

**ET IN HUNGARIA EGO:
TRIANON, REVISIONISM AND THE JOURNAL
MAGYAR SZEMLE (1927–1944)**

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The journal *Magyar Szemle* (1927–1944), founded by Prime Minister István Bethlen and edited by the historian Gyula Szekfű, was the primary forum for the discussion of the revision of the Treaty of Trianon and the situation of the Hungarian minorities in the neighboring states. Rejecting all proposals for border revision on an ethnic basis, the journal espoused integral revisionism, or the restoration of the historical Kingdom of Hungary. The periodical's own position on revision is best illustrated by the "New Hungaria" essays of the legal scholar László Ottlik, published between 1928 and 1940, which hoped to win back the former national minorities through promises of wide-ranging autonomy within a re-established Greater Hungary.

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I. Introduction

Magyar Szemle (*Hungarian Review*, 1927–1944) was the conservative journal *par excellence* and one of the outstanding periodicals of interwar Hungary. Inspired by Prime Minister István Bethlen (1874–1946)¹ and for many years edited by the prominent historian Gyula Szekfű (1883–1955), the journal represented the most significant gathering of conservative intellectuals to be found during the period of Admiral Miklós Horthy's regency (1920–1944). In the wide variety of the topics it covered as well as the quality of its writing, *Magyar Szemle* far surpassed other conservative journals of the day. In addition to essays on history, literature, art, culture, education, politics, economics and social issues, the journal focused on the pressing questions of Hungarian foreign policy. In reality, this centered on two distinct yet interconnected issues: the revision of the Treaty of Trianon and the fate of the more than three million ethnic Hungarians assigned to live outside Hungary as a result of that treaty. As the journal's first minority expert declared in 1929, "Since Trianon, Hungarian national policy has centered on two points: revi-

sion and the question of the Magyar national minorities suffering under foreign domination."² Although the periodical unequivocally embraced the goal of integral revisionism, it spoke to the Hungarian public in a voice far more refined than that of most irredentist movements.

The following pages will attempt to provide an analysis of the question of revision in *Magyar Szemle*. After an overview of the historical background, including an examination of the consequences of the Paris Peace Conference for Hungary, the interrelated phenomena of irredentism and revisionism and the impact of the Rothermere Campaign of 1927 (Chapter II), the paper will sketch briefly the establishment of and background to the journal *Magyar Szemle* (Chapter III). Following this, the influential and utopian plan published in *Magyar Szemle*, the so-called "New Hungaria" Concept, will be examined in some detail (Chapter IV). Finally, the journal's coverage of the Hungarian minorities as well its other reflections on the future of the Carpathian Basin will be considered briefly before ending with a brief conclusion.

II. The Historical Context: Interwar Hungary

*The Treaty of Trianon*³

It is no exaggeration to state that the catastrophe that befell Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference was the most decisive moment in modern Hungarian history, the repercussions of which continue to be felt even today. Although Hungary might have expected to face an unfavorable settlement for having finished the war as a defeated enemy combatant, nothing could have prepared the country for the severity of the peace terms which the Entente Powers dictated. The Treaty of Trianon, signed on June 4, 1920 in the Grand Trianon Palace at Versailles, had been drafted without consulting representatives of Hungary. Since the fall of 1918 a team of Hungarian experts had been hard at work preparing maps, statistics and other supporting materials in anticipation of an opportunity to present the country's case. The Hungarian delegation, which included the prominent statesmen Counts Albert Apponyi (1846–1933), Pál Teleki (1879–1941) and István Bethlen, was invited to attend the conference only in December 1919.⁴ The delegation arrived in Paris on January 7, 1920, fully one year after the conference had been convened. The frosty welcome the Hungarian representatives received upon arrival presaged the harsh peace terms that the Entente Powers would present as a *fait accompli* one week later.⁵

The treaty itself, a lengthy, extremely thorough document containing 364 total articles divided over 14 parts, left virtually nothing to chance and regulated almost every aspect of Hungary's place in the new world order.⁶ From the Hungarian

point of view, the most pernicious provisions of the treaty were those contained in Part II (“The Frontiers of Hungary,” articles 27–35). The thousand-year-old Kingdom of Hungary was required to cede approximately 70% of her territory and two-thirds of her population to six different states. Romania emerged as the biggest beneficiary of the partition of Hungary, receiving not only all of Transylvania, but also the eastern reaches of the Great Hungarian Plain (Alföld), the Partium⁷ and a share of the Banate (Bánság). To Czechoslovakia the peacemakers awarded virtually all of former Upper Hungary (Felvidék, present-day Slovakia) and Subcarpathian Ukraine (Kárpátalja). Yugoslavia gained, in addition to the union with Croatia, a large portion of the fertile Bácska region, the balance of the Banate as well as the small wedge of territory lying between the Mura and Dráva Rivers (Muraköz). Austria was granted the so-called Burgenland. Poland received small portions of former Árva County, while Italy took possession of Hungary’s lone outlet to the sea, the port city of Fiume (Rijeka). Underscoring the severity of the peace settlement, more Hungarian territory was awarded to Romania than was left to Trianon Hungary, while even her former partner in the now defunct Dual Monarchy, Austria, benefited from Hungary’s dismemberment. Hungary’s net losses far exceeded those of Germany, widely considered to be the primary culprit behind the outbreak of the war.

Table 1
Hungarian Losses at Trianon⁸

	Area (km ²)	Population (total)	Ethnic Magyars (total)	Ethnic Magyars (%)
Historical Hungary:				
excluding Croatia-Slavonia	282,870	18,264,533	9,944,627	54.4
including Croatia-Slavonia	325,411	20,886,487	10,050,575	48.1
Lost to:				
Austria	4,020	291,618	26,153	9.0
Czechoslovakia	61,633	3,517,568	1,066,685	30.3
Poland	589	23,662	230	0.01
Romania	103,093	5,257,467	1,661,805	31.6
Yugoslavia:				
without Croatia	20,551	1,509,295	452,265	30.0
with Croatia	63,092	4,131,249	558,213	13.5
Italy	21	49,806	6,493	13.0
Total losses:				
excluding Croatia-Slavonia	189,907	10,649,416	3,213,631	30.2
including Croatia-Slavonia	232,448	13,271,370	3,319,571	25.0
Trianon Hungary	92,963	7,615,117	6,730,996	88.4

The territorial provisions of the treaty resulted in a flagrant violation of the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination, which the peace makers supposedly championed. For although the new Hungary had clearly become an ethnic Magyar nation-state, included among the population left outside the partitioned country were roughly 3.3 million ethnic Magyars. Thus, instead of furthering the cause of national self-determination, the Great Powers created an *irredenta* surpassed proportionally in Europe only by the Albanians.⁹ The lone advantage of the peace treaty was that it had reestablished Hungary's independence from Austria; for the majority of Hungarians, however, independence had come at an unacceptably high cost. The knowledge that the Great Powers had refused to grant the Successor States the most excessive of their demands, including the important cities of Pécs, Salgótarján, and Sátoraljaújhely as well as a belt of territory in Western Transdanubia to link Czechoslovakia with Yugoslavia (the so-called "Slav Corridor"), provided little comfort for Hungary.¹⁰

Table 2
Population of Trianon Hungary¹¹

Ethnicity	1920		1930	
	Number	%	Number	%
Magyar	7,156,727	89.5	8,001,112	92.1
German	551,624	6.9	478,630	5.5
Slovak	141,918	1.8	104,819	1.2
Romanian	23,695	0.3	16,221	0.2
Croatian	36,864	0.5	27,683	0.3
Serbian	17,132	0.2	7,031	0.1
Bunyevac, Šokci	23,228	0.3	20,564	0.2
Other	39,014	0.5	32,259	0.4
Totals:	7,990,202	100.0	8,688,319	100.0

The country's difficult position was further compounded by the nearly complete diplomatic isolation in which she found herself after Trianon. Through a series of bilateral treaties signed in 1920–1921 and with French backing, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes quickly formed a strategic alliance, the Little Entente, the primary goals of which were to prevent a Habsburg restoration and thwart Hungarian aspirations in the region. Furthermore, while Hungary was surrounded by this ring of openly hostile neighbors, Part V of the Treaty of Trianon placed severe restrictions on the country's military forces. It provided for an army of only 35,000 men, including officers (article 104). Moreover, the country was permitted to operate only one armaments plant producing a strictly limited quantity of weapons and munitions (article 115) and prohibited from manufacturing or importing armored vehicles or tanks (arti-

cle 119). Nor could Hungary maintain an air force or even own military aircraft (articles 128–132). These clauses and the fact that the majority of Hungary's largest towns lay relatively close to the new borders led many to opine that Trianon had rendered the country virtually indefensible.

The new frontiers also disrupted the country's economic life by depriving it of vital railways, important markets and precious natural resources. Exacerbating the situation were onerous demands for reparations payments (Part VIII, articles 161–179). Hungary was obligated to pay reparations for a period of thirty years, beginning in 1921, although the amount was not specified by the treaty but rather was to be determined by a "reparations committee" headquartered in Paris. Fleeing foreign occupation, hundreds of thousands of refugees¹² streamed into the reduced country, further straining its meager resources. It is small wonder that to many observers, Trianon Hungary seemed to be an unviable state, incapable of life (*életképtelen*).

The disintegration of historical Hungary was not simply the result of the unfortunate vagaries of history. In fact, a constellation of both internal and external factors came into play: the radicalization of the demands of the nationalities, Hungary's involvement in the war and her subsequent loss of prestige, and the change in the needs and interests of the victorious Great Powers.¹³ The harsh terms of the peace were motivated first and foremost by considerations of *Realpolitik*; anti-Hungarian sentiment played a secondary, albeit significant, role. As one noted participant, Harold Nicolson, later recalled:

My feelings towards Hungary were less detached. I confess that I regarded, and still regard, that Turanian tribe with great distaste. Like their cousins the Turks, they had destroyed much and created nothing. Buda Pest was a false city devoid of any autochthonous reality. For centuries the Magyars had oppressed their subject nationalities. The hour of liberation and of retribution was at hand.¹⁴

Probably a more significant factor was the piecemeal method by which the peacemakers handled the demands of the Successor States vis-à-vis Hungary. Unlike in the case of the neighboring states, whose claims were studied by separate committees, no single committee dealing exclusively with Hungarian affairs was ever established. Moreover, the Treaty of Trianon was drafted and debated relatively late in the peace negotiations, at a time when the peacemakers were anxious to bring the entire process to a swift conclusion.¹⁵

Whatever the reasons for the severe peace terms, the losses had a psychological impact impossible to measure. Countless historical towns, buildings and monuments, deeply ingrained in Hungarian national consciousness, were now located outside the country and required a passport to visit. National heroes, such as János Hunyadi and Ferenc Rákóczi, were now entombed in foreign countries.¹⁶ The

family estates of such luminaries of Hungarian literature as János Arany, Imre Madách, Kálmán Mikszáth and Endre Ady were similarly located on the wrong side of the border.¹⁷ Many Hungarian citizens were cut off from family and friends, and in a few rare cases the border passed through towns, such as in Komárom and Sátoraljaújhely.¹⁸ For many, the specter of the nation's extinction (*nemzethalál*), which had haunted the Magyars since the time of "Herderian prophesy" predicting the disappearance of the Hungarian language, must have appeared to represent a greater menace than ever before.¹⁹

The cruel reality of Trianon gave rise to much soul-searching. People needed answers to explain why historical Hungary had disintegrated. In general, the search for an explanation led to an indictment of Western liberalism, and in that effort writers and scholars played a leading role. Among the countless "Trianon books" that appeared after the war, the most influential were Dezső Szabó's polemical novel *Az elsodort falu* (The Village Swept Away, 1919), Gyula Szekfű's historical study *Három nemzedék* (Three Generations, 1920) and Cécile Tormay's two-volume *Bujdosó könyv* (Fugitive's Book, 1921–22). All three works were written in response to the events that unfolded during the Republic of Councils (March 21 – August 1, 1919), led by the Hungarian Bolshevik Béla Kun (1886–1939); they illustrate in part the dominant "Christian National" ideology of the interwar period as well as the conservative turn Hungarian cultural life underwent after 1919.²⁰ Foreigners, especially Jews, were blamed for the country's demise. Szekfű's *Three Generations* in particular enjoyed a large readership throughout the period, and its author came to be widely regarded as the chief ideologist of the Horthy Era.

Hungarian Irredentism, Hungarian Revisionism

"No one could be in Hungary very long," recalled the American minister to Budapest in the 1930s, John F. Montgomery, "without knowing that *nem, nem, soha* meant no, no – never, and that it referred to the boundaries fixed by the Treaty of Trianon."²¹ Trianon inflicted a national trauma upon the Hungarians equal in magnitude to medieval Hungary's catastrophic defeat at the Battle of Mohács in 1526, which had resulted in the partition of the kingdom into three parts.²² Already exhausted by four years of warfare, a relatively bloodless democratic revolution, a communist coup d'état, foreign occupation and finally a rather violent counter-revolution, the country succumbed to shock upon learning of the severity of the peace terms. The suddenness with which the content of the peace treaty was revealed gave neither the Hungarian political leadership nor the public time to prepare for the blow. As one historian has remarked, "the shock of Trianon was so pervasive and so keenly felt that the syndrome it produced can only be compared

to a malignant national disease”.²³ The ensuing “Trianon syndrome” manifested itself in an irredentist cult, one which occasionally reached astonishing proportions.

In his informative study of interwar revisionism, Miklós Zeidler clarifies the important distinction between “revisionism” and “irredentism”, concepts that have been frequently used interchangeably. Revisionism can be defined as the attempt to modify the terms of a treaty through diplomacy and international law. By contrast, irredentism aspires to take back national territories under foreign rule; it seeks to achieve this goal either peacefully or by force. In Zeidler’s opinion, Hungary’s foreign policy between the two world wars was officially revisionist, though it often resorted to the threat of armed force and the slogans of irredentism.²⁴

Nem, nem, soha! was only one of the many popular irredentist slogans that abounded in interwar Hungary. Others included *Mindent vissza!* (Everything back!), *Így volt, így lesz!* (Thus it was, thus it shall be!), and the mouthful *Csonka-Magyarország nem ország, egész Magyarország mennyország!* (Mutilated Hungary is not a country, entire Hungary is heaven!). It became customary for Hungarian school children to recite the so-called “Hungarian Credo” (*Magyar Hiszekegy*) at the beginning and end of each class:

I believe in one God,
I believe in one Homeland,
I believe in one divine eternal truth,
I believe in Hungary’s resurrection.
Amen.²⁵

All across the country countless memorials were erected ranging from the moving and the pathetic through the tasteless to the truly bizarre. Hungary was frequently personified as a wounded maiden (Hungária). The country’s suffering took on religious imagery: the map of historical Hungary depicted crucified and wearing a crown of thorns became popular in this period, while irredentist artwork made frequent reference to Hungary’s “resurrection”.²⁶ The most ambitious of these irredentist monuments was undoubtedly the assemblage of statues arranged on the northern end of Szabadság tér (Liberty Square) in Budapest. Four larger-than-life allegorical sculptures representing North, South, East and West were erected in January 1921.²⁷ These were complemented in 1928 by the unveiling of the reliquary national flag (*ereklyés országzászló*). A twenty-meter high flagpole emerged from a pedestal, which formed a reliquary containing soil from each of the counties of historical Hungary. The pole was topped with a one-meter hand (cast in copper and modeled after Horthy’s own), poised as if to swear an oath.²⁸

On a less monumental scale, shop windows were decorated with irredentist displays, flowerbeds arranged with irredentist slogans, and one could purchase everyday household items such as pencils, matches, ash trays, thumb tacks and shoe polish in packaging bearing anti-Trianon symbols. Even an irredentist board game (*Let's Get Back Greater Hungary!*) was produced.²⁹ It is small wonder that Kálmán Kánya (1869–1945), Hungary's foreign minister for much of the 1930s, believed that where revisionism was concerned, the Hungarians might have suffered from a slight case of insanity.³⁰

