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PhD dissertation

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Contested Self-Governance: Dilemmas of Security in Western Hungary (1867-1918)

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Elvitatott önkormányzás: A biztonság dilemmái Nyugat-Magyarországon (1867-1918)

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I have written this dissertation independently and without any assistance other than that which is indicated. I consider this dissertation to be my own intellectual product.

Budapest, 20 June 2024

Tamás Székely

Erklärung

Ich erkläre, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbstständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt habe. Die Dissertation betrachte ich als mein eigenes geistiges Produkt.

Budapest, den 20. Juni 2024

Tamás Székely

Nyilatkozat

Kijelentem, hogy a jelen munkát önállón készítettem, és semmilyen más segédeszközt nem használtam a feltüntetetteken kívül. Az értekezést saját szellemi termékemnek tekintem.

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I. Introduction

1.1 Contextualization of Research

"Western Hungary – such part of the country does not exist and never did", a local Hungarian journalist claimed in his despair at losing his narrower homeland (Moson County) to Austria in 1921.[1] Such a strong statement warrants further exploration. While outright denial of the existence of a geographical region of one's own country is highly uncommon, the historical circumstances of the western border area of Hungary in the late 19th and early 20th century provide a compelling context for such sentiments. This border region was entangled in a triple collapse at the time: its own fragmentation following the Great War, compounded by the simultaneous dissolution of both the Habsburg Empire and the historical Kingdom of Hungary.[2]

In the exploration of the topic, one must face two fundamental questions: Can "historical Western Hungary" – encompassing three counties (Sopron/Ödenburg, Vas/Eisenburg, Moson/Wieselburg) and the four free royal cities (Sopron/Ödenburg, Kismarton/Eisenstadt, Ruszt/Rust, and Kőszeg/Güns) at the time – be considered a distinct regional entity? And does the period between 1867 and 1918, bookended by the Austro-Hungarian Compromise and the First World War, constitute a distinguished era in the region's history? The answers, as we will uncover, are nuanced and complex. This study hypothesizes a positive answer to both questions while arguing that the disintegration of Western Hungary after the Great War was not a spontaneous event, but the culmination of complex, interconnected processes originating decades earlier.

Though it is rather well-researched, the post-war border conflict between Austria and Hungary may still appear in literature as if it arose rather unexpectedly in the autumn of 1918. Indeed, unlike other regions in Central and Eastern Europe, Western Hungary appeared relatively stable and secure before the war, lacking significant political or social unrest, at least on the surface. While recent studies, especially on national indifference in the Habsburg

[1] *"A nyugati határvidék sorsa"* ["The Fate of the Western Border Territory"], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XIX/2, 9 January 1921, p. 1.

[2] The questions of the collapse and viability of the Habsburg Monarchy and its historical provinces has been on the focus of historical research for decades: SKED, ALAN: H*istorians, the Nationality Question, and the Downfall of the Habsburg Empire*, in: Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Volume 31, 1981, pp. 175–193.; While many scholars believe the Empire was destined to collapse, others argue for its viability even in the context of 20th century. For an example of the former, see: MAYR-HARTING, ANTON: *Der Untergang. Österreich-Ungarn 1848-1922*, Wien, 1988, pp. 270-378.; For examples of the latter, see: SKED, ALAN: *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815-1918,* London – New York, 1989, pp. 247-279.; Most recently: JUDSON, PETER M.: *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*, Cambridge (MA), 2016, pp. 155-217.

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Empire, attribute the destabilization of multi-ethnic regional societies to the devastation of war and subsequent political turmoil, this dissertation delves deeper into the region's pre-war history. It investigates whether the unintended consequences of nation-state building and modernization efforts, through the triggering of various security concerns, contributed indirectly to the political and societal disintegration witnessed in the aftermath of the First World War.[3]

Focusing on the region of historical Western Hungary, we look primarily into the era of Austro-Hungarian dualism (1867-1918). However, the transformation period of the Habsburg Empire into the Austria-Hungary serves as a crucial starting point as prehistory and historical context.[4] The once powerful Habsburg Empire, which had provided the framework for the statehood of the Kingdom of Hungary since the early 16th century, became increasingly perceived as a place of instability and insecurity after the rise of competing national movements in the mid-19th century. The multinational regions and borderlands of the realm came to be conceptualized and imagined as places suffering from insufficient administration and endangered by potential ethnic or social conflicts. The very foundations of the empire trembled all at once when the rise of liberalism and nationalism raised a series of internal and external security questions, which – by forcing the decision-makers to react – profoundly shaped the structures of the late Habsburg Monarchy.

We examine the impacts of these modernization-driven shifts, which occurred first on imperial and national levels, had on the regional level, in this case on an internal border region between the two halves of the Monarchy.[5] The core elements of the analysis highlights how a multi-ethnic Habsburg region simultaneously contributed to both the stability and insecurity within the Empire before the First World War, setting the stage for future fragmentation. The development of the modern Hungarian nation-state institutional system began after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which triggered various securitization processes that potentially endangered political stability through social destabilization and competing ethnic

[3] For the concept of national indifference and its significance for Habsburgs studies, see: VAN GINDERACHTEER, MARTEEN – FOX, JON: *Introduction: National indifference and the History of Nationalism in Europe,* in*:* VAN GINDERACHTEER, MAARTEN – FOX, JON (eds.): National indifference and History of Nationalism in Modern Europe, London – New York, 2019, pp. 1-14.; ZAHRA: *Imagined Noncommunities*, pp. 93-119; ZAHRA, TARA: Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis, in: Slavic Review, 69 (2010), 1, pp. 93-119.

[4] PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ: *The Dualist Character of the 1867 Hungarian Settlement*, in: LOJKÓ, MIKLÓS (ed.): Hungary's Long 19th century, Collected Studies by László Péter, Leiden-Boston, 2012, pp. 213-280.

[5] On the concept of multiple modernities, see: EISENSTADT, SHMUEL, N.*: Multiple modernities: Analyserahmen und Problemstellung*, in: BONACKER, THORSTEN – RECKWITZ, ANDREAS (eds.): Kulturen der Moderne. Soziologische Perspektiven der Gegenwart, Frankfurt, 2007, pp. 19–45.

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aspirations.[6] By uncovering these underlying tensions and fault lines, we aim to demonstrate how the seemingly peaceful pre-war landscape masked vulnerabilities that would ultimately contribute to the region's post-war disintegration. If we can learn more about how modernity – modern nationalism and nation-state-building in particular[7] – created and escalated security issues at local and regional levels, we might better understand the challenges the Habsburg Monarchy as a whole faced with the emergence of modern times, too.

In order to uncover the complexities of this historical trajectory, this dissertation adopts the theoretical and methodological framework of historical security studies (historische Sicherheitforschung).[8] As part of this effort, we take an overview of the main leading schools and themes of security studies, keeping the question of their relevance for historical research in mind. The project engages itself first and foremost with the original concept of the social-constructivist approach, while attempting critically to apply its concept of security and the term "securitization" in a given historical context. In this endeavour, we lean primarily on the methodological instructions of a group of German historians, who have discovered great potential in what they call "historical security studies." The dissertation aims to contribute to the growing of this novel historical subdiscipline. The challenge this endeavour is facing is twofold. On the one hand, it seeks to test security studies with a particular case study of late Habsburg history; on the other, it wishes to examine the benefits, security studies could offer to historical research, in this case Habsburg and Hungarian studies, in general, and to the Western Hungarian case study in particular.

By examining the concept of security as it was understood and experienced by contemporary imperial, national, regional and local actors, we uncover the complex ways in which security concerns shaped the pre-war modernization processes in the late Habsburg border region of Western Hungary. The task ahead is not an easy one, because the traditions of Hungarian history-writing are not theory-oriented.[9] This dissertation, however, emerged from

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[6] For a comprehensive analysis of Hungary's constitutional development in the 19th century see: PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ: *Die Verfassungsentwicklung in Ungarn*, in: RUMLPER, HELMUT – URBANITSCH, PETER (eds.): Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, vol. VII/1, Verfassung und Parlamentarismus, Vienna 2000, pp. 239-540.

[7] Although the different schools of nationalism studies (primodialism, ethno-symbolism, modernism) have very different opinions on what nationalism is, they agree that 19th century modernity played a crucial role in the history of nationalism. See ÖZKIRIMLI, UMUT: *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, New York, 2000; See also: SMITH, ANTHONY D.: *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*, London, 1998.

[8] The demand for historical security studies as a new subdiscipline of academic history-writing appeared about a decade ago and has been developed further ever since. See: ZWIERLEIN, CORNEL: *Sicherheitsgeschichte. Ein neues Feld der Geschichtswissenschaften*, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft no. 38, Berlin, 2012, pp. 365–386.; CONZE, ECKART: *Geschichte der Sicherheit, Entwicklung – Themen – Perspektiven,* Göttingen, 2019.

[9] ROMSICS, IGNÁC: *Clio Bűvöletében. Magyar történetírás nemzetközi kitekintéssel* [Under the Spell of Clio. Hungarian History-writing with International Outlook], Budapest, 2011, pp. 77-166; pp. 245-490.; ERŐS,VILMOS:

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a binational cooperation of a German and a Hungarian university. By integrating the strengths of both academic traditions, the author aimed to forge a balanced approach that leverages the unique perspectives and methodologies offered by each. In terms of theoretical background to be discussed in the first chapter, therefore, an approach borrowed from the history of ideas provided the common ground for dealing with the ever-changing concepts of security within historical context. Rather than enforcing a historization of today's notions of security on historical events, we sought to uncover and reconstruct the understandings and narratives of security originated from the history of European political thought and held by the contemporary actors.

Throughout the chapters that follow the theoretical and methodological introduction this study is operating primarily at the mezzo-level of political history and in a *longue durée* perspective, while attempting to employ a broader notion of security in comparison to that familiar in traditional history-writing. We will focus on two main research questions: (1) which security concepts prevailed during the Austro-Hungarian era that affected Western Hungary; and (2) which security narratives and measures did the competing national, regional, and local elites develop at the time? Through analysing the issues of security concerning Hungarian nation-state-building after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, the thesis investigates relevant primary sources on county assembly and city council debates as well as on local and regional administration. The dissertation intends to put special focus on the issues of political representation (for example local elections) and the roles played by the representatives of the political, ethnic and social groups in the region. Besides qualitative research on political discourses of the era, we also engage in quantitative analysis of demographic and cultural data to prove that a unique regional identity emerged from the interactions of diverse ethnic groups, establishing a special 'Austro-Hungarian' character to the region.[10]

Under the title *Contested Self-Governance*, this study investigates the complex interplay of identity formation, modernization, and political conflicts over public administration, while seeking to illuminate an era of the region often overshadowed in broader historical narratives. The research aims to underscore the importance of understanding the roles played by long-term historical processes, regional dynamics, and security dilemmas in shaping the course of the

Modern historiográfia. Az újkori történetírás története [Modern Historiography. A History of Modern History-writing], Budapest, 2015, pp. 129-152., pp. 177-203.; pp. 377-406.

[10] To avoid any association with the Habsburg era, scholars generally favour the term "Pannonian" when discussing the shared cultural heritage of present-day Burgenland and Western Hungary. Learn more: CSIRE, MÁRTA – DEÁK, ERNŐ – KÓKAI, KÁROLY – SEIDLER, ANDREA (eds.): *Region der Vielfalt. Wechselbeziehungen im burgenländisch-westungarischen Raum in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Wien, 2003.

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history of the region. The intention, however, was not to write a textbook-like history of Western Hungary, but to showcase a possible implementation of historical security studies on a late Habsburg case study, which enables us to better understand the general history of region, too. The main aim of the thesis is to determine whether the various securitization processes led to a growing insecurity in historical Western Hungary before the Great War, and thus paved the way for the post-war disintegration of the region and the birth of Burgenland, the youngest Austrian state, more than 100 years ago.

1.2 Current State of Research

The depth and breadth of available literature regarding the topic of the dissertation varies widely depending on the topic of a given chapter, the language it is written in, the level of academic interest in that area, and established research traditions. The field of security studies has experienced a surge in theoretical literature, particularly with the growing influence of critical approaches in social sciences. To identify the three most impactful contributions, we can begin with the book, edited by Paul D. Williams, which provides a thorough overview of the different perspectives within this discipline. Next, the pivotal work of the three Copenhagen School authors crucial for comprehending the constructivist approach to security. Finally, it was historian Eckart Conze who demonstrated how to effectively apply social scientific approaches to security within historical research.[11]

When it comes to the application of the different theories of security to historical subjects and its methodological challenges however, the accessible literature is rather limited and often restricted to English and German publications, though their number has increased remarkably over the past decade. In Hungarian literature, for instance, the topic of security is nearly absent from historical discourses.[12] Nevertheless, the international efforts to historicize present-day notions of security can now be discovered not only in contemporary and modern

[11] WILLIAMS, PAUL D. (ed.): *Security Studies. An Introduction*, New York, 2008.; BUZAN, BARRY — WÆVER, OLE — DE WILDE, JAAP: *Security. A new framework for analysis*, London, 1998.; CONZE: *Geschichte der Sicherheit*, 2019.

[12] As opposed to historians, Hungarian political and social scientists have been paying serious attention to security-related topics in the last two decades. See for example: GAZDAG, FERENC (ed.): *Biztonságpolitika* [Security Policy]. Budapest, 2001; PÓTI, LÁSZLÓ (ed.): *Nemzetközi biztonsági tanulmányok* [International Security Studies]. Budapest, 2006; DEÁK, PÉTER (ed.): *Biztonságpolitikai kézikönyv* [Handbook of Security policy], Budapest, 2007.; In addition, since 2008 a scientific journal dedicated to security studies has been published regularly under the title *Nemzet és Biztonság. Biztonságpolitikai Szemle* [Nation and Security. A Security Policy Journal] at the University of Public Service (NKE) in Budapest. See for example: GAZDAG, FERENC – TÁLAS, PÉTER: *A biztonság fogalmának határairól* [On the Boundaries of the Notion of Security], in: *Nemzet és Biztonság. Biztonságpolitikai Szemle* 1. (2008), pp. 3-9.

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history-writing but also in the sub-disciplines of early modern, medieval and ancient history. Moreover, historical security research has also gained momentum in the field of area studies in recent years, including research on the history of East Central Europe, and thus of the Habsburg Empire as well.[13]

As for the traditional historical literature on the Habsburg Empire, it could fill an entire library even if it was focused only on the late 19th and early 20th century. The bible of this academic field is beyond doubt the monumental twelve-volume series entitled "Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918", which explains the history of the empire in thematic units through studies written by a recognized international group of historians.[14] As for monographic literature, A.J.P. Taylor, Robert A. Kann and Helmut Rumpler are known as the classic experts in the field as their works are still considered as basic literature today. Among today's Habsburg-specialists, Pieter M. Judson and Mark Cornwall are the best known of those who have brought new perspectives to their research into the history of the late Habsburg Monarchy.[15] Last but not least, one should mention the peer-reviewed journal "Austrian History Yearbook", which provides a unique opportunity for historians worldwide to access and contribute to the transnational interpretation of Habsburg history.[16]

Having been part of the Habsburg Empire for nearly 400 years, Hungary's history is an integral part of Habsburg history, which means that neither of them could be explained without

[13] HASLINGER, PETER: *Gesellschaftliche Mehrsprachigkeit*, pp. 243-256.; HEIN-KIRCHER, HEIDI: *Lembergs "polnischen Charakter" sichern - Kommunalpolitik in einer multiethnischen Stadt der Habsburgermonarchie zwischen 1861/62 und 1914,* Stuttgart, 2020.; HEIN-KIRCHER, HEIDI: *Zum Wechselspiel von verpasster Konsolidierung, Demokratiekritik und Diskursen der Versicherheitlichung in der Zweiten Republik Polens (1918 bis 1926)*, in: KAILITZ, STEFFEN (ed.): Nach dem "Großen Krieg". Vom Triumph zum Desaster der Demokratie 1918/19 bis 1939, Göttingen, 2017, pp. 317-338.; HEIN-KIRCHER, HEIDI: *Der Galizische Ausgleich als Beitrag zur inneren Sicherheit. Zu den Intentionen und zur Rolle der galizischen Abgeordneten bei den Landtagsverhandlungen 1913/14*, in: CARL, HORST – WESTERMEIER, CAROLA (eds.): Sicherheitsakteure. Epochenübergreifende Perspektiven zu Praxisformen und Versicherheitlichung, Baden-Baden, 2018, pp. 183-196.; SZÉKELY, TAMÁS – CSERNUS-LUKÁCS, SZILVESZTER: *Securing Own Position: Challenges Faced by Local Elites after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise*, in: Acta Poloniae Historica, 121 (2020), pp. 85-120; RAMISCH-PAUL, SEBASTIAN: *Fremde Peripherie – Peripherie der Unsicherheit? Sicherheitsdiskurse über die tschechoslowakische Provinz Podkarpatská Rus (1918-1938)*, Marburg, 2021.

[14] WANDRUSZKA, ADAM – URBANITSCH, PETER – RUMPLER, HELMUT (eds.): *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, Band I-XII, Vienna, 1973-2018.

[15] TAYLOR, A.J.P.: *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918: a History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, London, 1948 (reprinted in 1990); KANN, ROBERT A.: *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Empire* (Volume 1: Empire and nationalities. Volume 2: Empire reform), New York, 1950.; KANN, ROBERT A.: *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918*, Berkeley, 1980.; RUMPLER, HELMUT: *Österreichische Geschichte 1804-1914. Eine Chance für Mitteleuropa. Bürgerliche Emanzipation und Staatsverfall in der Habsburgermonarchie*,Vienna, 2005.; CORNWALL, MARK: *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary. A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century Europe, Exeter*, 2004.; JUDSON: *The Habsburg Empire*.

[16] Austrian History Yearbook, ISSN: 0067-2378 (Print), 1558-5255 (Online), Editors: HOWARD LOUTHAN (University of Minnesota, USA) – DANIEL UNOWSKY (University of Memphis, USA) https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/austrian-history-yearbook [20.06.2024]

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an understanding of the other. Consequently, the era of the 19th and early 20th centuries is a thoroughly examined period.[17] Although no stand-alone monograph has been published recently on the country's history between 1867 and 1918, Hungarian historians publish extensively on an era that is known in public discourse as the most successful yet highly controversial chapter of modern Hungarian history. The most comprehensive attempt to deal with the history of the era was carried out within the framework of the monumental 'History of Hungary' series, published by the Hungarian Academy Sciences between 1976 and 1989.[18]

When it comes to the time prior to the Austro-Hungarian era, one should lean on the works by Ágnes Deák, István Deák, György Szabad and András Gergely. As for the history of the Compromise of 1867 itself, the fundamental contribution was made by Éva Somogyi, Péter Hanák and László Péter. The intellectual and political history of Hungary between 1867 and 1918 is in the focus of works by a younger generation of historians, among others Iván Bertényi Jr., András Cieger and Bálint Varga. The social history of the era was investigated on the highest academic level by György Kövér and Gábor Gyáni, whereas the history of the Dualist era governance and public administration can be best learned from the books by Béla Sarlós, Gábor Csizmadia, István Stipta.[19]

Compared to the imperial and national levels, literature on the history of Western Hungary is much more limited. In the era before the end of the Great War, yet practically no

[17] On the Hungarian historiographical context of the Compromise and the Dualist Era, see: GYÁNI, GÁBOR: *Nation-State Building with "Peaceful Equalizing," and the Hungarian Historical Consciousness*, in: GYÁNI, GÁBOR (ed.): The Creation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. A Hungarian Perspective, New York – London, 2022, pp. 70-92.

[18] The work was initially planned to be a 10-volume series but volume 2, 9 and 10 were never published. The Dualist era was discussed in two volumes: KOVÁCS, ENDRE (ed.): Magyarország története [History of Hungary] 1848-1890, Volume 6/1-2, Budapest, 1987; HANÁK, PÉTER (ed.): Magyarország története [History of Hungary] 1890-1918, Volume 7/1-2, Budapest, 1978.

[19] DEÁK, ISTVÁN: *The Lawful Revolution. Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians 1848-1849*, New York, 1979.; DEÁK, ÁGNES: *'Zsandáros és policzájos idők'. Államrendőrség Magyarországon 1849-1867* ['Times of Gendarmerie and Police'. State police in Hungary 1849-1867], Budapest, 2015; SZABAD, GYÖRGY: *Hungarian Political Trends Between the Revolution and the Compromise (1849-1867)*, Budapest, 1977.; SZABAD, GYÖRGY: *Forradalom és kiegyezés válaszútján (1860-61)* [On the Crossroad between Revolution and Compromise (1860-1861)]; Budapest, 1967.; GERGELY, ANDRÁS (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. században* [History of Hungary in the 19th century"], Budapest, 2005.; SOMOGYI, ÉVA (ed.), HANÁK, PÉTER: *1867- európai térben és időben* [1867 in European Space and Time], Budapest, 2001; LOJKÓ, MIKLÓS (ed.): *Hungary's Long 19th Century. Constitutional and Democratic. Traditions in a European Perspective, Collected Studies by LÁSZLÓ PÉTER*, Leiden-Boston, 2012; CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *A kiegyezés* [The Compromise], Budapest, 2004.; CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *1867 szimbolikus világa. Tanulmányok a kiegyezés koráról* [The Symbolic World of 1867. Studies on the Age of the Compromise], Budapest, 2018.; VARGA, BÁLINT: *The Monumental Nation: Magyar Nationalism and Symbolic Politics in Fin-de-siècle Hungary*, New York, 2016.; KÖVÉR, GYÖRGY – GYÁNI, GÁBOR: *Magyarország társadalomtörténete a reformkortól a második világháborúig* [Social History of Hungary from the Reform Era to the Second World War], Budapest, 2006.; SARLÓS, BÉLA: *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika a dualizmus rendszerében* [Public Administration and Power Politics in the System of Dualism], Budapest, 1976; CSIZMADIA, ANDOR: *A magyar közigazgatás fejlődése a XVIII. századtól a Tanácsrendszer létrejöttéig* [Developement of the Hungarian Public Administration from the 18th century to the creation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic], Budapest, 1976.

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analysis with a regional perspective exists. The region's history in the Austro-Hungarian era, therefore, can be learned mostly from the local historical materials, whose number and academic level vary widely. The most valuable contributions in this field are usually those written by the local archivists and historians employed by the various archives and museums of the region. The series entitled 'Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei', published by the Archives of Vas County, for instance, represents a high level of academic history-writing, and the journal 'Soproni Szemle' has proved to be an excellent secondary source of information for understanding the history of the city of Sopron and Sopron County. In the case of Mason County, however, the accessible literature is either limited or simply outdated.[20] What is striking in all three counties is the lack of a modern monographic synthesis of their respective history. The region's significant cities (Sopron, Kőszeg, Szombathely, etc.) are in a much better position in this respect.[21] The amount of accessible and usable literature is significantly greater when it comes to the post-war history of the region, as the border conflict between Austria and Hungary as well as the birth of Burgenland have attracted far wider interest than the pre-war history of the region.[22]

1.3 Theoretical Framework: from *Securitas* to *Securitization*

One hears the word 'security' more and more nowadays, but it is quite difficult even to imagine the great number of feelings, meanings and functions attached to this word. If we listen to the

[20] The series *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei* includes either thematic studies or monographs on the history of Vas County: MAYER, LÁSZLÓ and TILCSIK, GYÖRGY (eds.): *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei*, Volume 1-9, Szombathely, 2004-2015; *Soproni Szemle* is a quarterly journal on the history and culture of Sopron and Sopron County, which has been published since 1937; HORVÁTH, JÓZSEF (eds.): *Fejezetek Győr, Moson, és Sopron Vármegyék közigazgatásának történetéből*, Győr, 2000.; THULLNER, ISTVÁN: *Mosony Vármegye. Helytörténeti olvasókönyv* [Moson County. A Local Historical Book], Győr-Mosonmagyaróvár, 1993.

[21] Sopron (Magyar Várostörténeti Atlasz 1. / Hungarian Atlas of Historic Towns No. 1), by FERENC JANKÓ, JÓZSEF KÜCSÁN and KATALIN SZENDE with the contribution of FERENC DÁVID, KÁROLY GODA and MELINDA KISS, Sopron, 2010.; and Kőszeg (Magyar Várostörténeti Atlasz 6. / Hungarian Atlas of Historic Towns No. 6), by BARISKA, ISTVÁN with the contribution of BENKHARD, B. LILLA, IVICSICS, PÉTER, KOVÁCS,VIKTÓRIA, MENTÉNYI, KLÁRA, SÖPTEI IMRE, and SZILÁGYI, MAGDOLNA Budapest, 2018; MELEGA, MIKLÓS: A modern város születése. Szombathely infrastrukturális fejlődése a dualizmus korában [Birth of the Modern City: The infrastructural development of Szombathely in the era of Dualism], Szombathely, 2012.

[22] HASLINGER: *Der ungarische Revisionismus und das Burgenland 1922-1932*, Frankfurt, 1994.; VARES, MARI: *The Question of Western Hungary/Burgenland 1918-1923*, Jyväskylä, 2008; BOTLIK, JÓZSEF: *Nyugat-Magyarország sorsa 1918-1922* [The Fate of Western Hungary 1918-1922], Vasszilvágy, 2008.; TÓTH, IMRE: *A nyugat-magyarországi kérdés 1922-1939. Diplomácia és helyi politika a két háború között* [The Western Hungary Question 1922-1939. Diplomacy and Local Politics in the Interwar Period], Sopron, 2006; TÓTH, IMRE: *Két anschluss között. Nyugat-Magyarország és Burgenland Wilsontól Hitlerig* [Between two Anschluss'. Western Hungary and Burgenland from Wilson to Hitler], Pécs, 2020.; MURBER, IBOLYA: *Grenzziehung zwischen Ver- und Entflechtungen. Eine Entstehungsgeschichte Deutsch-Westungarns und des Burgenlandes*, Wiesbaden, 2021.; JANKÓ, FERENC: *From Borderland to Burgenland. Science, Geopolitics, Identity and the Making of a Region*, Budapest - Wien, 2024.

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everyday news carefully, we can immediately discover that almost all public developments are, or at least might be, described as security issues.[23] Moreover, quite often one single phenomenon is depicted as not one but two or more contradictory security issues at the very same time. Just to mention some of the major ones from recent years: the economic and financial crisis of 2008, the refugee and migration crisis of 2015, the deepening climate crisis, and most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2022 as well as the Russia's war on Ukraine that rapidly grew from an Eastern European military conflict and humanitarian catastrophe into a worldwide crisis of energy and food security.

Having witnessed all these, it is not that surprising that academic interest in security has also exploded in recent times, especially in English and German literature of the social sciences. The underlying reasons are political on one hand, and epistemological on the other. The former refers to the fact that the leadership in science-management recognized the demand from political decision-makers to address particular topics in a more structured and professional manner. The latter is about the rise and breakthrough of (late) postmodern theories such as social constructivism or post-structuralism in the social sciences and humanities in recent decades. Whereas the political point of view urges an outcome that provides answers to practical problems regarding security, the theoretical one seeks to consolidate its positions in the ideological and intellectual arena.[24]

Today, the value of security is clearly on the rise. It is no longer seen as an exclusively or primarily military and foreign policy issue but is used as a term of far wider application even in discussion of past centuries.[25] However, this was not the case for a very long time. In this subchapter, therefore, we attempt to take an overview of the main leading schools and themes of security studies, keeping the question of their relevance for historical research in mind. Although security – at least in the form we use it today – is an essentially modern term, and the obsession with understanding and managing it is a typically postmodern phenomenon, it does

[23] A leading figure of contemporary security studies warned of this phenomenon twenty-five years ago: "In the current European situation, security has, in some sense, become the name of the management problem, of governance in an extremely unstructured universe." WÆVER, OLE: *Securitization and Desecuritization*, in: RONNIE D. LIPSCHUTZ (ed.): On Security, New York 1995, p. 75.

[24] According to Ulrich Beck's theory of reflexive modernization, a significant epochal change has been taking place since the 1970s. Consequently, the period before was the era of the "more linear" "First Modernity" as opposed to the current era of the "more reflexive" "Second Modernity". Compared to the former, the latter can be characterized by "increased risk production" on one hand, and "increased risk awareness on the other". BECK, ULRICH — BONß, WOLFGANG — LAU, CHRITOPH: *Entgrenzung erzwingt Entscheidung: Was ist Neu an der Theorie Reflexiver Modernisierung?*, Frankfurt am Main 2004, pp. 13-64.

[25] In this regard, Christopher Daase emphasizes the role of the 'linguistic turn', including the academic impact of the German conceptual history school (Reinhard Koselleck) and the Cambridge school of intellectual history (Quentin Skinner). See DAASE, CHRISTOPHER: *Der Erweiterte Sicherheitsbegriff*, in: FERDOWSI, MIR A. (ed.): Internationale Politik als Überlebensstrategie, München, 2009, p. 137.

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not mean that security as such never attracted the interest of those who lived before the era of modernity. On the contrary, both Graeco-Roman Antiquity and Christianity – the two main pillars of European civilisation – elaborated their own views on what they called *securitas*.

In Roman mythology, for instance, 'Securitas' was the goddess of security and stability. She was often portrayed on coins as either a seated or standing figure leaning on a column and surrounded by her attributes of a rod, lance, cornucopia and palm branch. Her usual inscription "*Securitas Imperium*" referred to the fact that the Romans worshiped her as a minor but very popular goddess, who in their eyes guaranteed the existence, stability and prosperity of the empire. As Cecilia Ricci pointed out in her monograph, in early Roman times the word *securitas* was primarily a philosophical term that meant some sort of freedom from worldly troubles, rather than a political one meaning the safety and security of persons. However, by the era of Emperor Augustus (27 BC – 14 AD), *securitas* developed a meaning involving "being free from concerns about one's personal safety and free from fear of harm."[26]

The shift can be explained through the societal change that accompanied the political transition from republican to imperial state structures. In the new era, the previously politically active Roman elites preferred to retreat to their countryside villas in order to spend their time in a more useful way (otium vs negotium). This philosophical, contemplative way of life, which distances itself from everyday politics and public life, had a fruitful impact on arts and science (Seneca, Cicero). At the same time it transformed the task of ensuring security into one of the main responsibilities of the emperor. Augustus and his successors, at least until the Severan era (193-235 AD), introduced and promoted *securitas* as a twofold term referring both to the armed power of the empire and to the peace and stability provided to the peoples of his realm by the emperor himself. Whereas the former established security as something that is first and foremost a military and policing issue, the latter embedded security into a political and ideological framework. Both senses had an enormous impact on future European thought on security. For instance, the role of the emperor as a security-provider can be traced in the case of the Habsburg dynasty as well.[27]

In medieval times, *securitas* evolved into a philosophical term once again, or more precisely a theological one. Synthetizing Christian doctrine with Neoplatonism, Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) marked two different meanings of security by contrasting

[26] RICCI, CECILIA: *Security in Roman Times: Rome, Italy and the Emperors*, London, 2018, p. 300

[27] BERTÉNYI, IFJ. IVÁN: *Ferenc József, a legalkotmányosabb magyar király* [Franz Joseph, "the most constitutional Hungarian king"], in: FÓNAGY, ZOLTÁN: A véreskezű kamasztól Ferenc Jóskáig [From the Bloody-handed Teenager to Francis Joe], Budapest 2018, pp. 265-311.

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them against each other. In his view, the first and superior term is *certitudo*, which refers to the certainty of faith as well as intellectual certainty, in contrast to the inferior term of *securitas* which is a merely existential assurance promoted by antique philosophers.[28] According to Augustine, one should seek freedom from anxiety only in Christ and his Grace, and this kind of "security" (*certitudo*) can be sustained by having faith and living well. This Augustinian approach dominated discussion for centuries and led to a threefold distinction of *certitudo* in medieval thought in Europe: the theological ('salvation certainty'), the philosophical ('knowledge certainty') and the political one ('operational certainty').[29]

In the early 15th century, even Martin Luther, leading figure of Protestantism, himself insisted on the idea of *certitudo* while describing *securitas* as the standpoint of those who do not trust God. In the very same late medieval–early modern period, however, the Renaissance rediscovered the ancient term *securitas* too.[30] The most spectacular example of this is the frescoes of the town hall (Palazzo Pubblico) of Sienna, painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in 1338-1339 under the title 'Allegory of Good and Bad Government'. The masterpiece – located at the 'Salon of Nine' (Sala dei Nove), which was the council hall of the Republic of Siena's nine executive magistrates – consists of six different frescoes. One of them, entitled 'Effects of Good Government in the Country', depicts an angel-like winged figure of *Securitas* in the upper-left corner. Lorenzetti's frescoes inspired a great number of interpretations and many of them highlighted the late medieval concept of *salus publica*, which – as G.J. Schenk points out – should be described as public welfare or good social "configuration of order", in which *securitas* plays a very important role.[31] German art historian Max Seidel goes even further, and speaks about the glorification of the successful security, agricultural and trade policies of the Republic of Siena in the panoramic picture. Seidel argues that one can not only see the depiction of Sienese politics and its underlying state theory but also a "mythological-astrological super-elevation of a political doctrine of security by means of peace and harmony."[32]

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[28] KAUFMAN, Peter Iver: *Patience and/or Politics: Augustine and the Crisis at Calama 408-409*, in: Vigiliae Christianae 57 (2003), 1, pp. 22-35.

[29] VELÁSQUEZ, OSCAR SANTIAGO DE CHILE: *From Dubitatio to Securitas: Augustine's Confessions in the Context of Uncertainty*, in: WILES, M. F. – YARNOLD, E. J. –PARVIS, PAUL M. (eds.): Studia Patristica Vol. XXXVIII. St Augustine and his Opponents, Other Latin Writers. Papers presented at the Thirteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford, 1999, Leuven, 2001, pp. 338-341.

[30] LIESNER, ANDREA: *Zwischen Weltflucht und Herstellungswahn. Bildungstheoretische Studien zur Ambivalenz des Sicherheitsdenkens von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Würzburg, 2002, pp. 80-81.

[31] SCHENK, GERRIT J.: *"Human Security" in the Renaissance? Securitas, Infrastructure, Collective Goods and Natural Hazards in Tuscany and the Upper Rhine Valley*, in: Historical Social Research, 35 (2010), 4, pp. 209-233.

[32] SEIDEL, MAX: *Dolce Vita. Ambrogio Lorenzettis Porträt des Sieneser Staates*, Vorträge der Aeneas-Silvius-Stiftung an der Universität Basel no. 33, Basel, 1999, p.7.

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The idea of good governance that provides – among many other benefits – security to a particular community has become a fundamental idea of European political theory ever since.[33] This can be traced in the most tangible way in the works of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). The English philosopher, an expert scholar of ancient Greek and Latin works, claimed that strong political power is a necessity. Without such a thing, every human community would be doomed to remain in an archaic natural condition characterized by anarchy, where everyone is seen as a potential enemy as a result of the complete lack of security. According to Hobbes, the only solution is the natural law, which drives all individuals toward mutual understanding and cooperation, and if necessary, towards the self-restriction of their own rights and privileges for the sake of common security. The desired outcome of the operation of natural law is a body (preferably monarchy) which can declare its will unambiguously, where the society grants the sovereign (Leviathan) extraordinary power. Hobbes insisted that the only privilege one can never give up is the right to self-defence. The Hobbesian understanding of security, therefore, is based on causality: whereas the cooperation of individuals leads to *securitas*, the implementation of natural law and the creation of the state to peace.[34]

These examples, in spite of being cherry-picked from the non-modern era, clearly show that not only does security itself have a long history, but so do the ways of thinking about security. When it comes to historical security research, therefore, one has to pay special attention to the philosophical background of the given era. In many cases, however, it mirrors the ideas of the previous centuries more than of those of the contemporary great minds. In the 19th century, for instance, the indirect impact of ancient and medieval ideas and values (neoclassicism, romanticism) cannot be underestimated, even if some modern theories were already present and widely discussed among intellectuals.

The first modern "school" of security that should be mentioned is the classic liberal school.[35] With their roots going back to the era of enlightenment in the 18th century, liberal principles greatly influenced the general approach to security of the 19th century elites, including those of the Habsburg lands. Many commentators honour the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) as the founding father of the liberal school, thanks to his famous work *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay (Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer*

[33] For the topic of Habsburg rulers as the Personification of Good Governance, see: MOORE, SCOTT O.: *Teaching the Empire. Education and State Loyalty in Late Habsburg Austria*, West Lafayette, 2020, pp. 51-84.
[34] ARENAS, J.F.M.: *From Homer to Hobbes and Beyond — Aspects of' security' in the European Tradition*. in: BRAUCH, H.G. (ed.): Globalization and Environmental Challenges. Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace, Volume 3, Berlin – Heidelberg, 2008, pp. 263-277.
[35] WILLIAMS (ed.): *Security Studies*, pp. 29-32.

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Entwurf), published in 1795.[36] In this essay, Kant argued for an ambitious international peace programme that should be implemented by states, the great powers of the era in particular. Through idealizing the republican – which in his time did not mean democratic – form of governance, Kant measured and judged states according to their peace-producing capabilities. The more the different states operated according to law and under due regulation, he argued, and the more they cooperated with each other, the better the chances of avoiding international armed conflicts. As Kant put it: "Without a compact between the nations, however, this state of peace cannot be established or assured. Hence there must be an alliance of a particular kind which we may call a covenant of peace (*foedus pacificum*), which would differ from a treaty of peace (*pactum pacis*) in this respect, that the latter merely puts an end to one war, while the former would seek to put an end to war for ever. This alliance does not aim at the gain of any power whatsoever of the state, but merely at the preservation and security of the freedom of the state for itself and of other allied states at the same time."[37]

In his proposed peace plan, the world-famous philosopher worked out the "preliminary articles" that would pave the road to a more peaceful atmosphere in international relations.[38] Kant's six-point plan included visions such as "no independent states, large or small, shall come under the dominion of another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase, or donation"; "no state shall by force interfere with the constitution or government of another state"; and even "standing armies shall in time be totally abolished".[39] Since not making war at a particular juncture does not necessarily result in perpetual peace, Kant went on to draft three definitive articles for those states that had already successfully ceased hostilities. In order to create a solid foundation for the peace, he suggested that (1) the civil constitution of every state should be republican; (2) the law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states; and 3) the law of world citizenship shall depend on the conditions of universal hospitality.[40]

The last two points are of crucial importance since, according to Kant, the states – even if they fully adopt the rule of law – are not able to achieve perpetual peace by themselves, but

[36] Certain scholars consider this an oversimplification, pointing out the non-liberal (realist) aspects of Kant's thoughts. WALTZ, KENNETH N.: *Kant, Liberalism, and War*, in: American Political Science Review, Volume 56, Issue 2, June 1962, pp. 331 – 340; ROMERO, PAOLA: *Why Carl Schmitt (and others) got Kant wrong*, in: Con-Textos Kantianos. International Journal of Philosophy, No. 13, June 2021, pp. 186-208.

[37] KANT, IMMANUEL: *Perpetual Peace. A Philosophical Essay*, London, 1903, p. 134.

[38] Two centuries after Kant's study, the topic 'peace vs armed conflicts' is still high on the academic agenda. Nevertheless, peace- and conflict studies have their own theoretical and methodological background and in spite of the connections they are not to be identified with security studies. BONACKER, THORSTEN – IMBUSCH, PETER: *Zentrale Begriffe der Frieden- und Konfliktforschung: Konflikt, Gewalt, Krieg, Frieden*, in: IMBUSCH PETER – RALF ZOLL (eds.): Friedens- und Konfliktforschung. Eine Einführung, Berlin 2006, pp. 67-142.

[39] KANT: *Perpetual Peace*, pp. 107-116.

[40] IBID., pp. 117-142.

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only through establishing an alliance of free states. This rather optimistic, if not naive, idea came back like a boomerang after the First World War, following the complete collapse of the under-/non-regulated international order that had dominated the long 19th century. However, the dramatic failure of the League of Nations in the interwar period, not to mention the rise of the various totalitarian dictatorships in several European countries, quickly dispersed the illusion of the classic liberal peace theory. Consequently, new so-called realist approaches emerged in the 1930s that questioned the premises of Kantian idealism and rather sought the explanation for hostilities and war in the flawed nature of mankind. As Hans J. Morgenthau, leading figure of the realist approach, wrote: "For realism, theory consists in ascertaining facts and giving them meaning through reason. It assumes that the character of a foreign policy can be ascertained only through the examination of the political acts performed and of the foreseeable consequences of these acts. Thus, we can find out what statesmen have actually done, and from the foreseeable consequences of their acts we can surmise what their objectives might have been."[41]

The classic realist approach first appeared in comprehensive form in renowned British historian Edward Hallett Carr's book, *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939), in which he harshly criticized the liberal approach to international politics for once again pushing Europe towards the possibility of another world war. The central text of the classic realist school, however, was Hans Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, first published in 1948. According to the classical realists, states play a key role in international security, and their leaders evidently work under constant pressure to expand their power and to assert the interests of their respective states. These leaders must think rationally, while taking into account the probable benefits and disadvantages of their decisions after pondering all the scenarios from the worst to the best case. However, realist theorists argue, the irreducible weaknesses of human nature mean that sometimes bad people with evil intentions rise to power, which necessarily leads to serious international conflicts, if not to war. Therefore, the classical realists advise each state to organize their respective defensive capabilities accordingly. Paraphrasing a maxim attributed to Oliver Cromwell ("Trust in God and keep your powder dry"), one can accurately say that the realists basically recommended "hoping for peace but preparing for war". This way of thinking was obviously in deep resonance with the general political atmosphere of the Second World War and the Cold War eras, but suddenly lost its supremacy when the bipolar world order collapsed and gave place to a unipolar, and later to a multipolar, one.

[41] MORGENTHAU, HANS J.: *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, New York, 1978, p. 4.

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Signs of fundamental shifts in the international order appeared before the actual fall of the Soviet Union. In response, new, revised or modified versions of both the classic liberal and realist approaches were developed as the competition to explain, predict and prevent interstate conflicts accelerated. According to the proponents of the so-called "democratic peace thesis" (Michael Doyle 1983), for example, contemporary history shows that liberal states do not tend to fight war against each other, thus the spread of democracy and liberalism across the map of world politics points in the direction of a more peaceful era than the 20th century had been. Other neoliberals saw the guarantee of peace not only in democratization, but also in the rise of international institutions. Robert Keohane (1984) and Robert Axelrod (1984), for instance, argued that international institutions create strong incentives for cooperation while using a variety of peaceful methods to influence the behaviour of states.[42]

The neorealists, in contrast, did not share the liberal optimism. As Kenneth Waltz's, *Theory of International Politics* (the main book of the neorealist approach, published in 1979) pointed out, international politics is characterized by a disheartening consistency in which very similar, often tragic, things (such as wars and war crimes) happen over and over again. Some, like Robert Gilpin in *War and Change in World Politics* (1981), explain this phenomenon through a realist 'Rise and Fall Theory'. This approach aims to discover the logic behind the rise and fall of states throughout human history, and their endless rivalry for the leading position that fundamentally shapes international relations. Others favoured instead the explanatory power of 'Game Theory', based on the popular book, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* by John Von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern (1944). Followers of game theory remained within the realist approach, but attempted to analyse the interstate conflicts, typically imagined in the Cold War era as zero-sum games, using mathematical models instead of historical knowledge.[43]

As we have seen, the different liberal and realist approaches did not just clash with other theories rooted in different ideological backgrounds, but also with each other in terms of methodology and conclusions.[44] What connects them all, however, is their narrow interpretation of security, which constricts the different theories and concepts exclusively to the fields of international relations, foreign and military policies. As if security could not be interpreted from the perspectives of societies, communities or even individuals. Ola Waever illustrated this problem with an hourglass model of security wherein the top and bottom refer to the

[42] WILLIAMS (ed.): *Security Studies*, pp. 18-20. and pp. 36-43.
[43] IBID., pp. 24-25. and pp. 44-57.
[44] See for instance the case of defensive vs. offensive structural realism: IBID., pp. 20-24.

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international and individual levels of security, whereas the narrowest middle section represents the national (state level), which still enjoys a dominant position: "The problem is that, as concepts, neither individual security nor international security exists. [...] There is no literature, no philosophy, no tradition of 'security' in non-state terms; it is only as a critical idea, played out against the concept and practices of state security, that other threats and referents have any meaning."[45]

The great turn in this regard came as a result of the academic breakthrough of constructivism in the late 1980s, which almost perfectly coincided with the final days of the bipolar world order.[46] The title of Nicholas Onuf's ground-breaking book, *World of Our Making* (first published in 1989), tells us a lot about the conceptual revolution that the author and his followers unleashed. Following in the footsteps of the basic constructivist claim that people actively construct their own knowledge while learning; theories of social constructivism radically challenged traditional ways of thinking about human society. The proponents of the new approach suggested that our world in general should not be imagined as a rock-solid entity, to be discovered or observed from an external point of view, but as something which is constituted socially through inter-subjective interactions. This applied also to ideational factors such as norms, identities and ideas that are central to politics and history.[47]

In this interpretation, security is also a context-specific social construction that cannot be narrowed down to the mere analysis of power politics and military issues, even though it had tended to be so narrowed at the highest academic levels. By questioning the then dominant positions of the realist schools, the social constructivists argued that security has different meanings in different times and spaces, which are constructed through the discourses between the leadership and those who are being led.[48] This means neither that no threats to security could be real, nor that security issues lack any basis in reality, but simply points out that all security issues are embedded in complex political and social processes. Since the social construction of security is a unique process in each case, it is impossible to come up with a universal definition of security. Instead, the constructivists argued, the focus should be on the question of identity, because it plays a key role in the construction process of security. As Canadian researcher Phillippe Bourbeau put it: "Security is not a fixed attribute or a dispositional quality but a

[45] WÆVER, OLE: *Securitization and Desecuritization*, in: LIPSCHUTZ, RONNIE D. (ed.): On Security, New York, 1995, p. 48.
[46] WILLIAMS (ed.): *Security Studies*, pp. 59-67.
[47] ONUF, NICHOLAS: *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*, London, 2012.
[48] BONß, WOLFGANG: *Die gesellschaftliche Konstruktion von Sicherheit*, in: LIPPERT, EKKEHARD – PRÜFERT, ANDREAS (eds.): Sicherheit in der unsicheren Gesellschaft, Opladen, 1997, p. 24.

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dynamic and complex process. It is constantly in flux, and it does not express itself in an unvariegated, stable or variation-free way. Security, then, does not imply finality, as the process can never be fully completed; security needs to be reproduced all the time."[49]

Constructivists, however, remain divided over how to deal with identity in their respective analyses. One group tends to see the identity of a group, community or a nation as a crucial but rather passive factor, to be analysed in order to understand the security dilemmas of the particular group. For instance: who they think they are, who or what threatens them, and what needs to be done to ensure their safety. The critical constructivists go further and claim that identity as such is also an unstable, contingent factor; therefore, it plays a very active role in the construction of security. In this sense the making of 'we' is part of the process in which certain actors and agents compete to define the identity and values of a particular group, and thus their basic interpretation of security. The contestation and negotiation of those actors and agents, as well as the structures in which they pursue their activity are also reciprocally constituted. According to proponents of social constructivism, however, this does not rule out any chance of a fundamental structural change, at least theoretically.[50]

The main contribution of social constructivism to security studies is beyond doubt the term 'securitization', as introduced to the social sciences by the so-called Copenhagen School. As the pioneers of the concept explained: "Our securitization approach is radically constructivist regarding security, which ultimately is a specific form of social praxis. Security issues are made security issues by acts of securitization. We do not try to peek behind this to decide whether it is really a threat (which would reduce the entire securitization approach to a theory of perceptions and misperceptions.)"[51] The name of the school (hereafter CS) refers to the contribution of a group of scholars who worked in the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute in the 1990s. Their most important book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, co-authored by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, was published in 1998 and has since become the "Bible" of international security studies. The comparison stands not only because of the tremendous amount of references the book has earned, but also because of the heated academic

[49] In this spirit, Bourbeau urges a multidisciplinary approach in studying security, including disciplines such as philosophy, anthropology, geography, sociology, psychology, international relations, international law, political economy and even criminology. However, he politely ignores history. See: BOURBEAU, PHILLIPPE: A multidisciplinary Dialogue on Security, in: BOURBEAU, PHILLIPPE (ed.): *Security. Dialogue across disciplines*, Cambridge, 2015, p. 8.

[50] According to Thierry Balzacq, "identities are not essentially threatening". Instead, "it is through particular speech acts and practices that they are loaded and lead to conflicts among human collectivities. Hence, to de-securitize is to regenerate identities in narratives that reallocate power-relations between actors and provide an updated content to who they are." BALZACQ, THIERRY (ed.): *Contesting security. Strategies and logics*, London – New York 2015, p. 86.

[51] BUZAN – WÆVER – DE WILDE: *Security*, 1998.

