preserve the unity of the socialist camp. He therefore furnished Kádár with no practical advice regarding the possible means of consolidating his power.[66] It soon became clear that the aim of the KSČ leadership was to put pressure on Kádár to resist the processes of decentralization more decisively, instead of vacillating.

The Czechoslovak party and government leaders frequently referred to the main principles proclaimed in the KPSS Central Committee resolution of June 1956. On 15 November, ČSR Prime Minister Viliam Široký declared during talks with MSZMP General Secretary János Kádár—who also served as Hungary's head of government—that "Western imperialist circles" had recognized the positive impact that the Twentieth Congress of the KPSS had had on the "peace movement" and the campaign to liberate colonized peoples and that it "has therefore tried to turn back the wheels of history in at least a few places in the world." The prime minister of Czechoslovakia warned the general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party that these forces were attempting to provoke discord between the people's democratic states:

66 Kádár thus provided only a very short account of his consultations with Czechoslovak officials on 15 November during a meeting of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Provisional Executive Committee held the following day. Sipos, Némethné Vágyi and Balogh eds., *A Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*, 61.

> They want to undermine the unity of the socialist camp at any cost and have attempted to drive a wedge between various countries that are fighting against imperialism. This is why they launched a war against the Egyptian people as well. Imperialist circles seek to destroy the unity of the socialist camp at every turn.[67]

Široký told Kádár that the failure of the Hungarian Working People's Party to apply the tenets articulated in the KPSS Central Committee resolution had diminished the outlook of the working class, transforming Hungary into a fertile ground for the efforts of the "Western imperialists" to plant the seeds of dissent.[68] The Czechoslovak head of government, slightly altering Klement Gottwald's previously cited maxim, cautioned the MSZMP general secretary that "When the party does not speak, when the Central Leadership does not formulate the political program for socialist construction, various social groups such as the Petőfi Circle, the writers and the students understandably devise their own policies." Finally, Prime Minister Široký asserted that "Hungarian reaction" and the "Hungarian bourgeoisie" had successfully exploited the legitimate popular dissatisfaction with the low standard of living in Hungary, noting that these forces had twice instigated "counterrevolution" and "white terror" in the country since the end of the First World War.[69]

Marshal Tito proffered an alternative perspective that had a much greater impact on the course of political events in Hungary than the Soviet—Czechoslovak narrative. On 11 November, 1956, he expressed his opinions regarding the Hungarian uprising and

67 Communist Party of Czechoslovakia General Secretary Antonín Novotný employed this same reasoning in a speech he delivered during the two-day plenary session of the KSČ Central Committee that began on 5 December, 1956. This conclusion also appeared in the subsequent Central Committee resolution and the report that the CC submitted to the body's Secretariat on 3 January, 1957.

68 These allegations appeared in the reports of ČSR Ambassador to Hungary István Major, see AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 6. (Major 0504); and AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 6. (Major 0512). ČSLA Colonel Jaroslav Miller also expressed them in one of his reports, see ABS, f. I.S-8, reg. sz. 80353/000, č. l. 50–52. For the Czech-language version of this report, see Pavel Žáček, "'Napětí v Budapešti trvá.' Hlášení rezidentury Správy rozvědky ministerstva vnitra, 1956–1957," part 1, Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek No. 14 (2016) pp. 431–471; and Žáček, "'Napětí v Budapešti trvá.' Hlášení rezidentury Správy rozvědky ministerstva vnitra, 1956–1957," part 2, Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek No. 15 (2017) pp. 339–377.

69 For Široký's speech, see AMZV, Politické zprávy II. (1945–1977), Budapešť 1956.

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the essence of the Soviet system during an address to activists of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in the Istrian port city of Pula. Tito stated at the beginning of his speech that many "members of the working class and people of progressive mindset" had engaged in armed struggle against the Soviets on the streets of Budapest, declaring that "This was a justified revolt against a clique that transformed into an uprising of the entire people against socialism and the Soviet Union." The Yugoslav leader maintained that "reactionary forces" had intervened in the rebellion only after the Hungarian Working People's Party had split into two factions, emphasizing that "it was not Horthyites who fought there, but the entire nation." Tito claimed during his address that Stalin's "foolishness" had placed the socialist camp in a very difficult situation and that the personality cult that had surrounded the KPSS leader had been an organic product of the Soviet system. The president of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia told the party activists that the initial Soviet intervention in Hungary in October had been "completely misguided," while the second intervention in November could have been avoided had Prime Minister Imre Nagy not let events progress to the point at which "Soviet troops had to prevent the victory of the counterrevolution." In conclusion, Tito asserted that the victor of the struggle between the old "Stalinist" orientation and the "new course" had not yet been determined, noting that the latter had "in fact started in Yugoslavia."[70]

Tito's address greatly angered the leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, who summarized their opinion of the speech in a KSČ Political Bureau memorandum that was sent personally to KPSS General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev on 21 November, 1956.[71] The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia PB memorandum accused Tito of attempting to propagate the "Yugoslav example" abroad, specifically in Poland and Hungary, and described his address in Pula as "an appeal for factional conflict between communist parties and a flagrant intervention in the internal affairs of [other] communist parties." The KSČ's leaders raised the possibility of again severing relations with Yugoslavia and recommended holding regular consultations between communist parties and launching an international theoretical journal.[72]

70 Népszabadság (Budapest), 17 November 1956.

71 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 123, a.j. 156/per rollam.

72 Almost all of the KSČ Political Bureau's ideas were implemented: by the spring of 1958, relations with Yugoslavia had been almost completely terminated; in the autumn of 1958, the theoretical journal Problems of Peace and Socialism was launched in every country that belonged to the socialist camp; and regular consultations between the leaders of Warsaw Pact member states also began during that year.

Tito's speech remained on the agenda of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Central Committee the following month. On 6 December, the KSČ CC adopted a resolution rejecting debate on the Yugoslav model on the grounds that the unity of the international communist movement — "the source of the power and success of the struggle for the victory of socialism" — needed to be preserved.[73] KSČ leaders thus conspicuously avoided the issue of alternative models of socialism and its connection to the Hungarian uprising. The speeches by Marshal Tito and other Yugoslav leaders were consequently not published in Czechoslovakia.

It seems that Kádár actually did consider the introduction of some form of "national-self-governing reform concept" that he envisioned within the framework of a formally multi-party system.[74] In mid-December he planned to set up committees of economic reform and would have involved workers' councils in this work. This would also have been accepted by the leadership of the other socialist countries.

On 11 November, the MDP CC adopted a decision to ask the Soviet leadership to organize a summit of the Communist Parties' leaderships to discuss the situation in Hungarian domestic politics. Kádár had thus sent a letter to Khrushchev before the visit of the Czechoslovak delegation, requesting a meeting between the first secretaries of the communist parties be convened shortly to discuss the "relationship between the socialist countries and the national issue" in the light of the experience of the events in Hungary. Khrushchev's reply arrived two days later, stating that the summit would take place from the 1st to the 4th January 1957 in Budapest. Meanwhile, A. B. Aristov and M. A. Suslov, the secretaries of the CC of the KPSS and Malenkov, had already arrived in Budapest.[75]

73 Rudé právo (Prague), 8 December 1956; Új Szó (Bratislava), 9 December 1956.

74 On 2 November 1956, János Kádár was present at the Chairman's meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU where he defended the parties, especially the Smallholders' Party, that had taken part in Imre Nagy's coalition: "The coalition parties don't want a counter[revolution]." He quoted Béla Kovács who claimed that: "we are creating a Smallholders party, but we can't struggle on the basis of the old program." Kádár argued that the communist party alone is not sufficient to stabilize the situation, but together with the parties of the coalition, the counter-revolution will be defeated." Kádár was also present at the meeting on the next day. At that time, he stated that: "This government must not be puppetlike, there must be a base for its activities and support among workers." See: Mark Kramer, "The "Malin notes," 396–397.

75 National Archives of Hungary (hereafter MNL OL), M–KS 288.f. 9/1956/7. ő.e.

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The fragmentary sources available regarding the 1–4 January consultations indicate that MSZMP General Secretary Kádár was genuinely thinking in terms of "national–left-wing plebian bloc politics" at this time.[76] According to memoranda that KSČ General Secretary Novotný prepared about the meeting, Kádár considered "Rákosism and bureaucracy" to be great dangers and was considering the introduction of some kind of multi-party system including the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Smallholders' Party and, presumably, the National Peasant Party, while he and other MSZMP leaders wanted to "assert the Yugoslav line" and "limit central bureaucratic control to a minimum."[77]

The joint communiqué issued following the conference referred neither to Hungary's future political and social systems nor to Nikita Khrushchev's 1955 Belgrade declaration recognizing the right of individual states to follow their own roads toward socialism, nor to the October 1956 Soviet government proclamation. However, the communiqué did contain the following paragraph about Hungary's economy:

> Only after the restoration of production and normal economic conditions, the development of the people's economy, the increase in labour productivity in both agriculture and industry, the decline in the cost of production for products and the generation of socialist accumulation can a rise in the living standards of the people and the strengthening of people's democratic Hungary be ensured.[78]

This condition fundamentally excluded the adoption of any kind of alternative model or pursuit of an "independent pathway." The Soviet, Czechoslovak, Bulgarian and Romanian communist-party leaders had in effect rejected Kádár's proposals. This "rump session of the Warsaw Pact" was the first time that KPSS, KSČ, PCR and BKP leaders collectively intervened in the internal affairs of another socialist state, thus essentially laying the foundations for the Brezhnev Doctrine introduced in 1968.[79] At that moment, it became clear that there was no possibility of introducing a multi-party system in Hungary in any form. The leaders of the other socialist countries would not even accept the implementation of the Czechoslovakian model. Speaking in confidential circles,

76 See Kalmár, *Történelmi galaxisok vonzásában*, 107–108.

77 NA, f. 1261/0/44, ka. 49, inv. č. 57. sign. 13.

78 Népszabadság (Budapest), 6 January 1957.

79 For more on this see: Kalmár, *Történelmi galaxisok vonzásában*, 108.

Kádár mentioned several times "it happened this way historically" that there was no multi-party system in Hungary. Based on the documentary evidence it can credibly be supposed that between early November 1956 and early January 1957, Kádár would have been willing to enter into a coalition with parties that accepted socialism and to integrate workers' councils in the process of decision making in the field of economic policy. He would have done so out of tactical considerations, to bolster his own legitimacy.

This debate did not only take place in Hungary. Władysław Gomułka was reluctant to accept the Soviet policy according to which there were no alternative paths to Socialism. The Polish leader had earned his popularity by having declared that he would follow a more independent line vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, thus inching close to the Yugoslavian model. However, by the autumn of 1957 he had been forced to accept the Soviet model – even though this meant that his promise would remain unrealized. Disbanding the editorial board of the paper *Po prostu* that had been the most vocal in demanding reforms was a sign of this change. A joint declaration of the communist and workers' parties followed the conference. This document was the outcome of the Moscow summit of November 1957 and also meant the partial withdrawal of the declaration that the Soviet government had made on 30 October 1956. The later document added an important qualification to the principles of equality, territorial integrity, independence, sovereignty and non-intervention: "mutual fraternal help in which the ideas of socialist internationalism are embodied." This clearly represents the foundation of what was to become the Brezhnev-doctrine: if the socialist order comes under threat in a country, other socialist countries might provide help. The declaration also posited that "socialist revolution and the development of socialism are based on a series of contingencies that are true of every country that choose the pathway of socialism."[80] In November 1957, the Soviets revealed everything that they had put forward in January in Budapest. The only party that did not sign the proclamation was Yugoslavia.

Debate regarding the possible introduction of the Yugoslav model in Hungary ended in the spring of 1957 for two main reasons: first, the launching of criminal proceedings against former Prime Minister Imre Nagy and his political associates had compelled János Kádár to place himself firmly behind the Soviet Union;[81] and second, the

80 See: "A szocialista országok kommunista és munkáspártjainak nyilatkozata (16 November 1957)." 19–30.

81 Kádár twice publicly condemned Yugoslav "national communism" at meetings of Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party activists held in the weeks following the "five-party summit meeting"—first in the Budapest district of Csepel on 27 January and then in Salgótarján on

significant aid that Hungary had received from the states of the socialist camp, primarily the SSSR, China and Czechoslovakia, following the 1956 uprising produced economic consolidation and rising living standards, thus slowly lending the Kádár-led party and government social legitimacy.

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Czechoslovak Economic Assistance for Regimes' consolidation

The most important tool of the Kádárist policy of consolidation was the improvement of standards of living. Kádár – reasonably – believed that Hungarians revolted against the "Rákosi-regime" as a result of the unbearable fall in standards of living. The events in October and November caused economic indicators to deteriorate even more. Contemporary economists estimated that the damage and loss resulting from the uprising amounted to 20 to 22 billion Hungarian Forints, a fifth of the national income, between the end of 1956 and early 1957. Armed struggle, strikes and the shortage of coal and energy further deepened the crisis in economic terms. The central bureaucracy disintegrated, financial discipline weakened, and inflation soared. Mass unemployment and overall economic collapse became real threats. Towards the end of the year, without imports it would have been impossible for the government to provide the population with basic food items.

Kádár needed the material support of socialist countries to make his regime look better than the previous one. Although Comecon existed for such reasons, it was a slow and bureaucratic organization burdened with debates. The Hungarian government could hardly count on it for help. Instead, the new Hungarian regime tried to negotiate bilateral agreements with those socialist countries that could provide aid. Poland was not among these since it also faced economic hardship[82]. Moreover, Gomułka was unhappy

2 February. During his speech at the party-activist meeting in the latter city, Kádár equated national communism with national socialism. The MSZMP general secretary also began to reinterpret the role that Imre Nagy had played in the "counterrevolution" at this time. See Huszár, *Kádár János politikai életrajza*, vol. 2. 29. Diplomats posted at the Czechoslovak embassy in Budapest took note of Kádár's change in political course following the inter-party meetings held from 1–4 January. See AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 5. (Rázga 0142).

82 The Polish government provided 100 million zł worth of grant-in-aid during the days of the revolution. However, the aid that individual members of Polish society put together voluntarily was even more important and was worth 2 million USD.

with the Soviet military intervention in Hungary and Kádár-government.[83]

Besides the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, the DDR and Romania could be approached for help. Kádár expected that Czechoslovakia would contribute the most. On 24 October, Khrushchev praised the achievements of the Czechoslovakian economy, and this reassured Kádár. However, negotiations proceeded more slowly than expected. It turned out that the Czechoslovakian economy depended on the Polish economy, which was in crisis, and that it also had profound structural problems.

On 5 November, 1956—the day after the Soviet invasion of Hungary—Kádár issued an appeal to the states of the socialist camp to provide the country with aid, specifically food, medicine, bandages, building materials and heating fuel. The following day, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau founded a "Solidarity Fund for the Workers of the Hungarian People's Republic" to operate under the authority of the Czechoslovak Red Cross and opened an account for the collection of private donations and proceeds derived from surplus labour. The KSČ Political Bureau also ordered the Deputy Prime Minister, Ludmila Jankovcová, to determine in cooperation with the Planning Office the quantity of medicine, glass, lumber and other construction materials the ČSR could send to Hungary in the form of relief aid. The Political Bureau furthermore instructed Foreign Trade Minister Richard Dvořák to take measures aimed at ensuring that Czechoslovakia promptly satisfied its specified commodities-exchange obligations toward Hungary for the year 1956.[84] Finally, the PB stipulated that the form and amount of relief aid to Hungary should, if possible, be determined before the visit of a Czechoslovak government delegation to the country scheduled for 8 November.

Also on 5 November, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau drafted a telegram for the KSČ and KSS regional committees that praised the "crushing of the counterrevolutionary conspiracy" and summoned the citizens of the ČSR to help the people of Hungary "heal the painful wounds."[85] The PB also notified the regi-

83 Gomułka was not willing to acknowledge that there had been a counterrevolution in Hungary and did not want to host Kádár in Warsaw for years. He visited Budapest for the first time on 9 May 1958, following lengthy preparations. Since Imre Nagy and his fellow politicians were executed a month after his visit, he felt that Kádár had tricked him and he was outraged. For more details see: Mitrovits, *Lengyel, magyar „két jó barát"*, 18–23.

84 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 120, a.j. 149/21.

85 Ibid. The 5 November, 1956, issue of the Hungarian-language daily of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Új Szó carried the following banner headline on its front page: "The Hungarian People Has Broken the Counterrevolution" (A magyar nép letörte az ellenforradalmat).

onal committees that, in addition to money, they were expected to provide commodities such as agricultural products and building materials to the newly established "Solidarity Fund."

The Czechoslovak leaders subsequently cancelled the planned visit of government officials to Budapest primarily because their Hungarian counterparts could not guarantee their safety. This security concern was probably not unwarranted: on 10 November, the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Hungary István Major noted in a telegram that "for the first time today it has been possible to take a look around the city without significant danger."[86] MSZMP General Secretary Kádár and Provisional Central Committee member and industrial affairs minister Antal Apró told Ambassador Major and other officials from the Czechoslovak embassy during a subsequent meeting that the cancelled visit should be rescheduled as soon as possible because "it would help to stabilize conditions." Major and his fellow diplomats agreed to recommend to their superiors that Czechoslovak government officials spend a single day in Budapest for talks, although they informed Kádár and Apró that "other programs (i.e. activities) would not be possible for security reasons."[87]

On 11 November 1956 Kádár sent a letter to Khrushchev. He asked for direct economic assistance, while urging the Soviets to put pressure on the Czechoslovak, East German and Polish parties to help overcome the difficulties of the Hungarian economy. Kádár described the Hungarian situation as follows: "There are no conditions for a satisfactory supply of coal and electricity to industry in the coming months on our own strength" […] " Now, such a situation threatens us that we will be in a state of insolvency within a very short period of time." Khrushchev's response arrived in Budapest three days later, in which he promised help.[88]

The postponement of the Czechoslovak delegation's trip to Budapest provided Deputy Prime Minister Ludmila Jankovcová and State Planning Office Chairman Otakar Šimůnek with the opportunity to formulate detailed proposals regarding relief aid to be sent to Hungary. On 12 November, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau decided, based on these recommendations, to send 90 million koruna (Kčs) worth of the following commodities calculated at retail prices to Hungary: 32.4 million Kčs in textiles, shoes and industrial products; 25.1 million Kčs in food, including 5,000

86 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 6. (Major 0423)

87 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko, kr. 1, obal 6. (Major 0428)

88 MNL OL, M–KS 288.f. 9/1956/7. ő.e.

tons of flour, 5,000 tons of potatoes and 100 tons of meat; 17.5 million Kčs worth of medicine, including the immediate shipment of 10,000 doses of gamma globulin; and 15 million Kčs worth of building material, including 10,000 tons of lime, 5,000 tons of cement, windowpanes, logs and lumber.[89] The KSČ PB planned to gather these commodities from state and ministry stockpiles and donations from the Central Cooperative of Consumer and Production Cooperatives, the United Agricultural Cooperatives and from individual farmers.

On 13 November, the Czechoslovak government issued resolution no. 2569 endorsing the Political Bureau's planned shipments of relief aid to Hungary. The government then forwarded a letter providing information regarding this assistance to MSZMP General Secretary János Kádár via the Ambassador of Hungary to Czechoslovakia, József Gábor.[90] Both the Hungarian-language daily newspaper of the Communist Party of Slovakia *Új Szó* and the official newspaper of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, *Népszabadság* published reports on the planned 90 million Kčs in Czechoslovak relief aid to Hungary.[91]

It was after this that, as described above, the eight-member Czechoslovakian delegation led by Viliam Široký negotiated political and economic issues in Budapest on 15 November. The Industrial Affairs Minister of the Kádár government, Antal Apró and the Minister of Commercial Affairs, Sándor Rónai received the Minister of Health of the Široký government, Josef Plojhar and Local Economy Minister Josef Kyselý as well as Czechoslovak State Construction Industry Committee President Emanuel Šlechta. During this meeting, Apró presented the officials from the ČSR with the following requests: 40 million dollars in long-term trade credit specifically for the purchase of raw materials; 10 million dollars in non-refundable trade credit for the acquisition of other commodities; and a further 10-million-dollar long-term foreign-currency loan. Apró and Rónai also called upon Plojhar, Kyselý and Šlechta to ask their government to accelerate the delivery of the goods stipulated in the 1956 Hungarian—Czechoslovak commodities-exchange agreement and to extend the deadline for Hungary to satisfy the conditions of the agreement itself.[92]

89 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 121, a.j. 152–154/27.

90 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

91 These reports appeared in both Új Szó and Népszabadság on 15 November—the same date on which the Prime Minister Viliam Široký–led Czechoslovak government delegation finally arrived in Budapest for talks.

92 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

On 20 November, the Hungarian Deputy Finance Minister, István Antos specified further details regarding the requested Czechoslovak aid to Hungary during a visit to Prague. He conveyed the government's request that the 10 million dollars (40 million roubles or 72 million Czechoslovak koruna)[93] in non-refundable trade credit be allocated for food, furniture, motorbikes, bicycles, medical supplies, cotton, wool, leather footwear, woven goods and clothing, to be delivered by 15 January, 1957;[94] and that the 40 million dollars (160 million roubles or 288 million Czechoslovak koruna) in long-term trade credit be disbursed in two instalments—8 million dollars by 31 December, 1956, for the purchase of mining timber, firewood, brown coal, cement, synthetic fibres, leather and other commodities and the remaining 32 million dollars by 31 March, 1957, for the purchase of 17.5 million dollars in already determined products and 14.5 million dollars in undetermined goods.[95] The Czechoslovak officials immediately rejected most of these requests and furthermore informed Antos that the ČSR would not be able to provide Hungary with the stipulated 10-million-dollar long-term foreign-currency loan.

Antos also asked the Czechoslovak officials to postpone the impending deadline for the Hungarian government to repay one-third of the principal on a 15-million-Swiss-franc (CHF) loan that the ČSR had made to Hungary in February 1956.[96] The Kádár government's deputy finance minister also requested the liquidation of Hungary's remaining obligations connected to a 27 April, 1951, "agreement regarding the development of the aluminium industry and the mutual provision of electricity."[97]

On 13 December, 1956, deputy ministers of the Široký government, including Deputy Prime Minister Ludmila Jankovcová held consultations that produced the following recommendations in connection with Czechoslovak relief aid for Hungary: instead of the proposed 10 million dollars (40 million roubles or 72 million Czechoslovak koruna) in non-refundable trade credit, the ČSR would provide Hungary with only 33.8 mil-

93 The currency equivalents that appear in documents pertaining to the Hungarian deputy finance minister's visit to Prague show that they were based on the following exchange rates: 1 dollar = 4 rubles and 7.2 Czechoslovak koruna; 1 ruble = 1.8 Czechoslovak koruna; and 1 Czechoslovak koruna = 1.6 Hungarian forints.

94 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

95 Ibid.

96 This 15-million-CHF loan was composed of two parts—10 million CHF with a maturity of two years and 5 million CHF with a maturity of one year, both of which carried interest rates of two percent.

97 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

lion Kčs (4.7 million dollars) in repayable trade credit; and the ČSR would not grant Hungary the requested 40 million dollars in long-term trade credit.[98]

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau met on 17 December and 27 December to discuss the issue of assistance to Hungary. The KSČ PB adopted resolutions during these meetings that contained the following stipulations regarding this aid: they would ensure the delivery of all the commodities specified in the interstate goods-exchange agreement for the year 1956 with the exception of coal, magnesite, rolled materials and firewood;[99] the provision of 48.3 million Kčs in long-term trade credit composed of 37.5 million Kčs in commodities through the Ministry of Foreign Trade and 10.8 million Kčs in commodities through the Ministry of Domestic Trade;[100] guarantee the shipment of 45 million Kčs in goods—primarily automobile tires, various chemical products, building materials, paper and lumber—that had been destined for export to the West as well as to the German Democratic Republic and Poland throughout 1957 rather than during the first quarter of the year as Hungarian Deputy Finance Minister István Antos had requested during his visit to Prague on 20 November.[101] They also agreed to postpone the initial repayment of 5 million Swiss francs of the 15-million-Swiss-franc loan that the ČSR had granted to Hungary in February 1956 and to renegotiate the terms surrounding the 1951 "agreement regarding the development of the aluminium industry and the mutual provision of electricity."

The KSČ Political Bureau resolutions noted that by the end of 1956 Hungary would have arrears of 167.7 million Kčs, 130.4 million Kčs of which would have to be compensated by other socialist countries and 37 million Kčs by capitalist countries, and that Czechoslovakia planned to export 97.2 million Kčs worth of commodities to Hungary during the first quarter of 1957, of which nearly 95 percent could be compensated via capitalist markets, and that as a result of Hungarian liabilities and the repayment of

98 Ibid.

99 The KSČ Political Committee decided at its 27 December meeting to use coal to generate electricity for Hungary rather than shipping it directly to the country. (Cf. NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 125, a.j. 159/14.; and NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 125, a.j. 160/7.) Firewood was likely exempted from delivery because it had already been sent along with the special relief transport. These exemptions meant that 25 million Kčs of the remaining 87.5 million Kčs in 1956 Czechoslovak obligations could not be satisfied. NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 125, a.j. 160/7 (see appendix III, I.4. ad. 4).

100 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 124, a.j. 159/14. (See appendices IVb and IVc).

101 Ibid., appendix IVe.

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ČSR-disbursed credit by 31 December, 1956, Hungary would have liabilities of 42.3 million Kčs towards the Czechoslovak foreign-currency treasury and 72.4 million Kčs in credit debt.[102]

The KSČ Political Bureau had therefore offered Hungary 93.3 million Kčs worth of commodities in the form of long-term trade credit.[103]

By 10 December, 1956, 82 million Kčs of the 90 million Kčs in trade-credit commodities that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau had decided to send to Hungary the previous month had already been delivered to the country.[104]

On 27 December, the KSČ PB confirmed that the ČSR would send 50 Csepel trucks to Hungary in order to help with the cleanup of debris from the armed conflict that had taken place in the country in October and November.[105]

One should note that the 60 million dollars (240 million roubles) in trade credit and foreign-currency loans that the Minister of Industrial Affairs of the Kádár government, Antal Apró had requested on 15 November was only slightly less than the 248.2 million roubles in commodities that Czechoslovakia had delivered to Hungary during the whole of 1955. There was, however, one significant difference between the goods that Czechoslovakia had delivered to Hungary in 1955 and those that Hungarian officials had requested in November 1956: whereas machinery had constituted 38.6 percent of the value of all the commodities that the ČSR had sent to the MNK in 1955, no machinery appeared on the list of requested goods in 1956.[106]

On 28 December, 1956, Foreign Trade Minister Richard Dvořák informed the Ambassador of Hungary to Czechoslovakia, József Gábor, that the ČSR would not be able to grant the MNK the 10 million dollars in non-refundable trade credit and the 10-million-dollar foreign-currency loan it had requested. Dvořák told Gábor that the KSČ Political Bureau had, however, approved 93.3 million Kčs in trade credit for Hungary.

