

THE NATIONALITY QUESTION IN HUNGARY  
AND  
ITS EFFECT ON THE FOREIGN POLICY  
OF THE  
DUAL MONARCHY  
1867 - 1914

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ABSTRACT

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The objective of this thesis is to examine how the policy of Magyarization in Hungary weakened both Hungary and the whole Monarchy, how this policy contributed to the diminishing of Hungarian influence in foreign affairs and how it isolated Hungary both from Vienna and the national minorities in the Dual Monarchy.

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The purpose of this paper is not to write the history of Hungary between 1867-1914, nor even to discuss the nationality question in Hungary, which was the most important issue of the period but rather to focus on the problem of how the Hungarians intended to use the Dual Monarchy and its foreign policy for the one purpose on their mind - Magyarization. The connection between foreign and domestic affairs is well known; it was pushed to the extreme by the Hungarians. Hungarian influence on the foreign policy of the Monarchy varied at times; however, it is safe to say that it was strongest shortly after the constitutional compromise of 1867 and under the tenure of Andrassy as Minister of Foreign Affairs. It gradually declined in later years, and particularly rapidly after 1906. Growing domestic difficulties within Hungary enabled Vienna to ignore their particular interest. Hungary, obsessed with Magyarization, with the idea of creating a "Hungarian Empire", and constantly fighting a two-front war against her national minorities and Vienna, found herself in a complete cul de sac in 1914, going to war to "avenge" the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Hungarians' arch enemy. Victory could have meant one thing only: a change to a federalist system. The point I wish to emphasize is that the policy

of Magyarization not only alienated the national minorities in Hungary, but, in effect, also brought about a stalemate for Hungary as far as the Empire's foreign affairs were concerned, contributing largely to the charge by independentist politicians and historians who described Hungary not as one of the "ruling" nations but as a glorified colony within the dualistic system.

## II.

There is a general agreement among historians that the years between 1867-1914 represented the most fruitful and most settled years of Modern Hungary's stormy history. Furthermore, there is a general agreement that, in spite of all their progress, the Hungarians were really unable to make good use of these peaceful years and avoid the disintegration of their country in 1918, the reason being the inability of both Vienna and Budapest to solve the nationality question. While Vienna tried the policy of "divide et impera" or simply did nothing, the Hungarian answer was an aggressive effort at Magyarization of the national minorities. Then, of course, in spite of the constitutional compromise of 1867, the Hungarians were unable to see the Dual Monarchy as one unit with a common interest. Their only interest was that the Habsburg Empire should act according to Hungarian interests in economic and foreign affairs: a classic example of Hungarian unwillingness to think even in economic terms of one unified state was the development of two "great" ports on the Adriatic Sea. Vienna developed Trieste, linking it by rail to Vienna. The Hungarians wanted their own port and developed Fiume, connecting it to Budapest with a railroad, via Zagreb. (1)

In foreign affairs, the Hungarians insisted upon a close alliance with the new Germany - mainly for domestic reasons, to keep Vienna in check - and an uncompromising hostility towards Russia - also essentially based on domestic considerations.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, Russia gradually became the "arch enemy" in the eyes of the Hungarians. From the 1820's onward, the liberal generations saw Czarist Russia as the bulwark of reaction, the bastion of the hated Holy Alliance. In 1830, during the Polish revolt against Russia, Hungarian public opinion was unanimously on the side of the Poles and all kinds of unrealistic schemes were devised which might help them.<sup>(2)</sup> Then, as the national consciousness of the various Slavic minorities began to grow, the Hungarians discovered the hand of Russia in this nationalism; the actual fact that Russia had no part at all in the early stages of nationalism was conveniently overlooked by the Hungarians. The proof that Russia was the enemy came in 1849 with the decisive Russian intervention to defeat the Hungarian Revolution. Thus, from 1867 onward, the Hungarians did everything in their power to prevent any alliance between Vienna and Russia. Furthermore, according to the Hungarians, Habsburg diplomacy should block any close co-operation between Germany and Russia and this

pro-German, anti-Russian foreign policy should also ensure friendly relations with the British Empire. Unfortunately, in the next forty years, the Hungarians were as slow to realize changes in the outside world as in domestic affairs. It was only in the spring of 1914 that they finally realized, with growing alarm, what a dangerous position the Dual Monarchy had steered itself into.



III

From the turn of the nineteenth century, the Habsburg Empire was in rapid decline. Its essential weakness was revealed during the Napoleonic Wars although Metternich managed to restore the Empire's prestige for a generation after Napoleon's defeat. The events of 1848 again showed how fragile the Habsburgs' domain was. While they managed to defeat the Italian and Hungarian revolutions with considerable assistance from Russia, after 1848 it was downhill all the way. The moment for the Hungarians came after the defeat at Konigratz in 1866.

The Hungarians responded with a remarkably united passive resistance to the defeat of their revolutionary war of independence in 1848-49. By the early 1860's, it became clear that Vienna was getting tired and was ready to make concessions.

Ferenc Deak was Minister of Justice in 1848 but resigned when conflict with Vienna became inevitable and so avoided the vengeance of the Habsburgs. He emerged as the spokesman of the sullen Hungarians. When it became possible, Deak summarized in a famous newspaper article in the spring of 1865 the minimum demands of the Hungarians. The article became generally known as the May Programme of 1865. Deak, in essence, insisted

on the validity of the revolutionary April constitution of 1848. He admitted, however, that the April laws could be modified. He insisted upon Hungary's equality with the Cis-Leithanian provinces. Common Affairs were to be the Royal household, foreign affairs, defence, customs and trade policy, indirect taxation and general principles of commercial legislation. On the other side, the Emperor-King was to appoint a ministry responsible to the Hungarian Parliament and the territorial integrity of the Crown of St. Stephen (including Croatia) should be recognized. If this demand was met, Parliament should be summoned on the basis of the laws of 1848. (3) For Vienna, this was too much. However, after Konigratz there were second thoughts at the court. Deak skillfully paved his way. As he emphasized, "We are not asking more after Konigratz, just the same that we asked before". (4) The compromise was finally achieved.

On February 17, 1867, Hungarians listened amidst rapturous applause at the great hall of the National Museum at Pest, to the Royal letter restoring the Hungarian constitution and authorizing the formation of a ministry responsible to a Hungarian parliament. (5)

The new arrangement was an extremely complicated one. There was an Austrian government in Vienna, a Hungarian government in Budapest which had no authority

over "common" affairs, and, after 1868, there was also a Croat government in Zagreb, subservient to Budapest. While the settlement of 1867 did not satisfy the exiled revolutionary hero, Louis Kossuth, and his numerous followers, the architect of the arrangement, Ferenc Deak, did extract a high price from Vienna. Vienna paid this at the expense of other nationalities. One issue the Hungarians insisted upon was the territorial integrity of St. Stephen's Kingdom; that meant the inclusion of Transylvania and Croatia in Hungary. In Transylvania, the Roumanians were shocked; they vehemently objected and considered that Vienna had sold them to the Hungarians. The Croats, who had supported the Empire so energetically in 1848, were also left out in the cold: Vienna informed them that they had to make their own arrangements directly with Budapest. After extremely difficult negotiations in 1868, a Hungarian-Croat settlement was reached. The whole arrangement, of course, was extremely fragile. The majority of Hungarians never hid their dislike of any form of subservience to Vienna and the Croats even more openly expressed their distaste for the rulers of Budapest. However, it was this constitutional compromise which enabled the Habsburg Monarchy to survive for another fifty years.