Irredentism was not confined to the mundane, however. Even some of Hungary's most talented citizens participated in the movement. Many prominent Hungarian authors, poets and artists had been born outside the boundaries of Trianon Hungary and now required a passport to visit their hometown or village. Dezső Kosztolányi (1885–1936), one of the Hungarian language's most gifted writers, edited an anthology of irredentist writing in the early 1920s entitled *Bleeding Hungary (Vérző Magyarország)*. The volume, which contained works by both famous authors as well as others now long-forgotten, featured a preface by Admiral Horthy and contributions from other important public figures, such as János Csernoch (1852–1927), the Archbishop of Esztergom. Included also was a fold-out map of historical Hungary indicating the names of dozens of famous Hungarians born outside the Trianon borders. The caption to the map asked plaintively, "Can the Romanians make us believe that János Arany was born in Romania? Can the Czechs make us believe that Mór Jókai was born in Czechoslovakia?" and so on.³¹

Trianon inspired some works of enduring beauty as well. The poet Mihály Babits (1883–1941), who had worked as a teacher before World War I at the *gimnázium* in the Transylvanian town of Fogaras, wrote a cycle of poems entitled *My Homeland! (Hazám!)*:

Röpülj, lelkem, keresd meg hazámat!
 Enyhe dombsor, lankatag magyar föld!
 s az a róna túl már a nagy-alföld
 szemhatártól, ahol a nap támad.
 Röpülj, lelkem, röpdül át hazámat!
 Szemhatártól szemhatárig, s újra
 merre emléked, a halk selyempók
 vonja szálát, szállj a rónán túlra
 s át hol állnak a bolond sorompók:
 és akármit ír a kard a rögre,
 lankád mellől el ne bocsásd bérced:
 ha hazád volt, az marad örökre;
 senkisésem bíró, csak ahogy érzed!³²

The intensity of Hungarian irredentism becomes even more understandable if one takes into account certain attitudes prevalent in Hungary during the Monarchy's final years. In the decades preceding the First World War, certain segments of Hungarian society had become convinced that it was Hungary's destiny to supplant Austria as the true center of power both within the Habsburg Monarchy and in the region. Symptomatic of this illusory "Great Power" status was the spate of monumental building projects planned for the millennial celebrations of 1896, including Heroes' Square, Saint Stephen's Basilica and the neo-Gothic Parliament on the banks of the Danube. Many became blinded by the dazzling spectacle of the Millennium Exhibition held in the City Park, which celebrated one thousand years of Hungarian history and accomplishment in the Carpathian Basin. The Exhibition came to be seen by many non-Magyars as the ultimate expression of Magyar chauvinism, for it juxtaposed a vision of the heroic Magyar past alongside an unflattering portrayal of the nationalities and their assigned place in the hierarchy of the kingdom, which further exacerbated already inflamed nationalist passions.³³ At the dawn of the twentieth century, many Hungarians were carried away by the delusional prognostications of ultra-nationalists like the journalists Gusztáv Beksics (1847–1906) and Jenő Rákosi (1842–1929). The latter foresaw in his newspaper *Budapesti Hírlap* an "empire of thirty million Magyars"; this he trumpeted at a time when the population of Hungary stood somewhere around twenty-one million (including Croatia), of which the total number of ethnic Magyars barely reached ten million, and large-scale emigration to the New World was taking place.³⁴ Under such circumstances, the scale of the nation's outcry against Trianon should not have come as a surprise.

In addition to this pervasive irredentism, interwar Hungary was characterized by a relentless pursuit of revisionism. Needless to say, revision of the Treaty of Trianon became the national cause as well as the primary objective of every Hungarian government during the Horthy Era. The minimal goal was the recapture of all Hungarian-inhabited territories, while the maximal goal sought to restore the borders of the historical Kingdom of Saint Stephen. Correspondingly, there existed (at least in theory) two major conceptions of revisionism in interwar Hungary: ethnic or ethnographic revisionism and integral revisionism.

The principle of national self-determination served as the basis for ethnic revisionism, which aimed at recovering only those territories inhabited exclusively or primarily by Hungarians. The peace settlement had indeed left approximately 1.6 million Hungarians just outside the borders of interwar Hungary. Large areas of former Upper Hungary contained significant ethnic Magyar populations, especially on the large island of Csallóköz (Žitný Ostrov, Grosse Schütt), south of Pozsony (Bratislava, Pressburg). This territory was almost exclusively Hungarian but assigned to Czechoslovakia to provide the new state with a more secure border and an outlet to the Danube.³⁵ Likewise, a Hungarian majority prevailed in much

of the zone immediately across the border with Romania. This area, formed by the eastern reaches of the Great Plain and the so-called Partium, included the important towns of Nagykároly (Carei), Nagyvárad (Oradea) and Arad. The region had been awarded to Romania along with Transylvania proper because of the important railway line connecting these towns, thus sparing Bucharest the trouble and expense of building a new one.³⁶ The northern part of the fertile Bácska region (Vojvodina), which the Peace Conference had granted to the new South Slav state, included Szabadka (Subotica), Kosztolányi's hometown and also populated by a Hungarian-speaking majority.³⁷

While ethnic-based revisionism was a more reasonable (and realistic) aim, it was fraught with complications. First of all, the Hungarian populations living in the immediately adjacent territories only amounted to roughly half of the minorities living in the Successor States. The compact Hungarian-speaking settlements of the Szekler lands (Székelyföld) were not contiguous with the core Hungarian territories, being separated by a wide swathe of mainly Romanian-inhabited territory. One potential solution to this problem envisioned an autonomous or independent Transylvania, in which Romanians, Saxons and Hungarians would enjoy equal political and cultural rights. Similarly complicated was the situation in the Banate, partitioned between Yugoslavia and Romania, where in some places as many as four nationalities (Hungarian, Serbian, German and Romanian) co-existed. Such a mixed patchwork would have frustrated even the most dedicated attempts to draw satisfactory ethnic borders.

Ethnic revisionism certainly had its proponents in Hungary, the majority of whom were to be found on the political left and among the members of the emerging Populist (*népi*) movement. Prominent among them was the versatile and enigmatic writer László Németh, who wrote that "there is a watchword much more sacred than integral Hungary: integral Hungarians".³⁸ However, these intellectuals had relatively little influence among decision makers in interwar Hungary.³⁹ The official policy of every interwar government aimed at integral revision or at least something approaching that, while the Hungarian public at large clamored uncompromisingly for a restoration of the country's historical borders.

By contrast, integral revisionism referred to the complete restoration of historical Hungary; in other words, it was tantamount to a complete nullification of the territorial terms of Trianon. Central to the integral revisionist ideology was the concept of "St. Stephen's State" (*Szent István-i állameszme*): Hungary had always been a state with many customs and many languages, one which had welcomed foreigners to come and settle within its borders. Proponents of integral revision often cited the *Admonitions* of King Stephen (*Szent István Intelmei*), addressed to his son Prince Imre, in which the ruler had declared: "the country with one language and one set of customs is fragile and weak".⁴⁰ It was this concept, the "Empire of Saint Stephen", which would be adopted by numerous writers and given a

modern content throughout the interwar period to justify multinational historical Hungary's right to exist in an age of nationalism.⁴¹

Since the early 1980s, Hungarian historians examining the interwar period have tended to employ the term “optimal revision” instead of “integral revision”, recognizing that most of Hungary's political leaders were somewhat flexible in their views and realistic enough to know that a total restoration of the country's pre-war borders was unlikely.⁴² As recent studies have shown, the foreign policy of such “integralist” politicians as Bethlen, Teleki and Gömbös exhibited a diversity of views regarding the revision of Trianon, even if the ultimate goal of each remained the recovery of as many of the annexed territories as possible.⁴³ Their requirements in general represented something more than ethnic revision but less than integral revision, although always much closer to the latter. “Optimal revision” is in fact precisely what took place in the period from 1938–1941, when on four separate occasions Hungary recovered substantial amounts of territory, thanks to Italian and German intervention. However, few of Hungary's leaders would have termed either the extent of the reoccupied territories or the manner in which they were regained as optimal.

Throughout the period in question, Hungarian leaders insisted that their goal was to achieve a “peaceful revision” of Trianon (*békés revízió*).⁴⁴ Theoretically, such a revision would have entailed working through the League of Nations, which accepted Hungary as a member in 1922. That body's founding charter, the Covenant, formed Part I of the Treaty of Trianon and seemed to offer the best hope in this regard. Article 19 of the Covenant stated that

[t]he Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.⁴⁵

Despite this proviso, few Hungarians could place much faith in the possibility of negotiating an acceptable settlement through the League, since in their view the League demonstrated little sympathy in handling the complaints Hungary brought before it, especially in the matter of the treatment of Magyar minorities in the neighboring states.

Given the prevailing climate of mutual antagonism in Central and Eastern Europe, few political leaders could have truly believed in the likelihood of a peaceful solution to the question. While official Hungarian foreign policy aimed at something approaching integral revision, the states of the Little Entente adamantly refused even to consider surrendering any of their territory.⁴⁶ Under such circumstances, it is difficult to see how rectification of the Trianon borders could have entailed anything but armed conflict.

Neo-nationalism: Cultural Superiority

Despite the unprecedented scale of the catastrophe, there were still some Hungarians who could regard the future with some optimism and find in Trianon an opportunity to correct the ills of Old Hungary. One such individual was the Minister of Culture and Education for the Bethlen Government, Count Kunó Klebelsberg (1875–1932). A man of great erudition and energy who admired the vital nationalism of Italian Fascism, Klebelsberg was almost single-handedly responsible for the cultural and educational policies of the Bethlen Era. During his Ministry (1922–1931) he proposed an ambitious series of initiatives that aimed to overhaul completely the Hungarian education system and lift Hungary out of its cultural isolation, a factor which Klebelsberg believed had contributed greatly to Hungary's collapse. In truth, his reform program proved to be overly ambitious, and much of it failed to materialize.

After overseeing the completion of several practical tasks, including the transfer of the Universities of Pozsony and Kolozsvár (now outside of Hungary) to Pécs and Szeged respectively, the consolidation of the country's archives and the restoration of the financial well-being of the bankrupt Academy of Sciences, Klebelsberg turned his attention to reforming the educational system and eradicating illiteracy. In 1924 he introduced a new type of secondary school, the *reálgimnázium*, which aimed to provide students with a more practical education by emphasizing modern languages and natural sciences. A few years later he launched a program to develop and expand the network of rural schools.⁴⁷

In an effort to release the country from its cultural isolation, Klebelsberg unveiled his plan to establish a network of Hungarian cultural centers in foreign capitals. These institutions, the so-called *Collegia Hungaricae*, would not only promote Hungarian culture abroad, they would help to improve the image of the nation that Western public opinion held. Centers were opened in Berlin, Vienna and Rome, while smaller-scale institutions were established in Paris and New York. He also helped to set up chairs in Hungarian in Finland at the University of Helsinki and in Estonia at the University of Tartu. Complementing these foundations, the Count also funded scholarships to enable talented Hungarian students to study abroad.⁴⁸

In the second half of the 1920s, Klebelsberg announced his philosophy of national and cultural renewal, which he termed "neo-nationalism". Neo-nationalism would prepare Hungarians for the work necessary to erase Trianon. In an article in the daily *Pesti Napló* on January 1, 1928, Klebelsberg attempted to define his idea:

[...] the national feeling and idea which I am trying to nurture through Hungarian schools, I have to call *neo-nationalism*. [...] Hungarian nationalism has lost its main content, and therefore new goals

must be set before the old sentiment. [...] we want to be an *educated and well-to-do* nation, and therefore more substantial (*fajsúlyosabb*) than the nations surrounding us...

We do not want to sit in the shadows, living in misery and doing without, perishing and merely vegetating forever, but rather we want to *increase the productivity of Hungarian labor exponentially through the power of morals and knowledge*, and through this productive labor we want to be wealthier, and thus more independent and above all *more self-consciously* Hungarian. This is the healthy goal of Hungarian neo-nationalism.⁴⁹

For Klebelsberg, neo-nationalism was a practical approach to the country's predicament and more constructive than most irredentist activity. Trianon, for all of its ills, had presented Hungary a fresh start. Rectifying the errors of the peace settlement would be neither simple nor quick and so had to be construed as a long-term project. In the meantime, through diligent efforts, Hungarians could become better educated and wealthier than their neighbors. Klebelsberg frequently emphasized the idea of "cultural superiority" (*kultúrfölény*), which represented the Hungarian nation's best chance for survival in an increasingly hostile world. Cultural superiority was essential for the Hungarians to win back the populations lost at Trianon. Furthermore, by fostering Hungarian cultural superiority, neo-nationalism would also safeguard the leading role of the Magyars among the peoples of the Carpathian Basin.

A Place in the Sun

As Europe entered the summer of 1927, the Hungarian revisionist movement suddenly began to gather momentum, due in large part to the appearance of an unexpected benefactor. Oddly enough, the revisionist movement's new patron came not from Hungary but rather from Great Britain. On June 21, 1927 the newspaper with the largest circulation in that country, the *Daily Mail* of London, published a front-page article that caused a sensation in Hungary and provoked indignation among the neighboring states. The author of the article, which bore the title "Hungary's Place in the Sun. Safety for Central Europe", was none other than the owner of the paper himself, the British press magnate Harold Sidney Harmsworth (1860–1940), better known by his title Lord Rothermere.⁵⁰

Describing Eastern Europe as "strewn with Alsace-Lorraines", Rothermere singled out the Treaty of Trianon as the worst of the agreements produced at Versailles and argued that the blunders committed by the peacemakers at Paris had in fact sown the seeds of a future European conflagration:

Of the three treaties which rearranged the map of Central Europe, the last and most ill-advised was that of Trianon, which Hungary was called upon to sign on June 4, 1920. Instead of simplifying the network of nationalities existing there it entangled them still further. So deep is the discontent it has created that every impartial traveler in that part of the Continent sees plainly the need for repairing the mistakes committed.⁵¹

The situation, although serious, was salvageable in Rothermere's view, for a few relatively minor adjustments of the borders of Hungary would provide security for Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania as well. Because of the three-million-strong Sudeten German population living in Czechoslovakia, sooner or later the Czechs would undoubtedly come into conflict with Germany. Romania likewise faced the possibility that a resurgent Soviet Union might press its claims on Bessarabia. By acquiescing to the return of certain Magyar-inhabited territories, these states could finally normalize their relations with Hungary and would thus be better prepared to face the challenges of their more dangerous neighbors on other borders.

Anticipating the Little Entente's unwillingness to cede any territory to Hungary, Rothermere suggested that the dependence of those countries on foreign credit could provide the financial houses of London and New York with significant leverage, the "banker's power for peace", as he called it. A great deal of pressure could be exerted on the recalcitrant states by refusing to advance them much-needed loans. Lending money to aggressive, politically unstable countries like Yugoslavia, he added, did not represent a sound investment in any event.

In the more ethnically mixed territories, the local population should be consulted and given time to make up their minds, after which plebiscites would be held under the supervision of a disinterested power, such as the United States. In all, Rothermere claimed this scheme of territorial adjustments and plebiscites would return approximately two million Magyars to Hungary.⁵² Rothermere described Hungary as a "natural ally" of Great Britain and France, with a long and illustrious history of constitutional development, possessing its own "Magna Charta" (the Golden Bull). "A people like the Hungarians", he noted, "is not to be treated like a newly formed Balkan State of upstart institutions and inexperienced politicians."⁵³

Both the article and the rather crudely drawn map which accompanied it contained several factual errors and inconsistencies, the most glaring of which placed an estimated 400,000 Hungarians of Yugoslavia in Croatia instead of Serbia. In one paragraph, it is stated that Trianon placed 3,300,000 Hungarians under foreign domination, while further on the number is 3,500,000. Referring to Transylvania, Rothermere made the eyebrow-raising contention that, due to the fact that the majority of the Hungarians were so intermingled with Romanians and Ger-

mans, Hungary had already conceded their loss! Elsewhere he claimed that the Hungarians were glad to be rid of certain peoples, “like the Czechs, Croats and Rumanians”.⁵⁴ Whatever the flaws of the article may have been, they did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the Hungarian public, which soon lionized their new patron.