102 Ibid. appendices IVf, IVg and IVi.

103 The 27 December KSČ Political Committee resolution instructed Finance Minister Július Ďuriš to allocate 93.3 million Kčs from the 1957 budget of the ČSR for trade credit to Hungary. NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 125, a.j. 160/7.

104 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 124, a.j. 159/14 (see appendix IVd).

105 The KSČ PB specified that these trucks be returned to Czechoslovakia, noting that, if necessary, spare parts could be acquired in Hungary.

106 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 124, a.j. 159/14 (see appendix IVa).

On 8 February, 1957, Commercial Affairs Minister of Hungary, Sándor Rónai and the Deputy Finance Minister, István Antos travelled to Prague in order to try to convince Czechoslovak party and government officials to increase the amount of assistance it would send. During meetings with the KSČ General Secretary, Novotný, Deputy Prime Minister Jankovcová, Foreign Trade Minister Dvořák and State Planning Office Chairman Šimůnek over the following four days, Hungary's Commercial Affairs Minister, Rónai not only requested that Czechoslovakia grant Hungary the 10 million dollars in non-refundable trade credit and 10-million-dollar foreign-currency loan it had previously stipulated, but that the ČSR augment the requested 40 million dollars (160 million roubles) in long-term trade credit with 138.7 roubles in long-term credit for the acquisition of industrial equipment. Rónai referred during his talks in Prague to the clause contained in a joint Soviet–Czechoslovak declaration of support for Hungary issued on 30 January, 1957, stating that the ČSR had not provided as much assistance to the MNK as other socialist countries had by that date. This was not entirely true, however. Although Czechoslovakia had provided only 10 million roubles worth of aid to Hungary[107] according to official data, which probably referred to the 90-million-Koruna pledge made on 15 November, Hungarian data showed that it was in fact worth 15 million roubles. According to the figures collected by Hungarian state organs, the DDR had pledged to provide 8.5 million roubles in aid, Bulgaria 5 million roubles, Poland 10 million roubles, Romania 4 million roubles and Yugoslavia 2 million roubles worth of assistance, apart from the 40 million roubles promised by the Soviet Union.[108] Thus, Czechoslovakia was second only to the Soviet Union in terms of the immediate help it offered with the purpose of stabilizing the Hungarian economy. Rónai and his team was also wrong in stating that Czechoslovakia had been the only state to partially decline the request for a long-term loan and hard currency loan. In fact, they put together an offer for 93.3 million koruna that was equal to 17.45 million USD at the time. One may argue that considering the strength of its economy, Czechoslovakia should have offered proportionately more since the much poorer Romania was able to loan goods worth 10 million USD besides a 5-million-USD-loan. Bulgaria promised to loan goods amounting 7 million USD while the DDR promised a loan of goods to the amount of 15 million USD.

107 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 129, a.j. 169/6.

108 See the MNL OL, XIX–A–16-i 1. doboz; and Honvári, "A szovjet és a keleti hitelek," and Feitl, *Talányos játszmák*, 131.

Novotný informed Rónai and Antos that Czechoslovakia would be unable to provide the requested aid to Hungary because the ČSR had received less than one-third of the expected amount of coal from Poland that year and was thus unable under the prevailing circumstances to satisfy the demand for special goods (i.e., weapons) from countries in the Middle East.[109] However, the KSČ general secretary nevertheless offered to nearly double the amount of credit that Czechoslovakia would extend to Hungary to 180 million Kčs from the 93.3 million Kčs that the party's Political Committee had proposed on 27 December.[110] This 180 million Kčs—or 100 million roubles—in credit would be composed of the following three elements: 48.2 million roubles in long-term investment loans—17 million for the machinery and equipment needed for the power station being built in Tiszapalkonya, 16 million for the repayment of previous investment credit, 6 million for construction projects in the new city of Sztálinváros (Stalin City) and 9.2 million to cover the cost of electricity imported from Czechoslovakia in 1955; 26.8 million roubles in credit so that Hungary could make the planned purchases of consumer goods from the ČSR for the year 1957; and 25 million roubles in long-term trade credit. According to the proposed conditions for these loans, Hungary would repay the 26.8 million roubles in loans for consumer goods in three instalments—6.8 million roubles in 1958 and 10 million roubles in both 1959 and 1960—and would compensate Czechoslovakia for the remaining 73.2 million roubles credit worth of debt through the delivery of bauxite to Czechoslovakia in five equal annual quantities beginning in the year 1959. Moreover, Czechoslovakia was projected to generate a surplus of nearly 100 million roubles in trade with Hungary for the year 1957, thus essentially representing the provision of further credit to Hungary.[111]

Rónai and Antos were not satisfied with the support offered, however. Rónai stated before leaving Prague that "the Czechoslovak response fell profoundly short of our expectations," adding that Novotný "is aware that we are not leaving satisfied."[112]

On 21 February, 1957, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Committee approved the proposed 100 million roubles (180 million Kčs) in aid for Hungary and decided to send the Foreign Trade Minister, Richard Dvořák and the Chairman of the

109 See MNL OL XIX–A–16-i 3. doboz; and Honvári, "A szovjet és a keleti hitelek."

110 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 129, a.j. 169/6.

111 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 5, Obal 2.

112 MNL OL XIX–A–16–i 3. doboz. See also Honvári, "A szovjet és a keleti hitelek."

State Planning Office, Otakar Šimůnek to lead a delegation to Budapest in order conduct further talks with Hungarian officials.[113]

The Hungarian Minister of Commercial Affairs, Sándor Rónai announced during the talks conducted from 25 February–1 March that Hungary would be unable to repay the 100 million roubles in Czechoslovak loans as KSČ General Secretary Novotný had specified in Prague a couple of weeks earlier. Rónai requested that Hungary instead be permitted to repay the loans over a period of ten years beginning in 1960, noting that the country had a budget deficit of 3.7 million forints and would require 1.9 million forints to liquidate its existing debts. The commercial affairs minister added that Hungary would also have to pay 23 million roubles in instalments from the 1951 credit agreement in the years 1958 and 1959.[114]

The Czechoslovak delegation offered Hungary the following concessions in return: exemption from its obligation to deliver 265,000 tons of brown coal to Czechoslovakia in 1957; a reduction in the amount of aluminium oxide to be supplied to the ČSR in 1957 from 39,400 tons to between 15,000 and 20,000 tons; and the export of 355 million kWh of electricity to Hungary, 35 million kWh of which was designated for the production of 84,000 tons of iron bars for Czechoslovakia.[115]

Hungarian and Czechoslovak officials furthermore jointly determined that industrial capacity in Hungary that might be used to satisfy the import needs of the ČSR could be generated primarily through an improvement in labour productivity.[116]

The delegation led by Richard Dvořák and Otakar Šimůnek agreed to modify the repayment terms of the proposed 100 million roubles in Czechoslovak credit, requesting that Hungary instead compensate for this loan via the annual shipment to the ČSR of ten equal amounts of bauxite beginning in 1960 with an annual interest rate of two percent. The Czechoslovak officials also agreed to jointly invalidate the 1951 credit agreement and to settle Hungary's outstanding debts under this arrangement within the framework of future mutual commodities-exchange accords.[117] Finally, the talks produced a com-

113 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 129, a.j. 169/6.

114 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 134. a.j. 174/5.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid. (see appendix no. 1).

117 The invalidation of the 1951 credit agreement required Hungary to maintain its obligation to deliver between 210,000 and 320,000 tons of bauxite per year to Czechoslovakia until 1960 and stipulated that ČSR must make 18.2 million rubles available to the MNK in the

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promise settlement regarding the price of electricity exchanged between Hungary and Czechoslovakia at 7.61 kopeks per kWh.[118]

The agreement on the 100 million roubles in Czechoslovak credit for Hungary was finally signed on 19 July 1957. However, prior to this agreement, Czechoslovak and Hungarian officials had targeted an 11.2-percent year-on-year increase in the volume of bilateral commodities exchanged for the year 1957. However, due to the rapid consolidation of conditions in Hungary and the better-than-expected agricultural yields, this target was increased by 15 percent one month later to an unprecedented volume.[119]

On 9 November, 1956, Pavol David, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Slovakia, reported during a meeting of the KSS PB that Hungarian officials had requested supplies of both power and coal from the ČSR:

> Yesterday a delegation from Győr met with Comrade Bacílek and asked for coal and electricity. Their power plant is on strike and they asked us for more than the planned amount of electricity. (They said that) We should also supply them with coal because miners at their mines in Tatabánya are not working.[120]

On 12 November, the Hungarian government officially asked the Czechoslovak government to increase peak output from 65 MW to between 110 MW and 130 MW.[121] The Deputy Finance Minister of the Kádár government, István Antos essentially repeated these requests during his visit to Prague on 20 November, although Czechoslovakia had by this date already begun to export the increased amount of electricity to Hungary.[122]

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years 1957–1958 for the acquisition of equipment for the power plant being constructed in Tiszapalkonya. Czechoslovak and Hungarian officials also determined that Hungary would repay the remaining 35 million rubles owed to Czechoslovakia for machinery used in the bauxite and aluminium-oxide industries in three instalments—16 million rubles in both 1958 and 1959 and 3 million rubles in 1960. AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9 (see appendix no. 3).

118 Hungary used 9.2 million roubles of the 100 million roubles in new Czechoslovak credit to repay its outstanding debt for electricity that the ČSR had supplied to the country in 1955.

119 NA, ÚV KSČ–AN II. ka 131. inv.č. 299. 77.

120 SNA, Predsednictvo ÚV KSS, Október–November, rok. 1956, k. 933.

121 During the first 10 months of 1956, Hungary used 0.83 GWh of power per day in accordance with the annual plan for that year. Following an agreement concluded between the Czechoslovak and Hungarian governments on 12 November, Hungary's daily consumption rose to as high as 2 GWh. AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

122 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

However, the depletion of domestic coal reserves nevertheless resulted in a significant reduction in the supply of electricity in Hungary. According to a report prepared for the Hungarian government of 4 December, 1956, , "the available electricity is not sufficient to satisfy the demand of the population and a restriction of around 50–60 MW must be imposed." This report also stated that power shortages would become worse after the middle of December:

The situation with regard to the supply of electricity is becoming increasingly critical. Compensation for the shortfall [in power production] will require 1,500–2,000 tons of coal per day. If this cannot be generated via domestic production or imports, then the shortfall in electricity output will increase to 90–100 MW. [. . .] A large portion of the country will remain without power as a consequence. Transportation will be shut down and the plants at which production has been launched will not be able to operate either.[123]

On 4 December, Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party General Secretary Kádár sent a letter to Czechoslovak Prime Minister Široký in which he requested that Czechoslovakia continue to export between 110 NW and 130 MW of electricity to Hungary until 20 December.[124]

The Czechoslovak leadership complied with Kádár's appeal, forwarding electricity imported from the German Democratic Republic and Poland to Hungary as well as increasing domestic power production to cover the shortfall in that country.

On 7 December, Kádár dispatched another letter to Široký in which he requested that the ČSR continue to send the previously stipulated amount of power to Hungary until 15 January, 1957, noting that "otherwise, we must count on enormous restrictions with regard to the provision of household electricity and immense difficulties in the supply of water and gas, which would further impede the process of normalization and the launching of industrial production."[125]

123 Report to the Revolutionary Worker-Peasant government regarding the coal and energy situation. MNL OL XIX–A–16–i 1. doboz. This report also appears in Honvári, "A szovjet és a keleti hitelek."

124 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

125 Ibid.

On 13 December, the Commercial Affairs Minister of the Kádár government, Sándor Rónai stated during a meeting with diplomats from the embassy of the ČSR in Budapest that "over the past few days, supplies of electricity transferred [to Hungary] from Czechoslovakia have been a life and death matter."[126]

However, according to a Czechoslovak report on 6 December, "the amount of electricity stipulated in the trade agreement for the year 1956 could be reached by 10–12 December."[127] Therefore, on 15 December, the Czechoslovak government issued a resolution "regarding assistance to the Hungarian People's Republic in the form of electrical energy" stipulating that the ČSR export 15 million KWh of power to Hungary by 31 December with a maximum output of 85 MW.[128] The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia approved this resolution at meetings of the KSČ PB on 17 December and 27 December.[129]

Thus, Czechoslovakia provided a 37.5-million USD loan (270 million Czech Koruna = 432 million Hungarian forints) to Hungary. On top of this there was the 25 million USD Czechoslovakian trade deficit vis-á-vis Hungary in 1957 which amounted to an indirect loan. (180 million Czech koruna = 288 million Hungarian forints). Altogether, between November 1956 and December 1957 Czechoslovakia provided 62.5 million USD in the form of trade loans and hard currency loans. This was 16% of the 380–390 million USD in credit that the Hungarians expected to receive from the socialist bloc. Only the Soviet Union and China gave more than Czechoslovakia.[130] If we add that Hungary primarily used these credit facilities for buying food stuff and consumer goods instead of the machinery stipulated in previous trade agreements and that Czechoslovakia provided energy to the Hungarian population and to its industry well below the market price, we can conclude that the Czechoslovakian contribution was even more significant than the loan amounts suggest.

Loans facilities and aid coming from socialist countries not only contributed to Hungary's economic consolidation but also made it possible for the Hungarian government to increase salaries. In early 1957, 70–75% of the population received a raise. This constituted the most important element of the social legitimacy of the Kádár regime.

126 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 6.

127 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 124, a.j. 159/14 (see appendix IVh).

128 AMZV, Teritoriálni Odbory – Tajné, 1955–1959, Maďarsko 4, Obal 9.

129 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 125, a.j. 160/7 (see appendix III, point II.1).

130 MNL MOL XIX–A–16–i 1. doboz., Honvári, "A szovjet és a keleti hitelek."

It is true that Hungary wanted more than it eventually received. On the one hand, this is also a common negotiation tactic, where one party asks for more than it needs and the other gives less than it was asked for. Finally, in Budapest the leaders also expected that the Czechoslovak industrial and economic lobby would not want to fulfil all the demands of the Kádár government.

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Czechoslovak Assistance for Interior Ministry Organizations in Hungary

During the period of post-revolution political consolidation, Hungarian political leaders sought help from Czechoslovakia in their efforts to reorganize the Interior Ministry and police, to establish the new Workers' Militia (Munkásőrség) and to furnish these organizations with the required weaponry and equipment. Initially, the Hungarian authorities thought that they would use the Czechoslovak party militia, (Lidová Milícia) as a model for the Hungarian Workers' Militia. As early as November 1956, Rudolf Rónai, who held the title of government commissioner, went to Prague in order to learn about the structure of the Lidová Milícia. Initially, this would have been a body of guards protecting industrial sites. The party leadership eventually decided, based on a proposal by Kádár, that the Militia should be subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior instead of to the Party and that its scope should also be expanded. According to a governmental decree of 7 February 1957, the duties of Workers' Militia are "to enhance the protection of people's democracy, prevent disturbances among working people and in the process of production, as well as to offer more effective protection against counter-revolutionary attempts." Providing arms for the militia proved difficult for the Party, however.

At first, they received guns from the Soviets and "from the street". The supply of adequate equipment soon became an acute problem. According to a plan approved on 21 February 1957, 5241 members should have been armed by 10 March especially in Budapest and in the larger towns. At the next stage of the plan, between 20 March and 1 April membership should have increased to 15 408.[131] The party leadership expected that a new wave of demonstrations and revolt might begin on 15 March, on the anniversary of the revolution of 1848, which had been a national holiday before the Communist regime came to power.[132]

131 Kiss, „A Munkásőrség megalakítása," 238–277.

132 In reality, there was no such thing as the "We Start Again in March" movement (Márciusban

On 15 December, 1956, Deputy Interior Minister Tibor Pőcze told an official posted at the Interior Ministry *rezidentura* at the Czechoslovak embassy in Budapest that Hungary was receiving sufficient supplies of weaponry from the Soviet Union, although it still needed 5,000 truncheons for the national police force.[133] On this same date, First Deputy Prime Minister Ferenc Münnich sent a letter to the Czechoslovak Interior Minister, Rudolf Barák in which he asked the ČSR to send 5,000 truncheons to Hungary on loan.[134] However, the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry did not have the stipulated number of surplus truncheons and therefore had transported only 450 truncheons to Hungary by 23 January, 1957. [135] On 6 February, 1957, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau issued an order for the Matador factory in Bratislava to manufacture and deliver the remaining 4,450 truncheons within three weeks.[136] By the end of February, Matador had produced 2,500 truncheons and promised to manufacture the remaining 1,950 by 20 March.[137]

On 12 January, the Hungarian First Deputy Prime Minister, Münnich wrote another letter to Czechoslovak Interior Minister Barák in which he requested that the ČSR send various types of weaponry and equipment to Hungary and invited the Czechoslovak Deputy Interior Minister Karel Klíma to Budapest in order to personally discuss these deliveries.[138]

On 21 January, Deputy Interior Minister Klíma and Interior Ministry Directorate IX leader Colonel Karel Šímek travelled to Budapest, where they met Münnich, as well as the chief Soviet advisor in Hungary, Aleksey Dmitrievich Beschastnov, the former State Protection Authority (ÁVH) Colonel Mihály Jamrich, the head of the Budapest police and Hungarian intelligence officials.

Újra Kezdjük – MUK) but the slogan had appeared in graffiti in Budapest. The Czechoslovakian ambassador to Budapest also reported that something might happen on 15 March.

133 ABS, f. I.S-8, reg. sz. 80353/000, č. l. 48–49.

134 ABS, H-669-1.

135 Ibid.

136 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 129, a.j. 169/12.

137 ABS, H-669-1.

138 Ibid.

During these talks, Münnich gave Klíma and Šímek a list of the weapons, ammunition and intelligence-gathering equipment that were required, including the following specific items: 500 6.35mm pistols; 50 small submachine guns; 8 hunting rifles; 3 million 7.65mm cartridges; 500,000 6.35mm cartridges; 50,000 9mm cartridges; transceivers; tape recorders; cameras; and camera lenses.[139]

On 15 February, Deputy Interior Minister Antal Bartos, who had succeeded Tibor Pőcze in this position, requested that the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry deliver the requested 7.65mm cartridges to Hungary as soon as possible.[140]

The Economic Directorate of the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry determined that the weaponry, ammunition and equipment that Hungarian officials had requested was worth 2.51 million Kčs, but that the ministry would be unable to deliver items valued at 590,000 Kčs that included tires for Škoda trucks and Magnola cameras.[141] On 29 January, Deputy Interior Minister Klíma delivered some of the requested operative instruments to Münnich.[142]

On 21 February, 1957, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Political Bureau approved 1.99 million Kčs in material support for Hungary and a further 200,000 Kčs in assistance for the Hungarian intelligence services in order to purchase the necessary equipment for its operatives.[143] Czechoslovak Interior Minister Barák subsequently informed Hungarian First Deputy Prime Minister Münnich that 1.87 million Kčs worth of the requested items would be delivered to Hungary on 5 March via the Komarno/Komárom border crossing in six trucks and in two passenger vehicles. Barák noted that this shipment would include all of the requested weaponry and optical equipment with the exception of four hunting rifles and two Magnola cameras and furthermore stated that 2,500 truncheons would be delivered to Hungary on 15 March.[144]

139 For the complete list, see ABS, H-669-1.

140 ABS, f. I.S-8, reg. sz. 80353/013, č. l. 67.

141 ABS, H-669-1.

142 For the specific instruments, see ABS, H-669-1.

143 NA, f. 1261/0/11, sv. 129, a.j. 169/12.

144 ABS, H-669-1. The delivery of these truncheons on the Hungarian public holiday commemorating the outbreak of the 1848 Revolution against Habsburg rule was a symbolic gesture.

On 21 March, the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry issued a summary report showing that 1.95 million Kčs in assistance had been sent to Hungary and that in return the MNK had delivered three Csepel motorboats worth 447,000 Kčs to the ČSR, thus resulting in a difference of slightly over 1.5 million Kčs. The report stated that the Interior Ministry had paid 54,924 Kčs for a visit by Hungarian state-security officials to Czechoslovakia, noting that 20 of these officials were still in Karlovy Vary.[145]

In essence, Soviet arms were initially used for the rapid training of the Workers' Militia, thus the vehicles, truncheons and other weapons were of fundamental importance to prepare the organization to be ready to act in case of an eventual uprising breaking out on 15 March – although this did not happen. However, the documents reveal that it was not only the Workers' Militia that received much help from Czechoslovakia. The state security forces that were in the process of reorganization also benefited from the supplies to a large extent.

Conclusion

At the time of the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution, the KSČ had been in a secure position for about three months. It had either suppressed or channelled initiatives coming from below to its own aims. In Czechoslovakia, there was no revolutionary atmosphere in October 1956. This made it possible for Antonín Novotný to strengthen his own position in Moscow. He was present at a series of meetings that discussed and assessed the situation in Hungary: on 24 October in Moscow, on 2 November in Bucharest and between 1 and 4 January 1957 in Budapest. During the first two meetings, he argued that the revolution needed to be put down through military means and he offered Czechoslovakian resources for doing so. The Czechoslovakian party leadership closely followed events in Hungary from the first day and took measures in both internal and foreign policy with three related objectives in mind. First, they wanted to make use of the revolution to strengthen their own position. Second, they wanted to make sure that the revolution would not spread to Czechoslovakia. Third, they wanted to assist and influence the new Kádár-led government of Hungary as much as they could.

In order to prevent the spread of revolutionary ideas, they closed the border with Hungary completely and also mobilized the army units that were in Slovakia. At the

145 Ibid.

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same time, they launched anti-revolutionary propaganda spread through newspapers, radio and leaflets both in Czechoslovakia and in Hungary. They set up an Operations Team and tried to engage in propaganda activities along the border, including by infiltrating Hungary, with the help of Hungarian-speaking members of the party. After the Kádár government was formed, they helped Hungarian government propaganda by supplying paper to it.

The KSČ had an important role in advising the Kádár-government. The "summit" meeting in Budapest on 1–4 January 1957 was even more important in this regard than the visit of the Czechoslovakian government delegation to Budapest on 15 November 1956. Despite the fragmented nature of archival material documenting the meeting in January, it can be concluded that the KSČ played an important role in convincing Kádár to change the course of his policies. In place of a decentralised model of socialism based on multiparty government,[146] he opted for the centralised Soviet model and (even if we consider subsequent reforms) remained essentially loyal to this until 1989.

Having observed the actual steps that indicated that decentralisation had stopped – and in order to make up for the loss that the change caused – the Czechoslovakian government provided large-scale economic assistance to Hungary. The size of the package of loans issued by Czechoslovakia was third only to those extended by the Soviet Union and China, even though the material and financial assistance it rendered burdened the Czechoslovakian economy and could not satisfy all requests that Kádár's government had made. This was vital for enabling the Kádár government to improve the standard of living in the country besides stabilizing its own position already in 1957. Finally, the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Interior provided equipment to its Hungarian counterpart so that it could set up a security force to supress any further dissent.

146 It should be borne in mind that between 1945 and 1989 Czechoslovakia and Poland formally had multiparty parliamentary systems. These parties de facto accepted the leading role of Communist parties but they had a role in legitimizing the regime in the eyes of the population.

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Democratic transition with those responsible for martial law? Moral criticism of the Polish round table talks

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Abstract

The martial law in Poland, introduced on 13 December 1981 put an end to any lingering belief in the system's reformability and gradually forced the Jaruzelski regime onto the path of expediency. Thus, in addition to the deepening economic crisis, the need to reach a mutual compromise brought to the negotiating table the leadership of the state and Lech Wałęsa's Citizens' Committee as the constructive opposition. As a consequence, other opposition organisations such as Fighting Solidarity, the Confederation of Independent Poland or the Federation of Fighting Youth sharply criticised not only the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR), but also the mainstream opposition, which was ready to compromise. They pointed to the worst sins of the communist regime, which had become a negotiating partner, with the latest martial law at their head. The clash of these morally-based criticisms with the views of those trying to avoid further bloodshed through negotiations deepened the internal conflicts of the Polish opposition and have proven to be crucial in the contemporary assessment of Poland's transition from Communism to the present democratic system.

Keywords

martial law, transition, Poland, round table talks, Solidarity, Citizens' Committee, Lech Wałęsa, Wojciech Jaruzelski

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Introduction

Although martial law in Poland, introduced on 13 December 1981, was lifted on 22 July 1983, its effects remained decisive on several levels until the transition from Communism in 1989 and indeed to this day. The aim of my paper is to determine the role of the memory of the martial law in the critiques of the events of 1989 made at that time, especially contemporary criticism of the round table talks. I will therefore focus on the opposition organisations that were left out of the central processes of transition, and investigate whether the declaration of Martial Law in December 1981 was treated as an abstract or practical part of their critiques. In order to tackle the problem precisely, it is also essential to review the conclusions that the leadership of the state and that of Solidarity drew from the experience of martial law, and the dimension to which these experiences influenced the negotiated transition. I will also briefly address the post-1989 assessment of martial law.

In this study, I will apply Jan Assmann's concept of *communicative memory.* This type of memory has not yet been institutionalised, its interpretations have not matured, and specialists have not yet accepted it as an established fact. It is unstable: instead of material symbols, it is embodied in everyday communication and interactions.[1] The groups transmitting communicative memory – primarily the organisations of the Polish opposition in the context of this study – do not have a unified internal image of the

1 Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory", 18.

object of memory, and generational differences are decisive in these distinctions.[2] I will approach the interpretations of martial law of 1989 from this point of view.

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Solidarity forced into compromise

In addition to the direct strikes on the opposition, including the internment of opposition leaders and their occasional imprisonment, martial law soon led to the fragmentation of Solidarity. A key factor in the schism was the development of very different ideas among its main spokesmen about how to react to the new situation. Jacek Kuroń, for example, wanted to deal a simultaneous, countrywide blow to state power through a general strike, forcing it to compromise (in a *szybki skok,* i.e. quick jump).[3] Adam Michnik, on the other hand, favoured a comprehensive underground movement that would have served to reconstruct civil society (*długi marsz,* i.e. long march).[4] Such disagreements, that were less ideological than strategic in nature (they all agreed that the communists had to be fought in some form) led to the secession of many groups from Solidarity. For example, Kornel Morawiecki, who rejected the moderate policy, resigned from the Solidarity Regional Strike Committee in Lower Silesia and founded Fighting Solidarity. This group declared an open, uncompromising struggle against the communist regime.[5] At the same time, various student and youth organisations also broke away from Solidarity. Their members did not feel defeated by martial law, so in contrast to the previous generation, which had become highly apathetic by 1989, they had a strong voice in the process of transition, especially as regards criticism of compromises with the authorities. It is also worth mentioning that the vast majority of these new formations rejected the ideas of self-government that were still a feature of Solidarity in 1980–81 and gradually took a stand in favour of the idea of a free market.[6]

2 Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory", 19.

3 Lis, "Solidarność w podziemiu", 148.

4 Kucharczyk, *Polska myśl polityczna,* 136–137.

5 With its militaristic structure, the organisation, which was mainly active in Wrocław, saw itself as a successor to World War II resistance movements and a follower of the anti-communist tradition. Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution*, 30.; Kamiński, "A lengyelországi szükségállapot", 80.