The exiled Kossuth, of course, never stopped blaming Deak and Andrassy for the missed opportunity.

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According to him, an uprising in Hungary shortly after Konigratz would have achieved its goal: an independent Hungary and the collapse of the Habsburg Empire. Kossuth had all the qualities of a revolutionary hero, including that of being a dreamer. In 1866, there was no revolutionary mood in Hungary: there is a big difference between passive resistance and armed revolt. The nation was tired. The compromise of 1867 was, undoubtedly, quite an achievement from the Hungarian point of view. Thus, there is a lot to say for the current re-examination of 1867 going on amongst Hungarian historians. It was not the compromise, the constitutional framework, but the policies pursued by the Hungarian governments which contributed so greatly to the collapse of 1918.

## IV

A number of historians, with some justification, describe the arrangements of 1867 as Vienna having taken in the Hungarians as partners of the Germans in a ruling coalition. There were a number of reasons why Vienna chose the Hungarians. They were numerically the strongest coherent nationality, although the various Slav peoples, taken together, far outnumbered them. Their geographic position put them in the centre of the Empire, and while some other nationalities (e.g. Serbs and Roumanians) may have wanted to break away and join their brothers on the other side of the border, as happened with the Italians, this would not have meant the end of the Empire; Hungarian independence, however, could be achieved only on the ruins of the Habsburgs. Also, Vienna quite erroneously presumed that while it had to sacrifice the "less developed" Slovaks, Ruthens, Roumanians to the Hungarians, the other two "developed" nations within the Empire, the Czechs and the Poles, not living in Hungarian territories, would have no objection to these new arrangements.

Vienna was also influenced by the failure of two previous efforts to strengthen the domestic structure of the Empire. By 1860, it was clear that the centralizing efforts of the Bach system could not work in the long run.

The system was rejected by all nationalities. After the fall of Bach, some feeble attempts were made to create a semi-federalist state with a semi-autocrat in Vienna. It was most strongly rejected by the Germans and Hungarians.

In the arrangements of 1867, the Hungarians quite rightly considered one of their biggest gains to be the territorial unification of historical Hungary, together with the re-establishment of a central government in Budapest. In those counties where the Hungarians were a majority, the will of the Hungarian gentry was upheld, at least in local matters, even at the height of the Bach system.

The situation was different where the Hungarians were a minority, sometimes a tiny minority. In those cases, the local authorities, supported by Vienna, could ignore or even oppose the Hungarian landlords and petty nobility. This situation changed in 1867: Vienna gave up its right to have any voice in domestic issues in territories considered to be part of historical Hungary. The importance of this change was not lost on either the Hungarians or on the other nationalities. Thus, while Vienna had no voice in domestic Hungarian issues, the Hungarians considered it very much their affair what happened in the Cís-Leithanian (Austrian) part of the Empire.

The time for the Hungarians to interfere came as early as 1871. The Emperor agreed to re-establish the Czech constitution in a somewhat similar way as the Hungarian and plans were made to crown the Emperor as the King of Bohemia in Prague. (6) The Hungarians objected and succeeded in blocking the plan. They felt that if the Czechs achieved the same status as the Hungarians, there was no way that the Croats could be held back. Dualism would be replaced with federalism, which was unacceptable to the Hungarians. This was a remarkably short-sighted policy. Certainly, there were conflicts between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia and Moravia but the government in Vienna never had a "Germanization" policy. The Czechs had their cultural autonomy, with great achievements to show for it in the nineteenth century and they were well represented both in the Parliament of Vienna and in the civil service of the Empire. The Czech aristocracy was wiped out in 1620 and the years after. The eighteenth century saw the rapid growth of a Czech middle class and when the industrial revolution reached the Habsburg territories, the main beneficiaries were the Czech provinces which had both the material and the human resources. At the turn of the century, the standard of living, the level of education and the quality of life in general in Bohemia and Moravia was far above that of semi-feudal Hungary, yet the Czechs

were not satisfied. They resented their position, and the fact that they had no influence on the policy of the whole Empire, particularly in foreign affairs. The mass desertion of Czech soldiers in World War I demonstrated their real feelings. Thus, while the Hungarians, by accepting a compromise in 1867, helped to save the Empire, the rigid insistence in the ensuing years to maintain Dualism essentially weakened it.



## V

The nationality question and Magyarization naturally were not new issues in 1867. They were very real issues already in the 1840's and they exploded in 1848. Kossuth and his followers, representing the petty nobility, the intelligentsia (most of whom originated in the petty nobility), and a very small bourgeoisie, were pushing for the abolition of serfdom and other liberal democratic reforms as well as for the establishment of a pure Magyar state. The anti-feudal reforms did not appear to be much different from those of some of the Slovak and Croat leaders' reforms, such as Kollar, Stur or Gaj. However, while all of these groups wanted similar reforms and all were opposed to Vienna and the ideology of the Holy Alliance, nationalism tore them apart and in 1848, Vienna would successfully mobilize the non-Magyar nations against the Hungarian revolution. It is interesting to note that when, in the 1840's, the obligatory use of the Hungarian language and the forced Magyarization were put on the agenda in the Hungarian Diet by the petty nobility, some magnates, conservative, always faithful to Vienna, and essentially cosmopolitan, pointed out how dangerous and unrealistic this programme was. (7)

When Vienna, in 1867, had to choose the Hungarians over the other nationalities, Magyarization got its second chance.

Hungarian historians often introduce the problem as the sabotage of the liberal nationality law of 1868. While it is true that the Hungarian bureaucracy consistently sabotaged this law, it is doubtful that even the strict application of the law would have made much difference in the long run.<sup>(8)</sup> Certainly, the law guaranteed the nationalities cultural autonomy in linguistic and educational matters, but only on a local level. The language of the nationalities could be used in municipal and county administration. The law did not hide the centralizing character of the Hungarian state. The official language of the central administration was Hungarian. A knowledge of Hungarian was required to practice law or medicine anywhere in the Hungarian Kingdom. Furthermore, it is often pointed out that although the language of administration in Vienna was German, in the Habsburg administration, non-Austrians (mainly Czechs, Poles and Hungarians) were always well represented even in the highest posts. In Hungary, non-Hungarians were to be found only at the lowest level of the bureaucracy and even there only in limited numbers. On the other hand, it must be explained that this fact

was connected with the position of the German and Hungarian languages. Large numbers of Germans were living all over the Habsburg territories. German was the language of commerce not only in the Monarchy but all over South East Europe even in territories under Turkish rule and also in the Western and Baltic provinces of Czarist Russia. Most important, it was the language of the German Empire, the strongest power on the continent. In contrast, Hungarian - a difficult and strange language - was absolutely useless outside the Hungarian Kingdom. Thus, for example, an educated young Slovak was quite willing to learn German but was opposed to learning Hungarian, both on emotional and practical grounds.

