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Chopping Hungary Up by the 1920 Peace Dictate of Trianon

Causes, Events and Consequences



Summary

The regime that emerged with the peace treaties concluded after World War I chopped up the Kingdom of Hungary and rewarded its neighbours, helping them to establish themselves on the basis of the principle of national self-determination, by giving them two-thirds of Hungary's areas and one-third of its Hungarian-speaking population. During the settlement that followed World War II, the great powers repeatedly forced this shocking decision upon Hungarians drifted to the losing side. This essay sums up the causes and events of this difficult-to-survive historical traumatism and its adverse impacts on the Central European region, in retrospect after more than a century.

Keywords: Kingdom of Hungary, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Peace Treaty of Trianon, Little Entente, protection of ethnic minorities, nationalities, homogeneous nation state, integration, autonomy

CAUSES OF DISINTEGRATION

At the very end of the 9th century, the nomadic Hungarian tribes arriving from the east converted to Christianity and founded a state, which then successfully repelled attacks by both Byzantine and German imperial conquerors organised under various names. St Stephen's kingdom was considered as a potent, medium-sized power, with an independent status symbolised by a closed crown granted by the Pope in 1000.

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The House of Árpád established family relationships with the most powerful dynasties of Europe. Only the 1241 Mongol Invasion caused a severe loss of blood to this rich country having an effective fighting force. That year marked the commencement of immigration by foreign nationalities in larger numbers. Without an exception, all of them found home in the country. The Ottomans conquest reached the southern borders of the country, and thus Christianity, at the end of the 14th century. However, supported by the Black Army and the system of double fortresses, the well-organised Renaissance state of King Matthias I (Matthias Corvinus) firmly defended its borders up to the end of the 15th century.¹ As a result of the internal conflicts that flared up after King Matthias's death, the 1514 peasant rising and especially the battle lost at Mohács in 1526, the country was profoundly shaken. Amidst feuds between various claimants to the throne, the Turkish conquest tore the country into three parts (the Habsburgs, who had been elected kings of Hungary, ruled the north-western, the Turkish occupied the middle, and the Principality of Transylvania organised in dependence of the Turkish, comprised the eastern part). For two hundred years, Hungary's entire territory became a battlefield.

Historians today consider the military defeat suffered from the Turks and its subsequent division into three parts as the “first Trianon” for Hungarians (Pálffy, 2015). The assumption is supported by the facts that from that point in time, the fate of the leading nation in Central Europe was decided abroad (in Vienna, Istanbul and Rome); and the financial, intellectual and moral resources of Hungarians were wasted away by the intentions, political coveting and, especially, desperate combats fought in self-defence. Due to destruction, blood loss and exodus, the central, plains areas of the country were depopulated, while the nationalities (Slovakians, Ruthenians and Romanians) living under the shelter of the semi-circular mountain chain of the Carpathians fringing the country survived uninterrupted wars with lower losses, and showed healthy demographic increase, with southern Slavs and Romanians fleeing from the Turks constantly immigrated to the country. Vienna's conscious settlement policy consummated the redrawing of the country's ethnic map. In addition to increasing the amount of taxes collected and the defence capacity of the empire, its purpose was to bridle the “revolting Hungarians”, who frequently rose and organised numerous independence movements in defence of the Hungarian nobility's constitution. As a result of this double procedure, after the expulsion of the Turks (in 1718), Hungarians became a minority in their own country.² They could not gain foothold on the re-captured territories, because the Viennese court expelled Hungarians from the most fertile area of the country for 60 (sixty) years, as they considered it their loot. On these territories they settled masses of Catholic Germans they considered “reliable”, and granted privileges to Serbians, Croatians and Romanians in the border guard areas.³ This divisive policy offered an opportunity to the minorities living, thriving and strengthening on the confines to mature and implement their own nation-building objectives (Gulyás, 2012, pp. 217–224).

The late 18th-century national awakening unfolded in the region supported by the ideas of nationalism and literary romanticism. The evolving national identities of the

“co-nation” Croats, who previously had an independent state, Slovaks and Serbs were dominated by their proposition of being indigenous in the Carpathian Basin. For this reason they started to mention Hungarians, who arrived from the east, as a “barbarian horde”⁴ which tore “peaceful Slavs” into three parts. It was no accident that plans for unification or independence with the leadership or patronage of the only independent Slavic state, the Russian Empire, popped up one after the other in this period.⁵ The ethnic intelligentsia endeavoured to support their equivalence with Hungarians by the demographic force of Slavs⁶ and – in a Romantic approach – by their noble origin in contrast to Hungarians’ claim of Hunnic and Turkic ancestry.⁷ As inspiring the doctrines advocated by Jan Kollár and others were for the ethnic minorities in Hungary, so menacing they were for Hungarians (who would learn in 1849 what exactly the *Pax Russica* meant).

At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Hungarian gentry, capitalising on their political experiences gained in county administration, launched a public law against the centralisation policy of the Habsburg dynasty, and this struggle intertwined with the economic and social modernisation of the country. The Age of Reforms released enormous intellectual and moral energies. The most influential point in the programme of the political élite was their voluntary waiver of the majority of noblemen’s privileges (e.g. tax exemption), contribution to public finances by all was announced and this created a vast basis among the masses for the achievement of national goals. In fact, the ethnic minorities shared an interest with the reformer Hungarians against Vienna’s Germanising policy and also looked to them as a model; however, in order to determine their own national characteristics, Hungarians were also used for the perception of an enemy (Sokcsevits, 2004, pp. 131–154). Especially when in 1844, Latin was replaced by Hungarian as the official language of the country. Partly for defence reasons, the ethnic minorities, which had become competitors, sought alliance with the imperial court and this led to the armed conflicts during the 1848–1849 Hungarian revolution and war of independence, which obtained a civil war character in the case of Romanians and Serbs. Thus, in addition to “Europe’s gendarme”, tsarist Russia, Hungary’s ethnic minorities, drifted to the Viennese reaction, also participated in the crushing of the lawfully elected Hungarian government.