The British lord’s motives for championing the cause of a small country in a relatively unknown part of the Continent are not entirely clear to this day. The most probable explanation was that Rothermere had fallen for the charms of an aristocratic lady of Austrian origin named Stefánia Hohenloe.⁵⁵ Although the “Rothermere Campaign”, as it came to be known, undoubtedly represented an important breakthrough because of the significant publicity it generated abroad for the cause of Hungarian revisionism, the headaches which the British newspaper baron’s efforts caused Bethlen probably outweighed whatever benefits they provided. The Prime Minister found himself steering between Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand, he was in the uncomfortable position of having to reassure angry French and British diplomats that his government had not been involved in the affair. On the other hand, neither could he simply ignore the first truly noteworthy manifestation of support for Hungary in the Western press. The frenzy and unrealistic expectations that the article had stirred up among ordinary Hungarians made it impossible for Bethlen to rebuff openly Rothermere’s proposal without seriously undermining his own position.

Beyond these practical considerations, however, Rothermere’s plan advocated a form of ethnic revisionism that left Transylvania outside of Hungary, a solution at odds with Bethlen’s own objectives.⁵⁶ Publicly, therefore, the Prime Minister confined himself to appropriate expressions of gratitude while remaining non-committal to the plan; indeed, Bethlen took great pains to deny any involvement on the part of his government:

It goes without saying that this campaign is far removed from the activities of the Hungarian government, and that this campaign has nothing to do with the Hungarian government. When I state this here, however, I must declare at the same time that as a Hungarian I believe that Lord Rothermere has greatly obliged us and the entire nation for the trouble he has taken ... to acquaint the world with the Hungarian truth.⁵⁷

It was this last point, making the injustices committed against Hungary known to the world, which remained the government’s official stance on the Rothermere Campaign.

Far from bringing about reconciliation between the Hungarians and their neighbors, the press campaign had made the already strained relations in Central Europe even tenser. The Czechoslovak, Yugoslav and Romanian press reacted an-

grily to Rothermere's plan and took the opportunity to pillory him on an almost daily basis. One of the leading Romanian dailies, the nationalist *Universul*, ran frequent articles that summer ridiculing the Hungarians and their British sponsor. One noted commentator was "convinced that the articles appearing in the *Daily Mail* are not written by Rothermere, since he is incapable of writing, but probably by some editor, or else sent in from Budapest", adding that the paper was read in England chiefly "for its sports news and coverage of sensational crimes".⁵⁸ "The press campaign launched with such bitterness by Lord Rothermere in favor of Hungary", wrote one journalist, "has caused a worrisome state of mind in our Hungarian neighbors, who fail to understand that a historical epoch full of injustice has disappeared forever into the mists of history and that we now live under a rule of law based on respect for the idea of nationality."⁵⁹

In any event, the article provoked great excitement in Hungary and raised the unfounded hopes that the Western Powers would take up the question of border revision in earnest. Inspired by the *Daily Mail*'s campaign, on July 27, 1927 representatives of several patriotic organizations gathered to form the Hungarian Revisionist League (*Magyar Reviziós Liga*), the purpose of which was to convince public opinion abroad of the justness of Hungary's revisionist ambitions. This was to be done first and foremost through the publication of numerous reference works in foreign languages. The League elected the celebrated author Ferenc Herczeg (1863–1954) as its first president.⁶⁰

The extent to which ordinary Hungarians overestimated Rothermere's actual influence was matched only by the adulation they demonstrated for their new patron. The lord was inundated with gifts (which soon filled an entire hall in his castle), and when his son Esmond visited Hungary in 1928, he was greeted by adoring crowds at each stop. Encouraging this blind enthusiasm, many artists and writers of modest talent produced an outpouring of works dedicated to Rothermere; however, few, if any, rose above the level of kitsch. Illustrative of this trend was the album edited by the delusional prophet of the "empire of thirty million Magyars", Jenő Rákosi.

In blazing letters Lord Rothermere has written across the Hungarian sky the redeeming word bravely, openly, boldly, so that the nation exulted and its enemies were dumbfounded; this word is – revision!⁶¹

When the idea, probably originating from Rákosi, of placing either the lord or his son on the vacant Hungarian throne surfaced, Rothermere began to wear out his welcome among Hungarians. To the relief of the Bethlen Government (and probably Rothermere, too), the furor caused by the campaign gradually lost momentum and came to an end by the close of the decade.

III. The Journal *Magyar Szemle* and Hungarian Revisionism

The Founding of Magyar Szemle

Writing in late January 1927, Count István Bethlen, then somewhat more than half way into his term as Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Hungary, outlined some of the urgent tasks that still lay ahead of the nation in a letter sent to various influential public figures:

Among the means which will serve these aims, I am also thinking of a monthly periodical, which would acquaint its readers with the tasks and happenings of foreign, social, legal, cultural and economic policy, and in doing so would try to instill in them the true picture, given our historical development, geographical position and social conditions, as well as the dangers of theories and improvisations. Such a review, by the very nature of the goal, would be far removed from party politics and by means of scholarly journalism would illuminate objectively, but from all sides, the questions to be raised ...⁶² —

In concluding his letter, the Prime Minister expressed the hope that his call for help in solving the country's problems would meet with a favorable response. The Transylvanian aristocrat's request did not fall on deaf ears, and on August 1, 1927, the Society of the Hungarian Review (*Magyar Szemle Társaság*) was established.

The idea for such a society seems to have originated with an associate of Bethlen, the prominent banker, industrialist and philanthropist Baron Móric Kornfeld (1882–1967). In an address given in the Upper House of Parliament in 1926, Kornfeld had proposed the establishment of a society in memory of his father Zsigmond.⁶³ Bethlen appropriated the idea, while Kornfeld himself would provide much of the financial backing for the venture. The Society elected the medievalist Bálint Hóman (1885–1951) as its first president, the law professor Géza Magyary (1864–1928) as vice-president and the journalist and literary scholar József Balogh (1893–1944) as secretary. The Society's primary purpose would be to publish a monthly political and cultural journal, *Magyar Szemle*, or *Hungarian Review*.

Even before the establishment of the Society of the Hungarian Review, Bethlen had already made perhaps the most important decision with regard to the direction of the new publication when he selected his editor-in-chief. His choice fell upon Gyula Szekfű, arguably the most prominent (and perhaps most controversial) Hungarian historian of the first half of the twentieth century. The Bethlen–Szekfű partnership would prove a fruitful one, and the journal that bore both their names for almost 17 years enjoyed an unexpected success throughout the interwar period.

Preparations must have been proceeding for several months in advance, for the first issue of *Magyar Szemle* was published in September 1927, barely one month after the Society was formed. Thereafter *Magyar Szemle* continued to appear monthly and without interruption until the German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944 put a halt to most publishing activities. In total it comprised 46 volumes and 199 issues (the 200th issue was in press at the time of the invasion). More than 2,500 articles and columns were published on its pages, covering a vast assortment of topics. One thing it did not publish was *belles lettres*. The decision had been a difficult one, since it was generally agreed that poetry and fiction guaranteed the journal a certain readership. This was left to the conservative literary journal *Napkelet* (*Sunrise or East*), founded in 1923 by Klebelsberg and edited by Cécile Tormay expressly to counterbalance the influence of the prestigious literary journal *Nyugat* (*West*, 1908–1941).

Despite Bethlen's call for a periodical free of party politics, *Magyar Szemle* from the very beginning had to fight the perception that it served merely as the mouthpiece of the government (*kormány szócsöve*), an allegation that was difficult to refute with the name of the country's prime minister appearing on every issue. From the available evidence, it appears that Bethlen in fact took a largely hands-off approach, generally providing the guiding principles but only rarely intervening directly in editorial matters.⁶⁴ In any event, this problem of credibility largely disappeared when, as a result of the prolonged economic crisis, Bethlen tendered his resignation on August 18, 1931.⁶⁵

The original membership of the editorial board, in September 1927, mainly men with ties to either Bethlen or Szekfű, represented a notable grouping of well-connected political figures and respected academics. In addition to Bethlen, who served as President of the Board, and Szekfű, the editor-in-chief, the members included the following: Zoltán Gombocz (1877–1935), professor of linguistics; Gusztáv Gratz (1875–1946), historian and member of Parliament; Jenő Gyalókay (1874–1945), retired military officer and historian; Ferenc Herczeg, novelist, playwright and President of the Hungarian Revisionist League; Bálint Hóman, politician and professor of medieval history; Benedek Jancsó (1854–1930), historian and author of a lengthy book on Romanian irredentism; Béla Kenéz (1874–1946), university professor and member of Parliament; Baron Móric Kornfeld, industrialist; Gyula Kornis (1885–1958), Piarist priest, professor and politician; Antal Leopold (1880–1971), Catholic prelate and art historian; Géza Magyary (1864–1928), professor of law and noted expert on public administration; Elek Petrovics (1873–1945), art historian and director of the Museum of Fine Arts; László Ravasz (1882–1975), theologian and Bishop of the Reformed Church; and Iván Rakovszky (1885–1960), Minister of the Interior under Bethlen.⁶⁶ All but Kornfeld and Rakovszky were (or would eventually become) members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Naturally, *Magyar Szemle* reflected a conservative outlook and because of its important political connections, it can rightly be regarded as a journal of the establishment. However, it would be incorrect to characterize it as a mere governmental organ. *Magyar Szemle* generally succeeded in avoiding the pitfalls of official or semi-official government publications. As editor, Szekfű demanded that contributors avoid a dry, academic tone and use a polished literary style. Articles varied in length, but 8–10 pages seemed to be the preferred standard. The number of pages each issue contained likewise fluctuated, though this generally fell somewhere between 95 and 105. Each issue came out in print runs of 4,000–5,000 copies. From the scant information available, the number of paid subscribers may have hovered around 3,000, primarily members of the intelligentsia.⁶⁷

No discussion, however brief, of *Magyar Szemle* can overlook the three important book series that appeared under the aegis of the Society of the Hungarian Review. These were the “Books of the Hungarian Review” (*A Magyar Szemle Könyvei*), the “Treasury of the Hungarian Review” (*A Magyar Szemle Kincsestár*) and the “Classics of the Hungarian Review” (*A Magyar Szemle Klasszikusai*). Many of the volumes published in these series became and have remained cultural products of lasting value.

Magyar Szemle and the Wider Propaganda Effort

If *Magyar Szemle* can be regarded as an instrument for molding and consolidating the educated middle class in Hungary, it should be seen also as the domestic component of a larger propaganda machine. In order to improve Hungary’s profile in the West, in the 1930s Bethlen also founded two foreign-language journals, *La Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie* (1932–1944) and *The Hungarian Quarterly* (1936–1944). These new journals, targeting the French- and English-speaking worlds respectively, were published under the auspices of organizations like the Society of the Hungarian Review. More importantly, many prominent contributors to *Magyar Szemle* played important roles in the publication of the foreign-language reviews. Bethlen served as president of the editorial boards as well. József Balogh, the chief secretary of the Society of the Hungarian Review from 1927 to 1934, became editor-in-chief of both after leaving *Magyar Szemle*, a result of a personal falling-out with Szekfű.⁶⁸ Many frequent *Magyar Szemle* contributors likewise published in the foreign-language reviews, such as György and László Ottlik and Zsombor Szász. Unlike *Magyar Szemle*, however, *La Nouvelle Revue* and *Hungarian Quarterly* did publish Hungarian literature in French and English translation. In addition, some regular contributors wrote articles for the somewhat less polished English-language organ of the Hungarian Revisionist League, *The Danubian Review*. In most cases, however, the articles were not mere

translations but instead carefully tailored to meet the tastes of the Anglo-Saxon and French readers.

Anti-revisionist propaganda in the neighboring states as well as in the West received much attention. *Magyar Szemle* regularly published brief digests of Hungarian-related news appearing in the West European press. Balogh kept close watch on reports published in the British and French press and provided analysis. The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš (1884–1948) was particularly reviled for his strongly anti-Magyar attitudes, and *Magyar Szemle* became embroiled in a journalistic war with one of the leading Romanian dailies, the nationalist *Universul*.

Finally, another of Bethlen's revisionist propaganda initiatives sought to publish an abridged and adapted English translation of Hóman and Szekfű's monumental *Magyar Történet* (Hungarian History, 7 vols., 1929–1933). This volume, too, would have appeared under the aegis of the Society of the Hungarian Review and was intended as a response to R. W. Seton-Watson's *History of the Roumanians* (1934), the popularity and influence of which Bethlen had witnessed first hand during his lecture tour in Great Britain. Unfortunately, for numerous reasons, including the simmering feud between Szekfű and Balogh as well as a lack of qualified translators, the project dragged on for years without ever reaching publication.⁶⁹

The timing of *Magyar Szemle*'s appearance in the autumn of 1927 was neither arbitrary nor coincidental. Historians have traditionally divided the Bethlen Era into two distinct periods, one of domestic consolidation (1921–1926) and another characterized by a more active, assertive foreign policy (1927–1931).⁷⁰ If Bethlen could describe the basis of his government's foreign policy in the first period as "patient anticipation" (*türelmes várakozás*), then the second period of Bethlen's time in office witnessed a clear shift to an openly revisionist policy.

That year did indeed mark a turning point in Hungary's fortunes, both on the domestic front and internationally. On New Year's Day, a new unit of currency, the *pengő*, went into circulation, replacing the completely devalued *korona*. The measure underscored the considerable success the Bethlen government had had in stabilizing the country's devastated economy. The international military observers, who had been on the ground in Hungary to ensure the terms of the peace treaty were being honored, left the country at the end of March. Their withdrawal naturally relaxed many of the constraints placed on Bethlen's freedom of action.

While enjoying a freer hand at home, the Bethlen government also began to achieve success in pulling the country out of its diplomatic isolation. In an attempt to loosen the bonds of the Little Entente, Hungary entered into negotiations with the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The Hungarian government saw in their southern neighbor the best opportunity of concluding some kind of an agreement, possibly because the South Slav kingdom had acquired less Hungarian

territory and had a smaller Hungarian-speaking population in comparison with Czechoslovakia and Romania. Moreover, the Yugoslavs also seemed interested in normalizing their relations with Hungary. However, such a rapprochement conflicted with the territorial designs of Fascist Italy. Bethlen's preliminary negotiations prompted Mussolini to offer Hungary a ten-year agreement of friendship, conciliation and arbitration. As desirable as an agreement with Yugoslavia might have been, a pact with a more powerful (and openly revisionist) state like Italy was impossible to turn down. Bethlen and the Duce accordingly signed the treaty on April 5, 1927 in Rome.⁷¹

In his public utterances, Bethlen himself clearly signaled the change in orientation in a colorful speech given in Debrecen in March 1928. After summarizing the achievements of his government in the domestic sphere, the Count turned his attention to the question of Hungary's borders:

We did not lose provinces. We were partitioned. Our case is not the case of Alsace-Lorraine. Ours is the case of Poland. Germany could surrender one province, but we can never surrender one third of our race forever...

[...] If someone buttons his vest the wrong way, he can only tidy his appearance by first unbuttoning his vest and then re-buttoning it correctly. A lasting peace cannot be built on these borders. On these borders a prison can be built, one in which we are the prisoners and the victors the guards ... It is not treaty revision we need, but rather different borders.⁷²

Revisionism in Magyar Szemle: The First Reactions

From the very first issue, *Magyar Szemle* became the country's primary forum for discussing the issue of revisionism and would remain so until it ceased publication.⁷³ Over the nearly seventeen years of its existence virtually no issue appeared that did not treat some dimension of the question. Most of the traditional arguments made in favor of revision found expression in *Magyar Szemle*, but the two which figured most prominently were the historical and the ethnographic. In general, historical arguments were used to justify the restoration of Hungary's historical borders. In time, the journal would come forth with its own concept for this. The ethnic principle, however, was not so much invoked in the name of ethnic revisionism, but rather to foster awareness among Hungarians of the plight of their fellow Magyars in the Successor States. During most of the interwar period, authors writing in *Magyar Szemle* advocated something close to integral revisionism while consistently rejecting proposals based on ethnic revisionism.