The first Hungarian governments after 1867 were quite convinced that with the skilful adoption of a "stick and carrot" policy the small educated strata of the nationalities could be assimilated and this would almost automatically be followed by the "Magyarization" of the peasantry. Both the spirit and the practice of the nationality law of 1868 made it clear that the "room at the top" could be reached by not only learning Hungarian but by becoming a Magyar in spirit as well. By the turn of the century, however, the Hungarians realized with alarm that the national consciousness of the minorities did not diminish but, on the contrary, increased. It was quite clear that the doctors, teachers and lawyers of

the national minorities were not interested in a Hungarian "career", but were willing to make substantial sacrifices to keep their national identity and to indoctrinate the peasantry with the same feelings. Thus, the Hungarian Prime Minister, Dezso Banffy, admitted in 1899 that since the only way to survive was through a unilingual Magyar state this must be achieved either voluntarily or by coercion. The stick gradually replaced the carrot. In this spirit, the school laws of 1908 were enacted. This law made it obligatory to teach Hungarian as a subject in all elementary schools. In all schools where 50% or more of the children were Hungarian, the language of general instruction must be Hungarian. Where the Hungarian enrollment was between 20% and 50%, instruction should be in Hungarian, depending on local conditions. If the law made it difficult to get a non-Hungarian education on an elementary level, it made it almost impossible on a high school or university level. The only relief the minorities got was that the law was often sabotaged by non-Magyar local officials. (9) Despite all of this, Magyarization was a complete failure, with the exception of the Jews. The Jews fleeing from Czarist Russia found relative freedom in the Habsburg Empire. In Hungary, the Jews were first emancipated in 1848. Although this law was repealed after the defeat of the revolution, it was

reinstated without any difficulty in 1867: As early as 1870, the Hungarian Jewish community split into an orthodox and a modern, neolog faction.<sup>(10)</sup> The orthodox Jews intended to keep the Jewish national traditions while the neolog faction claimed that "Jew" was a religion like Catholic, Greek Orthodox or Protestant and that their nationality was Hungarian. Gradually, as a growing number of Jews reached a prominent position, mixed marriages and/or accepting the Catholic religion became quite commonplace. Although there were sporadic anti-semitic outbursts, it is justified to consider the years 1867-1914 as the golden era of Hungarian Jewry. Their voluntary Magyarization greatly contributed to the one area where Magyarization was a relative success, namely in the larger cities.

## VI

The stock of the Hungarians was high in Vienna in the first few years following 1867 and understandably so. After Konigratz, it was the accommodation of the Hungarians which gave the Empire a new lease on life. According to the new constitution, Hungary was an independent state; however, military and foreign policy were treated as common affairs with the other part of the Empire. The first test came in 1870. At the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, some circles in Vienna wanted to join France in a war against Prussia as revenge. The Hungarians vehemently objected and blocked any such adventure.<sup>(11)</sup> Their victory against the war party was made easier by the fact that the Prussians might have easily won a two-front war against France and Austria.

It is significant that Andrassy was the only Hungarian foreign minister between the years 1867 and 1914,<sup>(12)</sup> serving from 1871 to 1879. Andrassy became the Emperor's foreign minister after being the Prime Minister of Hungary for four years. He went to Vienna openly and unashamedly to represent Hungarian interests. As his son wrote about him:

"Andrassy was an out and out Hungarian . . . He entered the common Austro-Hungarian service not out of a hyphenated (i.e. Austro-Hungarian) patriotism, but because he believed he could be useful to the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy." <sup>(13)</sup>

It was in the interests and sentiments of the Hungarians that Andrassy set the Monarchy firmly on the path of a pro-German and anti-Russian course. While he already wanted to resign for personal reasons in 1878 after the Berlin Congress, he stayed in office to establish a firm two-partner alliance between the Monarchy and the new Germany which automatically delegated Bismarck's hope for an alliance between Austria, Germany and Russia to second place. The day after the treaty with Germany was signed, Andrassy did resign.

The dominant problem under Andrassy's tenure was the Eastern question. By 1875, European Turkey and the Balkans were in full revolt. For a while it appeared that the Turks might master the situation but then the Russians intervened and by January, 1878, they were at the doors of Constantinople. They forced the Turks to sign a devastating peace treaty at San Stefano. This was naturally alarming news for the Monarchy. At the subsequent Berlin Congress Andrassy managed, with the close co-operation of the British, to cancel most of the Russian gains of San Stefano. Bismarck tried desperately to mediate between his two allies, Austro-Hungary and Russia but, in the final analysis, he had to support the Austro-Hungarian view. Thus, the Balkans became, not a Russian domain, but were divided into

"spheres of influence" between Russia and the Monarchy. Undoubtedly, the Berlin Congress was a great diplomatic victory for the Monarchy. Without any serious fight, (14) unlike Russia, it managed to increase its influence on the Balkans. In a smaller way, Andrassy managed the same as Metternich; in spite of its essential weakness and the military defeats, he maintained and even strengthened the great power status of the Monarchy. In spite of this, Andrassy was not happy with the Balkan developments. He knew that if Turkey, "the sick man of Europe" died, the Monarchy would be the next on the "sick list". He certainly would have preferred to maintain the status quo. This was not, however, how Vienna saw the situation; the Emperor and his close advisors openly hoped for territorial gains in the Balkans to offset the losses in Italy.

Andrassy, representing the Hungarian interests, was fighting hard against the desired annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. From a Hungarian point of view, any extension of territory was undesirable, because the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina would just create the pressure to attach it to Croatia and so the Kingdom of Croatia should become a third equal partner in the Monarchy.

Andrassy's position was extremely difficult: the Turkish rule had collapsed and the Christian revolt in



1875 in Bosnia had started after Franz Joseph's visit to Dalmatia. Really, the question was whether the territory would go to the Monarchy or to Serbia. A compromise was finally reached. The territory was occupied by Austro-Hungary but it nominally continued to be under Turkish rule. The paradox of the situation was that only the Mohammedans became loyal subjects of Vienna.

The cornerstone of Andrassy's foreign policy and the legacy he left behind him was the German alliance. Andrassy looked upon it, domestically, as a way of strengthening the Magyar position in Vienna and, diplomatically, as the tool which would isolate Russia. He could not, of course, foresee the day when Britain and Russia would settle their differences. Also, he could hardly have seen that in thirty years the Monarchy's relationship with Germany would deteriorate from a valuable alliance into a complete dependence, but would still enable Vienna to follow, in the shadow of Germany, an aggressive foreign policy which was completely alien to Hungarian interests and sentiments.

The gradual lessening of Hungarian influence on Vienna's foreign policy was quite visible by the turn of the century. As Vienna watched the domestic difficulties of the Magyars in the Kingdom of Hungary, she managed to act more and more independently of them.

Furthermore, Hungarian public opinion had only a negative attitude toward foreign affairs. They had no positive programme but raised violent objections if they felt that Hungarian interests were endangered. Thus, while their influence declined, they did manage to force the resignation of Andrassy's successors, Kalnoky's in 1895 and Goluchowski's in 1906. (15)

## VII

The most important single event in the relationship between Vienna and Budapest in the years 1867 to 1914 was the constitutional crisis of 1906. Its solution also resulted in an accelerating decline of Hungarian influence on foreign affairs. Its origins go back to the two-party system established in 1867. The division was on constitutional lines. The permanent government party, the party formed by the Constitutional Compromise of 1867, was called the Liberal party; the opposition was the party of the exiled hero Louis Kossuth and was known as the Independentist party. The franchise, the geographical distribution of seats and the open interference by the government, not so much by pressure as by corruption, seemed to ensure forever the rule of the Liberal party. The much heralded change from a feudal Parliament to a modern parliamentary system in 1848 meant much less in Hungary than anywhere else.

One person in fourteen in Hungary was a nobleman and thus had the right to vote although quite a few of them were poorer than some of the well-to-do peasants. In contrast, in Bohemia one person out of 828 belonged to the nobility. As Priscilla Robertson points out, in England before the reforms of 1832, there was only one person out of 24 eligible to vote; even in the United States,

only one person in eight was an eligible voter. (16)

Thus, "feudal" Hungary did not fare so badly. However, the extension of the franchise based on educational and financial limitations changed little in the Hungarian parliamentary life. Some well to do and "middle" peasants in the country and the small bourgeoisie middle class in the city gained the right to vote.