Ten years after the 1848–1849 Hungarian war of independence that ravaged the prestige of the Habsburg Empire, the Monarchy was compelled to give in to the pressure from the French Piedmont alliance. Finally, in 1866, after a defamatory flash defeat, Prussia also turned it out of the German Alliance. Thus, from the power centre of Western Europe, the Habsburgs were ousted to the Eastern European periphery for good. Against all odds, in 1867 the dynasty arrived at a compromise with the Hungarian political élite. Over the long term, the latter had two options: either to agree with the ethnic minorities and transform the country into a federal state,⁸ or, capitalising on but not abusing the dire situation of the dynasty after two decades of passive resistance to despotism, to choose the division of power based on parity. Having chosen the latter option, which required less effort and offered more benefits over the short term, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was established, as summed up by its first For-

eign Minister: "...as a partnership between the German and the Hungarian elements against Panslavism."⁹

Naturally, not everybody was happy with this outcome of the lengthy consultations. The participants of the Vienna Slavic congress professed their belief in a pentapolar federal state. Although the new public law situation reflected the momentary balance of power, it proved to be a complicated and rigid structure,¹⁰ and the peoples of the Danube Valley did not constitute an organic economic and political union. Their intellectual community was even less obvious, as the memory of the many centuries of a common "hungarus" past had already faded considerably. The empire seemed to only be held together by the Catholic masses' loyalty to the dynasty, an army of a million soldiers, the supranational aristocracy, the high priests, and the staff of public administrators, as a framework, completed by the interests of large capitalists, and fear from the two neighbours: the expansive tsarist Russia and Germany, in the progress of organisation to an empire.

The challenges of modernisation resulted in uneven competition for the regions of different levels of development,¹¹ however, it is obvious that the criticism formulated by the politicians of ethnic minorities against dualism and their frequently voiced slogans about the democratic forms of the division of power and social justice frequently concealed the vulgar motives of obtaining position and financial gain. It follows from this that nationalism, which invigorated western nation states, had a fragmenting force in the Monarchy. With the intention of creating independent states and in order to change western public opinion, this was the reason why certain southern Slavic and Czech politicians unjustly called Austria-Hungary "the prison of nations" (Makkai, 2012).

The Hungarian political élite, which seemed to have ridden at anchor in 1867, incorrectly sized up their opportunities over the long term. Despite ensuring equal rights (irrespective of mother tongue, nationality and religion) to everyone, following the example of western nation states, they made efforts at insisting on the concept of "a uniform Hungarian political nation". The single exception was the Croatian "co-nation", which had been developing in a commonwealth for eight hundred years, and was granted broad autonomy (Act XXX of 1868). However, vis-a-vis the peoples termed by Otto Bauer as "having no history", Hungarians referred to their state organisation capacity and past sacrifices made in defence of state sovereignty.

This approach is reflected in the act on ethnic minorities, unprecedented in Europe at the time (Act ILIV of 1868). More than half of the members of the drafting committee were ethnic minority experts; however, their proposal for ethnic representation relative to headcount was not included in the legislation. The reason for this was that the freedoms applicable to each single citizen of Hungary were personal rights, in agreement with the zeitgeist of liberalism at the time. However, with a view to their autonomous church organisations and to their societies built on patriarchal large families, the Serbs and Romanians demanded collective rights, and in the unfavourable demographic situation of Hungarians and in the imagined or actual threat of Panslavism, this may have undermined the territorial unity of the state. However, the act genuinely sought to serve peace, and generously provided about the linguis-

tic and cultural rights of minorities,¹² even though several articles were not put into practice. First and foremost, it provided broad language use rights in culture, public administration and justice at the level of communities and counties, when a particular ethnic minority reached 20 per cent, set as a threshold.

Minority leadership in counties with a majority of an ethnic minority was not implemented, and an enacting order was not drafted to this act. It is also a fact that this period was characterised by liberalism gradually losing ground and its unfavourable impacts were also felt in Hungarian minority policy. However, the responsibility of the radical minority leaders can also be established as they brought forward some exaggerating demands¹³ and failed to vote for the act.

Finally, to protest the ethnic minority parties announced a “passivity” policy, although this was not justified by any intent of subordination or rights abuse. When they decided to re-adopt participation in politics during the hot debates of the turn of the century, they already demanded the full implementation of the act. But by that time the Hungarian political élite’s readiness to compromise had diminished¹⁴ due to the government’s stability, the favourable demographic indicators, the salient improvement in the standard of living¹⁵ and the celebration of the millennial of the Kingdom of Hungary.

As a result of the spectacular economic and social development and long peace, the new generation of politicians were overcome by a kind of complacency. They underestimated the political weight of ethnic minorities, as the latter were represented by a low number of MP’s at Parliament, due to the tight suffrage.¹⁶ Similarly to the new movements of agricultural workers and industrial workers, their movements were considered as subversive activities, and mass emigration could not be halted either (e.g. by a targeted policy). The election campaigns, not free from violence; the wasting away of Slovakian cultural institutions, the school close-ups during the Bánffy Government, the Hungarianisation of geographical and personal names, and the setting up of Department III/3 for monitoring ethnic minority politicians and the press all triggered apprehension in Hungary and abroad, as the ethnic minorities brought their legitimate and imagined grievances to international forums. Consequently, the international reputation of Hungarians, who made history in 1848–1849, had spectacularly deteriorated (Jeszenszky, 1986). Especially by renowned foreign publicists (like the British Robert William Seton-Watson or Henry Wickham Steed) and writers (e.g. Norwegian poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson) became the ringleaders in a smear campaign associated with ethnicity propaganda. Budapest did not take the untrue charge of “brutal” Hungarianisation¹⁷ seriously, and also failed to reckon with the effects of leftist political powers and the criticisms by the influential freemasonry, intended at class war or world improvement caused erosion. This also applies to the criticisms received from the press and Parliament in the other half of the country, made for political reasons, although the Germans that constituted a one-third minority on the opposite side of the empire made similarly tenacious efforts at maintaining their decreasing power as the Hungarians, who had a very narrow absolute majority on this side of the River Leitha (Zöllner, 1984). In Austria, the administrator govern-

ment, usually relying on Slavic Catholic electorates, also had difficulties in coping with the opposition forged into union by parliamentary obstruction (and sometimes street) fights. The efforts made by young Czechs, who applied radical means after the failed Czech effort at establishing a tripartite state (1871),¹⁸ by Italian irredentist, who knew no compromise, by the tenacious Polish, who wanted to create a state, and the southern Slavic problem that became acute as a result of the 1875–1878 Balkan crisis forced the costly forms of a parallel public administration, which did not serve peace between the nations, and men's general suffrage in 1907. However, despite all these, with the consciousness of being the “masters” of the empire, the Germans, who paid the highest amount of tax, continued to claim the leading posts. Many who lost on decentralisation found the solution in Georg von Schönerer's programme of a large German unification.¹⁹

Meanwhile, the international relations also deteriorated in the region. In the 1880's and then in the early 1900's, the Monarchy embroiled in lengthy customs warfare with its neighbours: Romania, advocating a “nation unification” strategy, and Serbia. And as in October 1908, without a thorough diplomatic preparation, on the authorisation of the 1878 Berlin Congress, it annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to the southern Slavs; it also triggered partial military deployment by the “host” state Turkey and the Slavic protector Russia. Despite Italy being a member of the alliance of central power since 1882, and Romania from 1883, both condemned the unilateral action and increased their irredentist campaigns. It was no accident that the Austro-Hungarian chief of staff, Conrad von Hötzendorf urged a preventive war against their unstable allies on several occasion (for good reason, as during World War both attacked the Monarchy from behind, Zöllner, 1984). The dynastic expansion of the Monarchy also inflamed internal ethnic tensions,²⁰ and the plans made in the crown prince's surrounding for transforming the Monarchy into a federal state could not mitigate them.²¹