6 Paczkowski, *Fél* évszázad *Lengyelország történetéből*, 346; 351.

Thus, the introduction of martial law led to strong anti-communist resentment but not to unity among the opposition, which became further fragmented before 1989.

In addition, not only did the number of members of Solidarity decline, but also the supportive crowd behind the union also waned. When the leaders of the organisation, whose structure was disintegrating, were released from internment or prison, they were unable to reconnect directly with society. This alienation was illustrated by the 1985 legislative elections. The National Electoral Commission stated that 78.86% of those eligible voted, in spite of the Solidarity's call to boycott the elections. In contrast Solidarity estimated the participation at approximately 66 percent.[7]

Limited opportunities of the state leadership

The start of the process of perestroika in the Soviet Union increased the economic and political room for manoeuvre of the Central and Eastern European states.[8] In Poland, however, the introduction of martial law gradually restricted the options of the Jaruzelski regime. During the period of martial law, in parallel with this method of political repression, the leadership of the state also employed economic means to stifle the opposition. Jaruzelski announced reforms as early as January 1982. These measures helped to keep social tensions under control, even at the cost of more severe external indebtedness.[9] After the lifting of martial law, the authorities experimented with progressive measures affecting society in several areas, such as the issue of the ownership of individual farms.[10] The changes taking place in the Soviet Union also greatly contributed to the "reform compulsion" of the Polish leadership. Mikhail Gorbachev made it clear to Jaruzelski that he could not count on his help in solving Poland's internal problems.

In parallel with the growing economic uncertainty, political change was becoming inevitable, especially as Western creditors were making it increasingly clear that they would take into account political factors – not only economic issues – when assessing solvency. Thus, the institution of ombudsman was created, which was highly unusual

7 Siedziako, *Bez wyboru*, 309.

8 Szalai, "A létezett szocializmus", 62.

9 Szalai, "A létezett szocializmus", 59.

10 Eisler, *The "Polish Months"*, 110–111.

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for a party-state, even if Ewa Łętowska's field of action was restricted.[11] As early as in the spring of 1982, the State Tribunal was established, adjudicating cases in which individuals who occupy (or have occupied) the highest positions of state are charged with violation of the Constitution or other laws. Almost significantly, political liberalisation included the general amnesty in September 1986, which led to the release of political prisoners, allowing Poland to rejoin the IMF after the state had left in 1950. According to Jerzy Eisler: "No doubt the Poles living in the final years of the PRL enjoyed the broadest range of freedoms in the entire Soviet bloc […]"[12] Although this statement can be criticised due to the fact that the existence of theoretical freedoms did not necessarily mean that citizens could exercise them, it is true that Polish leaders, who closely followed the changes taking place within the Soviet Union, had succeeded in making society highly apolitical by the time of the transition. Radical opposition voices were not finding a receptive audience by then. At the same time, however, the Jaruzelski system had not succeeded in winning over society, as is shown, for example, by the record-low participation in the 1987 referendum. Furthermore, political issues were increasingly being overshadowed by the looming economic difficulties of everyday life. The leadership of the Polish People's Republic (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa, PRL), like other socialist regimes, could do little to avoid the implementation of radical economic and political changes while their own policies were failing[13].

Preparatory and round table negotiations

The state of the Polish economy, which sunk to a low point in 1988 – inflation, for example, rose by more than 100% in that year alone[14] – generated, for the first time since 1980–81, a series of national strikes, although these fell short of the size of the 1980 summer walkouts. The strikes began in April, and after a quieter period following May, they flared up again in August, and lasted until the end of the summer, primarily demanding wage increases and the legalisation of Solidarity.[15] Due to the unrelenting

11 Eisler, *The "Polish Months"*, 110–111.

12 Eisler, *The "Polish Months"*, 111.

13 Bartha, "Transition, Transformation, 'Postsocialism'", 30.

14 Vnenchak, *Lech Walesa and Poland*, 132.

15 The latter claim was not accepted by the All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (Ogólnop-

resistance, the National Defence Committee (Komitet Obrony Kraju)[16] issued ordinances to the army and the state administration on 20 August 1988 to prepare for the imposition of a state of emergency.[17] Martial law did not, therefore, remain at the level of a recent but gradually receding trauma. At this turning point, just before the start of the transition negotiations, it became a real prospect once again.

As the economic crisis now threatened to re-energize an only recently pacified society and political sphere, the leadership of the state finally admitted the need for compromise. In previous years, the communists had primarily tried to win over the Catholic Church, which they saw as the only force capable of mobilising and taming society at the same time.[18] However, by 1988 Jaruzelski himself was aware that he would not be able to lead the country out of the crisis without coming to an agreement with the opposition.

The PZPR slowly recognized that they had to begin negotiations with Lech Wałęsa, the leader of Solidarity, which was considered the only legitimate party in the Western world. Resolving the economic crisis at this point had become more important than the question of who would resolve it. Informal talks, which had been taking place since January 1988, were replaced by direct negotiations between Interior Minister Czesław Kiszczak and Wałęsa from the end of August, after the latter fulfilled the condition of state power, i.e. put an end to the high volume of strikes.[19]

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olskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych), which primarily instigated the strikes. The trade union, led by Alfred Miodowicz, was set up in 1984 to counterbalance Solidarity, so it initially almost fully supported and followed the policies dictated by the PZPR. However, as early as March 1987, its leadership issued a statement openly criticising the reform plans announced by the government. Garlicki*, Karuzela*, 15.; Paczkowski, *Fél évszázad Lengyelország történetéből,* 1997. 357; Dudek*, Historia polityczna Polski,* 18.

16 Committee on Defence Affairs of the Council of Ministers of the Polish People's Republic, established in 1959. It was empowered to supervise and coordinate the work of all state bodies performing defence tasks. In the event of an imminent threat to state security, it was given full authority, led by the first secretary of the PZPR.

17 Paczkowski, *Fél* évszázad *Lengyelország történetéből*, 372.

18 Kuta*,* "Polityczne konstruowanie „okrągłego stołu", 33–42.

19 Dudek*, Pierwsze lata III*, 21–22.

The round table talks,[20] originally scheduled for October 1988, could not be started for months due to the postponement of the adoption of a position on political and trade union pluralism, the lack of unity in the PZPR and a change of prime minister. The passage of time favoured the opposition, as it gave Solidarity time to put its battered organisational infrastructure in order and to strengthen the image of Wałęsa. The joint outcome of these two processes was the setting up on 18 December 1988 of the Citizens' Committee (Komitet Obywatelski).[21] In addition to Wałęsa, the leaders of the organisation, which involved about 135 participants, were Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuroń and Bronisław Geremek. The 15 thematic groups of members, in practice, corresponded to the subcommittees of the subsequent round table talks.[22] Thus, within Solidarity, which was already party-like in many respects despite encapsulating many ideologies, a narrower group emerged, the main connecting element of which was its leading figure.

The membership of Solidarity had already been polarised by the mere fact of it entering into negotiations with the authorities.[23] Furthermore, potential participants were divided into "constructives" or "obstructives" by Wałęsa himself and his closest confidants. All this deepened the fault lines within Solidarity. At the same time, society was also divided as to which line to follow.[24] The origins of this conflict can be traced back to Wałęsa's release from 11 months of internment in November 1982. From then on, his leadership approach was often described as dictatorial by prominent figures of Solidarity, such as Anna Walentynowicz or Andrzej Gwiazda. In their eyes, the operation of the trade union had become more and more anti-democratic. Meanwhile, Wałęsa tried to create an organisational structure that matched his own charismatic leadership style. For this reason he formed the Temporary Council of Solidarity (Tymczasowa Rada NSZZ Solidarność) in September 1986. The declared goal of the governing body, created by members of Wałęsa's trusted circle, was to lead Solidarity back to the path of legal operation.[25] In response to this, the Working Group of the National Commission

20 The term was first used by Wojciech Jaruzelski during the 7th Congress of the Central Committee of the PZPR, in his speech in June 1988 on the need for "open dialogue" prior to the enactment of a new law on companies and associations. Dudek, *Pierwsze lata III*, 20.

21 Opulski, "Gracze, szulerzy", 44.

22 Jurzysta, *Unia Wolności*, 9.

23 Opulski, "Gracze, szulerzy", 49–50.

24 Mitrovits, "From the Idea of Self-Management to Capitalism", 168–170.

25 The Temporary Council of Solidarity was dissolved in the spring of 1989. Its members con-

of Solidarity (Grupa Robocza Komisji Krajowej NSZZ "Solidarność") was founded in April 1987, led by such figures as Andrzej Gwiazda and Seweryn Jaworski.[26]

On 18 January 1989, the "Position of the PZPR Central Committee on political and trade union pluralism" was adopted at the 10th Plenum of the PZPR Central Committee. On 27 January, Kiszczak and Wałęsa agreed on a list of participants to meet at the Round Table. The strength of the opposition's negotiating position is shown by the fact that, despite putting Michnik and Kuroń on the blacklist of "radicals", Kiszczak and the State Security Service (Służba Bezpieczeństwa), failed to exclude them from the talks. The final decision on their presence was made personally by Wojciech Jaruzelski.

In the meantime, a common goal of the state authority and the Citizens' Committee became evident: to prevent the more radical opposition organisations from influencing the course of events at all costs.

Twenty-six of the fifty-six people who took part in the roundtable talks were delegated by the opposition, fourteen by the governing coalition,[27] and six by the All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions, while fourteen were invited as "independent authorities".[28] The Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches were also present as observers, with Bronisław Dembowski and Alojzy Orszulik representing the former and Janusz Narzyński the latter church.[29] The election of Cardinal Archbishop of Kraków Karol Wojtyła as Pope in 1978 played a huge role in making the Polish Catholic Church, which has traditionally been deeply socially embedded, an unavoidable presence. John Paul II made three pilgrimages in the PRL, and in the spirit of his role as a mediator, he greeted Jaruzelski at the Vatican in early 1987. According to state security reports on Archbishop of Kraków Franciszek Macharski, he summarised the purpose and responsibilities of the clergy as regards the round table talks at a conference on 22 March, 1989, as follows:

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tinued their activities in the Citizens' Committee.

26 Pilarski, "Okrągły stół" 81.

27 In the PRL there was a quasi-one-party system. In addition to the unquestionable dominance of the PZPR, other allied parties – the United People's Party (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe) and the Alliance of Democrats (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne) – also took part in the National Assembly.

28 Five of the latter also strengthened the ranks of the Citizens' Committee.

29 Dudek. *Pierwsze lata III*, 32.

> Representatives of the church are present at all times during the meetings, but only as observers […] The Round Table should lead to an agreement between all constructive actors in the country. In order not to waste this opportunity, prudence and serenity are needed. The priesthood is absolutely necessary to achieve this goal. Any action by its members in this situation that is irresponsible, politicised, malicious or disturbing the mood of society is completely unacceptable.[30]

The Polish Catholic Church professed faith in the negotiated solution in this spirit, drawing a sharp dividing line in view of the system's past crimes.

On 6 February 1989, the round table talks[31] began in the Viceroy (now Presidential) Palace in Warsaw, the seat of the Prime Minister's Office. The negotiations took place in three committees (economic and social policy, trade union pluralism, political reform) and their subcommittees.

The appearance of the memory of martial law in the critique of transition negotiations

When attempting to determine whether the memory of martial law was decisive in the background of the objections to the negotiations, it is first worth pointing out that the criticism coming from within Solidarity did not focus on this aspect in the least. Those leaders of the trade union who were not members of Walesa's inner circle, above all Andrzej Gwiazda, instead criticised the discussions in the light of the role of Solidarity in 1980–81. It is part of the overall picture, however, that Gwiazda did not even sign the Gdańsk Agreement of 31 August 1980, claiming that it contained too many compromises. Along with several others, he also strongly protested against the Warsaw Agreement (30 March 1981), which was made after Wałęsa ended the strikes without the consent of the National Coordinating Commission.[32]

30 Łatka, "Osoba numer 2", 308.

31 When using the common term, it is worth noting that at the Round Table itself, the negotiating parties took their seats only at the opening and the closing ceremony. See Opulski, "Gracze, szulerzy", 45.

32 Paczkowski, *Fél évszázad Lengyelország történetéből,* 319–320.

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In addition to the old fault lines within Solidarity, the negotiations were also heavily criticised from outside. Kornel Morawiecki was the first to declare that he considered the dialogue with state authorities, manifested in the Kiszczak–Wałęsa talks, to be a mistake not only politically but also morally.[33] He thus predicted that criticisms of the negotiations would relate at least as much to the mere fact that they took place as to their specific content.

It is difficult to determine the extent to which the communicative memory of martial law played a role in the formation of similar opinions. The very genesis of certain organisations – for example Fighting Solidarity – was linked to martial law, as they were created in reaction to it. Thus, this aspect could hardly have become unimportant for them barely 7 years later.

Furthermore, there is a concrete, tangible aspect: personal overlaps. The largely anti-communist opposition organisations[34] such as Fighting Solidarity, the Confederation of Independent Poland (Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej), the Federation of Fighting Youth (Federacja Młodzieży Walczącej), and so on, were particularly critical of the process of transition due to the leading role played by the politicians who had introduced martial law. Indeed, there were no personnel changes in several key positions of the state in the previous years. In addition to Wojciech Jaruzelski, who was still the first secretary of the Central Committee of the PZPR, and Czesław Kiszczak, who had held the post of Minister of the Interior without interruption since July 1981, mention may also be made of names such as Janusz Narzyński. He was the bishop of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland from 1975 to 1991. In 1989 he was given observer status at the Round Table, despite having previously welcomed the introduction of martial law and then done much to improve the foreign image of the PRL. The key figure, however, was above all Jaruzelski: the symbol of the communist authorities' war on their own nation, which culminated in the introduction of martial law.[35]

As in other East-Central European states, not only the state party but also the opposition that showed its readiness to compromise was the subject of much criticism for participating in the talks. In Poland, the leading figures of the opposition, just like

33 Ligarski, "Wolni i solidarni", 93.

34 In Poland, party formation-fever was only diminished by the Law on Political Parties No. 312, which came into force on 28 July 1990. Until then we can only speak of political organisations.

35 Łatka, "The Catholic Church in Poland", 304.

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those of the PZPR, were the same as when martial law was introduced. Above all, their critics pointed to the most serious sins of the regime,[36] which had become their negotiating partner, including most recently the imposition of martial law.[37] The clash of these moral criticisms with the position of those seeking to avoid more bloodshed through negotiations[38] further deepened the internal conflicts of the Polish opposition. In addition, it proved decisive in the subsequent assessment of the regime change. Dissatisfaction was further exacerbated by conspiracy theories, which were rapidly gaining ground and which were fuelled by members of the right wing of Solidarity, who were increasingly pushed into the background of the negotiations.[39] They spread rumours that the real agreements, in which the elite of Solidarity was transferring the PZPR *nomenklatura* to the new system in exchange for certain leading positions, were being concluded in the villa of the Ministry of the Interior in Magdalenka.[40] The latter location really did host unofficial meetings running parallel to the official talks, where the negotiators tried to resolve the most intractable disputes of the Round Table. Twisted out of the context of an actual phenomenon that occurred in the regime changes in Central and Eastern Europe – the transformation of members of party nomenklatura appointments into capitalists[41] – in the eyes of many, those negotiations made the discussions entered into with the state a symbol of a deal with the enemy rather than an attempt at democratisation. The "black legend" of the Polish transition was born.[42]

36 Namely, putting a bloody end to the Poznan 1956 uprisings and the 1970 protests, as well as the administrative and existential repression of the 1968 student and 1976 workers' protests.

37 As a Hungarian analogy, it is worth mentioning that the memory of the defeat of the 1956 revolution and the retaliation that followed it was more than three decades old by 1989. The temporal distance not only resulted in the envelopment of trauma, but also in the overwhelming replacement of the elite of the one-party system. Thus, all the "1956" events of 1989, with the exception of the brief attempts to revive the workers' councils, were symbolic: Imre Pozsgay's "revolutionary" radio speech, the reburial of Imre Nagy, the proclamation of the republic on October 23, and so on.

38 As early as 1976, Adam Michnik made it clear in his essay, *A New Evolutionism,* that changing the system cannot claim more human lives.

39 Vetter*, Jak Lech Wałęsa,* 285.

40 Mitrovits*, A remény hónapjai*, 172.

41 Seeing the unreformability of the planned economy and the inevitable fall of state concentration, the party-state elites turned to the free market and the multi-party system to ensure their stay in positions of power.

42 Szumiło*, "*Reform or revolution?", 269.

It is important to note that most of the critical organisations had already long since rejected the idea of negotiations with the state leadership.[43] For example, the Polish Independence Party (Polska Partia Niepodległościowa) had announced on 22 January 1985 in the programme it issued at the formation of the party that, in the light of the experience of martial law, there could be no dialogue and agreement with these authorities. They also declared the compromises of August and September 1980[44] to be ''naïve'.[45] The latter criticism is particularly interesting in terms of the round table talks, when the radical opposition organisations seem to have collectively forgotten that the state authorities and Solidarity had already resolved a crisis situation through negotiation. From another point of view, it was also overlooked that the Polish leadership had much more experience in neutralising situations that threatened a social explosion by force than they had in negotiated solutions. The mere fact that such negotiations began in 1989 can be considered at least a half-success, especially in the light of the decrees of August 1988, which prepared for the re-introduction of martial law. While it would be wrong to claim that the only alternative to the round table talks would have been bloodshed, another solution in the absence of direct social pressure – e.g. on the model of the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution – could not have taken place.

Depending on their ideological stance, the various critical opposition organisations denounced the round table talks from different perspectives. Janusz Waluszko, for instance, one of the leaders of the Alternative Society Movement (Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego) in Gdańsk, noted that the Round Table "is an instrument of communist-style repression and economic exploitation".[46] A common element in this and similar critiques is that the Round Table was seen as a "communist" phenomenon, a construct serving the interests of the PZPR.

43 Rejecting the thought of negotiations was quite typical. The need for some kind of compromise was first openly proclaimed by Adam Michnik in 1985 (*Takie czasy… Rzecz o kompromisie)*.

44 In August and September 1980, the strike committees reached a total of four different agreements with government representatives. They stated the need for new self-governing unions, which allowed Solidarity to become legal, while the government undertook to ease censorship, re-employ those made dismissed as a result of their participation in the 1970 and 1976 workers' movements, and to hold a public debate on the essential elements of the necessary economic reform.

45 Deklaracja Programowa Polskiej Partii Niepodległościowej [Programme Declaration of the Polish Independence Party], Archiwum Akt Nowych (hereafter: AAN), 2/2853/0/-/1

46 Informacja o ingerencjach dokonanych w marcu 1989. [Information on interferences made in March 1989.] AAN, 2/1102/0, kat. A, Sygn. 3925.

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From the point of view of communicative memory, not only generational differences, but also distinctions within each generation can be observed. For some young people martial law was an actual point of reference, for others it was not, even if the negotiations were criticised by both. This question can be approached from two sides. For one group, the introduction of martial law was a crime that precluded compromise with those responsible. For the other group, however, the events of December 1981 and their consequences were simply not tangible enough by 1989. While they were not inclined to come to an agreement with the authorities, this was not because they were afraid of them: they did not see the possible recurrence of martial law as a real threat.

It is also worth addressing the characteristics of the use of the adjective "totalitarian" in conceptual terms. Ignoring the above-mentioned process of detotalization and the original meaning of the term, this phrase has become a constant element in the description of the system in the vocabulary of the radical opposition. However, there have also been instances of individuals going beyond the use of this adjective in their criticism of the state leadership. Earlier, in 1986, Jan Józef Lipski stated that the rivalry of the reborn political camps (left and right) could only be secondary to the conflict between "democracy and totalitarianism".[47] Nevertheless, when the Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna) was reorganised under his leadership in November 1987, he had already expressed doubts as to whether the power exercised by the PZPR was indeed totalitarian.[48] However, this left him in the minority in the opposition space. Some of its anti-system representatives thus inadvertently contributed to the legitimacy of the constructive opposition they sought to criticise, as the latter could be credited as the conquerors of a vast, totalitarian state rather than the somewhat weaker reality of the late Jaruzelski regime.[49]

47 Garbal, "Inicjatywa odbudowy PPS", 417–418.

48 Garbal, "Inicjatywa odbudowy PPS", 431.

49 Walicki, "Totalitarianism and Detotalitarization", 525. The inadequate use of the totalitarian phrase during the period of transition was by no means limited to Poland.

The round table agreement and the elections

The main political results of the round table talks presented at the plenary session of 5 April 1989 were as follows:

- the re-legalization of Solidarity (but without the right to strike);
- the restoration of the upper house of the Polish Parliament, the Senate, which had been cancelled by the falsified referendum of 1946, as that would have entailed continuity with the Second Polish Republic;
- the establishment of the institution of the President of the Polish People's Republic in place of the Council of State, with broad authority;
- an undertaking that Members will initially enter parliament, which will work to develop a new democratic constitution and suffrage law, through compromise elections. Under the latter agreement, all seats in the Senate were available, while in the Sejm only 35 % could be freely elected, with sixty percent of the seats held by the PZPR and its satellite parties, and five percent by certain Catholic organisations (PAX Association, Polish Christian Social Association, Christian Social Union).

The success of the roundtable negotiations and the agreement that was reached represented a failure for the organisations protesting against the talks. Although the initiative of the Congress of the Anti-System Opposition, which aimed to unify their operations at least in part, had its second (and last) meeting in May 1989, the changing political climate provoked increasingly different reactions from those involved.

The central fault lines lay in the differing attitudes towards the parliamentary elections. One of the harshest condemnations of elections can be read in *Bojkot Wyborów,* a statement submitted to the National Committee by the Gdańsk wing of the Federation of Fighting Youth. According to this declaration, the election boycott is "a political order and a moral duty for all Poles", as participating in the elections would legitimise a state power "on which hands there is blood of the soldiers of the Home Army, the workers of Poznań and the Tri-city, and the victims of martial law".[50]

50 Wąsowicz SDB, "„Nie pójdziemy na wybory!" Akcje bojkotu wyborów organizowane przez młodzieżowe organizacje niezależne w Gdańsku w latach 1984–1988", 757.

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However, an election boycott did not prove to be a common position among the organisations criticising the round table talks. The case of the Confederation of Independent Poland, founded in 1979 as the first opposition group in the Eastern Bloc which defined itself as a party,[51] is particularly interesting. In his essay *Revolution without Revolution* (Rewolucja bez rewolucji), its leader, Leszek Moczulski, criticised those in the opposition who could only imagine the change hand-in-hand with the PZPR, seeing chaos as the only alternative.[52] The Confederation's view of the state party as an administrative tool of Soviet colonisation,[53] along with its strongly anti-Soviet rhetoric and the setting of national independence as its main goal, was primarily addressed at conservative-nationalist groups.[54] Identified by the security services as an organisation posing a national security risk on the basis of intelligence analyses,[55] the Confederation was particularly devastated by martial law. 272 of its members were interned and several served prison sentences. Moczulski, who had been in prison almost continuously since 1980, received a 7-year prison sentence in October 1982. He was released under an amnesty after 1 year and 9 months.[56]

In light of all this, it is understandable why the Confederation deciding to run in the June 1989 elections stirred up such a storm in the opposition. In the election program of the organisation – which was in line with the objectives accepted by its 3rd Congress in March 1989 – they justified their participation with the argument that if only constructive opposition candidates ran for seats, it could seem that Polish society was legitimising the existing system, which was still dominated by those responsible for martial law.[57]

51 It also tried to run in the 1980 Sejm elections. Paczkowski, *Fél* évszázad *Lengyelország történetéből*. 286.

52 Moczulski, "Rewolucja bez rewolucji", 6.

53 Gieroń, "Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej", 60–61.

54 Körösényi, *Értelmiség, politikai gondolkodás*, 52.

55 Gieroń, "Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej", 63.

56 Cecuda, *Leksykon opozycji*, 50.

57 *Program wyborczy Konfederacji Polski Niepodległej*. Lengyel Kutatóintézet és Múzeum (hereafter: LKM), Polish samizdat publications, 5/151.

The state authorities originally hoped that the Citizens' Committee, as a legally functioning parliamentary opposition, would merely help them convince society to accept the planned, painful economic reforms. However, the Citizens' Committee was overwhelmingly successful in the elections, with a participation rate of 62 %. They had acquired all the seats in the Sejm available to them, and this was also true of the Senate, with one exception.

After the elections

The state authorities, which had suffered a serious defeat in the elections, still won a parliamentary majority thanks to the round table compromise. Adam Michnik offered a solution to this unexpected problem of power sharing in a *Gazeta Wyborcza*[58] editorial of 3 July, 1989: "Your President, Our Prime Minister" (Wasz Prezydent, Nasz Premier).[59] The idea, which was considered hasty by many commentators, was embraced by Lech Wałęsa and, more importantly, by the Soviet and American leadership. With the help of the latter, Wojciech Jaruzelski accepted his candidacy for the presidency, and Solidarity did not nominate a counter-candidate. Despite the road being cleared in this way, on 19 July 1989 the parliament elected Jaruzelski as President by only a one-vote majority, as counter-votes were received from each faction. His election provoked serious indignation from Solidarity voters. Jaruzelski's successor to the position of first secretary of the Central Committee of the PZPR was Mieczysław Rakowski, who resigned with his government after the elections.

Meanwhile, the Alliance of Democrats and the United People's Party were pivotal to the issue of government formation. Together with their representatives, either the PZPR parliamentary group or the Citizens' Parliamentary Club (Obywatelski Klub Parlamentarny) could have achieved a majority. The latter's first attempt to agree with the satellite parties was unsuccessful, so on 2 August, 1989, the Sejm finally supported Czesław Kiszczak's candidacy for prime minister. The communists wrongly calculated

58 The newspaper was the legal continuation of the samizdat sheet *Tygodnik Mazowsze,* which had previously been published in editions of 50–70 thousand copies. The first issue as the campaign newspaper of Solidarity's Citizens Committee was published on 8 May 1989. After the political struggles following the June 1989 elections and the formation of the Mazowiecki government, it gradually became an independent daily newspaper. Its editor-in-chief has been Adam Michnik from the beginning.

59 Michnik, "Wasz prezydent, nasz premier", 1.

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that Solidarity would also join the cabinet. This should have offset the fact that not only the head of state, but now also the prime minister was a PZPR member. All of this made it very doubtful that they would be able to gain social trust for an effective fight against the economic crisis.[60]

After lengthy out-of-parliament negotiating, the Alliance of Democrats and the United People's Party were eventually open to the offer of Lech Wałęsa. Kiszczak's election was opposed by several of their representatives for moral reasons. Thus, after the resignation of Kiszczak, on 24 August 1989, Tadeusz Mazowiecki was designated Prime Minister, forming his government on 12 September. The PZPR delegated four members to this cabinet, holding key ministries such as home affairs, defence, foreign trade and transport. The post of Minister of Finance was given to Leszek Balcerowicz, a non-party deputy prime minister. The economic shock therapy he initiated was intended to drag the state out of the hopeless economic situation. On 19 September 1990, Wojciech Jaruzelski announced his intention to shorten the term of his presidency, and on 27 September, a Sejm decree changed the method of electing the President from indirect to direct.[61] In the second round of the presidential elections on 9 December, Lech Wałęsa triumphed, collecting almost 75% of the vote. Then in 1991, now completely free, uncompromising parliamentary elections were held in Poland, ending the political history of the transition.