The system, often called "phony Parliamentarianism", seemingly operated in such a way as to make it impossible for the governing Liberal party to be defeated. In the elections of January, 1905, however, the impossible happened: the Liberals were defeated by an opposition coalition led by the Independentists. While this was unexpected, it should not have come as a shock. The government was gradually losing its power base from the 1890's, a growing number of important political figures drifted into the opposition, particularly in the last few years under the rule of Prime Minister Stephen Tisza. It was economic developments within the Empire, however, which gave the most serious impact to the discontent. One irony of the period is that Vienna always found it easier to deal with the Czech bourgeoisie than with the Hungarian gentry.

The Hungarians jealously safeguarded their internal autonomy and constantly complained that Budapest did not have the same influence on common affairs as Vienna;

however, when it came to the distribution of the burden for the budget for the same common affairs, they quickly pointed out that Hungary was less than half of the total Empire, both in population and in gross national product. Following the depression of 1873, a remarkably rapid industrial expansion took place in the Monarchy. However, both Vienna and the foreign capital concentrated their efforts on those parts of the Empire where the best natural, human and financial resources were already available, namely in the Czech provinces. While the expansion of the railroad network did help industrial development in Hungary for the first three decades following 1867, the Hungarian ruling classes were essentially happy playing the role of food supplier to the rest of the Empire, this in spite of growing protests from the weak Hungarian bourgeoisie. It was already clear before the turn of the century that Hungary was falling further and further behind the German and Czech provinces in economic development. Then came the agricultural crisis which had a disastrous effect on the price structure of agricultural products in relation to industrial goods. It became eminently clear that the Czech and German capitalists completely dominated the Hungarian markets. Voices defending Hungarian industries became louder and louder, expressing themselves in the concrete demand for an independent Hungarian

national bank. The ruling Liberal party, adhering strictly to the arrangements of 1867, was unable to accept these demands. This led to its defeat in January, 1905.

It is interesting to note that the victorious opposition leaders, at their first audience with the Emperor, asked for much less than their original programme, namely complete independence with a personal union.<sup>(17)</sup> Their three major demands were: the use of Hungarian in the Army command, the establishment of a Hungarian National Bank and a separate Hungarian tariff zone. The Emperor flatly refused. He appointed a new government consisting of Hungarian civil servants faithful to Vienna, headed by a Hungarian general of the common Army. The Hungarian Parliament quickly passed a no-confidence vote. After some hesitation, the Hungarian Parliament was dispersed by military force using, significantly, an army unit of Roumanian soldiers.<sup>(18)</sup>

As in the 1850's, the Hungarians responded with a remarkably united show of passive resistance. The Hungarian-speaking counties formed the core of the resistance. They refused to collect and pay out the taxes and also refused to recruit the men into army service. Also, a fairly successful boycott was organized in all segments of the Hungarian society, against all

industrial articles manufactured in the Austrian part of the Empire. It was at this dangerous moment that the Vienna-installed government threatened to extend the franchise with practically no limitations, and introduce the secret ballot.<sup>(19)</sup> The Hungarian ruling classes became truly alarmed. A radical change in the franchise would be the end of the Hungarian Parliamentary system as the gentry knew it and liked it.

A Parliament where the non-Magyars might be a majority and where the working class would be represented was unacceptable. This would mean the replacement of "semi-feudal democracy with real bourgeois democracy."<sup>(20)</sup>

In no time at all, the Hungarians were willing to give up all their demands to save the system. The Emperor, after making some meaningless concessions concerning the use of Hungarian in the army, could appoint a new "Constitutional" government from the Independentist party and its allies. The question of change in the electoral system was conveniently forgotten. The crisis was thus averted, with a complete defeat of the Hungarians.

Outmanoeuvred by Vienna, the new government turned even more vehemently against the nationalities than had their predecessors. Magyarization turned more and more into open oppression. It created no new Magyars - only enemies.

## VIII

Three factors contributed to the serious decline of Hungarian influence on the foreign affairs of the Monarchy in the last period between 1906-1914: first, the solution of the constitutional crisis of 1905-1906 revealed the extreme weakness of the Hungarian position. It showed again that the ruling gentry needed the framework of the Monarchy as much, if not more than Vienna needed them in order to keep the Empire together.

Secondly, 1906 marked the start of the growing influence of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir apparent. Previously working through his small Military Chancellery, he was concerned only with military affairs. As his Chancellery started to grow, however, he took a more and more active interest in both foreign and domestic affairs.

In 1906, Aehrenthal became Foreign Minister and Conrad von Hotzendorf, Chief of Staff. Both men were close to Franz Ferdinand. The heir apparent had definite ideas on how to save the Monarchy; he wanted to replace Dualism with Trialism, creating a third South Slav country within the Monarchy, with Zagreb as its center. Later on, he even considered federalist ideas which demanded the rearrangement of the Empire along the lines of race and topography. (21) The biggest obstacle to this plan were the Magyars. There was not much love lost between the



Hungarians and Franz Ferdinand. During the long battle to introduce Magyar as a language of army command, he was quick to point out that the Magyars had freely conspired with the enemies of the House of Habsburg in the past (with Cavour in 1859 and with Bismarck in 1866) and were continuing to do so; nevertheless, they had been rewarded for this at the expense of other nationalities, who were staunchly loyal to the Imperial cause. In a letter to Max Vladimir Beck on August 28, 1905, he wrote:

"Again and again I come back to the conviction, which I shall go on expressing as long as I live, that the so called 'decent Hungarian' simply does not exist, and that every Hungarian, be he a minister, a prince, a cardinal, a tradesman, a peasant, a hussar or a stable boy, is a revolutionary. Every one of them thinks precisely what the most rascally Deputy says". (22)

The third factor contributing to the decline of Hungarian influence was the general disinterest of Hungarian public opinion in foreign affairs. The only issue after 1867 which excited and divided Hungarian public opinion and the political parties was the relationship to Vienna; later on, added to this were the growing difficulties of the nationality question and, after the turn of the century, the rapid growth of the socialist movement, all domestic issues. The only fixed point in foreign affairs was the hatred and fear of Russia.

It was only in the spring of 1914 that the Hungarians fully realized the precarious diplomatic position of the Monarchy. As it turned out, the German alliance did not serve as a counterweight to Vienna but contributed to the complete isolation of the Monarchy; its weakness made it a satellite of Germany and alienated the British, a development completely contrary to Hungarian interests and sentiments. In the decade preceding 1914, it became abundantly clear that the Hungarians, while trying to exert considerable influence in Vienna, had absolutely no foreign policy. Their only interest was making the Monarchy safe for the Magyars; in the meantime, they neglected to help to make Europe safe for the Monarchy.

The last Hungarian "victory" in foreign affairs was the resignation of Goluchowski in 1906. During that year, the Foreign Minister, Count Goluchowski, was under constant attack in the Hungarian press. When he asked the new Hungarian Prime Minister Wekerle to interfere, Wekerle flatly refused. So, in spite of the Emperor's wish that he continue, Goluchowski resigned.<sup>(23)</sup> He was succeeded by Alois Aehrenthal, a much worse choice from the Hungarian point of view.

Goluchowski had a wait-and-see attitude, an inactive foreign policy, essentially being happy with the status quo. He managed to keep a detente with Russia, never

hoping for anything better. He tried to maintain good relations with Britain and France. At the time of the Moroccan crisis, he gave only lukewarm support to Germany.