By that time, the best Hungarian politicians had already been aware of the fact that what was at stake was not the illogical territorial expansion, which increased the number of ethnic minorities, but the survival of the Monarchy, including the Kingdom of Hungary. After the scandalous interludes of cutthroat debates on the development of armed forces in the European arms race, on the eve of the war, Count István Tisza, considered to be the most influential statesman of the empire, called for reconciliatory negotiations with the Romanians, Croatians and Slovaks.²² However, the modest results achieved were already insufficient for winning the élites of the separatist ethnic minorities endeavouring to have independent national states.²³

COLLAPSE OF THE MONARCHY, INCLUDING THE KINGDOM OF HUNGARY

The war that soon set the world ablaze and fundamentally changed the power structure of the region offered an excellent opportunity for the separation of ethnic minorities concentrated on the rims of the empire. In order to expand its resources,

the entente persuaded the Italian and Romanian governments to betray their allies by holding out the promise of obtaining significant territories.²⁴ However, the leaders of the Croatian, Serbian and Czech political emigration also joined the competition for the expansion of the national land. They promised saboteur actions in return for weakening the Monarchy's hinterland, and subsequently also held out the prospects of deploying troops. The Yugoslavian Committee established in London in the spring of 1915 conducted a diplomatic campaign for creating a federative common southern Slavic state, while the Czech Committee Abroad, which advocated the union of the Czech and Slovakian nations, started operation a few months later in Paris. The territorial claims of the two organisations, which also competed with each other, stretched far beyond the ethnic borders (Zeidler, 2009, p. 21).

In order to prevent further war adversities Charles IV, who succeeded the elderly Franz Joseph I in 1916, offered a special peace agreement to the Entente in 1917, but the attempt failed. A few days later, however, Russia, which had plunged into a deep social crisis, was replaced by the United States as a belligerent on the Entente's side. With its declaration of war sent on 6 April 1917, it turned the tide, and in his speech delivered on 8 January 1918, President Thomas Woodrow Wilson already revealed the principles of the post-war arrangement. Its 14-point programme still included the maintenance of the Monarchy, but with the autonomy of the peoples under its control.²⁵ Essentially, England agreed with this. The earliest initiative for the division of the Monarchy was made by Russia. The policy of the Entente Powers only changed, however, when the German Middle Europe plan threatened with materialisation after the signature of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and Berlin indicated the significance of its intentions by placing the allied Monarchy under military custody.²⁶ France endeavoured to mitigate the threat of a "German Europe" by weakening Germany's allies and laying the foundations of its own system of allies. Parcelling out the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy offered an obvious solution for both. In light of all this, on 7 January 1918 the establishment of an army of the Czechoslovakian migrants in France was ordered. Within barely half a year, its allies followed its example and recognised the Czechoslovakian National Council. (One of the leaders of this body issued the catchword: "Smash Austria-Hungary!") With this they gave a green way to the separatist ethnic minority movements in the Monarchy, as in essence they raised the Czechoslovakian, Southern Slavic and Romanian emigrant political lobbyists to the level of allies. Change in the circumstances was indicated by the fact that US Foreign Secretary Lansing declined the proposal made by the Monarchy's Foreign Ministry for an armistice (on 4 October 1918) on the grounds that it was no longer sufficient to offer autonomy to the ethnic minorities as a basis of peace, as they would already decide their fate independently (Zeidler, 2009, p. 22).

This new diplomatic failure accelerated the appointment of the government of the pacifist and pro-Entente Count Mihály Károlyi in Hungary (which actually took place on 31 October). The quest for peace had significantly damaged the soldiers' heart for combat, and the hinterland was stirring because of the hitches in supply. On 23 October, with Károlyi's leadership the Hungarian National Council was established

and led the people to a civil war called the Aster Revolution, and as a result, Hungary regained its independence. However, the ethnic minorities also made a move... On 29 October, Croatia decided to break its nearly 800 years of legal bond with the Hungarians. On 30 October the Slovakian National Council announced union with the Czech nation, and on 25 November, the Serbians living in the south of Hungary declared their accession to the Kingdom of Serbia. This was followed by a declaration of union by the Romanians in Hungary on December 1, and one month later the assembly of Transylvanian Saxons also announced their accession to the Kingdom of Romania. These illegitimate forums were given great support after November 1918 from the Serbian, Czech and Romanian armies, which attacked the defenceless country in order to secure as favourable lines of demarcation as possible, not really disturbed by the intentions of the general staff of the Entente, and occupied Hungarian territories (Lipcsey, 2009, pp. 46–47).

Meanwhile, the Károlyi Government made desperate attempts at stabilising the country's precarious external and internal situation, primarily at organising public supply and restoring the operation of legislation. He declared the Republic of Hungary, and having a naive belief in democratic settlement, and also hoping for the legitimisation of his government and the halting of the occupying armies, he entered into a humiliating pact with the Balkan military leaders of the Entente. Military considerations hardly justified the Belgrade convention (13 November), as the Padova ceasefire concluded with the collapsing Monarchy had been in effect, and pursuant to this agreement, no foreign army was stationed on the (Zeidler, 2003, pp. 31–32). Seeking the triumphant parties' benevolence, the Hungarian delegation nevertheless accepted an unfavourable occupation plan along the southern border section, and started the withdrawal and disarmament of the several hundred thousand strong Hungarian army, who returned home inordinately, and moreover, they even gave up significant assets to the Entente troops.²⁷ Nevertheless, these bona fide and irresponsible actions failed to earn higher appreciation for the Károlyi Government among the winners, but made the country militarily vulnerable. Negotiations with the Slovakian and Romanian parties about federative re-organisation failed, similarly to the proposals for territorial autonomies unilaterally offered to the Ruthenian and German minorities, and the late autonomy agreement concluded with the pro-Hungarian representation of Slovaks was even less successful against the Slovakian National Council. The Entente continued to refuse to recognise the Károlyi Government or the Berinkey Government that replaced it, and did not contain the advancing Serbian, Czech and Romanian armies, which obviously intended to give the Paris Peace Conference, convened on 18 January 1919, a foregone conclusion. The Vix Memorandum of 19 March 1919²⁸ ordered the depleted Hungarian army to give up further areas and thus the country would have been cut to one-third of its territory. These tragic conditions foreshadowed the future borderlines. Recognising the total failure of the pro-Entente policy, the government refused the memorandum and resigned.