Approaches to the revision of the Treaty of Trianon took various forms. In the first years of its existence, much of the discourse on treaty revision in *Magyar*

Szemle centered around a discussion of the Rothermere Campaign. Other proposals to modify the country's borders, put forward by Hungarians and foreigners alike, similarly received coverage. With time, *Magyar Szemle* articulated its own concept of revisionism, the so-called "New Hungaria Idea". This proposal would prove to be attractive to many Hungarians.

When in the mid-1930s it became obvious that the time was still not ripe for discussing revisionist plans, the situation of the Hungarian minorities in the neighboring states, which had always received coverage, earned increased attention. Just as importantly, the journal closely monitored anti-revisionist, anti-Hungarian propaganda, both in the Western press as well as in that of the Little Entente. Finally, historical and cultural essays often appeared, the purpose of which was to counter anti-Hungarian propaganda, especially the allegations of Hungary's former oppression of its national minorities, and buttress the arguments in favor of a restored Greater Hungary.

The journal's first task in this area was to combat the excesses of irredentism. Almost paradoxically, commentators writing in *Magyar Szemle* found it necessary time and again to discourage their readers by injecting them with a sobering dose of pessimism. Indeed, the blind enthusiasm and unrealistic hopes generated by the revisionist movement were perceived more often than not as counter-productive and liable to damage the nation's cause. The largely uninformed masses had been electrified by the Rothermere Campaign and thus completely overestimated the British lord's influence.

Consequently, many of the earliest articles reflected on the campaign at length and tried to place it in its proper perspective. Following Bethlen's example, commentators heaped lavish praise on Rothermere for making the world aware of the Hungarian question. At the same time, they studiously avoided endorsing the plan itself. In the very first issue, Benedek Jancsó gratefully acknowledged Rothermere's efforts on behalf of the Hungarian people. Jancsó regarded the lord's campaign as "the perfect expression of an ever-growing conviction", evolving since the day the Treaty of Trianon was signed, that the peace settlement represented a grave injustice to Hungary. "The Rothermere Campaign differs from all previous ones," the author continued, "in that he [Rothermere] himself wishes to fight, so that those who are responsible for the injustices against Hungary might correct them."⁷⁴ Having stated that, he cautioned his readers that:

The struggle that Lord Rothermere has undertaken, and in which Hungarian society, within the framework of the Hungarian Revisionist League, stands beside him as a partner, will be neither short nor easy. On the contrary, it will be long and difficult. In fact, several of its efforts will probably be unsuccessful. The Paris Peace Treaties do not resemble the Walls of Jericho, which collapsed at the blare of the trumpet. They are the most modern fortifications, which can be taken

only with an incessant and regular siege. To carry out such a venture successfully, there is a greater need on the part of the besieger for a strong will, level-headed prudence and rugged perseverance, than of the valor and bravado of the hussar.⁷⁵

Later that year, in the December issue, an article by the agrarian economist Károly Ihrig (1892–1970), “What Would the Rothermere-Line Bring Back?” struck a more critical tone when it sought to analyze the potential benefits of the Rothermere Plan for Hungary’s economic capacity. After carefully indicating the line along which the new borders would run, Ihrig provided a detailed statistical comparison of Trianon Hungary and the potentially enlarged Hungary. The country’s territory would expand by some 64,000 km² and its population would jump to about 12.4 million inhabitants. Hungary would regain a favorable amount of grazing land and forests, and her supply of livestock would also increase significantly. Reviewing the country’s industrial potential, the author found that, other than salt, the returned territories would provide few raw materials. Moreover, Ihrig claimed that the industry of the Highlands, i.e. Slovakia and Ruthenia, had been ruined by Czech competition as well as a destructive economic policy. Thus, although the agricultural capacity of an enlarged Hungary would be noticeably improved, the proposed border changes would bring about little improvement in the country’s industrial capacity. Summing up, Ihrig concluded that on economic grounds the ethnic-revisionist solution must be rejected:

Only a country able to offer all of the basic conditions of economic life is capable of establishing anew the future of the Hungarian nation, ensuring that its talents can flourish, and rendering its friendship valuable to those who seek it out of their own interest. The country that is restricted to merely the Hungarian-language territories would not be such a country. This is not to state that we should come forward with political demands for the return of those territories which fall outside the Hungarian-linguistic areas. But it does indeed mean that without complete geographic and economic fulfillment, such a revision would mean peace neither for the Hungarian nation, nor for Central Europe, not even from economic reasons.⁷⁶

In his June digest of foreign affairs, György Ottlik, writing ostensibly about the visit of Lord Rothermere’s son Esmond to Hungary, devoted most of the column to warning Hungarians against overestimating the impact of the campaign and reminding them that the road ahead is a long one. The value of the Rothermere article lay in the fact that henceforth “the existence of the Hungarian problem occupies a place in the minds of millions”.⁷⁷ The campaign had taken care of much of the preparatory work necessary to move Hungary’s cause forward. “The Hungarian truth has reached the ground floor of the building of public opinion: naturally, it may take a long time for the merchandise to make its way from the ground floor

or the warehouse up to the first-floor rooms, the studies and the chancellery.” Elsewhere, crediting Lord Rothermere’s intercession with Mussolini on behalf of Hungary, Ottlik noted that “one cannot warn our public enough against harboring over-optimistic expectations and laboring under the illusion of quick fulfillment”. He hastened to add that “we can hope, because we cannot be destroyed: he who seeks to eat the Hungarian bites into granite”.⁷⁸

For most observers, to achieve border revision by peaceful methods meant working through the League of Nations. In particular, many Hungarians placed their hopes in the tersely worded Article 19 of the League’s Charter, which supposedly provided for the possibility of re-examining those treaties which had become outdated and threatened the maintenance of world peace. However, here, too, *Magyar Szemle* proved to be pessimistic: the journal cautioned Hungarians against blindly trusting in the League of Nations.

In his evaluation of the possibility of treaty revision through the League, Gusztáv Gratz identified the problem with Article 19, namely that it had been pulled out of the original context in which President Wilson had envisioned it. Furthermore, its language had been so watered down as to render it impotent. While providing for the possibility of re-examining peace treaties, it failed to indicate clearly the means by which such an examination would take place. Moreover, reviewing the extensive literature on the League, Gratz revealed that most experts considered the article virtually useless. He concluded that Article 19 offered Hungary little hope of redress, since it could only recommend border adjustments, not prescribe them. In fact, the only hope for a peaceful revision of the borders would be if Hungary were to reach an agreement with one of her neighbors, but in that case, the League’s involvement would be unnecessary.⁷⁹ Yet, as Gratz noted, the mission of the League, to maintain the status quo, was an absurdity without the possibility of peacefully modifying unfeasible frontiers.

IV. Saint Stephen’s State or Eastern Switzerland?

Towards a New Hungaria

Although the first several issues of *Magyar Szemle* devoted considerable space to dissecting (and rejecting) Lord Rothermere’s project for a revision of the terms of Trianon along ethnic lines, before long the journal came forward with an alternative proposal for the political reorganization of the Danubian Basin. Beginning in 1928, *Magyar Szemle* published a series of articles from the pen of a young legal scholar, László Ottlik (1895–1945).⁸⁰ His contribution is significant not only because of the publicity it received, but also due to the fact that Ottlik was a close confidante of the Prime Minister; during much of the interwar period he worked

for the Department of Nationality and Minority Affairs, which operated within the Offices of the Prime Minister. His older brother György was the editor of the German-language daily *Pester Lloyd* and wrote the monthly foreign affairs column for *Magyar Szemle*. Their father, Iván Ottlik (1858–1940), had spent his career in the civil service; in 1919 and 1920, he had been an important member of the Hungarian delegation at Versailles.

The “State Idea of St. Stephen” (*Szent István-i állameszme*) or the “Empire of St. Stephen” (*Szent István birodalma*) was not an unknown concept, but it was Ottlik who first popularized the notion and provided it with an ideological content. His “New Hungaria Concept” rested on two main pillars: that Hungary cannot be restricted solely to the Magyar-inhabited territories, and that it was the Hungarians who were predestined to lead the other peoples of the region.

Ottlik’s first effort, entitled “Hungarian Nation – Czech Empire”, appeared in the February 1928 issue. In this essay the author attempted to draw a sharp distinction between the nature of the former Hungarian regime in Slovakia and the current Czech domination. The new political order installed by Prague was, in Ottlik’s view, not autonomous but in fact colonial. Czech leaders purposely dismantled the old Hungarian system of counties (*vármegyék*) and replaced them with new administrative units (*upany*) in such a way so as to ensure Slovak majorities. This plan was deliberately designed to reduce the power of the former Magyar ruling elite, who would have emerged victorious from democratic elections. At the same time, due to the divergent historical development of the Hungarian and Czech societies, an unbridgeable chasm separated the Czech bourgeois oligarch from the Slovak peasant. The Slovaks, argued Ottlik, despised the Czech “parvenus”, with whom they shared nothing in common other than linguistic similarity. “What the Czech nation cannot give, the Hungarian can give *eo ipso*: autonomy for the Highlands. Slovakia can be raised from its present colonial status to dominion status only by returning to St. Stephen’s Empire.”⁸¹

Already in this initial essay one finds most of the elements of Ottlik’s later concept: the treachery of the greedy, hostile neighbors that had destroyed the millennial unity of the Carpathian Basin; a common national identity among the Magyars and the former minorities based on a millennium of cohabitation in the Carpathian Basin; and most importantly, the notion that only the restoration of historical Hungary would remedy the problems plaguing the small peoples of Central Europe. Significantly, Ottlik rejected the notion of a common “Czechoslovak” nation based on a common language; he went even further and claimed the existence of a Magyar-Slovak nation, two nationalities with two languages, but forming a single nation. He may have targeted Czechoslovakia in his essay at the behest of Bethlen.⁸²

Several months later, in the September issue, Ottlik developed these ideas further in a second essay, “Towards a New Hungaria”. While his initial effort seems

to have elicited little comment, this next article gained widespread notice in both the domestic and foreign press and provoked a lively debate inside and outside Hungary. In it, Ottlik outlined his own proposal for reconstituting a multi-ethnic, multilingual historical Hungary. He offered his readers a glimpse of the future, one which would hopefully appeal not only to Magyars but to the majority of the former nationalities as well. The essay, which came to be regarded as the journal's programmatic statement of revisionism, has been frequently cited in accounts of Hungarian revisionism and merits some closer scrutiny.

"There is no good Hungarian," Ottlik boldly proclaimed, "who would doubt that the territorial unity of St. Stephen's Empire sooner or later will be restored."⁸³ Continuing in this optimistic vein, the author elaborated on this statement by remarking on what he regarded to be the two most influential positive intellectual currents to be found in contemporary Hungary. The first of these was Count Klebelsberg's project for cultural renewal, "neo-nationalism". The second he identified as "neo-patriotism", the political analogue to neo-nationalism and apparently a concept that Ottlik himself coined. Before the arrival of modern nationalism, it had been patriotism that supplied the old Hungarian kingdom with cohesion. Now, a reinvigorated patriotism would be needed to unite the peoples of the Danubian Basin into a restored Kingdom of St. Stephen:

Neo-nationalism [...] fosters the growth of neo-patriotism. By neo-patriotism I mean the notion that, having recognized that St. Stephen's legacy belongs neither to minority nor majority, neither to lords nor solely to Magyars, but to all those whose ancestors lie in the lap of the Carpathians, who gave their blood or sweat for these lands, and for whom this is their home in the wide world, comprehends less and less the differences which separate Magyars, Croats, Slovaks and Transylvanian Romanians from one another, but comprehends more and more that these peoples can only find rest on each other's bosom, and that they can solve their problems only with each other's assistance; by separating, their lot is only destruction, humiliation and misery.⁸⁴

Ottlik then went on to outline, territory by territory, the contours of the New Hungaria. His solution consisted in granting varying degrees of autonomy to the former provinces, based on their level of development and the ethnic composition of their populations. The result would have been a hybrid political system of relations among the various nationalities. The Croatian case was the simplest. The country had traditionally been recognized as a legally distinct entity within the Kingdom of Hungary.⁸⁵ Since Croatia formed a distinct geographical unit with a nearly homogenous population and furthermore had attained a high level of political and cultural development, Hungary was prepared to offer a federative union. Under such an arrangement, Ottlik reasoned, the Croats would be able to pursue

their national ambitions completely unhindered, something quite impossible under the conditions of their union with Greater Serbia.

Turning his gaze northward, Ottlik recognized that while Slovakia did not display the same geographical and ethnic homogeneity that Croatia did, the intransigent public pronouncements of such Slovak leaders as Father Andrej Hlinka had made it perfectly clear that their people would be unwilling to surrender even the smallest piece of their land. At the same time, given their cultural, political and economic preeminence, it would be unreasonable to expect the large and compact Magyar population of the province to accept exclusive Slovak dominion. Therefore, Slovakia would retain its territorial integrity, while both Slovak and Hungarian would be declared official languages. Here Ottlik proposed as a workable model the Union of South Africa, where English and Afrikaans were co-official languages. The benefits to the Slovaks seemed obvious. Within Czechoslovakia, the Slovaks faced the threat of denationalization at the hands of the politically and culturally more advanced Czechs. After their return to Hungary, this danger would cease to exist. In Ottlik's view, such an arrangement was in perfect harmony with the teachings of St. Stephen.

As far as Transylvania was concerned, the author acknowledged that the situation appeared far more complicated than that of Croatia or even Slovakia. First of all, whereas one could dispute the membership of the Croats and the Slovaks in the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak nations, respectively, the same could not be said of the Transylvanian Romanians, who quite obviously did form part of the same nation as the Romanians of the Old Regat. Worse still, relations between Romanians and Magyars of the province had been poisoned to such a degree that the possibility of a rapprochement was unlikely in the near future. The solution, according to Ottlik, lay in some form of autonomy or independence for Transylvania. Within such an entity, the ancient system of three political nations, which had originally applied to the Saxons, Hungarians and Szeklers,⁸⁶ could and must be updated to include the Romanians. Nonetheless, this remained a long-term goal, since the animosity between Magyars and Romanians in Transylvania still represented too great an obstacle to overcome immediately. A true reconciliation would require the replacement of the current old guard of Romanian leaders with a younger generation not brought up to hate Hungary.

Almost as an afterthought, Ottlik paused briefly to mention Subcarpathian Rus' (Ruthenia). Without entering into details, Ottlik claimed that within the restored Kingdom of St. Stephen, Subcarpathian Rus' would be granted autonomy. At the peace conference the Czech delegates had pledged to grant full autonomy to the province at the time of its incorporation into the Czechoslovak state, but Prague had never fulfilled that promise. He concluded on an optimistic note, professing that:

St. Stephen's Crown and St. Stephen's Empire are not exclusively ours, and just as we consider the annexed territories and their cultural treasures our own, our separated Hungarian- and non-Hungarian-speaking brothers have the same right to the blessed fertile plain between the Danube and the Tisza, the Buda Castle of King Matthias and wonderful, shelter-giving state formation of St. Stephen. When we ask for what was unlawfully taken from us, at the same time we are aware that we, too, are obligated to return to the ancient inhabitants of the annexed territories those treasures that were taken from them unjustly and of which we are the sole guardians. This is simply the basis and content of neo-patriotism, and the promising token of Hungaria's happy new millennium!⁸⁷

There are many important points to be noted in Ottlik's essay, not the least of which was the name he gave his concept. By using the Latin name "Hungaria", Ottlik was attempting to make a distinction that the term *magyar* did not.⁸⁸ He emphasized a national identity based on a shared historical experience, not race or language. Citizenship and loyalty to the homeland were more important than identification with ethno-linguistic groups living outside of historical Hungary. According to this formulation, Slovaks, Ruthenians and Croats (though perhaps not Romanians) belonged to the *magyar nemzet (Natio hungarica)*; thus, they could be considered "Hungarian" or *hungarus*, no matter what language they spoke.