Aehrenthal wanted to revitalize the Monarchy's foreign policy. His great dream was the revival of the Three Emperors' League. As a close associate of the heir apparent, he was suspicious of the Hungarians and also much less sensitive than his predecessors to the bitching of the Hungarian Parliament and press.

Aehrenthal was sure that Austro-Hungary's destiny lay in South East Europe; however, this conviction made any co-operation with Russia an impossibility. The only serious attempt to come to an understanding at the famous Buchlau meeting between Aehrenthal and the Russian foreign minister Izvolsky, almost ended in a war.

Exactly what happened at Buchlau will probably forever remain a major diplomatic mystery. The two men were together for six hours, and neither kept a record of what was said. The crisis came on October 6, 1908, when the Emperor Franz Joseph announced, out of the blue, the formal annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This sudden act was a direct breach of the treaty of Berlin.

Aehrenthal took the line that Izvolsky, at Buchlau just three weeks earlier, had agreed to the Annexation in exchange for assurances of Austrian support in the

matter of the Straits. Izvolsky denied that there had been any agreement; it was one thing to agree to support Austria's claim to Bosnia in principle, but he had no idea that Aehrenthal was contemplating immediate action; such action he considered a deliberate breach of faith and held Aehrenthal to be a liar and a rogue. It would seem that Izvolsky was caught napping. (24)

For a moment, the situation did look dangerous. Serbia and Russia refused to accept the fait accompli. As it turned out, however, Germany was willing to support the Monarchy unconditionally, while Russia and Britain were more cautious in their support of Serbia. The crisis was solved when, under the pressure of the great powers, Serbia, in a note dated March 31, 1909 and addressed to Vienna, accepted the annexation of Bosnia by the Monarchy.

This diplomatic "victory" of Aehrenthal completed the isolation of the Monarchy, in the company of Germany.

In the twenty years preceding 1914, Germany rapidly increased its military and economic strength while, diplomatically, it became more and more isolated. Austria-Hungary shared only the isolation; it became not stronger but weaker.

The Hungarians were strongly opposed to the annexation; however, they were impotent. If Andrassy, as foreign minister, could not stop the occupation in

1878, Hungary was even less in a position to block the annexation in 1908. What bothered the Hungarians particularly was that the annexation might increase the pressure for a constitutional change from Dualism to Trialism with Croatia the third component. Unfortunately, their objection to increasing the Slav population of the Monarchy was quite valid. As it turned out, Bosnia was a major trouble spot in the Monarchy.

The change in status from occupation to annexation changed nothing. The province continued to be governed by the Common Finance Minister and there was no change in the population's attitude either. The Mohammedans were consistently loyal to the Monarchy. The Croats were divided: some wanted unification with Croatia within the Empire, others wanted the unification of all South Slavs - outside the Empire. The large majority of Serbs, of course, wanted unification with their brothers in the Kingdom of Serbia.

The loyalty of the Mohammedans was the result of the conservative policy of Vienna. Under Turkish rule, the Mohammedans were landlords and Christians were serfs. While at first the Mohammedans awaited with apprehension the arrival of the new officials from Vienna, it soon became quite clear that they would do nothing to change the social set-up of these provinces. Also, religious freedom and tolerance was strictly observed. In the

only elections ever held under Austro-Hungarian rule, in 1910, Vienna managed to have a coalition of Mohammedans and Croats to oppose and isolate the Serbs. (25)

The two Balkan Wars in 1912-1913 marked the final expulsion of Turkey from Europe and greatly increased the power and prestige of Serbia - a most unwelcome development for the Monarchy. At first, Austria-Hungary did not interfere in the war and was content with trying to establish independent Albania as a counterweight to Serbia and Montenegro. When, in the fall of 1913, Serbia refused to evacuate Albania, the Monarchy raised a very strong protest - for the last time successfully. Serbia retreated.

As the Monarchy's diplomatic position went from bad to worse, the voice of the war party in Vienna, under the leadership of Conrad von Hotzendorf, the Chief of Staff, became stronger and stronger. As a solution for both the domestic and international ills, the war party was pushing for a preventive war, for the destruction of Serbia. By the spring of 1914, the situation was truly alarming. It was at this point that Count Tisza made the last serious attempt to influence events from the Hungarian side.

Tisza, a rabid nationalist and a staunch defender of the status quo, was also more farsighted than most of his contemporaries. His party came to power again

in Hungary in 1910 and in the summer of 1913, he himself became Prime Minister. He realized what a dangerous position the Monarchy was in, a fact which also seriously threatened the Magyar hegemony in Hungary. Clearly, the Magyars could not continue to ignore the issues of foreign affairs. In march, 1914, Tisza presented his memorandum to Berchtold, who became Foreign Minister after Aehrenthaa's death in 1911.

Tisza realized that, after the two Balkan Wars, the Monarchy's situation had become almost intolerable; however, he argued that not war but a diplomatic realignment of the Balkan states should be the solution. The key was to first get Bulgaria firmly on the side of the Central powers. The Monarchy should enter into an alliance with Bulgaria against Serbia. The Macedonian question made Serbia quite vulnerable. If Bulgaria could be reconciled with Greece and Roumania, it would be possible to isolate Serbia diplomatically. (26)

The plan could, of course, only work with active German assistance, since Germany did have the economic and political power to influence these smaller Balkan states. Tisza admitted that Roumania had become completely unreliable as an ally and strong German help was needed there to regain any influence; what he did not mention was that this shifting of Roumania to the opposite

camp was mainly the result of the treatment of Roumanians in Transylvania. In the spring of 1914, Vienna was quite nervous about an impending unification of Montenegro with Serbia. Tisza was not particularly concerned; if the long-range plan of isolating Serbia would work, the unification of the two small Balkan states had no importance.

Foreign Minister Berchtold was, in general, closer to Conrad's War Party, but, under pressure from Tisza, he hesitated for the moment. On June 26, 1914, he forwarded the Tisza memorandum, with minor modifications, to the German Foreign Office. Two days later, a Serbian nationalist, part of a plot, assassinated Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo.



## IX

Franz Ferdinand had more enemies than friends in the Habsburg lands. At first, nobody thought that his tragic death would unleash a World War. When Tisza visited Vienna for the funeral, he advised caution in the diplomatic steps to be taken at Belgrade to find and punish the conspirators. (27)

However, within days of the assassination, the War Party in the military establishment and in the foreign ministry went to work. The object was the destruction of Serbia; the only diplomatic step to be undertaken was to obtain German support which should have been a guarantee that the War could be localized; thus, the famous Hoyos mission to Berlin and the blank cheque given by the Kaiser to the Austrians in full support of whatever action they might take. The issue of war first came up in the Council of Ministers for Common Affairs on July 7th. (28) Tisza strongly opposed it; he wanted a harsh but not unacceptable note delivered in Belgrade. For the War Party, naturally, this was not enough. They were not interested in a diplomatic victory; they wanted a military victory to prove the strength of the Monarchy.