Károlyi, in the meantime elected as head of state, asked the social democrats to form a cabinet, and already hoped support from the international labour movement

and Soviet Russia. In the new cabinet key roles were granted to the representatives of the Communists' Hungarian Party. Especially Béla Kun, the Foreign Commissioner of the Soviet Republic proclaimed after the merger of the two parties, who acted as an ally to the "fraternal" Russia, and proposed negotiations to settle the territorial claims made by the Entente on the basis of Wilson's principle of peoples' self-determination.²⁹ At that time, the Entente sent general Jan Christiaan Smuts to Budapest, with the intention to have a slightly more favourable line of demarcation accepted. However, with the conditions still unacceptable for any Hungarian government, Paris failed to get through, so to exert pressure; they allowed the Romanian troops to take possession of the eastern half of the country up to the River Tisza. The newly organised Red Army successfully halted the advance of the Romanians launched on 16 April 1919, and within a few days they also repulsed the Czech armed forces even beyond the language boundaries in the north.

But the country's financial and military strength was insufficient for permanent success against vastly superior forces. For this reason, as a result of two confrontational telegrams by French head of state and the chairman of the peace conference Georges Clemenceau, the military leadership withdrew from the occupied territories. This withdrawal extorted by a double-edged (threatening and promising) diplomacy demoralised the army and so they could no longer resist the repeated offensive by Romanians, who did not stop at the line of demarcation. On 3 and 4 August, the Romanians occupied Budapest without opposition. The Soviet government did not wait until that date: they resigned on 1 August, and the majority of its members fled abroad. The trade union government taking office was arrested – with Romanian support – by a group organised of political adventurers on 7 August. The country fell apart to six regions under separate controls and chaos set in. In order to conclude the peace treaty as soon as possible, a British diplomat, George Russell Clerk was engaged in Paris to facilitate the formation of a legitimate Hungarian government on condition of the withdrawal of the occupying Romanian troops. As a result of his mission, (after grave atrocities³⁰) in November 1919 the Romanian army withdrew from the capital city and from between the Danube and the Tisza. A few days later (on 2 December) the government of Károly Huszár was formed and at last an authorisation was granted from Paris to appear in the presence of the winners at the Peace Conference.

AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

The Hungarian delegation led by Count Albert Apponyi (who had a bad reputation for his pro-German attitude and for his 1907 draft bill in favour of the spread of the national language) arrived in Paris on 7 January. The members included to subsequent prime ministers: Count István Bethlen and Count Pál Teleki, who had both been aware, since Clemenceau's Memorandum (of 13 June 1919) of the fact that they had to expect losing the greater part of the country (Zeidler, 2003, pp. 74–75). However, it was a new development that territories had to be given up for the benefit

of a “partner state”, namely Austria, by redrawing one of the oldest borderlines of Europe (which had been in place for more than a thousand years).³¹ Such a mutilation by more two-thirds of the territory and 58 per cent of the population, the drastic reduction of the army and the instructions on the payment of extensive restitutions cast doubts on the self-sustaining capacity of the remaining country. The uninhibited territorial claims by the neighbouring peoples had already been on the table of the expert committees a year earlier. All the three subsequent successor states lodged claims for territories and industrial areas with a majority of Hungarian-speaking population. (Thus the Czechs, the Serbs and the Romanians made attempts at presenting Csalóköz, the coal basin around Pécs, and the eastern rims of the Hungarian Plains, respectively, as if they had a legitimate right to them, e.g. referring to the strategic significance of railways.) The Anglo-Saxon powers, and essentially also Italy, considered the demands of the minor allies legitimate up to the ethnic borders; however, the French position predominated repeatedly in most cases. Passing on responsibility to the defeated parties and ransoming them for the damages and losses caused were in the common internal policy interest and endeavours of the victorious powers, however, obtaining influence over the Central European regions was mostly coveted by French diplomacy. This was certainly due to their “holy hatred” of Germans³² ever since the 1871 annexation of (mainly German-inhabited) Alsace and Lorraine. Thus, France was perhaps the most interested in weakening Germany and limiting the opportunities of revenge. This included the prevention of Germany from finding strong allies for any possible retort. This was the reason for dividing the Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire, for taking additional areas from Bulgaria and imposing substantial restitution penalties on all of them. On the other hand, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia were meant to have a role in halting the spread of Soviet Russia and bolshevism. Thus, to oblige six allies by granting them territories and financial goods (through restitution) and by imposing a serious punishment on a single country seemed to be a reasonable solution

The peace conditions received on 15 January surpassed the worst expectations of the Hungarian delegation. Therefore it was highly apposite from them to present a professional memorandum to the experts of the conference right upon their arrival in order to somewhat offset the frequently grossly cooked data lines and propagandistic argumentations of ethnic minorities (the authenticity of which was subsequently doubted by the decision-makers themselves). The Hungarian position was worded by Count Albert Apponyi, who was an excellent speaker (Szarka, 1998, pp. 285–297). Next day in his speech delivered in French with English and Italian summaries before the Supreme Council (including heads of government and ambassadors), Count Apponyi called the document unsuitable for securing equitable and permanent peace and unacceptable. He complained that the decision made by the right of the winner was disproportionate to Hungary’s war efforts. Of all losing parties, a country that had not been completely independent and was not granted the opportunity to represent its position and participate in drafting the peace was afflicted by the worst mutilation of its territory. He criticised the violation of the principle of ethnicity³³ because

nearly five million Hungarians and Germans were thrown at the mercy of the successor states. Already the mass redundancies of Hungarian teachers and administrators evidenced political discrimination. As the method of decision-making most compliant with principle of self-determination the speaker proposed referendum concluded in a controlled framework.³⁴ He also made reference to the advantages implied in the country's exceptional geographical unity, which justify integrated control and management. Finally, he gave a flash of the exposure to the spirit of revenge if a forcible settlement was made, and the security risks related to the oppression of minorities (Szarka, 1998, pp. 285–297). Apponyi's stately argumentation had an impact on Prime Minister Nitti of Italy. The head of the British government Lloyd George showed interest in the data evidencing the Hungarian claims, and in response, the chief Hungarian negotiator presented the audience with the so-called Red Map by geographer Pál Teleki, displaying the scale data of the 1910 consensus. Its novelty was that mountain and barren lands were marked white, and thus it gave a graphical portray of the predominance of Hungarians in the spatial structure of the Carpathian Basin. Based on what they saw and on the documentation submitted several days earlier, the British delegation, supported by Italy, motioned for the renegotiation of the borderlines and certain economic issues. As a result of the rigid French position and vehement opposition by the minor allies, finally they stuck to the original conditions, despite the truckload of evidence added by the Hungarian delegation to its various modifying motions richly supported by maps and statistics. However, this thorough and professional documentation that gained appreciation was only sufficient for a little more lenient financial conditions and textual corrections not affecting the essence. This text was received by the delegation on 5 May with the accompanying letter by the new French Prime Minister Millerand, providing the border-setting committees' option for making proposals on the modification of any border section they might consider unjust (however, in contrast to the increased expectations of the Hungarian public, this provision only applied to setting village borders, Zeidler, 2009, pp. 37–39).