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debates it has generated. The initial aim of CS was to further widen the notion of security while placing it into a strict analytical framework that simultaneously determines the limits of the enlarged concept.[52]

The historical context was in favour of this revolutionary attempt in that the fall of Communism in East Central Europe destroyed the old global security system more or less overnight. CS recognized that by the end of the Cold War era the time had come for a more decentralized perspective in global security research.[53] Therefore, they introduced the novel concept of 'regional security complex', which refers to that set of units in a particular geographic area whose security processes and dynamics are interlinked to the extent that their security problems need to be understood and addressed in conjunction with each other. CS scholars were also aware of the fact that in this fragmented, post-bipolar world new types of security issues would emerge (environmental issues, human rights, migration, etc.), which would call for a new security paradigm. CS, however, did not widen the notion of security with a new comprehensive definition, but shifted the focus on how security itself is given meaning through inter-subjective processes.[54]

To reinforce this attempt, CS introduced several new key concepts and terms, first and foremost '*securitization*'.[55] To summarize briefly, 'securitization' refers to the discursive construction of threat, namely a process in which an 'actor' declares a particular issue to be an 'existential threat' to a particular 'referent object'. If accepted as such by a 'relevant audience', this enables the suspension of normal politics and the use of emergency measures in responding to that perceived crisis. As the authors put it: "In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labeling it as security, an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means. For the analyst to grasp this act, the task is not to assess some objective threats that really endanger some object to be defended or secured; rather it is to understand the processes of constructing a shared understanding of what is to be

[52] WILLIAMS (ed.): *Security Studies*, pp. 68-72.
[53] As Ronnie D. Lipschutz envisioned in 1995: "almost all wisdom about security no longer holds. The orderly practices of the world of international relations embodied in neorealist discourse – the practices of power, not the absence of disorder – require constant reiteration and reification in mantra-like fashion, even as they become increasingly problematic in the hyperreality of the non-place and time bound worlds of transnational society." LIPSCHUTZ, RONNIE D.: *On Security*, in: LIPSCHUTZ, RONNIE D. (ed.): On Security, New York 1995, p. 18.
[54] As Holger Stritzel pointed out: "the interesting question is, of course, whether there is indeed a universal logic of security, what such a logic actually entails, and, finally, how one can identify such a logic". STRITZEL, HOLGER: *Security in Translation. Securitization Theory and the Localisation of Threat*, London, 2014, p. 15.
[55] A vital prerequisite for the securitization theory is the denial of the binary opposition between 'security' and 'insecurity'. According to Ole Wæver, the former "signifies a situation marked by the presence of a security problem and some measures taken in response", whereas the latter is a "situation with a security problem and no response". WÆVER: 'Securitization and desecuritization', p. 56.

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considered and collectively responded to as a threat."[56] They also claim that "securitization can be seen as a more extreme version of politicization".[57] CS introduced the supplementary terms of securitization too. 'De-securitization' refers to the process whereby particular issues or actors are removed from the security realm and re-enter the realm of normal politics. In the same way but with a quite different outcome, 'counter-securitization' refers to an attempt to overwrite one's securitization move with a more powerful attempt of the same kind.

CS interprets the way in which the actor declares something to be a security issue as a '*speech act'*, a term of language theory borrowed from J.L. Austin.[58] For linguists, the speech act is something expressed by an individual that not only presents information, but performs an action as well (As when, for example the priest says at the wedding ceremony: "I now pronounce you husband and wife.") Furthermore, they differentiate between three levels of speech act: the actual utterance and its apparent meaning (locutionary act), the active result of the implied request or meaning (illocutionary act) presented by the locutionary act, and the actual effect of the first and the second levels (perlocutionary act).[59]

For CS, the term speech act also means much more than a description of a security or emergency situation; it is a powerful 'securitizing move' that itself plays an active role in the creation of a security issue.[60] In other words, a securitizing move is an attempt by an actor to construct an issue or another actor as an existential threat to a particular group (audience) through a security speech act. CS authors insist that a securitizing move is successful and leads to securitization only if and when the relevant audience accepts the securitizing move performed by the actor. The audience's decision as to whether to accept the move very much depends on the so-called 'facilitating conditions'.[61]

This term refers to the particular context that enables the acceptance of the securitizing move, such as the form of the speech act and the position, authority and repertoire enjoyed by the actor, or the historical and sociological context, etc. As CS authors point out, their speech act approach requires a distinction to be made between three types of units involved in security analysis: (1) the referent objects; (2) the securitizing actors; and (3) the functional actors.[62] The

[56] BUZAN — WÆVER – DE WILDE: *Security*, p. 23.
[57] IBID.
[58] AUSTIN, JOHN L.: *How to do things with words*, Oxford 1962.
[59] According to Holger Stritzel, "unfortunately, however, members of the Copenhagen School have not elaborated in more detail how specifically their idea of securitization relates to the three, potentially competing speech acts described as locution, illocution and perlocution". STRITZEL: *Security in Translation*, p. 22.
[60] As Ole Waever put it in his ground-breaking article in 1995: "With the help of language theory, we can regard "security" as a speech act. In this usage, security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance itself is the act." WÆVER: *Securitization and desecuritization*, p. 55.
[61] BUZAN — WÆVER – DE WILDE: *Security*, pp. 31-33.
[62] IBID., pp. 33-36.

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first refers to those things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival. In the world of politics and international relations, the referent object is typically a state or nation or their combination (nation-state), but in principle almost anything in society could become a referent object. The second refers to those who declare the first – the referent objects – to be in danger, most typically politicians, decision-makers or representatives of a particular group or movement. The third refers to those actors who are not directly taking part in the securitization process, yet they strongly affect the securitization process through contributing to the debate or influencing decisions.

At this point one arrives at the topic of which sectors or fields are to be analysed in a Copenhagen-minded security research. CS identifies five of them: (1) military, (2) environmental, (3) economic, (4) societal and (5) political. These are seen as the fields of activity that entail particular forms of security interactions and particular definitions of referent objects. CS does not imagine the sectors, however, as completely discrete or easily separable units but as different "lenses focusing on the same world" which are interlinked by cross-references. Therefore, the authors strictly suggest looking at the sectors through the security actors' lense. By doing so, the argument goes, one can discover the cross-sectoral dynamics behind security dilemmas.[63] As the authors point out: "in a specific analysis, the sequence is (1) securitization as a phenomenon, as a distinct type of practice; (2) the security units, those units that have become established as legitimate referent objects for security action and those that are able to securitize – the securitizing actors; and (3) the pattern of mutual references among units – the security complex."[64]

All five sectors are investigated by CS authors primarily from the perspective of the reasons for their existence and their implications, the main issues generally raised in a given sector, and the roles of the referent objects and security actors. In addition, they also investigate the globalizing, regionalizing and localizing dynamics in each sector. The first sector to be discussed is the military one.[65] In this sector, according to CS, states remain not the only but the most important referent objects, and accordingly the ruling elites of the states are the most typical securitizing actors. The explanation behind this is that the modern state is defined by the idea of sovereignty, which is a claim of exclusive right to self-government of a specified territory and its population.[66]

[63] IBID., pp. 166-171.
[64] IBID., p. 169.
[65] IBID., pp. 49-70.
[66] Challenging the traditional geographical approach to security, French geographer Phillipe Le Billon claims that "space is at the same time the way security is performed and the way securitized spaces become performative in

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CS points out that geographical, historical and political factors play key roles in securitization in the military sector, which is dominated by regional and local security dynamics. Throughout history, acquiring a territory and asserting the right to rule it was typically realized by force against internal and external rivals. According to the Westphalian tradition, the state should be engaged in disarming its own population while keeping the monopoly of using force exclusively to itself. In most European countries this process, which includes the separation of police and armed forces, was more or less carried out in the long 19th century as a result of the transition from classic empires to modern (nation-)states. Among the principal domestic functions of government are the maintenance of civil order, peace, administration and law. All of these are at great risk when the state is no longer able to maintain the monopoly of force and thus faces the possibility of disintegration, if not anarchy. All in all, in the military sector the state becomes a referent object primarily because of its vulnerability. In case of an external attack it is quite simple: if the military power of the enemy is stronger, the state is in grave danger. In case of an internal crisis, securitization is often centred on majority vs. minority conflicts, arising from, for instance, religious, ethnic or ideological tensions. [67]

In connection with the military sector, CS highlights the case of the so-called "would-be states", namely secessionists, unionists, revolutionaries etc., that often pose a great challenge to their respective parent state. In their words: "The very nature of would-be states, and their position in the international system, means they are frequently objects of military interest and action and therefore of securitization. They can easily be cast as threats to state sovereignty and, by the kind of statelike activities they engage in, can motivate the existing state to use military force to secure its monopoly over legitimate violence."[68]

Unlike the military sector, the environment as a security sector is not usually considered to be an ancient one.[69] It may sound strange today, but even in the 1990s the reasons for the existence of such a sector were thought to require careful explanation. According to CS, the most striking feature of the environmental sector is that it is shaped by two overlapping but still

relation to security-based actors and objects. Space is thus itself a political object constituted by, and constituted of, security discourses and praxis." See: LE BILLON, PHILIPPE: Geography: *Securing Places and Spaces of Securitization*, in: BOURBEAU, PHILLIPPE (ed.): Security. Dialogue across disciplines, Cambridge, 2015, p. 66.

[67] Investigating the "creation of the homeland", Hein Goemans pointed out: "In order to make collective defense of the homeland possible, every group member must know not only who is a group member, but also that all other group members know who is a group member, and that all other group members know who is a group member, ad infinitum." GOEMANS, HEIN E.: *Bounded communities: territoriality, territorial attachment, and conflict*, in: KAHLER, MILES – WALTER, BARBARA F. (eds.): Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization, Cambridge, 2006, p. 32.

[68] BUZAN — WÆVER – DE WILDE: *Security*, p. 53.

[69] IBID., pp. 71-93.

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different factors: the political and the scientific agendas. They interpret both as social constructs, with the distinction that whereas the scientific agenda is about the assessment of threat and consulting on environmental securitizing and de-securitizing moves, the political one focuses on the allocation of collective means by which to deal with the issues raised. These issues vary widely thematically, from the disruption of ecosystems (climate change, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, etc.) to energy problems (depletion of natural resources, water and air pollution, etc.), food problems (famines, overconsumption, unmanageable migration or urbanization, etc.), economic problems (for example unsustainable production modes) and civil strife such as war-related environmental damage. The referent object in the environmental sector is the environment itself on one hand, and the "nexus of civilization and the environment" on the other.

The threats to face in the environmental sector are threefold: (1) threats to the human civilization from the natural environment that are not caused by human activity (natural disasters such as earthquake or volcanic eruption); (2) threats from human activity to the natural environment that also damage civilization (for example greenhouse gas emissions or floods caused by deforestation); and, last but not least; (3) threats from human activity to the natural environment that seemingly cause no harm to humans (for example depletion of fossil resources). The leading actors of securitization in the environmental sectors can be the states and their governments, but their role is rather controversial as they tend to prioritize political and economic interests over environmental ones. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the actors coming from non-governmental sphere. CS authors also point out that because of the interconnected nature of environmental systems, the regional perspective is generally less important in the environmental sector than in the military sector. A possible exception is when the consequences of a natural disaster are addressed only on a local level.

The third sector in the CS securitization model is the economic sector.[70] As the authors point out, it is a highly politicized sector, which is fundamentally shaped by various political and ideological forces, among which are (neo)mercantilism, (neo)liberalism, socialism and nationalism. Economic-financial security is important in every system but especially crucial in capitalism. The under-regulated Manchester-type of capitalism that dominated Europe in the 19th century is certainly no exception in this regard. The feeling of insecurity experienced by the actors in capitalist markets can itself lead to unforeseeable consequences, even if their fears

[70] IBID., pp. 95-117.

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prove groundless. Therefore, the actors in the economic sector constantly feel themselves under pressure, which is a hotbed of securitization.

From a security perspective the most striking issue is perhaps the relation between the military and the economic sectors, namely the enormous challenge all states face when it comes to financing their armed forces and maintaining their military production. In a similar way, the economic sector can be interconnected to the environmental one through issues of supply- and resource-management. Thirdly, one should be aware of the constant fear that the markets will produce more losers than winners. Whereas leading actors are threatened by the prospect of decline, those at the bottom are threatened by exploitation due to potential debt crises, economic mismanagement, unemployment, social polarization, etc. The dark side of capitalism too (illegal trades, smuggling, financial fraud, etc.) is noteworthy. It not only threatens the profit of those pursuing a legal activity, but might eventually undermine the entire political-social establishment. Last but not least, it must be recognized that the economic sector constantly fears the possibility that the international economy itself might fall into a new crisis.

According to CS, both the referent objects and security actors in the economic sector vary to a far greater extent than in the case of the military or environmental sectors: from individuals to firms, companies and lobbying groups, to classes and states, to mention only a few that often overlap with each other. As for the spatial dynamics of the economic sector, the main tendency of capitalism is beyond doubt globalisation; however, regionalization can also become a dominant trend if a shift takes place from a liberal to nationalist view of political economy in particular places.

In the CS system, society itself constitutes a separate sector from the political.[71] In spite of the overlaps and interconnections with the political sphere, the societal sector is concerned with security in terms of the identity and self-concept of communities, and of those individuals that identify themselves as members of particular communities. The interpretation of societal identities can become entangled with the identities that political institutions and governments are promoting, but in many cases they are seen rather as distinct from them. CS raises awareness that societal security should not be mistaken with social security, because the former is about individuals and their finances or economic activity, whereas the latter is about collectives and their identities. Moreover, CS warns that the societal sector of security is not compatible with the common interpretation of the word ‘society’, in which it refers to the population of a state as a vague group which does not carry a specific identity, in contrast to nearly the same

[71] IBID., pp. 119-140.

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population considered as a nation, which does carry such an identity. Instead, society should be interpreted as a conglomerate of different communities that, just like the national one, are self-constructed, imaginable communities, where the question of belonging primarily remains a matter of political and personal choice.

According to CS, these communities are potentially facing four different types of challenges, which often arise in varying combinations. One is the issue of 'migration', which rises up the agenda when one group of people fears that it is being overrun or diluted by the influx of another group. Second, one can speak about 'horizontal competition' when a particular group is threatened by a strong overriding influence of another, typically neighbouring or dominant, cultural or linguistic group. Third, in contrast, the issue of 'vertical competition' refers to a process where one group stops seeing themselves as they used to do, as a result of either an on-going integrating (unification) or secessionist (separation) project. The fourth main type of societal security issue arises when the society feels threatened by the prospect of depopulation for political or environmental reasons. In each case, the question is how the society reacts to the threats: it either engages in self-protecting activities within its own sphere or attempts to move the issue further up the agenda of the political sector. The referent objects in societal sectors are those larger groups that can create the "socially powerful argument" that they (i.e. "we") are threatened to the point of losing their very identity. According to CS, historically these groups have generally been family-based smaller or medium-sized units such as the village, the clan, the region or the city-state, while in the modern world they rather tend to take the form of larger entities such as nations or ethnic groups, classes, religions, or even civilizations. The security actors here are first and foremost those activists and agents who enjoy an influential position within the given community, and who feel authorized to speak on behalf of their fellow community members. They often rely on the services of the media, which is a powerful instrument in identity-formation as well as mobilization. Since society and its communities are usually strongly attached to a particular geographical space, the regionalizing dynamics in the societal sector – as in the military one – can be of great significance, and thus require a regional approach. In some cases, they can contribute to the disintegration of already existing regions or even produce entirely new ones.[72]

[72] More and more geographers claim that traditional approaches in their discipline fail to understand the „social and political meaning of the physical materiality of spatial features" (for example borders, territory, etc.) because "beyond external material conditions, the relationship between space and conflict revolves around the intangible, dynamic qualities attributed to these conditions by social groups or individuals" (such as notion of ownership and ideas of cultural identity that are connected to certain physical space). See: CHOJNACKI, SVEN — ENGELS, BETTINE: *Material Determinism and Beyond: Spatial Categories in the Study of Violent Conflict*, in: SFB-Governance Working Paper Series, No. 55, June 2013, pp. 5-7.

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Finally, but perhaps most importantly, CS interprets politics as the fifth sector of its securitization theory.[73] Since the very essence of the political sector is "made up of threats to state sovereignty", it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the military and political sectors. In contrast to the former, the political sector is about non-military threats to sovereignty. The other three sectors are also interconnected with the political, because securitization can be seen as a political act. Consequently, in a great number of cases, one could accurately speak, for example, about 'political-societal' or 'political-economic' security issues, as well as 'political-environmental' securitization. There are, however, CS argues, purely political threats that are aimed at the organizational stability of the state. In other words, political security is about giving or denying recognition, support or legitimacy to particular political units, structures, processes and institutions. Political threats are made either to the internal legitimacy of political units, structures, etc., or to their external legitimacy, which may include the very recognition of the state itself. The main referent objects in the political sector are the territorial state[74] (most typically the nation state) and other "statelike or state-paralleling political organizations", such as supranational conglomerates, self-organized societal groups (for example minorities) or transnational movements, including those of powerful ideological or religious backgrounds. The securitizing actors here are generally the political elites, or more precisely the authoritative leaders, including, in the case of the (nation) state, the government itself.

According to CS, regionalizing dynamics do not play a decisive role in the political sector. Instead of a regional approach, they rather discovered nine different "state situations" that dominate the sector. These are as follows: (1) intentional threats to (weak) states on the basis of their state-nation split; (2) intentional threats to (weak) state on political-ideological grounds; (3) inadvertent, unit-based threats to state-nation vulnerable states; (4) unintentional threats to states on political-ideological grounds; (5) security of, or against, supranational, regional integration; (6) systematic, principled threats against states that are vulnerable because of a state-nation split; (7) structural (systemic) threats to (weak) states on political-ideological grounds; (8) threats to transnational movements that command supreme loyalty from their members; and (9) threats to international society, order and law. From an historical research perspective, the most interesting of these is perhaps the sixth. According to CS, the case of the

[73] BUZAN — WÆVER – DE WILDE: *Security*, pp. 141-162.
[74] According to Lena Hansen, the "territorially-bounded identities are all imbued with political content but spatial identity might also be articulated as abstract political space, boundaries and subjectivities." HANSEN, LENA: *Security as practice. Discourse analysis and the Bosnian War*, London – New York 2006, p. 47.

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"systematic, principled threat against states that are vulnerable because of a state-nation split" is mainly of historical relevance, and one good way to illustrate this is the Austrian (Austrian-Hungarian) example, due to its vis-à-vis nationalist movements in the 19th century.[75]

Although CS is widely regarded as the leading school of security studies, it was not the only one to call for a great turn in the discipline in the early 1990s. As soon as the Cold War ended and its rigid approach to international security became old-fashioned, several other scholars engaged in the search for new interpretations of security. Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones, who later become known as leading figures of the Welsh (Aberystwyth) School, for example, who emphasized first that security is a "derivative concept", meaning that what one thinks security is necessarily derives from one's political stance and philosophical worldview. Since security has a culture-bound character, it is impossible to come up with a single universal definition.[76] Instead, they suggested creating and using "working definitions" that enable scholars from different political and philosophical backgrounds to understand each other and to cooperate effectively. By recognizing security as a shared 'instrumental value' common to otherwise irreconcilable sides, they laid down the foundations of what is today called "Critical Security Studies" (hereafter CSS). As Ken Booth explained: "In the study of world politics, emphasizing emancipation is one way to help loosen the grip of the neo-realist tradition. Neo-realism undoubtedly highlights important dynamics in relations between states, and these cannot be disregarded. But to make world politics more intelligible it is necessary to go beyond these important but limited insights. The tradition of critical theory is helpful in this regard; its most important potential contribution in the present state of the subject lies in recapturing the idea that politics is open-ended and based in ethics."[77]

The word 'critical' in the name of the new approach refers to two inspirational sources. One is Italian political philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), who is mostly known for his Marxist theory of cultural hegemony. It was also Gramsci who made a clear distinction between 'problem-solving theory' and 'critical theory'. Whereas the former refers to the pragmatic approach, interested in how to improve already established institutions, the latter is about understanding the (historical) processes arising from those failing institutions that had been

[75] BUZAN — WÆVER – DE WILDE: *Security*, p. 158.
[76] Conceptualizing culture as such has been at the focus of conflict studies too. Guy Olivier Faure, for example, points out that "culture can be viewed as a kind of structural component, conditioning human behavior and leaving an enduring print on people. According to the French scholar, "culture is constantly in flux and form a long-term perspective, it is a dynamical social phenomenon that provides changes over time through integration of new values and disqualification of former values". FAURE, GUY O.: *Culture and Conflict Resolution*, in: BERCOVITCH, JACOB –KREMENYUK, VICTOR (eds.): The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution, London, 2008, p. 507.
[77] BOOTH, KEN: *Security and Emancipation*, in: Review of International Studies, 17 (1991), 4, p. 321.

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created in the first place. The second source of inspiration for 'critical security studies' was the so-called Frankfurt School, and especially the contribution by Max Horkheimer (1895-1973). Like his Italian counterpart, the German philosopher also drew a clear distinction between 'traditional' and 'critical' theory, though in a somewhat different context. In Horkheimer's view, the former is about the reification of ideas into institutions which are later taken to be pre-given, while the latter points to the role played by certain actors and their ideas in the reification process, and thus questions the pre-given status of the institutions.

For critical security scholars, all this means that the traditional state-centric approaches regarding security should be replaced with approaches where "states are means and not the ends of security policy". Abandoning the ideas of "statism", the critical approach therefore both deepens and expands the meaning of security, while interpreting it primarily as a question of emancipation. As Ken Booth put it, "security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin". It means that emancipation produces security by removing threats. Security in this sense is explained as the absence of threat.[78]

Consequently, liberating the people from what makes them insecure – war, poverty, poor education, discrimination, political or ideological oppression, etc. – will certainly lead to a more secure and stable world, at least according to CSS authors.[79] It is noteworthy that they do not consider theory as a utopia-making academic passion, but as a form of practice that has a direct impact on the real world.[80] This point of view is one of several aspects in which theories of CSS agree with those of the Copenhagen School. However, there are some remarkable differences as well. Above all, CSS has challenged the CS term 'de-securitization'. Whereas CS uses de-securitization as an instrument to ease tensions by taking certain issues off the security agenda of state elites, CSS – in direct contradiction – deliberately politicizes security in order to bring the insecurities from below the horizon of the decision-makers up to the higher

[78] NUNES, JOÃO: *Reclaiming the political: Emancipation and critique in security studies*, in: Security and Dialogue, 43 (2021), 4, pp. 345-361.

[79] According to Christoph Schutt, "the state's loss of its monopoly on means of mass destruction, millions of individuals living below poverty-line, social injustice, gender inequality, climate changes triggering trans-regional migration, failing and failed state and so on, do not constitutes a new phenomenon but have increasingly moved into the security focus." SHUCK, CHRISTOPH: *Introduction: Whose security?,* in: SHUCK, CHRISTOPH (ed.): Security in a Changing Global Environment. Challenging the Human Security Approach, Baden-Baden, 2011, p. 8.

[80] As Keith Krause put it: "promoting an agenda of human security – promoting the >>the freedom of fear<< draws our attention to a number of essential challenges around the world. It goes well beyond the traditional conflict prevention or conflict resolution agenda, and leads us to ask some basic questions about how to make people safe and secure in their daily lives – in their homes and streets, within their communities, and in their regions." KRAUSE, KEITH: *Human Security: An Idea Whose Time Has Come?,* in: S+F Sicherheit und Frieden – Security and Peace, 23 (2005), 1, p. 6.

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levels of politics. Once again: deepening and widening the meaning of security with an emancipatory imperative is a key assumption of CSS.[81]

The Copenhagen scholars of security face competition not only from Aberystwyth but also from "Paris", though the name of the so-called P.A.R.I.S. School does not refer to the French capital but is an acronym of 'Political Anthropological Research Initiative For Sociology'. Nonetheless, the group of prominent scholars centred initially around the academic journal *Cultures et Conflits* are known today as the founding members of this school, that in addition to CS and CSS has become the third leading laboratory of contemporary security studies. What clearly distinguishes the Paris authors – Didier Bigo, Anastassia Tsoukala, Ayse Ceyhan, Elspeth Guild, to name just a few – from their Copenhagen and Welsh counterparts is that they drew their main intellectual inspiration from the post-structuralist writings of Michel Foucault (1926-1984) and Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002).[82]

The Foucauldian reading of policing as a form of governmentality influenced the approach to security of the Paris scholars in particular. Like CS, the Paris school also understands security as a social construction as opposed to an objective reality, but as regards how to deal with this social construction they went further than Copenhagen's speech act-based securitization theory. According to Didier Bigo, the real questions are "how security is practised" and "what is done with security"? It means that the PARIS scholars argue for a shift of focus from securitizing actors and referent objects to the audience, which is to be considered as a co-constitutive element in the securitization process.[83] Furthermore, they introduced the term 'security fields' to refer to the arenas where the securitization and insecuritization (also a term introduced by the Paris school) - takes place as a result of force, struggle or domination. Paris scholars insist on the existence of a merger between the formerly rigid state-centrist categories of external and internal security.

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[81] Christopher Daase illustrates the change in security culture and the expansion of the notion of security with concentric circles intersected in the form of an 'x' by two double arrows. The four end points of the arrows refer to the four dimensions of security, whereas the circles show the expending nature of each dimension: Space dimension (national, regional, international, global); Factual dimension (military, economic, environmental, humanitarian); Referent dimension (state, society, individual); Threat dimension (threat, vulnerability, risk). DAASE, CHRISTOPHER: *Der Wandel der Sicherheitskultur. Ursachen und Folgen des erweiterten Sicherheitsbegriffs*, in: ZOCHE, PETER –KAUFMANN, STEFAN – HAVERKAMP, RITA (eds.): Zivile Sicherheit. Gesellschaftliche Dimensionen gegenwärtiger Sicherheitspolitiken, Bielefeld, 2011, pp. 142-148.

[82] FOUCAULT, MICHEL: *Governmentality*, in: BURCHELL, GRAHAM – GORDON, COLIN – MILLER, PETER (eds.): The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, Chicago 1991, pp. 87–104.

[83] As a much-quoted trio of the Paris school explains, "the concept of audience is of crucial importance of securitization theory" because a "key assumption of the theory is that securitization is an intersubjective process, which depends on audience assent". However, they point out that "the complexity of determining the assent of the audience is further compounded by that fact that, in many instances, there is not one single audience but rather several possible audiences". BALZACQ, THIERRY — LÉONARD, SARAH — RUZICKA, JAN: *Securitization revisited: Theory and cases*, in: International Relations, 30 (2015), 4, pp. 494-531.

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In this framework, security and insecurity are the results of an (in)securitization process achieved by a successful claim resulting from the struggles between actors and audiences in a particular security field. These actors compete in order to frame what are and what are not considered to be the major threats, and the results of (in)securitization are very often different from what was expected by the actors who initiated the process in the first place. The Paris interpretation of security – what Bigo and his followers are attempting to systematize under the project name 'International Political Sociology' (IPS), still involves a 'speech act' calling for a 'politics of exception'. However, it pays more attention to the creation of the exceptional itself, by investigating the interplay of those different actors, transnational bureaucracies and private agents that compete to frame security issues. Furthermore, they heavily criticize CS for using a very strict distinction between 'normal politics' and 'exceptional politics' as a basis for their securitization theory.

This distinction is alleged to rely on conservative German philosopher Carl Schmitt's (1888-1985) theory on state and sovereignty, and thus to serve a (nation)-state-centrist view, even if CS declares its intentions as the very opposite.[84] The Paris scholars are rather echoing Foucault's postmodernist views[85] on power, authority and governmentality, and argue that (in)securitization processes are embedded in the use of technology in everyday practices, including bureaucratic decisions, use of technologies and Weberian routines of rationalization.[86] Sharing the Marxism-inspired emancipatory approach of the Welsh school, the Paris school suggests that security researchers should focus primarily on what they take to be the marginalized groups of the society, such as immigrants and other allegedly oppressed communities.[87] As Didier Bigo himself wrote: "Securitization of the immigrant as a risk is

[84] In a co-authored book with Lena Hansen, Copenhagen author Berry Buzan admits that the original CS theory has three main roots and that one of them is a Schmittian understanding of security as danger and the exceptional character of security politics, while the other two are the speech act theory and the traditional security debates. See: BUZAN, BERRY — HANSEN, LENA: *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, Cambridge, 2009, p. 213 and p. 217.

[85] The best way to illustrate the Foucaldian approach is perhaps to cite Tugba Basharan's article on the recent refugee and migration crisis in the Mediterranean. The author leans on the French philosopher when claiming that "governing refers to the variety of techniques and procedures for directing human behavior" and then accuses the decision-makers of "inducing collective indifference" among their people towards those fellow humans suffering at sea. "These practices reveal deeper rationales at play, associated with the creation of spaces of security. Security requires the collective indifference of the general population toward securitized populations." BASHARAN, TUGBA: *The saved and the drowned: Governing indifference in the name of security*, in: Security Dialogue, 46 (2015), 3, p. 215.

[86] According to Thierry Balzacq, arguments for contesting security are closely related to justification of legitimacy. He argues that "Security practices that result from securitization, remain socially binding as long as they respond to commonly accepted values. That is so long they are regarded as legitimate." BALZACQ, THIERRY (ed.): *Contesting security. Strategies and logics*, London – New York 2015, p. 3.

[87] See for example: HUYSMANS, JEF: *The Politics of Insecurity, Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU*, London 2006.

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based on our conception of the state as a body or a container for the polity. It is anchored in the fears of politicians about losing their symbolic control over the territorial boundaries. It is structured by the habitus of the security professionals and their new interests not only in the foreigner but in the 'immigrant.' These interests are correlated with the globalization of technologies of surveillance and control going beyond the national borders. It is based, finally, on the 'unease' that some citizens who feel discarded suffer because they cannot cope with the uncertainty of everyday life."[88]

The securitization theory of the Copenhagen School has sparked a lot of interest as well as criticism from outside the narrow academic field of security studies in the last two decades. To some extent, most of the contemporary critique of the Copenhagen approach can be linked to either the Welsh or to the Paris school, but it is more appropriate to read them in terms of their own discipline and philosophical background. First of all, one has to mention the feminist scholarship that has been thoroughly criticizing CS since Lena Hansen's ground-breaking article published in 2000.[89] The renowned Danish scholar used the metaphor of the Little Mermaid (the famous sculpture on a rock by the waterside in Copenhagen) to prove that the speech act theory in the form in which CS was promoting it simply does not work in the case of what she identified in her case studies as 'silenced' groups of women.

As Lena Hansen put it: "'Security as silence' occurs when insecurity cannot be voiced, when raising something as a security problem is impossible or might even aggravate the threat being faced. 'Subsuming security' arises because gendered security problems often involve an intimate inter-linkage between the subject's gendered identity and other aspects of the subject's identity, for example national and religious. As a consequence, 'gender' rarely produces the kind of collective, self-contained referent objects required by the Copenhagen School, and to the extent that gender is included it is mostly as an individual – and less important – security problem."[90] Hansen also pointed out that those who are deemed to remain silent, for example many abused women in the Muslim world, cannot stand against oppression by giving voice to their insecurity. Therefore, Hansen and her followers argue strongly for extending the scope of security studies with feminist approaches[91] in order to overcome the methodological

[88] BIGO, DIDIER: *Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease*, Alternatives 27 (2002), Special Issue, p. 65.
[89] HANSEN, LENE: *The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School*, in: Millennium. Journal of International Studies, 29 (2000), 2, pp. 285–306.
[90] IBID., p. 287.
[91] See for instance: HOOGENSEN, GUNHILD — VIGELAND ROTTEM, SVEIN: *Gender Identity and the Subject of Security*, in: Security Dialogue, 35 (2004), 2, pp. 155-171.; HUDSON, HEIDI: *'Doing' Security As Though Humans Matter. A Feminist Perspective on Gender and the Politics of Human Security*, in: Security Dialogue, 36 (2005),

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shortcoming of the original securitization theory as presented by the three male scholars of the Copenhagen School. Some feminist scholars even drew the conclusion that all the main three schools of security studies failed to include gender-based perspectives: "If there is a gender-deficit in the substantive theorization of security by the Aberystwyth School, and a strong element of gender-blindness in the writings of the Copenhagen School on securitization, there is virtually a gender-silence in the work associated with the so-called Paris School of critical security studies. When it comes to the work of Didier Bigo, there is almost nothing in print that specifically engages with gendered dimensions of security."[92]

More recently, another group of scholars have expressed their discontent with Waever-like interpretations of security because of what they allege to be an absence of de-colonialist perspectives.[93] By questioning the very functionality of the Copenhagen securitization model in a non-European context, these scholars raised their concerns over CS's 'Eurocentric' approach. They are convinced that CS paid too much attention to the West, while ignoring the rest of the world.[94] Their critique turned into a politically heated debate on security when two researchers openly accused the CS authors of having founded their theory on "civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack thought."[95] In their article published in 2019, Allison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit harshly attacked CS for using the term 'normal politics' as a European phenomenon as opposed to the 'primal anarchy' associated with the allegedly 'uncivilized' parts of the globe. According to the two authors of the highly controversial article, CS has made the principle "becoming like Europe" a moral imperative, while 'antiblackness' remained a "crucial building-block" of their securitization theory. It is not the task of this work to review all the sometimes absurd accusations levelled against CS over the years. However, as far as the questions of 'Eurocentrism' and 'Westernism' are concerned, it is important to note

2, pp. 155-174.; MARHIA, NATASHA: *Some Humans are more Human than others: Troubling the 'human' in human security from a critical feminist perspective*, in: Security Dialogue, 44 (2013), 1, pp. 19-35.

[92] DERICHS, CLAUDIA – PINÉU, DANIEL: *Security and Gender: Feminist Approaches to the Concept of Security*, in: CHRISTOPH SHUCK (ed.): Security in a Changing Global Environment. Challenging the Human Security Approach, Baden-Baden 2011, p. 240.

[93] Investigating the securitization of wartime rapes in Africa and the Balkans, Sabine Hirschaurer claims, for example, that the "origins of the Securitization Theory firmly locates itself in a 'Western' setting" and "it is western-based and western-funded, and, therefore remains inherently suspect of valuing security issues from a specific, limited (Western) angle." HIRSCHAURER, SABINE: *Securitization of Rape. Women, War and Sexual Violence*, London, 2014, pp. 198-199.

[94] Some of these researchers go even further to challenge "the dominant temporal division of the world and modernity's attempts to ontologize the World as Western, modern, and secular." AGATHANGELOU, ANNA M. – KILLIAN, KYLE D. (eds.): *Time, Temporality and Violence in International Relations. (De)fatalizing the Present, Forging Radical Alternatives (Interventions)*, London – New York, 2016, pp. 10-11.

[95] HOWELL, ALISON — RICHTER-MONTPETIT, MELANIE: *Is securitization theory racist? Civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and anti-black thought in the Copenhagen School*, in: Security Dialogue, 51 (2020), 1, pp. 3-22.

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that they may present a methodological challenge for historical security studies too, especially when it comes to non-Western-European aerial studies.

1.4 Methodological Premises: Towards Historical Security Research

Having taken an overview on the history of security studies, especially the latest developments, a historian may have the impression that security studies are showing a self-destructive tendency. Indeed, the constructivist turn and the initial aim of overthrowing the dominance of the realist schools has released an avalanche of literature in the field of security studies and today it is quite difficult to tell which phase of the 'security revolution' we are in right now and what will be the consequences for the discipline in the long run. It is hardly a coincidence that many traditional-minded historians rather keep a polite distance from postmodern theories.[96] History as an independent, modern academic field with its own scientific principles and methodology was born in the 19th century, and thus played a crucial role in national movements and the creation of nation-states all over Europe. About a century later, the post-modern philosophers and proponents of critical theory identified their number one intellectual enemy exactly in what can be described as the dominant discourses of the era of high modernity, which are profoundly characterized by – among many other features – nationalism, nation-states, religious thinking, traditionalism, essentialism, primordialism, historicism, romanticism, etc.[97]

Foucault, for instance, claimed that in spite of their claims to the contrary, historians are not even able to reconstruct the past from a neutral point of view for two main reasons. On the one hand, historians themselves are very much dependent on the dominant discourses of their time as well as the reigning power structures that determine the knowledge and way of thinking of a particular era. On the other hand, the sources from which historians extract the "facts" on which their conclusions are based, are just products of the once reigning power structures, and thus potentially misleading. In other words, they are not to be trusted. In Foucault's view, historians should focus not on source-based narratives of chains of events, but on the analysis of the discourses that dominated the period of their respective research interests.[98]

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[96] DAVIES, NORMAN: *Europe: A History*, Oxford 1996, p. 6.

[97] On the dominant role of nationalism and nation-state-centric approaches in European historiography, see: LEERSEEN, JOEP: *Nation and Ethnicity*, in: BERGER, STEFAN – LORENZ, CHIRS (eds.): The Contested Nation. Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories, London, 2008, pp. 75-103.; DENECKERE, GITA – WELSKOPP, THOMAS: *The 'Nation' and 'Class': European Master-Narratives*, in: BERGER – LORENZ (eds.): The Contested Nation, pp. 135-170.; BAÁR, MONIKA: *Historians and Nationalism. East Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century,* Oxford, 2010.

[98] Although Foucault's ideas on history are far from an influential position in Hungarian history-writing in general, certain historians pay thorough attention to them. See: ROMSICS: *Clio Bűvöletében.* pp. 231-232; ERŐS: *Modern*

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It has been half a century since postmodernism appeared in academia, but historians have remained divided on how to deal with ideas and research initiatives that originate from post-modern-inspired social sciences.[99] Probably the largest group of them – the situation of course varies from country to country – fiercely oppose the novel ideas as well as the demand for a new history-writing, and seek to maintain the principles of conventional methodology. Other groups of historians, by contrast, are more open to the new approaches and seek to re-configure their own discipline accordingly, which has led in recent decades to the emergence of a number of new subdisciplines such as counterfactual, transnational or feminist history-writing. Since security studies was originally a subfield of political science, or more precisely of international relations, and since it has increasingly taken its main intellectual inspiration from post-modern theories – such as the linguistic turn, critical theory and post-structuralism – many historians are reluctant even to consider applying security studies to their research. Ideological assumptions, however, should not prevent anyone from asking the important questions: what can be gained from security studies, and what relevance do its main assumptions have for historical research?

This dissertation project aims to demonstrate that it is possible to find a golden mean between the "old" and "new" types of history-writing. The analysis of security issues and processes enables historians not only to investigate a given period of time and space from new perspectives, but also to test and critically apply the theoretical concepts as well as the methodology of security studies as invented and practiced by social sciences. Both the strengths and shortcomings of the different theories can be demonstrated through historical analysis. In contrast to researchers of contemporary societies, historians can allow themselves to keep temporal distance from their subject of observation. This of course poses an enormous challenge in terms of gathering sources, but in exchange it offers a greater degree of objectivity and a somewhat better chance of avoiding a rush into ahistorical or unfounded conclusions. The main question which remains, however, is whether it is possible, and if yes, should historical security research seek to verify the security crises of past times? If security is something constructed and subjective as philosophers and social scientists argue nowadays, so that one can speak only

historiográfia, pp. 269-271.; GYÁNI, GÁBOR: *A történeti tudás* [The Historical Knowledge], Budapest, 2020, pp. 311-313.

[99] On the main challenges of contemporary history-writing, see: BERGER, STEFAN – LORENZ, CHRIS: *Introduction: National History Writing in a Global Age*, in: BERGER – LORENZ (eds.): The Contested Nation. Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories, London, 2008, pp. 1-23.; In Hungarian language, the main collection of theories and philosophy of history: GYURGYÁK, JÁNOS – KISANTAL, TAMÁS (eds.): *Történelemelmélet* [Theory of History] I-II., Budapest, 2006.

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about the sense or feeling of security, then security issues cannot be verified historically, and at most the crises of the feeling of security as a fact can be confirmed. Does this mean that historians should focus primarily on the historical construction of security-related processes? This subchapter attempts to begin forming answers to these rather difficult questions.

Traditional historians have always favoured political and military history and focused on the activity of state leaders, as well as the clash, rise and fall of different empires, states and nations in history.[100] In this sense, historians often just ignored the topic of security or worked simply with realist approaches. This means that they either did not investigate security issues explicitly, or if they did so, they analysed them mostly in connection with military events of the past and the history of geo- and power-politics and foreign affairs. This naturally corresponded with the interests of the nation-states, which is hardly a coincidence as modern academic history-writing was established within national frameworks all over Europe in the 19th century. Although the rise of economic and social history-writing in the first half of the 20th century significantly changed the focus of studying history, the dominant political perspectives of historians remained largely intact.[101]

The great philosophical turn (critical theory, language turn, postmodernism, etc.) in the second half of the 20th century, however, made a great impact in this regard too, though not in as revolutionary or as rapid manner as in the case of social sciences, linguistics and literary studies. Nevertheless, the massive shift in how we perceive human society resulted in new, innovative history schools, with conceptual history being one of them. Within their enormous research project 'Begriffsgeschichte', Reindhart Koselleck and his colleagues were the first historians who paid attention to security as one of the great number of abstract phenomena that have historical dimensions.[102] In their analysis, written by Werner Conze, they did not abandon the state-centric interpretation of security, but clearly pointed out how historically complex the term 'security' with its multiple meanings was, and how security developed into a key term of modern politics throughout the centuries. This beyond doubt provided a new historical insight

[100] For the Rankean tradition see: IGGERS, GEORG – POWELL, J.M. (eds.): *Leopold von Ranke and the Shaping of the Historical Discipline*, Syracuse (NY, USA), 1990; For non-empiricist tradition of historiography, see: CARR, EDWARD H.: *What Is History?*, London, 1961.

[101] In this respect one has to mention first and foremost the French Annales school and the works of - among others - Fernand Braudel, Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. See for instance: BURKE, PETER (ed.): *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Lucien Febvre*, London 1973.

[102] Learn more: KOSELLECK, REINHART: *The Practice of Conceptual History. Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, Stanford, 2002, pp. 20-37.

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into security but did not yet lead to the birth of a new subsdicipline in academic history-writing.[103]

The demand to deal with security from a historical perspective in a more conceptualized and structuralized form arose among a group of German historians and social scientists only about a decade ago. Taking inspiration from the triumph of critical security studies in the social sciences around the millennium, their initial aim was to look far beyond the traditional interpretations of security in history, including the one formulated by conceptual historians. This was and is not imagined as a one-way cooperation. As political scientist Christopher Daase pointed out, the "historical accounts of security are an essential corrective to the rather static understanding of security in political and social sciences. At the same time, social science concepts promise a fruitful field of application if taken as historicized heuristics for the exploration of specific problems of a security history."[104]

Beyond the interdisciplinary cooperation, Daase also discovered great potential in historical security research for all the main epochal fields of history. Medieval research on security, for example, can prove if basic security can be provided even without proper, modern state structures. Early modern historians, to give another example, could gain inspiration from security studies to decide the most difficult question of their field: how to distinguish early modern times from medieval and modern periods. Historians of modern and contemporary periods can go even further and find new perspectives and research results through applying theories of security studies such as securitization to their respective case studies.

Was security indeed neglected by historians until now? According to Cornel Zwierlein, one of the pioneers of the new research field, the answer is both yes and no. As he explains, 'security' is such a general concept that it has been long omnipresent in all fields of historical research, and yet it has not made its way to become a separate subdiscipline. Accordingly, Zwierlein joins Daase in arguing that the time has now come for historiography to reply to the "important contemporaneous changes in concept and practices of security production", including the extended notion of security and the disappearance of the rigid distinction between external and internal security.[105]

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[103] CONZE, WERNER: 'Sicherheit, Schutz', in: BRUNNER, OTTO – CONZE, WERNER – KOSELLECK, REINHART (eds.): *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Band 5 Pro-Soz, Stuttgart, 1984, pp. 831–862.

[104] DAASE, CHRISTOPHER: *Die Historisierung der Sicherheit. Anmerkungen zur historischen Sicherheitsforschung aus politikwissenschaftlicher Sicht*, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 38 (2012), 3, pp. 387–405.

[105] ZWIERLEIN, CORNEL: *Sicherheitsgeschichte. Ein neues Feld der Geschichtswissenschaften*, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft, 38 (2012), 3, pp. 365–386.

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Zwierlein, in a joint study with his colleague Rüdiger Graf, reinforced that claim in developing the idea of 'historization of human security'. They pointed out that the concept of 'human security' was first introduced by the United Nations in the early 1990s in order to promote the basic rights and security of individuals worldwide, regardless of their citizenship or national belonging. The UN Human Development Report of 1994 defined security as "safety from constant threats of hunger, disease, crime, and repression", which means it is no longer an exclusive matter of state affairs but includes aspects of everyday life of people, including secure living conditions, security against violence and crime and in face of natural or human-made catastrophes. Zwierlein and Graf highlighted that, "human security emerged as a central category in debates on security policies after the Cold War", and admitted, it "often alludes to a new postmodern and postnational age". Therefore, they insist, "'human security' is supposed to overcome state borders for the sake of people's human rights and the security of their basic livelihoods when failing or failed states do not accomplish the function of protecting their citizens from harm and violence".[106]

The authors welcome the emergence of transnational history as an important topic of historical research in recent times,but express their disappointment with the fact that historians rarely deal explicitly with the concept of 'human security', so that "studies of historical security regimes still largely focus on national and military security of nation-states". Zwierlein and Graf therefore urge their colleagues to contribute to the new field of 'historical security studies' in two possible ways: either with studies that aim to "historicize human security or corresponding notions of security", or with studies that "explore the analytical and heuristic value of 'human security' to historiography". As for the latter, they advise taking care in the interpretation and usage of the term 'modernity' in connection with security. It is problematic on the one hand, because more and more scholars question the previously dominant views of Western-type homogeneity of modernity as a linear route to political, social and economic progress and prosperity, while emphasizing the concept of "multiple modernities" as well as ideas of hybrid and entangled versions of traditionalism and modernity varying from one region to another. As Zwierlein elsewhere pointed out: "The failure of those preformed schemes of perception shows that under conditions of globalisation the previously seemingly universal distinction between 'Tradition' and 'Modernity' is reduced to a rather arbitrary labelling

[106] ZWIERLEIN, CORNEL — GRAF, RÜDIGER: *The Production of Human Security in Premodern and Contemporary History*, in: CORNEL ZWIERLEIN (ed.): The Production of Human Security in Premodern and Contemporary History, Köln, 2010, pp. 7-9.

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depending on the standpoint of the attributing person; what remains is a pure diversity with no given epochal index."[107]

Some scholars even claim that one can find more reason to compare our contemporary world (second/late/postmodernity) to medieval and early modern times than to its direct predecessor the 'first/high modern period'. On the other hand, historians can use modernity as a twofold term: either to structure their narratives chronologically, as they normally do in their works, or to express the constantly changing relationship of people to security. Relying on Reinhart Koselleck's interpretation of modernity, which is based on the concept of an increasing gap between "spaces of experience" and "horizons of expectation", Zwierlein and Graf argue that one can say that security is "located exactly within this gap".[108]

Insisting that in-depth historical security research can be carried out only simultaneously on different levels, Zwierlein suggested the necessity of identifying those particular fields in which security can be analysed historically, alongside conceptual history and traditional time- and space-specific history-writing. In his view, these fields of historical security studies, that are to be overlapped not with categories of national history-writing but rather with each other, should be as follows: (1) security as concept and definition; (2) security and its opposing terms (risk, fear, threat, terror); (3) security and the state, community and smaller collectives; (4) security and economy; (5) security and its cultural, religious and emotional dimensions; (6) security and perceptions of people and individuals; (7) security and its space and time horizons. Zwierlein suggests putting the focus of historical security research on the creation, development and changes of what he describes as "security-producing-mechanisms", in order successfully to avoid ahistorical discourses on security as well as simply enforcing today's perceptions in historical contexts where they do not properly apply.[109]

Zwierlein himself combined more of the above-mentioned points while giving an example of how he imagines historical security research in practice. In his case study on the history of insurance, he investigates whether the insurance principle developed in a linear or rather in a neo-cyclical structure throughout pre-modern, high modern and late modern phases of history. Citing various examples from the history of insurance, from medieval guilds in Italy and 17th-century German and English merchants to the enlightenment-inspired idea of "normal secure society", and to the spatial dimensions of the activity of Western fire insurance

[107] ZWIERLEIN, CORNEL: *Insurances as Part of Human Security, their Timescapes, and Spatiality*, in: ZWIERLEIN, CORNEL (ed.): The Production of Human Security in Premodern and Contemporary History, Köln, 2010, pp. 253-274.
[108] ZWIERLEIN – RÜDIGER: *The Production of Human Security*, pp. 10-16.
[109] ZWIERLEIN: *Sicherheitsgeschichte*, pp. 365–386.