Ottlik attempted to contrast the bright future awaiting the nationalities in Hungaria with the bitter present they were forced to endure in the Successor States by emphasizing the internecine conflicts among the nationalities. His premise, of course, contained more than a grain of truth. Tensions, oftentimes quite pronounced, certainly existed between Czechs and Slovaks (as well as Ruthenians), Serbs and Croats, and even between Transylvanian Romanians and those of the *Regat* because of a tendency on the part of the central government to ignore local conditions and centralize administration. Nevertheless, it did not follow logically that any of these peoples identified more with the Hungarians than with their compatriots, nor that they would rush back willingly into a union with the Hungarian state. It is difficult not to regard such a vision as utopian.

Despite the conciliatory tone adopted by the author, the article leaves no doubt as to the Magyars' continuing dominant status within the restored state. If all nationalities were to enjoy equal rights, the Magyars would nonetheless remain *primus inter pares* by virtue of their advanced cultural, political and economic development. "We know," wrote Ottlik, "that the world has changed drastically over the past ten years. We also know that instead of the advantageous position of *pater familias*, we now feel comfortable at best in the role of the older brother."⁸⁹ In Ottlik's view, the Slovak was an innocent lamb destined to end up in the belly of the Czech wolf if deprived of the protection of the Hungarians. Furthermore, the

other nationalities of the Carpathian Basin have no history independent of the Magyars:

It does not matter that Thököly fought for the freedom of the Highlands, or that Rákóczi rests in the Cathedral of Kassa, because the Slovaks and Ruthenes may not bathe their souls in these noble memories. Instead of them, the people of the Highlands are left with Žižka and Prokop, or at most Janošik, the highwayman to venerate as its heroes. And did the people of Transylvania come out ahead when, instead of the historical glory of István Báthory and Gábor Bethlen, they have to make due with Hora-Cloșca and Avram Iancu?⁹⁰

Most commentators have seen István Bethlen himself as the inspiration behind this essay. Ottlik was, of course, a trusted associate of the Prime Minister. Some historians link Ottlik's article to some of the public speeches Bethlen made at this time.⁹¹ As Zeidler has pointed out, the article almost reads like a homework assignment, with awkwardly inserted quotes from Ady, Vörösmarty and Madách.⁹² Bethlen was quite flexible in his approach to border revision, and his pronouncements on the topic changed frequently, depending on the prevailing international climate and the character of his audience. Ottlik's conception does seem to have fit Bethlen's basic requirements in the main: the return of Slovakia and Ruthenia, some form of self-government for Transylvania, and a loose federation with Croatia.⁹³ The lack of any reference to Burgenland, Fiume and the small territories annexed to Poland was not especially remarkable, for Bethlen seems to have accepted that these lands would no longer belong to Hungary, and in any event, only in the case of Burgenland could one find any significant Hungarian minority. Only the omission of the Vojvodina ceded to Yugoslavia requires an explanation. If Bethlen was indeed the moving force behind Ottlik's article, perhaps he still held out hope of reaching some accommodation with the South Slav kingdom even after the treaty with Italy had brought negotiations to a halt.

Of course, the principal advantage of addressing the Hungarian public through Ottlik was that Bethlen could float certain ideas that might meet with disapproval at home without suffering damage to his personal prestige. Furthermore, in the event the Western Allies protested, he could deny any responsibility for the article.

"Towards a New Hungaria" naturally did attract much attention in the press, and not only in Hungary. The journal had anticipated this, and it duly reported on the echo in several subsequent issues. The domestic reception was generally favorable, though not without criticism. Interestingly enough, the most serious attack came from the political right opposition. In an article appearing in the weekly *Előörs* and meant to disparage Ottlik's New Hungaria, the politician and journalist Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky (1886–1944) alleged that the author's neo-patriotism bore a striking resemblance to the "Eastern Switzerland" concept of the sociolo-

gist and politician Oszkár Jászi (1875–1957).⁹⁴ Such a charge in the Horthy Era was not to be taken lightly, for Jászi had been made one of the principal scapegoats for the disaster of 1918–1919, and his name was anathema in Christian-Conservative Hungary.

A committed democrat and a founder of the important journal *Huszdik Század* (*Twentieth Century*), the very periodical Szekfü had singled out for attack in his inaugural essay, Jászi had been a fierce critic of the government's minority policies in the years leading up to the First World War. Jászi had become convinced early on of the need to reorganize the Habsburg Monarchy on a federal basis and had come to cherish the notion of an "Eastern Switzerland". He saw in the Swiss Confederation, with its multiple nationalities coexisting peacefully and prospering economically, the appropriate model for a democratized Monarchy. He had even gone so far as to propose replacing the Dual Monarchy with a "Danubian Federation" that would have included the Polish lands and much of the Balkans.⁹⁵

Following the democratic "Aster Revolution" (az őszirózsás forradalom) and the proclamation of the republic in October 1918, Jászi served as Minister without portfolio for Nationality Affairs in the government of Count Mihály Károlyi. It was in this capacity that he drafted and attempted to carry out his plan for an Eastern Switzerland. He envisioned redrawing the administrative map of Hungary into 14 cantons or districts (of which at least seven would have been exclusively or preponderantly Magyar-speaking). The plan also provided for the wide use of the nationalities' languages in the local administration.⁹⁶ Jászi had negotiated in vain with the leaders of the national minorities in an effort to keep them within Hungary. In fact, the only territory where the Hungarian authorities had been able even to attempt the implementation of the Eastern Switzerland Plan was Subcarpathian Rus'. On December 23, 1918, the government passed the law establishing the autonomous province of Ruska-Krajna, based on Jászi's guidelines.⁹⁷

Ottlik thus found it necessary to clarify his views in a new essay carried by *Magyar Szemle* in the October 1929 issue "New Hungaria and Eastern Switzerland" (Új Hungária és Keleti Svájc). Ottlik conceded that on the surface his formulation of New Hungaria did indeed resemble Jászi's Eastern Switzerland, except for one critical difference: the historical context of each was completely different. Jászi's plan, Ottlik suggested, not only would not have preserved the kingdom's territorial integrity in 1918; in fact it would have accelerated the country's breakup.⁹⁸ Now, in the mutilated Hungary of Trianon, it was the best solution for undoing the damage. In a clear distortion of history, Ottlik went so far as to state that:

It is a fact, one which some mention bitterly but of which I believe we should be proud, that the old Hungarian policy, in the service of the unity of Hungaria, not only did not oppress the non-Hungarian-speaking populations, it did everything in its power to provide them

with bread and culture: to a certain extent, even to the detriment of the ethnic Magyar population.⁹⁹

Ottlik returned once again to his conception in the November 1934 issue. This time he introduced the notion of a *Pax Hungarica*: only the old Hungarian kingdom had been able to provide the stable framework and harmony necessary for the various peoples of the Danubian Basin to thrive. The period of Hungarian rule, then, should be seen as a golden age for these peoples.

The cause of Hungarian revisionism, contended Ottlik, had met with little true success because of the persistence of a negative stereotype held in the West: the negative, distorted image of the Hungarian in the Western mind:

The image that confronts us is the figure of an apocalyptic horseman: the frightening equestrian figure of the conquering Hungarian, just as he appeared in the terrified imagination of the contemporary Christian peoples; and thus he remained. With time, it is true, the image was modified and refined: gradually metamorphosing into the figure of a barbaric, arrogant Eastern great lord, who, still armed and mounted on horseback, nevertheless continued to rule the enslaved peoples trampled under his power with an iron fist.¹⁰⁰

It was this distorted image of the Hungarians that had promoted the charge of a “thousand years of oppression” and had allowed the West to justify the excessive severity of Trianon. This had led to the cliché, supported by obsolete sociological theories of elites, that the ruling aristocracy had been Hungarian while the oppressed people had not been. “According to this [theory],” wrote Ottlik,

the mutilation and dismemberment of Hungary had been just, for it had happened in the holy name of democracy... Hungary therefore had been carved up at Trianon in the name of a theoretical fad of the past.¹⁰¹

“The reality is,” continued Ottlik, “that the political structure of Hungary had at no time ever meant the rule of one people, the Hungarians, over foreign peoples.” The ruling strata in medieval Hungary, the nobility and the high clergy had always been multi-ethnic, as had been the peasantry and the population of the towns. The country was called “Hungary” not because the Hungarians had ruled over it, but because the overwhelming majority of the population had been Hungarian up until the 18th century.

Ottlik reformulated his “New Hungaria” ideology with the new concept of *Pax Hungarica*. This he defined as gathering the Carpathian Basin as a natural vital unit into a single political framework and the filling of that territorial empire with the concept of Hungarian liberty. The *Pax Hungarica* had fostered a cultural and political unity within the geo-economic unity of the Carpathian Basin. In this civilization, many peoples had lived peacefully side by side: Magyars, Slovaks, Ger-

mans, Romanians, Croats and Serbs. At the same time, it was the Hungarian talent for state-building that had created and held the country together.

Unfortunately, two factors had disrupted the ancient spirit of *Pax Hungarica*: the Ottoman occupation (which had resulted in depopulation and resettlement of new peoples) and the emergence and triumph of modern nationalism. Simultaneously, the idea of *Pax Hungarica* had been challenged by a rival concept, dynastic Habsburg imperialism. In their eagerness to prove themselves as “good Hungarians”, non-Magyar speaking Hungarians had hurried to become magyarized and make the state language their own. With time, those who had not adopted the Hungarian language came to be seen as unpatriotic and thus were pressured to become Magyar. This was the origin of the so-called “magyarization” campaign. It had been carried out by overeager “neophytes”, not by true Hungarian patriots. In any event, noted Ottlik, “magyarization” had been more noise than anything else, and the country’s leaders had been too occupied with defending the country against Habsburg ambitions to “magyarize” the country’s minorities.

Happily, the concept of a *Pax Hungarica* had not died out, for it lived on in the younger generation. It offered the best solution for the peaceful cohabitation of all the peoples in the region:

In our opinion the proper solution is to return to the two basic ideas of the old Hungarian civilization, the *Pax Hungarica*: one is the idea of the primacy of space, which refers to taking as a point of departure the basic fact of a shared fate of peoples belonging to a geo-economic space, the fact that these peoples necessarily belong together, because they depend on each other; the other idea is the idea of equal liberty of peoples belonging together, the ancient Hungarian legal concept: *una eademque libertas*.¹⁰²

Ottlik’s “New Hungaria” concept did in fact come to be regarded as an ideology of the younger generation. Remarking on Ottlik’s ideas in the 1930s, one commentator was moved to write that “the new generation sees in this historical catastrophe the opening of a new era of the Hungarian state and national development ... The new generation of today, by accepting these basic principles, has made the New Hungaria concept its own. It does not fear that in this new environment the Hungarian nation will lose its leading role, for its culture, economic superiority, fecundity and central location alike assure its position.”¹⁰³

One political leader with whom Ottlik’s New Hungaria clearly resonated was the leader of the right radical Hungarist Movement, Ferenc Szálasi (1897–1946). In his 1935 opus, *Út és cél* (The Way and the Aim), he termed his movement’s ideology “hungarism”, and in virtually impenetrable prose he tried to define the essence of his creed:

Hungarism is belief, obedience and struggle! Hungarism is *Pax Hungarica*! Hungarian peace for those nation-families of the Carpathian-ringed Danubian Basin capable of believing, obeying, and struggling!¹⁰⁴

Szálasi also drafted his own version of a restored Greater Hungary, the “United Lands of Hungaria”, which consisted of six oddly-named administrative units: Magyarland, Slovakland, Ruthenland, Transylvanialand, Croatland and the Western March.¹⁰⁵ “Magyarland” was by far the largest unit in the federation. Naturally, Szálasi’s plan resembled that of Ottlik in neither form nor spirit, and in contrast to the “New Hungaria Concept”, Szálasi stated quite openly in his party’s program that this Hungaria would be directly administered from Magyarland.¹⁰⁶

The Nationalities Question

After Trianon it was widely believed in Hungary that the country’s harsh treatment at the Paris Peace Conference had been due in large measure to the anti-Hungarian propaganda campaign carried out by Czechoslovak, Romanian and South Slav representatives. Whereas the Hungarians had not been invited to participate in the negotiations leading up to the drafting of the peace treaty, the delegates of the Successor States not only had been granted a voice in the proceedings but also frequently succeeded in bolstering their claims to predominantly Magyar-inhabited territories with distorted or false ethnographic data. To justify those demands which violated the principle of national self-determination (the very principle on which their claims to independence rested), Hungary’s neighbors resorted to other arguments, such as Hungarian responsibility for causing the war. The primary charge leveled at the Hungarians, however, was that they had oppressed their national minorities over the course of the previous millennium.¹⁰⁷ Many observers felt that this accusation not only hurt Hungary’s reputation abroad but also hindered efforts to win over the former minorities and convince them to return to St. Stephen’s Empire.

For Szekfű, here was the area in which the professional historian could play a crucial role in the revisionist movement. In order to refute the charge of a “thousand years of oppression”, Szekfű himself published numerous essays in *Magyar Szemle* probing the question of the history of the national minorities in historical Hungary. He also sought to provide a historical framework for Ottlik’s New Hungaria by explaining the evolution and significance of the “State Concept of Saint Stephen”.

In an essay appearing in 1931, “The Revision of Trianon and Historiography”, Szekfű attempted to sketch the history of the nationality question in Hungary. He identified the Turkish conquest of the sixteenth century as the source and the de-

termining factor of the nation's misfortunes. Prior to the defeat at Mohács, the Hungarian kingdom had contained so few minorities that it could have been considered a nation-state. The collapse of the medieval state had triggered a fateful cycle that Szekfű divided into five basic stages: 1. the Hungarians and Croats were forced to flee north because of Turkish attacks, thus depopulating a large area of the country; 2. the Turks in turn began to repopulate the evacuated areas with Serbian and Romanian settlers; 3. subsequently, because of the terrible conditions prevailing in the Danubian Principalities, Romanians began to flood into Transylvania and other regions of Hungary, in the seventeenth and especially the eighteenth centuries; 4. also in the eighteenth century, the central authorities settled non-urban Germans (the so-called Swabians) in planned villages on originally Hungarian territory; and finally 5. Serbs fleeing from the Turks received permission to come into Hungary and were granted local autonomy.¹⁰⁸

The implications of Szekfű's argument were obvious. The "alien" Serbs and Romanians were relative newcomers who had taken advantage of Hungary's misfortunes to move into better lands and therefore had no historic rights to the territories they had occupied. The depopulated Hungarian villages had been easy loot for Romanian shepherds and "tent-dwelling Serbs possessing the culture of the Gypsies". In Szekfű's analysis, the Ottoman Turks were the real culprits behind the destruction of Hungary, not the Habsburgs. Far from having oppressed their national minorities, the Hungarians themselves had been oppressed and squeezed into the background.

But Szekfű went even further. Underscoring the point made by Ottlik in his essay "New Hungaria and Eastern Switzerland", Szekfű went on to argue that Hungarian rulers had always protected the national minorities and had given free rein to their cultural aspirations. Taking the example of the Transylvanian Romanians, the historian argued the cradle of Romanian literature was not the Danubian Principalities but Transylvania. Transylvanian princes in the 17th and 18th centuries had established Romanian-language schools. The first Romanian books, Szekfű noted, were printed in Transylvania, where the first Romanian translation of the Bible had appeared as well. The historian also remarked that parallels in the cultural history of each of the former nationalities could be found.

Reacting to the growing trend of ethnohistory (*népiség* or *Volkstum* in German) in Hungarian historiography, Szekfű published a strong criticism of this intellectual current in *Magyar Szemle* in September 1934. The founder and foremost proponent of the ethnohistory school in Hungary was Szekfű's rival, Elemér Mályusz (1898–1989), who rejected the utility of the concept of a political nation (such as the old *natio hungarica*) and insisted instead on a definition of the nation based on the ethnic character of the people (*népiség*). Such a view of the nation, of course, stood diametrically opposed to the vision proclaimed in Ottlik's "New Hungaria Concept".