The Hungarian peace delegation considered the authentication of the document unsupportable and they resigned. However, due to its predicament, the Hungarian government was not in a position to refuse signature. This fifteen-minute diplomatic act took place in the large Trianon Palace on 4 June, with two minor public administrators, the Minister for Public Welfare and the Minister of Labour, and the ambassador plenipotentiary signing the peace document on behalf of Hungary. At 10 o'clock on the day of signature, life stopped in the remnants of Hungary: public institutions and entertainment facilities closed, traffic stopped, flags were let fly at half mast, the bells tolled and the air-raid sirens gave a hoot. The entire society was in mourning.

EFFECTS OF THE PEACE DICTATE

The ruthless interests of great powers imposed disproportionately grave peace conditions on Hungarians, who received the peace dictate with astonishment and shock. They had every reason to do so. Hungary (excluding Croatia) lost 67 per cent of its

territory.³⁵ The victorious powers increased the territories of six neighbouring countries by chopping up Hungary, creating a peculiar situation: this is the only country in Europe that borders itself, as depicted in the map below (Chart 1).³⁶ The country's population reduced from 18,264,533 to 7,615,117 (Vizi, 2016, pp. 9–10). One of three inhabitants in the areas torn away was a Hungarian, and one-third of these Hungarians lived in blocks, right next to the new borders, making ethnic majorities. Underlying these drastic decisions there was undoubtedly a kind of anti-Hungarian sentiment, among experts as well as among the highest circles of decision-makers. However, Miklós Zeidler gives conclusive examples of the fact that these prejudices could only be enforced to the extent allowed by the current power interests (Zeidler, 2009, pp. 30–31).³⁷

Chart 1: Country parts annexed after the Peace Treaty of Trianon



Naturally, the peace-makers expected the fact that Hungarians would not easily resign to such an extent of mutilation, and so they made efforts at making military retort impossible for them. Similarly to the other defeated countries, Hungary was required to drastically reduce its army. Mercenary troops of maximum 35,000 people were only

Table 1: Size and population ratios of the annexed areas

The “beneficiary” country	Area of the granted territory (km ²)	Population of the annexed territory (person)	Percentage ratio of the Hungarian population (%)
Czechoslovakia	61,633	3,517,568	30.3
Romania	103,093	5,257,476	31.6
Kingdom of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia	20,551 (and Croatia: 42,541)	1,509,295 (in Croatia: 2,621,954)	30.3 (in Croatia: 4.0)
Austria	4,020	291,618	8.9
Italy	21	49,806	13.0
Poland	589	23,662	1.0
Total annexed:	189,907 (including Croatia: 232,448)	10649416 (including Croatia: 13,271,370)	

Source: Edited by the author

allowed for policing and border control, all modern arms (tanks, navigation and aviation fleets) were liquidated and all weapons were confiscated. Setting up a general staff and the conventional forms of military administration and mobilisation were prohibited. Concerning ammunition, only the topping up of any used stocks were allowed. The peace document went into minute details concerning post-war reparations, however, the financial chapter only required the blocking of public revenues as coverage for the subsequently established 200 million crowns payable as indemnity and occupation costs. Chapters XI and XII regulated the conditions of railway and waterway transport (despite the fact that the Romanian army had “rescued” the overwhelming majority of the railway transport equipment from the country well in advance³⁸). The peace treaty regulated Hungary’s economic, political and diplomatic ties with the great powers, the successor states and the newly established League of Nations, including citizenship and property.

The treaties concluded near Paris undoubtedly reduced the number of vulnerable ethnic minorities on the continent, but each of the states established on the ruins of the Monarchy still remained multi-ethnic (e.g. in Czechoslovakia there were more Germans living than Slovaks). In order to offset this doubtful outcome, the victorious powers set up a system of treaties for the protection of minorities, however, they did not apply even to the losing large powers, and a significant part of the successor states (including Hungary’s neighbours) endeavoured, by every means, to escape the fulfilment of their obligations. Equal treatment of the minority population in the annexed areas could have been a token for the long-term sustenance of these treaties. However, the successor states made efforts at keeping the obtained areas under their control “forever” by the creation of homogeneous nation states (i.e. by brutal assimilation and settlement policies). The operation of international minority protection forums also contributed to this, as they adopted doubtful decisions, in only a fragment

of the disputes, and rarely if ever to the benefit of the complainant minorities (Romsics, 1998, pp. 204–213, 227).

The peace treaties concluded near Paris caused serious disruptions in the economic processes of the region. This risk was indicated in 1919 by the renowned economist J. M. Keynes, who participated in the peace conference as an expert (Keynes, 1920). The manufacturing excess capacity due to the gross shortage of raw materials and the cutting off of territories caused a difficult-to-handle problem in the operation of the Hungarian economy. More than 400,000 Hungarians chased away or fled from the successor states had to be taken care of. For years they led a hand-to-mouth existence in railway carriages and emergency homes (Csóti, 2002). Certain flourishing city centres and regions suddenly became withering rim areas (Kovács, 1990). The secluded and autarchistic economic policies of the successor states terminated the previous free movement of labour and capital and the smooth division of work that had evolved between the various economic regions over the centuries, and this had adverse impacts on the entire Carpathian Basin that have been felt to this very date.

Therefore the peace forged along rude power interests was destined to be short-lived. Bitter disappointment and indignation overpowered the entire society. Protecting demonstrations and memorial services were held one after the other. All political trends in the Hungarian society urged a review of this punitive settlement. Differences concerned at most the extent of territorial claims. The government made efforts at keeping this psychosis, also incited by irredentist social organisations, on track,³⁹ and also capitalising on it according to its political intentions (partly to mitigate class conflicts and partly to support revisionist external policy).