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companies in Istanbul and Bombay in the 19th century, Zwierlein comes to the conclusion that the Kosselleckian term 'open future'[110] is no longer valid in today's modernity. Although it did indeed characterize the insurance principle for a long time in the high modern period, as opposed to the 'closed future' vision of medieval times, human beings in late modernity rather find themselves surrounded by 'manufactured uncertainties' and 'unknown unknowns' than believing in the calculability of risks with regard to an open future. Thus, Zwierlein explains, what we are witnessing today is the extension of the present at the cost of the future.[111]

As opposed to Zwierlein, his colleague Eckart Conze approaches the creation of historical security studies as a new subdiscipline not from the idea of historization of human security but from the securitization theory of the Copenhagen School. Conze, an expert in modern and contemporary German history, has become an emblematic figure of historical security studies. He argued first that German historiography had been obsessed long enough with political history and state-centrism in his article "Farewell to state and politics", published in 2004.[112] In this early study of historical security studies, Conze first mentions 'security' as a key element of historical research, while arguing for new perspectives in political history-writing that enable historians to shift their focus from the overestimated "great statesmen" to those often forgotten individual actors who in fact shaped historical processes at a deep level. Furthermore, Conze urged his fellow historians to adopt the latest concepts and assumptions of political and social sciences, including those concerning transnational relations and social communication.

Conze soon went even further with his study entitled "Security as Culture", published in 2005.[113] In this work, he developed the idea that security should be the new basis on which the history of (West) Germany is to be explained in the second half of the 20th century. Citing Austrian author Stefan Zweig, who in his memoirs sadly lamented the complete loss of what he imagined as the security of the pre-war era due to the shocking brutality of the two world wars and the totalitarian regimes, Conze came to the conclusion that new democratic state of West Germany found its own constitutional mission in providing its people with the greatest possible security in a bipolar world of uncertainties.

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[110] KOSELLECK: *The Practice of Conceptual History,* pp. 131-147.
[111] ZWIERLEIN: *Insurances as Part of Human Security*, pp. 253-274.
[112] CONZE, ECKART: *Abschied von Staat und Politik? Überlegungen zur Geschichte der internationalen Politik*, in: CONZE, ECKART – LAPPENKÜPER, ULRICH – MÜLLER, GUIDO (eds.): Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen, Köln, 2004, pp. 15-43.
[113] CONZE, ECKART: *Sicherheits als Kultur. Überlegungen zu einer „modernen Politikgeschichte" der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, in: Vierteljahrshefte der Zeitgeschichte (VfZ), 53 (2005), München, pp. 357-380.

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This security, however, was far from equivalent to the historical one. Given the circumstances resulting from losing two world wars in less than thirty years, Germany was no longer a great power in international politics, and in consequence security was slowly but surely extending its meaning from an external military concept to an internal social and cultural one. As a result of the quick economic recovery ("Wirtschaftswunder") in the 1950s and 1960s as well as the cultural revolution from the early 1970s, a series of new security questions emerged (social security, nuclear energy, environmental issues, feminism, etc.) that fundamentally reshaped the West German political culture, and the word 'security' came to enjoy a distinguished place in this new era. Conze later elaborated his interpretation of post-war German history in great detail in his book *The Search for Security*, published in 2009.[114]

In this comprehensive work, Conze not only gives his own example of how to apply theories of security studies to actual historical sources, but also shows how to make security the analytical guiding principle of a historical work with a *longue durée* perspective. Echoing the above-mentioned arguments of his colleagues (Daase and Zwierlein), Conze promotes the securitization theory of the Copenhagen school as an adequate basis for historical security research. Since ideas and perceptions of security change over the time, and since security has always been a highly contested term, Conze believes the securitization theory is fruitful not only in the case of contemporary history, but also for research in the history of previous centuries.

The main question, Conze insists, is how security problems emerged in different eras and what made societies of the time perceive certain issues as relevant in terms of security. Therefore, Conze argues, historians engaged in investigating security should concentrate on three possible fields, while using the concepts of securitization and desecuritization in a trans-epochal perspective: (1) the role of securitization for the evolution and the legitimation of the state; (2) securitization as a central element of political communication; and (3) the relation between securitization and mechanisms of social integration and identity formation.[115]

In his most recent attempt to reinforce historical security studies as a legitimate and progressive subdiscipline within academic history-writing, Conze summarized his experience in the field in the book *History of Security. Development – Themes – Perspectives*, published in 2019.[116] In this introductory work to historical security studies, Conze first takes an in-depth

[114] CONZE, ECKART: *Die Suche nach Sicherheit: Eine Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1949 bis in die Gegenwart*, München, 2009.
[115] CONZE, ECKART: *Securitization. Gegenwartsdiagnose oder historischer Analyseansatz?*, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 38 (2012), 3, pp. 453-467.
[116] CONZE, ECKART: *Geschichte der Sicherheit, Entwicklung – Themen – Perspektiven,* Göttingen, 2019.

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historical overview on the development of security in European and German political thought, arguing that besides theoretical and historical assumptions, the latest developments in domestic and world politics all point in the direction of intense security research. Secondly, Conze identifies the place of historical security research among a group of other "neighbouring fields" that proved to be an integral part of social and historical sciences. The research on the various but interconnected phenomena of 'risk', 'vulnerability and resilience', 'anticipation and prevention' as well as 'threat' are complementary to security research and the boundaries between these fields are fluid.[117]

Last but not least, Conze attempts to determine the main themes and research perspectives for historical security research. In his view, the investigation of the 'spatial and temporal dimensions of security' should be the main mission of historians who are engaged with the new subdiscipline, because these aspects are often ignored or neglected by the social sciences, as if security were an ahistorical concept. Quite the contrary, he insists, security plays a crucial role in historical processes; therefore 'the role of security in shaping modernity' is another important theme of historical security research. The same goes for research into 'security as a community and identity formative factor' that helps us to understand how the different collectives of humans developed over time into 'security communities'. Conze also points out that security has a strong emotional appeal; it generates affections and desires among people, motivating them to act and to make an impact, just as in the case of insecurity when it comes to negative emotions such as fear or despair. In this sense, historical security studies can contribute to its fellow historical subdiscipline known as the history of emotions.[118] Similarly, Conze insists, peace studies, that have become a promising research field in social sciences in recent decades, can learn a lot from historical security studies.[119]

Since securitization is based on a very strict speech-act approach, languages and language use in general are all critical factors in a historical analysis of security. What clearly differentiates historical societies from imagined ones is that in many cases there was no one single language that all the members of the given community used, or at least understood, and thus in which a speech-act could have been carried out without encountering greater or lesser obstacles to unambiguous interpretation. Instead, in many historical contexts we can discover complicated structures of several different languages co-existing in hierarchical, interconnected

[117] IBID., pp. 107-126.
[118] For the history of emotions, including fear, see: PLAMPER, JAN: *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*, Oxford, 2012.; PLAMPER, JAN – LAZIER, BENJAMIN (eds.): *Fear: Across Disciplines*, Pittsburgh, 2012; FREVERT, UTE: *Emotions in History – Lost and Found*, Budapest – New York, 2011.
[119] CONZE: *Geschichte der Sicherheit*, pp. 127-172.

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and competing forms. Consequently, multicultural and multilingual societies, for example those of the Habsburg Monarchy and many other multinational empires, require a delicate and historically embedded approach when it comes to security research. According to Peter Haslinger, it is perhaps for good reason that theories of securitization have not yet accounted for all facets of multilingualism and multiculturalism. In his study on social multilingualism and processes of securitization, the Austrian historian argues for a new model that enables scholars to use the term security in their research designs more extensively on the one hand, and to come up with long durée comparative approaches when investigating multicultural and multilingual societies of the past on the other.[120]

Haslinger did not promote an approach that – based on the cultural and identity-related concepts of stability and homogeneity – identifies lingual and cultural heterogeneity as a threat to the natural sense of security. On the contrary, he suggests focusing on the translation processes between the different subgroups of the multicultural societies in the context of their asymmetric power relations. Haslinger points out that neither the Copenhagen School nor their prominent critics have contributed in this regard. Referring to the theory by linguist Rosita Linder Schjerve, he argues that the lingual conflicts are often in fact socially, economically and politically motivated conflicts which are being articulated through their secondary feature, the language itself. In the context of social multilingualism the spaces of languages and their variants are often connected to the language-specific concepts of societal security. Haslinger, therefore, suggests putting at the focal point of the analysis the actors, who speak on behalf of either a dominant (majority) or non-dominant (minority) language group, and their ambivalent positions and activities.

It is noteworthy, as he explains, that referring to state or societal security always depends on the position of the actors within the power hierarchy. As a result of the intersection of language and security discourses, the actors tend to generate more and more identity-related declarations, and thus they convey messages of inclusivity or exclusivity to their respective audiences. In this sense, the security crisis escalates when the disintegrative force of securitization, with its negative learning and perceptual processes and perfectionist self-definitions, sooner or later overburdens the problem-solving competencies of all sides involved.[121]

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[120] HASLINGER, PETER: *Gesellschaftliche Mehrsprachigkeit und Prozesse der Versicherheitlichung*, in: HASLINGER, PETER – MONIKA WINGENDER – KAMIL GALIULLIN – ISKANDER GILYAZOV (eds.): Mehrsprachigkeit und Multikulturalität in politischen Umbruchphasen im Östlichen Europa, Wiesbaden 2016, pp. 243-256.
[121] IBID., pp. 250-254.

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Taking all of this into consideration, it is clear that historians who intend to use the securitization theory of the Copenhagen School as a cornerstone of historical security studies have to face a number of methodological challenges. The main difficulty every historian dealing with security studies faces is whether theories that were configured for late twentieth century Western European politics can be applied in historical research with a different geographical scope. In order to answer that question, it is reasonable to follow an individual set of methods specifically designed for the research of a particular era and area, for instance late 19th century Habsburg studies.

In any case, it is of crucial importance to make a clear distinction between the notion(s) of security in the historical era of research and in the era of historical research. The former refers to the historical time when the events, processes and discourses (i.e. the matter of research) in fact took place, whereas the latter refers to the time when the historian is carrying out his or her research. Projecting back today's values and ideas to the past and bringing historical actors to book for not sharing them is an obstacle to understanding history. After re-constructing the then-contemporary notion(s) of security, historians need to identify those historical entities, structures, ideas, etc. that were perceived to be endangered at the time, and to explain the reasons behind that particular perception of insecurity. At the same time, it is necessary to explain what role, if any, the different actors and their audiences of the given period played in the securitization processes.

The most problematic point in this regard is perhaps to meet the very strict speech-act criteria of the original securitization theory. If securitization is successful only if and when the relevant audience accepts and confirms the securitization move by the actor(s) – as CS authors insist – then historians need to demonstrate not only the securitizing move but also the acceptance of that move by the audience. This can be challenging, especially when it comes to non-democratic, non-transparent eras of politics when modern types of mass media did not yet exist, and decisions were taken within exclusive or informal circles while their implementation often remained an internal issue of the authorities. In this sense, the audience in many cases can be seen historically as a "silent" group – to borrow Lena Hansen's term.

Similarly to this, it may be very problematic to use the terms "counter-securitization" and "desecuritization" in historical context: even if we can identify such moves by an actor, it is almost impossible to determine whether something ceased to be a security issue because of a counter- or de-securitizing attempt. Historically, when a critical issue reaches the agenda, it rarely disappears without a trace as a consequence of an intention or declaration. Most typically

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these issues remain there, maybe smouldering in the deep only to pop up again later, often unexpectedly in a different form and in a different age.

The five sectors of security in the form in which CS identified them certainly leave room for a historical interpretation. It is hardly deniable that what we can describe as the military, political, economic, societal and even the environmental sectors existed in previous centuries too; and for this very reason they could evolve historically into what they are today. Therefore, it is necessary to explain thoroughly what those sectors were like and how they functioned in a given era of the past. When it comes to a sector-based interpretation of security in historical perspective, one should answer a variety of seemingly easy questions. Just to name few: what role did the military play in then-contemporary society? What was that society like in the first place? How did the economy function at that time? Who were the potential actors involved in the political sector according to the standards of the period? What approach, if any, did the era take to environmental issues? If we can find answers to these questions with respect to security, it indicates that the sectors do have historical relevance.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that none of the various schools of security studies can serve as the sole basis for historical security research. However, it would be an illusion to think that one can apply all the different theories to a particular group of historical sources in an equal manner. Therefore, it seems reasonable to rely primarily on one particular interpretation of security as a main inspiration for historical analysis, but with a critical approach with regard to those elements of the theoretical framework that seem to be less well fitted to the subject. At the same time, one should keep an eye on other theories and schools of security studies which in general might seem less fruitful from one's perspective, but which, as sources of auxiliary knowledge, can still enable one better to understand what security means in historical perspective. This dissertation project follows this method by using the Copenhagen School as its core theoretical basis. Nevertheless, throughout the upcoming chapters it maintains the principle that theoretical and methodological premises should serve empirical research, and not the other way around.

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II. Notions of Security in Late Habsburg Hungary

2.1 Hungarian Political Language and Discourse on Security

The long 19th century was not only the golden age of Hungarian parliamentarism and the birth of the modern state, but also the time when modern Hungarian political language developed.[122] In this subchapter, first we shall take a brief overview of this political-lingual development, and then investigate how security was defined in Hungarian political thought in the era. The credit for including the analysis of political language as a research area in the subdiscipline of history of ideas goes to the so-called Cambridge School. The Cambridge approach to research into political languages can be easily connected to the securitization theory of the Copenhagen School, in that both use Austin's speech-act theory as a core element in their respective methods.

Cambridge scholars like Quentin Skinner, John Pocock, Richard Tuck or John Dunn pointed out in the 1970s that in order to correctly understand what political philosophers or actors of past centuries spoke about, it is not enough to analyze their utterances. In their view, the actualization of the language in a given situation is possible only through the mediation of a unique speaker, which means that the language of political actors cannot be interpreted as an entity independent from external connections.[123] Consequently, when it comes to the analysis of sources, the representatives of the Cambridge School turned their attention towards the questions "Who actually used the words?", and "What kind of argumentative intentions did the speaker (writer) have in mind when the source came into existence?" The real question is, "What kind of act did the speaker perform with the utterance?" It is also important to determine what position the speaker occupied, because this may reveal the reception he or she anticipated from the audience. In order to answer these questions, the Cambridge scholars made a clear distinction between the meaning and the expressiveness of a political language, with the former referring to what the speaker was actually doing, and the latter to what results he or she was expecting from the words he or she was using.[124]

Of course, the proponents of the Cambridge approach had their differences. Jon Pocock, for instance, suggested concentrating on common political discourse instead of the works of

[122] KAMUSELLA, TOMASZ: *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe,* Basingstoke, 2009, pp. 431-480.
[123] HÖRCHER, FERENC (ed.): *A koramodern politikai eszmetörténet cambridge-i látképe* [The Cambridge Perspective on the Early Modern History of Political Ideas], Pécs, 1997, pp. 287-293.
[124] IBID., pp. 294-297.

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great philosophers, because in his view it was not the intentions of an author that mattered, but rather the general modes of political expression of a given era. John Dunn respected this approach, but insisted that neither the history of concepts nor the history of expressions can replace the history of political thought, because the latter continues to bear the greatest significance from today's perspective, and this is what legitimizes history as a science. Richard Tuck argued that instead of comprehensive theoretical and methodological disputes, historians of ideas should engage themselves with deep empirical research. Nonetheless, they all agree that the research should focus not only on "texts" and "units of ideas", but also on the complete vocabulary of political language of a certain era.[125]

These considerations are mirrored by John Pocock's study on the political language used by Edmund Burke, a leading figure of 18th century English conservativism. In this work, Pocock investigated the reasons behind Burke's linguistic traditionalism by comparing the political languages and vocabularies of the era of Burke with those of the preceding periods. Pocock drew the conclusion that the late 18th century philosopher deeply understood and frequently used a number of words and expressions that had featured heavily in, and helped to determine, English political language in the 16th and 17th centuries. The vocabulary of the "common law", formed by early modern English lawyers, was still used in Burke's time, and his contemporaries were very much aware of the expressions and hints that were later falsely ascribed to Burke or canonized under his name by posterity. In the late 18th century, when the rationalist ideas of the Enlightenment dominated the public discourse, Edmund Burke insisted on the primacy of tradition and experience in his groundbreaking book, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Although Burke did so because of the threat posed by the revolutionary movement, he was speaking primarily to those who still understood the vocabulary of the old political language.[126]

In addition to the Cambridge School, one also has to mention the German conceptual history school when it comes to the analysis of political languages. The conceptual history encyclopedia for instance, edited by Reinhart Kosselleck and his colleagues, has become the Bible of the research into the history of ideas in recent decades.[127] As opposed to the Anglo-Saxon approach, the German conceptual historians took their main inspiration not from the history of ideas but from social history. Kosselleck and his followers point out the fact – a fact

[125] IBID., pp. 298-305.

[126] POCOCK, JOHN G.A.: *Burke and the Ancient Constitution – A Problem in the History of Ideas*, in: The Historical Journal 3 (1960), 2, pp. 125-143.

[127] BRUNNER, OTTO – CONZE, WERNER – KOSELLECK, REINHART (eds.): *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Band 1-8, Stuttgart, 1972–1997.

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that makes all proper historical research challenging – that concepts have their own history and their meanings and connotations change from time to time throughout history. This does not simply mean that today we might have a different interpretation of a word – such as 'state', 'constitution', 'government', 'nation' or 'security' – than it had in the past, but also that in any given period of time we might find parallel and often contradicting versions of meaning and connotations connected to the same word.

Koselleck is known not only for his contribution to the conceptual history encyclopedia, but also for his theoretical works. In his book entitled *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, he analyzed the historical-political semantics of the so-called asymmetrical concepts as well as others. Koselleck pointed out that there are certain symmetrical concepts, which with regard to their values are neutral, meaning that they reciprocally recognize each other, for example: 'father-mother', 'parent-child', 'young-old', etc. Political concepts are, however, often asymmetrical, which means that they have a negative perspective on some other or others, for example: 'Barbaric vs. Hellenic', 'Christian vs. Pagan', 'superior vs. inferior', etc. These dual concepts, especially those which play a decisive role in group identities (we vs. they) will not remain simple adjectives but eventually grow into productive factors in politics. In a similar way, using a definite article can lead to the conceptual despoliation of rival groups, for example: 'the Church', 'the Party' or 'the Nation'. Koselleck highlighted the historical perspective of the asymmetrical concepts, insisting that although history will never be identical with the linguistic perception of it, or the way one experiences it through written or oral sources, it will not be independent from these aspects either. The renowned German historian argued that it is well-worth investigating the argumentative structures of these asymmetrical dualistic concepts, because in many cases they display similar features, which opens up a vast space for historical comparisons.[128]

As for the Hungarian perspective, it was literary historian József Takács at the University of Pécs who first engaged in historical research into political language. He came to the conclusion that Hungarian political language went through a dynamic transformation at the end of the 19th century, which perfectly coincides not only with the main tendency of general modernization but with the culmination of the county question. Takács identified four different modes of utterance (*beszédmód*) in Hungarian political language at the beginning of the 19th

[128] KOSSELLECK, REINHART: *Az elmúlt jövő. A történeti idők szemantikája*, Budapest, 2003, pp. 241-298. (German original: KOSSELLECK, REINHART: *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt am Main, 1979; English edition: KOSSELLECK, REINHART: *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time. Translated and with an introduction by Keith Tribe*. New York, 2004.)

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century, i.e. in the very last period of the early modern era which was intermingled with a very early phase of modernity.[129]

The first mode can be labelled "republicanism", and was used by those patriots who thought that serving the public interest was the main priority. The second was the mode of "referring to the historical constitution", which was used by those who emphasized the importance of traditions, customs and unwritten law. The third mode might be termed the "language of enlightened governance", which was used by those who believed in enforced top-down reforms, or in other words in some sort of social engineering. They were convinced that all the people should enjoy natural rights and their interests could only be served through high quality laws and public administration and highly educated officials. The fourth mode of utterance was the "language of varnishing", which refers to those who imagined the history of humanity as a linear development from ancient barbarity towards modern civilization.[130]

What is necessary to emphasize is that the four modes of utterance did not coincide with the boundaries between the political groups and movements in the era, but had an impact on the political language of all the various actors, though to different extents. Takács pointed out that the four archetypes of Hungarian political language dominated the so-called Reform Era (from 1820s to 1840s) and survived the upheavals of the mid-19th century (revolution, war for independence, neo-absolutism, etc.), though a first change in vocabulary can be observed in this period. However, after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise a second wave of lexical change occurred in Hungarian political language as a result of the breakthrough of new ideologies and aspirations in political thought.[131] Such great turning points in political history almost necessarily raise the topic of security too because they go hand in hand with the trembling of traditional structures. These highly complicated transitional processes reveal a lot not only about security and the sense of security of those who have created and are now operating a new system, but also about those who do not welcome but perforce endure the change and perhaps even suffer from its consequences. This is the reason why it is necessary to ask the questions "What types of security discourses dominated the era?", and "Which security heuristics did the various cooperating or competing elites develop?"

Security (in Hungarian: *biztonság*) "came into fashion not long ago, replacing the old and more appropriate term 'certainty' (*biztosság*)", reads the best-known 19th century dictionary

[129] Learn more: TAKÁTS JÓZSEF: *Modern magyar politikai eszmetörténet* [Modern Hungarian History of Political Ideas], Budapest, 2007.
[130] IBID., pp. 14-21.
[131] IBID.

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of Hungarian language. The dictionary, edited by Gergely Czucor and János Fogarasi and published in the early 1860s, defined security as a "state of bravery without fear".[132] A popular turn-of-the century encyclopedia went further when claiming that "security is a shared feeling of the individuals, the society and the state which is being created by the rule of law."[133] Another great encyclopaedia of the time touches upon only the foreign version of the term security, when it says briefly that *securitas* is "the personification of the state of security in ancient Rome (*S. populi Romani*)".[134]

The fact that contemporary dictionaries and encyclopaedias already reflected upon the term 'security' reveals that the very beginning of the discourse on security in Hungary more or less coincided with the so-called language reform in the first half of the 19th century. Prior to the standardization of the modern Hungarian language, Hungarian authors simply borrowed the latin terms of *securitas* and *certitudo* when it came to political, legal, or military arguments. In the wake of romantic nationalism in early 19th century, however, these were gradually replaced first by the Hungarian equivalents for bravery (*bátorság*), sureness (*biztosság*) and certainty (*bizonyosság*), and later and finally by the newly created word of security (*biztonság*). Interestingly enough, during the time of the 1848 revolution an organization named *Közbátorsági Választmány* was set up in Pest which could be literally translated into English as "Public Bravery Committee ". Similar organizations were also created in other cities and towns with the aim of maintaining public safety in the revolutionary atmosphere. Even the young radical poet Sándor Petőfi (1823-1849), a key figure of the March 15 revolution, became a member of the Public Bravery Committee in Pest.

The topic of security attracted the interest not only of the editors of dictionaries and encyclopaedias, but also of writers, philosophers and statesmen. Baron József Eötvös (1813-1871), probably the most known Hungarian author of the period[135], insisted in his most famous work that security was a shared interest of every citizen and every group in society. As Eötvös, who himself served twice as Hungary's minister of religion and education (1848 and 1867-1871) put it: "Neither the claim that public order and public safety lies only in the heart of the wealthier classes, nor the other claim that wealth may serve as the measurement of one's

[132] CZUCZOR, GERGELY – FOGARASI, JÁNOS: *A Magyar Nyelv Szótára. I. Kötet* [Dictionary of the Hungarian Language, Volume I], Pest, 1862, pp. 679–680 and pp. 681–682.
[133] Révai Nagy Lexikona, III. kötet [The Great Encyclopaedia by Révai, Volume 3], Budapest, 1911, p. 374.
[134] A Pallas Nagy Lexikona. XIV. Kötet [The Great Pallas Encyclopaedia, Volume 14], Budapest,1897, p. 1024.
[135] For a monographic overview of the life and work of József Eötvös, see: BŐDY, PÁL: *Eötvös József,* Budapest, 2004.

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mentality and skills, can be proved by either theory or by practice."[136] Political scientist Károly Bihari went even further, when he claimed in his monograph on Eötvös' life achievements that, "the well-being and contentment of the individuals depend on the security that one can find in the state structures to counterbalance the rapid changes of personal circumstances; therefore the realization of personal security is to be considered one of the most important missions of the state".[137]

These two quotes from opposite ends of the period clearly show how the contemporary elites approached the question of security: they were interested first and foremost in the safety of the people and individuals, which was often described as a special feeling, condition or impression. At first glance it may seem contradictory that they tended to define security in a negative way, that is as the absence of a series of negative feelings and impressions such as existential threats, fear, uncertainty, despondency, despair, etc. In spite of the fact that in most cases individuals were the focus of the security discourse, yet the society and the state became the dominant actors. This happens because individuals expect the state and society to guarantee their security, and in case of a crisis they blame the state or the society for the increasing sense of insecurity.

This state-centric approach to security was neither exclusively Hungarian nor East Central European phenomena; on the contrary, it had a lot to do with the classic liberal school of security that enjoyed its golden age all over Europe in the 19th century. Following in Immanuel Kant's footsteps, liberal authors of the time idealized and promoted those forms of governance that produced more and more security to individuals. This once again brings us back to the Foucauldian notion of *gouvermentailité*, that points out the limits and shortcomings of the state-oriented approach. The postmodern French philosopher pointed out that the modernizing and thus increasingly bureaucratic states (such as Hungary was by the end of the 19th century) show a tendency to take over more and more tasks while attempting to control the various spheres of society. The outcome of this may not be more and more security for individuals but a series of new institutions, procedures and micro-power strategies that enable governments to introduce extraordinary security measures whenever they deem it necessary.

[136] EÖTVÖS, JÓZSEF: *A XIX. század uralkodó eszméinek befolyása az államra.* I. kötet. XI. fejezet. [Influence of the Ruling Ideas of the 19th century on the State, Volume I, Chapter 11], Pest, 1851-1854. https://mek.oszk.hu/06600/06619/html/01.htm#38 [20.06.2024]

[137] BIHARI, KÁROLY: *báró Eötvös József politikája* [Policies by baron József Eötvös], Budapest, 1916, pp. 101–102.

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2.2 Burdens of the Past (1848-1860)

The transformation of the Habsburg Monarchy into Austria-Hungary was a result of the interplay of several long and very complicated international and national processes throughout the 19th century.[138] The Austro-Hungarian security discourses had reflected the different phases of this complex transition as certain decisions and issues were repeatedly put high on the agenda as unresolvable challenges. Without taking an overview of the main historical events taking place in the decades before 1867, it would be impossible to understand the motives behind the actions of the different security actors of the period after 1867. At the same time, it would be also impossible to address the general history of such a long and complex period as the mid-19th century in a single chapter.

Accordingly, in the upcoming subchapters we shall focus primarily on the main issues that determined the security discourses of the late 19th century. These are as follows: (1) the personality of Franz Joseph and his ambivalent relationship with the Hungarians; (2) Austria(-Hungary)'s role in the geopolitical formation of Southeast Central Europe in 19th century, with special focus on foreign and security policies; and (3) Hungary's fragile position within the Habsburg Monarchy and the security-related dilemmas facing the country and the empire. By way of introduction, we can say that the dynamics of security in the late Habsburg Monarchy depended very heavily on the struggle between the actors who identified and articulated the internal and external threats upon which the decisions that later proved to be historical turning points were taken.

At the time of Franz Joseph's birth in Vienna on 18 August 1830, the Eastern half of Europe was dominated by the Holy Alliance.[139] About fifteen years earlier, the powerful monarchs of Austria, Prussia, and Russia had agreed to cooperate politically as well as militarily. On one hand, the alliance provided security and stability for East Central Europe after the decades of Napoleonic wars, on the other hand it repressed nationalism, liberalism and secularism that had been spreading across Europe since the French Revolution. From the perspective of the dynasties, the revolutionary ideas and movements threatened to undermine Christian values in European political life, including the divine right of the royal families to

[138] On the long durée history of the late Habsburg Monarchy in English, see: TAYLOR: *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918*, pp. 38-131; MACARTNEY, C.A.: *The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918*, London, 1969 (reprinted in 1989), pp. 426-585.; RADY, MARTYN: *The Habsburgs: to Rule the World,* New York, 2020, pp. 229-268.; EVANS, R.J.W.: *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs. Essays on Central Europe, c.1683-1867,* Oxford, 2006, pp. 173-208.
[139] VOCELKA, MICHAELA –VOCELKA, KARL: *Franz Joseph I. Kaiser von Österreich und König von Ungarn 1830-1906. Eine Biographie*, München, 2015, pp. 16-55.

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rule in their respective realms.[140] In consequence, while in the sphere of international relations several issues coalesced or were consolidated, more and more internal issues came to be seen as security problems. Franz Joseph grew up in this political atmosphere and, despite being only a nephew of the emperor, he had high hopes as his father, Archduke Franz Karl, the younger brother of the childless Emperor Ferdinand, was reluctant to take on any political role.[141]

Franz Joseph's moment came at the end of what had been a tumultuous year, namely 1848.[142] After a transnational but nationalist revolutionary wave swept through the Empire, including Northern Italy and Hungary, and Chancellor Metternich was forced to resign by the Vienna revolution on 13 March 1848, the very existence of the Habsburg Monarchy was immediately at great risk.[143] In the spring and summer of 1848, the dynasty in appearance conceded to the revolutionary developments in Hungary[144] (their respective revolution took place on 15 March) in order to concentrate its resources on the Italian front. Ferdinand I – as King Ferdinand V of Hungary – appointed the liberal Batthyány cabinet and ratified the so-called April Laws, which are known as the constitutional re-birth of Hungary that paved the road for civic transition and modernization.[145] However, after successfully suppressing the Italian movement, the time for restoration in the rest of the realm had come, at least according to influential councellors such as Alfred Windisch-Grätz, Field Marshal of the Austrian army. The "camarilla" successfully convinced the dynasty that a new ruler would not be bound by Ferdinand's promises.[146]

Franz Joseph succeeded as Emperor of Austria in Olmütz on 2 December 1848. This moment produced Franz Joseph's first serious conflict with the Hungarian elites. From their perspective, the lawful king of the country was still Ferdinand V, regardless of the change on the imperial throne. According to an age-old tradition, Franz Joseph should have been crowned separately as King of Hungary, which he deliberately avoided in order to establish a central Habsburg administration for the whole empire. As Emperor, Franz Joseph refused to take the

[140] RUMPLER: *Österreichische Geschichte 1804-1914*, pp. 138-140.; ZÖLLNER, ERICH: *Ausztria története (History of Austria),* Budapest, 2000, pp. 265-275.

[141] PALMER, ALAN: *Twilight of the Habsburgs. The Life and Times of Emperor Francis Joseph*, London, 1994, pp. 1-27.

[142] BELLER, STEVEN: *Francis Joseph*, London, and New York, 1996, pp. 36-49.

[143] NIEDERHAUSER, EMIL: *1848: Sturm im Habsburgerreich,* Wien, 1990, pp. 39-72.

[144] On the Hungarian developments, see: DEÁK, I.: *The Lawful Revolution*, pp. 63-106.

[145] On the significance of the so-called April Laws of 1848, see: GERGELY, ANDRÁS: *1848-ban hogy is volt? Tanulmányok és Közép-Európa 1848-49-es történetéből?* [How Was It in 1848? Studies on the History of Hungary and Central Europe in 1848-1849], Budapest, 2001, pp. 93-136.; GERGELY: *Magyarország története a 19. században*, pp. 238-245.

[146] DEAK, JOHN: *Forging a Multinational State. State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War*, Stanford, 2015, pp. 65-98.

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oath on the Hungarian constitution and ignored the spirit of the April laws and thus denied both the historic and newly-established forms of self-governance of Hungary. This led to the escalation of an already ongoing military conflict between the Hungarian army and the Austrian troops.[147]

Franz Joseph announced the so-called "Imposed March Constitution of Olmütz" on 4 March 1849, in which he proclaimed moderate reforms while maintaining imperial centralism and absolutism in all Habsburg ruled territories.[148] The Olmütz constitution aimed to completely reincorporate Hungary into the Habsburg Empire, including the abolition of the country's historic constitution and of its right to hold its own national assembly. Such an outcome was unacceptable even to the moderate Hungarians, not to mention the radicals who, in response to the March Constitution, declared the dethronement of the Habsburg dynasty in Hungary, as well as complete independence from Austria, on 14 April 1849. These moves proved to be a point-of-no-return for both sides.[149]

Meanwhile, Lajos Kossuth rose to power as Governor-President of Hungary in an effort to repel the Austrian invasion.[150] As a result of the famous "spring campaign", the Hungarian Honvéd Army seized control of most of the country, including the castle of Buda.[151] However, Franz Joseph still had one more ace among his cards: in the name of the Holy Alliance he sought help from Russia. Having requested the intervention of Tsar Nicholas I in order "to prevent the Hungarian insurrection developing into a European calamity", the Austrian monarch received support from his Russian counterpart in the form of a 200,000 strong army. The international security-mechanism of the Holy Alliance worked: by the end of the summer of 1849, the defeat of the Hungarian troops was inevitable. Kossuth escaped to the Ottoman Empire, unjustly blaming Artúr Görgey, Commander-in-Chief of the Hungarian Honvéd Army, for the surrender at Világos. The capitulation in front of the Russian troops on 13 August 1849 marked the formal end of the Hungarian revolution and war for independence of 1848-1849.[152]

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[147] DIMMEL, HEINRICH: *Franz Joseph. Biographie einer Epoche*, München, 1983, pp. 68-89.

[148] NIEDERHAUSER: *1848: Sturm im Habsburgerreich*, pp. 157-176.

[149] DEÁK, I.: *The Lawful Revolution*, pp. 178-265.; see also: PAJKOSSY, GÁBOR (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, 2003, pp. 310-334.

[150] ERDŐDY, GÁBOR: *Kossuth Lajos. A demokratikus társadalmi átalakulásért és a nemzeti önrendelkezés kivívásáért folytatott küzdelem vezéralakja* [Lajos Kossuth. Leading Figure of the Struggle for Democratic Transition of Society and National Self-Determination], Budapest, 2002, pp. 47-49.; SZABAD, GYÖRGY: *Kossuth politikai pályája ismert és ismeretlen megnyilatkozásai tükrében* [Kossuth's Political Career in the Light of his Known and Unknown Utterances], Budapest, 1977, pp. 141-165.

[151] NEMES, ROBERT: *The Revolution in Symbols: Hungary in 1848-1849*, in: JUDSON, PIETER M. – ROZENBLIT, MARSHA L. (eds.): Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe, New York and Oxford, 2005, pp. 1-18.

[152] ROBERTS, IAN W.: *Nicholas I and the Russian Intervention in Hungary,* New York, 1991, pp. 185-223.

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After the restoration of Habsburg power, Hungary was placed under brutal martial law.[153] In spite of the Russian promises, the Austrians engaged in harsh reprisals against Hungary led by Julius Jacob von Haynau, Commander-in-Chief of the Austrian imperial troops in Hungary. The infamous general, known in Italy as the "Hyena of Brescia", sentenced hundreds of soldiers and civilians to death, and imprisoned many more. Prisoners of war were conscripted into the Austrian Army. Moreover, on 6 October 1849, the Austrian army executed a group of high-ranking Hungarian officers, who became honoured as the 13 Martyrs of Arad. On the same day, in Pest, they also executed by firing squad the country's first prime minister, Lajos Batthyány. Historical research confirms that the Emperor himself was personally involved in the decisions on these infamous reprisals. His grave responsibility for what was clearly seen in Hungary as the entire nation's suffering was also more than obvious to his contemporaries. The relations between the Habsburgs and their Hungarian subjects thus sank to a historic low.[154]

With the order restored and power secured throughout his Empire – if only belatedly in Hungary – Franz Joseph realized by the end of 1849 that his realm was at the crossroads of its history.[155] The national movements had been crushed and their demands for liberal constitutions based on ideas of national sovereignty were taken off the agenda. There was to be no return, however, to the 1840s: the pre-modern historic constitutions of the lands of Hungarian Crown could not be reintroduced anymore, since irreversible social and economic changes, including the emancipation of the peasantry, had already been going on all over the Habsburg lands.[156] For this reason conservative circles, including Windisch-Grätz, who envisioned a combination of federalism with some sort of improvement of the old regional constitutions dominated by the local aristocracy, also found themselves out of Franz Joseph's favour.[157]

The outcome of the power struggle in the Viennese court finally favoured a political solution what slowly became known as the absolutist-centralist combination represented by Felix Schwarzenberg. This old-new form of governance – with its roots going back to the Josephinism in late eighteenth century – remained in power up until October 1860. It was indeed absolutist in nature but did not lead to a conservative turn. On the contrary: the Neo-absolutist

[153] MAYR-HARTING: *Der Untergang. Österreich-Ungarn 1848-1922*, pp. 129-133.
[154] HERMANN, RÓBERT: *Ferenc József és a megtorlás* [Franz Joseph and the Reprisals], in: FÓNAGY: A véreskezű kamasztól Ferenc Jóskáig, pp. 49-77.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/1, pp. 450-452.; Learn more: HERMANN, RÓBERT, *I. Ferenc József és a megtorlás* [Franz Joseph and the Reprisals], Budapest, 2009.
[155] DEAK, J.: *Forging a Multinational State*, pp. 99-136.
[156] SZABAD: *Hungarian Political Trends Between the Revolution and the Compromise (1849-1867)*, pp. 11-33.
[157] HÖBELT, LOTHAR: *Franz Joseph I. Der Kaiser und sein Reich. Eine politische Geschichte*, Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2009, pp. 13-25.

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era is known for its enforced social and economic modernization efforts, initiated and controlled by the state itself. The Monarch felt liberated from the constitutional concessions he had made in Olmütz, so he revoked the March constitution in 1851 by issuing the so-called "Slyvesterpatent". The label "Neo-absolutism" was not exaggerated: when Prince Schwarzenberg died in 1852, Franz Joseph did not appoint a new Prime Minister; instead he simply took over the leadership of the cabinet personally.[158]

Interestingly, the name of the highly controversial era does not originate from the Monarch or Schwarzenberg in Hungary, but from the Minister of Interior Affairs, Alexander Bach. The name "Bach-era" refers to those completely loyal public servants, police officers and secret agents – either Hungarians or foreigners – who ran the public administration and implemented repressive policies that – among other measures – reduced freedom of the press, abandoned public trials and put thousands under surveillance or existential pressure for political reasons. The Bach-era was widely perceived as a tyrannical system in Hungary, and this view was not entirely unfounded.[159] The country's constitution was completely abolished as the traditional county-system was replaced with artificial territorial governance. Hungary's core territory was decomposed into five military districts as the central administration allowed no chance for real self-governance for any of the several nationalities in Hungary.[160] The otherwise progressive cultural and education policies of the era mirrored primarily imperial and Catholic interests rather than those envisioned by the awakening national movements, not to mention the enforcement of German language in public administration and education.[161] There was some truth in the contemporary thinking which claimed that after crushing the 1848-1849 war for independence, the nationalities received the very same treatment from Vienna as the Hungarians, the only difference being that the former received it as a reward for their loyalty,

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[158] BRANDT, HARM-HINRICH: *Verwaltung vor Verfassung. Zum historischen Ort des Neoabsolutismus in der Geschichte Österreichs. Einleitung zu einem Tagungsband*, in: BRANDT, HARM-HINRICH: Austriaca. Abhandlungen zur Habsburgermonarchie im langen 19. Jahrhundert, Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2020, pp. 438-458.; DEÁK, ÁGNES: *Ferenc József az önkényúr?* [Franz Joseph, the Despot?], in: FÓNAGY: A véreskezű kamasztól Ferenc Jóskáig, pp. 79-113.

[159] DEÁK: *"Zsandáros és policzájos idők"*, pp. 7-16.; SZABAD: *Hungarian Political Trends Between the Revolution and the Compromise (1849-1867),* pp. 34-70.

[160] K. LENGYEL, ZSOLT: *Zum Problem der Landesvertretung im Neoabsolutistischen Ungarn*, in: BRANDT, HARM-HINRICH (ed.): Der österreichische Neoabsolutismus als Verfassung- und Verwaltungsproblem. Diskussionen über einen strittigen Epochenbegriff, Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2014, pp. 383-412.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/1, pp. 453-462.; SASHEGYI, OSZKÁR: *Ungarns politische Verwaltung in der Ära Bach 1849–1860*, Graz, 1979.

[161] DEÁK, ÁGNES: *"Nemzeti Egyenjogúsítás". Kormányzati nemzetiségpolitika Magyarországon 1849-1860* ["National Emancipation". Governmental Nationality Policies in Hungary 1849-1860], Budapest, 2000, pp. 225-287.; For the imperial language policies of the late Habsburg Empire, see: HASLINGER, PETER: S*prachenpolitik, Sprachendynamik und imperiale Herrschaft in der Habsburgermonarchie 1740-1914*, in: Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung, (57) 2008, 1, pp. 81-111.

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whereas the latter received it as a punishment for the rebellion.[162] None of them could do much against their fate but to lay low, try to survive, and wait. Ferenc Deák himself, who was the Justice Minister in the Batthyány government in 1848 and now was to become the leading figure of the Hungarian liberals, applied the strategy of "passive resistance", hoping that it would pay off when change came in Vienna.[163]

At the same time, the hardline supporters of independence also waited for their time to come. Having been in exile since 1849, Lajos Kossuth and his followers envisioned the near-future collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy as a result of a potential external armed conflict. Such a scenario would have paved their road back to power in Hungary. Not everybody, however, was so patient: a Hungarian tailor's assistant attempted to murder Franz Joseph in Vienna on 18 February 1853. János Libényi, a witness of the executions of the Hungarian generals in Arad in 1849, attacked Franz Joseph with a knife, but inflicted only a minor wound to the emperor's neck. He was caught at the crime scene and executed for his treacherous and violent act, which became known as the first of the seven attempted assassinations committed against Franz Joseph.[164]

Franz Joseph's neo-absolutism can be rightfully seen as a repressive system, and also as an era when an early phase of modernization broke through in an otherwise conflict-packed and relatively underdeveloped region of East Central Europe.[165] However, it is quite difficult to argue against the obvious decline of the Habsburg Monarchy in terms of military and foreign policies. Although the Empire was in fact saved by the Russian intervention against the Hungarians in August 1849, when the Crimean war broke out and Tsar Nicholas I asked Austria to side with him, Franz Joseph turned his back on his former saviour. The Crimean conflict brought the end of the era of the Holy Alliance, and slowly but surely pushed Austria into an isolated position on the international scene.[166]

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[162] SEEWANN, GERHARD: *Centralizmus és föderalizmus Bécs és a magyar politikai elit nemzetiségi politikájában (1848-1867)* [Centralism and Federalism in the Nationality Policies of Vienna and the Hungarian Elite (1848-1867)], in: SZARKA, LÁSZLÓ (ed.): Párhuzamos nemzetépítés, konfliktusos együttélés [Parallel Nation-building, Conflictful Co-existence], Budapest, 2017, pp. 115-138.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/1, pp. 477-485.

[163] DEÁK, ÁGNES – MOLNÁR, ANDRÁS: *Deák Ferenc,* Budapest, 2003, pp. 87-98.; TAKÁCS, PÉTER: *Negyvennyolc mitológiája és a neoabszolutizmus valósága (Deák Ferenc és a passzív ellenállás), in:* SZABÓ, ANDRÁS (ed.): Deák Ferenc emlékezete [The Memory of Ferenc Deák], Budapest, 2003, pp. 140-148.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/1, pp. 498-500.

[164] VOCELKA – VOCELKA: *Franz Joseph I.*, pp. 97-105.

[165] RUMPLER, HELMUT: *Integration und Modernisierung. Der historische Ort des "Neoabsolutismus" in der Geschichte der Habsburgermonarchie*, in: BRANDT (ed.): Der österreichische Neoabsolutismus als Verfassung- und Verwaltungsproblem, pp. 73-82.

[166] BRANDT, HARM-HINRICH: *Kaiser Franz Joseph und die österreichische Außenpolitik von 1848 bis 1866*, in: BRANDT, HARM-HINRICH: Austriaca. Abhandlungen zur Habsburgermonarchie im langen 19. Jahrhundert, Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2020, pp. 142-185.; HÖBELT: *Franz Joseph I.*, pp. 27-37.

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In 1859, the second Italian war of independence broke out, in which Piedmont– with French assistance – defeated Austria at the battle of Solferino on 24 June 1859, and soon annexed the formerly Habsburg-ruled Lombardia, followed by Venice in 1866.[167] Meanwhile, the rise of Prussia posed an enormous challenge to Austria's desire for a Habsburg-dominated Great-German unification process.[168] In 1864, the two rivals were still able to join forces against Denmark in the Second Schleswig War, successfully securing the northern lands of Schleswig and Holstein for themselves, or more precisely for the soon-to-be-created Germany. However, two years later they turned against each other as the struggle for the leading role in German unification exploded into war.[169] At the battle of Königgrätz on 3 July 1866, the Austrian troops suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the technically superior Prussian army. This resulted not only in the end of the Habsburgs' Great-German hopes, but also in what Franz Joseph had been long resisting: the unavoidable revision of the Hungarian question.[170]

2.3 Securing the Compromise of 1867

The re-birth of the old realm as "Austria-Hungary" was not made overnight but took seven years to complete.[171] On 20 October 1860, Franz Joseph adopted the "October Diploma", which was basically a new constitution for the Austrian Empire based on aristocratic federalism. The Hungarian conservatives (count Antal Szécsen and his circle) contributed to drafting the October Diploma, therefore it can be rightfully interpreted as the first step towards a Habsburg-Hungarian reconciliation.[172] Marking the end of the era of Neo-absolutism, the Emperor increased the political influence of the conservative aristocracy by giving them more power over their own lands as well as a co-legislative role in the Imperial Parliament (Reichsrat).

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[167] PALMER: *Twilight of the Habsburgs,* pp. 98-113.

[168] RUMPLER: *Österreichische Geschichte* 1804-1914, pp. 386-401; ZÖLLNER: *Ausztria története*, pp. 308-312.

[169] For the correlations between German unification process and Hungary's struggle for independence, see: GERGELY, ANDRÁS: *Kossuth és a német egység (1841-1871)* [Kossuth and the German Unification (1841-1871)] , in: HERMANN, RÓBERT (ed.): Kossuth Lajos, "a magyarok Mózese" [Lajos Kossuth, "the Moses of the Hungarians"], Budapest, 2006, pp. 75-94.; WAWRO, GEOFFREY: *The Habsburg Flucht nach vorne in 1866: Domestic Political Origins of the Austro-Prussian War*, in: The International History Review, (17) 1995, 2, pp. 221–248.

[170] DEÁK, ISTVÁN: *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps 1848-1918*, New York – Oxford, 1990, pp. 43-51.; SZABAD: *Hungarian Political Trends Between the Revolution and the Compromise,* pp. 71-116.

[171] DEAK, J.: *Forging a Multinational State*, pp. 137-174; TAYLOR: *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918*, pp. 103-152.

[172] SZABAD, GYÖRGY: *Forradalom és kiegyezés válaszútján (1860-61)* [On the Crossroad between Revolution and Compromise]; Budapest, 1967, pp. 7-76.; PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, pp. 77-111.; HANÁK: *1867 - európai térben és időben*, pp. 17-42.

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From a Hungarian perspective, it was a decisive turning point, in that the country's constitution was restored with the prospect of re-calling the Hungarian National Assembly after long years of silence. The restoration of what could be roughly characterized as the 1847 situation, however, did not satisfy the politically dominant liberals, who insisted on upholding the achievements of the 1848 revolution (thus the name "48-ers"), including national sovereignty as formulated by the April Laws. Taking advantage of the reclaimed liberty, they started to re-organize their opposition movement. This reaction surprised and disappointed Franz Joseph, who was obliged to recognize that the Hungarian conservatives – despite their claims to the contrary – enjoyed no real mass support in their own country.

In an attempt to control the situation, the Emperor now turned his attention to the constitutional centralists, led by State Minister Anton Schmerling. Following their advice, Franz Joseph promulgated a new imperial constitution, the so-called "February Patent", on 26 February 1861, in which he transferred more power to the central government and the Reichsrat.[173] The latter was transformed into a bicameral imperial parliament, with an upper chamber appointed by the Emperor himself and a lower chamber, whose members were to be delegated by the provincial assemblies, which at the same time were also to operate. The National Assembly of Hungary was re-called, after a twelve-year intermission, in March 1861. The vast majority of the newly elected representatives were, however, liberals who agreed to continue the national resistance with political means but remained divided over both appropriate means and appropriate phraseology.[174]

One group was the "Resolution Party" led by former 1849 émigré count László Teleki, a close ally of independentist leader Kossuth, who was still conspiring against the Habsburgs in exile. They envisioned the near-future collapse of the empire, and therefore demanded Hungary's independence from Austria.[175] The other group, led by Ferenc Deák, was called the "Address Party", which rather saw an external security guarantee in the very existence of the Habsburg Monarchy, and therefore only wished to achieve Hungary's sovereignty within the framework of the Monarchy.[176] The intense parliamentary dispute ended with Ferenc Deák's triumph, in that the National Assembly did not pass an impolite resolution but addressed Franz

[173] SZABAD: *Forradalom és kiegyezés válaszútján*, pp. 259-278.; PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, pp. 410-414.