The changes that followed the June 1989 election gradually weakened the more radical anti-system organisations. In the pluralistic political space, their paths took a variety of directions, but they uniformly criticised the election of Jaruzelski as President for the last time. As early as May 1989, Wojciech Myślecki, a leading figure of Fighting Solidarity, stated that the removal of people like Jaruzelski from the political scene constituted the primary task and moral duty of the Polish opposition, and they in no way supported his election as a possible President.[62] However, one of the consequences of the round table agreement was that the decommunization demanded by the radical opposition did not take place in many areas – and not only in the highest leadership sphere.

60 Dudek. *Pierwsze lata III*, 70–72.

61 Dudek. *Pierwsze lata III*, 60.

62 Informacja o ingerencjach dokonanych w maju 1989. [Information on interference made in May 1989] AAN, 2/1102/0, kat. A, Sygn. 3925. 5.

Assessment of martial law after the transition

The roundtable talks in Poland were to create the framework for a democratic transformation in a state where, in the absence of a substantive tradition of democracy – or indeed of a citizenry itself – it had serious historical limitations. Thus, the transition could not be conducted on a fully democratic basis, so the subsequent assessment of the round table talks in Polish history was difficult from the beginning. Debates about their evaluation are still raging in the political space to this day, and often abandon scientific, professional approaches similar to the treatment of the period of martial law.

The negligent or at least severely incomplete prosecution of the instigators of martial law plays a major role in all this. As early as 1989, a parliamentary fact-finding committee was set up to investigate the possible involvement of the State Security Service in 122 deaths after 13 December 1981. However, despite the fact that evidence was found in 88 cases, no one was brought to justice as a result of its work. In 1992, the Sejm declared the introduction of martial law illegal, but did not name anyone responsible.[63] Despite refutations from many historians, there is still a strong basis for Wojciech Jaruzelski's position that the introduction of martial law allowed the avoidance of the "greater evil," namely, Soviet intervention. However, the truth is that he himself asked for Moscow's help, but the Soviets were only willing to threaten the possibility of an intervention rather than carry it through.[64] Jaruzelski was tried in 2006 for the introduction of martial law, but the proceedings were suspended in 2011, three years before his death, due to his failing health. Four cases have been brought against the former Minister of the Interior, General Czesław Kiszczak, including the case of nine strikers killed on 16 December 1981 in the Wujek Mine in Katowice. He was acquitted of this charge in 2011, but a year later he was found guilty of introducing martial law. Despite this, many assess the result of the impeachments related to martial law as insufficient, often stating that decommunization has not taken place in the justice sector – more precisely in the judiciary. In recent years, the current Polish government has also fully embraced this position.

63 Mitrovits, "A történelem kriminalizálása", 105–106.

64 Mitrovits, *A remény hónapjai…,* 278–282.

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Conclusions

The memory of martial law appeared in the critiques voiced at the time of the democratic transition in Poland in 1989, but it remained superficial, and did not play a decisive role. The focus of this criticism was on personal overlaps. Partly due to the proximity of events, the elites both in the state party and in the opposition had largely not changed since the time of martial law, thus they were the ones who "dragged" society into capitalist conditions.[65] However, their entry into various state positions or, in the case of PZPR leaders, their remaining in such positions was criticised by anti-system opposition organisations not only because of the shadows of the recent past. They recognized the central role of the round table talks in the redistribution of political and economic power, and identified the disadvantage they suffered in the emerging pluralist competition by being omitted from the process of transition. Groups outside the shrinking bloc of Solidarity were not able to become negotiating partners of the state leadership and its organisations, and thus could not take their places among the shapers of transition.

The experience of martial law also influenced the horizons of radically anti-communist organisations. Their criticisms, debates, and even their basic theoretical starting points were focused on the political sphere, so they also viewed the transition exclusively as a political act. In their eyes, the economic aspects were completely relegated to the background. Just like the Citizens' Committee, they did not have a comprehensive economic program. The lack of alternatives they could offer proved crucial in their failure to build relationships with society. Despite the extensive underground press life through which their messages could be delivered, the moral questioning of the transition negotiations did not prove sufficient to attract the attention of Polish society, which wanted a rapid economic transformation first of all. An unknown author aptly put it in the February–March 1989 issue of the journal of the Confederation of Independent Poland: "The viability of the Polish opposition [...] is hardly tangible for the average Pole who has been standing in the same sad line for half a kilo of jowl fat for decades."[66]

65 Szalai, "A létezett szocializmus", 67.

66 "The vibrancy of the Polish opposition [...] is hard to grasp for the average Pole standing in the sad queue for a pound of sausage that has been going on for a couple of decades." Kilka uwag o opozycji. "Droga" XII. (1989) 28. 33.

The memory of martial law has gradually separated from the communicative memory. The duration of the latter is severely limited, and we are now at the 40-year turning point when the generation of those who experienced the events of 13 December 1981 and the events that followed as adults is slowly fading. Their generational memory is being institutionalised both in the scientific (political science, history, sociology) and political spheres.

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"… victims of the war?" – two models of the resilience of educational institutions in temporary war theatres during World War I: The impact of the Romanian invasion of Hungary in 1916 on schools

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Abstract

It has always been an important task to settle and integrate refugees, at least temporarily. One of the key element of this process is to provide the education to refugee students. However, there is a relative dearth of literature dealing with the educational spaces created for refugees in the previous century and the personal experiences.

The Hungarian National Archives holds reports about the number and situation of refugee students. With the use of these, on the one hand, I intend to briefly present the conditions of Transylvanian refugee students who escaped from Transylvania to the safer parts of Hungary after the Romanian attack in 1916. I want to find out to what extent Hungarian state education and civil society contributed to the remediation of the refugees. On the other hand, I also focus on the question of returning to home.

I highlight that although life recovered in most areas of Transylvania after the defeat of the Romanian troops, various factors hampered the resumption of the education.

Keywords

World War I, Romanian–Hungarian War, Refugees, Civic initiative, State administration

Róbert Károly Szabó

"... victims of the war?" – two models of the resilience of educational institutions in temporary war theatres during World War I

The impact of the Romanian invasion of Hungary in 1916 on schools[1]

Introduction

Similarly to today, so too in the past a pressing issue for society was how to help refugees settle down and integrate them, at least temporarily. The literature on the history of education has highlighted the lack of research into the schooling of refugees.[2] In the last two decades, articles have tended to discuss education as if it only mattered for a transitional period in the case of refugees.[3] Some works have also addressed the question of education during the First World War, but they only examined how the maintenance of education was envisioned in the areas occupied by hostile powers, and what opportunities students had within the conditions that the occupation created.[4]

1 The research was carried out with the professional support of two scholarships. Firstly, by the Új Nemzeti Kiválóság Program of the Innovációs és Technológiai Minisztérium (Ministry for Innovation and Technology of Hungary), code number ÚNKP-21-3, financed by the Nemzeti Kutatási, Fejlesztési és Innovációs Alap. Secondly, by the Erasmus+ Short Doctoral Mobility Programme regarding for the contracts of 21/1/KA131/000003804/SMT-727 and 21/1/KA131/000003804/SMT-739.

2 In this regard see, for example, Kevin Myers's study on the Spanish Civil War orphans resettled in Cambridge or Vera Sheridan's article on the scholarship program for university students who emigrated to Austria and then to the USA after the 1956 revolution in Hungary. Myers, *National identity, citizenship and education for displacement,* 313–325.; Sheridan, *Support and surveillance,* 775–793.

3 Myers, *The hidden history of refugee schooling in Britain,* 153–162.

4 For the Russian occupation of Galicia: von Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*; Ruszala,

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For Hungary, the story of the Transylvanian[5] refugees who had to leave their homes with the invasion of the army of Romania in the summer of 1916 is one of key themes of the historiography of World War I. This is due to the number of people who fled, the role that the state played in managing their relocation as well as because of its long-term impact. At the same time, the access of Transylvanian students to education in 1916 and 1917 is one of the neglected aspects of this research, with only very little attention having been paid to it so far.[6] Knowing more about these kinds of personal experiences and concerns is ever more important and relevant in the light of current events in Ukraine.

In the first part of this paper, I will present the history of the evolution of the Transylvanian front as this was a major determinant of the timing and changes of the refugee crisis. I will then outline the general conditions of the refugees' arrival in the more westerly regions of Hungary. Within this discussion, I will focus on the accommodation and relief of Transylvanian refugee students, highlighting the conditions of their return to Transylvania, as well as the situation of those students whose schools were closed due to the war.

The research was carried out by processing the archival fond labelled '*Cases of Transylvanian refugee students*'[7] found in the Hungarian National Archives. This source mostly consist of the regulations of the Minister of Religion and Public Education, the reports prepared by the school principals and the principals of the school districts, as well as the requests for tuition exemption that refugee students submitted. Although I have estimated the number of affected schools at 120, the documents in the fond referred to only two Transylvanian schools. This circumstance explains why I deal only with those schools in my paper. The two schools for which documents were available

The evacuation and flight of galician refugees, 331–347. On the occupation of Serbia by the Central Powers see: Scheer, *Kitűnő lehetőség nemzeti jelképek kialakítására,* 419–436. On the occupation of Italy by the Central Powers see: Boisserie and Mondini, *I disarmati*.

5 Although Transylvania was not an administratively separate region, I define it as a part of historical Hungary which had a certain independence.

6 Kocsis, *Erdélyi menekültek Debrecenben,* 88–95.; Buczkó, *„Szállást adtunk hűséges magyar véreinknek"*; L. Juhász, *Amikor mindenki a háborús állapotok igája alatt roskadoz,* 29.; Szabó, *Az erdélyi menekült tanulók helyzete* és *sorsa*.

7 Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, Országos Levéltára (MNL OL). K 500 Vallás- és Közoktatásügyi Minisztérium (VKM). 1917-11-181. I–II. rész. Erdélyi menekült tanulók ügyei.

were the State Real School in Brassó (today's Brașov in Romania) and the State High School[8] in Gyergyószentmiklós (today's Gheorgheni in Romania).

Therefore, while explaining why it was at the Real School of Brassó where the schoolyear was able to start after the return of refugee students, I investigate the differences and reasons behind teachers' individual choices and the administrative responses to these decisions, as well as the differences between local conditions. From this point of view, I attempt to investigate the lives of the main characters. Why were students more fortunate and successful in reaching their goal in Brassó than in Gyergyószentmiklós even though the initial conditions of the two schools were similar in the autumn of 1916? Reflecting on the motto in the title of the paper, is it really reasonable to assert that the students in Gyergyószentmiklós became victims only because of the war? If it is indeed true, to what extent can we generalize this statement?

Comparing the two schools gains significance in a wider sense as a basis for understanding later events from a socio-historical point of view. The approaches tried in 1916–17 or the behavioural attitudes of that time could serve as a model for the period from 1918 to 1920, after the end of the First World War. The experience may be a relevant for some educational institutions during the change of regime, as well as for students and teachers who (had to) left their previous home to flee to the smaller Hungary. One of the most important analogies between the two periods was that local communities played an important role in preserving the educational culture.[9]

8 The two types of secondary schools were 'high schools' which prioritized the humanities and 'real schools' which focused more on modern languages and natural sciences. Successful completion of the high school graduation exam entitled students to admittance to colleges, while the real school graduation exam allowed to apply to the university of arts and the faculty of mathematics and humanities of the universities of science, as well as to the mining, forestry and economic academies. Az 1883-dik évi törvények gyűjteménye II. M. Kir. Belügyminisztérium, Budapest, 1883. 332–392.

9 To the historical significance of the question, regarding higher education institutions see the thematic issue of Gerundium. *Gerundium*, 32–124.

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Transylvania as war theatre: the first phase

Although the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy had foreseen the possibility of war with the Romanian Kingdom since the outbreak of the European war on 28th July 1914, reassuring reports in this regard and a lack of weapons and resources,[10] meant that no action was taken to defend the Eastern border of Transylvania. Hence, a great panic broke out when the Romanian army (approximately 250000 soldiers) crossed the Hungarian border in the early hours of 28th August 1916.

While the 4th, 1st and 2nd Romanian armies planned to occupy Transylvania and the Great Plain without any help from the allied countries, the 3rd Romanian army assumed a defensive stance in Dobruja until the arrival of Russian reinforcements. The initial success of the Romanian army can be explained by its numerical superiority and the element of surprise[11] in the first phase of the war in Transylvania (28th August–18th September).[12] By the middle of September 1916, the Romanian forces had advanced 60–80 kilometres.[13]

The settling of the Transylvanian refugees

The Minister of the Interior prepared a draft decree no. 4340/1916 dated 15th of August, 1916 to regulate the possible evacuation and the temporary resettlement of the civilian population living in the various counties lying close to the Romanian border in case of a war against Romania.[14] The place of temporary settlement was preliminarily designated according to the place of residence of the refugees.[15] Torontál County was assigned for refugees from Brassó County, Csanád County for refugees

10 In order to stop the front breakthrough in Luck on 4th June 1916 (so-called Brusilov offensive), all units were needed on the Russian front. Thus, despite the request of the Hungarian government, the gendarmerie was the only armed force on the Transylvanian border. Bihari, *1914. A nagy háború száz éve*, 301.

11 Hajdu and Pollmann, *A régi Magyarország utolsó háborúja,* 223–225.

12 Szijj and Ravasz, *Magyarország az első világháborúban,* 157.

13 Galántai, *Az I. világháború*, 298.

14 Nagybaczoni Nagy, *A Románia elleni hadjárat,* 74.

15 Csóti, A vasút szerepe, 31–34.

from Fogaras County, Bács-Bodrog County for refugees from Szeben County and Alsó-Fehér County, Hajdú County and Szabolcs County for refugees from Hunyad County and Krassó-Szörény County, while Békés County and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County were assigned for refugees from Háromszék County, and Csongrád County for refugees from Kis-Küküllő County (*Fig. 1*).[16] The resettlement plan basically took into account the possibilities offered by the railway network, and designated the western counties bordering Transylvania as the final destination for the refugees.[17]

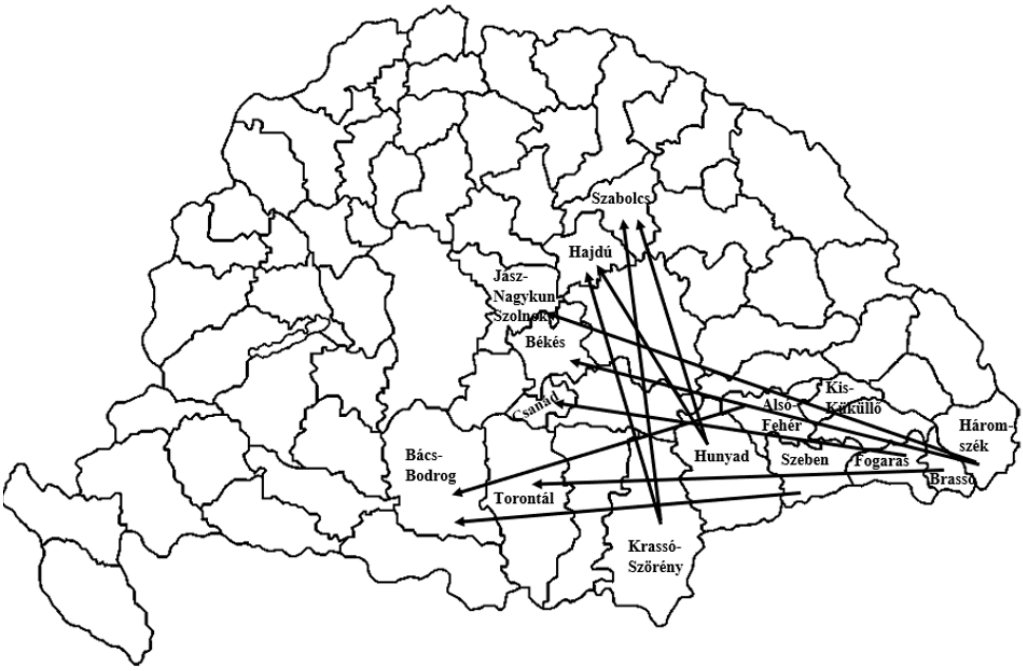

Fig. 1: The links between place of residence and place of temporary settlement of the refugees according to the plan

Defining the precise number of the Transylvanian refugees is a difficult task as there are different opinions about it. On the one hand, according to Miklós Betegh, the commissioner for Transylvania appointed by the Hungarian government, the war affected an area where approximately 1.3 million people resided. Based on contemporary statistics, Betegh wrote about 206 000 refugees who crossed the Király-hágó (today's Pasul

16 Segítsük az erdélyi menekülteket! *Magyarország,* 1916. szeptember 1. 7–9.

17 Erdélyi menekültek Szegeden. *Szeged* és *Vidéke,* 1916. szeptember 6. 4.

Craiului in Romania), which is considered the gateway to Transylvania from a geographical perspective.[18] On the other hand, according to János Sándor (Interior Minister between 1913 and 1917), only a half a million people set off from their homes. In contrast, the commandant of the 1st Hungarian army estimated that there would be one to two million refugees.[19]

After defining the numbers involved, the first and most important question was how to settle the numerous refugees who headed from Transylvanian counties to the interior parts of Hungary. There were differences within the executive about how to approach this issue. While the government was in favour of setting up camps for the refugees near the border in order to save money,[20] the government commissioner for Transylvania[21] recommended that the refugees be moved to accommodation further away, in the safer interior of the country.[22] Eventually, the latter option was chosen. Although transporting refugees by trains was costly, this method made it possible to enlist the aid of the hinterland's population. Consequently, providing for the refugees became an important objective not only for philanthropically-minded people, but for the whole of society.[23]

In accordance with the directives of the Minister of the Interior, several state and civil organizations (the Transylvanian Refugees Protection Committee, the Relief Committee, the Székely Committee etc.) were founded, which dealt with gathering money for the refugees, as well as helping to find homes for them. Apart from the church and the various social organizations, educational institutions were notably involved in these welfare-related tasks, so teachers and students also played a significant role in helping refugees.[24]

18 Betegh, *Erdély a háborúban*, 70–82.

19 L. Juhász, *Amikor mindenki a háborús állapotok igája alatt roskadoz…*, 29.

20 Csóti, Az 1916. évi román támadás, 227–233.

21 The government-appointed commissioner for Transylvania was Miklós Betegh who had been the head of the administration of Torda-Aranyos County. See Szádeczky-Kardoss, *Az oláhok betörése Erdélybe,* 43.

22 Csóti, Az 1916. évi román támadás, 232–233.

23 Bihari, *1914. A nagy háború száz éve,* 305.

24 L. Juhász, *Amikor mindenki a háborús állapotok igája alatt roskadoz...*, 51.

The reception and resettlement of the Transylvanian students

As most of the refugees were women and children,[25] the Minister of Religion and Education gave instructions about the method of their settlement before the end of September 1916. According to a regulation (111663/1916) by the Minister of Religion and Education, dated 18th September, schools had to accommodate refugee students, despite the extremely high numbers involved. The poorest students were exempted from paying tuition fees. Moreover, students could attend schools even in the absence of the required documents (birth and school certificate) or the yearbooks issued annually by schools. It was enough for them to prove their earlier school grades by parental declaration.

Beside the task of caring for and accommodating the refugees, schools were also responsible for providing refugee students with the basic necessities for their schooling. Under the above-mentioned regulation, schools had to supply refugee students with books.[26] Additionally, *A gyermekek Érdekes Újságja* drew attention to the importance of collecting stationery and clothes, as well.[27] Clothing was especially necessary in autumn, so the Minister of Religion and Education ordered schools to collect newspapers (158889/1916) on 24th November. Based on previous experience, newspapers were suitable for the thermal insulation[28] of the light summer clothes[29] worn by refugee students when they had been forced to flee.[30]

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25 Szijj and Ravasz, *Magyarország az első világháborúban,*158.

26 Kalocsai Főegyházmegyei Levéltár (hereafter: KFL), VI.1. Egyéb intézmények iratai, Kalocsai Érseki Főgimnázium. 163. 506/1916.

27 *Az osztálykassza*. Érdekes Újság. A gyermekek Érdekes Újságja. 1916. október 22. 35.

28 KFL VI.1. 213. 643/1916.

29 This was especially important for footwear, as many of the Transylvanian children did not wear either shoes or boots during the summer in peacetime. Buczkó, "*Szállást adtunk hűséges magyar véreinknek",* 39–40.

30 Buczkó, "*Szállást adtunk hűséges magyar véreinknek"*, 39–40.

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The impact of developments in the Transylvanian theatre

The second period of the war in Transylvania (18th–25th September) was the time when Austro–Hungarian reinforcements (the 1st, 3rd and 7th army) arrived at the front-line, while the 9th German army started a counterattack against the Romanian troops.[31] Thanks to this, [32] the Central Powers advanced on the Romanian front. The Romanian army was defeated in numerous battles including a decisive an engagement near Nagyszeben (today's Sibiu in Romania) from 26th–29th September, the battle of Persány (today's Perșani in Romania) from 5th–6th October and the battle of Brassó (7th–9th October).[33] By the end of October, forty days after the Romanian troops had crossed the border, they had been expelled from the territory of Hungary.[34]

After the troops of the Central Powers crossed the Romanian Kingdom's border on 10th October, the issue of returning the refugees to their homes came to the fore. However, according to a decree issued by the Interior Minister's (33000/1916) on 21st October, only some of the refugees were allowed to return home, as the eastern part of Transylvania was still declared an operational area.[35] Consequently, while the first larger group of refugees returned home already on 18th November, the second had to wait another five months.[36]

According to the above-mentioned decree, refugees who were administrative workers and food producers, that is,[37] those who worked in agriculture or were the leaders and workers of factories and plantations, as well as independent craftsmen and tradesmen, along with members of the clergy, doctors and pharmacists were given priority when it came to gaining permission to return home. In contrast, the non-productive social groups such as the urban population, teachers and students, pensioners, the sick, the elderly and the incapacitated were the last who could return home.[38]

31 Szijj and Ravasz, *Magyarország az első világháborúban,* 157.

32 Hajdu and Pollmann, *A régi Magyarország utolsó háborúja*, 226.

33 Szijj and Ravasz, *Magyarország az első világháborúban,* 157.

34 Torrey, *The Romanian Battlefront in World War I.,* 107.

35 Csóti, Az 1916. évi román támadás menekültügyi következményei, 227.

36 Buczkó, "*Szállást adtunk hűséges magyar véreinknek"*, 123.

37 Csóti, A vasút szerepe*,* 35–36.

38 A magyar kir. belügyminiszter 1916. évi 33.000. eln. számú körrendelete valamennyi

Despite the official prohibition, a significant number of refugees returned home without official permission. Parents who returned home often took their school-age children with themselves.[39] In doing so, they risked their schoolchildren losing the validity of the ongoing school year (i.e. "missing a year"). To avoid this, they had to request that their previous schools reopen before the end of the autumn semester.

The example of the State Real School in Brassó

Due to its closeness to the Romanian border, Brassó became involved in the war already on the first day of the Romanian attack.

Within a few weeks, approximately 20 000 people had fled the city, which amounted to half of all the citizens of Brassó.[40] At the same time, the Romanian pastor reported that Brassó had survived the ravages of the war without serious damage, even though fierce street battles took place.[41] The only exception was the railway station, which had been blown up before the arrival of the Romanians,[42] after the last refugee train (packed with administrative officers) left the city on 28th August.[43] During the Romanian occupation, looting by soldiers was a significant problem,[44] so the Romanian city command announced a prohibition on it.[45]

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törvényhatóság első tisztviselőjéhez, az erdélyrészi menekültek visszatelepítéséről. In: *Magyarországi Rendeletek Tára,* 1740–1744.

39 *Kataklizma,* 69–70.

40 *Brassóba visszatér a normális élet*. Szeged és Vidéke. 1916. október 11. 4.

41 Erdélyi Református Egyházkerületi Levéltár, Erdélyi Református Egyházkerület Igazgatótanácsának Levéltára (EREL IgtanLvt), Menekülni kényszerültek jelentései (I. 63/1916.) III/76.

42 *A románok támadása*. Népszava. 1916. szeptember 1. 3.

43 Szádetzky-Kardoss, *Az oláhok betörése Erdélybe,* 44.

44 EREL IgtanLvt I. 63/1916. III/76.

45 *A románok menekülése Brassóból*. Az Est. 1916. október 17. 2.

Brassó was under Romanian occupation for five weeks[46] until it was liberated on 10th October.[47] Although some students returned home after the battle of Brassó, their school was not able to reopen[48] as the army had reserved some parts of the school buildings for use as a field hospital.[49] This caused difficulties, especially for those families who could not escape,[50] and for those who returned home in October.

In order to help the returnees, local (Calvinist, Unitarian and Jewish) priests and religious education teachers[51] started to take classes even if they had no formal qualifications to teach the subjects. Besides these, a Calvinist assistant pastor also taught various subjects in the school, holding 24 lessons weekly. Descriptive geometry was taught in the sixth and seventh classes by an engineer. The only qualified teachers were two teachers[52] from the Roman Catholic High School in Brassó.

In addition, due to the lack of a school building, the main task facing the school was to find classrooms and start the children's education in them. Two rooms and an office of the Calvinist congregation were used for this purpose. Thanks to the above-mentioned activity and the temporary teaching venue, teaching could be started in the first seven grades, for 122 students, at the beginning of January 1917,[53] with the aim of preparing the students for their examinations at the end of the year.

To obtain official approval for what had already been carried out, Ernő Tőkés (1883–?), the course leader, wrote a letter to the Minister of Religion and Education. However, a report of the Nagyszeben's school district director suggests that due to an adminis-

46 *Cím nélkül*. Pécsi Napló. 1916. október 11. 2.

47 Ujabb részletek Brassó visszafoglalásáról. *Szeged és Vidéke.* 1916. október 10. 3.

48 Szépréthy, *A Brassói Magy. Kir. Állami Főreáliskola harminckettedik évi értesítője,* 7–8.

49 The school building functioned as a military hospital until 1 September 1917. However, according to the school's headmaster, it was still reserved on 12 September 1918, because later it was the office of the 1st army's quartermaster. MNL OL K 500 1918-45. Középiskolák épületének katonai igénybevétele. III. rész. 173858/1918.

50 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 67975/1917. Nagyszebeni Főigazgatói Jelentés a brassói Állami Főreáliskola tanévnyitójáról.