Later on, numerous former decision-makers admitted the legitimacy of Hungarian revisionist demands. Nevertheless, the international supporting campaign organised by the press guru Lord Rothermere at the end of the 1920's failed despite the fact that in contrast to the Hungarian government's previous rigid position, instead of the restoration of the full territorial unity of the country, he only encouraged equitable political borders up to the language borders (Romsics, 2003, pp. 238–239). However, the large powers refused to support a correction compliant with the principle of self-determination, as that would have been tantamount to admitting their previous fallacies. The affected successor states formed a military and political alliance (Little Entente)⁴⁰ to combine forces to prevent the loss of their estates obtain. Their neighbourhood and minority policies were shaped in the spirit of the psychological pattern "I am angry with you because I have hurt you". Thus the opportunities of a compromise in revising the peace narrowed for good. The failure of this peace that did not serve reconciliation in Europe but laid the basis for a military revenge instead was also indicated by Germany's subsequent aggressive tactics. Despite the best efforts of the allies, by the 1930's the Third Empire had developed into an economic and military power that could afford the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland, and then together with the fascist Italy, which was found the increase in its territories insufficient, it was authorised to decide territorial disputes with the Czechoslovakian and then the Romanian successor states. Due to the lenient conduct of the western large powers, in 1938 the German-Italian

arbitration awarded the southern part of today's Slovakia, predominantly inhabited by Hungarians to Hungary.⁴¹ This was followed by the re-annexation of Subcarpathia, populated by relatively less Hungarians, but the restoration of the border was of primary strategic significance due to the historical alliance with Poland.⁴²

In the summer of 1940, following unsuccessful Hungarian–Romanian negotiations, both parties agreed to arbitration by large powers. This time Northern Transylvania and the Hungarian-populated Sekler Land were re-annexed to Hungary (pursuant to the second Vienna decision).⁴³ In April 1941, Bácska, Drávaszög and Muraköz were re-annexed in the south.⁴⁴ However, the Germans cynically capitalised the territorial disputes between the countries of the region in their war against the Soviet Union: they urged the competing parties to make increasing concessions, or otherwise they would take with actions that served the benefit of the other party.

Involuntarily driven to another war due to the revision, Hungary had to share the fate of the defeated once again. The propaganda spread by the successor states stigmatised Hungarians as collectively guilty, despite the fact that all of the neighbouring countries entered the war in alliance with the Germans. As a retort for border changes, in the endgame of the war, the damages to and discriminative treatment of the institutions, church and cultural communities of Hungarian minorities led to gross atrocities (ethnic cleansing). The Hungarian community was intimidated by the retaliatory actions performed by the Maniu Guards in Romania (Gábor, 2016, pp. 104–105), and by the murder at least 20,000 listed civilians in Yugoslavia (Arday, 2002, pp. 145–146). In Czechoslovakia, considered to be democratic, masses of people were deprived of their citizenship, tens of thousands were deported and a hundred thousand people were resettled and their assets were confiscated to create a homogeneous nation state. This time the Anglo-Saxon large powers considered a correction of the borders along the Trianon line but close to the ethnic boundaries, and the experts (including Russians) even kept a plan for an independent Transylvania on the agenda, and still, the armistice agreement enforced the 1920 borders. At its meeting held in September 1945, the only correction the Council of Foreign Ministers considered possible was a minor one along the Hungarian–Romanian border. But Soviet Commissar Molotov firmly rejected the proposal. Nevertheless, the Hungarian peace delegation made an effort at getting through a correction by 22,000 sq km, in a zone that was once exclusively inhabited by Hungarians but had become partly Romanian-populated due to resettling, but it was not granted diplomatic support. It was refused despite the fact that the proposal, based on the principle of mutuality, could have created a situation in which nearly as many Romanians would have come under Hungarian control as the number of Hungarians stuck in Romania. Although this arrangement and political practice was not too principled but efficient in practice, and if generally applied, it would have ceased Hungary's unilateral vulnerability to blackmail, and reciprocity could have pressed the successor states to apply more temperance in their minority policies. However, instead of equitableness and balancing, once again “large powers' rationale” predominated in the decision-making process. The 1947 Peace Treaty of Paris reflects directing disputes towards the least resistance. It cynically turned a blind

eye to collaboration between the Romanians, Slovaks, Croats and Slovenians and hit Hungary by upholding the territorial provisions of the 1920 peace dictate. The difference is that the United Nations, which replaced the League of Nations, did not elaborate a minority protection system similar to the one adopted after World War I. With this, they encouraged Hungary's neighbours, repeatedly declared to be "nation states", to successfully complete the homogenisation of their multi-ethnic countries, and sent neighbourhood to a repeated low.⁴⁵ The Hungarians living on the other side of the border were given as hostages of this policy, and similarly to Germans, they were about to face even greater ordeal.

As an unfortunate outcome of the decades that have passed since then is a reduction in the headcount of Hungarians to one-third in the Carpathian Basin, while the neighbouring peoples have nearly doubled, including the assimilation gain (Kocsis and Tátrai, 2015, p. 34).

TRIANON'S AFTERMATH

In the historical memory and identity of Hungarians, made a scapegoat, plundered and humiliated, the shock caused by Trianon and its indirect consequences have caused permanent distortions. Not even the change of regime could find a remedy for this schizophrenic and undeserving situation. After several aborted attempts, a consistent programme was elaborated for the unification of the nation across borders during the various Fidesz-led governments (e.g. Hungarian ID card, preference act, and then the adoption of double citizenship, Vizi, 2016, pp. 203–235). In order to educate the generations that have been made completely indifferent and to improve social cohesion, the Day of National Togetherness has been adopted at schools (on the day of singing the Treaty of Trianon). The parent state has also undertaken a significant role in the maintenance and improvement of Hungarian communities and institutions beyond the borders. In addition to appearing as a patron (e.g. as a supporter of autonomy), in neighbourhood policy it makes genuine efforts at reconciliation with the host nations through maintaining and strengthening good neighbourly relations. These efforts are also supported financially and morally by the European Union in the framework of regional co-operations. Although the elimination of distortions imprinted in the self-image as a collective failure and the resolution of grievances mutually suffered by the neighbours during the centuries of coexistence may require decades, the question is worth asking today, on the hundredth anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon: Will loyal citizenship of minorities and the generous policies of majority nations securing national development create harmony based on agreement and reasonable co-operation in the Central Danube Valley?⁴⁶

Despite the existing prejudices and mutual suspicion, it can be established as a matter of fact that the Hungarians living beyond the borders have always acted in a constructive manner in spite of all kinds of subordination and limitation of rights. They did not take any irredentist or rogue action (and neither did the parent state) when Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia disintegrated. During the change of

regime, they advocated and worked on democratic transformation, whether in opposition or in government. They did not use any of the radical or violent methods available in both the western and the eastern repertoire of ethnic minority struggles, quite the contrary. Thus Hungarians do not represent any security risk in the region, rather more, they can be considered as a stabilising factor already because of the double affiliation of separated Hungarians, as the knowledge of several regional languages, cultures and mentalities is a peculiar value. Based on these criteria, we have good reason to hope that – in the shared interest of the challenges posed by globalisation and in the spirit of respect and mutual concessions – Hungarians and non-Hungarians will create a common future that brings peaceful increase in the Carpathian Basin.