The book that motivated Szekfű to write his article was written not by Mályusz, however, but by a young historian named Miklós Asztalos. In his work, *The History of the Nationalities in Hungary* (1934), Asztalos had argued that it was Hungary's misfortune that, through no fault of her own, she had ended up in the multinational Habsburg Monarchy. The Monarchy inevitably had to collapse into national territories in 1918, for there had been no centralizing force to hold it together and combat local forces. The conclusion to be drawn from this, declared Szekfű, was that now Austria and Hungary were free to cultivate their own national independence free of the former nationalities. "Now all we needed was to celebrate a *Te Deum* on the day of Trianon instead of a requiem."¹⁰⁹ For Szekfű, the ideas that the scholars of ethnohistory were trying to popularize represented a dire threat to Hungary's future:

Regarding our national future no more serious error is imaginable than to believe that we are sufficient for our state, that in the Hungarian state no other population is necessary than those belonging to the Magyar nationality, and that the cohabitation of several nationalities in one state is not only impossible but a moral flaw, an undesirable phenomenon as well.¹¹⁰

"How does he imagine the future of St. Stephen's Empire, the thousand-year-old Hungary," continued Szekfű, "if he considers several peoples living side by side in one state a monstrous thing?" In conclusion, the editor-in-chief of *Magyar Szemle* categorically rejected a state theory based on ethnicity:

Regarding *our* state concept, the situation is different. The Germans, the French and the Italians can accept a theory of the state that can and must be filled with one single nation. We here in the Danubian Basin, as the heirs to the ancient Hungarian Empire, would testify to our immeasurable decline if we were to subscribe to this theory: we would betray our past, sell off our future like cheap peddlers, if we were to abandon that historical state concept, which bound together the Magyars with so many non-Magyar peoples in peace and protection over the course of a millennium! The *népiség* theory as a state-forming and defining factor is inappropriate in these regions: hundreds and thousands of geographical, economic and cultural facts speak against it.¹¹¹

The Hungary of Tomorrow

The plans of Rothermere and Ottlik were not the only ones to appear in the 1920s. In 1929 a book was published in Paris entitled *La Hongrie de demain: Critiques des programmes révisionnistes*. The author, a Swiss journalist named Aldo Dami, outlined a comprehensive plan for redressing what he saw as the injustices

of Versailles. Having spent considerable time in Hungary and having made a thorough examination of the available data, Dami (whose work was at least in part funded by the Hungarian Press Office)¹¹² came to the arguable conclusion that the dismemberment of the Habsburg Monarchy had been a historical necessity. The problem was not the fact that historical Hungary had been dismantled, Dami reasoned, but rather that the peacemakers had carried out their task poorly. Referring to the former minorities Dami wrote that

in their great majority, these populations ... do not wish to return to Hungarian sovereignty. The dismemberment of the Dual Monarchy, and in particular the amputation of Hungary, is therefore a done deal, and justice does not require us to turn the clock back.¹¹³

Rejecting both an integral revisionist and a strictly ethnic revisionist solution, Dami compared his own plan, which he detailed in the book's conclusion, with both that of Lord Rothermere and the one proposed by the Hungarian Revisionist League. The author offered his own proposal to modify the borders and hold plebiscites in Eastern Slovakia and Ruthenia, a plan much more detailed than Rothermere's and similar to that of the League. Dami believed his borders would provide the region with equilibrium: by returning to Hungary 3.5 million inhabitants, the total population would increase to roughly 11.5 million, ranking the country's population numerically between that of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Slightly less than 2 million Magyars would be returned. The 1.5 million non-Magyars included in the enlarged Hungary would give her a minority population roughly equal to the number of Magyars left outside the country, thus providing some balance and motivating the neighboring states to treat their own minorities better.¹¹⁴ In a lengthy review, Jancsó appreciated Dami's recognition of the injustice of Trianon. Without sharing Dami's view that Austria-Hungary would have fallen apart even without the World War, Jancsó did agree with the Swiss author's view that much of the revisionist movement's activities had been counter-productive.¹¹⁵

All other proposals,¹¹⁶ including the so-called "Turanian-Slav Peasant State", were also rejected as unfeasible. The Turanian-Slav Peasant State had been a proposal put forth by members of the Miklós Bartha Society. In short, the plan advocated putting political power in the hands of the peasantry. Since the Magyar and Slav peasantry shared a largely similar way of life, they would be able to coexist in a Greater Hungary. Moreover, Hungary would be able to reach an understanding with the peasant states surrounding her.

Szekfű in this case saw the Turanian-Slav project as a well-intentioned but misinformed attempt on the part of the younger generation to link the Hungarians with Slavic peoples based on a perceived commonality of peasant culture. This Szekfű refuted, again turning to the era of the Turkish Occupation. Before

Mohács, the lifestyle of the Hungarian peasantry had closely resembled that of Western Europe. Moreover, the adjective “Turanian” was for Szekfű not really descriptive of Hungarians; the term smacked too much of Asia for him. The worst element of the plan, however, was the suggestion of creating a peasant state, which, Szekfű argued, would not find acceptance among the other strata of Hungarian society.¹¹⁷

The Hungarian Minorities

“Since Trianon, Hungarian national policy has centered on two points: revision and the question of the Magyar national minorities suffering under foreign domination.”¹¹⁸ From the very first issue, *Magyar Szemle* provided extensive coverage of the fate of the Hungarians left outside of the country. In his inaugural message to the readers, Szekfű described the strengthening of national self-consciousness among all Hungarians as one of the journal’s most important tasks:

We know well that this common self-consciousness cannot be created from one day to the next. The road has stations along the way. One of them is the maintenance and solidifying of the spiritual bonds which tie the Hungarians squeezed within the borders of Trianon with their cut-off kinsmen. The new national consciousness must connect everyone, inside and outside the borders, whether there will be borders or not.¹¹⁹

Without ever abandoning the pursuit of integral revisionism, Bethlen clearly recognized that the only form of revision that had any chance of consideration by Western policymakers was that based on ethnic borders. Naturally, the more than three million Hungarians living across the borders represented Hungary’s strongest argument in favor of rectifying any of the territorial provisions of Trianon.

In the interest of keeping the Hungarian public aware of the situation of the Hungarian minorities across the borders, *Magyar Szemle* assembled an impressive staff of minority experts. These experts, many of whom originated from the annexed territories, were men who possessed a profound knowledge not only of the Hungarian minorities but also of the states in which they lived. In the first few years of *Magyar Szemle*, the Transylvanian scholar Benedek Jancsó, who had joined the editorial board at Szekfű’s personal request, served as the review’s first specialist on minority affairs. Jancsó had been the author of several lengthy works on Transylvanian history, concentrating in particular on the Romanians of Hungary. One of his most important books, the *History of the Romanian Irredentist Movements*, appeared in 1920. After his death this task fell partly on the shoulders of Zsombor Szász (1871–1945?), *Magyar Szemle*’s expert on Romanian affairs. Developments in Czechoslovakia were analyzed by the journalist and historian

Lajos Steier (1885–1938), Ernő Flachbart (1896–1955), the librarian Endre Moravek (1902–1971) and later Lajos Gogolák (1910–1987). József Bajza (1885–1938), Imre Prokopy (1873–1944) and József Berkes (1895–1946) provided coverage of events in the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The journal never dealt with the situation of the Hungarian minority in Austria on a regular basis.

Starting with the inaugural issue the journal featured a semi-regular column, “Kisebbségi magyar sors” (Hungarian Minority Fate), which in 1929 was rechristened “Szomszédaink” (Our Neighbors). In the first article, “Hungarian Society and the Fate of the Hungarian Minorities under Foreign Rule”, Jancsó stressed that the Hungarian nation bears the heavy responsibility of supporting their brothers left outside the Trianon borders. Without mentioning Rothermere, he refers to the wild enthusiasm evoked by the lord’s efforts. Instead of blinding themselves with the illusion that territorial revision will take place in the near future, Hungarians, Jancsó cautioned, must dedicate themselves to more difficult, less exciting tasks. In the author’s view, preserving the cultural unity of the Hungarian linguistic community represented the necessary first step to achieving the nation’s ultimate goal of restoring historical Hungary:

There are two kinds of integrity: territorial and racial, or rather national. The latter is identical with cultural unity. Territory could be taken from us, but under favorable and fortunate circumstances, if the opportunity arises, we might get that back, because that will not be destroyed. Besides the mountains, valleys and rivers, the homeland is made up of the people who live in it. If as a result of foreign oppression, the Hungarians in these territories disappear in part or in whole, then we will lose our strongest title to the territories.¹²⁰

While Hungarian public opinion, in its romanticism and its ignorance of foreign affairs, clamored for territorial integrity, “in Europe’s present international and constitutional situation, only a Hungarian foreign policy rooted in the soil of cultural integrity can bear fruit and be useful to our kin under foreign rule”.¹²¹ Further on he noted that

[i]t is much more difficult to reach into people’s pockets to support the cultural and economic ambitions of our separated kin than to hold forth on how Hungarian heroism, even against the will of Europe, will restore the territorial integrity of St. Stephen’s Empire, not the day after tomorrow, but certainly in the short term.¹²²

Of the four special issues which the journal devoted to one particular theme, the October, 1928 number featured fourteen essays dedicated to the situation of the Hungarian minorities after ten years of foreign rule. Two essays surveyed the cultural and political life of the Magyars of Czechoslovakia, one each on the Hungar-

ians of Yugoslavia and Austria, and seven articles devoted to the Magyar minority of Romania.

Following his lecture tour in Great Britain in November 1934, Bethlen came to the realization that Hungarian demands for complete restoration of the country's historic borders enjoyed no support abroad. Instead of intensifying calls for revisionism, he began to emphasize the need to concentrate attention on the situation of the Hungarian minorities. Echoing Jancsó's warning, Bethlen declared in 1934 that "... if we do not make sure that the life of our Hungarian brothers in Transylvania, the Highlands and the South is guaranteed, there will no longer be any Hungarians in whose interest revision could be carried out".¹²³

This shift in emphasis was clearly perceptible on the pages of *Magyar Szemle*. Beginning in 1935, the journal began to include a rotating column devoted to one of the minorities living in the Little Entente States. Accordingly, the title varied monthly ("The Hungarian Minority in Romania/Czechoslovakia/Yugoslavia"). The novel feature of this minority column was that it consisted of reports assembled by local correspondents: Gyula Zathureczky (1907–1987) in Romania, Lajos Fekete (1900–1973) in Yugoslavia and János Ölvedi (1914–1983) in Czechoslovakia. The minority reports appeared until the end of 1938, after Hungary had begun to recover some of the annexed territories.

V. *Magyar Szemle* in the Age of Revision

Revisionism in Practice

As is well known, beginning in late 1938 Hungary began to recover some of the territories annexed at Trianon. The recovery took place in four stages, with Hungary gaining territory and population once a year until 1941. On November 2, 1938, in the wake of the Munich Agreement, the Axis Powers awarded a significant strip of Southern Slovakia to Hungary (First Vienna Award) after prolonged Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations failed to reach a compromise. After the final dissolution of the Czechoslovak state in March 1939, the Hungarian army moved in to occupy Subcarpathian Rus', thus gaining for Hungary the long-coveted common border with Poland. In August 1940, after further futile talks between Hungary and Romania, Hitler awarded the northern part of Transylvania to the former under the terms of the Second Vienna Award. Finally, in April 1941, Hungary joined the assault on Yugoslavia initiated by Nazi Germany and occupied the Vojvodina. In total, Hungary's territory increased from 93,073 km² to 171,753 km² and the population jumped from 9,319,992 to 14,683,323. Just over half of the 5,363,331 new inhabitants (2.7 million or 50.4%) were ethnic Magyars.¹²⁴

In the summer of 1940, during this period of successful revisionism, *Magyar Szemle* published one final article from the pen of László Ottlik. In “The Tasks of the Hungarian Nationalities Policy”, while Ottlik continued to cherish the idea of a return to St. Stephen’s Hungary, he now began to acknowledge the flaws of Hungary’s pre-war nationality policies. Most interestingly, departing from his position in “Pax Hungarica”, he even conceded openly that there had been a deliberate policy of Magyarization, though it had been well intentioned. “We must declare the policy of Magyarization to have been flawed,” admitted Ottlik, “not because it would have led the nation into a catastrophe, which it did not, but because it had set itself an impossible goal.” After reviewing the history of the Magyarization policy, Ottlik declared:

There is no doubt that sooner or later we would have had to break radically with this policy, even if the World War and the misfortune of Trianon had not taken place ... We cannot state that the future of Hungary, the new thousand-year glory of Saint Stephen’s Crown, can only be assured if all the peoples of the Holy Crown are successfully united linguistically through Magyarization.¹²⁵

Without mentioning his “New Hungaria Concept”, Ottlik reiterated some of the same ideas he had written over a decade earlier, when the prospects for successful border revision had seemed less hopeful. Now he wrote not of granting the various nationalities autonomy, but rather of making them feel once again that Hungary is their true home. “To provide a true home to the people,” Ottlik reflected,

means that conditions must be created in which the citizens of [another] nationality do not feel themselves to be a minority, second-class subjects ... For this requirement to be realized, it is necessary merely to apply the principles of our nationality policy, which stems from our constitution and has long been rooted in our laws.¹²⁶

Hungary’s leaders, it was true, had made mistakes in the past, but as Ottlik pointed out,

[o]ur errors had occurred wholly in regard to culture. These errors had not been apparent to us in the past because our characteristically legalistic mentality tended to apply the principle of equal rights in a slavishly liberal, that is, uniform manner.

Alluding to the heavy-handed Magyarization of the administration in the newly occupied lands, Ottlik cautioned the new administrators not to look at the laws only, but rather the facts, for

patriotism does not depend on the language we speak, but patriotism can be instilled in us only in a language we understand, which speaks unencumbered to the soul.¹²⁷

Reflecting on the partial results of the Second Vienna Award, László Ravasz virtually conceded that integral revisionism was an impossible goal. The joy over the return of Northern Transylvania was tempered by resignation over the partition of the territory between Hungary and Romania. “The Vienna Award,” wrote Ravasz, “returned to Hungary the smaller, poorer and more Hungarian half of Transylvania. It was a wise policy to make do with the smaller and poorer half in order that we might receive the more Hungarian half.”¹²⁸ Nevertheless, the author could also declare optimistically that “Transylvania has returned. This return is now an historical fact, an undeniable eternal reality.”¹²⁹

By this time it had become all too clear to most observers that the “New Hungaria Concept” was no longer a feasible option. Not only were the Axis Powers unwilling to help restore historical Hungary, the nationalities themselves had no interest in living together with the Magyars. As Lajos Gogolák observed:

That Hungarian mentality, which desires a true fresh start in Central Europe, must face this reality coldly and objectively. In possession of their new theories of the state, the new nation states do not recognize the hierarchy of “New Hungary” and the Idea of Saint Stephen, for in these [ideas] they seek recollections from before 1914; and in any event they oppose the revival of the historical legacy, since this is at odds with the emancipated self-awareness of the national middle classes that have grown considerably since then, and they believe it to be noble-historical in origin.¹³⁰

Time and hope, it appeared, had run out for a New Hungaria. Although Gogolák and his colleagues had no way of knowing it, *Magyar Szemle* itself also had very little time remaining to it.