51 They were Ernő Tőkés Calvinist, Lajos Kovács Unitarian and Lajos Pap Israelite pastors.

52 Sándor Tersztyánszky was the teacher of mathematics and physics, while György Zsigmond teached history and geography.

53 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 44339/1917. A nagyszebeni főigazgató a brassói állami főreáliskola tanulóinak tanítása tárgyában.

trative mistake, the letter was delivered only a few weeks later.[54] Therefore, the school district director had to go to the town to look into the situation there. Despite the above-mentioned difficulties, he supported the operation of the course with 147 students[55] at the end of March 1917. It is likely that in taking his decision he was positively influenced by the fact that priests and Religious Education teachers asked for payment only for the Religious Education lessons, while holding the other lessons free of charge.[56]

At the school district director's suggestion – '*despite the extraordinary affairs and the passage of time*' – the Minister ordered the continuation of this extraordinary way of education until June, when the entire teaching staff was supposed to return. After the headmaster and three teachers[57] returned to Brassó, the opening ceremony was held on 5th May. At the same time, the Roman Catholic High School allowed the students of the Real School to use its classrooms in the afternoons. The term finished on 14th July and the end-of-year examinations were organised for between 16th and 26th July.[58]

The example of Brassó shows what a significant role the level of local autonomy played in the restarting of various areas of life, in this case in education. Religious studies teachers – especially Ernő Tőkés – who took a proactive role in the community significantly increased the chances of reopening the school. The initiative from the Catholic Church may be related to the fact that there was also a Catholic High School in Brassó. Although there were difficulties, it was possible to obtain the support of the state to achieve their goal thanks to their preliminary proactive actions.

54 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 67975/1917. Nagyszebeni Főigazgatói Jelentés a brassói Állami Főreáliskola tanévnyitójáról.

55 Only 69 were those who returned home as refugees, while the others had not been able to leave Brassó or its neighbourhood. K500, 1917-11-181. I. rész. 44339/1917. A nagyszebeni főigazgató a brassói állami főreáliskola tanulóinak tanítása tárgyában.

56 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 44339/1917. A nagyszebeni főigazgató a brassói állami főreáliskola tanulóinak tanítása tárgyában.

57 They were Béla Szépréthy, the headmaster, Árpád Berenkey, the mathematics and physics teacher, Károly Jahn, the chemistry and mineralogy teacher and Emil Unger, the teacher of German and French grammar and literature.

58 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 67975/1917. Nagyszebeni Főigazgatói Jelentés a brassói Állami Főreáliskola tanévnyitójáról.

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The example of the State High School in Gyergyószentmiklós

Although Gyergyószentmiklós did not become a battlefield, almost 10 000 of its entire population (11 000) fled from the city during the Romanian advance.[59] Fortunately, the occupation had not caused any damage: the favourable situation of the city is indicated by the *Székely Napló* newspaper which reported that '*Gyergyószentmiklós probably suffered the least of the cities affected by enemy invasion.*'[60] The only problem was the looting of Romanian soldiers as their superior officers did not have any success trying to stop it.

Romanian troops were stationed in the city for only three weeks until it was liberated on 11th October.[61] Although the administration of justice and the financial sector had already been reactivated at the beginning of 1917,[62] the approximately five hundred refugees were only able to return home to Gyergyószentmiklós in May and June. The battles at the ridge of the Carpathians were still raging in the first part of 1917.[63]

Students from the State High School in Gyergyószentmiklós who returned with their parents wrote that almost all the amenities were functioning in the town with the exception of the school.[64] The 60–70 students were confused about why it was impossible to reopen the school. They wrote '*it would be devastating if the students from Gyergyószentmiklós were the victims of the second siculicidium'*. (The students identified the Romanian war with the mass murder of the Székelys in 1764 –the so-called Massacre at Mádéfalva, today's Siculeni in Romania.) Although the army had requisitioned the school building previously, the students asked for the reopening of their school as well as the return of the headmaster and a few teachers. To fulfil the request of students, the Minister ordered the headmaster and two teachers[65] to return home. However, Henrik

59 *Gyergyószentmiklós az oláh uralom alatt*. Magyarország. 1916. november 4. 6.

60 *A sértetlen kassza*. Székely Napló. 1916. október 22. 1.

61 *Gyergyó felszabadulása*. Székely Napló. 1916. október 21. 1.

62 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 28466/1917. A gyergyószentmiklósi állami főgimnázium tanulóifjúsága az intézet megnyitását kéri.

63 Buczkó, *„Szállást adunk hűséges, magyar véreinknek",* 130.

64 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 28466/1917. A gyergyószentmiklósi állami főgimnázium tanulóifjúsága az intézet megnyitását kéri.

65 Elek Farczády was a teacher of history and Latin grammar and literature, while György Kereszturi taught mathematics and physics.

Gruppenberg-Fehrentheil (1869–?) and Erik Farczády (1890–1974) remained at their temporary accommodation.[66]

Fehrentheil's personal character and approach to life came to play an unexpectedly important role in how the events unfolded in the town. According to a health certificate written by a doctor, he changed school four times between 1893 and 1911 (working at the Catholic High School in Brassó between 1893 and 1898, the Real State School in Sopron between 1898 and 1900, the State High School in Erzsébetváros (today's Dumbrăveni in Romania) between 1900 and 1910, the State High School in Budapest between 1910 and 1911). Since the yearbooks did not detail his career during the aforementioned period, all that is certain about his actions is that he was disciplined several times. In 1914, when he was sentenced to a 1st degree disciplinary penalty in a disciplinary investigation for having committed multiple misdemeanours. The investigation also found that he had behaved tactlessly which had led to the possibility of disturbing the peace of the institute and of his teaching colleagues. In 1916 he carried out an illegal procedure without higher permission. He was sentenced to an 11th disciplinary penalty with a fine of 300 Korona.

In the light of this background, it is not surprising that Fehrentheil used various excuses to stay in Debrecen where he was temporarily quartered. At first, he claimed that he had to wait for authorization to leave his accommodation at the students at dormitory in Debrecen. Secondly, he highlighted the importance of his job there (he worked as a deputy of the Debrecen school district director). Finally, he mentioned that '*due to the insecure situation in Gyergyószentmiklós, there is not any pedagogical need from the state (for him) to leave his temporary residence'*. When these arguments were not sufficient to convince the school district director of Kolozsvár (today's Cluj Napoca in Romania), he referred to a medical certificate in which a doctor had recommended that he take a six-month-long holiday. Specifically – according to the archival document – he suffered from hearing problems in his left ear and his nervous system was exhausted because of the hardships he had suffered while fleeing from Transylvania. Due to his resistance to return home, along with the above-mentioned reasons, the school district director asked for his exemption and employment in an '*easier office job'*.[67] Fehrentheil

66 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 28466/1917. A gyergyószentmiklósi állami főgimnázium tanulóifjúsága az intézet megnyitását kéri.

67 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 25017/1917. A kolozsvári tankerületi kir. főigazgató-

CENTRAL EUROPEAN HORIZONS 3, NO. 1–2 (2023): 124–146.

refused to return home, but at the same time he wanted to improve his negative image in the school's 1917–1918 yearbook. In this regard, the yearbook – edited by him – stated that '*although the headmaster visited the town twice in order to restart the education*', due to the above-mentioned difficulties and '*the lack of teachers*' he '*could not implement his plan*.'[68]

Considering Fehrentheil's attitude to the question, the school district director of Kolozsvár suggested an alternative solution to the Minister on the 20th of February 1917. On the one hand, he suggested that there was urgent need to send Farczády and one more person to Gyergyószentmiklós to carry out their pedagogical duties there. On the other hand, he proposed that the other teacher should be made the headmaster temporarily. As they had already created suitable conditions for education (in terms of lighting and heating) at the Roman Catholic clergy-house for the 41 students, the technical conditions had been met. The problem with this was that the school in Gyergyószentmiklós could only be reopened if there were at least two teachers (one of history and Latin grammar and literature, the other of Hungarian and German grammar and literature).[69]

However, only one teacher returned to Gyergyószentmiklós since Farczády was needed[70] in the Real School of Szakolca (and its dormitory). As the school district director's attempts to have Fehrentheil and Farczády return to Gyergyószentmiklós were unsuccessful, he wrote disappointedly that '*these students are the victims of the war*'. According to a report he made on 17th February, because of the shortage of time and the need for students to do agricultural duties in the spring, there was no longer a realistic prospect that the school would reopen.[71] Eventually, the school reopened for the next academic year on 21st October 1917.

In summary, even though the physical conditions (classrooms and heating possibilities) would have been adequate to reopen the State High School in Gyergyószentmiklós,

ság pótlólag felterjeszti Fehrentheil Henrik gyergyószentmiklósi áll. főgimn. igazgató tisztiorvosi bizonyítványát, s ennek kapcsán jelentést tesz a visszatért tanulók tanításügyéről.

68 Fehrentheil, *A Gyergyószentmiklósi M. Kir. Állami Főgimnázium tizedik évi értesítője,* 3–4.

69 MNL OL K500, 1917-11-181. I. rész. 26090/1917. A kolozsvári főigazgató jelentése a gyergyószentmiklósi főgimnáziumi tanulók tanulása tárgyában.

70 MNL OL K500, 1917-11-181. I. rész. 28466/1917. A gyergyószentmiklósi állami főgimnázium tanulóifjúsága az intézet megnyitását kéri.

71 MNL OL K500, 1917-11-181. I. rész. 25017/1917. A kolozsvári tankerületi kir. főigazgatóság pótlólag felterjeszti Fehrentheil Henrik gyergyószentmiklósi áll. főgimn. igazgató tisztiorvosi bizonyítványát, s ennek kapcsán jelentést tesz a visszatért tanulók tanításügyéről.

due to the lack of teachers this only happened with so much delay that the 1916–1917 schoolyear was invalid for Gyergyószentmiklós's students.[72] To identify the reasons for the considerably less fortunate outcome than in Brassó, one is that there were no schools managed by the Catholic Church in the town, which played an important role in the case of Brassó. Secondly, the low number of people who remained in Gyergyószentmiklós after the Romanian invasion meant that fewer students made the effort to assert their will.

Conclusions

Although daily life restarted in Transylvania after the mass resettlement, certain factors hampered the reactivation of education in some places. Due to the lack of a competent government in the evacuated areas, initiatives to reopen schools came from below.

The time that had passed since the beginning of the school year caused problems in both cases. Namely, students submitted their request with the difference of only one month in the Winter of 1916/1917. On the other hand, the army had occupied both school buildings, which meant that not only the school in Gyergyószentmiklós but also the school in Brassó had to find temporary venues for education. The difference between the two cases discussed here cannot be explained by the different war situation of the two cities as they were liberated one day apart. Consequently, returning home to Gyergyószentmiklós (in Hunyad County) and returning to Brassó (Brassó County) became possible at approximately the same time.[73]

What, then, can serve as an explanation for lack of successful in reopening the school in Gyergyószentmiklós? With the help of the church and the city authorities this problem was solved successfully in Brassó. The recommencement of the school year was possible thanks to the active cooperation of the teachers and the Church, as well as the gradually recovering administration. In Gyergyószentmiklós the personal reactions, attitude and character of the headmaster and the teaching staff made this impossible. Presumably, Gyergyószentmiklós represents an extreme case where individual self-interest or fear caused additional difficulties beside the existing problems.

72 Fehrentheil, *A Gyergyószentmiklósi M. Kir. Állami Főgimnázium tizedik évi értesítője,* 4–5.

73 *Tilos területek a menekülteknek*. Szeged és Vidéke. 1917. május 3. 5.

Examining the restorative activity that characterized the Transylvanian school system in late 1916 and 1917 after the withdrawal of the Romanian troops, it is reasonable to assume that the local events in Gyergyószentmiklós were different from the general situation. In Déva (today's Deva in Romania) the schoolyear started on the 10th November,[74] although the majority of Hunyad county was a restricted area and could only be crossed with a special ID-card (it was the so-called internal operational area) according to a regulation (33000/1916) issued by the Interior Minister, dated 21st October, 1916. The same was true for the entire county of Szeben,[75] although the schoolyear had already been started on 27th November in Nagyszeben.[76] On the other hand, we can also find counterexamples: schools did not reopen until the autumn of 1917 in Petrozsény (today's Petroșani in Romania).[77]

It is unclear why the headmaster and one of the teachers decided not to return. While in the case of the teacher this could even be explained by the physical distance, this was less likely in the case of Fehrentheil, who was temporarily settled in Debrecen, not especially far away. It is possible that they were afraid of war conditions, and they wanted to avoid risking their own and their family's lives. They might have predicted that Hungary and its allies would lose the war and that Romania would eventually prevail. Therefore, it is possible that they feared the requirements of the new power and no longer wished to return to an uncertain existence instead of a temporary station they considered safer from a geopolitical point of view. This scenario played out in 1919 so we may juxtapose their case with the fate of those social groups (foresters,[78] postmen[79] etc.) who were expelled or lost their positions because they refused to take the oath of loyalty to the new authorities. Their motivations, then may not have been purely

74 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 162705/1916. A nagyszebeni tanker főigazgatóság előterjesztése a tanker. tartozó három menekült középiskolai tandíjainak fizetése tárgyában.

75 A m. kir. belügyminiszter 1916. évi 33.100. eln. számú körrendelete valamennyi törvényhatóság első tisztviselőjéhez, az erdélyrészi menekültek visszatéréséhez szükséges igazoló okmányokról. *Magyarországi Rendeletek Tára. Ötvenedik folyam. 1916*. Budapest, 1916. 1744–1748.

76 MNL OL K 500 1917-11-181. I. rész. 162705/1916. A nagyszebeni tanker főigazgatóság előterjesztése a tanker. tartozó három menekült középiskolai tandíjainak fizetése tárgyában.

77 Ablonczy, *Petrozsényi tanárok és az impériumváltás*.

78 Ásványi and Balogh, *Trianoni menekült erdész életsorsok*, 179–182.

79 Szeghy-Gayer, *Trianon és a kassai postások*.

'patriotic'.[80] Knowing Fehrentheil's background this would not surprise us. We do not know a great deal about his later life. He never returned to Transylvania. According to the school yearbook, he worked as a teacher in Felsőgalla in the 1925–1926 schooly-ear.[81] It seems that he finished his school teaching career soon afterwards, as he was recorded as a tobacconist in the telephone directory in 1929.[82] His life took different turns than his colleague's. Farczády continued to work as a teacher from 1919–1940 and rose to the rank of headmaster (1940–1950) in Marosvásárhely (today's Târgu Mureș in Romania).[83]

Whether they foresaw the fate of Transylvania or behaved in an unpatriotic manner, the example of Fehrentheil and Farczády could serve as models for the behaviour exhibited by refugees after 1918. This is especially true of teachers from other Transylvanian cities. At one extreme, in the industrial town of Petrozsény all but one teacher left due to the loss of job opportunities.[84] The situation was quite different in Déva and Szászváros (today's Orăștie in Romania). Due to their local ties, most teachers agreed to stay on after the change of regime in Déva.[85] Almost all the teachers also stayed on in Szászváros, with only one exception. In addition to the changes caused by town coming under Romanian control, the opportunities offered by the ecclesiastical framework also played a role in this latter case.[86]

Overall, the two cases presented here demonstrate that the time it took to reopen the two schools depended primarily on the teachers. The 'go or stay' mentality was able to significantly influence the situation of the schools that became part of another sovereign state after the First World War.

80 Regarding the example of Fiume it becomes clear that the loyalty assumed by the state towards the teachers was not impeccable not only after the war, but also during the war years. Due to the workload and difficulties, as well as the indifferent attitude of the state, many teachers chose the new authority instead of the Hungarian state. Ordasi, *"Hazaszeretetből" jeles?*, 69–74.

81 Kokas, *A Felsőgallai Polgári Fiú- és Leányiskola évkönyve,* 11.

82 *A Budapesti és Budapest környékén lévő M. Kir. távbeszélő-hálózatok előfizetőinek és nyilvános állomásainak betűrendes névsora*. Pallas Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársaság. Budapest, 1929. május. 12.

83 Kenyeres, *Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon,* 190.

84 Ablonczy, *Petrozsényi tanárok és az impériumváltás*.

85 Ablonczy, *Impériumváltás a dévai várhegy alatt*.

86 Ablonczy, *A szászvárosi kollégium és az impériumváltás*.

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The Origins of Madness: Former prisoners of war in psychiatric care in the Hungarian Stalinist era

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Abstract

By the Second World War, the neurotic symptoms of "shell shock" were replaced by "combat exhaustion" which became an umbrella term for different depressive states and neuroses with organic conditions. While in the Western countries it became more common to compensate former victims for psychological harms too, in the Soviet dominated regions the experience of being a prisoner of war was dominated by ideological principles in the public sphere. Pavlovian doctrines for example denied the duality of reactive and somatogenic psychoses, placing psycho-traumas secondary to neurological features.

In this study, the medical history of six former prisoners of war is discussed who were treated in Lipótmező in the early 1950's. A comparison of Holocaust and POW survivors shows that the latter included people of lower social status and a higher prevalence of psychotic disorders. Illness became apparent to patients or their relatives at an early stage, but psychiatric intervention came relatively late. "Captivity" was an umbrella term, and they did not specialize the location, so only other sources might help us in the identification

Keywords

History of Psychiatry, Shell Shock, Prisoners of War, Sovietization, Hungary

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The Origins of Madness

Former prisoners of war in psychiatric care in the Hungarian Stalinist era[1]

War creates situations which impose considerable psychological strain on those involved. Mass violence causes traumas whose impact remains long after peace treaties have been signed and which deeply influence the psychological recovery of survivors, if they recover at all. In the early 1960's, renowned psychiatrist István Benedek (1915–1996) expressed his views on the relationship between schizophrenia and war thus:

> Schizophrenia had caught up with this young man during the war or when he was a war prisoner. The general opinion is that such people go mad from suffering. It is a yet unresolved question whether one can go mad from anything; the medical world disagrees on this for the time being. The same war terrors have swept over millions of other people; why should only these persons have gone mad? (Perhaps) There was some inclination or propensity in them. Who can say whether they might not have become just as disturbed with no war? [2]

Benedek's extremely popular book[3] took a critical approach to the practice of psychiatry of his day, but as the citation shows, it shared traditional views on the origin of mental illness that prioritized biological factors over the effect of any traumatic experience. During the 1950s and 1960s, there was a dominant belief within the psychiatric

1 The research was supported by the MTA BTK Lendület Ten Generations Research Group.

2 Benedek, *Gilded Cage*, 85.

3 Clyne, "The Gilded Cage by Istvan Benedek", 426

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profession[4] in Hungary that madmen are mad anyway and their condition has little to do with traumatic experiences.

In this paper I will examine the effects of the psychological burden of war on a specific group of victims: prisoners of war. First, I will briefly summarize the issues of the definition of victimhood in legal terms. Then I will trace the changes in the medical discourse on the subject up to the Second World War as well as identifying how approaches to the problem in the West and in Soviet-dominated states diverged after 1945. This will be followed by a discussion of psychiatric practice based on the patient files of the psychiatric hospital at Lipótmező. These latter sources are intended to provide a "history from below" perspective on the long-term effects of the Second World War on the mental health of those involved,[5] during the early 1950s, the peak years of Hungarian Stalinism. At the same time, the cases examined offer an insight into what it meant to be socially stigmatized due to mental illness. The case studies also reveal stories that contradicted the official narrative that viewed the arrival of Soviet troops in Hungary as the first act of liberation. The life stories of the former prisoners of war recorded in the clinical interviews have two layers. Besides presenting the patients' own narratives on the war and on their illness, they also reflect the contemporary medical interpretation of these accounts.

Background to victimhood during and after World War II in Hungary: distinguishing between facts and politics

The authorities were aware of the dimensions of the traumas impacting Hungarian society. The Second World War resulted in the deaths of some 350,000 Hungarian soldiers. In 1943, some elements of the Hungarian government had sought to distance the

4 We might find more permissive opinions regarding the potential occurrence of psychologically induced mental disorders. Nyírő suggested this regarding the case of schizophrenia (albeit exclusively on biological grounds). See Nyírő, *Psychiatria*, 685. Gimes discussed the traumas present in the life stories of individuals with manic-depressive disorder. See Gimes "Adatok a mániás-depressziós", 15.

5 Lipótmező is the popular name for National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry (Országos Pszichiátriai és Neurológiai Intézet = OPNI). The institutional documentation is preserved at the H-1088 Budapest, Szentkirályi strt. 21. For further reference on this collection, the abbreviation OPNI is used.

country from Germany, but these attempts failed and the Germans invaded the country on 19 March 1944. Even before the Nazi takeover, people who the Hungarian state deemed Jewish had been increasingly disenfranchised from 1938 onwards via several anti-Jewish laws modelled on Germany's Nuremberg Race Laws, and tens of thousands of Jews died in forced labour service or in mass executions in the Soviet Union as well as in Hungary. Even so, the occupation had a dramatic impact on civil society, with Jewish people being confined to ghettos and later deported to Auschwitz and other concentrations camps beginning in May 1944. In October 1944, the governor, Regent Miklós Horthy made a last attempt to declare an armistice with the Allies and withdraw from the Axis, but this effort also failed. The Arrow Cross Party came to power with Hitler's support just as the Red Army broke through the German and Hungarian defensive lines in Eastern Hungary. This was a pro-German, far-right government, which was devoted to continuing the war until the end. As a result of these failures and actions around one million people fell victim to the war between 1941 and 1945, mostly between May 1944 and March 1945. This number amounted to ten percent of the total population of Hungary at the time of the census of 1941. Notably, civilian victims of the war surpassed the number soldiers by a ratio of 3 to 1.

It is hard to estimate the number of people who experienced non-lethal violence, since many bureaucrats fled in the final months of war, so the state organizations issued documents only sporadically. In 2015, a comprehensive collection of volume county-level sources was published on the activities of Soviet troops in Hungary between 1944 and 1947, as the result of a two-year archival project.[6] As foreign embassies operated with serious limitations, external sources on this period are also very sporadic. A report prepared by the Swiss embassy that documented the atrocities in Budapest is an especially valuable source for this reason.[7] According to calculations based on various Hungarian and Soviet data, about one million Hungarian citizens – 2/3 of them soldiers and 1/3 of them civilians – were taken into Soviet captivity, including more than 15 thousand concentration camp survivors.[8]

6 L. Balogh, *"Törvényes" megszállás.*

7 Pető, *Elmondani*, 12.

8 Bognár. "1 milliónál több vagy kevesebb".

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The right to have one's victimhood recognized has been a political question since 1945. From this perspective, government decrees represented legal tools to designate victim groups, enabling them to discuss their traumas legally. Decree 1.278/1945 M.E. (M.E means Prime Minister) issued on 20 March 1945 placed the relatives of those who had "*lost their lives because of their anti-fascist behaviour [...] after 1st of April 1941"* under "national care." The wording of this legislation tended to exaggerate the anti-fascist past of Hungarian society. Later in 1945, Decree 29,000/1945 M.E. brought about a significant shift in the policy on acknowledging victims. It recognized victims of forced labour service by granting temporary aid to those citizens compelled to work by the Germans or the Arrow Cross Party. Although this was less in line with the initial stance, it provided aid for a period of three-month aid for those who had become prisoners of war before the Arrow Cross Party came to power or who voluntarily surrendered to the Soviets afterwards. No "*specific proof of political attitudes*" was needed. Moreover, "*recruitment for work by the Soviet military authorities and removal from the territory of the country"* also became grounds for claiming state aid, although this had to be proved by credible documents (for example, camp correspondence) or by two witnesses.[9]

This legislation clearly identified the state as a source of compensation for the suffering of certain groups. Former prisoners of war gained recognition of their ordeal relatively early. However, it is worth highlighting the political considerations behind defining and including certain categories of victimhood while remaining silent about other circumstances (e.g. victims of Holocaust and wartime rape)[10]. Moreover, these decrees did not specify whether injuries eligible for compensation included psychological trauma.

9 More than twenty years later, in 1966, Decree 29/1966 further extended the group of persons eligible for national care. Those who had been "crippled" during the repression of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919, those who took part in the resistance in the interwar period, or those whose relatives died or were injured during the 1956 "counter-revolution" could receive it. In Poland, in 1956, military invalidity was replaced by war invalidity, widening the range of possible victims. See Bomba and Orwid, "Psychiatric Study"

10 Pető, *Elmondani*

Concepts about the impact of war on mental health emerging in Europe, 1900–1960

"He went through hell during the war as a war prisoner, but who didn't?" [11]

Until the emergence of psychoanalysis, innate "biological" aspects were prioritized over a person's social milieu or psycho traumatic experiences in the development of madness. [12] The first war after which former combatants were treated for mental illness was the armed conflict between Russia and Japan (1904-1905)[13], but the systematic discussion of the subject started only a decade later, during and after the First World War. Psychological burdens played a secondary role in the biomedical model, which was the dominant paradigm of post-World War I psychiatry. The main tenet of this school of thought was that mental illness was a disease of the brain, and adverse environmental effects could trigger disorders when they encounter the inner vulnerability of the individual. Such environmental factors could be syphilis, fever, poisoning, and even head injuries, while psychological influences were excluded. There was a consensus within the biomedical school that "*great worry, lasting grief, intense disappointment, and mental overload were once accorded great importance. We now know that all these external influences have an effect only at the level of endogenous predisposition."* [14]

However, captivity was regarded as an exception in this model. In the late 19th century, captivity – mostly in the context of penal system – was discussed in the medical discourse as an external factor that might provoke psychiatric disorders. Prison overcrowding, malnutrition and psychological factors such as remorse or anxiety about the future could induce hallucinations, delusions and irritability in individuals with "weak resistance." [15] These symptoms also appear in psychoses, but contemporary experts did not agree whether captivity (or prison) psychosis was a real psychosis or not. While normal individuals are seen as persons whose behaviours are considered logical and comprehensible by their associates and whose emotions and interests are compatible with the social standards of their group, psychotics are completely unadjusted to their social group. Neurotic individuals fall in between these two groups: they are generally

11 Benedek, *Gilded Cage*, 70.

12 Beer, *The dichotomies.*

13 Karge, "War Neurosis and Psychiatry"

14 Schaffer, *Az elmebetegségek*, 113, 124.

15 Epstein, *Háború* és *elmebaj*,28 –30

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not well-adjusted to their social environment and their behaviour and thoughts might be peculiar, but for the most part, they are understandable.[16] According to the biomedical model, the external environment only plays a major role in the case of neurotics, as the explanations of post-First World War psychological problems demonstrated. László Epstein (1865–1923) and László Benedek (1887–1945), argued that only neuroses were affected by the war and that even if the symptoms might appear severe, neurotics could be cured relatively quickly and effectively. [17] As severe symptoms usually diminished after the end of captivity[18], captivity psychosis was considered to be more like a neurosis, similarly to shell shock. [19]

Notably, during the Second World War, there was a change in terminology. When referring to soldiers. the neurotic symptoms of "shell shock" were replaced by the term "combat exhaustion" which became an umbrella term for various depressive states and neuroses. Psychiatrists suggested that these mental disorders were the result of exhaustion: soldiers in the Second World War were therefore treated close to the front lines and sent back to their garrisons as soon as possible.[20] Importantly for this paper, the biomedical model helped the state authorities to avoid responsibility for providing compensation after the war. The medical records of soldiers and forced labourers treated at the Lipótmező in 1944–1945 almost invariably contain statements by the army that mental illness developed during military service, but could not be linked to it. [21]

16 Landis and Page, *Modern Society*, 9

17 Epstein, *Háború* és *elmebaj,* and Benedek "A cselekvő eugenikának*"*

18 Lunder, "Captivity psychoses"

19 Beer, *The dichotomies* argues that although this division between severe psychosis and milder neurosis seemed appealing, it became complicated when the theory turned into practice. Even during the career of a single scientist, different classifications of these mental problems might be made. This classification was by no means confined merely to theoretical debate: in certain regimes it determined people's right to live. The most dramatic example of this was the killing or sterilization of more than 400,000 patients in the Third Reich whose innate 'imperfection' was seen as posing a threat to the purity of the Aryan race. In addition to the mentally handicapped, schizophrenics and manic-depressives were the most frequently murdered or sterilized during the psychiatric genocide perpetrated in Nazi Germany.