NOTES

- ¹ This included significant parts of today's Czechia, Austria, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Romania.
- ² During the reign of King Matthias I, 74 per cent of the country's population may have belonged to the Hungarian ethnicity (or 66.1 per cent, if Croatia is included). By 1790 this ratio had dropped to 31.5 per cent (Kocsis and Tátrai, 2015, pp. 6–7).
- ³ Settlers were granted exemption from taxes for five years, freedom of movement, and construction timber and sawing seeds free of charge (Kollega Tarsoly, 2011, pp. 33–34).
- ⁴ Hungarians' settlement in Croatia was simply called "Mongol invasion" in the press published in Croatian.
- ⁵ In 1804, Serbian Stevan Stratimirović, archbishop of Karlovci sent a draft to Tsar Alexander I, motioning for the liberation of Serbia and the annexation of Southern Hungary, partly inhabited by Serbs, under the leadership of a dukes of the Romanovs (Gyetvai, 2015, pp. 62–63).
- ⁶ In 1910 they made the relative majority of the empire (46.6%), while in a narrower perspective, in the Kingdom of Hungary they shared 25.8 per cent.
- ⁷ Slovaks entertained the concept of the Great Moravian Empire, a vassal to the Franks; Croats clung to their Illirian origins before the Romans, and Romanians to the Dacian heritage, also considering themselves as heirs of the Roman culture. Before long, they put forward bellicose programmes, including the Daco-Roman continuity theory. In 1838 the Greater Romania unification programme, also targeting the detachment of Transylvania, was born in Walachia, a region under Turkish and Russian rule at the time.
- ⁸ An effort made at this included the "peace pact" concluded by Lajos Kossuth, number one leader of the Hungarian war of independence with the leaders of the Romanians. During the decades he spent in emigration, he arrived at the idea of the Danube Confederation, an alternative offering longer-term benefits than the dualist solution for the peoples of the region.
- ⁹ Quote from Friedrich Beus (Vadász, 1998, p. 233). Meanwhile, the aggregate ratio of Slavic peoples (46.6%) still exceeded the joint ratio of the two leading nations (43.5%) even in 1910 (Pándi, 1995, p. 184).
- ¹⁰ One parliament and one government operated in Vienna and another one in Budapest; foreign, defence and military affairs and finances that served as a coverage for the previous were under the control of common ministers, however, instead of a superior imperial parliament, they only reported to so-called delegations of 60 persons each, and ultimately to the emperor. This structure also included numerous dysfunctions and remnants from feudalism.
- ¹¹ In 1913, per capita DGP was 435 crowns in Hungary and 304 crowns in Croatia. In the Austrian and German provinces it was 790 crowns, in the Czech provinces it was 630 crowns, in the coastal provinces it was 450, in Carniola and Dalmatia it was 300, and in Galicia and Bukovina it was 255 crowns (Katus, 2012, p. 473).

- ¹² Broad language use rights were ensured in culture, public administration and justice at the level of communities and counties. The authentic translation and publication of statutes in the languages of the ethnic minorities were ensured, and any of these languages could be used for records made at municipalities. Courts were allowed to communicate with the communities, congregations and associations in their own languages. The language of village and church administration and school education could be freely chosen, and Hungarian was mandatory only in contacts with the government. The act also ordered the establishment of minority departments in education wherever the ratio of ethnic minorities so required. At the same time, ethnic minority citizens and associations of ethnic minorities were allowed to establish tertiary educational institutions according to their own requirements and from their own funds (Katus, 2012, pp. 347–350).
- ¹³ The Serbian and Romanian critiques of the act demanded the inclusion of the establishment that ethnic minorities were state-creating constituents and demanded that the official language of municipalities should be the (local) language. In Transylvania Romanians demanded a Romanian “voivode”, a Romanian minister in the government and a Romanian department in every ministry, speeches made in Romanian in Parliament, a separate university and a separate Romanian army (Katus, 2012, pp. 592–594).
- ¹⁴ Although these decades saw the drafting of numerous relevant liberal acts, e.g. about compromise with the Croatians, and about the Greek Catholic faith, which vested broad religious autonomy rights in Serbian, Romanian and Ruthenian ethnicities, or the acts about the separation of the church and state, and about the full emancipation of the Jewish people, drafted subsequent as a result of efforts made in the field of ecclesiastical law.
- ¹⁵ During the fifty years of the Monarchy, GDP increased by 2.7 per cent per annum in Hungary, and this was equal to the German growth rate. In other words, in contemporary Europe, only Sweden and Denmark developed faster (Katus, 2012, p. 472).
- ¹⁶ The series of Hungarian millennial celebrations were held in 1896 in the illusion that the Medieval large power would revive, and this rendered the realistic assessment of the historical role and contribution of the admitted ethnic minorities impossible. This was exactly why the latter faced the event with stern indifference, while considering themselves as state constituting factors, and made their citizen loyalty conditional upon the government’s concessions.
- ¹⁷ Undoubtedly, Hungarians’ demographic increase significantly exceeded that of ethnic minorities. This had three components: the high reproductive rate of Hungarians (mainly due to the more favourable mortality rate), the human capital lost to emigration, which mainly afflicted the ethnic minorities living on the outer rims of weaker carrying capacities in the country, and the gain from (mainly spontaneous) assimilation (Jewish, Slovakian and German) on areas of mixed population, which had resulted in a slight absolute majority (54.4%) by 1910. However, “violent assimilation” is not evidenced by the fact that barely more than 23 per cent of the ethnic minorities living in Hungary spoke Hungarian, the official language of the country.
- ¹⁸ Part of the political élite supported the Czech efforts at transforming the dualistic Monarchy into a tri-polar one by raising the 3 developed Czech provinces among the peers, however, there were concerns that the Polish, the Italians etc. would then come up with similar claims. Soon, a trialistic political trend based on a Croatian–Serbian(–Slovenian) ethnic background gained ground among the Croatians (Zöllner, 1984).
- ¹⁹ However, the so-called Anschluss would only be carried out by Hitler’s Germany in 1938.
- ²⁰ Due to the failure of the unification of Great Croatia, Croatia was looking for a way out in a Yugoslavian cooperation, while Hungarians deplored that the two provinces were governed by the common Finance Ministry, despite the fact that Franz Joseph I announced the annexation of the province on the legal basis that Hungarian kings ruled the area in the Middle Ages.
- ²¹ Turning the western part of the empire into a federal state was only declared by the new emperor and king Charles IV on 16 October 1918, but within a few days the empire split up into national regions.
- ²² It was István Tisza who opposed joining the war after the Sarajevo assassination, saying that even if won, it would result in an increase in the Slavic and Romanian population, which in turn would represent an even more threat to the territorial integrity of the state.