[174] HANÁK: *1867 - európai térben és időben*, pp. 43-91.; GERGELY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. században*, pp. 316-319.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/1, pp. 679-687.

[175] SZABAD: *Forradalom és kiegyezés válaszútján*, pp. 442-455.

[176] TAKÁCS, PÉTER: *Deák Ferenc politikai pályája 1849-1865* [Ferenc Deák's Political Career 1849-1865], Budapest, 1991, pp. 120-147.; DEÁK, ÁGNES: *Deák Ferenc útkeresése 1860-1861-ben* [Ferenc Deák's Pathfinding in 1860-1861]*, in:* SZABÓ: Deák Ferenc emlékezete, pp. 149-162.

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Joseph twice in a moderate way to represent the wishes of the Hungarians.[177] In addition, the Magyars, similarly to the Croats, refused to send their representatives to the lower chamber of the Reichsrat, massively undermining the constitutional cohesion of the Empire.

Neither of these two moves met the expectations of Franz Joseph who, in reaction to the seemingly never-ending Hungarian resistance, dissolved their National Assembly in August 1861. "Wir können warten" ("We can wait"), claimed Anton Schmerling, hoping that the Hungarians would sooner or later acknowledge the priority of the imperial interests over their national demands. In the meantime, Schmerling re-introduced a rule-by-decree governance in Hungary in a moderate and temporary form.[178] The Schmerling administration, known as the "Provisorium", persisted until 1865, when Franz Joseph revoked the February patent and appointed Richard von Belcredi as prime minister.[179]

Meanwhile in Hungary, Deák's position became even stronger as many conservatives and former Resolution Party members joined his camp.[180] As the leading figure of the Hungarian resistance, however, he had to realize that stubbornly insisting on his political stance of 1861, which was basically an 1848 position, would never serve as a basis for compromise with the emperor.[181] On 16 April 1865, Deák published his famous "Easter article" in which he reconsidered his political stance for the sake of the greater cause. In this anonymous piece – which was an answer to an article criticizing the Hungarians and published in the Austrian journal *Botschafter* a week earlier – Deák retreated to some extent from his rigid "48-er" position, but still insisted on Hungary's historical and constitutional sovereignty.[182] As Deák himself put it: "we have to seek after the complete achievement of the empire's security while the fundamental laws of the Hungarian constitution shall be also maintained at the maximum

[177] SZABAD: *Forradalom és kiegyezés válaszútján*, pp. 500-529.; pp. 559-570.
[178] SZABAD: *Hungarian Political Trends Between the Revolution and the Compromise,* pp. 117-143.; HANÁK: *1867 - európai térben és időben*, pp. 92-116.; SOMOGYI, ÉVA: *A birodalmi centralizációtól a dualizmusig. Az osztrák-német liberálisok útja a kiegyezéshez* [From Imperial Centralism to Dualism. The Path of the Austrian-German Liberals to the Compromise], Budapest, 1976, pp. 9-41.
[179] RUMPLER: *Österreichische Geschichte 1804-1914*, pp. 376-385.; SOMOGYI: *A birodalmi centralizációtól a dualizmusig*, pp. 75-121.
[180] KATUS, LÁSZLÓ: *Deák Ferenc és a kiegyezés* [Ferenc Deák and the Compromise]*, in:* SZABÓ (ed.): Deák Ferenc emlékezete, pp. 163-184.
[181] DEÁK, ÁGNES: *Who was the Father of the Compromise?,* in: GYÁNI (ed.): The Creation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, pp. 119-148.
[182] HANÁK: *1867 - európai térben és időben*, pp. 117-142.; CSORBA, LÁSZLÓ: *Deák und die Vorbereitung des Ausgleichs,* in: FAZEKAS, ISTVÁN – MALFÈR, STEFAN – TUSOR, PÉTER (eds.): Széchenyi, Kossuth, Batthyány, Deák. Studien zu den ungarischen Reformpolitikern des 19. Jahrhunderts und ihren Beziehungen zu Österreich, Wien, 2011, pp. 231-238.

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possible level, and the constitutional freedom of the lands of Cisleithania shall be also developed and secured".[183]

Publishing his views anonymously – which was not at all unusual in the period[184] – enabled Deák to make a clear distinction between his influential personality (authority) and the representation of the national interests. Since he wrote his article in Hungarian, his primary targets (audience) were those of his compatriots who still remained in "passive resistance", and who needed to be convinced about both the possibility and the benefits of a compromise with Austria. According to Deák, the Hungarian nation (referent object) had been long threatened by the prospect of enforced incorporation into Austria, meaning that Hungary might soon cease to exist as an independent nation (security issue). Using a combination of legal and historical argument[185] (repertoire), he argued that the threat could be averted only by means of a self-targeted act (extraordinary security measure), namely abandoning the unrealistic vision of complete national independence (even through a Habsburg personal union) and thus accepting the statehood of the Habsburg Monarchy as a framework for Hungarian sovereignty.

At the same time, Deák also sent a clear message to Franz Joseph, insisting that the anti-Habsburg uprisings in the country's troubled history had only broken out when the dynasty had first violated the Hungarian constitution. Deák therefore re-assured the Monarch that he could count on the Hungarians' contribution to imperial interests in the future too, were he to permit them to enjoy their historic right to self-governance within the Empire. With the aim of de-securitizing the Hungarian question, Deák pointed out that the real threat to the Habsburg Monarchy came not from inside but from the outside. This argument proved to be a powerful and acceptable one in the eyes of Franz Joseph after the tragic defeat at Solferino (24 June 1859), and would become even more so after the then upcoming tragedy of Königgrätz (3 July 1866). Consequently, secret compromise negotiations between the Hungarian liberals, led by Deák and Andrássy, and the Monarch accelerated rapidly. The beginning of a new era became more and more visible, especially after Friedrich Ferdinand von Beust replaced von Belcredi at the top of the imperial administration at the beginning of 1867.[186]

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[183] DEÁK, ÁGNES (ed.): *Deák Ferenc: Válogatott politikai írások és beszédek II. 1850–1873*. [Ferenc Deák: Collected Political Studies and Speeches, Volume 2. 1850-1873], Budapest, 2001, pp. 309–310.

[184] DEÁK, ÁGNES: *Suttogások és hallgatások. Sajtó és sajtópolitika Magyarországon 1861-1867* [Whispers and Silences. Press and Press Policies in Hungary 1861-1867], Budapest, 2018, pp. 305-311.

[185] The questions of legal historization and historicity in the political discourse of the Compromise of 1867 was analyzed by Péter Hanák: HANÁK, PÉTER: *Magyarország a Monarchiában. Tanulmányok* [Hungary in the Monarchy. Studies], Budapest, 1975, pp. 157-22.*; See also:* HANÁK: *1867 - európai térben és időben*, pp. 143-168.

[186] VOCELKA – VOCELKA: *Franz Joseph I.*, pp. 179-195.

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From a Hungarian perspective, another document of symbolic significance from the years around the Austro-Hungarian compromise was the open letter of the independentist émigré Kossuth to Deák. The so-called "Cassandra letter", published in Paris on 22 May 1867, is still commonly regarded as a prophecy of historic Hungary's collapse at the end of World War I.[187] Historians today rather interpret it as what it in fact was: a political indictment against his former ally, in which Kossuth brings Deák to book for the betrayal of the once shared ideas of 1848.[188] As in the case of any other open letter (speech act), the audience is not restricted to the person directly addressed. Kossuth (actor) on one hand targets the wider Hungarian public, and on the other hand his own followers in Hungary, namely the hardliner 48-ers or 49-ers.[189] Since the on-going compromise negotiations – as Kossuth mockingly labels them "the bargaining with Vienna" – were almost concluded, he made a last desperate attempt to influence public opinion in order to destabilize the Compromise and, in case of a turn of events in the future, to strengthen the position of the independentist camp.[190]

The Cassandra letter was distributed in Budapest both in Hungarian and German in the form of thousands of flyers. According to Kossuth, Deák and his followers (named soon as "67-ers"), were making a fatal mistake when they conceded sovereignty over foreign, military and financial policies (threat), and thus connected the boat of Hungary (referent object) to the sinking ship of the Habsburgs. In his view, the internal difficulties (nationality question) as well as the external threats (for example Russia) could be handled by an alliance of sovereign nation-states in the Danube region, including Hungary. Consequently, Kossuth argued that the mortal threat was posed by Vienna. In case of the consolidation and success of the Compromise, because of the Austrian hegemony within the Monarchy; in case of the future fall of the Empire, because of the dualist system which made Hungary the accomplice of the Habsburgs. Kossuth continued to insist on the en bloc securitization of the Austrian dynasty even years after the

[187] BERTÉNYI JR., IVÁN: *Towards a Catastrophe with a Compromise? On the Connection of the 1867 Compromise and the Treaty of Trianon*, in: GYÁNI (ed.): The Creation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, pp. 15-38.
[188] BERTÉNYI IFJ., IVÁN: *Megosztó kompromisszum. Az 1867-es kiegyezés sikerei és kudarcai 150 év távlatából* [A Divisive Compromise. The Successes and Failures of the Compromise of 1867 from the Perspective of 150 years], in: HERMANN, RÓBERT – LIGETI, DÁVID (eds.): *Megosztó kompromisszum. Az 1867-es kiegyezés 150 év távlatából* [A Divisive Compromise. The Compromise of 1867 from the Perspective of 150 years], Budapest, 2018, p. 34.
[189] For Kossuth's exceptional talent in political marketing, see: FRANK, TIBOR: *Az emigráns Kossuth és a politikai marketing születése*, in: HERMANN (ed.): Kossuth Lajos, "a magyarok Mózese", pp. 177-212.
[190] ERDŐDY: *Kossuth Lajos*, pp. 63-70.

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Compromise.[191] As he famously phrased it later in a private letter: "In case of a future great war, Hungary will be the bonfire on which the Austrian eagle will burn."[192]

As a result of the Compromise of 1867, Hungary fully regained its internal self-governance within the Habsburg Monarchy.[193] However, in the form of a real union, it remained connected to Imperial Austria not only through its head of the state but also through certain political and financial-economic institutions and issues, such as the joint foreign and military policies, the delegations or the common market, central bank, state debt and currency.[194] Although Deák's party (liberal 67-ers) formed a comfortable majority in the National Assembly, it is quite difficult to determine if the then-contemporary public opinion was rather for or against the Compromise. Indeed, Kossuth enjoyed great popularity among the Hungarian-speaking part of the society, but given the fact that about half of the country's population spoke another language as their mother tongue, it might be a mistake to extrapolate that popularity across other language groups. Furthermore, Franz Joseph – regardless of his title as Emperor of Austria or King of Hungary – was still widely honoured on the basis of the age-old tradition and sacred legitimacy of the Christian monarchs, especially among the rural population.[195]

It was not a coincidence that Franz Joseph's coronation ceremony on 8 June 1867, a week after the approval of the Compromise by the National Assembly (Act XII of 1867) became a key symbolic moment of the period.[196] From a security perspective, the most interesting part of the ceremony was the scene when Franz Joseph rode his horse to the top of the coronation hill – created from soil provided jointly by all the counties – and there pledged to protect Hungary from all threats coming from whatever direction. As the official plan for the coronation ceremony determined: "His Majesty jumps out of the [coronation] march at the proper place

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[191] SZABAD: *Kossuth politikai pályája,* pp. 189-199.

[192] Lajos Kossuth's letter to Ernő Simonyi, Collegno (al Baraccone) 3 December 1876, in: KOSSUTH, FERENC (ed.): *Kossuth Lajos összes munkái. Kossuth Lajos Iratai* IX. [Complete works of Lajos Kossuth. Writings by Lajos Kossuth, Volume 9], Budapest, 1902.

[193] LOJKÓ (ed.): Hungary's Long 19th Century. *Collected studies by PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ*, pp. 213-280.; SZENTE, ZOLTÁN: *Kormányzás a dualizmus korában* [Governance in the Era of Dualism], Budapest, 2011, pp. 173-208.

[194] For a systematic review of the common affairs between Austria and Hungary, see: OLECHOWSKI-HRDLICKA, KARIN: *Die Gemeinsamen Angelegenheiten der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie*, Frankfurt am Main, 2001, pp. 203-426., On the role of the delegations, see: SOMOGYI, ÉVA: *Hagyomány és átalakulás. Állam és bürokrácia a dualista Habsburg Monarchiába.* [Tradition and Transition. State and bureaucracy in Dualist Habsburg Monarchy], Budapest, 2006, pp. 11-63., On the financial-economic connections, see: KOMLOS, JOHN: *The Habsburg Monarchy as Customs Union. Economic Development in Austria-Hungary in the Nineteenth Century*, New Jersey, 1983, pp. 214-220.

[195] CIEGER: *1867 szimbolikus világa,* pp. 33-53.; GERGELY, ANDRÁS – SZÁSZ, ZOLTÁN: *Kiegyezés után* [After the Compromise], Budapest, 1978, pp. 40-56.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/2, pp. 814-830.; FREIFELD, ALICE: *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914*, Baltimore, 2000*,* pp. 189-224.;

[196] VOCELKA – VOCELKA: *Franz Joseph I.*, pp. 195-207.

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and he rides up galloping to the coronation hill, where drawing Saint Stephen's sword he makes the four slashes in the form of the cross into the directions of the four cardinal points."[197] This act – which in this case was not even a speech act but a symbolic performance act based on strong historic traditions – self-evidently referred only to external threats. The articulation of internal threats is always a much more complicated and delicate question. The same applied to the age of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, when many in Hungarian society still remembered the personal and national tragedies of the 1849 reprisals as well as the era of Neo-absolutism. These dark memories obviously did not disappear at once after the coronation.

The Holy Crown, consequently, did not lie on the head of Franz Joseph with a legitimacy deficit but with a moral one. The Hungarian liberals who had just risen to power were aware of this problem, which eventually endangered the entire political system. In consequence, from the very day of the coronation ceremony and throughout the whole era of Dualism up until World War I, the Hungarian elites put a lot of energy and resources into a new cult of personality of King Franz Joseph.[198] The challenge they faced was not an easy one, since according the popular independentist and pro-Kossuth narrative, the Habsburgs in alliance with the nationalities posed a grave danger to the chances of establishing a modern and unified Hungarian nation-state on the unstable foundation of the pre-modern and heterogeneous kingdom.

The 67-ers realized that Franz Joseph needed to be taken out of this security discourse (de-securitization), and attempted, by launching a new discourse, to put him in a position where he became the leading figure and champion in fighting external and internal threats. According to the main security narrative of the Compromise, the Monarch secured the Hungarian nation's supremacy over the non-Hungarian nationalities and at the same time he established a military and geopolitical defensive line around the Carpathian basin, which provided safety against external threats, such as a less likely than formerly but still possible Russian invasion. This paradigm was not a brand-new invention, it can be described rather as the reconfiguration of the old (i.e. prior to 1848-1849) security paradigm, with the distinction that this time it was optimized for Franz Joseph himself.[199]

[197] Official plan for the 1867 coronation ceremony in the Hungarian National Archives: MNL Országos Levéltár, Miniszterelnökségi Levéltára. A Miniszterelnökség Központilag iktatott és irattározott iratai. K26 1896-2509 (141).

[198] GERGELY – SZÁSZ: *Kiegyezés után*, pp. 74-77.; PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ: *Az Elbától keletre. Tanulmányok a magyar és kelet-európai történelemből* [East of the Elbe. Studies on Hungarian and Eastern European History], Budapest, 1988, pp. 219-263.

[199] MOORE: *Teaching the Empire*, pp. 51-84.

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2.4 A Traditional Space of Security: the Defence Forces Debate

Even if we accept the approach of the postmodern schools of security studies in terms of the socially-constructed nature of security, from a historical perspective it seems inevitable that the most important security issues were related to geopolitics, and informed by military and foreign policies. This seems especially true at a time when almost every generation had to face up at least once in a lifetime to what war and aggression meant in reality. Although the decades prior to the Great War are widely regarded as "happy times of peace", at the beginning of the period physical security was certainly neither self-evident nor natural in the eyes of the contemporaries. When they looked around themselves, they could rather witness a Europe suffering from a series of clashes between dynasties, empires, countries and awakening nationalisms.[200]

During the Compromise negotiations, the Hungarian elites, under the leadership of Deák, made the greatest concession in terms of military organization. Franz Joseph simply could not concede on this issue, because without a powerful imperial army the Habsburg Empire would have ceased to be an empire. From the Hungarian perspective, giving up on the idea of a fully independent military and foreign policies seemed to be a fair price, especially when they realized that Austria could function as a geopolitical and defence guarantor for Hungary's borders. Kossuth, of course, held the opposite opinion, as expressed in the already mentioned Cassandra letter: "The Hungarian army will be degraded to an auxiliary force of the Austrian army, and not only its organization and command, but also the application will be taken from the Hungarian ministry, and instead of the Hungarian national assembly it will be subordinated to the non-accountable imperial government. The right to determine and vote on the military budget will be also taken from the Hungarian national assembly to transfer it to delegations shared with the Empire, so it will be subjected to foreign manipulations, votes and decisions. By this the most important and practical guarantee of our nation's constitutional life will be taken away. It will lose the capability independently to restrict the law of war that brings such great miseries upon peoples; and also to influence international relations on the basis of its own national interests."[201]

This latest demand made by Kossuth proved to be an illusion, not only for Hungary but also for the entire Habsburg Empire. By the time the dualist structure was put in place, Vienna

[200] DEÁK, I.: *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps,* pp. 51-77.
[201] PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. században*, p. 463.

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had had to acknowledge the permanent loss of the provinces taken previously by Italy and Prussia. It was even more painful for Austria that its vision of a Habsburg-dominated Great-German unification process had also faded away for good. Austria became more and more isolated on the international scene as Vienna witnessed the Franco-Prussian war (1870-71), which eventually paved the way for Prussia to achieve German Unity, only from the sidelines. In spite of seeing a great threat in a potential Russian expansion, Franz Joseph agreed to take a neutral position during the Russian-Ottoman war (1877-78) that led to a major re-ordering of power relations in the Balkans.[202]

From this time on, the once powerful Habsburg Monarchy had to settle for less ambitious foreign and security policy goals, namely with maintaining the status quo with the two neighboring great powers, Prussia and Russia.[203] This materialized in the so-called League of the Three Emperors (in German: *Dreikaiserbund*), which was a mutual defence agreement between the monarchs of Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary. "Their Majesties are determined to prevent any schism between them with regard to those principles, which they consider solely suitable to secure and if necessary, enforce the peace in Europe against any kind of future convulsion coming from whatever direction", reads the text of the agreement that was first signed officially in 1873 and then renewed secretly in 1881.[204]

In the long run, Austria-Hungary committed itself as an ally much more to the German Empire, because Russia posed a greater threat to the East Central European status quo. These concerns led to another agreement, this time only with Germany and against Russia. The so-called Dual Alliance (*Doppelte Allianz*) was negotiated by German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck and Austria-Hungary's Foreign Minister Gyula Andrássy, and signed by the two emperors in 1879.[205] According to the secret document, the two monarchs "are considering their royal duty to ensure the security and tranquility of their peoples under any circumstances", therefore "in case in spite of the expectation and wish of the two High Contracting Parties, either of the two empires would be under attack by Russia, the two High Contracting Parties

[202] CANIS, KONRAD: *Das bedrängte Großmacht. Österreich-Ungarn und das europäische Mächtesystem. 1866/1867-1914,* Paderborn, 2016, pp. 53-108.
[203] GERGELY – SZÁSZ: *Kiegyezés után*, pp. 144-159.; DIÓSZEGI, ISTVÁN: *Die Außenpolitik der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie 1871 - 1877*, Budapest, 1985.; BRIDGE, FRANCIS ROY: *From Sadowa to Sarajevo: The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866-1914*, London – Boston, 1972.; BRIDGE, FRANCIS ROY: *The Habsburg Monarchy among the Great Powers,* New York - Oxford, 1990.
[204] PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, p. 591.
[205] CANIS: *Das bedrängte Großmacht*, pp. 109-126.; DIÓSZEGI, ISTVÁN: *Bismarck und Andrássy: Ungarn in der deutschen Machtpolitik in der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Wien – München – Oldenbourg – Budapest, 1999.

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are obliged to provide with assistance to each other by using the full power of their respective military forces".[206]

Both texts, namely the League of the Three Emperors and the Dual Alliance, highlight that in the age of the old European empires the most important security policy decisions were still made behind closed doors. In the face of such secret diplomacy, the press could often only guess at the main trends of the military and foreign policies, especially in the case of ethno-linguistically and constitutionally fragmented Austria-Hungary, where public opinion remained strongly divided even with regard to the basic foreign policy interests of the Monarchy. It is quite interesting that the text of the Dual Alliance was made public after all in 1888. This was done precisely with the very aim of enlightening, calming and reassuring the Hungarian-speaking public – which at the time was demanding firm action against Russia – that the agreement of 1879 was only about defensive cooperation.

In the new era, the once influential and powerful Ballhausplatz (the location of the Austrian Foreign Ministry in Vienna) had to realize that the Habsburg Monarchy was no longer the primary foreign and security policy actor in East Central Europe, and that it would hardly be able to cope with the ambitious and resourceful German and Russian Empires in the long run. The only exception was the Western Balkans, where the weakening Osman influence resulted in a regional power vacuum.[207] The Berlin Congress of 1878, one of the most significant diplomatic events of the period, not only stopped the Russian expansion in the Balkans and created new and/or independent states such as Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, but also granted a mandate for Austria-Hungary to occupy Bosnia–Herzegovina, ruled previously by the Ottomans.[208] This was widely regarded as a tremendous diplomatic achievement by Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Andrássy, and also a historic peak of Hungarian influence in 19th century international relations.[209] However, even Andrássy himself could not possibly know that his foreign policy efforts would end up producing turmoil in Austrian as well as Hungarian domestic politics. The so-called "occupation crisis" swept away Adolf von Auersperg's liberal cabinet in Vienna and nearly did the same to its Hungarian counterpart in Budapest, headed by Kálmán Tisza.[210]

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[206] PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, p. 463.

[207] For the main reasons behind the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, see: GLENNY, MISHA: *The Balkans 1804-2012. Nationalism, War and the Great Powers,* London, 2012, pp. 70-134.

[208] GRATZ, GUSZTÁV: A dualizmus kora. Magyarország története 1867-1918. I. kötet [The Age of Dualism. History of Hungary 1867-1918. Volume One], Budapest, 1934, pp. 166-185.

[209] KOZÁRI, MONIKA: *Andrássy Gyula*, Budapest, 2018, pp. 208-211.

[210] In Austria, even the ruling liberals turned their back on the government in protest against the occupation of Bosnia. HÖBELT, LOTHAR: *The Bosnian Crisis Revisited: Why did the Austrian Liberals oppose Andrassy?*, in: HÖBELT, LOTHAR – OTTE, THOMAS G. (eds.): A Living Anachronism? European Diplomacy and the Habsburg

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The occupation of Bosnia, a country with an extremely complicated ethnic, religious and social profile, came at a huge price both in terms of enormous military expenditures and a great number of dead and wounded soldiers.[211] The occupation resulted in an entirely new security policy situation for Austria-Hungary.[212] A new mortal threat to the very existence of the Monarchy appeared on the scene, and this time it was not an external but an internal one, though the formal annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary was carried out only in 1908.[213] Nevertheless, the opposition forces in Vienna and Budapest harshly criticized their respective governments, not only for the victims and material burdens of the occupation, but also for jeopardizing the sensitive balance of power within the Dual Monarchy. From Budapest's perspective, the incorporation of a new region into the Monarchy further decreased the proportion of the Hungarian-speaking population, and raised the spectre of triadism or federalism, involving a Slavic-oriented overhaul of the basic structure of the Monarchy. It was for this very reason that the formal annexation of Bosnia was delayed until 1908.[214]

At this point, it is noteworthy to mention the changing role of the media.[215] In late 1878, a new newspaper appeared on the Hungarian media landscape. The editors of the *Pesti Hírlap* declared themselves independent from both the ruling and opposition parties, yet they were very critical about the occupation crisis. As they put it in their first front page article: "What shall be done to prevent Hungary and the Hungarian nation from destruction? What shall be done to minimize the harm the Bosnian occupation caused to the political and material interests of our homeland? What shall be done to make the slowness, the high prices and the vast number of fashionable corruption cases disappear? These questions are answered neither by Kálmán Tisza nor by the verbosity of the opposition parties. Yet there is the rub. We do not need the

Monarchy. Festschrift für Francis Roy Bridge zum 70. Geburtstag, Wien, 2010, pp. 178-198.; For the impact of the occupation on Hungarian domestic politics, see: KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/2, pp. 1193-1203.

[211] Ottó Varga, a teacher from Sopron, Western Hungary, provides insight from a soldier's perspective into the struggles of the Austro-Hungarian troops during the occupation of Bosnia: BALLA, TIBOR – DOMINKOVITS, PÉTER (eds.): *Varga Ottó: Naplóm. 1878.* [Ottó Varga: My Diary 1878], Sopron, 2020.

[212] OKEY, ROBIN: *Taming Balkan Nationalism. The Habsburg 'Civilising Mission' in Bosnia 1878-1914*, Oxford, 2007, pp. 26-73.; RUTHNER, CLEMENS: *(Post-)Kolonialismus in 'Kakanien'. Einige abschließende Überlegungen unter besonderer Berücksichtigungen Bosnien-Herzegowinas, 1878-1918*, in: BACHINGER, BERNHARD – DORNIK, WOLFRAM – LEHNSTAEDT, STEPHAN (eds.): Österreich-Ungarns imperiale Herausforderungen. Nationalismen und Rivalitäten im Habsburgerreich um 1900, Göttingen, 2020, pp. 67-86.

[213] CANIS: *Das bedrängte Großmacht*, pp. 335-364.

[214] The Austro-Hungarian era in Bosnia was thoroughly analyzed in a recent volume of studies, from which the first two papers give an excellent introduction to the complexity of the topic: RUTHNER, CLEMENS: *Bosnien-Herzegowina als k.u.k. Kolonie. Eine Einführung*, in: RUTHNER, CLEMENS – SCHEER, TAMARA (eds.): Bosnien-Herzegowina und Österreich-Ungarn, Tübingen, 2018, pp. 15-44.; SCHEER, TAMARA: "*Kolonie" – "Neu-Österreich" – "Reichsland(e)". Zu begrifflichen Zuschreibungen Bosnien-Herzegowinas im österreichisch-ungarischen Staatsverband, 1878-1918*, in: RUTHNER – SCHEER (eds.): Bosnien-Herzegowina und Österreich-Ungarn, pp. 45-60.

[215] KÓSA, LÁSZLÓ – SZEGEDY-MASZÁK, MIHÁLY – VALUCH, TIBOR: *A Cultural History of Hungary*, Budapest, 2000, pp. 83-84.

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ongoing government policies. We consider the idea of the occupation unfortunate, whereas the implementation of it is even more unfortunate."[216]

The attitude of the new nationwide political newspaper marked the beginning of a new era. In a society that can be characterized mainly by modernization and massification, the role of the printed media increasingly strengthens.[217] From that time on, the politicians did not fight only with each other but with the businessmen who owned the media outlets. This is the moment when traditional journalism transforms into a modern capitalist industry that enjoys far greater influence on society than its predecessor. As a result of mass education and the sharp decline of illiteracy among the population, political programmes and views were no longer discussed only by members of parliament and other closed circles of the elites, but also by hundreds of thousands of readers.[218] This development had a strong impact on the security discourse too: the question was no longer simply one of what dangers in actual fact posed a threat, but also of what dangers were considered fearsome or threatening by the public. And just what the public thought those dangers were very much depended on the struggle of the political actors in the printed media for the power of narration and thematization.

In this intense and dynamic political atmosphere, the so-called 'defence forces debate' (*véderővita*) broke out in Hungary at the end of the 1880s. This heated public debate indirectly contributed to the ending of the period that consolidated the system of dualism in Transleithania under the leadership of Prime Minister Tisza.[219] Although the most important issues of the military were settled by the two sides during the Austro-Hungarian Compromise negotiations in 1867, and the recruitment of new troops as well as the military budget were given the green light from time to time by the two parliaments in Vienna and Budapest, these were sufficient at best to maintain the existing strength of the joint military forces.[220]

At the same time, the difficulties of the Bosnian occupation clearly revealed the weaknesses of the Austro-Hungarian imperial-royal army (K.u.K), and consequently Franz Joseph and the leaders of the military increasingly urged the modernization of the army,

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[216] The very first edition of the political newspaper *Pesti Hírlap* on 25 December 1877. In: PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, pp. 636-637.

[217] On the tendencies of massification of politics in Austria-Hungary by the end 19th century, see: JUDSON: *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*, pp. 333-384.; For the Hungarian case, see: FREIFELD: *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary*.

[218] For the history of Hungarian journalism, see: BUZINKAY, GÉZA: *A magyar sajtó és újságírás története a kezdetektől a rendszerváltásig* [History of Hungarian Press and Journalism from the Beginning to the Regime-Change], Budapest, 2016.

[219] For the general tendencies of the Kálmán Tisza era, see: GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora I.*, pp. 219-252.

[220] BIHARI, PÉTER: *A "nagy véderővita"* [The "Great Defense Forces Debate"], in: PAPP, GÁBOR (ed.): Az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia I. rész. A boldog békeidők. [The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Part I, The happy times of peace], Budapest, 2018, pp. 64-71.

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including a substantial rise in military expenditures. The Hungarian Prime Minister Tisza, having been in power since 1875, was at the peak of his career after his Liberal Party won a comfortable majority of the seats in the 1887 national elections. Tisza felt himself strong enough to pass a new defence forces law in the Hungarian Parliament in January 1889, which was of course quite consistent with, if not urgently necessary from, the imperial and military points of view. However, the parliamentary debate gave the opposition the opportunity to escalate the parliamentary debate through articulating the military question as a national security issue.[221]

The 14th and 25th paragraphs of the draft of the new law served as a solid basis for this endeavor: the former would have taken away the right of the parliament to determine the number of new troops to be recruited in every ten year period, whereas the latter would have made it obligatory for young officers to take their final exams in the joint commanding language of the army, which was not Hungarian but German. The debate triggered such harsh reactions in the media that mass protests against the law began on the streets of Budapest, which eventually degenerated into rioting and looting. At the same time, the two main opposition parties, the '48-er Independentist Party' and the so-called 'Moderate Opposition' led by Albert Apponyi, attacked the government in the Parliament and demanded the vindication of Hungarian national interests. They considered the recruitment of troops as a constitutional issue, and the officers' exam language as a gratuitous national offence.

As for the latter, Apponyi addressed the topic in the House of Representatives of the Hungarian Parliament in the following way: "Honorable House! Anyone who thinks seriously and unbiasedly about this question and about this certain aspect of the question – and I can tell you that this aspect of the question hurts me the most, excepting the national question – must admit that through the second year of service we are giving a dangerous souvenir to the army; dangerous militarily and even more dangerous politically."[222] In the same speech Apponyi also touched upon the language issue: "The theory that claims that the language question belongs exclusively to the competencies of His Majesty, can be defended in a such state as Cisleithania, where several parallel languages exist, and none of them bears the dignity of being state language, but all of them bears just a significance with respect to culture and ethnicity. […] But in our country, it is not the case, Honorable House. The Hungarian language does not bear

[221] GOTTAS, FRIEDRICH: *Ungarn im Zeitalter des Hochliberalismus. Studien zur Tisza-Ära (1875-1890)*, Wien, 1976, pp. 67-74.
[222] *Apponyi Albert gróf beszédei I. kötet 1872-1890* [Speeches by count Albert Apponyi, Volume 1, 1872-1890], Budapest, 1896, p. 667.

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significance only for ethnicity. The Hungarian language is the language of our state, the Hungarian language is the manifestation and symbol of our national character and our sovereign national state. Detracting from the legislative power to guard the Hungarian language means no less than taking away the control and protection over the integrity and sovereignty of our state from the hands of the legislative power."[223]

Although Apponyi considered himself an opposition politician of 67-er stance, his argument fitted very well into the narrative of the independentist forces. As one of the main figures (actor) in the defence forces debate, he spoke at the very same time to the opposition representatives in the Parliament (audience no.1) and to the masses demonstrating against the law on the streets of Budapest (audience no.2). He insisted that the Hungarian government which served the interests of the military leadership in Vienna was now pushing a law (threat) that seriously harmed the interests of the Hungarian nation-state (referent object). Apponyi, in spite of being a 67-er, suggested that at the time Vienna posed a greater threat to Hungary than any potential external enemies, which can be hardly interpreted otherwise than as a simple borrowing of the main argument of the 48-er narrative. This phenomenon is interconnected with securitization: the non-67-er opposition forces were determined to keep alive and even strengthen those public feelings and thoughts which suggested that being part of the Habsburg Monarchy inevitably entailed a constant threat to the nation-state. These tactics proved to be rather fruitful during the defence forces debate: although the parliamentary debate went on for three months before the ruling parties could pass the highly controversial law, in the end Prime Minister Tisza lost his personal battle in the arena of domestic Hungarian politics.[224]

2.5 Perceptions of Security in "the Happy Times of Peace" (1867-1914)

1867 was clearly a decisive turning point not only in modern Hungarian history, which is packed with various regime-changes, but also in the history of East Central Europe. After decades of unsuccessful revolutions and various separatist, absolutist and federalist ideas and experiments, a new dualistic type of state was established on the foundations of an age-old dynastical empire. At root the Dual Monarchy still remained, however, a multi-ethnic conglomerate which might, at first view, resemble a post-modern Super-state.[225] Indeed, if we

[223] *Apponyi Albert gróf beszédei*, pp. 677-678.

[224] KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/2, pp. 1319-1332.

[225] When it comes, for instance, to the enormous challenges of translation between multiple languages, state administration and politics, many compare the Habsburg Monarchy to the European Union: WOLF, MICHAELA: *Die Vielsprachige Seele Kakaniens. Übersetzen und Dolmetschen in der Habsburgermonarchie 1848 bis 1918*,

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take a look at the extremely diverse linguistic, religious, social and national identities in both halves of Austria-Hungary, the empire might seem a strange forerunner of the European multiculturalism of posterior periods.[226] As Polish historian Adam Kozuchowski writes in his book on the interwar memory of Austria-Hungary: "Supranational unity as a remedy against national conflicts, even in its imperfect Austro-Hungarian form, did not seem so ridiculous and anachronistic anymore."[227]

Thorough historical analyses, however, one can firmly reject such comparisons: in fact, Austria-Hungary mirrored neither a post-modern super state, nor a multicultural society in today's sense. It is probably not a coincidence that even the interwar Austrian aristocrat Count Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi, who is known as the founding president of the Paneuropean Union and one of the first promoters of Europe's political unification, never mentioned the Dual Monarchy as a pattern to follow.[228] The idea and spirit of the Monarchy, as a form of imperial or hegemonic power that provides with security and stability for Europan nations with troubled history, has remained on the agenda of European political thought ever since the Collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy.[229]

With respect to the ethnic groups within the borders of the Empire, instead of multiculturalism it seems more appropriate to speak in general about pluriculturalism, in which parallel and asynchronous nation-building processes developed throughout the long 19th century. [230] This is to say that the different pre-modern ethnic groups of the Empire, one after

Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2012, pp. 362-377.; HOREL, CATHERINA: *Cette Europe qu'on dit centrale. Des Habsbourg à l'intégration européenne 1815–2004*, Paris, 2009.; OSTERKAMP, JANA: *Vielfalt ordnen: Das föderale Europa der Habsburgermonarchie (Vormärz bis 1918)*, München-Göttingen, 2020.

[226] FEICHTINGER, JOHANNES – COHEN, GARY B.: *Introduction. Understanding Multiculturalism: The Habsburg Central European Experience*, in: FEICHTINGER, JOHANNES – COHEN, GARY B. (eds.): Understanding Multiculturalism: The Habsburg Central European Experience, New York – Oxford, 2014, pp. 1-14.; The complex legacies of the multicultural Monarchy raised the attention not only of historians but also of literary scholars: MÜLLER-FUNK, WOLFGANG – PLENER, PETER – RUTHNER, CLEMENS (eds.): *Kakanien revisited. Das Eigene und das Fremde (in) der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*, Tübigen – Basel, 2002.

[227] KOŻUCHOWSKI, ADAM: *The Afterlife of Austria-Hungary: The Image of the Habsburg Monarchy in Interwar Europe*, Pittsburgh, 2013, p. 19.

[228] VON COUDENHOVE-KALERGI, NIKOLAUS: *Die europäische Nation*, Stuttgart, 1953.; CONZE, VANESSA: R*ichard Coudenhove-Kalergi: Umstrittener Visionär Europas*, Northeim-Sudheim, 2004.

[229] VON HABSBURG, OTTO: *Die Reichsidee: Geschichte und Zukunft einer übernationalen Ordnung*, Wien, 1986.

[230] WANDRUSZKA, ADAM – URBANITSCH, PETER: *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, Band III: Die Völker des Reiches*, Vienna, 2003; KANN, ROBERT A.: *Das Nationalitätenproblem der Habsburgermonarchie. Geschichte und Ideengehalt der nationalen Bestrebungen vom Vormärz bis zur Auflösung des Reiches im Jahre 1918, Erster Band, Das Reich und die Völker,* Graz – Köln, 1964.; KANN, ROBERT A. – DAVID, ZDENĚK V.: *The peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands*, 1526-1918, Seattle – London, 1984, pp. 292-475.; PROKOPOVYCH, MARKIAN – BETHKE, CARL – SCHEER, TAMARA: *Language Diversity in the Late Habsburg Empire: Foreword from the Editors*, in: PROKOPOVYCH, MARKIAN – BETHKE, CARL – SCHEER, TAMARA (eds.): Language Diversity in the Late Habsburg Empire, Leiden, 2020, pp. 1-11.; JUDSON, PIETER M.: Encounters with Language Diversity in Late Habsburg Austria, in: PROKOPOVYCH – BETHKE – SCHEER (eds.): Language Diversity in the Late Habsburg Empire, pp. 12-25.

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the other, entered the great competition of the time: becoming a modern nation, preferably with a designated territory under their control. Those communities which had historical experience in state-building and/or some basis of pre-modern nationalism enjoyed some advantages over the others, at least in the beginning.[231] The rolling phases of the nation-building process – as Czech historian Miroslav Hroch explains nationalism – more or less determined the state-building tendencies in Austria-Hungary in the second half of the 19th century.[232] It may sound contradictory, but the different national movements were not always rivals of other similar movements: they rather played a vital role in creating the self-image and identity of the particular national community in question.[233] The issue of nation-building was heavily intermingled with the issue of state-building in Austria-Hungary.[234]

An assessment of the Dual Monarchy, therefore, should be simultaneously undertaken through holistic, dualistic and regional approaches. The structure of the empire was not based exclusively on only a single great compromise, but also on the sensitive balance of multiple compromises between various actors, compromises variously explicit or implicit, visible or partly or fully submerged, resulting in the evolution of synchronous but hierarchical state-building tendencies.[235] One group of such compromises could be called "Cisleithanian", which refers to the dominance of the central state-building attempt in the Austrian part between 1867 and 1914. It was an attempt to unite the primacy of the Habsburg dynasty with moves to integrate the German, Czech, Polish, Ukrainian, Italian, and Slovenian societies into a semi-federal Dynastical state by confronting their national movements. A second group might be called the "Transleithanian", which refers to the Hungarian attempts at nation-state-building. It was inspired by the historic concept of "the lands of the Holy Crown" and the vision of an "ethnically diverse but politically unified Hungarian nation". A third group might be named "sub-state governance", and would refer to those regions which enjoyed more or less autonomous status within the Austrian or Hungarian state, for example the Croatian and Polish communities. Further groups could be labeled as "pseudo-state-building" or "shadow-state-

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[231] JUDSON, PIETER M.: *Introduction: Constructing nationalities in East Central Europe*, in: JUDSON – ROZENBLIT (eds.): Constructing nationalities in East Central Europe, pp. 1-18.; KISS, ENDRE – STAGL, JUSTIN: (eds.): *Nation und Nationenbildung in Österreich-Ungarn 1848-1938. Prinzipien und Methoden*, Wien, 2006.

[232] See: HROCH, MIROSLAV: *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations*, Cambridge, 1985.

[233] HASLINGER, PETER: *Hungarian Motifs in the Emergence and the Decline of a Czechoslovak National Narrative 1890-1930*, in: WINGFIELD, NANCY M.: Creating the Other. Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe, New York – Oxford, 2003, pp. 169-182.

[234] DEAK, J.: *Forging a Multinational State*, pp. 175-260.; ŘEZNÍK, MILOŠ: *Die Habsburgermonarchie - ein Imperium ihrer Völker? Einführende Überlegungen zu 'Österreichs Staatsidee'*, in: BACHINGER – DORNIK – LEHNSTAEDT (eds.): Österreich-Ungarns imperiale Herausforderungen, pp. 45-66.

[235] OSTERKAMP: *Vielfalt ordnen: Das föderale Europa der Habsburgermonarchie*, pp. 205-238.

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building". They refer, for example, to the extremely complicated Bohemian, Bosnian and Transylvanian cases.[236]

Yet, in spite of all the political, national and social tensions and conflicts, the Monarchy was more or less able to fulfill its historical mission, namely bringing some peace and prosperity, economic progress, social mobility and cultural blooming for decades in the multi-ethnic and tension-packed region of East Central Europe. The exaggerated label of "prison of folks" has much more to do with First World War propaganda than with actual history, especially if we take a look at the minority policies in the region in the interwar period.[237] Therefore, one should be very careful when assessing the Dual Monarchy from later perspectives and follow an approach, which avoids ahistorical comparisons with later political ideologies or structures.[238] As British historian Mark Cornwall argues, many often non-national and contemporary viewpoints need to be resurrected, that would reassert themselves in the transnational historiography of a Habsburg mental space in East-Central Europe, even if the old territorial empire disappeared from the map long ago. As Cornwall pointed out: "perhaps too easily, the historian may follow those voices from the successor states that shouted the loudest".[239]

As for the memory of the dualist era in Hungary, it is necessary to underline that in the period that followed the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, citizens of the country experienced for themselves the consequences of a drastic change in political, economic and social conditions that was carried out only within just a few generations. The new parliamentary form of governance, the hegemony of liberalism and nationalism as mainstream ideologies and the widespread introduction of capitalism had a huge impact all over the country – though in different phases, and to different extents depending on the region.[240] All this nonetheless, pointed in the direction of a new, modern age full of possibilities for those who were ready to adapt. The majority of contemporary Hungarian society, however, was still showing rather pre-

[236] In her thought-provoking analysis, Andrea Komlosy came to the conclusion that the peripheral regions of the Empire served as some sort of substitutes for those non-European colonies that Austria-Hungary did not possess: KOMLOSY, ANDREA: *Innere Peripherien als Ersatz für Kolonien? Zentrenbildung und Peripherisierung in der Habsburgermonarchie*, in: HÁRS, ENDRE – MÜLLER-FUNK, WOLFGANG – REBER, URSULA – RUTHNER, CLEMENS (eds.): Zentren, Peripherien und kollektive Identitäten in Österreich-Ungarn, Tübingen – Basel, 2006, pp. 55-78.

[237] Learn more: PIETROW-ENNKER, BIANKA (eds): *Nationsbildung und Außenpolitik im Osten Europa. Nationsbildungprozesse, Konstruktionen nationaler Identität und außenpolitische Positionierungen im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert, Osnabrück*, 2022.

[238] For a good example, see: BARAN-SZOŁTYS, MAGDALENA, WIERZEJSKA, JAGIDA (eds.): *Continuities and Discontinuities of the Habsburg Legacy in East-Central European Discourses since 1918,* Wien, 2020.

[239] CORNWALL, MARK: *A Conflicted and Divided Habsburg Memory*, in: CORNWALL, MARK – NEWMAN, JOHN PAUL: Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War, New York – Oxford, 2016, p. 10.

[240] On the rapid industrialization in Hungary in the Dualist era, see: KOMLOS: *The Habsburg Monarchy as Customs Union,* pp. 112-213.

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modern or post-feudal characteristics, especially at the beginning of the new era. Therefore, the great political, economic and social experiment – known most commonly as 'civic transformation' in Hungarian historiography – was fraught with great risks and grave problems, above all the smoldering national and social tensions that historically fragmented the society. Apart from some pioneering attempts by the author of this work, these risks and problems have not been interpreted explicitly as security issues.[241]

The age of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is often called "the happy times of peace" in Hungary, which was obviously not a contemporary opinion but a nostalgic one which emerged in the wake of two horrific world wars and the troubled interwar period. The myth about the decades of peace and prosperity, however, was not entirely unfounded: prior to the Great War, two entire generations had lived and prospered without being harmfully involved in a major armed conflict, which was simply unimaginable both for their ancestors and successors. The reality of the turn-of-the-century, however, was certainly not as 'happy' as this folk memory suggests. Contemporaries had to face several greater and smaller challenges, some inherited from the past and others brought on by modern times. One such issue was the controversial reputation of King Franz Joseph, which can be interpreted as the Achilles' heel of the Dualist establishment. The already mentioned new cult of personality of the Monarch that emerged after 1867 was built upon three main pillars.[242]

(1) The "unfortunate events of 1848-1849" were explained through the activity of some "vicious" counsellors who probably misled the "young and inexperienced" Monarch at the time. The same applied to the era of Neo-absolutism, which was now also described as a "troubled period", assailed by numerous wars and foreign policy turmoil that prevented Franz Joseph from focusing on internal issues such as the Hungarian question. Those critical points that were simply impossible to explain away, such as the execution of the Hungarian generals in Arad, were rather passed over in silence.

(2) The Compromise of 1867 was interpreted and propagated as a tremendous personal achievement by the Monarch, who had not only recognized the Hungarian national movement but taken a leading role in it. In this regard, Franz Joseph's wife Queen Elizabeth (Sisi) also played a crucial role.[243] Her flawless personality and alleged friendship with the Hungarians

[241] SZÉKELY, TAMÁS: *A kiegyezés mint biztonsági játszma. A dualizmus kora biztonságtörténeti perspektívából* [Compromise as Security Issue. The Age of Dualism from the Perspectives of Historical Security Research], in: *Századok, 155* (2021), 1, pp. 5-36.; See also: SZÉKELY – CSERNUS-LUKÁCS: *Securing Own Position*, pp. 85-120.

[242] FÓNAGY, ZOLTÁN: *Ferenc József és a kortárs magyar közvélemény* [Franz Joseph and the Contemporary Hungarian Public Opinion], in: FÓNAGY: A véreskezű kamasztól Ferenc Jóskáig, pp. 32-41.

[243] For the Sisi cult in Hungary, see: FREIFELD, ALICE: *Empress Elizabeth as Hungarian Queen, in:* COLE, LAURENCE – UNOWSKY, DANIEL L. (eds.): The Limits of Loyalty. Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and

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did contribute to the Habsburg-Hungarian reconciliation process and after the Compromise it enabled the cult-makers massively to increase the popularity of the Habsburg dynasty in Hungary.[244] As of 1867, the birthdays and different anniversaries (coronation, marriage, etc.) of the royal family members, and especially those of the King and Queen, were widely celebrated across the country.[245] A vast number of pro-Habsburg books, poems, albums, postcards, paintings, statues, and monuments were created and distributed or showcased among the citizens as artists received state sponsorship to contribute to the great cause.[246]

(3) The 67-er Hungarian governments used every possible political and legal means to strengthen the Habsburg-Hungarian reconciliation process. For example, as in other Monarchies, the criminal code of the dualist era (Act V of 1878 known as the "Csemegi code") punished any kind of anti-monarchist activity or propaganda with up to 3 years imprisonment. The cabinet members and other high-ranking officials were directly involved in the cult-making process, since praising the King and the royal family became part of their every-day activity. It was not only the National Assembly which gave a home to pro-Franz Joseph speeches and celebrations, but also the mezzo and micro levels of state administration. The 67-er county and city leaders and representatives also felt it their duty to promote the new political system and the "most constitutional king".[247]

The reconciliation between the dynasty and the nation, however, remained a difficult and slow process which experienced several setbacks because both sides remained angry at the other over past events.[248] Even count Gyula Andrássy, the first dualist era Hungarian Prime

State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy, New York – Oxford, 2007, pp. 225-256.; SZAPOR, JUDIT: *From "Guardian Angel of Hungary" to the "Sissi Look-Alike Contest": The Making and Remaking of the Cult of Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary"* , in: SCHWARTZ, AGATHA (ed.): Gender and Modernity in Central Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Its Legacy, Ottawa, 2010, pp. 235-250.; GERŐ, ANDRÁS: *Az Erzsébet-kultusz* [The Cult of Elizabeth], in: Rácz, ÁRPÁD (ed.): Erzsébet, a magyarok királynéja [Elizabeth, Queen of the Hungarians], Budapest, 2001, pp. 132–141.