20 Horváth Szabolcs, Juhász and Pertorini, "Háborús stressz"

21 E.g: OPNI 0161–M191 28th March 1944 – 15th April 1944. private first class in the infantry with schizophrenia; 1st – 8th December 1944. and 25th August 1942 – 22nd March 1944. forced labourer with schizophrenia. And: OPNI 0161-M197 22nd February 1944. – 30th July 1945: soldier with epileptic dementia. In early 1943 this soldier was beaten in the head by partisans in a "Russian theatre of operations" resulting in the loss of bone four centimetres

So, László Epstein's wish, expressed during the First World War, that "*of the much love that surrounds the physical wounded of war, a little should also be given to the wounded of the mind"*,[22] was thus ahead of his time.

It was only in the 1950s that survivors of war began to be systematically studied in the Western world and this research focus significantly contributed to understanding the complexity of war losses. A New York psychoanalyst, Walter G. Niederland[23] (1904–1993) introduced the idea of "survivor syndrome", a set of psychopathological symptoms that developed because of persecution. Other clinical observations validated his findings and it became accepted that the Holocaust was a severe psycho-trauma. This led to survivors becoming entitled to compensation in West Germany where aid was provided only to those who could clinically document their health impairment. Both the scientific findings and the legal victories of concentration camp survivors gave other former captives a greater understanding of their own psychological state and helped them to articulate their wish for compensation.[24]

Futterman and Pumpian-Mindlin pioneered the study of the psychological impact of the Second World War on veterans. They reported a high incidence of war neurosis five years after the war had ended. The condition was characterised by intense anxiety, combat-related dreams, tension, depressive symptoms, and aggressive behaviour. Interestingly, these symptoms occurred with greater frequency among non-combatant personnel, e.g. military medics.[25] In 1962, research by Archibald and his colleagues

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in diameter in his skull. He interpreted the events as follows: "Then he was hit in the head by something, right where the splinter was, and he only vaguely remembers the rest. He was in several hospitals, maybe in Warsaw where his leg was amputated, but he is not sure." According to the medical officer's opinion of February 1944: "The injury to his skull, the frostbite in both legs and its consequences were caused by the peculiar nature of his actual military service, and were not due to any fault of his own. His mental disorder was in all probability due to a congenital disposition and to the serious injuries and military exhaustion he had suffered." His hospital diary revealed that at first, he seemed irritable, cursing and demanding to be sent home, but after a few days he became calmer and talked to his fellow patients about his 'experiences in battle'. His condition quickly deteriorated, however, and he became quieter and more withdrawn. During the summer he would not even accept hospital food, waiting for his wife to bring him something better. A few months after the end of the war in Europe, on the 30th of July 1945, he died in Lipótmező of consumption.

22 Epstein, *Háború* és *elmebaj*, 12

23 Niederland, "The problem of the survivor"

24 Horváth and Juhász and Pertorini, "Háborús stressz"

25 Futterman and Pumpian-Mindlin, "Traumatic war neuroses"

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into former POWs highlighted that while their condition improved over time, veterans continued to suffer from sleep disturbance and were capable of lower levels of work performance due to exhaustion. The magnitude and intensity of the stressful situation patients had been subjected to and the subsequent rate of mental illness varied according to the better or worse conditions in the POW camps.[26] These findings have disproved the thesis that neurotic symptoms disappeared rapidly. Research into the impact of war on mental health during the 1950s played an important role in expanding the scope of mental illness to include cases beyond those with a risk of suicide or aggression.

Did the views of psychiatrists working east of the Iron Curtain diverge from the views outlined above? In the history of psychiatry in the Soviet satellite countries, Marxist-Leninist doctrines and the biomedical model interacted in a particular way. Both concepts rested on a materialistic view of life. Under the spell of the Marxist-Leninist vision, some Soviet ideologues went so far as to promise that their system would enable man's life to be prolonged to 150 years on average, conquering old age and allowing the resuscitation of victims of accidents.[27] Similar optimism was expressed regarding mental illness. For example, a neurologist named István Tariska (1915–1989), who participated actively in the communist movement,[28] claimed that: "*The number of the insane is increasing in imperialism, while in socialism it is decreasing. The intensified oppression of the masses in imperialism propagates the reproduction of mental illnesses, but in socialist society this impact is expressed in a reduction.*"[29] Such ambitious statements were fuelled by three assumptions.

26 Horváth and Juhász and Pertorini, "Háborús stressz"

27 Kuusinen, ed. *Fundamentals of Marxism–Leninism*, 623.

28 He joined the illegal communist party in 1940. With the arrival of the Soviet troops, he became the communist party secretary of Eastern Hungary and the member of the National Assembly between 1944 and 1945. From 1948 to 1951 he was the director of Lipótmező, when he was taken from his workplace by the secret police. He was sentenced to twelve years of prison with political charges but released after a few years. In 1956 the revolutionary committee in Lipótmező re-elected him as institutional director. See Kovai, "The History of the Hungarian Institute"

29 Bakonyi, *Téboly, terápia, stigma*, 63.

First, Soviet science was positioned as superior to bourgeois (idealist) schools in terms of understanding and curing diseases. In an interview from 1949, Tariska stated that insanity, which had previously been regarded as the result of bad luck, could now be understood as a "typical social consequence" of certain circumstances.[30] Second, communist health policy was informed by the idea that it would be possible to eliminate mental diseases triggered by external factors (such as syphilis or alcohol) by introducing effective prevention programmes. Many contemporary adherents of communism reasoned that in a capitalist system doctors are interested in making illnesses as long-lasting as possible in order to earn more money whereas under socialism doctors are motivated by the interests of society.[31] Third, communist health policymakers believed that there would be fewer neurotics as a result of reduced oppression and the resulting lack of conflict between people, alongside an increase in living standards.[32] University lecturers such as István Simonovits (1907–1985) continued to expressed such views into the 1970s, by which time most medical students listened to such explanations with an ironic smile.[33] By then, it had become evident that in the field of mental health the socialist states were unable to repeat their successes in reducing communicable diseases and that they had failed to control the spread of mental illness. There were at least three reasons for this failure.

First, ideological influences themselves may have been psychopathological factors. In interviews from the Radio Free Europe archive, emigrants often identified the public mood in Eastern Europe with nervousness. Doctors in Czechoslovakia could no longer cope with the onslaught of neurotic patients[34],,while fights between Hungarian workers were caused by exhaustion from overwork. [35] These anecdotes cannot be empirically

30 Pál, "Elfújja a szél"

31 Buga, *A jó egészség könyve*, 43. On the preventive work in psychiatry see Nyírő, *Psychiatria*, 307–309

32 Examples from the daily press: Pál "Elfújja a szél" or Bányász, "Küzdelem a világtól"

33 Harmat, "Az apológiától a szociológiáig", 497

34 "Nervous Disorders and General Health Conditions of Czechoslovak Population", 5 November 1955. HU OSA 300-1-2-63510; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: General Records: Information Items; Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest.

35 "Some Cases of Workers Nervous Breakdown", 5 May 1953. HU OSA 300-1-2-34270; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: General Records: Information Items; Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest.

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verified, but it is known that in Poland, the sociologist Jan Szczepański (1913–2004) discussed the housing shortage and the resulting housing neurosis as a consequence of the decisions of communist politicians. [36] Another verified case is that of the Hungarian medical scientist, Kálmán Sántha (1903–1956) who discussed the nervous exhaustion caused by the Stakhanovist movement. For doing so, he was deprived of his university post in a show trial. Interestingly, the doctors at Lipótmező, the most important psychiatric institution in Hungary, testified that they had never encountered such cases at their institute, but according to the patient files, many workers were treated for nervous exhaustion in the early 1950s. This shows the significant differences between contemporary public discourse and psychiatric practice.[37]

Second, despite the need to support institutions treating mental illness, the regime was not willing to spend sufficient funds on increasing the number of psychiatric beds substantially. On a national level, the number of beds in psychiatric hospitals increased above the 1938 level only by 1957. Overcrowding was particularly difficult to manage in the case of neurotic patients. [38] Ideological reasons were partly responsible for this discrepancy: the underlying belief was that creating a classless society would eradicate mental illness. Ideologues also denied that neurosis represented a major problem in socialist countries: they interpreted the disappearance of "*shellshock"* in the Soviet Union as a consequence of creating a socialist country. According to this theory, in capitalism, hysterical symptoms helped the individual to reach his goals, including receiving social support and health care. Such mechanisms in the Soviet Union were meaningless, as all the Soviet citizens had equal rights and access to the health care system.[39] However, it was seldom mentioned that war-related neurotic disorders were not referred to as "shell-shock" in the capitalist countries either but that the condition persisted under the name of "combat exhaustion" throughout the world.

36 "Polish Housing - "The New Neurosis"", 28 November 1961. HU OSA 300-8-3-4480; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Publications Department: Background Reports; Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest.

37 See Csikós, "Mennél több bolondot"

38 Bezerédyné, Hencz and Zalányi, Évszázados *küzdelem*, 285–286

39 A szovjet orvostudomány tapasztalatai

Considering these doctrines, it is not surprising that in the Communist Bloc, the issue of war neurosis was a sensitive matter to discuss.[40] Approaches to mental illness stemming from wartime trauma varied in each communist country. In the GDR, the narratives on the experience of being a prisoner of war were very strongly defined by ideological principles. [41] In contrast, in Yugoslavia – which came out of the Second World War as a winner –partisan hysteria was treated as a common psychopathology [42] In fact, the Yugoslavian methodological landscape in the 1950s was more complex than those in Hungary or the GDR, for example. [43] In spite of the radical nature of the communist authorities in the 1950s, in terms of health care the era showed several continuities with the pre-1945 world in its methodologies[44] or even individual practitioners. [45]

In Hungary until the mid-1960s, psychiatric treatment was limited to sedatives, special diets, electroshock therapy, and prolonged sleeping.[46] Psychotherapy included hypnosis and suggestive techniques based on the principles of Pavlovian reflexology.[47] Pavlov regarded speech as a human ability that works as an important stimulus in creating reflexes. He also noted that "*speech stimulations have removed us from reality,*

40 Dale, "Testing the Silence"

41 Schöhl and Hess, "War Imprisonment"

42 Antic, "Heroes and Hysterics"

43 Savelli, "Socialism, Society"

44 Marks and Savelli, "Communist Europe". In an interview, the chief doctor of Lipótmező explained that the most modern methods were imported from the Soviet Union. (Bányász, "Küzdelem a világtól") In reality, the first Hungarian experiments with electroshock preceded the Soviet occupation of the country (Angyal and Juba, "Tapasztalatok az elektroshock-kezeléssel") as did the use of hypnosis (Gyimesi, 'Hypnotherapies in 20th-century") or Pavlovian conditioning in curing alcoholism (Kő, Újabb tapasztalatok") In 1936, István Kő, a junior doctor at the Angyalföld mental hospital in Budapest, published an article on a therapy inspired by Susmann Galant's experiences in Leningrad. He gave two patients with alcoholism apomorphine to induce nausea. The success of the therapy was complete as the negative experiences stopped both patients from continuing their alcohol consumption.

45 Vargha, *Polio Across*, 9. The regime tolerated the possible pre-war political involvement of the doctors due to the acute shortage of doctors.

46 Tringer, "A Nap utca"

47 Leuenberger, "Cultures of categories". In 1897, the Russian physiologist Ivan Petrovich Pavlov had demonstrated the effect of reinforcement and aversion in modifying animal behaviour. His views were welcomed in Marxist-Leninist scientific circles, which saw these experiments as proof of the human ability to change. In psychiatry, especially in the first half of the 1950s, a biologistic perspective based on the stimulus-response pattern, conditioned reflexes, and the theory of higher neural activity prevailed.

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and we must always remember this in order not to distort our attitude to reality." [48] A practical guide to Pavlovian psychotherapy of the period emphasized the importance of authority in the doctor-client relationship, although it also stressed the importance of collecting a lot of data at the very beginning of the therapy. The patient therefore should be approached with *"understanding and the intention of help. […] (This first interview) should include the social and economic status of the patient, his informal and family relations, private life, and physical health. […]Honesty is of great importance."* [49]

Former prisoners of war undergoing psychiatric treatment, 1952 (–1971): telling their truth about captivity

In Stalinist countries, considering honesty in professional psychiatry raises the question of how "dual loyalty to both the patient and the state" was possible[50]. One of the foundation stones of the communist regime in Hungary was the axiom that the Soviet Red Army had liberated the country. Consequently, the violence perpetrated by the Soviets was a complete taboo, which psychiatrists and patients alike had to be aware of. What, then, happened in the many cases when it was clear that an illness was the direct result of war atrocities? How could the patients articulate their sufferings? Most perplexingly, how could psychiatrists simultaneously be open to patient narratives and remain loyal to the official narrative?

The following table summarizes the background and case history of the patients discussed below. (Table 1). It should be noted that in the patient files, captivity is used as an umbrella term that referred both to concentration camp survivors and prisoners of war. For this reason, I only examined those cases where the patient's status as a former prisoner of war can be clearly identified.

48 Pavlov, The conditioned reflex, 378.

49 Tokay, "A gyakorlati pszichoterápiáról", 166–167.

50 Marks and Savelli, "Communist Europe".

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Institutional stay	Year of birth	Occupation	Diagnosis	Discharge
22nd March 1951 – 23rd April 1951	1911	farmer	chronic alcoholism	cured
3rd December 1949 – 31st March 1950	1914	factory worker	chronic alcoholism	improved
2nd October 1952 – 9th October 1952	1917	director	neurasthenia	great improvement
7th March 1952 – 24th March 1952	1921	university student	neurasthenia	unchanged
9th May 1951 – 21st June 1951	1900	warehouse manager	neurasthenia	improved
20th August 1950 – 1st October 1950	1896	construction worker	paralytic dementia	deceased
5th February 1948 – 31st May 1951	1905	ship owner	paralytic dementia	deceased
11th December 1951 – 5th January 1952	1908	stoker	psychopathy	improved
31st August 1950 – 15th November 1950	1903	farmer	schizophrenia	improved / unchanged
20th May 1959 – 19th March 1960. (first stay)	1927	unskilled labourer	schizophrenia	recurring (17) admissions to Lipótmező until 1972

Table 1: Demographic data on the patients presented

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These cases illustrate that, in many cases, the survivors/patients themselves also linked their organic illnesses to their captivity.

A forty-three-year-old stoker (Case 1) is the only person with a diagnosis of psychopathy in this sample. He "*cannot control his nerves"* which meant that he was irritable, and his memory was constantly deteriorating. Some of his complaints, he said, were '*war-related'*. He recounted that he had been hit on the head and was taken prisoner in March 1945. He also added that when he returned home, "*he could not find his parents, he had nothing left. He went to work and now he's got himself together somehow*." The tests carried out following protocol found no neurological abnormalities and his diagnosis was psychopathy. He was prescribed sedatives and bromide to ease his symptoms.[51]

His narrative hints at the pathogenic nature of the prison camp, but these experiences were not well-expressed and are interspersed with other wartime events. However, the loss of his parents gives an insight into the difficulties of starting over after the war.

Paralytic dementia is a degenerative organic mental disorder that is caused by syphilis and which results in death without treatment due to the loss of brain cells. A fifty-four-year-old construction labourer (Case 2) with this diagnosis related the mental problems stemming from his wartime experiences. "*Since he returned home, he noticed that his mind was having problems. His thinking had become loose, he talked absent-mindedly, and saw soldiers and cannons in his hallucinations. He always felt fear. He was particularly afraid of airplanes and when he saw one, he went out into the corn to hide."* In 1945, he was a prisoner of war for six months. He was first treated with injections in 1949, but his condition did not improve significantly as he could not work, but just "wandered around". His treatment in Lipótmező did not bring any improvement, either. He was described in his medical records as a poorly nourished male patient whose condition had severely deteriorated, "... suffering from severe, advanced, demented insanity." He died after a month and a half after he had been admitted, on the 1 October 1950.[52]

A shipowner (Case 3) was also at an advanced stage of mental illness in 1948. "*He fought on the Hungarian front. In January 1945, he was taken prisoner by the Russians, he was a prisoner in the Caucasus, from where he returned 23 months later, in 1946. [...] He smiles jovially, explains his suffering as a Russian prisoner of war cheerfully,*

51 OPNI Institutional Stay: 11th December 1951 – 5th January 1952

52 OPNI 0161 – 007280/2 Institutional stay: 20th August 1950 – 1st October 1950

and then his face becomes sad." The cheerful style of his narration became a part of his clinical diagnosis, as the doctor (probably conveying the social consensus) unequivocally regards captivity as suffering. This was not the only surprising element of his story: he talked about love affairs with an actress and the drowning of Ferenc Szálasi, the leader of the Arrow Cross Party in the Danube. [53]

The mental disorder of schizophrenia is characterized by continuous or relapsing episodes of psychosis including hallucinations. One of the cases with such a diagnosis examined here was that of a forty-seven-year-old farmer who recounted his apparently unremarkable life story. (Case 4) He said the police had brought him to the hospital because of a quarrel with his wife. He felt fine, had a lot of friends, loved his wife, and loved to work on his 32 acres of land. The woman partly confirmed what the patient said, describing him as a "*cheerful, hard-working man*" who "*did all his work perfectly*." She had noticed a change in him after his return from captivity in September 1945. From that time on, "*he often laughed uproariously, heard voices, talked a lot, and often talked in confusion*." He developed an obsession that the neighbours, who he claimed were poking their animals with needles, so he often argued with them. The fact that he did not fulfil the compulsory agricultural delivery, thus decided not to comply with the demands of the new regime[54] aggravated his whole family's situation, and when his wife asked him to, he would beat her. "*He did his work in a disorderly way and we told him in vain: he did the farm work as he thought he should."* During another argument, he attacked his wife again and in consequence his brother-in-law tried to block his way with a pitchfork, but was also hit. The police then took him to Lipótmező. He mentioned that he had been a prisoner of war, but "*it took little time. He tells how he was tortured a lot and it makes him unable to speak."* Although his psychiatric records do not mention this his admission letter clarifies that he had been a "*prisoner of Russians"*, which caused his manic-depressive disorders, according to the local doctor.

In Lipótmező, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia and his treatment lasted from 31 August to 15 November 1950. At first, he behaved in an agitated manner, demanding to be taken home. From mid-September onwards, he received 12 electroshock treatments.

53 OPNI 0161 – 007280/2 Institutional stay: 5th February 1948 – 31st May 1951

54 The precursors of the compulsory-delivery system imposed on Hungary's peasants date back to the war economy of the Second World War. Hungary's communist government preserved this system. Individuals on the kulak list were subject to disproportionately high taxes and impossibly inflated delivery obligations. By 1950–1951, authorities had made it impossible for anyone in this category to earn a living.

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"*He did not resist, although he often said that he did not need it because he was not ill. Because of the treatments, he became calmer, less irritable, and less demanding to be discharged. He does not talk about his delusions. He is emotionally bleak, and although his thinking is not inchoate, it lacks higher factors. After treatment, he is quiet and withdrawn from the other patients."* He was discharged home back to his wife in an improved condition, although this presumably only meant that he had stopped talking about his hallucinations. The medical records also show that his condition showed signs of dementia.[55]

The life history of a man (Case 5) who was taken prisoner of war at the age of eighteen can be traced right up until1990 based on his psychiatric documentation. In 1990, his niece asked the management of the Lipótmező hospital to have her uncle's institutionalization certified, as two witnesses or the original documentation of war captivity was needed to obtain a higher pension (the same requirements that Decree 29,000/1945 M.E. listed, as mentioned above). In her letter, the woman pleaded: "*Mr. Director-General! Please help me if possible. My uncle was 17 years old when he was taken from his parents' home. His life was ruined. […] From 1945 to 1958 he was a prisoner in the Soviet Union / Norilsk in North Siberia/. He was brought home in a severe depressive state – at our request – in 1958 and was taken to the Red Army Road Institute for treatment."* (There is no reference to the circumstance that Norilsk was one of the Gulag camps.)

The first document on the patient's institutional stay in Lipótmező is from 1959. According to this, his medical treatment began in the Soviet Union in 1953. He was described as an inhibited patient with poor motivation, sometimes refusing to eat. He was given vitamin treatment in Hungary and after five months, he was released on adaptation leave. However, he soon returned after a family conflict. According to his sister, "*the nagging by his father that he would never be a man triggered his relapse*." In the hospital, he lay in bed all day without speaking. His symptoms continued in the following years. When his condition improved, he would go home and work as a domestic helper, but he would occasionally go into remission. In 1962, according to the medical documentation, he "*lay motionless in bed, eyes closed, hands clasped. He does not answer questions or say why he had to be admitted*." The record also states that in 1970 he "refuses to take his medication because he believes it is poison. He did not talk to anyone at home and was admitted to our ward again because of his inactivity". His

55 OPNI 0161 – 007280/2. Institutional stay: 31st August 1950 – 15th November 1950

brother-in-law stated that: "*There was no problem with the patient, he worked hard and liked to go to work. 11 days before his admission, he was asked to take his annual leave before the end of the year. He got worse on the first day and did not like the inactivity. Later he got worse, lying down all day, doing nothing, and not talking. Later, he did not even get up to eat. Then they asked for admission to hospital. According to his brother-in-law, if the patient had not been sent on leave, there would have been nothing wrong with him*." His long history of treatment between 1959 and 1971 included electroshock, various neuroleptics, and work therapy.[56]

Some patients diagnosed with chronic alcoholism had also endured captivity. For two weeks in March 1951, a forty-five-year-old farmer (Case 6[57]) behaved in a disturbing manner: he went into the garden in his underpants to dig, sometimes at night. His brother-in-law said that he had displayed a constant "*compulsion to go out"* and spoke to his relatives in an unnerving way. When he drank alcohol, he would wander away from home. He was taken to the Lipótmező mental institute by ambulance under sedation. He was registered with a diagnosis of chronic alcoholism, as if his drinking alcohol explained his deterioration. However, his brother-in-law also reported that he had speech problems even when sober. Reportedly, the problems began in October 1946, when he had returned from captivity: "*from that time onwards he was observed to suffer convulsive states in which his hands and feet twitched, he urinated in bed, lost consciousness and then had no recollection of any of it."* A few days later, his sister added that apart from pneumonia at the age of twenty-four, she knew of no other illness he had suffered from. "*Several times during work he was noticed to twitch, but not to collapse. In such cases he stopped and did not continue his work. The twitching was like standing in one place or leaning against something and then bouncing and making twisting movements with his limbs. All of these episodes have been going on for about six months. Before they admitted him about 2 weeks ago, he fell off a chair. He was disoriented, stripped naked, and tore at his bodily hair, saying there must be something else there. Since this sickness he could not do his work: he had been walking senselessly, but he complained of nothing. He had to be looked after like a little child because he always wanted to go out. Then he acted aggressively which is why they were afraid of him and brought him to our institution."*

56 OPNI 0161 – 006563. First Institutional stay: 20th May 1959 – 19th March 1960.

57 OPNI 0161 – 007280/2 Institutional stay: 22nd March 1951 – 23rd April 1951

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According to his documentation, he was only kept under observation and when he was discharged, the head physician, Dr. Lili Hajdú Gimes (1891–1960)[58] recommended abstinence, assuming that alcohol consumption had caused all his symptoms. She described the man as calm and quiet. "*He answers questions quietly but precisely. He only becomes animated when we ask him about his work at home and the 'land' – He is precise, lively, and very colourful in his accounts of how they work at home. He used to say that they had more and better crops than any other village."*

There are conflicting explanations of psychopathology in the case of a 35-year-old factory worker. (Case 7) According to his wife, he used to "*always drink,* [even before the war] *but in moderation"*, but since returning home from American captivity he had been drunk constantly, sweating at night, sleeping restlessly, and behaving nervously. She also said that his alcoholism had led to crime as he began to steal significant sums from the rent he collected. The man, on the other hand, said that the reason for his alcoholism was that he had fallen in with the wrong group at the factory where he had taken a job. [59]

Conclusions

In summary, all but one (Case 7) of these patients perceived a link between their war-related experiences and their current mental state even though most of them were diagnosed with severe mental illnesses. Generally, "captivity" was an umbrella term, and they did not specify which camp they were held in, although sometimes (Case 5) it was stated or is clear from other sources (Case 1)

The onset of the problems was identified as the time when the ex-soldiers returned home (Case 1, Cases 3, 4, and 7). This means that the problems were detected relatively early, but it took years before a psychiatric intervention was attempted. Treatment usually started when the patients became unbearable for their families: either because of their inactivity (Case 5), because of behaviour that was perceived as physically threatening (Cases 4 and 6), or because they committed an actual crime crime (Case 7). Some of them faced new social conflicts after the war ended. In two cases (Cases 4 and 6) a former prisoner of war was also subjected to violence as a peasant farmer during the

58 For her ideological conflicts and tragic life see Borgos, *Girls of Tomorrow.*

59 OPNI 0161 – 007280/2 Institutional stay: 3rd December 1949 – 31st March 1950

collectivization campaigns. Their status was peculiar in that health care in general was available free of charge only for state employees. Until the early 1960s, more than half of the population had to finance their own health care, and medical costs were extremely high. This explains why, according to a report by Radio Free Europe, around "*7000 peasant lunatics were […] institutionalized only when they turned out to be a threat to their environment*." [60]

While the psychotic patients included in this study were of low socioeconomic status, this was not the case for neurotic patients, who were typically admitted with a diagnosis of neurasthenia. Neurasthenia, or weakness of the nerves, refers to a state of physical and mental exhaustion accompanied by a variety of physical symptoms (headache, dizziness, insomnia), depressed mood, and irritability.

The clinical interviews with patients suffering from neurasthenia usually revealed that they had pursued notable careers during the communist era. An agrarian proletarian (Case 8) returned home from a POW camp in 1947. According to his account, while in captivity "he had a bad temper and was homesick." He and his wife got married in 1944, but after his return home, they did not spend much time together: on the orders of the Communist Party, he started studying economics and went to Budapest, while his family stayed in the countryside. He reported constant tinnitus and headaches, and that although he had "studied a lot, he could not assert himself because he forgot what he had learned." [61]

Another communist party member (Case 9) became a prisoner on the Soviet Front during the War but soon joined the Hungarian Red Army. The former electrician soon became director of several companies and graduated from the Technical University of Budapest. His nervous complaint started when he refused a project on the grounds of his exhaustion and for this, he was accused of backsliding and sabotage. [62]

Similar stresses affected another patient with neurasthenia, who gave a more detailed account of his war experiences. The man, the son of a poor craftsman (Case 10), had already served on the Italian front in the First World War before starting various businesses. When he fell into the cellar while taking an inventory at a cooperative run by the Hungarian Scouts, he suffered a concussion and went blind in one eye. He sued

60 "The Simaság-Intapuszta Experimental Lunatic Asylum", 11 May 1956. HU OSA 300-1-2-70948; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: General Records: Information Items; Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest.