- ²³ The leading Romanian ethnic minority politician, Ioan Slavici's following words shed light on the irreversibility of the separatist intentions: "Do not believe that you can win us by smartness or kindness. We do not want the Hungarian government to treat the Romanian people well, we would rather like them to oppress them as cruelly as possible. Because we are not seeking agreement, in the interest of our future, we need strife" (Raffay, 2015, p. 56).
- ²⁴ They agreed with the Italians in London on 26 April 1915 about giving up South Tyrol, the Istrian Peninsula and part of Dalmatia; and then with the Romanians in Bucharest on 17 August 1916 about the annexation of Transylvania and other areas mostly inhabited by Hungarians, up to nearly the River Tisza.
- ²⁵ He recommended the adjustment of the border along ethnic boundaries to the benefit of Italy, and urging the restoration of Poland, he also questioned the political borders of the Monarchy, although at that time not yet its *raison d'être* (Pándi, 1995, p. 280).
- ²⁶ Friedrich Naumann's *Mitteleuropa* Plan was born in 1915, and outlined an enormous area under German economic influence between Scandinavia and the areas leading to the Caucasus. Dependence of the peoples of the region on Germans was also reflected in the draft (Zöllner, 1984).
- ²⁷ The commander-in-chief of the Balkan front was not authorised to mark out lines of demarcation cutting deeply into areas inhabited by Hungarians, and he did not comply with the agreement he himself dictated. On the other hand, Károlyi satisfied all his demands. Applying a bad tactic, he also confined the troops of the victorious commander Mackensen of the German army returning from the lower stretches of the Danube (although they could have been extremely useful in repulsing the Romanian troops that broke into the country; Nagy, 2019).
- ²⁸ Lieutenant-colonel Ferdinand Vix was the Entente's liaison officer in Budapest (Zeidler, 2003, pp. 69–71).
- ²⁹ Letter by Béla Kun to the Paris Peace Conference, dated 24 March 1921 (Zeidler, 2003, pp. 71–72).
- ³⁰ In the course of "pacification" grave atrocities were made (647 persons lost their lives in other than combat operations), and requisition and damage amounted to 9 billion golden crowns. The robbery of the art treasures of the Hungarian National Museum was only thwarted by General Bandholtz's forceful response (Lipcey, 2009, p. 104).
- ³¹ The expression "thousand years old borderline" also applies to the north-western Czech and eastern-south-eastern Romanian border sections.
- ³² French Prime Minister Léon Gambetta: "Republicans should closely unite in the idea that objection by law and justice will be a revenge on violence and dishonesty" (Vadász, 1998, p. 119).
- ³³ This assumption is supported by the fact that an area of 103,000 sq km were cut out for Romania, making reference to less than 3 million Romanians living in Hungary (including 2 million ethnic minorities), while only 93,000 sq km were left for 7.3 million Hungarians.
- ³⁴ The Czech head of state Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, who had the reputation of being an exemplary democrat, cautioned against holding regional referendums, since he was confident that in this case the newly established Czechoslovakia would lose not only the purely Hungarian Csallóköz, but even the Slovakian-speaking population would decide to return (Popély, 2010, pp. 190–191).
- ³⁵ The only territorial correction took place in 1921 by a referendum at the western border, which resulted in the re-annexation of Sopron and its surroundings to Hungary.
- ³⁶ This number changed to eight on the signature of the 1947 Treaty of Paris and then after the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union (Austria, Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia), and Italy was excluded from among the "beneficiary" countries when the seaport Fiume (currently: Rijeka) was annexed to Croatia. (Subcarpathia was included in Czechoslovakia between 1920 and 1939, in Hungary between 1939 and 1944, in the Soviet Union up to 1991, and it is in Ukraine today.)
- ³⁷ This assumption of his is also evidenced by the fact that in 1912, while President Wilson of the United States, a country that did not even ratify the peace treaty concluded near Paris, was governor of New Jersey, he made the scandalous statement that the immigration of Hungarians should be prevented as their intellectual level fell short even the abilities of Chinese coolies. In Hungarian public opinion it was incorrectly ingrained that the Trianon borders resulted from relentless anti-Hungarian sentiments. Without denying

the existence of anti-Hungarian sentiments, a British diplomat saw the causes of merciless border setting in the fact that expert work was performed by separate committees, and exaggerated claims were made in each border section "in order to have enough to give concessions from". However, the Hungarian party was not granted the opportunity to participate in the preparatory work, and in the last stage of the exhausting work dragged for months, no strength and sufficient attention had been left for the substantial discussion of the meticulous and professional documentation handed over by the Hungarian peace delegation upon their arrival, and for the collation of the various proposals made by special committees, thus the decision-makers approved them without any amendment Cartledge, 2010, pp. 81–94).

- ³⁸ According to the 23 October 1919 report of the Clerk mission, the Romanians plundered the occupied territories, depriving them of the means of transport to the extent that fuel and food supply became practically impossible. Up to their withdrawal, they had robbed 39,395 draft horses, 1,302 locomotives and 34,160 rail carriages (Lipcsey, 2009, pp. 91, 111).
- ³⁹ E.g. in May 1921, Foreign Minister Miklós Bánffy requested the government to subject irredentist organisations to increased control as they jeopardised foreign policy interests (Zeidler, 2009, p. 107).
- ⁴⁰ About cooperation between the successor states between 1921 and 1938, see Ádám, 1989.
- ⁴¹ Pursuant to the first Vienna decision dated 2 November 1938, 11,927 sq km were re-annexed with 1,060,000 inhabitants, 84 per cent of whom declared to be Hungarian (Romsics, 2003, p. 246; Zeidler, 2003, pp. 315–316).
- ⁴² Approximately a hundred thousand soldiers and civilians could escape (and leave for the west) with Hungarian help thanks to the recapture in March 1939 from Poland grip of the Germans and the Soviets. The majority of the inhabitants in the area occupying 12 thousand sq km were Ruthenians, but Prime Minister Pál Teleki intended to grant them territorial autonomy. He submitted a draft act, however, under the war conditions, it did not enter into force (Romsics, 2003, pp. 246–247).
- ⁴³ The decision effective from 30 August 1940 re-annexed a territory of 43,000 sq km to Hungary. According to the 1941 consensus, 52 per cent of the population was Hungarian, 38 per cent was Romanian and 10 per cent was German (Romsics, 2003, p. 248; Zeidler, 2003, pp. 317–318).
- ⁴⁴ The area of 11,500 sq km was populated by 1,030,000 people. 39 per cent of its population claimed to speak Hungarian, 19 per cent German, and 16 per cent Serbian as their mother tongues. Banat, mainly inhabited by Germans, was brought under German control (Romsics, 2003, p. 251).
- ⁴⁵ Their means included the confiscation of assets, the limitation of linguistic and cultural rights, the collective deprivation of rights (Beneš Decrees), deportation and even genocide (e.g. in the winter of 1944–1945 in Yugoslavia). Not even Csallóköz and Szekler Land, still populated by an overwhelming majority of Hungarians, have been granted autonomy.
- ⁴⁶ A telling illustration of such distortions is the drop of the ratio of suicides from 0.0293 to 0.0236 within just a single year in Hungary. Such a reduction was unprecedented anywhere else in Europe at the time (Romsics, 2003, p. 248).

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