[244] In fact, the Empress of Austria and soon-to-be Queen of Hungary left behind the role of "accessory" at the side of her husband already during the making of the Compromise. VÉR, ESZTER VIRÁG: *Újraértelmezett szerepvállalások avagy Erzsébet császárné alak-változásai 1866-ban* [Roles Reinterpreted or Empress Elisabeth's Metamorphosis in 1866], in: Aetas, (27) 2012, 1, pp. 83-104.; VÉR, ESZTER VIRÁG: *Erzsébet császárné Magyarországon 1866 nyarán: fogadtatás, emlékezet, mítosz* [Empress Elizabeth in Hungary in the Summer of 1866: Reception, Memory, Myth], in: Történelmi Szemle, (65) 2023, 1, pp. 43-64.

[245] Very similar cult-making tendencies took place in Cisleithania, too: UNOWSKY, DANIEL: *Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848-1916*, West Lafayette, 2005, pp. 164-174.

[246] The school festivities also played an important role in the nation-building efforts of Dualist era Hungary: VON PUTTKAMMER, JOACHIM: *Alltägliche Inszenierungen. Kirchliche und nationale Schulfeste in Ungarn 1867-1914*, in: WESSEL, MARTIN SCHULZE (ed.): Die Nationalisierung der Religion und die Sakralisierung der Nation im östlichen Europa, Stuttgart, 2006, pp. 141–152.

[247] BERTÉNYI: *Ferenc József, a „legalkotmányosabb magyar király*, pp. 265-311.

[248] Learn more: CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *The Symbolic World of 1867: Self-representation of the Dual Monarchy in Hungary*, in: GYÁNI (ed.): The Creation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, pp. 39-69.; FREIFELD: *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary,* pp. 225-256.

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Minister (1867-1871) and later Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary (1871-1879), was sentenced to death in his absence and hanged in effigy on 21 September 1851 for his role in the events of 1848-1849.[249] How could one expect the ordinary people who fought in the war for independence to become all at once the most unquestionably loyal subjects of the Habsburgs? In an effort to ease the tensions, the first gesture was made by Franz Joseph and Elizabeth who, after the coronation ceremony followed Deák's advice and donated 100.000 forints to the veterans of the 1848-1849 war. In response, the 67-er Hungarian elites attempted carefully and slowly to re-interpret some aspects of the history of the war, suggesting that it had not been such a directly anti-Habsburg and anti-Austrian uprising as many remembered. PM Kálmán Tisza once even used the term "civil war" in a speech in the Parliament in 1882, causing outrage not only among 48-er opposition MEPs but also his own liberal party members.[250]

One of the many symbolic issues for the Hungarian nationalists remained the statue of Heinrich Hentzi in Buda castle. It was erected in 1852 to commemorate the Austrian general and his 420 soldiers who died at the hands of the Hungarian troops during the siege of Buda in April 1849. From the Hungarian point of view, Hentzi committed war crimes during the siege when he took many innocent lives in the bombardment of the city of Pest on the opposite side of Danube. The competing soldiers, or more precisely their memories, clashed again in 1892, when PM Gyula Szapáry came up with the idea of erecting a Hungarian monument close to the Hentzi statue. Franz Joseph supported the plan to commemorate the victims from both sides jointly, in the presence of Hungarian honvéd veterans and Austrian officers, while a military orchestra would play both the Hungarian national anthem and the Austrian imperial anthem "Gott erhalte". However, the 48-er political forces combined with the veterans' associations and systematically and successfully sabotaged the initiative, forcing the government to move the Hentzi statue from Buda castle to the garden of a military academy in Budapest.[251]

Like the siege of Buda Castle, the April Laws were also considered a moment of national significance during the 1848-1849 events. Ferenc Kossuth, son of Lajos Kossuth and a prominent figure in the 48-er opposition party, proposed in 1897 to declare the day of the revolution (15 March) a national holiday.[252] The idea appealed to the Hungarian public, but

[249] KOZÁRI: *Andrássy Gyula*, pp. 29-41.
[250] CIEGER: *1867 szimbolikus világa,* pp. 33-36.
[251] For the controversial role of the veterans' associations in late 19th century Hungary with special focus on Vas County in Western Hungary, see: TANGL, BALÁZS: *Military Veterans' Associations in the Kingdom of Hungary (1868–1914)*, in: The Hungarian Historical Review, (11) 2022, 1, pp. 71–104.
[252] FREIFELD, ALICE: *The Cult of March 15: Sustaining the Hungarian Myth of Revolution, 1849–1999*, in: BUCUR, MARIA – WINGFIELD, NANCY M. (eds.): Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present, West Lafayette, 2001, pp. 255-285.

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would have meant giving offence to Franz Joseph, and so PM Dezső Bánffy had to find the golden mean.[253] Instead of 15 March, the cabinet declared 11 April a national holiday, because King Ferdinand V had sanctioned the April Laws on this day in 1848. Furthermore, the cabinet connected the remembrance with the 50th anniversary of Franz Joseph's succession to the Austrian (but not the Hungarian!) throne, which would obviously be widely celebrated throughout the Habsburg Monarchy in 1898. In spite of Bánffy's astute manoeuvring, 15 March remained the real national holiday in the eyes of the public.[254]

Mourning ceremonies for national heroes also caused headaches to the 67-er elites and to the King. Franz Joseph, for example, stubbornly refused to rehabilitate count Lajos Batthyány in spite of his efforts to avoid military conflict with Austria in 1848. The reburial of Hungary's first Prime Minister, executed in Pest on 6 October 1849, was therefore organized by the Pest city council without any great ceremony, and high ranking state officials were strongly recommended to pay their tribute only as private individuals. Franz Joseph remained even stricter in the case of his arch-enemy, Lajos Kossuth. The leading figure of modern Hungarian nationalism died in 1894 in Turin, Italy. He was still so popular in his homeland that the funeral would have been unimaginable elsewhere than Budapest. However, the King forbade any kind of official state mourning ceremony and even determined the itinerary for the transportation of Kossuth's coffin from Turin to Budapest. In spite of the rigorous controls, thousands of Hungarians turned out on the streets of the capital in order to escort Kossuth on his last journey.

Franz Joseph later showed much more empathy with an enemy of his ancestors when the reburial of Ferenc Rákóczi (1676-1735) was put on the agenda. The leader of the Hungarian uprising against the Habsburgs in 1703-1711 was rehabilitated by the Parliament in 1906. Expressing his royal wish to come to terms with the past, Franz Joseph approved the act and gave his permission to transport Rákóczi's mortal remains back to his homeland. Rákóczi had died in exile in Turkey in 1735 and was re-buried in the city of Kassa (today Košice, Slovakia) in the Saint Elizabeth Cathedral on 29 October 1906.[255] This more than symbolic event reveals a turning point in Franz Joseph's relations with his Hungarian subjects. Although competing interpretations of the past remained a neuralgic point in terms of policies of memorialization, his reputation significantly improved around the turn of the century. The King himself grew old, and even got a nickname "Ferencjóska" (literal translation: "Francis-Joe") in Hungarian

[253] For main trends in Hungarian domestic politics in the time of the Bánffy administration, see: GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora I.*, pp. 336-354.
[254] CIEGER: *1867 szimbolikus világa*, pp. 37-39.
[255] IBID., pp. 41-48.

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folklore. He outlived most of his own generation by many years, including those who had caused him many sleepless nights in the previous century.

Furthermore, Hungary went through an outstanding economic and social development between 1867 and 1914. The positive aspects of modernization, namely the political stability, the social progress, the economic prosperity and above all the sense of security in various spheres of everyday life all attached to Franz Joseph's name. All this culminated, however, in a rather absurd phenomenon in which the King's personality became commercialized in a form of banal nationalism. Even contemporaries observed and lamented the schizophrenic aspects of the national identity of the great number of ordinary people who hung Franz Joseph's picture next to Lajos Kossuth's in their homes.[256]

[256] FÓNAGY: *Ferenc József és a kortárs magyar közvélemény*, pp. 42-47.

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III. Contested Self-Governance: "County Question" as Security Issue

3.1 Counties or Region: Did Western Hungary as a Region Ever Exist?

Using the attribute 'historical' with regard to Western Hungary is of crucial importance, since the region has been divided for one hundred years now between Austria and Hungary, two of the many successor states of the former Habsburg Empire. Historically, however, the entire region constituted the western border area of the Kingdom of Hungary, which is known in original sources also as the 'Lands of the Holy Crown' or 'Transleithania'. Indeed, not only does the term "Burgenland", the name of the youngest Austrian land, sound ahistorical regarding events prior the early 1920s, but to some extent so does even "Western Hungary", which had at best a vague geographical meaning over the course of the centuries. Before undertaking a deeper examination into the history of the region around the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, it is necessary to come up with a historical definition of Western Hungary. In this subchapter, therefore, we take a look at the historical geography and demography of the region that determined the basic contextual framework of the events and developments that took place in the period under consideration.

From a geographical point of view, historical Western Hungary can be defined as a territory which possessed more or less natural boundaries. Its western border clearly coincided with the feet of the most eastern fringes of the Alps. The eastern boundary of the region could be marked with the river Rába/*Raab*, with the proviso that both banks of the river should be considered as parts of Western Hungary. With its source in Styra, Austria, the river Rába flows east and breaks into the Pannonian basin through the southern part of Western Hungary, but eventually turns rather northeast to conclude its nearly 300 km-long journey by reaching the river Danube at the city of Győr/*Raab*, in northern Transdanubia. Consequently, the northern border of historical Western Hungary is the river Danube itself, which means that the territory located between the two rivers (Rába and Danube) and the Alps roughly constitutes the area that can be demarcated as Western Hungary. The geographical boundaries of the region in the South are less tangible and more problematic, as a certain area between the river Rába and the river Mura should be also considered as part of historical Western Hungary. As for the main geographical patterns of the region, the landscape is rather varied, as one can find smaller and bigger mountains as well as a number of hills and plains. Generally speaking, the more western areas, which are closer to the Alps, are the higher and more rugged in terms of surface and height above sea level, whereas the more central and eastern areas of the region are dominated

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by the lowlands of Pannonia.[257] The former were known primarily as the home for forestry and animal husbandry, while the latter were famous for extensive agricultural production due to the good quality of the soil in most parts of the region.[258]

It is noteworthy that Western Hungary as a region had quite a good reputation in viniculture and wine-making, which contributed massively to the region's economy and trade over the centuries.[259] Apart from some specific places, such as the Brennberg mines near Sopron, Western Hungary had limited mining resources, and thus heavy industry was nearly non-existent in the region before the end of the nineteenth century.[260] Despite being rich in rivers and streams, the region is the home of just a single large lake: the Fertő-tó/*Neusiedler See*.[261] The surface of the lake normally covers more than 300 square kilometers, but it has always been a very shallow and swampy lake, which made both fishing and sailing quite a challenge in past centuries. What is even more interesting is that the lake has dried out and disappeared completely several times during its history, most recently in 1866, just before the Austro-Hungarian Compromise. The local elites of the early Dualist era even considered building a new country road, because the locals had begun commuting regularly across the former lake bed. Moreover, the neighboring Moson and Sopron counties would have happily

[257] On the general historical geography of Hungary, including the Western periphery, see: FRISNYÁK, SÁNDOR: *Magyarország történeti földrajza* [Historical Geography of Hungary], Budapest, 1990; FRISNYÁK, SÁNDOR (ed.): *A Kárpát-medence történeti földrajza* [Historical Geography of the Carpathian Basin], Nyíregyháza, 1996; BELUSZKY, PÁL: *Magyarország történeti földrajza* 1–2 [Historical Geography of Hungary 1-2], Budapest–Pécs, 2005–2008; BAK, BORBÁLA: *Magyarország történeti topográfiája a honfoglalástól* 1950-ig [Historical Topography of Hungary from the 'Conquest of the Homeland' until 1950], Budapest, 1997; For today's Burgenland, see: BURGHARDT, ANDREW FRANK: *The Political Geography of Burgenland*, Volumes I-II, Madison, 1958. For the historical topography of the Western Hungarian cities of Sopron and Kőszeg, both in English and Hungarian, see: Sopron (*Magyar Várostörténeti Atlasz* 1. / Hungarian Atlas of Historic Towns No. 1), pp. 5–55.; and Kőszeg (*Magyar Várostörténeti Atlasz* 6. / Hungarian Atlas of Historic Towns No. 6), pp. 7–48.

[258] For the details on agriculture and forestry as leading sectors of regional economy, see the contemporary county monographs: MAJOR, PÁL: *Moson megye monographiaja I. füzet, II. rész,* [Monography of Moson County, Volume One, Part Two], Magyaróvár [today: Mosonmagyaróvár], 1878, pp. 135-188.; ÉHEN, GYULA: *Vas megye közgazdasági leírása,* [Economic Description of Vas County], Budapest, 1905.; SZIKLAY, JÁNOS – BOROVSZKY, SAMU (eds.): Magyarország vármegyéi és városai: Vasvármegye [Counties and Cities of Hungary: Vas County], Budapest, 1898, pp. 412-431.

[259] The four free royal cities of the region were especially known for their wine-production and trade: see: BARISKA, ISTVÁN: Kőszeg bortermelése a 13–18. században [The Wine-Production of Kőszeg in the 13–18th centuries], in: MAYER –TILCSIK [eds.]: *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei* No. 1., 2004, pp. 15–29; PRICKLER, HARALD: *Burgenlands Städte und Märkte, Österreichisches Städtebuch: Die Städte Burgenlandes*, Wien, 1970., p. 23.

[260] Contemporaries also recognized how unique the Brennberg mines were in the Western Hungarian landscape: *Reise durch die Leitha-Gegend. I. Brennberg. Kohlenlager,* in: Das Vaterland, Morgenblatt, Nr. 234/1870 (XI. Jahrgang), 26 August 1870, p. 1.

[261] BÉKESI, SÁNDOR: *Verklärt und verachtet. Wahrnehmungsgeschichte einer Landschaft: Der Neusiedler See* (Historisch-Anthropologische Studien, Band 20), Frankfurt am Main, 2007; BÉKESI, SÁNDOR: "Meer der Wiener": Der Neusiedler See. Zur Ausstellung des Wien Museums über die Geschichte einer Landschaft, in: *Wiener Geschichtsblätter*, 67 (2012), 4, pp. 307–340, BÉKESI, SÁNDOR: Fenséges pocsolya: A Fertő. Egy táj kultúr- és szemlélettörténetéről [A Majestic Puddle: the Fertő. On the Cultural and Perceptional History of a Landscape], in : *Soproni Szemle*, 63 (2009), 2, pp. 185–202.

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agreed to share the new territories gained from the lake, but the water reappeared in 1870 and within a decade it was about 2-metres deep once again.[262]

From a historical perspective, Western Hungary can be defined as a region composed of the seven municipalities (in Hungarian: *törvényhatóság*) of the Kingdom of Hungary that were located along the border with Austria (Cisleithania). Of these seven autonomous units, three were counties: *Vas vármegye* (In German: *Komitat Eisenburg*), *Sopron vármegye*/*Komitat Ödenburg* and *Moson vármegye*/*Komitat Wieselburg*. The other four municipalities were the so-called "free royal cities" of the region: *Sopron*/*Ödenburg*, *Kismarton*/*Eisenstadt* and *Ruszt*/*Rust* in Sopron county and *Kőszeg*/*Güns* in Vas county, all with significant German-speaking populations.[263] The region of Western Hungary is a specific area primarily because the western border of each of the three counties was officially an international border, but since Austria and Hungary constituted a dual monarchy between 1867 and 1918, this border should be considered rather a "weak" border than one of the "hard" variety typically imagined in case of two neighboring states.[264]

The complexity of the Austria-Hungary border and its impact on citizens is well-illustrated by the story of Ignác Feiglstock from the year 1884. Born in western Hungary, he was an optician of German origin who lived and worked in Vienna. In order to expand his business, Feiglstock was keen to be awarded a royal warrant, which was a prestigious honour for merchants who supplied goods or services to the royal court. However, Feiglstock was able to earn such honour not from the Viennese court but from the Romanian one; therefore, he needed a passport. Although he was based in Vienna, Feiglstock was born in the nearby village of *Lakompak*/*Lackenbach* in Sopron County, so he was considered not an Austrian citizen but a Hungarian one. Thus, he had to make a Hungarian passport application through the Sopron County administration that forwarded his request to the central government in Budapest. Since Romania was a foreign country, the case was also examined as a potential national security

[262]HALLER, JÁNOS: *Mosonvármegye történeti földrajza* [Historical Geography of Moson County], Mosonmagyaróvár, 1998, Reprint (original published in 1941), pp. 51–52.

[263] To some extent one also has to pay attention to the free royal city of Pozsony/Pressburg (today Bratislava, Slovakia) located just a stone's throw from the northern border of Moson County on the opposite bank of the Danube River. Unlike its parent county (Pozsony vármegye/Komitat Pressburg), the city of Pozsony was still in this period mostly German-speaking, and thus gravitated economically and culturally at least as much to Western Hungary and to the adjacent Austrian regions as to the northern, predominantly Slovak-speaking parts of the country. See: ORTVAY, TIVADAR: *Geschichte Der Stadt Pressburg. Herausgegeben Durch Die Pressburger Erste Sparkasse. Deutsche Ausgabe. Mit Illustrationen*, Etc. Dritter Band, republished by British Library, 2019.; KRIEGLEDER, WYNFRIED – SEIDLER, ANDREA – TANCER, JOSEPH (eds.): *Deutsche Sprache und Kultur, Literatur und Presse im Raum Pressburg*, Bremen, 2004.

[264] For the topic of border-crossing and migration between Cis- and Transleithania, see: STEIDL, ANNEMARIE: *On Many Routes: Internal, European, and Transatlantic Migration in the Late Habsburg Empire*, West Lafayette, 2020, pp. 23-57.

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issue before the passport was authorized by the Prime Minister's Office. The bureaucratic process concluded only when the Hungarian Minister of Internal Affairs – in his letter to the head of Sopron County – referred to the King's permission for Feiglstock to use the Romanian title in the territory of Austria-Hungary.[265]

The inverse of the term "pseudo border region" could be applied to western Hungary in the Era of Dualism, in that it appeared not to be a border region from an external perspective but in fact functioned as one.[266] Nonetheless, the proximity of the historical Austria-Hungary border had a great impact on the Western counties and cities, clearly distinguishing them from their more centrally located counterparts in Hungary. Although Vas, Sopron and Moson counties were traditionally in frequent contact with the neighbouring Austrian lands (Styria and Lower Austria) and with the imperial capital of Vienna, so far rather limited research has been carried out on the history of their common border.[267] After the Compromise of 1867, a precise demarcation was marked between Hungary and Austria, which caused difficulties at the local level. Since the two countries had never previously been separated by a modern, scientifically determined border, the status of some villages became a matter of dispute. Vas County, for instance, attempted to reclaim its 'historical' jurisdiction over the Styrian border villages of Sinnersdorf and Oberwaldbauern, which still belonged to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Szombathely, Hungary. At the same time, four villages on the Hungarian side (*Vörthegy*/*Wörtberg*, *Burgóhegy*/*Burgauberg*, *Vághegy*/*Hackerberg* and *Neudóhegy*/*Neudauberg*) remained part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Graz-Seckau (Austria).[268]

The geographical and historical definitions of Western Hungary mostly overlap with each other, but there are some areas which simply cannot be accommodated by their differing

[265] Source: Letter from Kálmán Tisza, as Royal Hungarian Minister of Internal Affairs, to Prince Pál Esterházy, Lord Lieutenant of Sopron county, 17 March 1884. MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai (1872–1944), IV/B/401/9, no. 86.; For the passport policies in Western Hungary of the previous era, see: HORVÁTH, GERGELY KRISZTIÁN: *Útlevélpolitika a rendi korszak végén. Moson vármegyei tapasztalatok* [Passport Policies at the End of the Early Modern Era. Experiences from Moson County], in: Regio, 13 (2005), 1, pp. 27-51.

[266] For a deeper understanding of the functioning of the internal borders within the Habsburg Monarchy, see: KOMLOSY, ANDREA: State, Regions, and Borders: Single Market Formation and Labor Migration in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1750-1918, in: *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, (27) 2004, 2, pp. 135–177.

[267] For more on the historical background, see: HORVÁTH, GERGELY KRISZTIÁN: *Bécs vonzásában. Az agrárpiacosodás feltételrendszere Moson vármegyében a 19. század első felében* [Attracted by Vienna. The Preconditions of the Agricultural Marketing in Moson County in the First Half of the 19th Century], Budapest, 2013.; GYŐRI, RÓBERT: *Bécs kapujában. Területi fejlettségi különbségek a Kisalföld déli részén a 20. század elején* [At the gates of Vienna. Territorial Differences in the Development of the Southern Part of the Kisalföld Region in the Beginning of the 20th Century], in: Korall, 7 (2006), 24-25, pp. 231-250.

[268] PÁL, FERENC: *A szombathelyi püspök joghatóságának kérdései 1867 és 1914 között* (The Questions of the Jurisdiction of the Bishop of Szombathely between 1867 and 1914), in: Vasi Szemle, 69 (2015), 3, pp. 335–341.

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criteria at the same time: for example, the right bank of the Rába River or the Mura micro-region. To come up with a proper definition remains difficult in addition because of the national perceptions of the region. From a traditional Austrian (German) perspective, the ethno-linguistic aspect is of crucial importance when it comes to Western Hungary.[269] In this sense, because of national differentiation, the region is narrowed down to "*Deutschwestungarn*", which in fact was the dominantly German-speaking western periphery of historical Western Hungary itself.[270] This perspective simply ignores basic geographical conditions and historical developments and, by creating and enforcing a distorted kind of "Burgenland narrative"[271], makes it difficult to properly understand the regional history of Western Hungary before the end of the First World War.[272]

At the same time, the traditional Hungarian point of view also prevents us from using a comprehensive regional approach, because it diametrically opposes the Austrian perspective. For the Hungarians, the political and administrative aspects are the most important evidence, and they suggest that Western Hungary existed only as a geographical region at best, and certainly not as a historical or political one.[273] Their explanation is twofold: on one hand, Western Hungary was always an integral part of the country, so its general history can be interpreted only in accordance with the national history. On the other hand, the region has never been a unified one, but has always been composed of the three counties and several cities

[269] BAUMGARTNER, GERHARD: *Die National Differenzierungsprozess in den ländlichen Gemeinden des südlichen Burgenlandes,* in: MORITSCH, ANDREAS: Vom Ethnos zu Nationalität. Der nationale Differenzierungsprozess am Beispiel ausgewählter Orte in Kärnten und Burgenland, Wien-München, 1991, pp. 93–155.

[270] This approach clearly manifested itself in the historical bibliography of the region: Allgemeine Bibliographie des Burgenlandes, IV. Teil Geschichte, Bearbeitet von Gottfried Franz Litschauer, Eisenstadt, 1959; In addition, one can discover similar tendencies in local history-writing of recent times: PERSCHY, JAKOB – SPERL, KARIN [eds.]: *Fokus Burgenland. Spektrum Landeskunde*, Eisenstadt, 2015.

[271] For the "geographical creation" of Burgenland, see: BURGHARDT, ANDREW FRANK: *Borderland: A Historical and Geographical Study of Burgenland, Austria*, Madison, 1962. Learn more: JANKÓ, FERENC: *From Borderland to Burgenland. Science, Geopolitics, Identity and the Making of a Region,* Budapest - Wien, 2024.

[272] Many Austrian historians even argue that a peculiar episode in the late medieval and early modern history of Western Hungary was some sort of historical forerunner of the birth of modern Burgenland. Between 1447 and 1647, in exchange for the return of the Holy Crown to Hungary, certain parts of the region were pledged to the Habsburg Emperor, who temporarily annexed them to Lower Austria. See: AULL, OTTO: *Die politische Beziehungen zwischen Österreich und Ungarn, in ihrer Auswirkung auf das Burgenland (bis 1918)*, in: Burgenland Heft 4-5, 1930, pp. 97–117; BRUNNER, OTTO: *Der burgenländische Raum zwischen Österreich und Ungarn 800–1848*, in: Burgenland-Landeskunde, Wien, 1951, pp. 245–302; ERNST, AUGUST: *Geschichte des Burgenlandes*, Wien, 1987, pp. 88–111. Among Hungarian historians, it was the former archivist of Kőszeg who investigated this controversial topic most recently: see BARISKA, ISTVÁN: *A Szent-Koronáért elzálogosított Nyugat-Magyarország 1447–1647* [Western Hungary pledged in exchange for the Holy Crown 1447–1647] (Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei No. 2.), Szombathely, 2007.

[273] The Hungarian historiography of Western Hungary primarily follows a strict county- or city-based approach. See, for example: HORVÁTH (eds.): *Fejezetek Győr, Moson, és Sopron Vármegyék közigazgatásának történetéből.*; or the series published by the Archives of Vas County under the title *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei*. Where Hungarian historians adopt a regional approach, they do so mostly in connection with the Burgenland question. See: BOTLIK: Nyugat-Magyarország sorsa 1918–1921; TÓTH: A nyugat-magyarországi kérdés 1922–1939.; TÓTH: *Két Anschluss között*., MURBER: *Grenzziehung zwischen Ver- und Entflechtungen.*

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already enumerated, so that when it comes to micro-history-writing, it should be practiced on the basis of administrative differentiation. This idea is also supported by the fact that the historical sources can be accessed only through the respective county and city archives, while they were produced in accordance with the very same logic. Nevertheless, the Hungarian perspective ignores the ethno-linguistic aspect, or at least downplays its historical significance, and thus denies that the Western Hungarian counties have much more in common than the geographical proximity of Austria and the presence of a German-speaking minority (in Moson County a majority) in their respective territories.[274]

The contradiction between the two rival national narratives[275] can be overcome only through a transnational and holistic approach[276], which enables us to work with a regional perspective undermined neither by ethno-linguistic nor by political-administrative shortcomings. This work intends to follow an approach which acknowledges that the three counties in Western Hungary do indeed have their own histories, which would remain unspeakable without Hungarian national history, yet have a shared regional history too, due to the so far underestimated impacts of the Austrian border, and the presence of German-speaking communities and their strong cultural influence in the region. If we picture the old empire of Austria-Hungary as a jigsaw puzzle, then the multi-ethnic Western Hungarian counties should be imagined as those oddly shaped interlocking and mosaic pieces that connected the two halves of the empire geographically as well as culturally. If there ever was a region of the Habsburg Monarchy which can be described for historical reasons as neither really Austrian nor typically Hungarian, but rather as Austro-Hungarian par excellence, then it must have been historical Western Hungary. In other words, if there was one place which remained the last stronghold of the Habsburgs, where the vision of "Austro-Hungarianism" – if such thing even existed at all – could have been realized for the long term, it must have been historical Western Hungary.[277]

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[274] For the case of Sopron, see: TÖRŐ, LÁSZLÓ DÁVID: *Határváros egy vitatott hovatartozású térségben. Történeti viták Sopron múltjáról a két világháború között* [Border City in a Contested Territory: Historical Controversies about Sopron (Ödenburg) between the Two World Wars], in: Világtörténet, (12) 2022, 2, pp. 325-344.

[275] Learn more: GERNOT, HEISS – VON KLIMÓ, ÁRPÁD – KOLÁŘ, PAVEL – KOVÁČ, DUŠAN: *Habsburg's Difficult Legacy: Comparing and Relating Austrian, Czech, Magyar and Slovak National Historical Master Narratives,* in: BERGER – LORENZ (eds.): The Contested Nation, pp. 367-404.

[276] On the impact of transnational history-writing, see: IRIYE, AKRIA: *The Rise of Global and Transnational History*, in: IRIYE, AKIRA: Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future, London, 2013, pp. 1–18.; Among Hungarian scholars, Gábor Gyáni challenges the national perspective while arguing for a transnational approach to the country's history. See: GYÁNI, GÁBOR: *Nemzeti vagy transznacionális történelem* [National or Transnational history], Budapest, 2018.

[277] It was probably not a coincidence that the most serious attempts to restore the Monarchy after its collapse at the end of the Great War were initiated twice from this very region in 1921. See: BROUCEK, PETER: *Karl I. (IV.), der politische Weg des letzten Herrschers der Donaumonarchie*, Wien-Köln-Weimar, 1997; ÁDÁM, MAGDA: *A két királypuccs és a kisantant* [Two Royal Coups d'état and the Little Entente], in: Történelmi Szemle (25) 1982, 4, pp. 665–713.

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When it comes to the social history of the region, researchers are in a rather favourable position. Five comprehensive censuses were carried out in Hungary during the period of the Dual Monarchy, in 1870, 1881, 1891, 1900 and 1910.[278] Although the methodologies and structures of these censuses were somewhat different, and in many cases highly controversial, they still enable us to reconstruct the main tendencies of social development throughout the era (see: Appendix, Chapter 8.1).[279] The most problematic census was the first one, because it did not involve any category referring to the ethno-linguistic affiliation or identity of the citizens. The lack of such a question was probably a result of a high-level political decision since the new administration preferred to emphasize the unity of the newly born "nation-state." To put it more strongly, the ruling elites simply feared publishing numbers that would have revealed how heterogeneous the country in fact was in terms of ethno-linguistic composition. Although ethnic identity remained uncategorized in the other censuses of the period, from 1881 onward they at least included some categories concerning citizens' "mother tongue" and "other spoken language(s)", which in most cases also reveal a lot about their ethnic background and national identity.[280] The biggest problem of the censuses remained that they ignored the phenomena of dual or multiple national identities, which meant every citizen had to choose one single language when asked about his or her mother tongue.[281]

[278] As the title shows, the first census was published in a bilingual (Hungarian and German) form: *A Magyar Korona Országaiban az 1870. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás eredményei a hasznos házi állatok kimutatásával együtt / Ergebnisse der in den Ländern der Ungarischen Krone am Anfang des Jahres 1870 Vollzogenen Volkszählung sammt nachweisung der nutzbaren Haustiere* [Results of the early 1870 census in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown including the registry of the useful domestic animals], published by M. Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal / Königl. Ungarische Statistische Bureau [Royal Hungarian Central Statistical Office (hereinafter KSH)], Pest, 1871. (hereinafter: *Census 1870*); *A Magyar Korona Országaiban az 1881. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás eredményei némely hasznos házi állatok kimutatásával együtt I-II. kötet* [Results of the Early 1881 Census in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown Including the Registry of Some useful Domestic Animals, Volume I and II], published by KSH, Budapest, 1882. (hereinafter: *Census 1881*); *A Magyar Korona Országaiban az 1891. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás eredményei,* [Results of the early 1891 census in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown], published by KSH, Budapest, 1893. (hereinafter: *Census 1891*); *A Magyar Korona Országainak 1900. évi népszámlálása* [The 1900 Census in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown, published by KSH, Budapest, 1902-1909. (hereinafter: *Census 1900*); *A Magyar Korona Országainak 1910. évi népszámlálása* [The 1910 Census in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown, published by KSH, Budapest, 1912-1920. (hereinafter: *Census 1910*)

[279] On the problematic aspects of the methodology and data management of the censuses, see: KÖVÉR, GYÖRGY: *Statisztikai asszimiláció Magyarországon 1880-1910* [Statistical Assimilation in Hungary 1880-1910], in: Századok, (150) 2006, 5, pp. 1221–1258.

[280] See: THIRRING, LAJOS: *Az 1869–1980. évi népszámlálások története és jellemzői, I. rész 1869–1910* [History and features of the censuses 1869-1980, Part 1, 1869-1910], KSH, Budapest, 1983.

[281] In case of Moson County in Western Hungary, for instance, bilingualism was an everyday experience both among the German and the Hungarian part of the population. See: FARAGÓ, TAMÁS: *Népességnövekedés – asszimiláció – vándorlás. (Adatok a Nyugat-Dunántúl társadalomtörténetéhez az első világháború előtt)* [Population Growth – Assimilation – Migration (Data for the Social History of Western Hungary before the First World War], in Századvég, (12) 1999, Spring edition, pp. 33–57.

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In spite of these shortcomings, one can still learn a lot from the 1870 census. At the time Western Hungary had altogether 637,246 inhabitants of which 75,486 persons lived in Moson County, 230,158 in Sopron County and 331,602 in Vas County. As for the four free royal cities of the region themselves, Sopron had 16,699 inhabitants, Kőszeg 5,989, while Kismarton and Ruszt had only 2,343 and 1,260 respectively.[282] These numbers clearly show that the rate of urbanization in the region was rather low at the beginning of the era. Consequently, being a citizen of a city in the late 1860s and early 1870s was still not seen as an opportunity for the many, but rather as a privilege of the few. This medieval and early-modern tradition, however, was soon to be questioned in the era of bourgeoisification, modernization and nationalism, all of which boosted urbanization in Western Hungary too.[283] Following the main demographic tendency of the era, the population of Western Hungary grew significantly in the succeeding decades.[284] In 1910, the entire region had altogether 813,782 inhabitants.[285] This represents a 27.7 per cent regional increase, which is slightly lower than the average population growth (34.8 per cent) of Transleithania between 1870 and 1910.[286]

As for the religious composition of society in Western Hungary, the vast majority at the time of the 1870 census was Roman Catholic (500,584), which in terms of proportion represents a far higher proportion than among the national population (79.2 per cent vs 48.7 per cent). They were followed by the strong minority of Lutherans (107,838), who in Western Hungary also exceeded their national proportion (17 per cent versus 7.2 per cent). The proportion of the Calvinists in Western Hungary, however, was far lower than at the national level (1.6 per cent versus 13.1 per cent). The small Jewish community (18,582) formed only 2.9 per cent of the inhabitants in Western Hungary, against 3.6 per cent of Hungary's population.[287] As for the general tendencies of the era, the number of Catholics in Western Hungary rose to 653,764 (80.3 per cent) while the number of Protestants increased to 140,093 (17.2 per cent) by 1910. As for the Jewry, their number increased to 22,965 by 1910 (2.8 per cent). All in all, it is correct

[282] *Census 1870*, pp. 12–15.
[283] DEÁK, ERNŐ: *Das Städtewesen der Länder der ungarischen Krone* (1780–1918). 1. Teil: Allgemeine Bestimmung der Städte und der städtischen Siedlungen. 2 Teil: Ausgewählte Materialien zum Städtewesen (Teilbd 1: A Königliche Freistädte - Munizipalstädte; Teilbd 2: B Privilegierte Städte und Marktflecken - Städte mit geordnetem Magistrat; C Kroatien - Slavonien), Wien, 1979–1989.
[284] KATUS, LÁSZLÓ: *A demográfiai átmenet kérdései Magyarországon a 19. században* [Questions of the demographic transition in Hungary in the 19th century], in: Történelmi Szemle, (23) 1980, 2, pp. 270–289.
[285] *Census 1881*, Part I, p. 6.; *Census 1891*, Part I, General Report Általános jelentés), p. 32.; *Census 1900*, Part I, General Report (Általános jelentés), p. 22.; *Census 1910*, Part I, General Report (Általános jelentés), p. 25.
[286] *Census 1870*, p. 5.; *Census 1910*, Part I, General Report (Általános jelentés), p. 1.
[287] *Census* 1870, pp. 52–54. and 58–61.

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to say that the religious-confessional background of the society in Western Hungary remained more-or-less unchanged throughout the Dualist era.[288]

What is striking is that more than a quarter of the Lutherans in Sopron County lived in the city of Sopron itself. This Lutheran community, which made up nearly half of the city's population, was almost entirely German-speaking. They still preserved "*Ödenburg*" as one of the main centres of German and Protestant culture in Hungary at the time.[289] In Vas County, however, the Lutherans included not only German "*bürgers*" but also half of the Slovene-speaking community who lived in the southern Mura region. In contrast, the Calvinists of Vas County – as in Hungary in general – were exclusively Hungarian-speakers.

The 1870 census also indicated the very basic intellectual skills of the population. In the three counties of Western Hungary altogether, 253,793 citizens declared complete illiteracy in Western Hungary around 1870, which amounted to 39.8 per cent of the population.[290] The detailed numbers show, there was no significant gender gap in terms of illiteracy in Western Hungary. The most striking difference between men and women was the higher proportion of the latter in the 'able to read but not write' category. This can be explained perhaps, through the fact that at the time more men than women attended school, which forced a great number of women to learn to read autodidactically, which is much more difficult to do when it comes to writing. Nevertheless, fighting illiteracy was one enormous challenge of the period, and was widely seen as a prerequisite of further modernization. The ruling elites were perfectly aware that a huge proportion of the (rural) population lacked basic reading and writing skills, regardless of their ethnic identity and gender. Although the elementary level of the public school system was based on the locally spoken languages, it also provided an opportunity to teach non-Hungarian children the official language of the state, and thus paved the road to the controversial "Magyarization" policies.[291] This is the reason why education played such a key role in the nation(-state)-building efforts of Dualist-era Hungary.[292]

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[288] *Census 1910*, Part I, General Report (Általános jelentés), p. 43.

[289] From contemporary sources, see: MÜLLER, MATHIAS: *Geschichte des evangelischen Gymnasiums zu Ödenburg*, Sopron, 1857; As for historical studies, see: NÉMETH, ILDIKÓ: *Sopron középfokú és középszintű iskolái a 19. Században* [Medium level schools of Sopron in the 19th century], Sopron, 2005, pp. 31–44.; MAAR, GRETE: *Einführung in die Geschichte der westungarischen Stadt Scarbantia - Ödenburg - Sopron,* Wien, 2000, pp. 131-149.; On the significance and influence of German language and culture in historical Western Hungary, see: KRIEGLEDER, WYNFRIED – SEIDLER, ANDREA (eds.): *Deutsche Sprache und Kultur, Literatur und Presse in Westungarn / Burgenland,* Bremen, 2004.

[290] *Census 1870*, pp. 236–239.

[291] For the case of Sopron, see: MAAR: *Einführung in die Geschichte der westungarischen Stadt Scarbantia - Ödenburg - Sopron,* pp. 157-166.

[292] LAJTAI L., LÁSZLÓ: *Tannyelvszabályozás és magyarnyelv-oktatás az 1918. Előtti hazai alsó- és középszintű iskolákban a nemzetépítések tükrében* [Regulation of the Language of Education and Teaching of the Hungarian Language in the Lower and Medium Level of Schools in Hungary before 1918 from the Perspective of Nation-

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If we are speaking about Hungary in a narrower sense (without Transylvania, Croatia-Slavonia and the Military Frontier), the rate of illiteracy around the year of 1869 ran at 58.16 per cent. From a Western Hungarian perspective, the numbers were much better than the national average. Of the seventy-eight counties and other types of territorial units in Hungary and Transylvania, Moson County and Sopron County had the lowest rates of illiteracy (16.88 and 22.16 per cent respectively), whereas Vas County was ranked fifteenth with 34.96 per cent of its population being illiterate. As for the seventy-nine cities with municipal rank, it was three out of the four Western Hungarian free royal cities that performed best: Kőszeg came first with 15.08 per cent, followed closely by Kismarton (17.83 per cent) and Sopron (18.38 per cent) with Ruszt securing the seventh position (24.56 per cent).[293]

Based on these official statistics, it is no exaggeration to say that by the standards of the time Western Hungary was one of the better educated and more culturally developed regions of Transleithania at the beginning of the Dualist era. Of course, it is difficult to draw direct conclusions regarding the cultural life of a region from rates of illiteracy, yet a lower rate in this respect evidently betokens a series of positive effects. Generally speaking, the more people are able to read, the more probable it is that they had attended some sort of school as children, the more likely they would be to read newspapers and books as adults, and the more likely they would be to possess the intellectual potential to participate in public life as citizens. In this respect, the people of Western Hungary experienced a huge step forward in the era of Dualism. In spite of the constantly growing population, the number of those completely illiterate decreased to 224,389 by 1910, that amounted to only 27.6 per cent of the population, which in comparison to the 40.1 per cent measured in 1870 constitutes a massive 12.5 per cent decrease.[294]

The 1870 census also provided valuable information on the occupations of the population. In Western Hungary altogether, the 1870 census registered 6,764 intellectuals, 73,079 landowners and tenants, 152,497 farmworkers, 33,832 industrial and handicraft workers, and 5,962 employees in the sector of trade and services.[295] If we take landowners, tenants and farmworkers as one single sectoral group, we can see that one third of Transleithania's entire population was occupied in the farming sector in the year of 1869. In

building], in: NAGY, NOÉMI: *Nemzetiségi-nyelvi szuverenitás a hosszú 19. században*, [Ethno-lingual Sovereignty in the Long 19th Century], Budapest, 2020, pp. 130–154.; Learn more: VON PUTTKAMMER, JOACHIM: *Schulalltag und nationale Integration in Ungarn, Slowaken, Rumänen und Siebenbürger Sachsen in der Auseinandersetzung mit der ungarischen Staatsidee 1867-1914*, Berlin – München – Boston, 2003.

[293] *Census 1870*, pp. 228–232.

[294] *Census 1910*, Part I, General Report (Általános jelentés), p. 43.

[295] *Census 1870*, pp. 264–268.

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this regard, Western Hungary occupied a somewhat higher than average position in national comparison. According to the 1910 census, as many as 502,088 people worked in agriculture in the three counties of Western Hungary. At the same time, 211,605 were employed by the industrial and trade sector, which means that their number had multiplied since 1870. The same goes for the intellectuals, whose number had risen threefold to 22,227 by 1910.[296]

Taking all this into account it is obvious that the region remained predominantly agricultural throughout the period, and by far the largest social group, albeit one whose primacy was lessening, was the peasantry. At the same time, new social groups were emerging by the turn of the century as a result of increasing bourgeoisification (in the notion of German "Verbürgerlichung", in Hungarian: "polgárosodás"), industrialization and modernization.[297] The appearance of the modern bourgeoisie and industrial workers on the social scene, and their increasing share of the population within the society brought on new security challenges all over the country, including in Western Hungary.[298]

What the censuses did not reveal is that in the period of Austro-Hungarian dualism wealthy aristocratic families still occupied the peak of an already transforming but still super-hierarchical class-society.[299] At the beginning of the era, economic life centered primarily around their business operations as they owned enormous farmlands and a great number of other properties all over Hungary.[300] In Western Hungary, examples of such families were, for

[296] As the precise categories regarding employment in the 1870 and 1910 censuses did not coincide exactly, it is hard to make a precise calculation. *Census 1910*, Part II, Detailed reports (Részletes kimutatások), Moson County: pp. 48–52., Sopron County: pp. 74–90, Vas County: pp. 100–138.

[297] For the civic transformation of the peasantry, see: KÓSA, LÁSZLÓ: *Paraszti polgárosulás és a népi kultúra táji megoszlása Magyarországon [Bourgeoisification of the Peasantry and Geography of Folklore in Hungary 1880-1920], 1880-1920*, Budapest, 1998.; On the dilemmas of modernization of Hungary in longue durée perspective, see: GYIMESI, SÁNDOR: *Utunk Európába: A magyar és az európai gazdaság viszonya a honfoglalástól a 20. század elejéig* [Our Way to Europe: Relations between the Hungarian and European Economy from the Hungarian Conquest to the 20th Century, Budapest, 1999.

[298] On the social history of Hungary in general throughout the era, see: KÖVÉR, GYÖRGY: *Inactive Transformation: Social History of Hungary from the Reform Era to World War I,* in: GYÁNI, GÁBOR – KÖVÉR, GYÖRGY – VALUCH, TIBOR (eds.): Social history of Hungary from the Reform Era to the End of the Twentieth Century, New York, 2004, pp. 3-270.; On the two main types of turn-of-the-century Hungarian bourgeoisie, see: HALMOS, KÁROLY: *Das Besitz- und Bildungsbürgertum in Ungarn*; in: RUMPLER – URBANITSCH (eds.): Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, Band IX, Wien, 2010, pp. 909-950.; For the history of labour movements in Western Hungary, see: BEDÉCS, GYULA: *Munkásmozgalom Magyaróvárott és Mosonban 1900-1918* [Labour Movement in Magyaróvár and in Moson County 1900-1918], in: GECSÉNYI, LAJOS (ed.): Tanulmányok Mosonmagyaróvár és vidéke történetéhez [Studies on the History of Mosomagyaróvár and its Area], Győr, 1979, pp. 163-183.; HORVÁTH, ZOLTÁN (ed.): *Sopron és a megye múltja egykorú iratok tükrében* [The Past of Sopron and the County in the Mirror of Contemporary Documents], Sopron, 1964, pp. 121-148.

[299] PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ: *The Aristocracy, the Gentry and Their Parliamentary Tradition in Nineteenth-Century Hungary*, in: LOJKÓ (ed.): *Hungary's Long 19th Century. Collected studies by PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ*, pp. 305–342.

[300] BARISKA, ISTVÁN: *Die Entwicklung des großen batthyányschen Bestizkomplexes im Komitat Vas/Eisenburg im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, in: KROPF, RUDOLF (ed.): Die Familie Batthyány. Ein österreichisch-ungarisches Magnatengeschlecht vom Ende des Mittelalters bis zur Gegenwart. Band 2, Eisenstadt, 2014, pp. 15-26.

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instance, the different branches of the Battyhány[301], Zichy and Széchenyi families, but most notably the famous Esterházy family, which had held the hereditary office of Lord-Lieutenant (in Hungarian: örökös főispán) of Sopron County since the early seventeenth century.[302] The political life of the region, however, was practiced mostly in the county assemblies that were dominated by the local middle- and lower nobility, namely the Hungarian-speaking landowners.[303] Since many of the important offices were filled via election at the county assembly, the gentry also secured its positions in the county administration.[304]

When it comes to the ethno-linguistic background of Western Hungary in the Dualist era, one can gather the first official statistics only from the 1881 census. Moson County was the only county in Hungary in the Dualist period where Germans formed an absolute majority. Out of county's entire population (81,370) in 1881, 54,975 (67.6 per cent) belonged to the German-speaking, 12,991 (16 per cent) to the Hungarian-speaking community, and there were also 8,464 Croatian-speakers.[305] Nevertheless, it was the Hungarian community which was able to grow substantially in the succeeding decades. In 1910, Moson County had as many as 94,479 inhabitants (22.3 per cent more than in 1870) of whom 33,006 (34,9 per cent) were Hungarian-speakers and 51,997 (55 per cent) German-speakers. These numbers show that although the native Germans could preserve their absolute majority, their number stagnated at best in a county of growing population, which meant that the gap between the German majority and Hungarian minority slowly but surely narrowed between 1870 and 1910. Meanwhile, the number of the Croatian-speaking community in Moson County remained at around 8,000 throughout the whole period.[306]

The ethno-demographic development of Sopron County showed very similar tendencies to that of Moson County. All in all, the numbers reveal that the German-Hungarian linguistic border in Western Hungary simply cut Sopron County into two halves, a more Hungarian and

[301] WIESFLECKER, PETER: *Die Familie Batthyány und der Wiener Hof im Zeitalter Kaiser Franz Josephs*, in: KROPF (ed.): Die Familie Batthyány, pp. 357-384.
[302] The family's historic attachment to Sopron County was mentioned several times at the inauguration ceremony of the new Lord-Lieutenant Prince Pál Esterházy on 27–28 Oct. 1872. For further details see: Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár (hereinafter: MNL), Győr-Moson-Sopron Vármegye (hereinafter: GY-M-S Vm.) Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/54, no. 405.
[303] Their political influence was ensured by the so-called virilist system. In the Era of Dualism, half of the seats in county assemblies were reserved for the highest tax-payers. For a list of the highest taxpayers in Sopron County on 10 November 1871 see MNL GY-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai (1867–1871), IV/251/3, no. 118.
[304] For the details of the county administrations in Western Hungary, see the contemporary county monographs: BERÉNYI, PÁL: *Sopron megye* [Sopron County], Budapest, 1895, pp. 85-100.; MAJOR, PÁL: *Moson megye monographiaja II. füzet,* [Monography of Moson County, Volume Two], Magyaróvár [today: Mosonmagyaróvár], 1886, pp. 38-58.; SZIKLAY – BOROVSZKY (eds.): Magyarország vármegyéi és városai: Vasvármegye, pp. 250-278.
[305] *Census 1881*, Part II, p. 177.
[306] *Census 1910*, Part I, Section I: General report (Általános jelentés), p. 35.