61 OPNI 0161-007173/ 424 Institutional stay: 7th March 1952 – 24th March 1952

62 OPNI 0161-007173/ 424 Institutional stay: 9th May 1951 – 21st June 1951

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the company for two years for the blindness, won, and received an annuity. After the accident, he worked as a manager for several cooperatives. In 1940, "he was enlisted as a soldier and was on guard duty in a Polish prison camp. In 1943, he was called up again as a soldier and was sent to the Soviet front, where he had terrible experiences. From Russia, he and his regiment were marched on foot back to Transylvania and from there to Carinthia. Meanwhile, he felt as if there was a "*very painful hornet's nest"* in his brain. He became a prisoner of the British for six months. The first two months were very difficult, but later they were treated well. On his return from captivity, he found his family well."[63]

In the 1950s, these mental problems were apparently being discussed within the field of health care in Hungary. However, the need to submit a certificate to a pension institution only became common in the 1970s and after the change of regime (Case 5). It is thus reasonable to suggest that psychiatric illness was probably not a major factor in compensation or admission to national care in the 1950s. However, more systematic research on this issue is needed. Accounts of concrete experiences from the traumatic pasts of these people were absent in most cases: unwarranted hilarity (Case 4) or hallucinations (Case 2), or just terrible memories (Case 10) appeared in their narrations.

Despite the fact that the legal recognition of the victimhood of former POWs happened very early after the war, the psychiatric discourse paid relatively little attention to this trauma in the 1950s. While there was heavy ideological pressure to publicly deny the existence of the issue, (as Tariska's statements show) in psychiatric practice the psychological damage caused by wartime experiences was recognised in many cases. Patients (and local doctors as Case 4 demonstrates) generally identified a link between their state of mind and their experiences (even in the cases of paralytic dementia of organic origin), but psychiatry practice showed that there was not a complete consensus on it. Although Dr. Gimes stated in her study that 40% of the manic-depressive patients of Lipótmező experienced long-lasting traumatizing events in their life[64], she did not specify what these were. Details of such traumas in the patient files are included only in the patients' narratives and not in their official, final report.

63 OPNI 0161-007173/ 424 Institutional stay: 2nd October 1952 – 9th October 1952

64 Gimes, "Adatok a mániás-depressziós", 15.

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Szeged/Szőreg. A school building damaged in a Serbian air raid in 1941. - Fortepan / Vincent Till Baumgartner

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Discipline, Human Bodies and Landscape during World War II: the case of Jamshedpur in Colonial British India

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Abstract

This paper will first look at the way war transformed the landscape and cityscape of Jamshedpur. This region around the city was one of the inner frontiers of resource appropriation over the course of the 19th century that turned into a military frontier during the Second World War. Wartime inflation and food shortages forced the state to recast its relationship with its subjects. The war also had a significant impact on company management policies. The paper illustrates this with presenting the issues of food prices, discipline, technical training and the rehabilitation of disabled workers.

Keywords

World War II, Asian Theatre, Hinterland, Industrial Relations, British India

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Discipline, Human Bodies and Landscape during World War II

The case of Jamshedpur in Colonial British India

CENTRAL EUROPEAN HORIZONS 3, NO. 1–2 (2023)

One of the most difficult summers of the Second World War, that of 1942, saw a turning point in India. At the beginning of August 1942, the Government of India felt that the public statements being made by the major nationalist, pro-independence political force, the Indian National Congress, were harming the war effort and arrested Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) and other Congress leaders. This move triggered a decentralised but mass-scale upsurge in activity and fuelled a strong underground movement that remained active for many months even after the repression of the open protests, known as the Quit India movement.[1] While considerable scholarly attention has been devoted to reappraising the period and the activities of the Congress Ministries (in place between 1937 and 1939) as well as the Quit India movement, and to investigating the role of the Indian National Army and the impact of the Bengal Famine of 1943–44, little has been written about the impact of the 'war effort' on Indian society.[2]

This paper aims to contribute to eliminating this lacuna by focusing on how the region around the industrial city of Jamshedpur, located in the southern area of the Chotanagpur region and to the east of Kolkata, turned into a military frontier during the

1 Scholars of the movement point out that the patriarchal social framework that nationalism promoted also received serious challenge during that movement. See Pandey, "Introduction", 1-15.: Chakrabarty, "Political Mobilization in the Localities", Tharu and Lalita, "Women Writing the Nation", 63–64

2 Bhattacharya, Basu and Keys, "The Second World War and South Asia: An Introduction", Kamtekar, "A Different War Dance.") For the impact of World War II on the institutions of knowledge production see Sinha, *Science, War and Imperialism*

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Second World War. It will first examine the way the war transformed the cityscape of Jamshedpur. It will then discuss how wartime inflation and food shortages forced the state to recast its relationship with its subjects and how the food situation interacted with the idea and practice of the scientific management of labour. I will also illustrate the latter by focusing on the issues of technical training and the rehabilitation of disabled workers.

Jamshedpur as a Military Frontier

By the late 19th century, the central and eastern zones of Chotanagpur had become the most important coalfields in India, while its southern areas were centres of iron ore and copper mining. Jamshedpur and especially the works of the Tata Iron and Steel Co. (TISCO) was the hub of turning these resources into products. In his monographic study of the history of the Tata Group, Mircea Raianu posited that rather than becoming the sole power in the region, the company manoeuvred between the legislation enforced by the British colonial state and local opposition to its need for land throughout the pre-independence period.[3] Raianu points to the Quit India movement as an event that put the management and directors under pressure to take a nationalist, thus, anti-British stance even during the war. At the same time, the war was also a period demanding closer cooperation with the USA, especially in view of the foreseen extension of the capacity of the plant.[4]

In the course of the war, Jamshedpur became a vital source of steel in South Asia that the British command wished to save at any cost. Between 1939 and 1942, the city turned into a hinterland and subsequently into a military frontier at an accelerating pace. However, these shifts did not all occur right after the outbreak of the war. In Jamshedpur, between the rainy season of 1939 and the cold season of 1941, apart from developing new products, conducting training for Air Raid Precautions and the implementation of fundraising measures related to the war, there were not many signs of the global military conflict in the region. Because of the sudden cessation of trade with Germany, the management of the plant had to delay some of the planned investment and had to replace

3 Raianu, *Tata,* 55–76

4 Raianu, *Tata*, 108–118.

some German technicians and engineers, but city life was hardly affected. [5] While the Battle of Britain was raging in the skies of England, shelters produced at Jamshedpur provided effective protection below. The army command was eager to involve TISCO in ambitious international projects. For example, it was planned that the company would provide cannons for units stationed in China.[6] In the city, the presence of air power, the most significant strategic innovation of the Second World War, was not a novelty. Managers frequently flew between Bombay and Jamshedpur and occasionally to other destinations and an aerodrome had served this purpose since 1935.[7] In this context, it is not surprising that members of the company management were aware that the outcome of battles would largely depend on air power, especially in the early stages of the conflict. In March 1940, A.M. Hayman, who led the delegation to the Viceroy as the Bihar Member of the Legislative Assembly and who was chief controller of TISCO, suggested that a fighter manufacturing plant should be set up near Jamshedpur. This plan did not materialize, but purchase of Spitfire fighter planes was the focus of fundraising activities in the city throughout 1940. The management was also aware that the sight of aeroplanes had a psychological impact. In November 1940, the TATA plane distributed propaganda material above Chaibasa. According to the deputy commissioner: "The appearance of the Plane and the dropping of leaflets created interest and was of immense success."[8]

By 1942, however, fear and mobilization for the war came to Jamshedpur, too. After the Japanese military successes of 1941, Jamshedpur was not only strategically important, but also endangered. TISCO continuously developed steel and alloys used for making bombs, warships, armoured vehicles, communication and surgical equipment.[9] As a consequence of the Japanese offensive, military units started using roads and buildings while TISCO workers built shelters, fencing and communication lines for them.[10] During 1942, it looked very likely that the USA Air Force would establish a hospital in the city and that it would require a new air strip and aerodrome.[11]

5 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 312 File no.173 no. 251.

6 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 314 File no. 178 part I no. 513.

7 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 313 File no. 174 part I no. 341.

8 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no.313 File no. 175 no. 292.

9 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 314 The Steel Company's War Effort in 1939.

10 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 313 File no. 173 nos. 283–287.

11 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 315 File no.179 part II. no. 224.

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The cityscape changed not only due to the noise that heavy vehicles and airplanes created and the presence of barbed wire and air defence units. Fear played its part, too. The town administration opened an office that presented the tools and methods of Air Raid Protection and thousands of TISCO workers were scheduled for related training. The company provided loans for its employees so that they could evacuate their families from the city.[12] Administrative units dealing with financial and technical planning and accounting shifted to other towns in order to minimize the damage that a Japanese attack would inflict.[13] Historians Christopher Bayly and Timothy Harper pointed out in their book on the war in South Asia that the majority of bombs dropped in the Asian theatre missed their target.[14] However, as Priya Satia also reminds her readers, we should not forget that the fear of bombs had a significant impact. According to Michal Shapira's thesis, one of the most significant shifts between the First and the Second World War is that after 1940 there was no longer a stigma attached to fear. Instead, the possible ways of handling fear constituted the main problem for the authorities.[15]

In her book summarizing the social landscape of Bihar from 1942–44, Vinita Damodaran painted a picture in which both economic and political violence was part of everyday life. In other words, violence was no longer on the margins. In fact, management and later government reports blamed the two-week-long strike that lasted until mid-August on the Quit India movement.[16] In this context it is worth noting that telegram messages mentioned delays in transmission in August and September: cutting communication lines was one of the main features of local anti-colonial resistance in 1942.

This security situation and the importance of war production made discipline a high priority. By this time, a number bodies had been endowed with the right to legitimate violence to maintain order in Jamshedpur. The close attention paid to the conditions and loyalty of the 400-strong Works Guards reflects the importance of discipline and

12 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no.314 File no.176 part II nos. 97–127.

13 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no.314 File no.177 part I n.108. Verma to General Manager 11th March 1944

14 Bayly and Harper, *Forgotten Armies*, 273.

15 Shapira, "The Psychological Study of Anxiety"

16 *Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour*

security.[17] The presence of the army was a double-edged sword. Units of the Eastern Command of the Indian Army and Wing no. 171 of the Royal Air Force were stationed in the town from early 1942. The presence of the military had brought about conflicts in the city by the summer of 1942. According to a letter of complaint addressed to the general manager of TISCO, attempts of gang rape were becoming more common.[18] On the one hand, the letter reflects the fact that these did not bring women to the fore. It is not women that complained but men on behalf of families worried about their honour. It is worth nothing that the letter did not see the presence of the army in terms of the national interest, but only considered the importance of defending the town's families then and there. In early 1942, the Eastern Command of the Army and TISCO's management discussed the feasibility of setting up a so-called Indian Territorial Force that would have been recruited from TISCO employees. From the managerial point of view, such a body would have been desirable because of the positive impact of military training on discipline. There is some indication that this local force was actually set up during the war.[19]

Time was a crucial factor for discipline. Towards the end of 1939, the management at Tata decided to introduce more serious disciplinary actions in case of irregular attendance or absenteeism. It is reasonable to suppose that the controversial case of one of the employees, Lakhan, triggered this measure. Lakhan was discharged in October 1939 for irregular attendance. Although at first sight, the case looked straightforward, the Tata Workers' Union asked for an investigation. Lakhan accused the guards that accompanied him to the gate of having pushed him, humiliated him in front of fellow workers and of not allowing him to take all his personal belongings including a tiffin box with him.[20] The case shows that a portion of the employees still attended their job at somewhat irregular intervals in 1939, and also that physical violence on behalf of management was not an accepted practice within the works.

17 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 313. File no. 174 part I. n 252–271-. 224–250. General Manger's circular to Divisional Heads 31 January 1940, Sikh Work Guards' uniform 21 May 1940

18 TSA Box no. 314. File no. 177 part I. no. 21.

19 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 314 File no. 177 part II. nos. 304–305, 310.

20 TSA Labour Relations Box no. no. 174. File no. L-84.

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The relationship between the trade unions and the management was important because of concerns about the war effort and productivity. It should also be noted that a strike or the spread of violence would have created new frontiers within a zone that had to be protected from bombs. The Defence of India Act of 1939 practically banned strikes and made mediation compulsory. Moreover, war ordnances regulating employment in industrial production applied to an increasing number of factories after each amendment. These regulations limited the free circulation of labour and thus the possibility of mass retrenchment. At the same time, inflation was becoming a serious strain on the everyday life of workers. Radha Kumar has shown that the quality of life deteriorated during the war due to insufficient food supply, rising price levels, as well as congestion on the roads and shortages of housing.[21]

TISCO's management tried to prevent the escalation of industrial conflict by introducing bonuses and employing new propaganda tools.[22] In April 1942 a talk by Ardeshir Dalal (1884-1949) was the first sound that the citizens of Jamshedpur could hear on the radio. Dalal was a former director of TISCO who was very active in designing its welfare schemes during the 1930s. A dozen daily newspapers reported on the event. Significantly, the speech was a response to the Tata Workers' Union demanding a 30% rise in wages. Dalal spoke in Hindi and built his arguments around the role of the company in the war. He stated with certainty that bombing would eventually take place in the area and that there would be loss of life. He attributed anxiety on the part of employees to war conditions and warned that losses can only be minimized if everyone avoided panic. Dalal emphasized that the victory of Axis powers would bring about a world dominated by governments where real trade unions did not exist and the sole function of workers was to serve the state.[23]

21 Kumar, "City lives."

22 The government made bonuses compulsory at the end of 1940 as a result of an investigation into the wages of railway employees. The Bengal-Nagpur Railways and the TISCO management regularly consulted each other regarding bonuses in order to avoid tension over wage differences.

23 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no.314. File no. 177 part II nos. 374–377.

Scientific Management of Labour and Food Shortages

Since millions starved to death during the Bengal Famine of 1943 and 1944, it is one of the key debates in the historiography on Colonial South Asia. One of the key questions in these discussions is how many crops the cyclone of 1942 actually destroyed and whether this was enough to cause a food availability crisis. Another concerns how far Churchill's white supremacist views led to a wilful ignorance of starvation. Arguably, one cannot answer these questions without taking a more comprehensive look at the agrarian economy of Bengal and the attempts of the colonial administration to modify it during the 1930s.

Undoubtedly, food prices were the most important sources of tensions throughout the war years in Jamshedpur, as elsewhere in the country. Considering the case of Jamshedpur, it is worth highlighting one of the aspects of the changes in colonial governance that were occurring in the period: the idea of scientific management in industry.

To start with, the report of the Bengal Famine Inquiry Commission, reflecting the strong influence of Wallace Aykroyd, stated that famines might be avoided if peasants had access to a better diet. In pursuing his agenda at the Coonoor Nutrition Laboratories, Aykroyd was a voice that represented a more genuine commitment to colonial development.[24] In fact, contemporary industrial surveys and texts on economic planning suggested that nutrition gained political significance during the war years in India – even if only temporarily. The discourse on economic planning at this time took food and nutrition problems seriously.[25] One of the key documents of this discourse appeared in 1944 and was entitled 'The Bombay Plan'. It stands out in the planning literature since the most noted industrialists of the time were among the authors and signatories listed on the front page, including J.R.D Tata and G.D. Birla. The second chapter of the Bombay Plan was an attempt to define minimum needs. Welfare concerns were integrated into this major plan of reconstruction through its focus on nutritional requirements. In numerical terms, the goal was to increase the per annum income from Rs 65 to Rs 74 over 15 years.[26] According to the report's calculations this would have been sufficient

24 Clarke, Sabine:"A Technocratic Imperial State?"

25 Kamtekar, "A Different War Dance"

26 Thakurdas and Tata and Birla et al. *A Plan of Economic Development for India*, 12.

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to reach the minimum standard of living. The Left wing on the contemporary Indian political spectrum refuted the Bombay Plan. Mahabendra Nath Roy called it a fascist programme on the grounds that it foresaw private industrialisation financed by the state and a large and a growing population that lives just above starvation level.[27]

From the perspective of Jamshedpur, it is worth looking at the context of the Bombay Plan. The idea of economic planning was not a new one by the closing years of the Second World War in India.[28] M. Visvesvaraya's 'Planned Economy for India' had been a popular work that was published in the middle of 1930s, appearing in two subsequent editions.[29] This literature adopted the principle of scientific management and was eager to learn from the experience of Soviet Russia. In his work, historian Anson Rabinbach pointed out the affinity between the planned machinery imagined by Soviet planners or Trotsky and Taylor's 'and the Gilbreths' notions of efficiency, motion and fatigue.[30] The prominent Bengali politician Nalini Ranjan Sarkar who oversaw the Education, Health and Land portfolio as a Member of the Executive Council until 1943, wrote in his 'Economic Planning and Programme for post-war India' that in order to attain "full development of the individual for efficiency without exhaustion" economic planning needed to follow the standards that nutritional science had established.[31] Virtually all the publications concerned with planning emphasized that industrialization must be a priority in planning. Industry was expected to relieve population pressure on the land, generate income, raise India higher in the international division of labour and bring about a transformation of the infrastructure of the country. Prominent public figures such as V. Sundaramurthy, M.Visvesvaraya and S.R.S. Raghavan wrote pamphlets drawing attention to these aspects. The Five-Year-plans of the Soviet Union were scrutinized and compared with the advances that the Planning Commission of India had made. In comparison with those goals the Bombay Plan appeared to be modest, and therefore seemed viable. However, the widely shared consensus about its objectives hides an important shift. While in 1944, the opening pages of the Bombay Plan formed the point of departure for a linear argument, six years later, the eventual Draft Plan perceived food

27 Roy and Parikh: *Alphabet of Fascist Economics*.

28 Chattyopodhyay, *The Idea of Planning*, 29–82. Zachariah, *Developing India*, 25-79.

29 Visvesvaraya, *Planned Economy for India*,[2]

30 Rabinbach, *The Human Motor*, 34

31 Sarkar, *Economic Planning and Programme*, 15.

shortage as a calamity that cripples all further economic activity. Instead of making standard income one of the main indicators of the state of Indian economy, the Draft Plan plainly stated that inflation left no scope for increasing salaries.[32] In other words, the post-colonial state quickly opted not to take the entitlement approach.

The price indices of the 1920s and the testimony of the deputy commissioner in 1930 show that Jamshedpur was an expensive place for food.[33] Taking the pre-war level as a base, the cost-of-living index remained at 118 in 1940, jumped from 118 to 145 in 1941 and had reached 192 by June 1942. The TISCO management introduced a scheme of dearness allowance in August 1940 that was initially a minimum Rs 2.8, was raised to minimum Rs 4 in October 1941 and then a minimum Rs 9 in October 1942 for those earning less than Rs 125. Apart from this there was an Emergency Bonus that meant an extra Rs 5 for the lower income groups and up to Rs 50 for the higher earners.[34] Regarding rationing, the official records are mainly concerned with the limitations imposed on petrol supplies, but they also reveal that food rations were distributed through co-operative shops throughout Jamshedpur.[35] Despite the noticeable archival silence about the wartime food shortage, in June 1943 a large workers' meeting sent a list of claims to the management that reveals that there was indeed a crisis. They talk of the "extreme gravity of the present food position of the industrial workers" caused by the "continuous and steep rise in the cost of living" and of a "shortage of supplies leading to the failure to ensure full supplies guaranteed under the Rationing Scheme…". The document reflects the fact that by the 1940s workers had internalized the basic principles of scientific management or at least they were willing and able to use arguments based on energy and efficiency if they believed that it might increase the chance of a positive response on the part of the management. They declared that they found it "impossible… to continue full pressure work for any length of time due to a progressive loss of energy consequent on short rations…".[36] As a result, TATA Steel management and the Bombay TATA central office began communicating about how to secure rations and eventually procured rice from Orissa.[37]

32 *The First Five-Year Plan*. 67–74 and 186.

33 Index Numbers Showing the Rise and Fall in the Cost of Living in Bihar and Orissa 1927-28 and 1932-33and Mr. Dain's Evidence 402–403.

34 TSA Labour Relations Box no. 152 File no. L87 n. 207–209

35 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 315 File no. 179 part II n. 230.

36 TSA Labour Relations Box no. 152 File no. L87 n. 215.

37 TSA Labour Relations Box no. 152 File no. L87 n. 217.

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Tellingly, the issue of food also outlined the boundaries of secular management during the 1940s. TISCO provided the Health and Development Survey with important details about what eating meant in the works in daily practice. According to the answers that management prepared for the uniform questionnaire there were two canteens in 1943 that provided food to Hindu vegetarians, non-vegetarians and Muslims separately.[38] In 1944 a memorandum about the amenities provided to the workers mentioned eight canteens within the works. This means that a fourth community had also acquired the right to have a separate menu. The space where lunch and dinner hours were spent re-enacted the communal logic of the day, hence reinforcing the culture of communal separation. This was not only the case within the factory area. A document produced by the town administration listed 24 eating places in May 1940.[39] These were characterized as Bengali, Punjabi and Muslim. The document, however, was mainly concerned with the needs of the middle-class visitor "who is not properly catered for."[40]

The Human Body at War: Technical Training and Rehabilitation 1940-1945

Questions of wartime training shed light on another aspect of the interaction between company management and the war effort of the central government. The Government of India paid unprecedented attention to technical training during the Second World War. The frequently amended and extended National Service (Technical Personnel) Ordinances established National Service Labour Tribunals that had vast powers to distribute skilled labour.[41] In June 1940, the Ministry of Labour planned a training programme for 3000 people, although the demands of factories involved in the war effort far exceeded the preliminary calculations. In January 1945 the number of Indian citizens that had taken part in training programmes was 107 000. The Ministry of Labour also ran a system that provided further training and was expected to produce 6000 graduates until September 1942.[42] Compared to these, the scope of the most well-known programme

38 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 315 File no. 179 part II n-230.

39 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no.312 File no. 174 Part I nos. 15–16.

40 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 312 File no. 174 Part I. nos. 15–16.

41 Tata Steel Archive General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 313 File no. 176 part II nos. 381–387.

42 Rao, Wartime Labour Conditions, 32–34.

of the period, the Bevin scheme, was negligible. That project was the idea of Ernest Bevin, the wartime British Minister for Labour and National Service. It envisaged training Indian skilled workers in state-of-the-art British industrial plants and involved 700 workers until February 1945. A series of supporting letters show that a number of Bevin trainees sought employment at TISCO.[43]

It is perhaps unsurprising that one of the national training schools of the Indian training programme was the Technical Institute at Jamshedpur. In 1942 the company management discussed the possibility of opening a hostel for trainees studying in Jamshedpur.[44] Reports show that the number of TISCO employees registered at the Technical Institute rose from 50 to 126 between January 1941 and September 1942.[45] The extensive national training schemes inspired the TISCO management to reassess their own system of internal training. The sub-committee that the managing board set up did not support the idea of providing workers with the opportunity to receive training at foreign universities and had reservations about the use of higher education in India. Instead, the report suggested that on-site study of technologies would be of greater benefit.

The policies of the Government of India regarding technical training show that the needs of mobilization outweighed uncertainties about the potential for development in India that had been motivated by racial profiling. The prevailing thinking about racial differences assumed that in a colonial world order Indian politics, society and economy could only be modernized in the distant future. Even if there were groups that possessed important skills and there were peoples that were less distant from European populations racially, and even if there were fearless fighters, good miners and smelters with great stamina, they also appeared in archaic colours and in metaphors as brave medieval warriors. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the literature on Indian labour emphasized the otherness and low productivity of Indian workers with few exceptions. Mass training schemes reflect the new reality that under the pressure of war government required labour that would be able to produce guns and machines for the British Empire, and in such an emergency there was no room for doubts. The colonies had to be developed, and rapidly. The adoption of the Bevin scheme demonstrates that the British government wanted quick and unidirectional technological transfer. In line with this vision, the

43 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 313 File no. 175 nos 249–283.

44 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no.314 File no.177 part II no. 402.

45 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 313 File no. 175 n-286.

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masses that were not familiar with industrial work had to be trained in centres near their homes under the supervision of English trainers, while Indian skilled workers needed to acquire knowledge about new technologies that would be implemented in India.

Within TISCO, the management sub-committee objected to the idea of training being conducted abroad during the discussions about how to improve the internal training scheme. It was afraid that the glamour of the West would seduce and disorientate the trainees. On the other hand, it did not regard it as likely that workers that had been employed by the company for a number of years would be ambitious enough to leave his household behind. They implicitly assumed that Indian workers were essentially different from skilled Americans or Germans that worked for TISCO in this regard. The recommendations of the sub-committee emphasized that an increase in pay should not automatically be guaranteed to workers who complete a training course at the Technical Institute. The management perceived the increase of wages as a somewhat illegitimate demand that was nonetheless the only real motive behind Indian workers taking part in voluntary training courses. The technical training of disabled persons shows that information related to training circulated swiftly between Britain and India during the Second World War. It also reflects the role of army in the process. Agents asked the General Safety Committee of TISCO to study ways of rehabilitating injured personnel. The Chief Engineer contacted the headquarters of the Eastern Army on behalf of the committee and subsequently made a visit to the army rehabilitation centre in Pune in September 1944.[46] In the same period, one of the agents, S.H Saklatvala visited the Austin Motor Company and an exhibition on rehabilitation in Birmingham.[47] The group visiting the army centre concluded that very few of the people trained there could be employed at TISCO, but both J.R.D. Tata and John Matthai encouraged them to think of an independent training scheme. Matthai saw great prospects in employing blind people while J.R.D Tata stressed the importance of TISCO becoming a model factory in the field of employing ex-soldiers and rehabilitating employees that had suffered accidents.[48] Saklatvala's positive experience also suggested that it was possible to link gradual rehabilitation, the scientific management of tools and regular medical supervision in state-of-the-art industrial plants. This represents an attempt at technological transfer

46 TSA Box no. 178 part II n.27 Bryant to Agents 18 September 1944

47 TSA Box no. 178 part II n. 36-–39- Saklatvala to Chief Engineer 6th October 1944

48 TSA General Manager's CorrespondenceBox no. 178 part II n n.19 Mathai to Ghandy 23 November 1944, n.21 and J.R.D Tata's note 17 November 1944

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between metropolitan industry and TISCO in which governments were not involved. Both the report on the Pune model and the one on Austin Motors highlighted the importance of the sense of integrity and self-confidence that employment gave to disabled persons. On the other hand, the special scheme that the Eastern Army ran at Poona gave input about the limitations of such training and an idea about the methods of sharing both the financial burdens and the benefits with the Army. The TISCO management wanted the Army to cover housing costs and a small salary during the training. According to the plan the training period would not have lasted for more than three months. That much time was judged sufficient to determine the employability of the participants. The framework of the scheme reveals that its scope would have been much more limited than what Saklatvala saw at Birmingham, although management was ready to open up a new field of human resource management that considered the well-being of workers as a crucial asset. This approach drastically differed from the perception and conceptualization of coolie labour that dominated earlier discourse on the Indian and TISCO labour force.