The End of Magyar Szemle and the Revisionist Movement

The German invasion of Hungary on March 19, 1944 opened a new, tragic chapter in the nation’s history. Most significantly, the country’s Jewish citizens, who until that date had faced legal discrimination but relatively little physical danger, were now exposed to the full horror of the Final Solution. Hungarian anti-Nazi organizations and publications were shut down and their members hunted. The Nazi occupation forced *Magyar Szemle* to cease publication just shy of its 200th issue, though at that time it was hoped that the halt in operations would be temporary. The occupation and final stages of the war took a heavy toll on the journal. Many of the periodical’s prominent figures were forced to go into hiding,

including István Bethlen, Gyula Szekfű, Gusztáv Gratz and József Balogh. Balogh, of Jewish origin, was captured and murdered by the Gestapo. The “architect” of the New Hungaria, László Ottlik, disappeared during the siege of Budapest in January 1945. Likewise, the periodical’s Romanian affairs specialist, Zsombor Szász, vanished without a trace. Of all these losses, the most prominent was Bethlen himself, who was arrested by the Soviets and deported to Russia after having offered them his services. He eventually died in a Moscow prison hospital in 1946. Gratz’s health was seriously compromised during the last phase of the war, and he died in 1946.¹³¹ Szekfű survived the war, as did his successor as editor, Sándor Eckhardt. After the war, the latter had hoped to resume publication of the journal. In September 1945 Eckhardt received permission from the Interior Minister Ferenc Erdei to resume publishing activities, but financial and political problems prevented this from happening.¹³²

The signing of the Treaty of Paris in February 10, 1947 restored Hungary’s pre-1938 borders.¹³³ In contrast to the Treaty of Trianon, the new treaty was a much shorter document comprising seven parts and forty-two total articles. It restored Hungary’s frontiers as of January 1, 1938 with one small adjustment to the Czechoslovak-Hungarian border.¹³⁴ Once again, the country had ended up on the losing side of a disastrous war. Although British and American officials floated proposals for moderate border revision in the immediate post-war period, the Soviets resolutely opposed giving Hungarian claims any consideration. Thus, by this time hopes of attaining a limited revision of the country’s borders on even an ethnographic basis had faded. Perhaps most telling were the words of the one-time ideologue of the Bethlen régime, Szekfű. In his last major work, *After Revolution* (1947), Szekfű wrote that

[a]fter this all our revisionist ambitions and propaganda had to fall silent once and forever ... The governments [of Hungary] ... in their propaganda incessantly referred to Saint Stephen, as if the oppression of minorities was in keeping with his spirit. In this way, they compromised and discredited Saint Stephen just as much as they did the concepts of nation and Christianity.¹³⁵

The possibility of recovering any lost territory had passed Hungary by; the forum which had most vigorously and eloquently promoted this cause could not be revived either.

VI. Conclusion

From its inception in 1927 until its sudden demise in 1944, *Magyar Szemle* embraced the goal of revision of the Treaty of Trianon. Practically every number

published addressed the question from some angle. Although revisionism had many dimensions, the most significant from the journal's point of view were the fate of the ethnic Magyar minorities outside Hungary and the restoration of the country's historical borders. Not surprisingly, the revisionism on the pages of *Magyar Szemle* was "integral" in outlook, in keeping with the convictions of the journal's founder, Bethlen, and its editor-in-chief, Szekfű. Writers consistently rejected proposals that sought to adjust the country's borders on an ethnographic basis. Instead they advocated a return to the "Empire of Saint Stephen". To achieve this improbable goal, *Magyar Szemle* articulated a utopian project that sought to reconstruct Greater Hungary by winning over the country's former national minorities to leave their new states and come back to Hungary. It was hoped that through guarantees of equal rights and regional autonomy, Slovaks, Ruthenes, Croats and Transylvanian Romanians would see the error of their ways and return to their "homeland" (*patria*).

Such a definition of nationhood had become completely anachronistic long before the interwar period. It was not based on any reality, consistently underestimated the extent of national awareness among peoples like the Slovaks and the Ruthenes, and was hopelessly at odds with modern East European nationalism. The State Concept of St. Stephen simply could not compete with the modern nation state, which was seen as the fulfillment of the ultimate goal of East European nationalist movements. Even where the writers of *Magyar Szemle* were undoubtedly correct to refute the existence of such constructs as "Czechoslovak" or "Yugoslav" nationhood (which they constantly labeled as "fiction"), what they offered in place of such national identities (for example, Hungarus) rang just as false in the ears of Hungary's neighbors.

The idea of a "New Hungaria" proved enticing to many Magyars, many of whom could not comprehend why their neighbors did not feel the same way. Naturally, the logical next step for Slovaks and Croats, after parting ways with the Czechs and the Serbs, was not to live in a federal union with the Magyars, but rather to establish nation-states of their own and cultivate their own independent nationhood. This is precisely what took place after Nazi Germany shattered Hungary's neighbors to the north and south.

At the same time, Ottlik and others never abandoned the notion of the Magyars' historic mission in the Danubian Basin. For all of their assurances and friendly words, neither Bethlen nor Szekfű nor Ottlik ever truly envisioned an arrangement wherein each nationality would be completely equal. The ethnic Magyars were predestined to maintain their preeminent position among the other peoples of the region. To their credit, perhaps, Szekfű and his followers defined the nation not in racial or linguistic terms but as an historical formation. They argued for a national identity based on citizenship in a common state and on a common past. While this

plan met with widespread (though by no means unanimous) public approval at home, abroad it failed to impress the very people it sought to win over.

Despite its espousal of integral revisionism, *Magyar Szemle* still represented a moderate form of revision when compared to the frenzied irredentism of a large segment of Hungarian society between the two world wars. The journal generally eschewed overtly chauvinistic discourse and even criticized irredentist excesses. It strove to warn Hungarians not to delude themselves with false hopes. Unfortunately, Hungaria itself was constructed on false hopes, and its architects discovered this only at a very late date.

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Notes

- ¹ Basic biographical data for most persons mentioned in the text have been collected from Ágnes Kenyeres, ed., *Magyar életrajzi lexikon*, 4 vols. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985–1991). Occasionally I have had to consult the *A magyar társadalom lexikonja* (Budapest: Magyar Társadalom Lexikonja Kiadóvállalat, 1930).
- ² Benedek Jancsó, "A holnap Magyarországa." *Magyar Szemle* (hereafter *MSz*), July 1929, p. 218.
- ³ There exists an extensive literature on Trianon. Among the most important books in Hungarian are the following: Mária Ormos, *Padovától Trianonig 1918–1920* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1983), a path-breaking work focusing primarily on the role of France in creating the peace settlement; Ignác Romsics, *A trianoni békeszerződés* (Budapest: Osiris, 2001), the most recent and concise summary; and the massive tome of sources edited by Miklós Zeidler, *Trianon* (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), which provides a comprehensive bibliography. In English, two classic works are: Francis Deák, *Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference: The Diplomatic History of the Treaty of Trianon* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1942), a detailed account of the negotiations from the armistice of November 1918 to the ratification of the treaty in November 1920; and C. A. Macartney *Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences 1919–1937* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), which surveys each country affected by Trianon and remains a goldmine of information.
- ⁴ Deák, *Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 173.
- ⁵ The story of the Hungarian delegation's activities and experience in Paris is related in Romsics, *A trianoni békeszerződés*, Chapter 6, pp. 159–182.

- 6 Several editions of the treaty have been published. For this paper I consulted *The Treaties of Peace, 1919–1923*, vol. I (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1924), pp. 461–649. A recent Hungarian edition is contained in András Gerő, ed., *Sorsdöntések: A kiegyezés – 1867, A trianoni béke – 1920, A párizsi béke – 1947* (Budapest: Göncöl, 1989), pp. 166–253. The volume also includes a representative sampling of the reaction to the treaty in the press and among politicians.
- 7 The name *Partium* (*partes regni Hungariae adnexae*) was an administrative relic that referred to several eastern counties which had come under the administration of the Princes of Transylvania after the Turkish occupation of Central Hungary in 1541. Henry Marczali, *Hungary in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), p. 332, n. 1.
- 8 The data in this table comes from Romsics, *Trianoni békeszerződés*, pp. 229–230, and Rothschild, *Eastern Europe*, pp. 155–156. It should be noted briefly that all data on Hungary's population is based on the last census taken before World War I (1910). Thus, it cannot account for civilian and military casualties suffered during the war, the influx of refugees as well as natural demographic trends. Moreover, after the war most of the countries in the region distorted population statistics to some degree.
- 9 Approximately 44% of all ethnic Albanians were left outside the borders of the independent Albania established in 1912 by the Great Powers (740,000 of 1,330,000). See Nicholas C. Pano, "Albania," in Joseph Held, ed., *The Columbia History of Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1992), p. 18.
- 10 Romsics, *Trianoni békeszerződés*, pp. 124–125.
- 11 Rothschild, *East Central Europe*, p. 192.
- 12 Perhaps as many as 350,000 refugees may have entered Trianon Hungary in the immediate post-war years, which would help account for the difference in total population of Hungary indicated in Tables 1 & 2. By 1930, there were more than 530,000 residents of Hungary who had been born in the annexed territories, just over 6% of the population. See Lajos Thirring, "Népesség és népmozgalom (Magyarország Trianontól napjainkig)," *Magyar Statisztikai Szemle* 16:4 (1938), pp. 383 and 390.
- 13 Miklós Zeidler, *A revíziós gondolat* (Budapest: Osiris, 2001), p. 16.
- 14 Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919* (New York: Grosset and Dunlop, 1965), p. 34.
- 15 Had such a Hungarian affairs committee been in operation, it may well have prevented the transfer of so many ethnic Magyars to the surrounding states. Rothschild, *East Central Europe*, pp. 156–157.; Alan Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking in Paris, 1919* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. 148.
- 16 They are buried in the cathedrals of Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) and Kassa (Košice) respectively. Rákóczi's remains had been returned to Hungary for burial only in 1906.
- 17 Madách was from Alsó-Sztrégova, Mikszáth from Szklabonya; both are located in Southern Slovakia. Arany came from Nagyszalonta, Ady from Érmindszent, both in Romania. All of these places are located quite close to the border with Hungary.
- 18 Ormos, *Padovától Trianonig*, pp. 198–199; Romsics, *Trianoni békeszerződés*, p. 122.
- 19 Herder had written in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1791) that "Da sind sie jetzt unter Slawen, Deutschen, Wlachen und andern Völkern der geringere Teil des Landeseinwohner, und nach Jahrhunderten wird man vielleicht ihre Sprache kaum finden." In fact, Herder most likely took this from A.L. Schlözer, who in turn had quoted the Slovak A. Kollár. See Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, "Irodalom és művészetek a XVIII. század elejétől napjainkig," in László Kósa, ed., *A magyarságtudomány kézikönyve* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993), p. 555. On *nemzethalál*, see also Lóránt Czigány, *The Oxford History of Hungarian Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 103 and 114–116.

- 20 An excellent overview of cultural developments in interwar Hungary is Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, “A polgári társadalom korának művelődése II. (1920–1948),” in László Kósa, ed., *Magyar művelődéstörténet*, 2nd ed. (Budapest: Osiris, 2000), pp. 428–459; in English, Czirány, *Oxford History of Hungarian Literature*, Chapter XXI, pp. 361–380.
- 21 John Flournoy Montgomery, *Hungary: The Unwilling Satellite* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1947), p. 47.
- 22 Trianon was often compared to Mohács in this period, as well as to the Battle of Muhi in 1241, when the army of King Béla IV was routed by the Mongols. Jenő Horváth, *A milleniumtől Trianonig, Huszonöt év Magyarország történetéből, 1896–1920* (Budapest: A Szent István-Társulat, 1937), p. 290.
- 23 Steven B. Vardy, “The Impact of Trianon upon the Hungarian Mind: The Nature of Interwar Hungarian Irredentism,” *Hungarian Studies Review* 10:1 (Spring 1983), p. 22.
- 24 Zeidler, *Revíziós gondolat*, p. 51.
- 25 The Credo was the opening stanza of a poem written by a certain Mrs. Elemér Papp-Váry. See Miklós Zeidler, *A magyar irredenta kultusz a két világ háború között* (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2002), p. 52.
- 26 Katalin Sinkó, “A megsértett Hungária,” in Tamás Hofer, ed., *Magyarok kelet és nyugat között: a nemzetudat változó jelképei* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1996), p. 272. Even an irredentist greeting was invented: “Feltámadást!” (“Resurrection!”); see Zeidler, *Irredenta kultusz*, p. 73.
- 27 For photographs of the monuments, see the plates in Zeidler, *Irredenta kultusz*. The statue of the North depicted the wounded Hungaria, defended by a *kuruc* soldier. A small child, representing the innocent Slovaks, clings to the maiden’s knees. Interestingly, the Czechs often portrayed Slovaks in exactly the same way. See the Czech anti-Hungarian propaganda posters reproduced in Lajos Steier, *Ungarns Vergewaltigung. Oberungarn unter tschechischer Herrschaft* (Zurich: Amalthea Verlag, 1929), Table 37.
- 28 Zeidler, *Irredenta kultusz*, pp. 17–21.
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 77.
- 30 Montgomery, pp. 54–55.
- 31 Dezső Kosztolányi, ed., *Vérző Magyarország* (Budapest: Legrády, n.d. [1920]), pp. 200–201.
- 32 Mihály Babits, *Az ország, mappa szerint* (“The Country according to the Map”): “Soar, my soul, seek out my homeland!/The rolling hills, gentle Hungarian land!/And that open country already beyond the horizon/the Great Plain, where the sun rises./Soar, my soul, fly across my homeland!/From skyline to skyline, and once again/ To where your memory, the silent silk spider/Spins its thread, soar beyond the plains/And across where the foolish barriers stand:/And whatever the sword writes on the soil,/Do not relinquish your cliffs from beside your slopes:/If this was once your homeland, thus it shall be forever;/No one but your sentiment may judge!
- 33 Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848–1914* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 2000), pp. 275–277.
- 34 On Rákosi’s “30 million Magyars,” see Ignác Romsics, “A magyar birodalmi gondolat,” in *Múltról a mának* (Budapest: Osiris, 2004), p. 142. It is interesting to note that many of the most ardent revisionists were demonstrably not ethnic Magyars. Rákosi, for example, was born Kremsner, and Ferenc Herczeg (or Franz Herzog) allegedly learned to speak Hungarian fluently only at the *gimnázium*.
- 35 The American delegation at the peace conference had initially wanted to leave Csallóköz to Hungary, but the other representatives, particularly the French, wanted to grant it to Czechoslovakia out of economic and transport considerations. False demographic data furnished by Edvard Beneš also played a role. Here is a good example of the Entente Powers’ willingness to

- forego the ethnic principal when deciding between an ally and a defeated enemy. Deák, *Hungary at Paris*, pp. 29 and 68–69; Romsics, *Trianoni békeszerződés*, pp. 121–122.
- 36 Romsics, *Trianoni békeszerződés*, pp. 115–119; Deák, *Hungary at Paris*, p. 67.
- 37 Deák, *Hungary at Paris*, p. 48.
- 38 László Németh, “Új reformkor felé,” in László Németh, *A minőség forradalma. Kisebbségben*, vol. 1 (Budapest: Püski, 1992), p. 35.
- 39 It is true that some Populist and associated writers, members of the “New Spiritual Front” (*Új Szellemi Front*) met personally with Prime Minister Gyula Gömbös in 1935, but largely to no result. See Szegedy-Maszák, “A polgári társadalom,” p. 449. Gömbös himself had drafted a plan for border revision that was neither integral nor strictly ethnic-based, but it was never made public. See Zeidler, *Revíziós gondolat*, pp. 150–155.
- 40 Tibor Joó, *Magyar nacionalizmus* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1940), pp. 90–91.
- 41 The prominent Hungarian medievalist Jenő Szűcs discussed the Admonitions of St. Stephen in the medieval context in his essay “István király *Intelmei* – István király állama,” in *Nemzet és történelem* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1974), pp. 359–379. In this essay Szűcs dismissed the various modern theories based upon St. Stephen’s legacy as “crooked games” (*hamis játékok*).
- 42 The historian Mária Ormos seems to have used the expression first. See Ignác Romsics, “A Horthy-rendszer jellegeről: historiográfiai áttekintés,” in *Múltról a mának*, p. 367.
- 43 See the interesting collection of essays by young Hungarian historians contained in Ignác Romsics, ed., *Trianon és a magyar politikai gondolkodás, 1920–1953* (Budapest: Osiris, 1998).
- 44 For details of Hungarian attempts to secure a peaceful revision of Trianon, see Eva S. Balogh, “Peaceful Revision: the Diplomatic Road to War,” *Hungarian Studies Review* 10:1 (Spring 1983), pp. 43–51; Pál Pritz, “Revíziós törekvések a magyar külpolitikában, 1920–1935,” in Pál Pritz, *Magyar diplomácia a két háború között* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1995), pp. 234–240.
- 45 “Covenant of the League of Nations,” in *The Treaties of Peace*, p. 18.
- 46 Tomáš Masaryk (1850–1937), first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, apparently considered the possibility of returning some predominantly Magyar territories to Hungary, but his public pronouncements on this issue were always promptly contradicted by his Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš, thus infuriating the Hungarians. For details, see Ignác Romsics, “Edvard Beneš and the Czechoslovak-Hungarian Border,” *The New Hungarian Quarterly* vol. 33 (Winter 1992), pp. 94–106.
- 47 Szegedy-Maszák, “A polgári társadalom korának művelődése,” p. 431.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 431.
- 49 Count Kunó Klebelsberg, “A magyar neonacionalizmus,” in Ferenc Glatz, ed., *Tudomány, kultúra, politika*, p. 436 (emphasis in the original).
- 50 On the Rothermere Campaign in general, see Ignác Romsics, “Magyarország helye a nap alatt. Lord Rothermere és a magyar revízió,” in *Múltról a mának*, pp. 249–263. There is also an earlier, quite readable account by Miklós Vásárhelyi, *A lord és a korona* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1977), especially pp. 62–92. The recent work by Gábor Bencsik, *Igazságot Magyarországnak! Lord Rothermere és a magyar revízió*, (Budapest: Magyar Mercurius, 2002) was not available to me.
- 51 The complete text of the article and the accompanying map are reprinted in Viscount Rothermere [Harold Sidney Harmsworth], *My Campaign for Hungary* (London: Eyre Spottiswoode, 1939), p. 60.
- 52 Rothermere, p. 63.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 66.