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a more Germanic one, along a North-Easterly line. The centrally located Sopron district and the city of Sopron, however, remained a peculiar mixture of the two. At the time of the 1881 census, the population of Sopron County was 245,787, of whom 109,798 (44.7 per cent) were Hungarian-speakers, 97,677 (39.7 per cent) German-speakers, and 21,691 (8.8 per cent) Croatian-speakers. By the time of the 1910 census, the number of Hungarian-speakers was 136,616 (48.2 per cent), as opposed to the 108,446 (38.3 per cent) German-speakers and 31,317 (11 per cent) Croatian-speakers.[307] The proportion of Hungarian-speakers rose step by step throughout the whole period, partly because of natural population growth and partly also at the expense of the German-speaking community (assimilation). The expansion of the Hungarian community did not reach a level before the First World War, which could be described as "game-changer" in the ethnic question.

This was not the case in the city of Sopron though. The administrative centre of the county had a population of 23,222 in 1880, of whom 16,425 (70.7 per cent) were German-speakers and 4,665 (20.1 per cent) Hungarians. By 1910 the number of local Hungarians (13,540) nearly doubled, which in terms of proportion meant a rise from 20.1 per cent to 39.9 per cent. In the same period, the number of the German-speaking citizens of Sopron only rose to 17,924, which resulted in a significant proportional decrease (from 70.7 per cent to 52.8 per cent.)[308] Sopron's case confirms the assumptions of the historical literature, which claims that natural assimilation as well as the "Magyarization policies" of the Dualist era proved to be much more effective in urban areas, in the bigger cities in particular, than in the countryside.[309]

Vas County was the biggest of the three counties of Western Hungary, both in terms of territory and population. It is fair to say that – as in Sopron County – the German-Hungarian linguistic border cut Vas County into two halves along a North-Easterly line: a slightly bigger, more Hungarian half and a slightly smaller more Germanic one.[310] The main difference between the two counties was that in Vas County, in addition to these "two halves", there was also a smaller, predominantly Slavic-speaking part in the South. In the Vend region (Vendvidék) of Vas County – officially named the Muraszombat district – Slovenes formed an overwhelming majority, with 79.7 per cent of the population.[311] All in all, Vas county had 360,590 inhabitants

[307] *Census 1881*, Part II, p. 245.; *Census 1910*, Part I, Section I: General report (Általános jelentés), p. 35.
[308] *Census 1881*, Part II, p. 245.; *Census 1910*, Part I, Section I: General report (Általános jelentés), p. 35.
[309] On the historical background, see: THIRRING, GUSZTÁV: *Sopron népessége a 18-ik század elején* [Population of Sopron in the beginning of the 18th century], in Soproni Szemle, (1) 1937, 3, pp. 161–172.; THIRRING, GUSZTÁV: *Sopron népességének fejlődése és összetétele* [The development and composition of the population of Sopron], Budapest, 1931.
[310] KOVÁCS, TIBOR: *Vas vármegye népessége a XIX. században (1804-1870)* [Population of Vas County in the 19th century (1804-1870)], Szombathely, 1970, pp. 5-31.
[311] *Census* 1881, Part II, p. 354.

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in 1881, of whom 169,904 (47.1 per cent) belonged to the Hungarian community, 118,065 (32.7 per cent) were German-speakers, 41,772 (11.6 per cent) spoke Slovene (Vend) as mother tongue, and 16,189 (4.5 per cent) were native Croats. At the time of the last census of the era in 1910, the numbers of the Hungarians and the Slovenes had increased to 247,985 (56.9 per cent) and 54,036 (12.4 per cent) respectively, whereas the number of the German speakers and Croats had sunk to 117,169 (26.9 per cent), and 16,230 (3.7 per cent) respectively.[312]

If we take a closer look at the numbers, we can conclude that the natural population growth once again benefited the Hungarian community the most. They also enjoyed the first results of the 'Magyarization policies' in education, public administration, and cultural life. However, to judge from the numbers, it seems to be an exaggeration to claim that these top-down political efforts delivered a breakthrough in the assimilation of the non-Hungarians, especially in the countryside areas.[313] In more remote places such as the Vend region, where the landscape was dominated by small villages, the non-Hungarians could even raise their numbers and proportion in the Dualist era. Although the number of the Germans only stagnated, and thus their proportion decreased in Vas County in this period, from an ethnographic point of view not much changed in those westerly districts where they had already formed the vast majority in 1870. The difference was made once again in the urban areas: the former free royal city of Kőszeg, for instance, which was an overwhelmingly German-speaking town at the beginning of the era, was turned into a half-Hungarian town by the early twentieth century. The former country city of Szombathely, the administrative centre of Vas County, which had only 7,561 citizens in 1870, grew into a city of regional significance, with a Hungarian-speaking population of 30,947 in 1910.[314]

Taking Western Hungary as a whole into account, the number of the Hungarian-speakers in the region rose from 292,693 to 417,607, and thus their proportion in the region's population increased from 42.6 per cent to 51.3 per cent in the Dualist era. In the same period, the number of the German-speakers only stagnated, which in terms of proportion within the entire population means a decrease from 39.4 per cent to 34.1 per cent. The proportion of the South-Slavic-speaking population (Slovenes and Croats together) in Western Hungary slightly

[312] *Census 1891*, Part I, Section II: Statistical Tables (Táblás kimutatások), pp. 106–107.; *Census 1900*, Part I, Section I: General report (Általános jelentés), p. 32.; *Census 1910*, Part I, Section I: General report (Általános jelentés), p. 35.

[313] Learn more: SZABÓ, ISTVÁN: *A magyarság életrajza* [Biography of the Hungarians], Budapest, 1941. ,pp. 200-247.

[314] As for Kőszeg, see: THIRRING, GUSZTÁV: *Kőszeg népességének fejlődése és összetétele* [The development and composition of the population of Kőszeg], Budapest, 1932.; On the case of Szombathely, see: MELEGA, MIKLÓS: *A modern város születése. Szombathely infrastrukturális fejlődése a dualizmus korában* [The Birth of a Modern City. The Infrastructural Development of Szombathely in the Era of Dualism], Szombathely, 2012.

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increased from 12.8 per cent to 13.4 per cent. These numbers support the assertion that Western Hungary was indeed a multi-ethnic and multicultural region at the turn of the twentieth century. From a regional perspective, this is a hardly deniable fact; however, if we dig a little deeper, we can read the same numbers very differently. From a perspective which straddles the micro and mezzo levels, one can soon realize that Western Hungary was multi-ethnic and multi-lingual only in a narrower sense, namely along the line of its internal German-Hungarian language border, especially in the cities and towns located in the ethnically intermingled central areas of the three counties.[315] Outside these areas, however, the border region rather seemed to be a strange historical combination of two different ethno-linguistic areas: a predominantly German-speaking one and a predominantly Hungarian-speaking one, with both having several greater or lesser South-Slavic linguistic islands within themselves.

The picture gets even more complicated when we zoom in further to the micro level. At this level, apart from certain cities and towns once again, it seems as if most parts of Western Hungary were not multi-ethnic at all, but a conglomerate of mono-ethnic communities existing in parallel. In this subchapter, we have lacked the space to go into the details of the ethno-linguistic backgrounds of the villages and smaller communities of Western Hungary, which clearly demonstrate that the decisive majority of them belonged exclusively either to one or another ethno-linguistic group. In other words, in a typical Western Hungarian village with a few hundreds of inhabitants, in many cases we can hardly find any existing local minority; if they were present in the given micro-region at all, they rather lived in a neighboring village where they formed the vast majority. Paradoxically, out of the three counties it was Moson – where Germans enjoyed an absolute majority – that could be described as most multi-ethnic, at least according to the data gathered on the micro-level.[316]

The question whether Western-Hungary was multi-cultural or pluricultural is difficult to answer.[317] If we consider language as the very foundation of culture, then once again a strong differentiation between the German, Hungarian and South-Slavic ethnic-linguistic sub-cultures in Western Hungary is called for. However, if we understand culture and cultural identity in a wider sense, as a category based primarily on everyday cultural exchange and social

[315] According to Bálint Varga, multilingualism was a far less present phenomenon in turn-of-the-century Hungarian cities than scholarship suggests: VARGA, BÁLINT: *Multilingualism in urban Hungary, 1880–1910*, in: Nationalities Papers, (42) 2014, 6, pp. 965–980.
[316] *Census 1910*, Part I, Section II: Detailed statistics (Részletes kimutatások), Moson County: pp. 24–26 ; Sopron County: pp. 38–46; Vas County: pp. 50–70.
[317] HOREL, CATHERINE: *Multi- és plurikulturalizmus városi közegben. Nemzeti és társadalmi sokszínűség a Habsburg Monarchia városaiban, 1867–1914* [Multi- and Pluriculturalism in Urban Environment. National and Social Diversity in the Towns of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867–1914], in: Aetas, (25) 2010, 2, pp. 190-201.

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interactions, then one can rightfully claim that Western Hungary historically produced its own regional cultural character.[318] It was neither really Austrian nor Hungarian, but something that could be perhaps described as Austro-Hungarian.[319]

3.2 Hungary and its County Question

In order to understand the political behavior of the counties in Western Hungary in the Dualist-era, one needs to be aware of the general constitutional development of the country in the nineteenth century, as well as the political traditions and controversies attached to that development.[320] In this era in Hungary one of the most intense public debates, and a debate still underdiscussed, was the so-called county question. Interconnected with several other issues, it had a major impact on multiple aspects of turn-of-the-century Hungarian politics: domestic power relations, ideological struggles, the nationality question and social changes. In the eyes of the contemporaries, it probably seemed to be a never-ending public dispute, whereas from later perspectives the question became suddenly rather meaningless after the Great War. This may be the reason why in Hungarian history-writing the county question is usually discussed as a matter of the history of law.[321] In contrast to the traditional approach, this subchapter rather investigates the topic primarily through approaches borrowed from the history of ideas, and with special focus on security. Dedicating a longer chapter to this topic makes sense not only because of its potential for historical security research, but also because it is a prerequisite for better understanding the Western-Hungarian regional developments to be elaborated in the subsequent chapters.

In terms of territorial administration, Hungary has been subdivided into counties since the 11th century.[322] According to tradition, the credit for the creation of a very early version of

[318] Although it was written in an explicitly patriotic and romantic spirit, the shared cultural character of the three Western Hungarian counties is really striking in the representative series dedicated to presentation of the entire Monarchy at the time of the Hungarian Millennium. JÓKAI, MÓR (ed.): *Az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia írásban és képben Volume XIII. (Magyarország IV.)* [The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Writing and Picture. Volume Thirteen (Hungary IV.)], Budapest, 1896, pp. 361-464.

[319] Dominique Kirchner Reill came to a similar conclusion regarding the Adriatic coast. The American historian identifies the region as a peculiarly non-nationalist and multi-cultural entity even by Habsburg standards. Learn more: KIRCHNER REILL, DOMINIQUE: *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation. Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste and Venice*, Stanford, 2012, pp. 233-246.; KIRCHNER REILL, DOMINIQUE: *The Fiume Crisis: Life in the Wake of the Habsburg Empire*, Cambridge, MA – London, 2020, pp. 225-234.

[320] See PÉTER: *'Die Verfassungsentwicklung in Ungarn'*, pp. 239–540.

[321] For the traditional legal approach, see: STIPTA, ISTVÁN: *Die Vertikale Gewaltentrennung. Verfassungs- und rechtsgeschichtliche Studien*, Budapest, 2005, pp. 191-300.

[322] For a basic overview on early medieval Hungary in English, see: ENGEL, PÁL: *The Realm of St. Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526,* London – New York, 2001.*;* MOLNÁR, MIKLÓS: *A Concise History of*

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the county-system goes to the founder of the Christian kingdom, King Saint Stephen (1000-1038) himself. Nonetheless, each medieval county was headed by the so-called *ispán* (Latin: *comes*; Slavic languages: *župan*; German: *Gespan*), who was appointed and dismissed by either the king himself or a high-ranking royal official responsible for the administration of a larger territorial unit within the kingdom. They fulfilled political, administrative, judicial and military functions at the same time, and in many cases not only in one but more counties. Increasingly, therefore, from the 13th century onwards, the heads of counties (in Hungarian: *főispán*, Latin: *supremus comes*, German: *Obergespan, hereinafter in English: Lord-Lieutenant*), were increasingly represented locally by their deputies (in Hungarian: *alispán*, Latin: *vicecomes*, Slavic languages: *podžupan*; German: *Vizegespan, hereinafter in English:* Vice-Lieutenant). Although the Vice-Lieutenants took over more and more functions from the Lords-Lieutenant, the latter remained the leading officials of the county administration. According to medieval tradition, some prelates were ex officio Lords-Lieutenant of certain counties: for example, the Archbishop of Esztergom (head of the Catholic Church in Hungary) was automatically the Lord Lieutenant of Esztergom county.[323]

From early 16th century onwards, when Hungary was deprived of huge parts of its southeastern territory as a result of the Ottoman invasion but kept its downsized statehood and limited sovereignty in the northwest by becoming part of the Habsburg Empire[324], the political significance of the counties increased. In this early modern age, the counties served as a political refuge for the Hungarian nobility's positions against the foreign dynasty.[325] As the Habsburgs were often reluctant to call the national assembly (parliament), the county assemblies constituted an important arena of local political opinion making. Although the legislative power was in the hands of the dynasty, the counties retained the rights of determining and collecting taxes and of raising new troops. These privileges proved to be a rather useful tool in the struggle to preserve what they called Hungary's historic constitution and to avoid the country's complete incorporation into the Habsburg hereditary provinces, as happened in the case of Bohemia.

Between the 16th and the 19th century, the Lords-Lieutenant were still appointed by the king, who was now also the Emperor in Vienna. In exchange for their loyalty to the Habsburg

Hungary, Cambridge, 2003, pp. 1-40.; TÓTH, ISTVÁN GYÖRGY: *A Concise History of Hungary. The History of Hungary from the Early Middle Ages to the Present,* Budapest, 2005, pp. 43-114.

[323] For the medieval history of the office see: ENGEL, PÁL: *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1457* [The Secular Archontology of Hungary 1301-1457], Budapest 1996.

[324] MOLNÁR: *A Concise History of Hungary,* pp. 87-138.; TÓTH: *A Concise History of Hungary*, pp. 181-230.

[325] On discourses of early modern Hungarian nationalism, see: TRENCSÉNYI, BALÁZS: *Patriotism and Elect Nationhood in Early Modern Hungarian Political Discourse*, in: TRENCSÉNYI, BALÁZS – ZÁSZKALICZKY, MÁRTON: Whose Love of Which Country? Composite States, National Histories and Patriotic Discourses in Early Modern East Central Europe, Leiden – Boston, 2010, pp. 499-544.

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dynasty, some of the noble families were rewarded with the title of "perpetual Lord-Lieutenant", which means that they were allowed to perpetuate the office and title of Lord Lieutenant to the next generation.[326] In Western Hungary, for example, one such aristocratic family was the famous Esterházy family, which had held the hereditary office of Lord Lieutenant of Sopron county since 1626. In most of the counties, the old system remained, namely that the monarch simply appointed a new Lord-Lieutenant when the former one was dismissed for some reason or passed away. In the Middle Ages, the Lords-Lieutenant took their ceremonial oath of office in front of the king or – if the king was absent – the palatine. After the 16th century, since the king was permanently absent, taking the oath became part of the county inauguration. In its earliest form, the inauguration took place with ceremonial formalities and after a while some local 'scenarios' evolved. In the Baroque Age, an inauguration which involved large audiences became an indispensable part of social representation.[327]

The political autonomy of the counties further strengthened from the late seventeenth century, as the local gentry won the privilege of electing the Vice-Lieutenants in the county assemblies. It was not a democratic right at all, as the noblemen could typically choose only among four candidates presented by the Lord Lieutenant, yet the implication of this pre-modern tradition was obvious: the Lord-Lieutenant – either perpetual or appointed – was seen as the king's right hand who formally represented the legislative power and the imperial interests, while the Vice-Lieutenant, as representative of the local elite, took over the management of the every-day county administration, while pursuing local and regional (or as later interpreted: national) interests. In a way, the Lords-Lieutenant constituted a sort of bridge between the Hungarian nobility and the Habsburg administration, preserving the delicate balance of cooperation between the two sides.[328] In addition, in the early modern era, the counties served not only as units of local politics and national administration but they also delegated members with a given political mandate to the National Assembly of the Estates, and thus played an important political role.[329]

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[326] For the early modern history of the office, see: FALLENBÜCHL, ZOLTÁN: *Magyarország főispánjai. Die Obergespane Ungarns 1526-1848* [The Lords-Lieutenant of Hungary 1526-1848], Budapest, 1994.

[327] BÁTHORY, ORSOLYA: *Batthyány József esztergomi érsek főispáni beiktatása* [The Inauguration of Archbishop of Esztergom József Batthyány as Lord-Lieutenant], in: BÁTHORY, ORSOLYA – KÓNYA, FRANCISKA (eds.): Egyház és reprezentáció a régi Magyarországon. [Church and Representation in Old-World Hungary], Budapest, 2016, pp. 45-58.

[328] GRÜNWALD, BÉLA: *A régi Magyarország [Old-world Hungary] 1711-1825,* Budapest, 2001 (original published in 1888), pp. 286-316.

[329] MOLNÁR: *A Concise History of Hungary,* pp. 139-200.; TÓTH: *A Concise History of Hungary*, pp. 274-277.; For the political significance of the counties in the early modern Hungarian National Assembly, see: DOBSZAY,

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After the rise of competing national movements in the mid-19th century, the multi-ethnic conglomerate of the Habsburg Empire, and of Hungary within it, became increasingly perceived as places of instability and insecurity. In a final attempt to save the realm, Emperor Franz Joseph made peace with the Hungarians in 1867. As a result of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, Hungary regained its sovereignty and thus a new chapter began in the history of the country.[330] After centuries of struggle and a series of failed uprisings, the Hungarian elites were finally able to establish their own national parliament and government, which – at least in terms of internal affairs – were independent from Austria. The new Hungarian administration attempted the almost impossible, namely to transform a pre-modern, multi-ethnic kingdom into a modern and unified nation-state. This experiment led to radical reforms in territorial administration. Consequently, the counties went once again onto the defensive with respect to centralization and unification policies, but this time originating not with the Habsburgs in Vienna but with their own government in Budapest.[331]

The challenges of reforming the public administration already faced the very first Hungarian government after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, led by count Andrássy. Most of the competing sides agreed that there was no way back to the era prior to the 1848 revolution.[332] There was no doubt that the eras of Neoabsulutism and Provisorium provided no sort of example to follow either, even if they introduced some progressive measures and methods in public administration.[333] The new cabinet was just about to get to work when Deák, de facto leader of the 67-er forces, attempted to convince the 48-er opposition in the Parliament, who were demanding restoration of the autonomy of the counties, to accept the right of the Lords-Lieutenant to nominate certain county officials. "The Wise Man of the Nation" – as Deák was widely called – argued: "Should we take such a step at this very moment when the governance is in the hands of accountable administration, that we never took even in the time

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TAMÁS: *A rendi országgyűlés utolsó évtizedei (1790-1848)* [The Last Decades of the National Assembly of the Estates], Budapest, 2019.

330 See PÉTER: '*Die Verfassungsentwicklung in Ungarn*', pp. 239–540.

331 Some counties put up heavy political resistance, not only to the centralization policies but to all the constitutional changes of 1867. For example in Heves county, in central Hungary, the government even decided to suspend the county assembly temporarily, and assigned a commissioner to administer the county. MNL Országos Levéltára K148, 15. d, 17th of March 1869, Gróf Szapáry Gyula kormánybiztosság kinevezése Heves megyébe"

332 STIPTA, ISTVÁN: *Bestrebungen zur Veränderung der ständischen Komitatsverfassung im ungarischen Vormärz*, in: PÉTER, ORSOLYA MÁRTA – SZABÓ, BÉLA (eds.): A bonis bona discere. Festgabe für János Zilinszky zum 70. Geburtstag, Miskolc, 1998, pp. 473-484.

333 KAJTÁR, ISTVÁN: *Österreichisches Recht in Ungarn (Der Problemen der Rezeption und Identität während der Modernisation des ungarischen Rechtssystems um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts)*, in: PÉTER, ORSOLYA MÁRTA – SZABÓ, BÉLA (eds.): A bonis bona discere. Festgabe für János Zilinszky zum 70. Geburtstag, Miskolc, 1998, pp. 451-472.

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when Hungary had no accountable government; should we now take away the nomination right from the Lords-Lieutenant, it would give a reason for suspicion that we fear the Lords-Lieutenant appointed by an accountable government more than we feared them at the time when we had no government accountability. Such fear would have neither basis, nor a grounded reason."[334]

After an intense parliamentary debate, the National Assembly passed a law in 1869 on the complete separation of the public administration and the criminal justice system, however it still remained a matter of dispute what role the counties should have in terms of legislation and execution. In other words: how to reconcile the counties, with their strong tradition of self-governance, with modern parliamentarism and central governance. This question was also connected to the question of legitimacy of the 67-er system, in that its opponents could still use the counties as their last remaining political fortresses. As if Prime Minister Andrássy foresaw that the debate could not be settled soon, with antagonism probably recurring on another level in the future, he made his proposal of a new municipality law in Parliament with the following words: "But what would the Honorable Opposition and the entire public opinion of Hungary say, if state matters were to be managed only by our own [i.e. central government] administration, and the counties were to be restricted only to local issues, in which case they would be promptly obliged to give away space [i.e. power] to towns and villages? Then they would speak about a Bach-system, and certainly with more justification than today. This is my conviction, Honorable House, therefore I am asking the honorable representatives on the other side to consider things from this perspective, and then they certainly will not be as hostile to our proposal as they have been so far."[335]

At the end of another a heated parliamentary debate, the National Assembly passed the Municipality Law of 1870 (Act XLII of 1870), which defined the counties with regard to their internal affairs as self-governing bodies that also conveyed the policies and instructions of the central state administration to the regional and local levels. From this point forward, the legal interpretation of self-governance in internal affairs, as well as the term "conveying public administration" became a matter of never-ending legal and political disputes. It was also the Andrássy administration that passed the laws on the creation of the State Audit Office (Act XVIII of 1870) and on the public administration of settlements (Act XVIII of 1871). Furthermore, this government drafted the law proposing the unification of Buda, Óbuda and

[334] DEÁK, Á. (ed.): *Deák Ferenc: Válogatott politikai írások és beszédek II.*, pp. 439–442.
[335] LEDERER, BÉLA (ed.): *Gróf Andrássy Gyula beszédei II*. [Speeches by count Gyula Andrássy, Volume 2), Budapest, 1893, p. 332.

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Pest, or in other words the creation of the capital city of Budapest (Act XXXVI of 1872), but this was passed by the National Assembly when during the administration of the new Prime Minister Menyhért Lónyai (1871-1872).

In spite of the fact that the main legislation on public administration was put through in the first years after the *Ausgleich*, the county question remained one of the most embittered political debates in Hungary, since the antagonism between the pro-county and pro-state forces did not disappear from public life. The former group were often labelled "municipalists" because they were rather in favor of maintaining the historic autonomy of the counties in some modernized form, while the latter were called "centralists" for demanding a modern, unified and more centralized and nationalized state administration.[336] The roots of this antagonism go back to county debates of the 1840s are a strange example of just how many different arguments can be made in order to reinforce a given political opinion. The debate over the counties strongly divided the liberal Hungarian opposition at the time. The majority was municipalist, since they believed that the self-governing counties could counterbalance the high-handed Habsburg central administration and thus that they were the guarantors of national and individual liberties.

Reading through the sources of their debates, it is quite striking that in their arguments the two competing sides did not apply only the new liberal, conservative and nationalist phraseology, which was obviously a new phenomenon in Hungarian politics of the 1870s and 1880s, but they also inherited and deployed the old modes of political utterance. At the end-of-the-century, municipalists still used especially the "republican" mode and the mode of "referring to the historical constitution" when insisting that the counties were specifically Hungarian institutions embodying national characteristics, and that transmitting them to the modern era was not just a matter of political interest but also a moral obligation. They also argued that the county assemblies were the main arenas of political participation, and thus played an important role in awakening the national spirit of the public. Their centralist rivals spoke the languages of "enlightened governance" and "varnishing"; when referring to the interest of the nation-state. They argued that the country could be administered much more effectively if nominated professionals were to replace the elected amateurs in county offices, just as was allegedly the case in the over-idealized Western European countries. The centralist

[336] The roots of the debate go back to the times of the Reform Era and the 1848 revolution. Legal historian István Stipta differentiates between three different phases of the municipalists vs. centralists debate, of which the last one took place after 1867. Learn more: STIPTA, ISTVÁN: *A magyar történelmi alkotmány és a hazai közjogi-közigazgatási jogvédelem* [The Historical Constitution of Hungary and the Domestic Legal Protection in Public Law and Public Administration], Budapest, 2020, pp. 193-263.

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narrative echoed the words of István Széchenyi, who back in the Reform Era spoke about 52 different little kingdoms in the country. According to the centralists, the county administration oppressed individual liberties because they tended to represent a corrupt, non-transparent and uncontrollable local power (i.e. the interests of the local nobility).[337]

The political language and vocabulary of the era provided both sides with plenty of ammunition to express their arguments and to sweep away rival opinions. The competing parties had been debating the same question for decades, not only thematically but also in terms of language-use (for instance the asymmetrical dual concepts of 'nomination vs election' or 'self-governance vs centralization'). Both sides expressed their arguments in a liberal-nationalist modern spirit, but both used a political vocabulary inherited from their forebears. In a narrative that identifies modernization and progress as central priorities, the values of democracy and self-governance can be used as extensively as the rational arguments coined for a unified, centralized and effective state administration. Similarly, in a narrative that centres on national interests and patriotism, one can equally legitimately speak about the autonomous counties that protected Hungarian statehood for centuries, but also about the threats arising from the nationality question that could be managed only by a nationalized and centralized public administration.

Partly because of this lingual confusion, it is not easy to make a clear distinction between the two competing sides, because the labels 'municipalist' and 'centralists' do oversimplify the reasons for their rivalry. In general, it would be correct to say that the 67-er liberal ruling party showed a tendency towards centralism, whereas the 48-er independentists (in opposition, but ideologically also liberal) were rather "municipalists", yet one should always look at the person instead of the party. A good example to illustrate the complexity of the debate is Kálmán Tisza, who in the mid-1860s was known as an enthusiastic protector of county autonomy, while as Prime Minister in the 1870s and 1880s he became a leading figure in moves to greater centralization. It was also PM Tisza who held the first Public Administration Conference (*Közigazgatási Ankét*) of the Dualist era on 21 November 1880. During the closed gathering that was organized with the aim of discussing how to advance cautiously with further reforms, the Prime Minister asked for the opinions of a total of nine Lords-Lieutenant, eight Vice-Lieutenants, four County Chief Notaries, and twelve Members of the Parliament, but – as one

[337] TAKÁTS: *Modern magyar politikai eszmetörténet,* pp. 37-38.

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critic pointed out – simply "forgot" to invite representatives of academic life, such as professors of law or other experts in public administration.[338]

On the municipalist side, it is important to emphasize the impact of Kossuth's views and influence. The former revolutionary leader in exile came up with his own constitutional plan for Hungary. This proposal, commonly referred to as the "Kütahya Constitution", would have given a co-legislative role to the counties, which would have been a step towards a modern but decentralised state structure.[339] Most of the nationality leaders belonged to the municipalist camp, because they saw in county autonomy a guarantee of minority rights, and feared a powerful central government in Budapest. However, there were several representatives of non-Hungarian background among the ranks of the ruling liberal party too, who supported modernization efforts for ideological reasons. Moreover, maintaining the traditional county system was a matter of crucial importance for those of the ranks of the lower and middle nobility regardless of their ethnic belonging, who felt themselves culturally and existentially threatened by the prospect of centralization.

On the centralist side, there can be no doubt that modernization was the main intention behind the aspiration for reforming public administration. The conservative politician Pál Sennyei happened to say once in Parliament that the public administration in Hungary is "in Asian condition", a claim that soon became an adage in the discourse about the counties. Béla Grünwald, Vice-Lieutenant of the mostly Slovak-populated Zólyom County, published a book in 1874, in which he decried the general condition of Hungarian public administration. The father of the "grünwaldism" (i.e. the enforced Magyarization of the state administration) lamented the alleged corruption, provincialism, dilettantism and debauched lifestyle of the county officials, as well as the tradition of electing them locally as the main reasons behind the problems. Grünwald firmly rejected the general opinion that the Hungarian counties were the so-called "bastions of the constitution", and were therefore, in terms of function and significance, rightfully compared to their English counterparts, claiming that such arguments were nothing more but self-deception and illusion. The Hungarians, "tend to expect everything from the state, but in return they give nothing to the state", insisted Grünwald, adding that "in our country duties towards the state are the very last thing thought of, respect for law is basically

[338] KOZÁRI: *A dualista rendszer*, pp. 234-236.; For detailed analysis of the "Kütahya Constitution", see: SPIRA, GYÖRGY: *Kossuth és alkotmányterve* [Kossuth and his Draft Constitution], Debrecen, 1989.
[339] KOZÁRI: *A dualista rendszer*, pp. 197-198.

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non-existent, abusing or fooling the state is not a shameful act, but – as a spirited writer said not long ago – was a joy in the time of the Bach-system and is a glory today".[340]

Historian András Cieger described the public administration debates as an unresolvable antagonism between two political groups: "One camp perceived the change of autonomy as part of the introduction of parliamentarism in the beginning, then as a necessary and normal consequence of the increasing importance of state intervention, whereas the other saw thinly veiled power policies and oppression in the change. The evaluations did not come closer to each other over the decades, so we can say that the issue of public administration remained a constant dividing line in politics."[341] At the same time, Cieger pointed out that not only did political and ideological aspects play a role in the question, but so too did the financial and economic limits of county autonomy.[342]

Meanwhile public opinion was also massively influenced by the realities and myths of provincialism and by the corruption of the county elites which was effectively publicized by the media and also in contemporary literature – as, for instance, in baron József Eötvös' popular novel entitled, *The Notary of the Village* (*A falu jegyzője*).[343] Besides modernization, another important aspect of the county question was power politics and the political-existential struggle: as in many other countries and eras, in Dualist Hungary public administration was a hotbed of political clientelism not only on a national, but also on regional and local levels. While the ruling liberal party attempted to gain more and more control over the counties in order to extend its influence into every corner of the country, the 48-er opposition party, which was condemned by the 1867 political system to a long-term minority status in the National Assembly, discovered its political strongholds in the counties.

Although the foundations were laid by the Andrássy government, the main part of the legislation on public administration was the work of the Tisza administration in the 1870s and 1880s.[344] In this period, as a result of the consolidation of the Compromise, a novel nation and state concept, or more-precisely nation-state concept, evolved and became dominant in Hungary, which has displayed a clear tendency towards étatism. The transformation of public

[340] GRÜNWALD, BÉLA: *Közigazgatásunk és a magyar nemzetiség* [Our Public Administration and the Hungarian Nationality], Budapest, 1874, pp. 35-36.

[341] CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *A közigazgatás autonómiájának nézőpontjai 1848-1918* [Points of View of the Autonomy of the Public Administration 1848-1918], in: GERGELY, J. (ed.): *Autonómiák Magyarországon 1848-2000*, p. 57.

[342] CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *Autonómia a gyakorlatban. A dualizmus kori helyi közigazgatás pénzügyi kérdőjelei* [Autonomy in practice. Financial question marks of the dualist era local public administration] in: GERGELY, J. (ed.): Autonómiák Magyarországon 1848-1998, pp. 57-64.

[343] For a literary historical analysis of the novel, see: SŐTÉR, ISTVÁN: *Eötvös József*, Budapest, 1967, pp. 137-170.

[344] KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/2, pp. 1237-1244.

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administration in the era of Dualism therefore can be understood in its entirety only through the contemporary theories of nation-state-building. The practical, administrative and legislative dilemmas apparent at the surface often get entangled with more fundamental ideological and political considerations and aspirations. The nationality question played an important role in the county question because the government saw a potential state security issue in the multi-ethnic composition of the country, and therefore advocated a more centralized state administration, even at the expense of the traditional self-governance of the counties.[345]

The securitization of public administration in post-1867 Hungary can be best observed in the works of the already mentioned Béla Grünwald. "The appropriate transformation of the organization of our public administration is a question of order and personal freedom with regard to each individual citizen, of consolidation and existence with regard to the Hungarian state, and of power and domination with regard to the Hungarian nation", wrote Grünwald in his book entitled *Our Public Administration and Freedom*" (*Közigazgatásunk és a szabadság*) published in 1876.[346] The author urged the county reforms not only because of much-needed modernization, but also because of the threat that the nationality question allegedly posed in Hungary. As he put it himself: "There are some elements within the Hungarian state which negate the state and gravitate towards centres that are located outside the state."[347]

According to Grünwald, on the basis of historical right the Hungarians were destined to govern the state, and in the future it was also Hungarian supremacy which showed the route to the consolidation of the state, whereas "the nationality aspiration of the other ethnic groups existing within the Hungarian state would necessarily lead to the decomposition of the state".[348] In Grünwald's view, it was a hidden contradiction of public administration that in the county municipalities the mission of guarding the interests of the Hungarian state lay in the very hands of those who were the open enemies of his vision of the Hungarian nation-state. He warned, "Therefore, the organization of the public administration does not constitute a separate complex – which is emancipated from local interests and moods, and on which the idea of the state is based and which is clearly represents the idea of the state – but parts whose majority represents

[345] SZÉKELY, TAMÁS: *A közigazgatás átalakításának programja. Modernizáció és nemzetállam-építés a dualizmus korában* [Program for Reforming the Public Administration. Modernization and Nation-state-Building in the era of Dualism], in: CSIBI, NORBERT –SCHWARCZWÖLDER, ÁDÁM (eds.): Modernizáció és nemzetállam-építés. Haza és/vagy haladás dilemmája a dualizmus kori Magyarországon [Modernization and Nation-state-building. Dilemma of Homeland and/or Progress in Dualist era Hungary], Pécs, 2018, pp. 165-179.

[346] GRÜNWALD, BÉLA: *Közigazgatásunk és a szabadság* [Our Public Administration and Freedom], Budapest, 1876, p. 35.

[347] GRÜNWALD: *Közigazgatásunk és a szabadság*, p. 52.

[348] IBID., p. 53.

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particularistic narrower circles, often anti-state elements and their influence".[349] Similar thoughts came to the mind of László Arany while writing a review of another book by Grünwald in 1874. The popular literary figure warned that in old times the counties had hampered the undesirable Germanization just as they were now hampering the sought after Magyarization. "To put it briefly: with regard to the Hungarians the county was a shelter against the Germanizing aspirations of a central power, but against the nationality agitation ongoing among the peoples of the country it is not a shelter but a danger."[350]

In this new political atmosphere of the 1870s and 1880s, the Parliament passed the law that established public administration committees in the counties (Act VI of 1876), the law that reorganized the borders and territories of the counties (Act XXXIII of 1876), the law on the training and education of public administration officials (Act I of 1883), and the law on the extension of the power and jurisdiction of the Lords-Lieutenant and the Minister of Interior Affairs (Act XXI and XII of 1886).[351] During the parliamentary debates on these laws, one of the key questions was whether the county officials should be still elected by the county assemblies or should rather be nominated from above. The power and jurisdiction of the Lords-Lieutenant, known as the right-hand of the central government, was also a matter of great dispute. This can be well observed in the speeches delivered by Albert Apponyi, who was widely known as the greatest Hungarian rhetorician of his time. Apponyi tried to take a politically flexible, in-between position between the 67-er ruling parties and the 48-er opposition.[352] First of all, he questioned the basic 67-er argument that suggested that there is a necessary discrepancy between the parliamentary governance and the territorial self-governance of the counties, and thus identified the challenge of how to reconcile the two aspects. For his part, Apponyi believed that parliamentary governance would remain a "mere fiction" without self-governance. At the same time, he said it would be a big mistake by the opposition to label the system of nomination as "centralization", because a strong self-governance could be achieved even after the introduction of a nomination system.[353]

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[349] IBID, p. 78.

[350] Review by László Arany of Béla Grünwald's Közigazgatásunk és a magyar nemzetiség, in: Budapesti Szemle, Volume 5, 9–10, 1874, pp. 206–211.

[351] For the details of the legal procedure, see: STIPTA, ISTVÁN: *A vármegyei szervezet átalakítása Tisza Kálmán miniszterelnöksége idején* [Transformation of the Organization of the Counties in the Era of Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza], Szeged, 1995, pp. 3-18.

[352] *Apponyi Albert gróf beszédei*, pp. 399-430.

[353] Albert Apponyi's speech on the reform of the public administration in the House of the Representatives of the Hungarian National Assembly (5 March 1886), in: *Apponyi Albert gróf beszédei*, pp. 400-403.

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Apponyi also warned of the dangers of following the "latest fashion" by gifting the state with excessive power. In his view, such tendencies derived from the misunderstanding that a state could be governed by similar "manipulations" that proved to be effective in running a party. In 1886, Apponyi accused the ruling party implicitly: "One cannot go against the values of the moral laws of the world and the power of history". "How can the moral quality of the citizens be impacted by a state organization, that in its power structure combines the slackness in sense of duty with servility […] The slow operation of these factors will result in a society in which evolves the bitterness of the oppressed on the one hand, and the corruption of the oppressors on the other hand."[354]

Apponyi's speeches reveal that even some contemporaries recognized the confusion of words and concepts in their public debates. One such issue concerned the alleged Asiatic origin of the early-medieval Hungarian tribes, which was used in a positive sense in the contemporary discourse in order to demonstrate the long historical traditions of the nation and support arguments based on historical rights. Yet in the county debate, when protagonists used the word 'Asia' it always represented something backward and oppressive – as we have seen previously in the quote by Pál Sennyei – as opposed to the civilized, developed Western civilization which was a positive example to follow. As Apponyi himself put it: "In this country all the parliamentary and constitutional terms are turned upside down. […the government] with its experiments in the question of public administration sometimes is approaching the European notion of state when it introduces qualification, financial judiciary and gendarmerie; sometimes however, on to top of it and all at once it comes up with the idea of a non-Hungarian but essentially Asian institution such as the hereby proposed power of the Lords-Lieutenant."[355]

As a result of the reforms introduced step-by-step between 1876 and 1886, the counties were not really seen anymore as self-governing territorial units, but rather as integral elements of the modern national administration that should convey the decisions of the national government and parliament to the local level. The counties lost an increasing number of privileges as well as legal and administrative responsibilities to the central government, though the county assemblies did retain their function as forums of communication and debate for the politically still dominant nobility. They also retained their right to nominate and elect most of

[354] IBID., pp. 429.

[355] Albert Apponyi's speech on the authority of the Lord-Lieutenants (24 March 1886), in: *Apponyi Albert gróf beszédei*, p. 447.

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the local officials, including the administrative head of the county, the Vice-Lieutenant (*alispán*).[356]

The political leader of the county remained the Lord-Lieutenant. At the beginning of the new era, they were typically members of the old local aristocratic families, but in the course of time they came rather to be chosen from the ranks of experienced and loyal public servants such as former Vice-Lieutenants, even if they were considered low-born. In the era of dualism, the Lords-Lieutenant still took the oath of office according to the early modern tradition, in front of the county assembly. For this purpose, however, the Ministry of Interior Affairs provided the counties with a sample oath, which in most cases was used without major changes. As part of the ceremony, they pledged loyalty to the King and country, promising to work towards the interests of the people in their respective municipalities. Although officially they were still appointed by the King, in fact they were nominated by the government and received most of their instructions directly from the Minister of Internal Affairs or the Prime Minister.

Partly as a result of their expanding jurisdiction in the Kálmán Tisza era, the Lords-Lieutenant were increasingly seen as the right-hands of the government. They enjoyed the right to command the entire county administration, which was important because they had to report any activity in the territory of their respective county that could be considered dangerous to the vision of the Hungarian nation-state. Sometimes, even surveillance of citizens and spying on suspicious figures became part of the every-day county administration. Those who were found problematic, especially local actors of the political opposition, national minorities or religious groups, could be 'securitized' as potential underminers of the liberal and national state order established in 1867. The Lords-Lieutenants were also expected to maintain public security in their respective counties and to resolve delicate political matters efficiently, including local tensions such as ethnic, social or religious conflicts.

In the late 1880s and 1890s, the topic of public administration was increasingly discussed as part of the nationality question, in other words as part of the struggle to maintain or resist Hungarian supremacy in Transleithania. As Gusztáv Beksics, one of the main ideologues of the ruling liberal party claimed: "the public administration is the main instrument for consolidating the idea of the state, for reconciling national and social antagonisms and for developing the national character."[357] Beksics's premise was that in contrast to the 1860s and 1870s, when the dominating ideology in Europe was indeed liberalism, new times had now

[356] STIPTA: *A vármegyei szervezet átalakítása Tisza Kálmán miniszterelnöksége idején*, pp. 18-64.
[357] BEKSICS, GUSZTÁV: *Közigazgatásunk reformja és nemzeti politikánk* [The Reform of our Public Administration and our National Policy], Budapest, 1891, p. 17.

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arrived which posed new political challenges.[358] According to Beksics, it was no longer enough to build a culture-state, which featured national motives; the goal now was to achieve the level of a national culture-state. Beksics was convinced that the time of liberal-cosmopolitan peace was soon to be over, and the danger of an international conflict was about to appear on the horizon. For this very reason, he argued, "the Hungarian nation feels now that the unique sign of Hungarian ethnicity should be strongly marked on the Hungarian state".[359]

In Beksics's interpretation, society in modern states is manifested by the state and governs itself through the institution of parliamentarism. Outside of or in opposition to the parliamentary system, society collectively, or certain limited parts of it, should play only a supervisory role and should not exercise executive, administrative and jurisdictional rights. Any and all experiments that pushed towards the weakening or partitioning of state power would threaten a return to the anti-state thought of medieval times, Beksics explained, adding that, "the very interests of modern progress and liberalism also required a unifying nation-state development, especially in Hungary where the state is the progressive and liberal, and the society is the backward or what is more the retrograde force."[360]

Beksics admitted that in Western Europe the nationalization of society increasingly showed a socialistic tendency, yet insisted that Hungary was in a special situation because of the "critical national mission that must be soon taken care of".[361] The Hungarian state could not fulfill its mission if it did not have disposal over its own public administration. Having noted the contradiction between a liberal state that respects the rights of its citizens and the nation-state that attempts to homogenize its population, Beksics emphasized that Hungary should be able to become both things simultaneously, because these two concepts were reconcilable and could in fact complement each other. According to Beksics, individual rights were legitimate only up to the point beyond which they became a threat to the very foundations of the state.[362]

Beksics thoroughly investigated Western European models of public administration, in which historical rights and national characteristics both remained integral elements of contemporary discourse on public administration. As we have seen, the municipalist side, labelled by Beksics "fake municipalists", defended the traditional autonomy of the counties and refused to accept the nomination of county officials. Beksics laughed at the English-Hungarian

[358] BEKSICS, GUSZTÁV: *Új korszak és politikai programja* [A New Era and its Political Program], Budapest, 1889.
[359] BEKSICS: *Közigazgatásunk reformja*, p. 4. (Introduction, page IV.)
[360] IBID., p. 18.
[361] IBID., p. 16.
[362] IBID., p. 111.

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comparison, but also rejected pursuit of the French or German models. In his opinion, the former was a rigid top-down system that excluded any chance of meaningful self-governance, whereas the latter was an artificial system that showed no respect towards historical development.

Beksics was not able, and probably not willing, to accept the fact that the traditions of Hungarian public administration had always displayed an indisposition towards centralization, yet he also remained reluctant to import Western models. This may have been one of the reasons behind his recommendation of only moderate reforms in the county system. At least in terms of territorial aspects, he argued that radically changing the borders of the counties would not merely ignore traditions but would lead to the creation of some new counties of overwhelmingly non-Hungarian background: "If there is something in connection with which we must be very conservative, then it is territorial reform. We have one more reason for that than the English. They only respect the historical aspects, the past, the customs of the population. We must consider the nationality aspects as well. […] Our situation is profoundly different, in our case even the greatest idea of reform depends on the nationality aspect."[363]

For this very reason, Beksics considered the cities and towns as crucially important. He was convinced that the cities and towns of Europe had always fulfilled a historic mission of carrying and transmitting culture, and thus possessed an enviable capacity to accommodate or assimilate differences. Beksics spoke critically about the territorial structure of the Hungarian cities and towns, which in his opinion had a malformed structure in comparison to their Western counterparts. Nevertheless, he envisioned that the cities and towns would play a decisive role, not only in the nationality question but also in the county question. "The districts and developing towns, may be just big villages today, but will one day absorb the counties in the same way as the counties have absorbed the districts and villages for eight centuries, depriving them of the chance to develop."[364]

The next major attempt to reform the public administration was made by Gyula Szapáry after he replaced Kálmán Tisza as Prime Minister of Hungary in 1890. Szapáry, who served first as Minister of Interior Affairs and then as Minister of Agriculture in the Tisza era, believed the time had finally come to push centralization to a higher level. The so-called nationalization (*államosítás*) of the county administration would have been a cornerstone of this programme, including the replacement of the traditional system of electing the county officials locally with

[363] IBID., pp. 125-126.

[364] BEKSICS, GUSZTÁV: *Magyarosodás és magyarosítás különös tekintettel városainkra* [Spontaneous Magyarization and Policy-Driven Magyarization with Special Regard to Our Cities], Budapest, 1883, p. 71.

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a system of central nomination.[365] At this point, however, the centralization agenda suffered a setback, since even many of the ruling liberal party members opposed depriving the counties of their last remaining historical right, namely that of electing their own officials. The proposed law, known as *Lex Szapáryana* consisted of 281 clauses, but only the first two were passed by the Parliament in 1891, though these still formally declared the nationalization of public administration.[366] As political scientist István Schlett put it: "The great reform could not be implemented even at the time when the government stepped up as an initiator. As a parliamentary government, it evidently had a limited space for maneuvering between the different interests, goals, perspectives and political considerations. So the public administration remained unchanged, although considered both by the government and the opposition at the end of the 1880s to be in need of a radical reform. It did so partly because social-political resistance prevented the change, but also because, in spite of all the errors, insufficiencies and incoherences (or maybe because of them?) in that particular situation it was still functional."[367]

Nevertheless, the failure meant that the impetus to centralization slowed down, and the system did not experience further significant change until the Dualist era itself ended. Some cautious and minor public administration reforms were still implemented, such as the law on the reform of the offices of the capital districts (Act XXIII of 1893) under the Sándor Wekerle administration, or the creation of the much-disputed Public Administration Courts (Act XXVI of 1896) under the Dezső Bánffy government.[368] After the turn-of-the-century a serious domestic political crisis evolved in Hungary which reached its most critical point during the national elections of 1905 and 1906. The counties even launched a resistance movement against a temporary administration enforced upon Hungary by Franz Joseph to overcome the crisis. In such an atmosphere, it was impossible to introduce any kind of meaningful reforms in public administration. Even in the time of the so-called coalition government (1906-1910) that replaced the long-ruling liberals in power, the only significant move was the withdrawal of the *Lex Szapáryana* that had formally declared the nationalization of the administration. It was a symbolic act by Gyula Andrássy Jr., who remained committed to the traditional autonomy of the counties even as the Minister of Internal Affairs in the coalition government.

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[365] As Monika Kozári pointed out, nationalization was the contemporary term, that meant "replacing the uneducated noblemen with professional, educated officials nominated by the state with structured conditions of employment and career paths. The laicist and arbitrary public administration [was to be replaced] with regulated professionalism." KOZÁRI: *A dualista rendszer*, p. 247.

[366] SARLÓS: *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika*, pp. 170-172.

[367] SCHLETT, ISTVÁN: *A magyar politikai gondolkodás története 2*. [A history of the Hungarian Political Thought, Volume 2], Budapest, 2010, p. 802.

[368] KOZÁRI: *A dualista rendszer*, pp., 249-259.

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When the 67-er liberals (former Liberal Party) returned to power in 1910 with a new party name (National Party of Work) under the leadership of count István Tisza[369], son of Kálmán Tisza, they inherited an administrative system in which no major reforms had been carried out for more than twenty years. With a comfortable parliamentary majority behind them, the National Party of Work attempted to introduce radical reforms in public administration. Whereas they were able to pass a new law on the development of the cities and towns (Act LVII of 1912), the question of the counties proved to be a much more difficult issue. István Tisza was among the few who were able to reflect on the conceptual confusion of the debates over public administration and he believed that this was one of the main reasons behind the decades-long delay of a comprehensive reform. In 1913 – when he started his second spell as Prime Minister of Hungary[370], Tisza used the pro-government periodical *Magyar Figyelő* to express his political thoughts and to explain his plans to the intellectual public.