The day after the meeting of the Council of Ministers, Berchtold went to work on Tisza. In a private

letter of July 8th, he emphasized that "in Berlin an action of the Monarchy against Serbia is fully expected and that Germany would not understand why we should neglect this opportunity of dealing a blow".<sup>(29)</sup> The same point was stressed in their two private conversations. Berchtold pointed out that unless the Monarchy acted, she might be abandoned by Germany as an ally being more of a liability than an asset. A number of historians claim that Berchtold intentionally overemphasized or even misrepresented the German position; some even say that he simply lied to Tisza. Whatever the case might be, the argument was effective. Tisza knew that if Germany abandoned the Monarchy, its dismemberment would be unavoidable. The German-speaking areas would most likely be incorporated into the German Reich; the Roumanians and South Slavs would join their co-nationals outside the Monarchy and "independent" Hungary would become a small third-rate country dominated by its powerful German neighbour. Therefore, Tisza approved of the war plans, insisting on one condition only, namely, that no additional territory with a Slav population would be added to the body of the Monarchy.<sup>(30)</sup> Berchtold and Conrad agreed. This, of course, clearly showed the hopeless position of the Habsburg Monarchy. The reason for war was the destruction of Serbia; however, if no territory could be annexed, how did they hope

to curb South Slav agitation? It is fair to assume that Conrad and Berchtold expected that, after the victory, their "no annexation" promise could be conveniently forgotten. However, adding more Slavs to the body of the Monarchy made no sense at all if its constitution was not changed to a federalist system: something to which Hungarians vehemently objected. Certainly, Vienna did not expect a world war; their plan was to localize the war. It seems that only Tisza and, belatedly, the German Emperor Wilhelm himself, realized that this plan could not work.

Tisza's approval of a war which, no matter what the outcome, could only be unfavourable to the Hungarians showed the essential impotence of the Hungarians in foreign affairs. Yet Seton-Watson, writing in 1915, accused the Magyars and particularly Tisza and their policy of national oppression, of being the "mainsprings of the present war".<sup>(31)</sup> He further claimed that it was Budapest and Berlin - "natural allies", according to him - who blackmailed Vienna and forced her to act in the manner she did in 1914.<sup>(32)</sup> It would seem that Seton-Watson equates domestic oppression with an aggressive foreign policy. This was certainly not true in the Hungarian case. The oppressive policy of Magyarization did not need war; on the contrary, its only hope for

success would have been to maintain the "status quo" for at least a hundred years. Berlin and Budapest's blackmail of Vienna was exactly the opposite. The Habsburg court in 1914 was not willing to give up its great power status, despite the fragility of the Empire. It was Vienna who presented Berlin with a fait accompli and as far as the Hungarians were concerned, Vienna knew that Hungary was not at all in a position to break away from Vienna.

While the years 1867 to 1914 were, on the one hand, "good years" for Hungary, they were also years of constant decline. In 1867, the Monarchy, in spite of the defeat of Konigratz, was still a big power in which the Hungarians were accepted as equal partners. In 1914, she was a glorified satellite of Germany and while in 1867 the Hungarians could get what they wanted, by 1914 Vienna had more freedom of action than ever before, simply by taking note of the domestic and economic difficulties of the Hungarian Kingdom.

The greatest weakness in Hungary was, of course, created by the disastrous results of Magyarization. Tendencies to unite with their brothers outside the Monarchy in order to form new states based on the identity of the South Slavs and Czechs and Slovaks, grew stronger and stronger. Vienna watched this development with a

certain anxiety; however, she scrupulously adhered to the 1867 agreement not to interfere in Hungarian domestic affairs, but instead used the Hungarians' difficulties to undermine their influence in common affairs of the Monarchy, particularly in foreign affairs. Surely, in the case of Czarist Russia, Vienna's foreign policy and the Hungarians' sentiments were in harmony, but when Vienna's policy alienated the Italians, which was contrary to Hungarian sentiments, Budapest was impotent.

The war was a disaster for the Monarchy from day one. It is an erroneous conclusion by some historians that there was some vitality left in the body of the Monarchy since it could withstand four years of bloody warfare. It was German military might, the great victories of the German army, which enabled the Monarchy to "hang on". As the war went on and the German army had to bail out their comrades-in-arms more than once, which they easily managed, the Monarchy's complete dependence on Germany became more and more clear. It was evident that a complete German victory might not hold a much better future for the Monarchy than would a defeat. Thus, there were the clumsy attempts in 1917 to arrange a compromise peace.

The Centrifugal forces of nationalism were eating away the strength of the Monarchy for almost a hundred years. Neither the often-practiced policy of Vienna -

ignoring the facts - nor the policy of Budapest - opposing nationalism with its own extreme chauvinism, a forced Magyarization - could solve the problem. Certainly, there were also strong centripetal forces which kept the Monarchy together. Oscar Jaszi lists these as follows: the dynasty, the aristocracy, the Roman Catholic Church, the bureaucracy and, finally, both capitalism and socialism. (33) The Magyar gentry had nothing to do with any of these. The Magyars, in spite of being one of the ruling nations in the Monarchy, were essentially a centrifugal force. They considered the dualistic arrangements of 1867 only temporary. In the meantime, the process of Magyarization should have strengthened Hungary to the point where it could stand on its own when the inevitable breakdown of the Habsburg Monarchy came. The purpose of Magyarization was, as its journalistic exponent, Viktor Rakosi, explained, to create 30 million Hungarians who could stand on their own in the sea of Germans and Slavs. This, of course, was never more than a dream.

X

The constitutional compromise of 1867 was viewed by the Austrians, and also by all the studies written in English, as being extremely favourable to the Hungarians.<sup>(34)</sup> Hungarian historians, on the contrary, both right and left, were always very critical of 1867 and essentially supported the "independentist" position. The right emphasized the bargain with the nation's sovereignty while the left accused the men of 1867 of abandoning the revolutionary Liberal democratic ideals of 1848. In Eastern Europe today - and nowhere stronger than in Hungary - after the days of Hitler and Stalin, there is a marked nostalgia for the good old days of the Habsburg Monarchy. This nostalgia must contribute to the more balanced and sophisticated approach emerging in today's Hungarian historiography. It is not the compromise but the missed opportunities for which the Hungarian ruling class is criticized. The year 1867 opened the road to the widening of capitalist developments and could have been the starting point of a bourgeois democratic society. Instead, the semi-feudal system became institutionalized.<sup>(35)</sup>

The men of 1867 - Deak, Andrassy, Eötvös - still belonged to the revolutionary generation of 1848. Deak and Eötvös were ministers in the government of 1848 and Andrassy served the revolution to the very end as its

Ambassador to Paris. They envisaged the creation of a liberal Hungary and hoped to move the country toward democratic progress. It was with the next generation which came to power in 1875 with Koloman Tisza (father of the better-known Stephen Tisza, Prime Minister at the start of World War I) that the essentially reactionary character of the Hungarian ruling classes became quite apparent. Serfdom was abolished in 1848 but the big latifundium was untouched. The class of "free" landless peasants, agrarproletariats, were created. In the next fifty years, the poor nobility "gentry" rapidly lost its land while in some parts of the country an independent smallholders peasant class, who might be called Kulaks, was growing. However, the backbone of Hungarian agriculture remained the large estates of the aristocrats. By the 1890's, the agrarian socialist movements started to gain strength. It was in 1895 that a gentleman in the Hungarian Upper Chamber suggested that the government should import Chinese coolies against the striking harvest workers.

Industrial development, strongly helped by the boom in railroad building, was dominated by Germans and emancipated Jews. The "landless" gentry occupied all the positions from top to bottom in all the various levels of government. This gentry dominated the public life of the country. They knew only two issues: the



Constitutional problem and the Magyarization of the nationalities. They showed a complete ignorance and disinterest in foreign affairs. Thus, those who were the loudest nationalists opposed both Vienna and the minorities, contributing greatly to the gradual diminishing of Hungarian influence in the international affairs of the Monarchy. In a strange way, this was a voluntary abandonment of national sovereignty and interest.

Magyarization was seen as the only way to strengthen Hungary's position in the Monarchy and also to hide the country's social ills; it was a complete failure. It contributed strongly to the creation of the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav idea and their respective states. Undoubtedly, these were also artificial creations to a certain extent, riddled with their own nationality problems.