- 55 Ignác Romsics, “Magyarország helye a nap alatt. Lord Rothermere és a magyar revízió,” in *Múltról a mának*, pp. 251–253.
- 56 Ignác Romsics, *Bethlen István: politikai életrajz* (Budapest: Osiris, 1999) p. 263.
- 57 István Bethlen, “A Rothermere-akcióról és a kormány terveiről,” in *Bethlen István gróf beszédei és írásai*, vol. II. (Budapest: Géniusz, 1934), p. 190.
- 58 David Mitrany, quoted in “Acțiunea lordului Rothermere se sprijină pe fals și micuună,” *Universul*, August 5, 1927.
- 59 R. Seişanu, “Ungaria – un focar de agitații,” *Universul*, September 9, 1927.
- 60 Zeidler, *Revíziós gondolat*, p. 103. Unfortunately I was unable to consult Zeidler’s lengthy article on the League: “A Magyar Revíziós Liga,” *Századok* 1997:2, pp. 303–351.
- 61 Jenő Rákosi, *Trianontól Rothermereig* (Budapest: Horizont, n.d. [1928]), p. 6.
- 62 Tibor Huszár, “A Magyar Szemle körül,” *Valóság* 36:12 (1993), p. 69.
- 63 The Kornfeld family was of Jewish origin. Móric’s father Zsigmond (1852–1909) was born in Moravia and had made the family’s fortune. He was made a baron in 1909. Móric eventually converted to Catholicism. See Péter Újváry, ed., *Magyar zsidó lexikon* (Budapest: Makkabi, 2001), p. 505.
- 64 Huszár, “Magyar Szemle körül,” p. 70.
- 65 In total only six contributions from Bethlen appeared in *Magyar Szemle*, all published after he left office. In any event, most of these were reprints of speeches Bethlen had previously given in public.
- 66 The membership of the editorial board remained relatively stable at least through the beginning of 1933, after which *Magyar Szemle* no longer printed the members’ names on the issues. Magyary and Jancsó died in 1928 and 1930 respectively. Kálmán Hegedűs, a journalist and politician, joined the board in 1929, and Zsombor Szász, a lawyer and politician, in 1931.
- 67 Mihály Zichy, “Adalékok a Magyar Szemle történetéhez,” *Magyar Szemle* (new series) 6: December 1997, pp. 47–49.
- 68 On Balogh and *The Hungarian Quarterly*, see Tibor Frank, “Editing as Politics: József Balogh and *The Hungarian Quarterly*,” in *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-making: Studies on Hungarian Connections to Britain and America, 1848–1945* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1999), pp. 265–275.
- 69 The story behind the project to translate *Magyar Történet* into English is recounted in Tibor Frank, “Luring the English-speaking World: *Hungarian History* Diverted,” in *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-making: Studies on Hungarian Connections to Britain and America, 1848–1945* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999), pp. 276–295.
- 70 In the immediate post-World War II years within Hungary, it was virtually impossible to treat the Horthy Era in anything but a superficial manner. The Horthy-Bethlen system was labeled “fascist”, and the significance of the illegal communist movement was overemphasized. By the early 1980s, younger historians had begun to question this long-accepted paradigm. An early example is Ignác Romsics, *Ellenforradalom és konszolidáció* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1982), which focuses primarily on the Bethlen Era. More recently, several excellent surveys of Hungarian history during the interwar period have appeared, including Mária Ormos, *Magyarország a két világháború korában (1914–1945)* (Debrecen: Csokonai, 1998); and Jenő Gergely and Pál Pritz, *A trianoni Magyarország* (Budapest: Vince, 1998). A contemporary account, published only after 1989 and containing fascinating thumbnail sketches of the country’s leading statesmen, is Gusztáv Gratz, *Magyarország a két háború között* (Budapest: Osiris, 2001).
- In English, C.A. Macartney’s two-volume *October 15: a History of Modern Hungary* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1956), based on the contemporary press, unpublished memoirs, interviews of participants and archival materials, remains one of the most detailed

- accounts in any language. Equally interesting, though much less sympathetic to the Horthy régime, is the part history, part memoir of the liberal writer Paul Ignotus, *Hungary* (New York: Praeger, 1972). A concise account providing much statistical data is the sound chapter on Hungary in Joseph Rothschild's classic textbook, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974).
- 71 The text of the treaty can be found in *League of Nations – Treaty Series* 67:1–3 (1927), pp. 400–409.
- 72 István Bethlen, “Beszámoló beszéd Debrecenben (Mit tett a kormány 1926 óta),” in *Bethlen István gróf beszédei és írásai*, vol. II (Budapest: Génius, 1934), pp. 210–211.
- 73 There is one extensive study on revisionism in *Magyar Szemle*, Dénes Némédi, “A Magyar Szemle revíziós nacionalizmusának szerkezetéről,” *Történelmi Szemle* 15:1–2 (1972), pp. 75–110. Némédi treats the topic in great detail, but the article is somewhat marred by the author's openly hostile stance to his subject. On the question of Transylvania, see the brief but useful article by Domonkos Szőke, “A Magyar Szemle és az Erdély-kérdés,” in István Rácz, ed., *Tanulmányok Erdély történetéről* (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1988), pp. 160–166.
- 74 Benedek Jancsó, “Rothermere lord akciója és a Magyar Békerevíziós Liga megalakulása,” *MSz*, September 1927, p. 76.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- 76 Károly Ihrig, “Mit hozna vissza a Rothermere-vonal?” *MSz*, December 1927, p. 369.
- 77 György Ottlik, “Külpolitikai szemle,” *MSz*, June 1928, p. 180.
- 78 György Ottlik, “Külpolitikai szemle,” *MSz*, April 1928, p. 401.
- 79 Gusztáv Gratz, “Békerevízió és Népszövetség,” *MSz*, June 1928, p. 104.
- 80 There is surprisingly little information on Ottlik. He is not included in the Hungarian Biographical Lexicon. For a brief but informative biographical sketch, see József Szabadfalvi, “Jogfilozófiai töredékek: Ottlik László normatánának rekonstrukciója,” in Miklós Szabó, ed., *Regula Iuris. Szabály és/vagy norma a jogelméletben*. (Miskolc: Bibor Kiadó, 2004), pp. 273–281. I am grateful to Dr. Szabadfalvi for sending me a copy of this article. See also the article by Zoltán Major in the newspaper of the right-wing MIÉP “Politikatörténeti fogalmak Ottlik László (1895–1945) munkásságában.” Retrieved on March 7, 2004 from www.magyarforum.hu.
- 81 László Ottlik, “Magyar nemzet – cseh birodalom,” *MSz*, February, 1928, pp. 112–121.
- 82 At the time of the signing of the Italian-Hungarian treaty in April, 1927, Mussolini had apparently convinced Bethlen that Czechoslovakia should be considered Hungary's primary enemy. See Romsics, *Bethlen*, pp. 260–261. Incidentally, the Ottliks descended from a noble family from Upper Hungary.
- 83 László Ottlik, “Új Hungária felé,” *MSz*, September, 1928, p. 1.
- 84 Ottlik, “Új Hungária felé,” p. 4.
- 85 After the Compromise of 1867 between Austria and Hungary, the Hungarian Parliament had confirmed Croatia's distinct legal status within the kingdom by passing into law a “mini-compromise”, the so-called *Nagodba* of 1868. This arrangement, however, was embraced by only a minority of Croatian politicians, and the Hungarian government had often violated at least the spirit, if not the letter, of the law. See Robert A. Kann – Zdeněk V. David, *The Peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), pp. 397–400.
- 86 The Union of Three Nations, formalized in 1438 in response to the peasant revolt of the previous year, referred to political nations, not modern ethnic nations. In practice, the vast majority of Romanians were excluded from power, since they belonged to the peasantry, which was not represented in the Union. On the Three Nations, see Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804* (Seattle: U. Washington Press, 1978), pp. 146–150.

- 87 Ottlik, “Új Hungária felé,” p. 9.
- 88 It is worth noting that several of the neighboring languages do make a clear distinction between “Hungary/Hungarian” (state) and “Magyar” (ethnicity). For example, in Slovak, the terms *Uhorsko* (“historical Hungary”) and the corresponding adjective *uhorskýy* contrast with *Madarsko* (“Hungary”) and *madarskýy*. Romanian likewise has both *unguresc* and *maghiar* with a similar distribution of meaning.
- 89 Ottlik, “Új Hungária felé,” p. 4.
- 90 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 91 Anikó Kovács-Bertrand, *Die ungarische Revisionismus nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Der publizistische Kampf gegen den Friedensvertrag von Trianon (1918–1931)* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1997), p. 223.
- 92 Zeidler, *Revíziós gondolat*, p. 144, n. 122.
- 93 Lóránt Péteri, “Bethlen István,” in Ignác Romsics, ed., *Trianon és a magyar politikai gondolkodás, 1920–1953* (Budapest: Osiris, 1998), pp. 31–48.
- 94 kl., “Új Hungária felé – sajtóvisszhang,” *MSz*, January 1929, p. 73.
- 95 Oszkár Jászi, *Magyarország jövője és a Dunai Egyesült Államok*, 3rd ed. (Budapest: Új Magyarország Rt., 1918).
- 96 For the text of the plan, see Miklós Zeidler, ed., *Trianon* (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), pp. 33–35.
- 97 The text of the law is in Ignác Romsics, ed., *Magyar történeti szöveggyűjtemény, 1914–1999*, vol. I (Budapest: Osiris, 2000), pp. 75–76.
- 98 László Ottlik, “Új Hungária és Keleti Svájc,” *MSz*, October 1929, p. 114.
- 99 *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- 100 László Ottlik, “Pax Hungarica,” *MSz*, November 1934, p. 289.
- 101 *Ibid.*, p. 290.
- 102 *Ibid.*, p. 297.
- 103 Kálmán Pongrácz, “Új Hungaria eszméje és a mai fiatalság,” in Miklós Asztalos, ed., *Jancsó Benedek emlékkönyv* (Budapest: Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1931), p. 408.
- 104 Ferenc Szálasi, “Út és cél,” in *Szálasi Ferenc alapvető munkája és a munkás-, paraszt- és értelmiségi nagytanácson elmondott beszédei* (Buenos Aires: A Hungarista Mozgalom kiadása, 1959), p. 10. Excerpts from Szálasi’s writings in English are available in Eugen Weber, *Varieties of Fascism* (Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1964), pp. 156–164.
- 105 Zeidler, *Revíziós gondolat*, pp. 128–130, especially the map on p. 129.
- 106 Ferenc Szálasi, “Cél és követelések,” in Romsics, ed., *Történeti szöveggyűjtemény*, pp. 268–275.
- 107 During the initial phases of the war, when the fate of the Monarchy remained unclear and the demands of the nationalities less radical, Hungarian oppression was often dated only from 1867. See for example the brief essay by Thomas Čapek, “The Slovaks of Hungary,” in Thomas Čapek, ed., *Bohemia under Hapsburg Misrule* (New York: Revell, 1915), pp. 113–122.
- 108 Gyula Szekfű, “Trianon revíziója és a történetírás,” *MSz*, August 1931, p. 334.
- 109 Gyula Szekfű, “Népiség, nemzet és állam,” *MSz*, September 1934.
- 110 *Ibid.*
- 111 *Ibid.*
- 112 Recently one historian has even questioned how much of the book was Dami’s own work. See Balázs Ablonczy, “Trianon-legendák,” in Ignác Romsics, ed., *Mitoszok, legendák, tévhitek a 20. századi magyar történelemről* (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), p. 158.
- 113 Aldo Dami, *La Hongrie de demain. Critique des programmes révisionnistes* (Paris: André Depleuch, 1929), p. 62.
- 114 Dami, pp. 152–154.

- 115 Benedek Jancsó, "A holnap Magyarország," *MSz*, July 1929, p. 213.
- 116 Somewhat surprisingly, a rather detailed revisionist program written by an Italian journalist and prolific translator of Hungarian literature, Franco Vellani-Dionisi (1905–1942), seems to have evoked no response from the writers of *Magyar Szemle*. On this plan, see Zeidler, *Revíziós gondolat*, pp. 141–143.
- 117 Gyula Szekfű, "A turáni-szláv parasztállam," *MSz*, January 1929, pp. 30–37.
- 118 Jancsó, "Holnap Magyarország," p. 218.
- 119 Gyula Szekfű, "A magyar folyóirat problémája," *MSz*, September 1927, pp. 2–3.
- 120 Benedek Jancsó, "A magyar társadalom és az idegen uralom alá került magyar kisebbség sorsa," *MSz*, September 1927, p. 53.
- 121 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- 122 *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- 123 Romsics, *Bethlen*, p. 363.
- 124 Ignác Romsics, *Magyarország története a XX. században*, 2nd ed. (Budapest: Osiris, 2001), p. 252.
- 125 László Ottlik, "A magyar nemzetiségi politika feladatai," *MSz*, August, 1940, p. 57.
- 126 *Ibid.*, pp. 61–62.
- 127 Ottlik, "A magyar nemzetiségi," pp. 63–64.
- 128 László Ravasz, "Erdély," *MSz*, October 1940, p. 228.
- 129 *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- 130 Lajos Gogolák, "Közép-Európa népei," *MSz*, November 1943, pp. 242–243.
- 131 Romsics, *Bethlen*, p. 443.
- 132 Zichy, "Adalékok," pp. 56–57.
- 133 For the text of the treaty, see Amelia C. Leiss and Raymond Dennett, eds., *European Peace Treaties after World War II: Negotiations and Texts of Treaties with Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Finland* (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1954), pp. 273–297; in Hungarian, Gerő, *Sorsdöntések*, pp. 299–316.
- 134 In order to secure the bridgehead at Bratislava, Czechoslovakia had demanded the cession of five strategically located villages (Oroszvár, Dunacsún, Horvátjárfalu, Rajka and Bezenye). The Allies awarded the first three to Czechoslovakia and left the last two in Hungary.
- 135 Gyula Szekfű, *Forradalom után* (Reprint edition) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1983), p. 69.