Tisza strongly argued for the reforms with the following words: "Twenty years ago everyone believed that time for a reform of the county administration based on the system of nomination had come. Meanwhile the turmoil caused by the 'national resistance' threw this question too into the chaos of the general conceptual confusion; the 'national' government just doubled that with its empty demonstration against the toothless 'Lex Szapáryana', when it annulled this operetta-like law with a demonstration worthy of a comedy."[371] Tisza put all the blame for the unfortunate situation on the opposition parties that ruled in coalition between 1906 and 1910, and especially on one his main political rivals, Gyula Andrássy Jr., who served as Minister of Interior Affairs in the so-called "coalition" or "national" government.[372]

Andrássy, a rare but good example of being a pro-county autonomy and pro-67 politician at the same time, hit back at Tisza in the *Budapesti Szemle*.[373] According to him, "the centralization related to the domination of the party, not only forces the public administration to worship false gods, to worship the idols of the party, to serve the idols of the party, but also

[369] On rise of the National Party of Work to power, see: VERMES, GÁBOR: *Tisza István*, Budapest, 1994, pp. 286-337.; HORÁNSZKY, LAJOS: *Tisza István és kora. I-II. kötet.* [István Tisza and his Era, Volume One and Two], Budapest, 1994, pp. 657-766.; PÖLÖSKEI, FERENC: *A koalíció felbomlása és a nemzeti munkapárt megalakulása 1909-1910* [The Fall of the Coalition and the Creation of the National Party of Work 1909-1910], Budapest, 1963, pp. 138-192.

[370] VERMES: *Tisza István*, pp. 338-362.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 915-948.

[371] TISZA, ISTVÁN: *Államosítás és önkormányzat* [Nationalization and self-governance], in: TŐKÉCZKI, LÁSZLÓ (ed.): Tisza István. Válogatott politikai írások és beszédek [István Tisza. Selected Political Writings and Speeches], Budapest, 2003, pp. 382-386.

[372] SZALAI, MIKLÓS: *ifj. Andrássy Gyula élete és pályája* [The Life and Career of Gyula Andrássy Jr.], Budapest, 2003, pp. 62-85.

[373] ANDRÁSSY IFJ., GYULA: A közigazgatás reformja [Reform of the public administration], in: *Budapesti Szemle*, 155 (1913), 441, pp. 330-335.

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endangers political liberty and corrupts the constitution."[374] In his argument, Andrássy went as far as to accuse the Tisza administration of attempting to introduce autocratic rule, adding that centralization, "causes congestion in the centre and anemia in the countryside, which after all makes the whole body sick".[375] The metaphor, borrowed from medical science, mirrored Apponyi's argument from 1886. Like him, Andrássy also believed that the county question was not just a matter of administrative policy, but an issue that revealed the neuralgic points and crisis symptoms of Hungarian political culture in general. Andrássy warned: "Minority can lead to tyranny too. In some areas, the opposition that forms the majority can be displaced from public power, and the minority and the minor groups insisting on the government can rise to power despite being outnumbered. And what is even more dangerous, a minority can gain the rights of the majority within the entire nation."[376]

As opposed to Andrássy, Tisza, who was self-confessedly a former proponent of the system of election in the counties, reconsidered his old views when he became a leading politician at national level. Just like his father before him, Tisza was now convinced that modern public administration was not compatible with the Hungarian tradition of electing county officials, and he therefore argued for the introduction of the system of nomination. Tisza blamed not only the elected officials but also the county assemblies for being oversized and slow in terms of administration. For these reasons, Tisza urged the subordination of the entire county system to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and envisioned the future county assemblies as forums without any serious authority, but where the local public could still express its views on general and symbolic issues.[377]

Meanwhile the Hungarian Lawyers' Association organized a conference series in January–February 1914 that became known as the second Public Administration Conference.[378] This time around, academic life was also represented as the event was chaired by Hungary's

[374] IBID., p. 333.

[375] IBID.

[376] IBID., p. 333.

[377] PÖLÖSKEI, FERENC: *Kormányzati politika és parlamenti ellenzék 1910-1914* [Governmental Policies and Parliamentary Opposition 1910-1914], Budapest, 1970, pp. 29-48.; pp. 192-212.

[378] *A közigazgatás reformja. A Magyar Jogászegylet Közjogi és Közigazgatási Bizottságában 1914. évi január és február havában tartott előadás-sorozat. Kmety Károly, Balog Arthur, Benkó Albert, Ereky István, Rábel László, Vadnay Tibor, Majzik Viktor, Lukács Ödön és Harrer Ferenc előadásai, Concha Győző bizottsági elnök záróbeszédével, Nagy Ferenc elnök és Sándor János belügyminiszter felszólalásával* [Reform of the public administration. Series of lectures held in January-February 1914 by the Public Law and Public Administration Committee of the Hungarian Association of Lawyers. Lectures by Károly Kmety, Arthur Balog, Albert Benkó, István Ereky, László Rábel, Tibor Vadnay, Viktor majzik, Ödön Lukács and Ferenc Harrer, closing remarks by committee head Győző Concha, speeches by President Ferenc Nagy and Minister of Interior Affairs János Sándor], in: Magyar Jogászegyleti Értekezések VIII. kötet, 57. füzet [Studies by the Hungarian Association of Lawyers, Volume 8, Part 57], Budapest, 1914.

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leading professor of law at the time, Győző Concha, who was known as a long-time advocate of the system of nomination. The conference discussed the topic of public administration in 14 sections, with issues ranging from the question of county districts and borders to the "election vs. nomination" dilemma.[379] In contrast to the first Public Administration Conference held in 1880, not only members of parliament and county officials attended, but also academics and university professors like Concha, and even some opposition figures. The government was represented by Minister of Internal Affairs, János Sándor, the brother-in-law of Prime Minister István Tisza, who was responsible for drafting the new municipality law proposal, incorporating as many suggestions from the experts as possible. To name just a few of these suggestions: in his presentation professor of law Károly Kmety, for instance, belittled the alleged role of the county election system in guarding the constitution. This view was shared by most of the participants, so they suggested the introduction of the system of nomination. At the same time, most of the lecturers agreed to maintain virilism, namely the system that enabled the highest-tax-payers to become members of county assemblies. This was considered a necessity because of the most neuralgic points of early 20th century Hungarian politics: the nationality question and the landowner question.

During the spring of 1914, the Ministry of Internal Affairs worked hard on the law proposal and was able to submit it to the Parliament. The lawmakers were discussing the proposal and would have probably passed the law had history not intervened: on 28th June 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was murdered in Sarajevo, Bosnia. The debate in Parliament was at once interrupted as the upcoming war required a substantially different approach to public administration.

3.3 Securing Dominance in Vas, Sopron and Moson Counties before and after 1867

Narrowing our focus again on Western Hungary again, in this subchapter we shall first look at the path Moson County had to travel before reaching the time of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise. Then we shall investigate the direct impacts of the 1867 laws and the subsequent administrative reforms on the counties through the example of Vas County. Finally, we shall analyse the role of the aristocracy in the consolidation of the new system through the example of the Esterházy family in Sopron County. In all three cases, we focus primarily on the local

[379] For a summary of the speeches delivered at the conference see CSIZMADIA: *A magyar közigazgatás fejlődése*, pp. 280-289.

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elites, who as security actors played a decisive role in the transformation of the counties.[380] Generally speaking, the vast majority of the nobility of the Western counties traditionally had patriotic and pro-Habsburg feelings at the same time; thus, they supported the Compromise as well as the vision of a strong Hungarian nation-state, even if it threatened county privileges with the nationalization of the public administration. The devil, however, is always in the details, as state and local interests occasionally collide even between the pro-67 counties and the central administration. These conflicts often arose within the county administration itself, and so far, they have not been analysed as matters of security.

Before going into details, one must highlight that the counties themselves were part of a bigger game, as the new liberal-nationalist leadership of Hungary attempted to consolidate the hard-earned system of 1867 by securing its political dominance all over the country. At the same time, the county elites also did their utmost to secure their power and influence, and to preserve as many of the old privileges as possible in the new era. The centralization of the state administration was seen as a risky maneuverer at the time, because in the late 1860s and early 1870s it was not at all guaranteed that the Compromise of 1867 would endure as a long-term structure of the Habsburg Monarchy. Therefore, the situation can be rightfully described as a serious security dilemma. If Hungary were to disarm its counties politically, then in case of a great political turn on the imperial level, it would not be able to defend itself from alternative constitutional experiments such as Habsburg (Austrian) absolutism and centralism, or a pro-German or pro-Slavic version of federalism. If, however, the counties were allowed to preserve their traditional autonomous status even after 1867, they could potentially jeopardize the realization of the unified Hungarian nation-state from the inside.

The roots of this dilemma go back to the so-called Reform Era (1825–1848), which is known in Hungary as a transitional period between the early modern age (*rendi korszak*) and the modern age (*polgári korszak*). It was also the time when the municipalist and centralist camps first clashed over the question of how to transform the counties from early modern and feudal authorities into modern and civic units of territorial administration. Whereas the old county was home politically only to the privileged (nobility), the new one was envisioned as something that could represent all its citizens. When the Hungarian liberals first rose to power

[380] Research on local and regional Habsburg elites has gained a momentum in recent times: PÁL, JUDIT – POPOVICI, VLAD (eds.): *Elites and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe (1848-1918)*, Frankfurt am Main, 2014, pp. 7-20.; EGRY, GÁBOR: *Regional Elites, Nationalist Politics, Local Accommodations. Center-Periphery Struggles in Late Dualist Hungary*, in: BACHINGER – DORNIK – LEHNSTAEDT (eds.): Österreich-Ungarns imperiale Herausforderungen, pp. 333-354.; SZÉKELY – CSERNUS-LUKÁCS: Securing Own Position: Challenges Faced by Local Elites after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, in: Acta Poloniae Historica 121 (2020), pp. 85-120.

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(Batthyány cabinet) as a result of the extraordinarily political developments simply labelled as the 15 March 1848 revolution, the so-called April Laws touched upon the issue of the counties too. Mirroring the fact that the dispute between the centralists and municipalists was still undecided, Act XVI of 1848 on "the provisional practice of county authority" was intended by the lawmakers to be a temporary solution. The law declared that a permanent county reform would be drafted later by a soon-to-be elected representative national assembly (*népképviseleti országgyűlés*).[381]

Nonetheless, Act XVI of 1848 also prescribed the summoning of the general assemblies in all the counties, but this time in an expanded form where the members represented not only the historical elites (landowners, nobility) but also the common people. In order to implement the central reform policies, the enlarged county assemblies were asked to establish their own "permanent commissions" (*állandó bizottmány*), once again without taking birth-privileges into account. The law also ordered that the language of these commissions managing the counties should be exclusively Hungarian, with the exception of certain autonomous territories (for example Croatia and Slavonia). In addition to this law, Act XVII of 1848 on "the elections of the county officials" was also about the counties, as it forbade electing new county officials during the transitional period. This meant that the reform era officials of the counties, including the Lord-Lieutenant, the Vice-Lieutanant and the district administrators all remained in office during the period of the liberal Hungarian government (March–September 1848)

The problem of the series of regime-changes – in many cases without elite-changes – between 1848 and 1867 can be illustrated well by the case of Moson County in Western Hungary.[382] In this county, the last election of the local officials was held in April 1847, according to the pre-modern rules and traditions. The Lord-Lieutenant of Moson County at the time was Count Miklós Zichy, who, as the political leader of the county, was appointed by the Monarch back in 1845. The first and second Vice-Lieutenants (Lajos Króner and Antal Jankovits), the administrative heads of the county, as well as several other officials of the county administration, were elected by the county assembly itself. As ordered by the April Law, the

[381] On the history of the Reform Era and 1848, see: GERGELY, ANDRÁS: *Egy nemzetet az emberiségnek. Tanulmányok a magyar reformkorról és 1848-ról* [A Nation to the Humanity. Studies on the Hungarian Reform Era and 1848], Budapest, 1987, pp. 136-170.; pp. 380-430.

[382] Although Moson County was among the smallest counties of Hungary and it had no free royal city being located on its territory, the county was still of economic significance throughout the 19th century and up until the time of the Burgeland question (1918-1921) since Vienna heavily relied on its agricultural capacity. For further details, see: HORVÁTH: *Bécs vonzásában*.; SÁRY, ISTVÁN: *Moson megye gazdasági fejlődése a reformkortól az 1867-es kiegyezésig* [The Economic Development of Moson County from the Reform Era to the Compromise of 1867], in: GECSÉNYI (ed.): Tanulmányok Mosonmagyaróvár és vidéke történetéhez, pp. 117-140.; SZIRÁNYI, PÉTER: *Moson megye parasztsága a századfordulótól 1918-ig* [The Peasantry of Moson County from the Turn-of-the-Century until 1918], in: GECSÉNYI (ed.): Tanulmányok Mosonmagyaróvár és vidéke történetéhez, pp. 117-140.

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enlarged general assembly of Moson County gathered on 1 May 1848 to elect the new permanent commission with 82 members as well as the central board (*központi választmány*) with 40 members. Apart from some who joined the newly-established Hungarian army or those who pursued careers elsewhere, most of the county officials in Moson County, elected back in April 1847, remained in their offices during the era of the liberal government.[383]

After the war for independence broke out in September 1848, and the Hungarian government led by Lajos Batthyány resigned, count Henrik Zichy stepped down as Lord-Lieutenant of Moson County. The county was soon re-taken by the Habsburg imperial troops, and from the end of 1848 it remained under their control throughout the entire war.[384] The permanent commission and the central board – as liberal experiments – were both dissolved after only half a year of existence, but the services of the county officials were once again retained. In February 1849, Vice-Lieutenant Lajos Króner was ordered to establish a new administrative committee (*közigazgatási bizottmány*) from the ranks of the county officials as part of the attempt to consolidate the county administration. On 22 May 1849, Króner was even confirmed in his position by Imperial Commissioner count János Cziráky. Moreover, on 24 July Króner himself was appointed Imperial Commissioner (császári biztos) of Moson and Pozsony counties, which meant that Króner exercised the rights of the vacant offices of the Lords-Lieutenant in the two municipalities. Although he had to dismiss some officials who were known as Hungarian nationalists (pro-Kossuth), the services of most of his old colleagues were retained.[385]

After their victory in the war for independence, the Habsburg administration abolished Hungary's historical constitution, including municipal autonomy. Consequently, the counties were incorporated into five newly created (military) districts, which were soon transformed into the main territorial units of the neo-absolutist public administration. Moson County – as well as Vas and Sopron counties and most of Transdanubia – became part of the Ödenburg District, which was headquartered in the city of Sopron. The counties remained only as administrative subunits of the districts, since the county leaders followed the orders from the district

[383] HEGEDŰS, ZOLTÁN: Egy évtized Moson vármegye életéből (1861–1871) [A Decade in the Life of Moson County (1861–1871), in: HORVÁTH: *Fejezetek Győr, Moson, és Sopron Vármegyék közigazgatásának történetéből*, pp. 87–88.

[384] Given the fact that Moson was an overwhelmingly German-speaking county located geographically close to the imperial capital, the Hungarian leadership did not risk a military manoeuvre to reclaim it even during the successful spring campaign of 1849. On the history of Moson County in 1848–1849, see: THULLNER: *Mosony Vármegye*, pp. 181–192; RÁKÓCZI, TIBOR: *Moson megye az 1848-49-es forradalom és szabadságharc idején* [Moson County in the Era of the 1848-1849 Revolution and War for Independence], in: GECSÉNYI (ed.): Tanulmányok Mosonmagyaróvár és vidéke történetéhez, pp. 91-106.

[385] HEGEDŰS: *Egy évtized Moson vármegye életéből*, pp. 88–90.

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leadership, the Lieutenancy (*Helytartóság*) in Buda and the Imperial Ministry of Internal Affairs in Vienna. The language of the administration at the time was exclusively German. Lajos Króner, the former Vice-Lieutenant, served first in his new position as Imperial Commissioner and then as county chief of Moson County in the Neo-Absolutist Era (1849–1860). In Moson County, he was not the only member of the pre-1848 county administration who took office in the Neo-absolutist period. Vice-Lieutenant Antal Jankovics, county notary Bálint Rozsy and county treasurer Károly Bikkessy, for example, were all among the great number of local officials ready to serve under the third different political regime in three years. Apart from partially separating public administration and judiciary at the local level, the most important development of the period in Moson County was the creation of a third district (járás), the Rajka district, which was established in 1850, on territory taken from the already existing Moson and Nezsíder districts, in order to improve local administration.[386]

The next great political turn occurred in 1860 when Franz Joseph issued the so-called October Diploma, through which he put an end to Neo-absolutism and restored Hungary's old constitutional framework, including municipal autonomy. In Moson County, it was Count Henrik Zichy, the pre-1849 leader of the county, who took a leading role in the reorganization of the county. Having been appointed Lord-Lieutenant once again, on 6 December 1860, Zichy called a gathering of seventy prominent figures in local public life with the aim of re-establishing the old county assembly, and thus the self-governance of Moson County. Since only fifty-two members of the 1848 county assembly still lived/resided in Moson County, they designated a further 103 new members. The new county assembly was held on 28–29 December 1860, and it declared that it stood "on the basis of the October Diploma and it was going to govern the county in the spirit of the 1848 (April) laws".[387] The county-assembly immediately elected the officials of the county administration. This time only a few old names remained, although one of them was the Vice-Lieutenant, János Jankovics. The new county leadership had to deal with a number of pressing matters, including the territorial reorganization of the county and the election of the town and village magistrates, as well as the local members of the soon-to-be-held national assembly. They also faced serious difficulties with regard to the county's judiciary system, and the county budget in general, not to mention specific challenges such as how to manage land registries and orphan policies.[388]

[386] IBID.
[387] County Assembly Protocol of Moson County on 28–29 December 1860. Source: MNL Győr–Moson–Sopron Megye (hereinafter: Gy-M-S Vm.) Győri Levéltára, Moson Vármegyei Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Bizottmányának Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1860, no. 3.
[388] HEGEDŰS: *Egy évtized Moson vármegye életéből*, pp. 90–96.

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The reforms were cut short when Franz Joseph issued the so-called "February Patent" in 1861 in an attempt to "extend" the October Diploma. The Hungarian National Assembly was dissolved once again on 22 August 1861, and the days of municipal autonomy were also numbered. Protesting against the anti-liberal imperial policies and supporting Ferenc Deák's party, the Lord-Lieutenant of Moson County, Count Zichy, resigned once more. The Habsburg administration appointed Governor-Lords-Lieutenant (*főispáni helytartó*) or Royal Commissioners (*királyi biztos*) in charge of the counties. In Moson County, it was Lajos Króner once again who took full control of the county's affairs as Governor-Lord-Lieutenant. The county assembly was dissolved, and Króner appointed an old-new board of county officials loyal to him. Some of the new officials had already served under Króner in the Neo-absolutist period, whereas others remained from the previous administration, and there were some new names, too.[389] The transitional period, called the "Provisorium", lasted until June 1865, when the Emperor appointed György Mailáth as High Chancellor and decided to suspend the February Patent.

Meanwhile, the Hungarian national assembly was called again on 10 December 1865, which paved the way to beginning the Compromise negotiations between Franz Joseph and the Hungarian elites led by Ferenc Deák and Gyula Andrássy.[390] The two sides agreed to avoid committing the same "mistake" that had happened in 1861, namely restoring municipal autonomy before finding a long-term solution for the constitutional crisis at national and imperial levels. From a county perspective, this meant that although most of the Governor-Lords-Lieutenant and Royal Commissioners were dismissed, new Lords-Lieutenant were appointed, and the county assemblies were held again, but they were allowed to function only within certain limits. One of the first orders issued by Chancellor Mailáth after his appointment was to the few old and the numerous new Lord-Lieutenants to avoid the radical re-organizations of the counties, so new elections of the county officials took place only in spring 1867. This was seen as a necessary step in order to prevent them from discussing delicate political matters and thus hindering the ongoing top-level negotiations.[391]

In Moson County, Count Henrik Zichy was appointed once again as Lord-Lieutenant, for the third time in his life, which was unprecedented in the county's history. His mission was to supervise Moson County's transition to the new era, later to be known as the system of 1867.

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[389] IBID., pp. 96–102.
[390] For the negotiation process that led to the making of the Compromise, see: SOMOGYI, ÉVA (ED.): HANÁK, PÉTER: *1867- európai térben és időben* [1867 in European space and time], Budapest, 2001.
[391] DEÁK, ÁGNES: *A „Bach–Zichi huszár"-ok. Hivatalvállalás a Schmerling-provizórium idején* [The "Bach-Zichi" Hussars. Taking Office in the Time of the Schmerling Provisorium], in: Századok, (149) 2015, 5, pp. 1135-1162.

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Not surprisingly, Zichy started his work by removing Króner's men from the top of county administration, including Vice-Lieutenant István Hardy and his deputy Ferenc Barnstein, who were replaced by Pál Major and Count Győző Zichy-Ferraris respectively.[392] When the Austro-Hungarian Compromise was made and Gyula Andrássy was appointed as Hungary's new prime minister on 20 February 1867, a new era was also about to begin in the counties. Henrik Zichy resigned for the third and last time, and Count László Hunyadi was appointed the new Lord Lieutenant of Moson County. The political restrictions on the county assembly were soon lifted as well, and they were once again allowed to discuss political matters, including the proposed reforms of public administration. The assembly of Moson County gathered for the first time in the new era on 1 May 1867 and elected a new board of county officials. The Vice-Lieutenant remained Pál Major, and most of the officials were elected from those who had already played a role either in 1860–1861 or between 1865 and 1867, or both.[393]

The restoration of municipal autonomy was a result of a long and complicated process.[394] The Andrássy government first faced a legal challenge, as it had to bridge the gaps between the provisions of the April Laws of 1848, the ad-hoc re-organization of the county assemblies in 1861, and the current situation of the counties in the spring of 1867. The main problem was that Act XVI of 1848 did not allow the counties to re-organize their assemblies until the National Assembly passed a new law that settled the long-term future of the counties, even if certain county assembly members resigned or passed away in the meantime. Furthermore, Act XVII of 1848 prohibited the election of new county officials. The government therefore proposed to call the county assemblies as they were re-organized back in 1861, but in a way that empowered them with the privileges that the April Laws had granted to the municipalities in 1848. They also enabled the counties to elect new county officials, but only after nomination (*kijelölés*) by the Lords-Lieutenant. The National Assembly approved these proposals, which basically merged the 1848 and 1861 developments into a temporary solution, in 1867. From the cabinet's perspective, it was a necessary step to give them extra time to draft a new county law. In the meantime, public administration had to function; this is why the

[392] County Assembly Protocol of Moson County in August 1865. Source: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Moson Vármegyei Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Bizottmányának Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1865, IV.B 752., no. 258.

[393] County Assembly Protocol of Moson County on 1–2 May 1867. Source: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Moson Vármegyei Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Bizottmányának Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1867, IV.B 754a., nos. 1–5.

[394] In the early and mid-1860s, there was a pamphlet debate in Hungary over the county question, which paved the way for the political and legal discourse on the matter after 1867. STIPTA, István: *Törekvések a vármegyék polgári átalakítására* [Attempts for the Civic Transformation of the Counties], Budapest, 1995, pp. 70–124.

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government had to find a way to get the county assemblies as well as the county officials back to work.[395]

The legal innovation of the Andrássy cabinet, however, did not meet the expectations of the counties, of which several openly lamented the government's general approach to the county question. It was Pest-Pilis-Solt County, in Central Hungary, that protested most bitterly against the new policies, which inspired other counties too to petition the decision- and law-makers. The aim of these county initiatives was to pressure the government to draft a new law on the counties. The municipalist camp hoped that the new law would codify the autonomy of the counties, and thus provide shelter against centralization attempts coming either from Vienna (historically) or from Pest-Buda (recently). At this point, the county question became not only a legal but also a political challenge for the government and the 67-er Deák Party which sustained it. Even the 67-er ruling party remained divided on the question, not to mention the 48-er opposition. When Franz Joseph, as King of Hungary, opened the newly-elected National Assembly on 20 April 1869, he delivered a speech from the throne in which he marked the question of the municipalities as one of the most pressing matters for the law-makers to deal with.[396]

In Western Hungary, it was the assembly of Vas County that came up with its own proposal and sent it in the form of a petition to the central decision-makers. Like all the other counties, Vas County recognized the government's right to supervise the counties through the office of the Lord-Lieutenant. However, it insisted on maintaining what they called the privilege of self-governance on the part of the counties, the thousand-year-old bastions of the constitution. The counties did accept that the limits of their autonomy should be defined by the law; the controversy centered rather on how to handle a situation in which the central administration attempted to rule by decree. Vas County proposed that the soon-to-be-passed municipality law should equip the counties with the right to reject the implementation of government decrees that were "threatening the country's constitution or national existence". In particular, decrees that aimed to enforce the collection of state taxes or to recruit new troops without the consent of the national assembly or against its will should be rejected. According to Vas County, a government that issued such decrees and the officials who were willing to

[395] IBID., pp. 125–128.
[396] *Az 1869. április 20-ra hirdetett Országgyűlési Főrendiházának Irományai I. kötet* [Documents of the House of Lords of the National Assembly called on 20 April 1869], Pest, 1870, pp. 2–5. Irományszám [Document no.]: 1869-2. https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/OGYK_FI-1869_01/?pg=20&layout=s [20.06.2024]

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collaborate to implement them should be charged with treason and libel in accordance with the Act I of 1504.[397]

As for the boundaries between the municipal autonomy and the central authorities, Vas County acknowledged that the counties had no right to issue and execute local statues which contradicted the laws passed by the National Assembly. However, it insisted on the right of the counties to elect their own county officials who, in case of controversies, should be impeached by the central authorities only within the framework of administrative law. Vas County would also have maintained the counties' authority to implement government decrees with their own officials. Furthermore, their proposal aimed to preserve county jurisdiction with respect to issues of military billeting, which was a heavy burden the counties had had to carry for centuries, and thus a traditional source of tension between state and county authorities. Vas County also proposed to recognize the right of the local communities to determine their own financial and economic needs, including the right to set and collect the house tax. From a historical security perspective, the most interesting part of the proposal was that Vas County insisted on the counties' role in maintaining public order and security in their own territories.[398]

In the proposal, Vas County also expressed its views on the issue of the formation of the county assembly, including the elections and voting rights. Joining forces with some other counties, it proposed that county officials (district administrators, notaries, etc.) should be automatically considered members of the county assembly. The idea behind this was that the experience of the officials in every-day management would benefit the decision-making of the assembly. Apart from them, the members of the county assembly should be elected every nine years in the districts, with their numbers determined proportionally to the population. Furthermore, Vas County came up with a rather unusual idea on how to avoid the dominance of certain groups in the county assembly. According to the proposal, within the nine-year electoral cycle, one-third of the county assembly members would resign every three years. Those who stepped down could regain their mandate only at the time of the next general elections. As for the elections, Vas County proposed to make a distinction between "active" and "passive" voting rights. This meant that they would have determined the local elective franchise in accordance with the Act V of 1848, but at the same time they rejected the idea that certain people could still enjoy voting rights on the basis of historical privileges.[399]

[397] STIPTA: *Törekvések a vármegyék polgári átalakítására*, pp. 129–136.
[398] IBID., p. 138.
[399] IBID., pp. 133–136.

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Howsoever detailed it was, Vas County's proposal was just one of the many made by the different municipalities and sent to the government or the National Assembly in 1869–1870 at the time of the great county debate. Although the final law proposal, submitted by the government for debate in the House of Representatives on 28 April 1870, included some of the county's proposals, it mirrored first and foremost the interests of the central administration. The significance of the new municipality law and its consequences was confirmed by the fact that the parliamentary debate itself lasted for three months before the Act XLII of 1870 was passed on 26 July 1870. The primary aim of this much-disputed legislation was to define what was to be called a "municipality" in Hungary, and what functions, obligations and privileges a municipality should have in the future. The new law, which included as many as ninety-three clauses, recognized all the counties and the free royal cities, as well as some special territories, as independent municipalities (*önálló törvényhatóság*). The first paragraph of the law determined the three main areas of activity to be undertaken by the municipalities. These were as follows: (1) the right of self-governance; (2) the obligation to convey the state administration to local levels; and (3) the right to debate national matters. The third area also included the right to share their views with each other and the government, and to petition the House of Representatives.[400]

As a result of the reforms, the counties lost a number of political and legal responsibilities. Most of all, they were deprived of their historical "right to withstand" (*vis inertiae*). Instead, they were still allowed to petition the government and the National Assembly. Nonetheless, the counties maintained their right to nominate and elect most of the local officials, including the administrative head of the county, the Vice-Lieutenant (*alispán*), and his right-hand-men, the district administrators (*szolgabíró*). The county officials were elected for six years, and the only precondition of being elected was that of being a law-abiding Hungarian national of at least twenty-two years of age. Although some distinguished county positions (notary, doctor, engineer, etc.) required higher qualifications, most of the jobs offered by the county administration were seen as a tempting opportunity for the uneducated. Consequently, the qualifications of officials and their suitability remained a much-debated issue for the entire period. At the top of the county administration pyramid was the Vice-Lieutenant, who commanded all the county officials and represented the county with his signature on official documents. He was the one responsible for the execution of the laws and decrees, as well as for securing public order and safety in the county. In case the county police (*pandúrok*) proved to

[400] IBID., pp. 137–142.

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be insufficient, for example at election times, the Vice-Lieutenant had the right to request additional law enforcement forces as assistance.[401]

The political leader of the county remained the Lord-Lieutenant (*főispán*), who supervised the county administration and safeguarded the interests of the state. In the Dualist period, the Lords-Lieutenant were appointed by the king after being nominated by the Minister of Internal Affairs. At the beginning of the period they were typically members of local aristocratic families, but were later increasingly chosen from the ranks of distinguished public servants. During their term in office, the Lords-Lieutenant received instructions directly from the Prime Minister, the Minister of Internal Affairs or other members of the cabinet. In case of alleged corruption or abuse of power, it was the duty of the Lord-Lieutenant to launch an investigation against the suspected county officials. If necessary, he could even suspend them, including the Vice-Lieutenant, but the suspension of the latter required authorization from the government. The Lord-Lieutenant enjoyed the right to nominate some officials, such as the county archivist, public safety officer (*csendbiztos*) and others among his office staff.[402]

The most important body in the county municipalities was the county assembly which, according to the new law, had to meet at least twice a year. In fact, in most of the counties the assemblies were held every two or three months. In addition, extraordinary gatherings could be held at any time. The law precisely determined the competencies of the assembly, which included drafting the annual budget, electing the county officials and issuing local statutes and regulations. The size of the assembly was determined by the law on the basis of the local population. In theory, every 500 hundred citizens should have been represented by one assembly member, but the assembly's size was restricted to between 120 and 600. The members of the assembly were elected every three years in a six-year cycle. This meant that after three years half of the members were forced to resign, whereas three years later the other half stepped down. The law introduced the system of virilism (*virilizmus*), which meant that only half of the seats in the assembly were secured through elections, with the other half being reserved for the highest-tax payers residing in the given municipality. In contemporary words the latter were called the "virilists" (*virilisták*). The system of virilism was rather controversial: on one hand it restricted democracy, on the other hand – through the publicity of tax payment – it improved the willingness of the citizens to pay taxes. From a political perspective, the system was seemingly designed to secure and maintain the dominance of the historical upper and middle

[401] IBID., pp. 154–158.
[402] IBID., pp. 159–163.

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classes, first and foremost the Hungarian-speaking aristocracy and nobility in local political life.[403]

The Minister of Internal Affairs ordered the county assemblies to gather on 15 June 1871. In Vas County, it was not just the first county assembly held according to the new law but also the day of the inauguration of a new Lord-Lieutenant. Kelemen Ernuszt took his oath of office in front of the county assembly. In his very first speech, the new county leader said that his mission was to realize the “unification of interests" between municipal autonomy and the state administration. Ernuszt kindly invited the assembly members to join forces with him and the county officials in the endeavor to reorganize the county, for which he received great applause from the audience. On behalf of the county assembly, Vice-Lieutenant Lajos Takács rose to speak. Greeting the new county leader with warm words, Takács reminded Ernuszt of the historical meaning of municipal autonomy and expressed his hope that the new Lord-Lieutenant would use the authority of his office fairly. Referring to the ongoing political tensions between the government and the counties, Takács said the cabinet must respect the basic rights of the nation (i.e. self-governance), but it was also its duty to “withstand all the threats from the outside" as well as the “waves of the various movements inside”.[404]

According to the municipality law, the county assemblies had to establish a special committee, which was responsible for drafting the new regulations of the county. In Vas County, Count Sándor Erdődy led the sixty-member committee that drafted the plans. The document was written in both Hungarian and German, the most widely spoken languages in the county, and then distributed to the members of the county assembly as well as to the towns and villages. The county assembly discussed the proposal on 1 August 1871 and then – with some amendments – submitted it to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Given the territorial dimensions of Vas County, the new county regulations (*Vas vármegye 1871. évi szabályrendelete*) determined that the county assembly would have 600 seats (the legal maximum), of which half were reserved for the virilists and the other half filled via elections in sixty-five electoral districts across the county. The law also ordered the establishment of a permanent committee (*állandó választmány*), which set the agenda of the county assembly and prepared the matters

[403] SARLÓS: *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika*, p. 171.; CSIZMADIA: *A magyar közigazgatás fejlődése*, p. 92.
[404] County Assembly Protocol of Vas County on 15 June 1871. Source: MNL Vas Vármegyei (hereinafter Vas Vm.) Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve 1871, IV.B/303, no. 4376

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to be discussed. The chair of the permanent committee was the Vice-Lieutenant, so the county administration exercised a huge influence on the county assembly.[405]

The regulation also re-organized the territorial administration of the county. Previously, Vas County had been divided into five districts (*járás/főszolgabíróság*) under which altogether twenty sub-districts (*alszolgabíróság*) existed. In the new era, the county was made up of ten districts: Szombathely, Körmed, Sárvár, Kiscell, Kőszeg, Felsőőr, Muraszombathely, Németújvár, Szentgotthárd and Vasvár. Although the new regulation doubled the number of the districts, it assigned only one single district-administrator (*szolgabíró*) to each. This meant that the office of deputy district-administrator (*alszolgabíró*) was abolished. Although Vas County requested permission from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to hire additional staff in order to support the work of the district administrators, the government rejected the idea, labelling the proposed position (*esküdt*) as a "reminder of past times".[406]

The new county assembly of Vas County – which was based on the new municipality law (Act XLII of 1870) and the new county regulation drafted by the Erdődy committee – gathered for the first time on 4 December 1871.[407] After Vice-Lieutenant Lajos Takács reported to the assembly on the achievements of the county administration under his leadership in the previous four years, he stepped down from his position. Only then could the county assembly start the process of electing the new board of the county officials, including the new Vice-Lieutenant, Ferdinánd Chernel, and the members of the permanent committee. As for the latter, the election process revealed a conflict between the county assembly and the Lord-Lieutenant, both of whom believed that they should be responsible for drafting the list of the candidates from whom the members of the permanent committee were to be elected. The debate over the right of nomination remained a neuralgic point for the future in the relationship between the counties and the government. All this led eventually to Act XXI of 1886, by which the parliament extended the jurisdiction of the Lord-Lieutenants in the counties in favour of the central administration and at the expense of municipal autonomy.[408]

As we have witnessed, after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise the existence of an autonomous county system was increasingly questioned. In the eyes of the nationalist-liberal elites, the statehood of Hungary was no longer embodied at the mezzo-level of territorial

[405] County Assembly Protocol of Vas County on 1 August 1871. Source: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve 1871, IV.B/303, no. 2228 and no. 3815.
[406] STIPTA: *Törekvések a vármegyék polgári átalakítására*, p. 167.
[407] County Assembly Protocol of Vas County on 4 December 1871. Source: MNL Vas Megyei Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve 1871, IV.B/303, no. 5200.
[408] SARLÓS: *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika*, pp. 155–165.

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administration but on the national level in the form of modern parliamentarism. Therefore, the role of the county leaders was to be reconsidered once again. After 1867, the Lords-Lieutenant, who were known earlier as the representatives of the crown, were now seen as the right hand of the government in the counties, who delivered the implementation of the central decisions in the periphery. In this way, the office grew from an early-modern honorable dignity into an office of modern public administration. This was, however, a slow process, because both branches of the local elites insisted on keeping the historical traditions alive, including the ceremonial formalities of the inauguration of the Lords-Lieutenant.

The case of Prince Pál Esterházy, Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County between 1872 and 1893, clearly highlights this phenomenon. The aristocrat county leader was celebrated with as much enthusiasm after his appointment as if a minor king were being crowned in a small kingdom contained within the greater one. Yet, behind the medieval and early modern facades, a new modern type of political system developed in which the Lords-Lieutenant had to divide their loyalties between king, county and country, and preferably in the favor of the third. The attempt to find this delicate balance is very much detectable in Pál Esterházy's oath of office, as well as in the speeches delivered by him and other county officials during his inauguration ceremony held in Sopron on 28 October 1872. The oath in this context functions not only as a simple ceremonial speech but as a security device, which calls up an age-old history of securing or fulfilling a given expectation, relation, or undertaking.

According to medieval tradition, the Hungarian lords ruled a certain territory (county) in the name of the monarch, who required from them a pledge of their unconditional and personal loyalty and service; therefore, they took their oath in front of the king. This tradition developed further in the early modern period, when the Habsburgs rulers, as kings of Hungary, started to use the title of "Lord-Lieutenant" as a reward for the political services of the loyal aristocracy. The Esterházy family in Western Hungary, for example, had held the hereditary office of Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County since the early seventeenth century. Since the political role of the counties also increased during the intervening period, a new tradition evolved, according to which the Lords-Lieutenant took their oath in front of the local nobility at the county assembly. This early-modern tradition was still very much alive when Pál Esterházy de Galántha, the tenth Esterházy prince and first son of Prince Miklós Esterházy, was born in Vienna on 21 March 1843.[409]

[409] For the history of the Esterházy family, see: NAGY, IVÁN: *Magyarország családai. Czímerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, 4. kötet [Families of Hungary. With Coat of Arms and Generation Statistics], Pest, 1858, pp. 80–100.

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Pál's father was a loyal servant of Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph and remained the head of the wealthy family throughout the second half of the century, whereas his mother was an English noblewoman, Lady Sarah Frederica Caroline Child Villiers (1822–1853). Unlike his father, Pál did not pursue a military career in his youth, but followed in his grandfather's footsteps (Pál Antal) who served as Austrian Ambassador to London during the period after the Congress of Vienna (1815). In the 1860s, Pál also served in London as Austrian attaché, and he later fulfilled the same role at the Holy See in Rome. After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867), he decided to quit his diplomatic career and instead dedicated his life to the internal affairs of his homeland. In 1869, at an unusually young age, he was elected member of the Hungarian Parliament in the constituency of Kapuvár in Sopron County. Two years later, on the recommendation of the Minister of Internal Affairs, King Franz Joseph appointed him Lord Lieutenant of Moson County, which was the smaller, northern neighboring county of his native Sopron County.[410]

A political career was an obvious choice for Pál because his father enjoyed a very long life and remained the head of the family and thus the manager of the enormous Esterházy wealth until his death in 1894. The family owned vast farmlands and a great number of castles and palaces across the country, most of them in Western Hungary. While Miklós resided mostly in their main palace in Kismarton (Eisenstadt), his son Pál made the castle of Léka (*Lockenhaus*) in Vas County his private home. Pál married twice: his first wife, Countess Marie Trautmannsdorff, gave birth to Miklós Pál Antal, the future head of the family, in 1869. Pál's second wife, Eugenie Prinzessin von Croÿ, was the mother of his second son, Rudolf Pál Ödön, who was born in 1880. As a result of his second marriage, Pál Esterházy became the brother-in-law of Archduke Friedrich von Habsburg, and thus a distant relative of the royal family. Pál Esterházy was elected member of the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament. Honoring his achievements, he was named privy councillor of the King in 1880 and received the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1896. He died two years later at Léka.[411]

Esterházy could gain experience as Lord-Lieutenant of Moson County only for a year, because in September 1872 Franz Joseph dismissed Gyula Draskóczy, the former leader of Sopron County, due to his old age and declining health.[412] Esterházy was an ideal candidate to

[410] HALÁSZ, SÁNDOR (ed.): *Országgyűlési Almanach 1887, Főrendiház* [Almanac of the National Assembly 1887, House of Lords], Budapest, 1887, pp. 51–52.
[411] IBID.
[412] The farewell letter from the former Lord-Lieutenant was read out in the county assembly of Sopron County on 27 September 1872: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402/a-m, 1. kötet, 387. sz.

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fulfill the vacant post from the perspectives of all parties involved. In the eyes of the government, he was a great patriot who supported the Compromise of 1867 and the new liberal-nationalist administration. In the eyes of the Monarch, he was a descendant of the pro-Habsburg and most loyal Esterházy family, eldest son of Miklós, who had accompanied the Emperor during his visits to Hungary and Transylvania in the infamous period of Neoabsolutism (1849–1860). From the perspective of the county elites, he was a local but influential aristocrat whose attachment to the county guaranteed that the local and regional interests would be properly served. Due to the family background, Esterházy's inauguration ceremony was considered a much more symbolic event than an ordinary appointment of a high-ranking public servant.

Esterházy was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County by King Franz Joseph's highest resolution on 18 September 1872. On the same day, his predecessor Gyula Draskóczy was relieved from his duties at his own request, and Esterházy was also dismissed as Lord Lieutenant of Moson County, because according to the new Municipality Law of 1870 no one was allowed to be the leader of two or more different counties. The Sopron County officials had nearly five weeks to organize the inauguration, but they were ready with the plans by 6 October. They documented not only the detailed procession of the ceremony, including the speeches, but also the words with which the prince responded to the county officials. On the morning of 27 October 1872, Esterházy and his escort left his private residence, the Castle of Léka (*Lockenhaus*), located in neighboring Vas County, just a few kilometres away from the southern border of Sopron County. The prince first set foot in Sopron County as a county leader at 11am in the village of Répcekethely (*Mannersdorf an der Rabnitz*), where he was welcomed and greeted by a small county delegation led by István Ferenczy, the Vice-Lieutenant of Sopron County.[413]

It was not the administrative head of the county but the provost of Csorna, Vince Simon, who addressed the prince with exceptionally warm words, even as compared with other contemporary examples. First, Vince Simon shared the "unlimited joy and love" of the county people over the King's decision to appoint Esterházy as Lord-Lieutenant, who would be now in a position to practice of the virtues of his "glorious ancestors" such as "real and pure patriotism", "justice", "religious spirit", a "fair approach toward different opinions" and "unbiased love". Then the provost emphasized Esterházy's personal attachment to the county, referring to the fact that at a younger age the prince had already been awarded the title of

[413] The documents concerning the planning of the inauguration ceremony have been well preserved by the Archives of Sopron County, so it is possible to reconstruct the chain of events accurately: MNL MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/54, no. 405.

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"honorary notary" of Sopron County as some sort of compensation for the historic title of "perpetual Lord-Lieutenant" that was then held, by his grandfather. Last but not least, Vince Simon wished for long-lasting good health and asked for God's grace for the prince, who was taking over an "honorable but difficult office", in his attempt to "revive the county and country". In his answer, Esterházy compared the delegation's gesture to escort him from the border to the heart of the county to the services he would require from them in the future as Lord-Lieutenant. As he explained, he would be indeed in need of their strong support and good counsel in his new position, and therefore he expressed his wish to work jointly in mutual understanding for the sake of their native county.[414]

After the speeches Esterházy and his escort, accompanied by the county delegation, marched on to the north in the direction of the administrative centre of the county, the free royal city of Sopron (*Ödenburg*). The procession was led by the administrator of the Felsőpulya (*Oberpullendorf*) district, in which the Lord-Lieutenant first marched through the county. The approximately thirty-kilometre-long journey was stopped next in the village of Harka (*Harkau*), which is located very close to the city. In front of the so-called "county house" in the village, a group of county assembly members once again saluted the prince. From Harka to Sopron they advanced further in a very strict order: first rode the sheriff of the county with half of the county hussars, followed by the administrator of the Sopron district, then the prince with his personal escort, and last the rest of the hussars. They arrived in Sopron city centre around 3pm, marching through the marketplace and bypassing the legendary Firewatch Tower on their way to reach the County Hall located in the main square.[415]

Under the gate of the main building of the county administration, the county troops provided a guard of honor, whereas the county officials led by chief notary Ödön Simon stood on the stairs. Esterházy addressed them briefly, admitting that the closer he approached his beloved city, the more emotional he became. He also expressed his wish that those old friends who were present on the day should also take their part in his everyday work in the future. It was also the chief notary who accompanied the Lord-Lieutenant on his way to his office chamber, where he was introduced personally to the leading county officials. Esterházy delivered a brief speech, in which he reminded them of their responsibilities. According to the new Lord-Lieutenant, the elected county officials can only "repay the confidence of the voters" if they fully support each other in their efforts to serve the public interest and the common good. In his view, "the right public administration" shall be achieved by the "proper implementation

[414] IBID.
[415] IBID.

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of laws and decrees", and this could be the only way forward to boost the "homeland's spiritual and material revival". The official programme of the first day of the inauguration was concluded with a torch rally and street music, heading from the main square through the marketplace to Esterházy's personal apartment in the city.[416]

In the morning of the following day, 28 October 1872, a *Veni Sancte* mass was celebrated by János Zalka, the Bishop of Győr as part of the inauguration ceremony. On the same day, an extraordinary county assembly was held at the County Hall in Sopron, where the first point on the agenda was the inauguration of the new Lord Lieutenant.[417] The county assembly was attended by all the prominent public figures of the region, including the Sopron county members of the parliament, the Bishop of Győr and the representatives of neighboring Moson County, as well as delegates from Western Hungary's four free royal cities: Sopron, Kőszeg, Kismarton and Ruszt. The county assembly was opened by Vice-Lieutenant István Ferenczy, who proposed following the age-old tradition by forming an ad hoc delegation to invite Esterházy to the meeting. When the group of respectable noblemen returned with the prince, there was a burst of applause. After entering the room, Esterházy presented his decree of royal appointment. Then took the oath of office with the following words:

"I [N. N.] do swear to the one living God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to all Saints of God and I do vow and promise to my eternal Monarch on Earth, Franz Joseph the First, Austrian Emperor, Apostolic King of Hungary and Bohemia, and also Dalmatia, Croatia and Galicia, that I will be eternally loyal, submissive and worshipful to his Imperial and Apostolic Royal Majesty, and I will always try to maintain and consolidate the glory, dignity and power of his Majesty and his heirs and successors, and I will try to prevent any harm to them with all my power. I do swear to abide by all laws of Hungary and in all the issues arising from my office obligations, I will be ascertained by God and his sacred justice without making distinction between people, between rich and poor, while setting aside request and reward, favor and fear, love, kindness and hatred; and as far my talent and the laws are concerned, I will provide with right, justice and execution to all things. So help me God, the Blessed Virgin and all saints of God."[418]

[416] IBID.

[417] The procession of the extraordinary county assembly on 28 October 1872 was documented in the protocol of the Sopron County assembly: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402/a-m, 1. kötet, no. 404.

[418] The oath of office by Prince Pál Esterházy as Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County on 28 October 1872: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/54, no. 405.

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After taking the oath, Esterházy addressed the county assembly. In his speech, the new county leader admitted that he had accepted the office of Lord-Lieutenant not only because of his personal obedience to the Monarch, but also because of his "family's never-ending, age-old affection" towards Sopron County. Esterházy reminded his audience of his childhood spent in the region, when he learned Hungarian language and was lucky to "grow up amongst the walls of those historic monuments that are shared by the Esterházy family and Sopron County". Furthermore, he explained how proud he was of the trust he had received from the people of Kapuvár district when he was elected Member of Parliament at a very young age. As for the future, the new Lord-Lieutenant asked for the assembly's support and contributions: "We have a shared task to do", he insisted. Esterházy argued that since the coronation of the king in 1867, the Hungarian government had laid a new foundation for the state on which the "spiritual and material interests of the country" could be served and progress achieved "every time, in all possible ways, shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand". He expressed his hope that they would have future meetings in the same spirit of "enthusiasm for the public good", and even if they had different opinions on certain issues, they would still remain united "in their loyalty to the king, their love for the country, their respect for the laws and their good intentions for the county". Esterházy's words prompted a great applause among the audience once again. After the celebration, he was ceremonially lifted three times into the chair of the Lord-Lieutenant, which was considered an ancient tradition.[419]

In the name of the county assembly, Ödön Simon rose to speak. The chief notary repeated how happy and grateful the people of Sopron County were to have the prince in charge of the county's affairs. Then he engaged himself in a rather simplifying historical argument, claiming that the institution of Lord-Lieutenantship was invented by the state-founder King, Saint Stephen himself, in the early eleventh century, and therefore had a "shared eight-century-long history" with the kingdom. Simon continued his address by enumerating the glorious ancestors of the prince who had served the king and country as county leaders or in even higher offices since the early seventeenth century. Then he touched upon the topic of contemporary challenges. Without mentioning the serious conflicts between the Hungarians and the Habsburgs between 1848 and 1867, he said that "on the ruins of the old feudal constitution, a parliamentarian form of governance" has been recently established. Similarly, without mentioning the embittered contemporary debates over the country's territorial administration, Simon argued that the county system must be harmonized with the new system of governance

[419] IBID.