One of the Hungarians' most irrational acts was to refuse any concessions from the territories of St. Stephen's Kingdom. When, in early 1915, Vienna considered buying off Italian neutrality by territorial concessions from regions which were not part of the Hungarian Kingdom, the Hungarians were totally against it. Tisza threatened to resign. The implication was clear: if Italy could be bought off by territorial concessions, the next move would be the partition of

Transylvania to placate the Roumanians at Hungary's expense. The Hungarians fared much worse at the end. The establishment of borders on a clear-cut national basis is an impossibility in Eastern Europe. At Trianon, however, it was the Hungarians who were forced to sign a peace treaty leaving millions of Hungarians on foreign soil and establishing a small Hungary with over 90% of the population being Hungarian, and having only a small German and Slovak minority.

How far must the historian go back to the origins of nationalism? Did the conspiracy of certain Hungarian aristocrats against the Habsburgs in 1680 have elements of nationalism? Was nationalism an issue in the war for independence between 1703-1711, fought by the Transylvanian Prince Rakoczi against the Habsburgs and supported largely by the Hungarian nobility? These questions are open to dispute. By the time of the French Revolution, a literal renaissance was well underway in Hungary and by 1825, with the foundation of the Hungarian Academy, nationalism reached its grown-up stage.

Magyar nationalism in the first half of the nineteenth century was part of a broad modernization movement that came from the West. It helped the spread of civilization and, despite the country's feudal remnants, it was socially progressive and liberal in outlook. Its

role changed, however, when it came into a tragic clash with the nationalist movements of the other people in the region.

The development of the other nationalities was at least one generation behind and since nationalism came together with the democratic and liberal ideals of the French Revolution, it facilitated the completely voluntary Magyarization of the best-educated elements of the nationalities. Thus, the mother of the greatest Hungarian hero, Kossuth, was a Slovak who understood hardly any Hungarian. The father of the great national and revolutionary poet, Petöfi, was a Serb named Petrovic. By the 1840's, as the national consciousness of the other people grew, voluntary Magyarization - with the exception of the Jews - came to an end. In 1848-49, the nationalities - particularly the Croats and the Roumanians - fought on the side of Vienna against Hungarian independence. In 1867, Vienna changed sides: she chose the Hungarians over the national minorities.

It is estimated that, around 1800, within the territories of the Hungarian Kingdom (including Croatia), 33% of the population was Hungarian; according to Hungarian statistics, this number was 47% in 1880 and grew to 54% by 1910.<sup>(36)</sup> However, while this growth of Hungarian population, at least in the first period, was

partly a result of the voluntary Magyarization, the second period, during the times of forced Magyarization was probably nothing more than wishful thinking on the part of the Hungarian authorities.

Was there an alternative method available to the forced Magyarization in order to keep the territories of the Hungarian Kingdom together? Oscar Jaszi tried to argue strongly that replacement of the German-Magyar hegemony (whether, in fact, such a thing ever existed is doubtful) by a genuine confederation, might have given a different turn to history. Furthermore, he claimed that this confederation could have acted as a buffer zone between the Pan-German and Pan-Slav imperialistic tendencies. (37) The Hungarians were certainly extreme nationalists; however, the story was different in the other side of the Habsburg Empire and yet the end result was the same. The Habsburgs were genuinely cosmopolitan; they were anti-nationalistic; there was no centrally-organized, forced Germanization. Czechs played a very important part in the Habsburg bureaucracy on all levels. The Polish nobility not only had its great University in Cracow, and a free hand to oppress its peasants (Poles and non-Poles) but Polish aristocrats always played a leading role in the highest offices of Vienna. While, in 1910, in the Hungarian parliament there were 8 deputies

representing the nationalities among 405 members (the maximum they ever managed to elect was 27 in 1906), in the 516-seat Vienna assembly there were 185 Germans, 250 non-Germans and 81 Socialists not yet divided by nationalities.<sup>(38)</sup> All of this made no difference. The nationalities were ready to establish their nation states.

Kossuth's plan of a Danube confederation, which he worked out in exile and published in 1862, is often presented as the alternate solution to Magyarization which would still keep Hungary together. Again, how realistic was this? Both Kossuth and the men of 1867 realized that Hungary could not oppose both the Habsburgs and the nationalities. Therefore, Deak and Andrassy hoped to ensure Hungarian hegemony by making peace with Vienna. Kossuth opposed their concessions to national independence and hoped to enlist the nationalities - who opposed him in 1848 - in a common front against Vienna, still under a more subtle form of Hungarian hegemony. The nationalities, however, as their consciousness grew, were opposed to both Vienna and Budapest. Their ultimate goal was to unite with their brothers outside the Habsburg empire.

The pronouncements of the Roumanian deputies and the Croat delegation in the Hungarian Parliament are often used as arguments that a change to a federalist

system might have worked. For decades, the handful of Roumanian deputies were fighting for the secession of Transylvania from Hungary in order to become an equal part of the Empire, in some sort of federalist system. The Croats wanted essentially the same thing: complete independence from Budapest but not from Vienna. The representatives of the national minorities, of course, were asking for the maximum possible under the circumstances. It is almost certain that these demands were far short of their final goal. Nationalism reached its highest point in Europe in the decades before 1914; rational solutions were not the order of the day.

Among the many federalist plans, the one presented in 1906 by Ahrel L. Popovici, a Roumanian from Transylvania, received the most attention, having gotten a favourable reception from the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. (39) Popovici wanted to divide the Monarchy into fifteen federalist states. It is interesting to note that his Hungary was larger than the one established by the Treaty of Trianon and he also wanted to divide Transylvania to create a separate "Szekely" state for the Hungarian-speaking counties. Of course, the Hungarians were "dead against" the plan but, in all fairness, it must be said that there was very little interest shown by the other nationalities, either.

Nationalism, with its strong emotional impact, does act as an irrational force. To the dismay of classical Marxists, national consciousness proved to be stronger than class consciousness. This was clear even before the miserable failure of the Second Internationale. The Austrian socialist leader, Otto Bauer, urged Vienna in 1906 to use military force to put the Hungarians in their place. The weak Hungarian Social Democratic Party allied itself with the "Independentists". In 1909, the Czech Socialists broke away from Vienna and formed their own party.

Nothing shows the irrationality of nationalism more than the Hungarian minority in the new Czechoslovakia. In Czechoslovakia, the only democratic country of Eastern Europe, the standard of living, the political rights and the quality of life was on an incomparably higher level than in counterrevolutionary semi-fascist Horthy Hungary. Yet when the Southern part of Slovakia was returned to Hungary, after Munich, with the help of Hitler and Mussolini, the Hungarians of the area greeted this return with enormous enthusiasm. (40)

Nationalism was a deterministic force in the breaking up of the Habsburg Empire. Under its influence, the Hungarians acted quite irrationally, although as pointed out before, they had little choice. Their policies, sometimes intentionally, but more often unintentionally, contributed greatly to the final collapse.

Deak and Andrassy were men possessing exceptional political skills. They managed to secure a position for Hungary within the Empire which was far above her importance, her numerical strength or her economic power. Their successors were unable to consolidate these gains. Fighting constantly in a domestic two-front war, their policies, which consisted only of stop-gap measures, could do little to halt the gradual erosion of Hungarian influence. Deak, who died in 1876, was worried in the last years of his life, quite justifiably, about the policies and qualities of the men who were to succeed him. (41)

Hungarian policy of the eighteenth and nineteenth century which tried to re-establish a Hungary equivalent in power and prestige with the mediaeval Hungarian Kingdom which was vanquished in 1526 by the Turkish onslaught, was absolutely unrealistic from beginning to end.