New Landscapes: Flood Control, Energy and Development

As it transpired, during the years of the Second World War, no bombs damaged Jamshedpur and its vicinity. Other forms of destruction did occur, however: violent floods burst the banks of the River Khorkai in July 1940 and again in July 1943, destroying some of the workers' quarters (bustis). The company management documented the damages, but in their daily communication, the railway lines and the conditions of supplies figured more importantly than damage to buildings.[49] In fact, the occurrence of floods did not entirely surprise the TISCO management. The general manager's correspondence reveals that the dangers arising from the destruction of forests around Dalma Hill were known by 1938. The management suggested that the Bihar provincial government should reserve the hill area so that the smallholders that were allegedly cutting down the trees in the forest for the profit they expect from selling timber in Jamshedpur could be removed. Indeed, TISCO's management expected that these smallholders would cut down even more trees if the new bridge over the Khorkai opened.[50] They went as far as to argue that these activities for petty gains would bring about a climatic disaster that

49 TSA General Manager's Correspondence Box no. 314 File no. 178 part II. nos. 51–56.

50 TSA General Managers Correspondence Box no. 315 File no. 179 part II 24–36.

Central European Horizons 3, no. 1–2 (2023): 176–194.

must not be risked.[51] The carefully addressed and timed application for creating a new forest reserve consciously concealed the fact that in fact its main beneficiary would be the steel works.[52] Just as Jehangir Jivaji Ghandy (1896-1972), the first General Manager of TISCO had expected, the Conservator of Forests forwarded the case with supporting comments to the Revenue Department of Bihar.[53] It seems that some years passed without further action since Ghandy sent another letter to the Bihar Government in 1944 asking for "rationalization in the management of existing forest land" by which he meant the creation of reserves of private forests in the catchment area of both the Subarnarekha and Khorkai rivers. Ghandy suggested that the Embankment Act of 1882 should be applied to forests that helped with flood control, thus enabling the speedy appropriation of land. The Secretary to the Government of Bihar, Rai Bahadur B.N. Singh sent a short reply that did not promise anything. It stated that the issue of designating a reservation had been on the agenda of the local government for some time. Ghandy's application is remarkable because of its reference to the inherent conflict between nature and industrial "civilization" that research can eventually resolve. In Ghandy's formula, afforestation schemes devised by government bodies with the necessary expertise and a government with an innovative approach to existing legislation can remedy manmade mistakes that were the side effects of development in the preceding twenty years. In other words, in just two decades TISCO management had moved away from a view that perceived natural resources solely as treasure to be explored and exploited. Ghandy realized that industrial activity induced changes that disrupted the ecological equilibrium and that needed remedy. However, he wanted the owners of private forests and the government to pay for this cure.

Importantly, Ghandy made a link between this new approach to landscape management and the post-war reconstruction or development plans that experts, government and the Tatas themselves were drafting in the closing years of the Second World War. Maps that the TATA Steel Archives holds from the period from 1940-1945 show that landscape was reinterpreted within the framework of nation and development in precisely those years. The maps that visualize the "Proposals for interconnecting the Bihar

51 TSA General Managers Correspondence Box no. 315 J.J Ghandy to L.R Sabharwal 28th June 1939 n-298.

52 TSA General Managers Correspondence Box no. 315 J.J. Ghandy to Agents' Office 23rd June 1939 n-294.

53 TSA General Managers Correspondence Box no. 315 J.J. Ghandy to Agents' Office 26 July 1939 n-305.

electrification Scheme with Bengal" take a very ambitious perspective and show how the industrial area may be linked seamlessly to other junctures of India. The map depicts administrative and economic centres, as well as Nepal and Tibet, but topographical features are omitted.[54] This view reflects the eyes of the company management, with the interface between social and natural features being reduced to coal as a source of power. In a letter dated February 1940, the Superintendent of the Coal Department sent a long letter to the TISCO management outlining why he opposed plans for electrification that would take a provincial perspective.[55] The Superintendent suggested that the Tatas consider instead the possibility of a "general scheme of power supply" for Eastern India, possibly based on hydro-electric power.

This reveals another perspective on the dynamics and meaning of a resource frontier. The emergence of the power supply as a major issue did not only mean the ever more intensive commodification of the landscape: the resource frontier remained what it had been, but it would integrate the landscape more closely with new frameworks of power such as the nation and investment for development. This view emerged during the war, at a time when resource mobilization might legitimately override other considerations.

Conclusion

This paper described how Jamshedpur transitioned from an inner frontier into one of primary importance for the Empire that was in danger of being attacked and needed to be protected. The industrial premises, roads and air space all served this purpose. The local population was afraid both of the threat of bombing and the presence of the army. The management of the local industries introduced new norms of discipline under the new conditions demanded by the war effort and the lasting violence following the emergence of the Quit India movement. The government of India and provincial governments were tragically slow to introduce rationing during the food crisis of 1942-43, while the TISCO management tried to avoid the escalation of industrial conflict by offering bonuses and deploying new methods of propaganda. In response, one of the

54 TSA General Managers Correspondence Box no. 314 File no.176 part 2 n. 139–140.A. Targuhar to J.J Ghandy 27 February 1940

55 TSA General Managers Correspondence Box no. 314 File no.176 part 2 n 122–132.A. Targuhar to J.J Ghandy 27 February 1940

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trade unions used the language of scientific management, citing the ability to produce efficiently as the basis of its arguments for pay increases and better conditions. Mass training programmes demonstrated the new impetus and the change in the government's policy approach to developing the colonies. TISCO also re-evaluated its internal training programme, but this assessment still took differences between Western and Indian workers for granted. On the other hand, discourse about the training of disabled persons opened up new prospects for conceptualizing labour. It also demonstrated the potential benefits of enhancing information flow between companies and reflected the accelerating contemporary developments in the metropole, the army and TISCO.

The significance of the Second World War goes far beyond the political and social history of de-colonization. The late colonial years drew up structures that foresaw the most salient conflicts of post-war South Asian society: the uncertainty of the relationship between citizenship rights and the right to security of life, the persistence of rigid vertical boundaries within society and the dominant position of large companies in determining the use of elements of the landscape. TISCO's management felt capable of mobilizing and regulating nature in its own interests within the new framework of governance dominated by the idea of development and the nation.

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Pélmonostor, restoration of a railway bridge over the Karasica stream (1941)
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The radical reorganization of knowledge

Hubbell, J. Andrew and Ryan, John C.: *Introduction to the Environmental Humanities*. Abingdon and Oxon: Routledge, 2022. pp. 302.
https://doi.org/10.51918/ceh.2023.1-2.7

Central European Horizons, 3, no. 1–2 (2023)

This book provides an introduction to Environmental Humanities (hereafter EH), a relatively new, yet rapidly changing field of scholarship.

This *Introduction to the Environmental Humanities* is the joint work of two authors, John C. Ryan and Andrew J. Hubbell. John C. Ryan is Adjunct Associate Professor at Southern Cross University, Australia, and Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at the Nulungu Institute, Notre Dame University, Australia. His interests include contemporary poetry, Indigenous Australian and Southeast Asian literature, postcolonial literary criticism, ecomedia studies, and critical plant studies.[1] He also examines recurrent questions of nationalism through a distinctly global approach that considers factors of language, ethnicity, identity, justice, ethics, globalisation, environment, and postcolonialism.[2] Andrew J. Hubbell is Associate Professor of English at Susquehanna University, USA, and Adjunct Researcher at the University of Western Australia. His interests include nineteenth-century British literature, literary theory, climate narratives, empirical humanities, and new social movements. His main interest is in literature that represents human-nature relationships, and he specializes in British Romanticism and Ecocriticism.[3] As part of his university work, he has co-created a new Environmental Studies program. It certainly inspired him to write this book.

EH is the product of the 21st century, of an age in which it is no longer possible to grasp and manage environmental problems from a single viewpoint. This is also true of the scientific approach to such problems. Although it is fundamentally important for the understanding of ecological issues and climatic changes, scientific knowledge alone cannot provide adequate answers to the complex phenomenon that is the cause and consequence of the environmental challenges of our century. This is why traditional

1 Ryan, "Plants". Ryan and Chen, "Australian Wetland Cultures". McDougall, "Postcolonial literatures"

2 Biswas et alii, "Global Perspectives".

3 Hubbel, "Plants in Contemporary Poetry".

humanities such as philosophy, aesthetics, literary and religious studies, history and linguistics are combined with natural and social sciences and arts in an interdisciplinary formation in an attempt to understand the antecedents, current forms, and future trajectories of the contemporary environmental crisis, and find possible answers to it. This formation is EH.

The natural sciences have revealed climatic, hydrological and ecological correlations that have radically changed, or will change, the entire world, encompassing human and non-human life alike. The majority society has been unaware of it, or is reluctant to notice it, but the pandemic and the environmental disasters of the 2020s have made it clear that it is no longer possible to evade these problems. "Therefore, the morally legitimate and scientifically established question is not whether we are in trouble – but how we should cope with this situation, how great the trouble is, what work it imposes on us humans and more closely, on us researchers."[4] In the words of the philosopher Roger Gottlieb: "What morality has had to face the banality of evil in which the most common everyday actions (driving an automobile, putting fertilizer on the lawn [but I may also add our morning coffee and croissant, or our bathroom routine] could contribute to devastating effects on future generations or people at the other ends of the world?"[5] Compared to earlier environmental problems, our problems today have stepped over a threshold: humankind has managed to turn the sunrays so vital for life into a serious hazard, or – as the quotation above notes – we may jeopardize the lives of people living thousands of kilometres away from us simply by following our daily routine.

The "tangible" cause of these environmental problems – and of the closely connected economic and social problems – is the incredibly fast growth of the Earth's global population with the corollary consumption and over-consumption, overuse and depletion of natural resources, the depletion of fossil fuels, and the emergence of diverse forms of environmental destruction. Underlying all this, however, is a world view that evolved gradually in Europe and became prevalent in modernity.

This world view – which has both religious and philosophical roots – removed the human being from the rest of the world, created the dichotomy between nature and society, interpreted the human being as the absolute master and exploiter of nature, and foregrounded economic rationality. At the same time, it laid the foundations for the sep-

4 Mészáros, 'Kié az antropocén?', 144.

5 Gottlieb, 'Introduction', x.

aration of the natural sciences from the humanities and social sciences and subordinated all scholarship to the former.

The practitioners of EH, however, believe that the global environmental crisis requires new modes of thinking, new communities, and new forms of knowledge. They are convinced that this crisis cannot be solved solely with technological means which are simply "allocated" to passive consumers. For cultural and political reasons, even the best technologies, those that could most effectively mitigate the environmental problems are rejected. Unsustainable practices require cultural interpretation, just as the possibility of introducing good practices does. Knowledge is needed "that is affective, or emotionally potent, in order to be effective, or capable of mobilizing social adaptation",[6] and which is capable of overriding the logic of economic gain.[7] EH claims that this goal demands inter- and transdisciplinary approaches for which the humanities are indispensable. What EH does is actually *translation*: it transforms scientific and technological results into texts and sociocultural discourses which can capture the attention of both the public and the political and economic actors more than scientific reports can. Oppermann and Iovino conclude that EH is an ethical and pedagogical project with the help of which the above goals can be achieved.[8]

Accordingly, EH is not a new academic discipline, but a *field of research* that highlights the relationship between the human being and nature, and is engaged with environmental questions. It is also a *world view* that rejects the interpretation of the human being as the absolute lord and legitimate exploiter of nature. EH strives to understand the intricate relations between the human beings and society and nature, integrating all the disciplines that scrutinize these problems. At the same time it is a *method* that wishes to transgress disciplinary boundaries and the limits of creating theories and descriptions, and in addition to the customary frames of knowledge transmission, it also draws closer to applicability and activism. This is not to say that each EH scholar is at the same time an activist. As the authors Hubbell and Ryan put it: it does not mean "that you will have to chain yourself to a bulldozer in an old-grown forest threatened by logging."[9] It is more accurate to say that by virtue of its worldview and its fundamental issues, EH is inevitably an applied field of scholarship.

6 Emmett and Nye, 'The Environmental Humanities', 8.

7 Belfiore and Upchurch, "Introduction: Reframing"

8 Oppermann and Iovino, "Introduction:", 1–6.

9 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", 10.

The first chapter of the book (Introduction to EH: history and theory) surveys EH as a whole: it reviews the variety of new approaches to the relationship between nature and culture, presents how EH integrates dialogues between the humanities, arts, social sciences, and natural sciences and reflects on its origins in the environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s. This is followed by two chapters that present the essential knowledge in the science of climate change and the Anthropocene: 2. Climate change: the great disrupter; 3. The Anthropocene: a superhero species comes of age. The authors then present the key themes of EH and its key disciplinary orientations in 10 chapters. These are as follows: 4. Indigenous cultures and nature: past, present, and future; 5. Environmental anthropology, cultural geography, and the geohumanities: space and place; 6. Environmental history: the story of coevolution; 7. Environmental philosophy: thinking about nature; 8. Ecological religious studies: faith in nature; 9. Environmental art: creativity, activism, and sustainability; 10. Ecological literary studies: imagining nature; 11. Environmental theatre: performing nature; 12. Environmental film: projecting nature; 13. Environmental journalism: mediating ecological issues. These 10 chapters are closely related to the individual disciplines upon which this discipline-crossing field is built. As the authors suggest: "Our position, as authors, is that a good understanding of disciplines is a cornerstone to appreciating environmental interdisciplinarity and its raucous relatives. Your trans-, inter-, and multidisciplinarity will be more productive with a solid grounding in the core disciplines."[10] The final chapter (14. Conclusion: back to the future EH) reviews the latest developments in Environmental Humanities and how EH inspires positive ecological change and imagines sustainable societies. Although the authors typically organized the chapters around certain disciplines when structuring their book,[11] the chapters also deal with the main issues such as climate change, sustainability, biodiversity, extinction, energy policy, the Anthropocene, environmental activism and justice, indigenous studies, inter- and transdisciplinarity, and the role played by the arts and humanities in the future of the planet. In addition, the book introduces readers to seminal texts, artworks, events, movements, ideas, legislation, and organizations "to provide global literacy on environmental problems, actions, and solutions."[12]

10 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", 1.

11 Others, such as Emmett and Nye, have taken a thematic approach, organizing chapters around topics such as ecotourism or cities. (Emmett and Nye „The Environmental").

12 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", x.

The individual chapters each follow a clear and uniform structure: they start with a case study that provokes the questions and methods of environmental humanists. Case studies, Reflections and Waypoints, placed in boxes, help and supplement the overview of the given topic. They offer definitions and examples, consider current events and ethical questions, and rehearse debates on complex problems. At the end of the chapters, the authors suggest exercises and projects to motivate the reader to do their own work and to do small scale research, to think about some of the problems independently. The authors try to resolve the contradiction between the extreme breadth of the topic and the limitations of the book by providing an annotated bibliography and weblinks for further reading at the end of each chapter.

As for the territorial area covered by this volume, the main quoted fields of the book are from the US and Canada and from European, Australian and New Zealand contexts,[13] although it also provides numerous examples from Africa, Asia, South America, and Antarctica. In terms of the time frame: EH itself started in the 1990s and developed further in the 2000s, but the events that led to its formation happened in the post-WWII period. That was the time of a dramatic and global environmentalist turn, when scholars realised that we need radical a new approach to understand and give an adequate answer to the complex phenomenon of contemporary ecological crises. At the same time, the book inevitably goes back and forth to previous events, which are essential for an understanding of the contemporary world. "This historical context shaped the specific disciplinary debates out of which current practices in the EH emerged."[14]

In the preface of their book the authors define more precisely what the essence of EH is for them: the radical recreation of knowledge. As they put it: "EH is both a product and an agent in the radical reorganization of knowledge"[15] They believe that the global environmental crisis demands new directions in thought. This crisis was caused in no small part by the knowledge-power divisions fomented since the Enlightenment, therefore it cannot be solved by simply offering technological innovations; unsustainable practices and maladaptive reactions require cultural interpretations as does the introduc-

13 The start of EH is prominently tied to research in Australia: in the 1990s, historian Tom Griffith and law scholar Tim Bonyhady founded the *National Working Group on the Ecological Humanities*, then the new approach and method we term EH began to be called ecological humanities at the Australian National University and the University of New South Wales.

14 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", x.

15 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", ix.

tion of good practices. This needs an inter- and transdisciplinary approach with cannot succeed without the help of the humanities.

In addition to doing research in EH, the authors are also active in introducing this field to universities. This book also serves this purpose: it offers a practical, grounded, and accessible guide to the field designed for university students. The authors are acutely aware, however, that students and teachers in academia are still "enmeshed in this old knowledge order",[16] with its disciplines, departments, silos, and specializations. They believe that when teaching EH (and presenting it to the general public), we must be aware of this. Moreover, "historicizing the field will enable students to understand why our intertwined Anthropocene crises have required environmental humanists to develop inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary approaches."[17]

I agree with the authors that the: "relatively short chapters [of the book] can also be used to create part-term modules on the EH or supplement advanced courses within a wide range of disciplines and programs, from business and the social sciences to English, art history, and international studies."[18] The potential role of this work in education is facilitated by the fact that the book does not require more thorough prior knowledge about the field. It gives a detailed overview of the key terms, concepts, theorists, and debates within the field. Moreover, I am convinced that besides its utility for university courses the book will also be useful for researchers and general readers.[19]

In the Introduction to the book, the authors themselves challenge the reader to supplement their work, noting that: "Considerations of space limited our focus to disciplines that we consider integral to EH, but we hope that, after reading this, you'll be inspired to challenge us—what do you think we should have included?"[20] Considering the thoroughness and broad perspective of the book, this is a rather difficult task. Nevertheless, I believe that urban studies deserve a separate chapter, and psychology and environmental pedagogy can also play an important role in EH.

16 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", ix.

17 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", 1.

18 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", x.

19 , and Adapted for Hungarian readers the book *Environmental questions – Community answers. Environmental Humanities Reader* (Farkas 2023, under publication) was written with a similar aim. Hubbel and Ryan's book was admittedly a great source of inspiration for this book.

20 Hubbell and Ryan, "Introduction to the Environmental Humanities", 1.

EH is also developing and spreading in Hungary. While currently only a single research group that includes EH explicitly in its name (the EH Research Group at Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Pécs),[21] the number of research groups and institutions acting in the spirit of EH is increasing.[22] Furthermore, my teaching experiences at the university show that students are open to taking an inter-and transdisciplinary approach to human−nature related topics. My undisclosed goal with this book review is to arouse interest in EH, for which the book reviewed here is perfectly suited.

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21 https://btk.pte.hu/hu/pecsineprajz/human-kornyezettudomanyi-kutatocsoport-hkk (downloaded 03.05.2023)

22 Farkas, "Environmental questions".

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Between East and West

Fedinec, Csilla, Mária Font, Imre Szakál and Beáta Varga. *Ukrajna története: régiók, identitás, államiság.* [History of Ukraine: Regions, Identity, Statehood], Budapest: Társadalomtudományi Kutatóközpont – Gondolat Kiadó, 2021. pp. 444.

https://doi.org/10.51918/ceh.2023.1-2.8

This monographic work by four authors attempts to trace what happened on the territory of modern Ukraine for the last 1200 years, and gives a much-needed concise history of Ukraine in Hungarian – for academia and beyond.

The publisher, the Centre of Social Sciences in Budapest, is the home institution of one of the authors, Csilla Fedinec. Over the last decade, Fedinec has established herself as an authority on Ukraine in Hungary. She is frequently asked to interpret Ukrainian issues and politics in the media. She is also the guiding figure of this monograph, which was published at the end of 2021 while its official presentation was held only 21 days prior to the Russian invasion of February 24th, 2022. Thanks to the month-long escalation in tensions between Russia and Ukraine and the outbreak of war, the book sold out quickly. Fortunately, it is also available in its entirety online.[23] The reason for this generosity is somewhat educational in nature. Two of the writers, Márta Font and Beáta Varga, were the authors of a previous publication entitled *Ukrajna története* [History of Ukraine], published in 2006 and again in 2013.[24] That book was essentially a university textbook, and its republication was connected to the rising civil unrest in the country, accompanied by growing interest in Ukraine and its politics by the public in Hungary. The publication currently under discussion is closely connected to these previous textbooks. The opening chapters, which were written by the same two authors, are structurally similar and their content is tightly connected to one another. Besides newly written material, some of the paragraphs are identical to those in the previous works throughout these early chapters. In my opinion, this is advantageous, as this new concise history of Ukraine can contribute to the Hungarian historiography as the latest – partly revised and repurposed – teaching material and information source on Ukraine, following in the

23 http://real.mtak.hu/134693/1/FedinecUkrajna2021konyv.pdf (11.09.2023)

24 This is also available online: https://mek.oszk.hu/04800/04809/04809.pdf (11.09.2023)

footsteps of earlier volumes.

Before listing all the positive features of this publication, it is worth highlighting one crucial thing that this book lacks: illustration. The book includes three maps, all created by István Molnár D. (of the Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education in Berehove). The two larger maps are printed on the front and rear endpapers, while the third is to be found on page 12. The first map depicts the Kyivan Rus' and its regions before the Mongol invasion, the second one shows the regions of modern (pre-2014 and de jure) Ukraine and the third map depicts the twelve historical regions (politico-geographic toponyms) of modern Ukraine, e.g., *Kárpátalja* (Sub- or Transcarpathia), Galicia, Sloboda Ukraine, Tavria and so on. These three maps are the only illustrations to be found in the entire book, besides the colourful floral decoration (*вишива́нка*, vyshyvanka) on the cover. However, to compensate for this deficiency, the preface tries to reassure the reader that the account will be intentionally broken up by informational text blocks. The writers include these text boxes every three and a half pages or so on average, giving the reader useful insights, quotes and even tips on areas to follow-up and possible questions to consider.

In the following sections I will elaborate on some of the main points of interest raised in the book. Taking into account that the monograph was written by Hungarian scholars, it is worth noting the prominence they give to discussing the relations of the Kyivan Rus' and Ukraine to Hungary. In essence, this work is still a teaching material. Every other chapter ends with a subchapter dealing with the north-easternmost region of the Hungarian Kingdom, in an attempt to connect the modern history of Ukraine with the general historical knowledge of the average reader from Hungary. Indeed, two of the authors come from a Hungarian background in Ukraine/Transcarpathia. In subchapter I.6. (Where was the western border of the Rus'?) Font summarizes the Hungarian viewpoint on this question in four pages. Besides that, and to affirm it, she outlines Miroslav Voloshchuk's opinion: the western border of the Rus' was the Carpathian Mountain range, while the territory of the westernmost Ukrainian region of our time – Transcarpathia – was then an integral part of the Hungarian Kingdom and had no significant connection with the other side of the range up until the end of the 12th century.

In subchapter III.4. (The beginnings of the history of the Cossacks) – after previously discussing the history of the Poles and Lithuanians and their rule – Font and Varga provide an introduction to the Cossacks, their genesis and their appearance in Ukraine. This section is based largely on Ukrainian sources and outlines the differing views on their

origins from those of Hryhorii Hrabianka through M. S. Hrushevsky to V. Holobutsky. The rightly cautious authors do not settle for a definitive answer to this question, opting not to take a side. Their task was, instead, to introduce the historiographical landscape of *obchina*, *mir* and *sloboda*, and to summarise the credible historical narratives of the Cossacks for modern Ukrainian identity politics.

In the 26-page long chapter IV. (The age of Cossacks) – which contains subchapter IV.1.2. (The Union of Brest in 1596 and its consequences) – Varga, Szakál and Fedinec trace the territory's history from 1569 to 1654, from the Union of Lublin and the creation of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth to the March Articles of the Agreement of Pereiaslav. This chronological division reflects the main narrative and foreshadows the last subchapter of the book, *Between East and West*. Chapter IV. is a very-well written part of the book, together with chapter V. However, the literature cited at the points where the chapters deal with the question of the Greek Catholic denomination are surprisingly poor or even seem ad hoc. While a few authors such as Oskar Halecki, V. A. Bednov and Paul Robert Magocsi are mentioned, a vast proportion of the international and domestic literature remains unused and uncited. I would also note here that the usage of the word Vatican to describe the Papacy in a political sense is, to say the least, anachronistic before 1870. These are minuscule details, however, and do not detract from the text. These two chapters are deeply connected and continuous between page 163 and 200. This section takes up nearly 10 percentage of the whole publication, with the main focus on Khmelnytskyi and his movement. This rather disproportionate coverage reflects the fact that not only was this the single most important historical event leading to the statehood of Ukrainians, but also that it is still interpreted as such. This is clear even in the preface, which attributes the era as the source of the Ukrainian national idea. Khmelnytskyi, who was perceived as a statesman rather than as a soldier and a hetman, became not only the historical exemplary to future organizers of a Ukrainian nation or state, but also provided an answer to the question of identity – and the romanticised hero who made a bad choice (Pereiaslav) – throughout the centuries of foreign dominion. "*...[T]o show that we are brethren of the Cossack nation!"* – declares a poem from 1862 and this is echoed in the modern national anthem.

Subchapter VIII.5. (Regions), deals with three regions of Ukraine: Western Ukraine, Transcarpathia and Crimea. While this selection may seem ad hoc or biased, the account is well written – although of course, if one wished to read more about e.g., Sloboda Ukraine in the north-east, one would have to read the whole book to find occasional

mentions of it. Still, I would argue that this incomplete selection of regions is appropriate for this work. It corresponds to the interests and knowledge of the Hungarian reader, since Western Ukraine (Galicia, Podolia etc.), along with its capital Lviv, and Transcarpathia, with cities such as Uzhhorod, Mukachevo and Berehove are the two most culturally and historically significant Ukrainian localities for Hungarians. As the preface puts it: "*For every nation, its own history is the most important."* Focusing on these regions will benefit the Hungarian reader more, as it can be assumed that Hungarians will take an interest in them – a consideration that the authors might have thought of.

The closing remarks (subchapter IX.5.) of the publication, entitled *Between East and West*, compare and contrast the situation in Crimea, Luhansk and Donetsk with other frozen conflicts in the post-Soviet world – further linking Ukraine to the East. Besides this comparison and list of frozen conflicts, the subchapter and the book itself ends with a short summary of Ukraine's international connections. Szakál and Fedinec mention the Polish helping hand and the sympathy of the Baltic states, but place more emphasis on Ukraine's NATO Partnership of Peace since 1994 and its relationship with the EU since 2007 – as what binds the country and its future to the West.

The chronology at the end brings the publication to a fitting end. A look at the chronology gives the reader an excellent sense of the events, especially in the last three pages. The events listed here provide a better understanding of contemporary Ukrainian history since 1989. In a world that can seem as fast-moving and alienated from previous historical developments as never before, we are reminded of the fragility of both the stability of international peace and democracy in the post-Soviet world. The chronology ends with 2021: the introduction of autochthonous ethnic communities in Ukraine and the creation of the Crimea Platform. We all know what has happened since then.

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