The Hungarian gentry liked to compare itself with its British counterpart. The resemblance, if any, existed only in form, never in substance. The Hungarian ruling classes had none of the realism, political wisdom and understanding of history which typified the British upper class. The breakdown of the Monarchy was inevitable but the end was worse for the Hungarians than it really ought to have been. The responsibility lay with the short-sightedness of the Hungarian leaders who emerged after the "grand" generation of 1848 passed away.



In this respect, Jaszi's devastating criticism of the repressive policy of Magyarization, with the unrealistic dream of creating a unified Hungarian national state on the territories of the "historical" Kingdom, is quite justified. Jaszi wrote:

"The nation ran toward disaster and the ghost of the nationality problem, which already in 1848 defeated Hungary and led toward Vilagos, now in the World War raised its head again and drove the country toward Trianon." (42)

And it was the same "ghost of the nationality problem" which allied the reduced Hungary with Nazi Germany in the hope of regaining the lost territories.

## XI

It is an ongoing debate whether the Hungarians were one of the oppressed within the Empire or whether, through the intricate setup of the Dual Monarchy, they exercised a very considerable influence as one of the oppressors. In reality, they were both. However, as the bureaucratic oppression grew in Hungary, replacing any form of persuasion in the process of Magyarization, Hungary's influence in Vienna diminished and she certainly faced not a cultural but an economic oppression from the more advanced parts of the Empire. In the end, she had to fight a war which she could only lose. The Czechs, granted, never had much love for the war, but the Poles and Croats, as well as the Hungarians, were fighting for the Monarchy, yet they managed to appear at the end on the side of the victors, the only losers being the Germans and the Hungarians.

Thus, the policy of Magyarization ended not in a failure but in a disaster. The main conclusion must be that Magyarization was more than a failure to create new Magyars; it helped to undermine the foreign relations of the Monarchy in general, thus making it more and more dependent on Germany and it completely eliminated any freedom of action on the part of the Hungarians in foreign affairs. Without realizing it, they became the satellite

of Berlin via Vienna. History moves through deterministic forces, rational and irrational. The Hungarians refused to realize this and they paid for it dearly.

## NOTES

1. Wolff, Robert Lee: The Balkan in our time (New York, Norton, 1967) Page 151.
2. Kovacs, Endre: Szembe a történelemmel (Budapest, 1977) Page 176.
3. Kiraly, K. Béla: Ferenc Deak (Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1975) Page 172.
4. May, J. Arthur: The Habsburg Monarchy 1867-1914 (New York, Norton, 1951) Page 34.  
  
Macartney, C.A.: The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918 (New York, 1969) Page 547-48.
5. May, J. Arthur: The Habsburg Monarchy 1867-1914 (New York, Norton, 1951) Page 35.
6. Macartney, C.A.: The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918 (New York, 1969) Page 256.  
  
May, J. Arthur: The Habsburg Monarchy 1867-1914 (New York, 1951) Page 61.  
  
A.J.P. Taylor: The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918 (London Hamilton Press, 1951) Page 160.
7. Kovacs, Endre: Szembe a történelemmel (Budapest, 1977) Page 200-202.
8. It is interesting to note that Oscar Jaszi, an outspoken opponent of Magyarization, while arguing strongly that the strict application of the law would have made all the difference in the world, had to admit in the same paragraph that "sooner or later it would have become unavoidable to give some kind of territorial autonomy to the nationalities." (Oscar Jaszi: The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (Chicago, 1929) Page 316).
9. Kovacs, Endre: Szembe a történelemmel (Budapest, 1977) Page 490.
10. Szaraz, Gyorgy: Egy eloitélet nyomában (Budapest 1926) Page 173.
11. Macartney, C.A.: The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918 (New York, 1969) Page 579.  
  
A.J.P. Taylor: The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918 (London 1951) Page 157.

12. Among the seven Foreign Ministers between 1867 and 1914, besides the Magyar Andrassy, three were Germans (Benst, Haymerle and Aehrenthal); Kalnoky, in spite of his Hungarian name, was a Czech; Goluchowsky was Polish, and Berchtold was an aristocrat of Hungarian, German and Czech descent. Once, when asked to what nationality he belonged, he answered: "I belong to the Emperor".
13. Bridge: From Sadova to Sarajevo (London, 1972).
14. The occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina did involve some minor skirmishes of no particular importance, except that they again showed the military weakness of Austro-Hungary, which supposedly was a great power.
15. Bridge: From Sadova to Sarajevo (London, 1972) Page 208, Page 287-88.
16. Robertson, Priscilla: Revolutions of 1848 (Princeton University Press, 1952) Page 262.
17. May, J. Arthur: The Habsburg Monarchy (Norton, 1951) Page 356.  
Tapie: The Rise and Fall of the Habsburg Monarchy, Page 364.
18. Tapie: The Rise and Fall of the Habsburg Monarchy, Page 364.
19. May, J. Arthur: The Habsburg Monarchy (Norton, 1951) Page 359.
20. The Hungarians were always proud of their "Constitutionalism". They were quick to point out that the Hungarian "Golden Bull" of 1222, the charter institutionalizing the nobles' rights even against their King, was only eight years younger than the English Magna Carta.
21. Crankshaw, Edward: The Fall of the House of Habsburg (New York, 1963) Page 351-52.
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Macartney, C.A.: The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918 (New York) Page 753.
23. Bridge: From Sadova to Sarajevo (London, 1928) Page 287-88.
24. Bridge: From Sadova to Sarajevo (London, 1928) Page 305.  
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25. Macartney, C.A.: The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918 (New York) Page 792.
26. Fay, Sidney B.: The Origins of the World War (New York, 1928) 2nd Volume. Page 190-192.
27. Fay, Sidney B.: The Origins of the World War (New York, 1928) 2nd volume. Page 189.
28. Geiss, Immanuel: July 1914: The Outbreak of the First World War (New York, Norton, 1967). Page 80-86.
29. Geiss, Immanuel: July 1914: The Outbreak of the First World War (New York, Norton, 1967) Page 102.
30. Fay, Sidney B.: The Origins of the World War (New York, Norton, 1928) 2nd Volume. Page 240.
31. Seton Watson: Germans, Slavs and Magyars (New York, 1968) (Originally published 1916) Page 46.
32. Seton Watson: Germans, Slavs and Magyars (New York, 1968) Page 183.
33. Jaszi, Iszkar: The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (Chicago, 1929) From page 133 onwards.
34. The notable exception is Edward Crankshaw who leans toward the Hungarian point of view.
35. As a Marxist Hungarian historian remarked, the problem was not the Constitutional Compromise as such, but its class content.  
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36. Kann, Robert: The Multinational Empire (New York, Columbia University Press, 1950) 2nd Volume, Page 303.  
Jaszi, Oszkar: The dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (Chicago, 1929) Page 274.
37. Jaszi, Oszkar: The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (Chicago, 1929) Page 382.
38. Jaszi, Oszkar: The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (Chicago, 1929) Page 345
39. Tapie: The Rise and Fall of the Habsburg Monarchy (New York, 1971) Page 346-47.

40. Kovacs, Endre: Szembe a történelemmel (Budapest, 1977)  
Page 552-53.
41. Kiraly, Bela: Ferenc Deak (Boston, 1975) - Page 192.
42. Jaszi, Oszcar: The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy  
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