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in order to "let us become the founding nation of this great country". Referring to Municipality Act of 1870, he recalled that the historic title of Lord-Lieutenancy had now become a high-ranking public office, which comes with "both rights and obligations". Then the chief notary offered the county's trust and honesty to the prince and asked for God's grace for the new leader in the hope for a better future. "Long live his Majesty, the King! Long Live the inaugurated, beloved and honored Prince Lord-Lieutenant!", he concluded.[420]

At the last moment of the inauguration ceremony, a local member of the national parliament, Miksa Ürményi, gave a speech in the county assembly. Following the obligatory round of flattering words, he drew a thought-provoking comparison between the old generation of the so-called reform era (1830s and 1840s) and their own generation. He argued that whereas the ancestors, including Esterházy's grandfather, were much more talented and had delivered much greater achievements in difficult times, the contemporaries could now live and create under much better conditions and circumstances. In Ürményi's view, the new era required a new political generation with "new wishes, new demands, needs and activities", but they also had to continue the work started by the ancestors. Referring implicitly to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, he insisted that "we must secure especially what has been already gained", and that could be achieved by "order and good governance". In the second half of his speech, Ürményi switched to a more personal tone, asking the prince to set an example to follow both in his public and private life. Furthermore, he wished him to be understanding of those with different opinions and to help and support those whose family background was less fortunate than his own. With Ürményi's thoughts the ceremonial part of the county assembly came to an end. The next ordinary county assembly in Sopron County was held on 18 November 1872, chaired this time by Prince Lord Lieutenant Pál Esterházy.The County Hall in Sopron rang with loud cheers as he opened the county assembly for the first time as Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County.[421]

3.4 City Policies in Dualist era Western Hungary

When Hungary regained its internal sovereignty as a result of the Compromise in 1867, a new chapter opened in the history of the cities and towns. The elites' vision of a modern, unified and preferably "magyar" nation-state was unimaginable without a network of strong and

[420] IBID.
[421] Protocol of the county assembly on 18 November 1872: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402/a-m, 1. kötet, no. 415-416.

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developing cities; however, they were to be created on a very complicated and highly unbalanced historical foundation.[422] The transformation of the cities therefore posed an enormous challenge to the national and local elites, which caused political tensions between the different levels of state administration. Securitization too played an important factor in city policies, since securing control over the cities was widely seen as a prerequisite of effective nation-state-building.[423] In this subchapter, therefore, we will examine this question with regard to Western Hungary, focusing primarily on the question of how the four free royal cities of the region responded to the fundamental changes which occurred during the first ten years of the Dualist system, namely between 1867 and 1877.

As for the historical background, one should be aware that in comparison to European standards (for example German and Italian cities) or even to other Habsburg lands (cities in Austrian hereditary provinces or in Bohemia)[424], Hungary had never been a highly urbanized country.[425] This was reflected not only in the relatively low number of cities compared to the size of the territory of the country, but also in the relatively low population and small territory of the actually existing cities.[426] It is also noteworthy that due to the Ottoman invasion in the 16-17th centuries, the geographical distribution of the Hungarian cities suffered a massive deformation. This is the main reason why most of the (free royal) cities – either surviving or created in the early modern period – were to be found in the western, northern and eastern periphery of the country (namely Western Transdanubia, Upper Hungary and Transylvania) as opposed to the southern and central parts which were ravaged and occupied by the Turks.[427]

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[422] The previously mentioned ideologist, Gusztáv Beksics, dedicated one of his works to the importance of the cities for Hungarian nation-building. See: BEKSICS: *Magyarosodás és magyarosítás*.

[423] Very similar parallel processes took place in Cisleithanien, too. Learn more: HEIN-KIRCHER: *Lembergs "polnischen Charakter" sichern,* pp. 326-342; HEIN-KIRCHER, HEIDI: *Von Instrumenten der Durchstaatlichung zu Instrumenten des Nationalitätenkonflikts. Zur nationalitätenpolitischen Bedeutung von Städtestatuten am Beispiel des Lemberger Statuts*, in: Rechtsgeschichte Österreichs, (8) 2018, 1, pp. 63-80.; GANTNER, ESZTER – HEIN-KIRCHER, HEIDI: *Imperiale Herausforderungen in Habsburg Emerging Cities: Lemberg und Budapest zwischen Nationalisierung, Stadtentwicklung und Wissenstransfer*, in: BACHINGER – DORNIK – LEHNSTAEDT, STEPHAN (eds.): Österreich-Ungarns imperiale Herausforderungen, pp. 257-274.

[424] On the history of urbanisation in the late Habsburg Empire, see: HOREL, CATHERINE: *Multicultural Cities of the Habsburg Empire, 1880–1914: Imagined Communities and Conflictual Encounters*, Budapest, 2023, 23-62.; HOREL, CATHERINE: Imperial Challenges in Austro-Hungarian Multicultural Cities, in: BACHINGER – DORNIK – LEHNSTAEDT, STEPHAN (eds.): Österreich-Ungarns imperiale Herausforderungen, pp. 275-294.

[425] On the early modern city developments in European comparison, see: COWAN, ALEXANDER: *Urban Europe, 1500–1700*, London, 1998.; FRIEDRICH, CHRISTOPH: *Urban politics in early modern Europe*, London, 2000; TILLY, CHARLES – BLOCKMANS, WIM P. (eds.): *Cities and the Rise of States in Europe a.d. 1000 to 1800*, San Francisco–Oxford, 1994.; RAUSCH, WILHELM (ed.): *Die Städte Mitteleuropas im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Linz, 1981.

[426] LOVRA, ÉVA: *Városok az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchiában. Városszövet- és várostipológia 1867-1918* [Cities in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Urban Morphology and Typology 1867-1918], Budapest, 2019, pp. 16-50.

[427] On the early modern history of the Hungarian cities, see: H. NÉMETH, ISTVÁN: *Várospolitika és gazdaságpolitika a 16–17. századi Magyarországon. A felső-magyarországi városszövetség*. 1–2. kötet. [City

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As a result of the demographic changes which occurred in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, it was exactly those central territories that became the most populous as well as the ethnically "more Hungarian" parts of the country, thus reinforcing the priority of managing their urbanization for the nationalist-liberal leadership in the Dualist era. At the same time, they also had to deal with the question of the non-Hungarian, or at least multi-ethnic, cities located mostly in the peripheral regions of the country. Consequently, contesting their self-governance can be interpreted as a first necessary step towards their "Magyarization". In this sense, the issue of public administration after 1867, including the re-configuration of the cities and towns, clearly grew into a question of national security.[428]

When it comes to the question of political and social dominance in Hungary in the early modern era, it was always the aristocracy, the higher clergy and the nobility (counties) that enjoyed the leading role, and not the city bourgeoisie. Yet, it would be a gross error to claim that there was no flourishing city life in Hungary prior to the modern era.[429] To sum up the historical background very simply and briefly, one can say that over the centuries, two main types of cities evolved across the country. One was the group of the so-called 'country towns' (*mezőváros*), which were centres of agriculture and agricultural trade. The other group contained the so-called 'free royal cities' (*szabad királyi város*), which were known as the main hubs of handicraft, mining, forestry, trade, and culture. In the middle and early modern ages, the 'country cities' were subjected to the jurisdiction of a landlord and/or the county in which they were located. In contrast, the 'free royal cities' were subordinated exclusively to the crown, paying their taxes directly to the royal treasury and thus enjoying a far greater autonomy than their counterparts in the countryside. The free royal cities, which typically had a population of just a few thousand in the nineteenth century, even had the right to send their own representatives to the early modern version of the national assembly. Since they received their privileges from the crown, they were mostly seen as pro-Habsburg political bodies as opposed to the potentially disloyal Hungarian nobility based in the counties.[430]

Policies and Economic Policies in 16–17th century Hungary. Tha Alliance of Cities in Upper Hungary, Volume 1-2], Budapest, 2004.

[428] On 18th–19th century Hungarian city policies, see: DEÁK, ERNŐ: Das Städtewesen der Länder der ungarischen Krone.

[429] See: SZŰCS, JENŐ: Das Städtewesen in Ungarn im XV-XVII. Jahrhundert, in SZÉKELY, GYÖRGY – FÜGEDI, ERIK (eds.): *La Renaissance et la Réformation en Pologne et en Hongrie 1450–1650*, (*Studia historica Academiae scientiarum Hungaricae* 53.), Budapest, 1963. pp. 97–164; BÁCSKAI, VERA: *Városok és polgárok Magyarországon I-II*, Budapest, 2007.; H. NÉMETH ISTVÁN – SZÍVÓS, ERIKA – TÓTH, ÁRPÁD (eds.): *A város és társadalma. Tanulmányok Bácskai Vera tiszteletére* [The City and its Society. Studies in Honour of Vera Bácskai], Budapest, 2011.

[430] On the political significance of the free royal cities, see: H. NÉMETH, ISTVÁN: *Az állam szolgái vagy a város képviselői? A központosuló várospolitika hatásai a soproni politikai elit átrendeződésére* [Servants of the State or

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All this had an ethno-linguistic aspect too: the majority of the population of the free royal cities was of non-Hungarian ethnic origin, first and foremost German "bürger", whereas the country cities had most typically a Hungarian (and/or Slavic) background. This phenomenon can be observed very well in the case of Western Hungary. The free royal cities in the region – Sopron/*Ödenburg*, Kőszeg/*Güns*, Kismarton/*Eisenstadt* and Ruszt/*Rust*, and Pozsony/*Pressburg* too – were all mostly German-speaking communities, while the country towns such as Szombathely, Sárvár, Csorna, Kapuvár, etc. were populated overwhelmingly by Hungarian-speakers.[431] Historically, it was not a deep antagonism; these two different kinds of towns were able to find their ways to trade and cooperate with each other for mutual benefit regardless of their primary language, ethnic belonging or attitude to the dynasty.[432]

Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century, with the rise of modern nationalism, the non-Hungarian cities could be easily labelled as 'disloyal' or 'unpatriotic' in case political tensions rose for some reason. The origins of the distrust on the part of Hungarian decision-makers towards the free royal cities of Western Hungary cannot be explained purely through nationalist prejudices; it was based as much on historical experiences. In the era of Dualism, the memories of the war of independence of 1848–1849 and the Neoabsolutist era (1849–1860) were still an influential factor in domestic politics. One example to illustrate this could be the march of the Austro-Croatian imperial army commanded by pro-Habsburg Croatian Ban Josip through Western Hungary in the autumn of 1848, when the Hungarian war of independence broke out. The free royal city of Kőszeg/*Güns* was accused at the time of betraying the national cause when they decided not to engage in conflict with the enemy, thus "helping" them to escape from Hungarian territory on 11 October 1848.[433]

Representatives of the City? Impacts of the Centralizing City Policies on the Shift within the Political Elite of Sopron], in: Soproni Szemle, (61) 2007, 2, pp. 125–141; H. NÉMETH, ISTVÁN: *A szabad királyi városok igazgatásának abszolutista vonásaihoz. A felső-magyarországi városok 1681. évi tisztújításai* [On the Absolutistic Character of the Administration of the Free Royal Cities. Re-election of Official in the Upper-Hungarian Cities in 1681], in: MAYER, LÁSZLÓ – TILCSIK, GYÖRGY: Egy emberöltő Kőszeg szabad királyi város levéltárában. Tanulmányok Bariska István 60. születésnapjára [A Life Dedicated to the Archives of the Free Royal City of Kőszeg. Studies for the 60th birthday of István Bariska], Szombathely, 2003, pp. 229–254.

[431] THIRRING: *Sopron népessége a 18-ik században*, pp. 161–172; THIRRING: *Kőszeg népességének fejlődése és összetétele*, pp. 11–13.

[432] On the early nineteenth century development of the Hungarian cities, see: BÁCSKAI, VERA: *Városok és városi társadalom Magyarországon a XIX. század elején* [Cities and Urban Societies in Hungary in the Beginning of the 19th Century], Budapest, 1988, pp. 13-60.; BÁCSKAI, VERA: *Piackörzetek, piacközpontok és városok Magyarországon 1828-ban* [Market Districts, Market Centres and Cities in Hungary in 1828], Budapest, 1984. BÁCSKAI, VERA: *Városok Magyarországon az iparosodás előtt* [Cities in Hungary before the Industrialization], Budapest, 2002, pp. 83-162.

[433] BARISKA, ISTVÁN: *Hintergrund einer "Kapitulation". Kőszeg im Oktober 1848,* in: KROPF, RUDOLF (ed.): Die Revolution von 1848/49 im österreichisch-ungarischen Grenzraum, Eisenstadt. Symposion im Rahmen der "Schlaininger Gespräche" vom 22.-27. September 1992 auf Burg Schlaining, Eisenstadt, 1996, pp. 127-134.

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The chain of the military events was reconstructed by historian Róbert Hermann as follows: When the troops of Jelačić suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Hungarian army near the village of Pákozd, in Central Transdanubia, on 29 September 1848, the Croats attempted to escape to the northwest in the direction of Vienna. Reaching Moson County, Jelačić split up his remaining army and sent about 14,000 troops under the leadership of Major Kuzman Todorovic back to Croatia, while he headed on with the rest of his soldiers towards the imperial capital, Vienna. The problem was that Todorovic's troops could make their way to Croatia only if they were successful in marching through enemy territory, i.e. the Western Hungarian counties. The Hungarians, led by Colonel János Móga, hoped to prevent the maneuver, but most of their regular forces were engaged in chasing Jelačić, so the only option was to deploy the irregular, lightly armed insurrectionary forces recently recruited in Vas and Sopron Counties. Despite being outnumbered by the retreating Austro-Croatian army, the Hungarian insurrectionists launched several minor attacks, though they could not stop the advance south of Todorovic's army. At the same time, Todorovic called on the local population to support the maneuver of the Emperor's army, which further divided the peoples of the region, who were either pro-Habsburg or pro-Hungarian or both at the same time. In the village of Pomogy/*Pamhagen*, in Moson County, for example, the locals did not let the insurrectionists demolish a bridge of strategic importance and thus slow down the march of the Croatian troops through the swamps of Lake Fertő/*Neusiedler See*. They even threatened a district administrator arriving on the scene from Sopron County with death if he were to carry out the action. Having repelled an attack by the insurrectionists near the village of Lövő in Sopron County, Todorovic continued to march on and reached the free royal city of Kőszeg/*Güns* in Vas County on 11 October. Fearing another attack, the Croatian leader gave up his original plan and rather took a detour through Austria instead of marching further through enemy territory. Todorovic therefore demanded that the city of Kőszeg should not attempt to prevent his march to the west. Since the city commanded only a small group of town guards, they did not risk an armed conflict with the Croats, but rather let them pass.[434] Todorovic's army crossed the Austria-Hungary border near Kőszeg and continued its way back to Croatia through Styria. This was seen as a major blow for the Hungarian military leadership.[435]

[434] In the Dualist Era, Kálmán Chernel, author of the Kőszeg's historical monograph, rebuffed the accusations of Kőszeg was "not being patriotic in 1848-1849": CHERNEL, KÁLMÁN: *Kőszeg sz. kir. város jelene és múltja,* Szombathely [Present and Past of Free Royal City Kőszeg], 1877, pp. 258-274.

[435] HERMANN, RÓBERT: A Todorović-hadoszlop átvonulása Sopron és Vas megyén 1848 októberében [The march of the Todorović army through Sopron and Vas Counties in October 1848], in *Soproni Szemle* (53) 1999, 3, pp. 241–272.; HERMANN, RÓBERT: *Újabb adatok és szempontok Kőszeg „kapitulációjának" kérdéséhez. A Todorović-hadoszlop átvonulása Moson, Sopron és Vas megyén 1848 októberében* [New Data and Points of View to the

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As we have seen, the historical background of the cities in Hungary and their demographic, social, economic and cultural dimensions were indeed extremely complex at the beginning of the Dualist era. Consequently, it took several years to establish a new system of cities and towns and the new regulation was achieved by means of several, often contradictory steps. This also shows how experimental government policies were in the early years of the Dualist era, when the central government was preoccupied with more pressing matters, such as the relations with Austria and Croatia or the unification of Hungary and Transylvania. At the same time, slowly but surely, the county question and the fate of the cities and towns also became matters of great dispute. Theoretically, the majority of the parties involved in these discourses agreed that many of the early modern structures should be abolished in favour of creating a modern administrative structure, but in practice this would threaten a series of interests on various levels. The cities themselves also played a double game: on one hand they demanded modernization and progress, on the other, they insisted on holding on to the privileges they had gained in the previous centuries.[436]

The first controversial law in this regard concerned the judicial system (Act IV of 1869), in which the lawmakers declared that public administration should be separated from the judicial system.[437] Today it is a basic principle in most democratic states, but this was not necessarily the case before the modern era. In Hungary, the municipalities (either counties or cities) served traditionally not only as regional authorities but also as the first level of the court system. This meant that, for instance, criminal procedures were carried out by the same local elite who were also responsible for the administration of a given city or county. The new law of 1869 took this privilege away from the municipalities, which was interpreted by many as the first attack on the part of the central government against their historical autonomy.

The free royal city of Ruszt, in Sopron County, Western Hungary, for example, was among those municipalities that lamented the law during a city assembly meeting held on 16 November 1869.[438] The city took its inspiration from the county assembly of Bihar County, in Eastern Hungary, which had sent a petition to the House of Representatives of the National

Question of the Capitulation of Kőszeg. The March of the Todorović Army through Moson, Sopron and Vas Counties in October 1848], in: BARISKA, ISTVÁN – SÖPTEI, IMRE (eds.): Kőszeg 2000. Egy szabad királyi város jubileumára [Kőszeg 2000. For the jubilee of a free royal city], Kőszeg, 2000, pp. 193–236.

[436] KOZÁRI: *A dualista rendszer*, pp. 193–214.

[437] On the history of the legislation, see: SARLÓS: *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika*, p. 23; CSIZMADIA: *A magyar közigazgatás fejlődése*, p. 105.; KONCZ, IBOLYA KATALIN: *Exekutive und Judikative Gewaltenteilung aufgrund des Act. IV. des jahres 1869 – Erfolg oder Misserfolg?*, in: HOMOKI-NAGY, MÁRIA – VARGA, NORBERT (eds.): Codification Achievements and Failures in the 19th–20th Century, University of Szeged Department of Hungarian Legal History, Szeged, 2018, p. 78.

[438] Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1867-1870, Közgyűlés 1869. november 16-ról, No. 119.

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Assembly two months earlier. It was a rather common procedure at the time: when a municipality attempted to make an impact on a certain issue at a national level, it simply shared the news with other municipalities (fellow counties and/or cities), openly asking for their political support, which could eventually manifest even in the form of joint lobbying. If the addressed party failed to recognize their own interests in the given issue, they merely noted the incoming request in the record of the assembly meeting and respectfully archived the received documents. If, however, they were in agreement with the given initiative, they tended to write and distribute their own petition in addition to the original one, and thus they further increased the bottom-up political pressure on the lawmakers.

The latter was the case in Ruszt in late 1869[439], when the city assembly members decided to join forces with Bihar County. In their own petition to the House of Representatives, the citizens of Hungary's smallest free royal city expressed their concerns about certain paragraphs of the new law reforming the judicial power. Above all, they complained about the regulation that deprived the municipalities of the right of electing their own judges, and instead gave the privilege of nomination to the government. From the municipal perspective, the new regulation was a huge step towards the elimination of municipal self-governance, or at least to its serious curtailment, and thus prepared the way for "governmental tyranny". They claimed that in case of governmental centralization, "the nation as a whole might be free politically, and the citizens might even enjoy political rights, but the sons of such nation will lack individual, civic and social liberties, so in this respect they are not in a more favourable position than the citizens of some absolutist state".[440]

Referring to France as a negative example, with its "ongoing anarchy and absolutist government", the citizens of Ruszt argued that political liberty cannot exist in countries founded on centralization. In contrast to these nations, however, in others such as Belgium, England and the USA, where the "principle of self-governance is being carried into execution", order and liberty are jointly flourishing. The argument was turned into a securitizing move when they went further to claim that centralization is dangerous in every state, but even more dangerous in Hungary for two main reasons. First, the attempt to restrict self-governance would certainly unsettle the society, which had a long tradition of insisting on retaining historical privileges. Second, in case of centralization, political life would be concentrated only in the centre, as

[439] On the situation of the city of Rust after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, see: ARTINGER, HERBET: *Chronik der Freistadt Rust 1850-1950. Tagebuch der kleinsten Stadt Österreichs mit eigenem Statut*, Graz, 2002, pp. 24-34.

[440] Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1867–1870, Közgyűlés 1869. november 16-ról, No. 119.

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opposed to the situation under self-governance, when all members of the nation were involved in political life. As their petition concluded: self-governance is a tradition that it is "highly inadvisable to kill with a single strike of centralization".[441]

In spite of such complaints raised at the local level, the law that separated the public administration and the judicial system was no longer negotiable. In fact, those who would have maintained the role of the municipalities in the judicial system formed a minority even within the municipalist camp. From 1870 on, the majority of the municipalities rather focused on the political and administrative privileges that they hoped would be preserved in the new era.[442] As in the previous debate on the judiciary, some municipalities launched a political campaign to influence the legislation. This time the free royal cities of Kassa and Debrecen, in northeastern Hungary, were the first who petitioned the House of Representatives. They urged separate legislation with regard to the free royal cities, demanding that: (1) the representatives in the city assemblies as well as the officials of the city administration should not be nominated but elected at local level; (2) the number of a city's representatives should not be decreased; and (3) the "kind of foreign" power of the Lords-Lieutenant should not be expanded to the free royal cities. In Western Hungary it was the city of Kőszeg that this time joined forces with the initiators, and sent its very similar petition to the lower house of the Hungarian Parliament.[443] Although many others also demanded that Parliament address the situation of the counties and cities in separate laws, the government and Parliament insisted on treating the two issues together when passing the new Municipality Law (Act XLII of 1870).[444]

According to the new law, in addition to the counties and some special territorial units, all the former free royal cities were considered as independent municipalities (*önálló törvényhatóság*). As for the cities, the new municipality law replaced the medieval and early modern titles (free royal cities, country cities) with new legal categories – though the free royal

[441] IBID.

[442] This was the case also in Sopron, where the city's parliamentary representative reported on the ongoing parliamentary debate in detail to the leadership and electorate of the city: IHÁSZ, REZSŐ: *An die Wahler der königlichen Freistadt Ödenburg. Bericht über den Gesetz-Entwurf betreffend die Organisation der Comitate und königlichen Freistädte*, Oedenburg (Sopron), 1870. Druck von Adolf Reichard. 8 p. MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron sz.kir. város iratai: XVIII. 275-1870:2411. The document was published and analyzed by legal historian József Ruszoly, see: RUSZOLY, JÓZSEF: *Egy kései követjelentés. Ihász Rezső soproni képviselő beszámolója választóinak a köztörvényhatósági törvény vitáiról* [A late MP report. Parliamentary Representative of Sopron Rezső Ihász's Report to his Voters on the Debate of the Municipality Law (1870)], in: PÉTER, ORSOLYA MÁRTA – SZABÓ, BÉLA (eds.): A bonis bona discere. Festgabe für János Zilinszky zum 70. Geburtstag, Miskolc, 1998, pp. 485-509.

[443] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltára, Kőszegi Fióklevéltára, Kőszeg szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1870, 30. számú ülés, 1870. Május 13., No. 699/1047.

[444] For the history of the legislation, see: VARGA, NORBERT: *A köztörvényhatósági törvény (1870:XLII. tc.) létrejötte*, in: Debreceni Jogi Műhely, 2007/4.
http://www.debrecenijogimuhely.hu/archivum/4_2007/a_koztorvenyhatosagi_torveny_letrejotte/ [20.06.2024]

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cities were allowed formally to retain their historical titles. The first modern category (1) was named 'city with municipal rank' (*törvényhatósági jogú város*) and included all the former free royal cities and also some former country cities of greater significance. The units in the second category (2) were named "towns with settled council" (*rendezett tanácsú város*, which basically translates as city without municipal rank). Their legal status, along with that of other towns and villages, was regulated in detail by the Community Law (Act XVIII of 1871). The less autonomous third category (3) was made up of those smaller towns and villages of greater or smaller size, which failed to meet the political and financial requirements of a "settled council" and were therefore in need of more direct control by the county administration. Moreover, there was an additional top category of cities (4), but it consisted exclusively of the capital city, which was named Budapest following the unification of the former free royal cities of Buda and Pest and the former country city of Óbuda, on 1 January 1873 (Act XXXVI of 1872).

From a Western Hungarian perspective, the new legal framework imposed a differentiation between the cities of the region which lacked any obvious or justifiable rationale. The former free royal cities – Sopron, Kőszeg, Kismarton and Ruszt – were all automatically considered as 'cities with municipal rank'. In contrast, the former country city of Szombathely, despite its status as an episcopal city, as the administrative centre of Vas County and as the most rapidly developing city of the Dualist era in Western Hungary, was recognized only as a "city with settled council". Magyaróvár, the administrative centre of Moson County, was treated even less favorably, as it was downgraded from a country city to a greater village. In terms of autonomy and self-governance, a city with settled council (like Szombathely) was somewhere halfway between the "independent municipalities" (like Sopron) and the rest of the towns and villages, which were considered as communities without settled council (like Magyaróvár). At a stroke, possessing or not possessing a settled council, rather than having previously enjoyed the privilege of municipality rank became the criterion, which meant that these communities, regardless of their actual size and economic output, were subordinated to their respective county administrations.[445]

As for the four former royal cities, the new category of "city with municipal rank" implied that these cities should be supervised by the government in a way similar to the counties. The lawmakers therefore established a new institution called 'city Lord-Lieutenancy' (*városi főispánság*), which was basically a copy of the already existing 'county Lord-Lieutenancy' (*megyei főispánság*). The law debarred one and the same person from holding the

[445] On Szombathely's rapid development in the era as well as its attempt to gain the municipality rank, see: MELEGA: *A modern város születése*, pp. 33–42 and pp. 56–57.

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offices of Lord-Lieutenant in a city and in a county simultaneously. Furthermore, since the number of the free royal cities was rather high (seventy-two), assigning a different supervisor to each city would have been an extra burden for the state budget. Instead, the government came up with the idea of grouping the cities on a geographical basis, forming altogether twenty-three groups across the country.[446]

In Western Hungary, the four former free royal cities, which had all now been recognized as municipalities, formed one such group under the supervision of their new City-Lord-Lieutenant, who – as already mentioned – according to the law could not be the Lord-Lieutenant of either Vas, Sopron or Moson County at the same time. Although the city version of Lord-Lieutenancy was a newly invented office, it strongly resembled the role of the Royal Commissioners, who in early modern times were occasionally appointed to supervise the free royal cities on the behalf of the crown. In the eyes of the cities, the presence of these Royal Commissioners was always seen as a threat to their privileges, which had the potential to restrict their autonomy. Consequently, the cities also tended to display a rather unfriendly attitude toward the new City-Lords-Lieutenant.[447]

Like the county leaders, the Lords-Lieutenant of the cities were also chosen and nominated by the Minister of Internal Affairs and then appointed formally by the Monarch himself. Although the Municipality Law was passed by the Parliament on 26 July 1870, the execution of the law took more than a year, which can be explained by the fact that János Rajner was in the meantime replaced as Minister of Internal Affairs by his former state secretary Vilmos Tóth. Most of the new City-Lords-Lieutenant were appointed on 30 July, 26 August, and 3 September 1871 respectively. The only case where the appointment suffered an extraordinary delay was Western Hungary, where the new Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron, Kőszeg, Kismarton and Ruszt was confirmed by Franz Joseph only on 22 January 1872. As historian-archivist Imre Söptei, an expert on Kőszeg, points out, the question remains: why was it so difficult, and why did it take so long to find the appropriate candidate for this office when, compared to some other regions, Western Hungary was a rather peaceful region? Was it perhaps not so urgent? Or, on the contrary, was it a delicate matter due to the partly Germanic background of the border region?

[446] The annual salary of a Lord-Lieutenant at this time was about 3,000 forints. Hiring only twenty-three City-Lords-Lieutenant instead of seventy-two resulted in a saving of 147,000 forints, not to mention the additional expenditures of running an office.

[447] SÖPTEI, IMRE: *A városi főispánok története Magyarországon 1870–1874* [Szakdolgozat] [History of the Lords-Lieutenant of the cities in Hungary 1870–1874] [Master's thesis], ELTE-BTK, Budapest, 1998, pp. 21–31.

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In most cases, the government nominated a person who had some local roots, but in the case of the Western Hungarian cities they rather chose an outsider: Károly Mérey.[448] There were some rumours of other candidates but Mérey was probably chosen because he met most of the requirements expected from a Lord-Lieutenant operating in Western Hungary. He was known as a faithful royalist and a Hungarian patriot at the same time, who enjoyed a noble family history, a lawyer's education and vast experience in public administration. Furthermore, as a literary translator he had mastered the German language. The only problematic area was his lack of a close personal connection to Western Hungary, though some of his distant relatives had lived in Kőszeg several decades earlier.[449]

Mérey was appointed as Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron, Kőszeg, Kismarton and Ruszt on 22 January 1872. Mérey probably consciously followed the sequence of size and significance of the cities when he decided to visit Sopron/*Ödenburg* first, on 19 February. Although the inauguration ceremony took place more or less as expected, and Mérey was welcomed with warm words, the city was not enthusiastic about the new leadership. In his speech at the assembly meeting during which Mérey took his oath of office as City-Lord-Lieutenant, the city captain of Sopron clearly expressed their main concerns over the new authority.[450] According to József/Josef Glozer, the main problem with the office was that it was not just about supervision of the administration but possessed a power to intervene in matters that exclusively belonged to the interests of the cities (education and schools, taxation and finances, trade and industry, etc.), and upon which the "spiritual and material development" of the cities were founded.[451] In spite of the friendly welcome, from the first day on the cooperation between the Sopron city leadership and their new supervisor suffered from several minor conflicts. Even finding a location for the office and apartment of the new leader in Sopron caused a headache

[448] Károly Mérey was born on 15 October 1816 in the city of Esztergom, in Central Hungary. Having a noble title, he earned several decorations during his successful career under various political systems. Before 1848 he worked as a chamber secretary and in 1841 he was elected as county judge (*táblabíró*) in Pest County. After the revolution of 1848, he worked as a secretary in Lajos Kossuth's Ministry of Finance, for which he faced legal persecution after 1849. After the fall of the Neoabsolutist regime in 1861, he was appointed first as secretary of the chancellery of the court and then as Governor-Lord-Lieutenant (*főispáni helytartó*) of Somogy County, an office he held until 1865. He was retired from the court budget in 1867. In the 1870s, he lived in Zagreb, Croatia, where he died on 11 February 1874 at the age of 59. Besides politics and public administration, he was known as a literary and theatrical figure and a translator. SÖPTEI, IMRE: *Kőszeg szabad király város főispáni hivatala 1872-1876* [The Office of the Lord-Lieutenant in the Free Royal City of Kőszeg 1872-1876], in: TILCSIK, GYÖRGY: Előadások Vas megye történetéről III. - Vas megyei levéltári füzetek 9. [Studies on the History of Vas County, Volume 3 – Archival studies of Vas County, No. 9], Szombathely, 2000, p. 199.

[449] SÖPTEI: *Kőszeg szabad király város főispáni hivatala*, pp. 195–210.

[450] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron város tanácsülési és közigazgatási jegyzőkönyve, 1872. febr. 19.

[451] On the economic and political development of Sopron in 19th century, see: MAAR: *Einführung in die Geschichte der westungarischen Stadt Scarbantia - Ödenburg - Sopron*, pp. 150-167.

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for both parties. When Mérey ran out of patience he filed a condemnatory report to the government about the difficulties he faced.[452]

Károly Mérey started his services in Kőszeg/*Güns* on 24 March, where he was received by a local committee led by caretaker Mayor Sándor/Alexander Ullmann.[453] He was told that although the city had as serious concerns regarding the new institution as Sopron did, they still hoped that the new Lord-Lieutenant would prove to be "not a restrictor but a strong protector of municipality rights"[454] Mérey's inauguration in Kőszeg took place two days later at the city assembly. In his speech, the new supervisor assured the city representatives about his good intentions. Recalling his childhood memories of Kőszeg and emphasizing his patriotic sentiments in his introductory speech, he pledged to maintain the city's historical rights and autonomy. As he phrased it, referring to the Compromise of 1867, that autonomy was "the newest seedling of our regained liberty to be protected from all dangers".[455] In return, Mérey received a standing ovation from the city assembly. The good spirit lasted, and even increased, during the first few weeks of his service. The great tasks of the reorganization of the city between 2 April and 8 May, including the re-election of the officials, the appointment of several new committee members and the preparation for the local elections, was carried out in a cooperative and respectful manner. Sándor Ullmann, the former caretaker, was elected as new Mayor, with whom with Mérey was able to form a good working relationship. Eventually the new Lord-Lieutenant even gave a speech in German to impress the city assembly. In exchange for his supportive behavior in the beginning, on 8 May 1872 Mérey was awarded with the title of honorary citizen of Kőszeg, alongside the Roman Catholic bishop of Szombathely, Imre Szabó, the Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County, prince Pál Esterházy and the Prime Minister of Hungary, Menyhért Lónyai.[456]

As time moved forward, however, the relationship between the Lord-Lieutenant and the city leadership of Kőszeg deteriorated significantly. The everyday management of the city revealed differences that both sides had been anxious to sweep under the carpet in the spring of 1872.[457] As in Sopron, the city elite and their supervisor clashed over and over again on several

[452] On Mérey's conflicts with Sopron, see: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron város tanácsülési és közigazgatási jegyzőkönyve 248/1873., 606/1873., 997/1873., 515/1874.
[453] SÖPTEI, IMRE: *Kőszeg szabad királyi város törvényhatóságának utolsó évei (1865-1876)*, in BARISKA – SÖPTEI (eds.): Kőszeg 2000, pp. 258–260.
[454] "Kőszeg szabad kir. város törvényhatóságának szervezése", in: Vas Megyei Lapok, 7 April 1872, pp. 1–2.
[455] Kőszeg Város Levéltára, Kőszeg szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1872, 1872. március 26., pp. 73–76, No. 637.
[456] Kőszeg Város Levéltára, Kőszeg szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1872, 1872. május 8., pp. 93–109.
[457] SÖPTEI: *Kőszeg szabad király város főispáni hivatala*, pp. 195–210.

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minor and major administrative issues, including budgetary questions, tenancy contracts and, most notably, personnel issues, namely the fulfillment of vacant posts in the city administration. Not coincidentally, the biggest conflict arose within this latest category when Mayor Ullmann passed away on 13 May 1873, after which the Lord-Lieutenant and the city assembly were simply unable to reach agreement on the succession. Taking advantage of his rights granted by the law, Mérey forced the city to postpone the election of a new Mayor and suggested temporarily assigning the mayoral duties and responsibilities to city captain Nándor Schneider. A majority of the city assembly, however, insisted on a new election, and was angered by Mérey's decision to postpone the election, calling it "a rude intervention into the self-governance of the city". Lutheran pastor Vilmos Schneller even resigned from his position in the assembly as a gesture of protest against Mérey's unacceptable policies.[458]

The real reason behind the conflict was that the majority of the city representatives wanted to elect their own man, Mihály/Michael Bierbauer, as Mayor, but Mérey personally despised the candidate. In a letter to the Ministry, the Lord-Lieutenant labelled Bierbauer a tragically uneducated person, "a peasant", who "cannot understand a word in Hungarian" and "who is hardly able to write his own name in German".[459] According to Mérey, the Kőszeg elites were perfectly aware of Bierbauer's intellectual shortcomings, but still wanted him to become Mayor in order to control him. Nevertheless, when the postponed election took place on 4 July 1873, Mihály Bierbauer was elected as Mayor.[460] By this stage, Mérey's relations with Kőszeg had reached their lowest point and were clearly beyond repair. The distrust and the poor working relationship between the new Mayor and the Lord-Lieutenant only further exacerbated the existing tensions within the city administration until the departure of the latter in early February 1874.

The third former free royal city where Mérey exercised supervision was Kismarton/*Eisenstadt* in Sopron County. He arrived in the town, which was known as the location of the main residence of the wealthy Esterházy family, on 12 April 1872. He was welcomed by Mayor János/Jan Permayer, who escorted the new Lord-Lieutenant to the city assembly, where he took his oath of office in a ceremonial manner. Mérey re-assured his audience that his political intentions were inspired by his "loyalty to the royal family", and that he would serve exclusively the "interests of the country and the city". He also pledged that in

[458] Kőszeg Város Levéltára, Kőszeg szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1873, 1873. június 4., pp. 148–150.
[459] MNL Országos Levéltára, K150 A Belügyminisztérium iratai, Általános iratok, 1873. V. kútfő. 4. tétel. 22037.
[460] Kőszeg Város Levéltára, Kőszeg szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1873, 1873. július 4., pp. 187–188.

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any case when the "well-being of the city would be affected", he would count on the contribution of the city representatives to find a solution based on mutual interests. Following the inauguration ceremony, the city assembly dissolved itself with the approval of the new supervisor. As was ordered by the law in every city municipality, the new era in the history of Kismarton also started with a new leadership and the overhaul of the city administration. The new city assembly was formed two days later on 14 April, though most of the former representatives were simply re-elected. Mérey apparently found a close ally in the ruling Mayor, János Permayer, and strongly supported his ambition to be re-elected as the leader of Kismarton. This aspiration was soon realized, alongside the election of several other new city officials. The entire procedure of re-establishing the city leadership in Kismarton was supervised personally by Mérey.[461]

However, a group of disappointed citizens under the leadership of city chaplain János Fermesz unexpectedly filed a complaint with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, accusing Permayer of abusing his power and demanding his removal. Furthermore, about thirty protesters led by an unknown figure, allegedly named "Mikán", started an unauthorized political gathering in a restaurant in Kismarton, which was against the law at the time. In response, Mayor Permayer first assigned the city captain, Béla Fügi, to visit the place in order to put an end to the illegal gathering, but the protesters refused to obey, insisting that "if the Mayor wants something, he should come personally". Permayer then showed up at the scene with three armed city guards (*hajdú*) in attendance and successfully dissolved the protest without using force. At a tension-packed city assembly held on 15 June 1872, Permayer recalled the unfortunate event as an attack "against the public safety of the city", accusing the protesters of posing a threat to the peaceful and law-abiding citizens of Kismarton. The Mayor, who depicted himself a victim of defamation, even offered his resignation to the city assembly due to the fact that several assembly members had subscribed their names to the opposition complaint sent to the ministry. This theatrical scene proved to be a shrewd move in terms of power politics: the majority of the city assembly re-affirmed Permayer as Mayor and rather turned against the rebels. Permayer then initiated a process of requesting Lord-Lieutenant Mérey to intervene with the Ministry for the sake of the city, which meant he should manage things so that the anti-Permayer action would have no consequences. Furthermore, the city assembly informed János Zalka, the bishop of Győr, who exercised church jurisdiction over

[461] Landesarchiv Burgenland, Archiv der Freistadt Eisenstadt, M/II: Ratsprotokoll und Generalversammlungsprotokollbücher 1871–1884, "Kismarton szabad király város közönségének 1872. évi április 13-án, 14-én és 15-én tartott ülésének jegyzőkönyve".

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Kismarton, about the unacceptable behavior of the city chaplain, whose salary from the city budget was suspended with immediate effect.[462]

Unlike the cases of Kőszeg and Kismarton, in the city of Ruszt Mérey had to find a new Mayor who was willing to cooperate with him in the renewal of the local administration from his very first day in office.[463] The new Lord-Lieutenant arrived in Ruszt only on 26 June 1872, and was welcomed by a committee led by outgoing Mayor János Pauler. Having taken the oath of office in front of the city assembly, Mérey urged the representatives to vote for those candidates in the forthcoming elections of city officials who would "indeed serve the city's best interests". As for the new Mayor, Lajos Conrad won thirty-four of the forty-four votes to become the new leader of the smallest free royal city in the region and in the country.[464] Compared to the other cities, Mérey's relation with the city elites of Ruszt was based on pragmatic cooperation. Apart from a minor terminological dispute on whether the new city notary was "elected from below" or "nominated from above", the city assembly records reveal only limited signs of conflict between the city and its new supervisor.[465] This was probably due to the fact that the old city leadership stepped down as a whole when Mérey took office in the city. In contrast to the situation in the other Western Hungarian cities, where the reorganization of the administration resulted in the re-election of the old faces, Mérey could take advantage of the regime change in Ruszt from the very beginning of his activity as Lord-Lieutenant. Furthermore, he probably paid much more attention to affairs of the bigger cities, so his presence in Ruszt was not perceived as a frustrating factor, as it was in Sopron or Kőszeg where he spent much more time. For a city the size of Ruszt, remaining a city with municipal rank after the Compromise of 1867 was probably considered a positive result, even if they were forced to welcome a new supervisor. Mérey's satisfying work relationship with the city administration is also evidenced retrospectively by the fact that the city assembly officially expressed its sympathy when he resigned and soon passed away in early 1874.[466]

By the mid-1870s, it was becoming more and more obvious that neither the county system nor the new system of the cities, in the forms they had been given after the Compromise,

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462 Landesarchiv Burgenland, Archiv der Freistadt Eisenstadt, M/II: Ratsprotokoll und Generalversammlungsprotokollbücher 1871–1884: "Kismarton szabad király város közönségének 1872. évi június 15-én tartott ülésének jegyzőkönyve".

463 ARTINGER: *Chronik der Freistadt Rust 1850-1950*, pp. 26-28.

464 Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvei 1872–1876, Tisztújító közgyűlés 1872. június 26-án

465 Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvei 1872–1876, Rendkívüli közgyűlés 1872. Január 23-án, No. 10.

466 Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvei 1872–1876, Rendkívüli közgyűlés 1874. február 21-én, No. 30.

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were functioning as the lawmakers had hoped. Mérey was not satisfied with his achievements as the Lord-Lieutenant of the four cities in Western Hungary either; therefore, he submitted his letter of resignation to the Ministry of Interior Affairs on 24 January 1874, almost exactly two years after his appointment.[467] Citing private reasons (declining health), Mérey also justified his decision with recent rumours about governmental plans to abolish the office of City-Lord-Lieutenant. Indeed, the central administration, led at the time by Prime Minister József Szlávy, was looking into the possibility of radically decreasing the number of cities with municipal rights at the earliest opportunity. This idea was threatening to the smaller cities in particular, which feared the prospect of losing their self-governance and being incorporated into the counties.

As it had done in similar circumstances in 1869, the city assembly of Ruszt once again petitioned the House of Representatives on 21 February 1874, strongly protesting against an alleged law proposal that aimed further to curtail the privileges of the free royal cities.[468] Mérey having departed, Ruszt was not under supervision at that moment, which emboldened the city leaders to use stronger words when it came to the contestation of their historical privileges. Emphasizing the role of the cities in general and their contribution in particular to the country over the centuries in terms of economy, trade, handicraft and culture, the petition reminded the lawmakers of the detailed history of the city of Ruszt. According to the old sources, the citizens paid 60,000 golden forints and delivered 500 barrels of premium wine (*aszú bor*) worth 40,000 forints to the court of Emperor Leopold I at the end of the seventeenth century. In exchange, the Habsburg monarch, as King of Hungary, endowed Ruszt with the privileges and title of free royal city at the extraordinary national assembly held in the city of Sopron in 1681. Nearly 200 years later, the citizens of Ruszt threatened the government with demanding that 100,000 forints back from the state treasury, in the event that national legislation deprived them of their hard-earned autonomy.[469]

The citizens of Kőszeg also protested against the law proposal, but they used a less emotional tone in their effort to influence the lawmakers. In their own petition, which they shared with the rest of the free royal cities, Kőszeg argued that in contrast to what the government was hoping, the proposed abolition of several city municipalities would only further increase the financial burdens of the cities, and thus administrative procedures would

[467] Lord-Lieutenant Károly Mérey's resignation letter to Vilmos Tóth, Minister of Interior Affairs on 24 January 1874. MNL Országos Levéltára, K148, 83. d.,1867. III, 19–20.
[468] ARTINGER: *Chronik der Freistadt Rust 1850-1950*, pp. 29-30.
[469] Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvei 1872–1876, Rendkívüli közgyűlés 1874. február 21-én, No. 30.

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slow down even more.[470] On 27 July 1874, the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent a letter to the free royal cities, asking their opinion on the reform plans. The city assembly of Kőszeg discussed the matter on 10 September. First, they dismissed the financial arguments of the government, insisting that the city was able to maintain its current system of self-governance without overburdening the citizens. Moreover, the envisioned incorporation of Kőszeg into Vas County would offer no real advantages, since being downgraded from a city with municipal rank to a city with settled council would not necessarily decrease the number of city officials. In addition, they pointed out that being part of the county would just increase expenditures because of a new obligation to contribute to the county budget. Last but not least, the city leaders of Kőszeg insisted that taking away their historical self-governance, which they had inherited from their self-sacrificing ancestors, could not be justified historically because it had never threatened the interests of the country.[471]

At the very end of the year, in preparation for the upcoming reform, the Hungarian Parliament passed a law (Act XXXIX of 1874) that amended the Municipality Law of 1870 in one single but very important respect. The prohibition of simultaneously holding the offices of Lord-Lieutenant in a county and in a city was revoked. For Western Hungary it meant that as of 1875 there was no longer any need to find a new candidate for the role of City-Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron, Kőszeg, Kismarton and Ruszt. The office, which had remained vacant since Mérey's departure in February 1874, could be now occupied by the respective county leaders of Vas and Sopron Counties. In the case of Sopron, Kismarton and Ruszt, it was Prince Pál Esterházy, Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County, who took over the supervision of the cities, in January and February 1875. The Esterházy family's historical role, authority and influence in Sopron County ensured that the three cities would not engage in heavy resistance against the controversial reform plans, even if those plans threatened their interests. Just as on his county inauguration in the autumn of 1872, Esterházy was welcomed by the three cities like a minor king being crowned.[472] In the case of Kőszeg, the transition was less smooth as Kálmán Radó, the political leader of Vas County, was also to be replaced. The new Lord Lieutenant of Vas County and simultaneously the new City-Lord-Lieutenant of Kőszeg, Lajos Takács, was finally inaugurated on 18 and 20 May 1875 in Szombathely and Kőszeg, respectively. As a local nobleman, former Vice-Lieutenant of Vas County and member of the parliament from the

[470] SÖPTEI: *Kőszeg szabad király város főispáni hivatala*, p. 205.
[471] Kőszeg Város Levéltára, Kőszeg szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyve 1874, 1874. szeptember 10., no. 1275/611., pp. 171–173.
[472] Archiv der Freistadt Rust, Ruszt szabad királyi város közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvei 1872-1876, Közgyűlés 1875. február 1-én, No. 7.

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Körmend district, Takács enjoyed a great reputation in all parts of Vas County, including Kőszeg.[473]

Both Esterházy and Takács were able engage in a constructive dialogue with the free royal cities under their respective supervision. Unlike Mérey, they could uphold government interests at local levels without being perceived as abusers of self-governance. By this time, all parties were probably aware that the big decisions had already been made at the highest level. When Kálmán Tisza was appointed Prime Minister on 20 October 1875, he continued the policies of his predecessors in terms of promoting an even more centralized administration for Hungary.[474] Consequently, the Parliament passed a new law on the dissolution of certain city municipalities in less than a year (Act XX of 1876).[475] The law attached to Tisza's name was a major blow for the region of Western Hungary, as three of the four former free royal cities were among those cities that were downgraded from their status as cities with municipal rank.

The new law meant that Kőszeg in Vas County, as well as Kismarton and Ruszt in Sopron County, were to be downgraded to 'cities of settled council' and incorporated into their respective counties. From this point forward Kőszeg – like the county centre Szombathely – was supervised by the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, whereas Kismarton and Ruszt were supervised by the Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County. Formally, Esterházy and Takács resigned as City-Lord-Lieutenants of the three cities, but in fact they still exercised jurisdiction over them by virtue of leading the county administrations. The city of Sopron, the last remaining city with municipal rank in Western Hungary after 1876, was still supervised by its own City-Lord-Lieutenant; however, this was the very same person who held the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County: namely Pál Esterházy, and later his successors.

As we have seen in this subchapter, the transformation of Hungary's traditional administration radically changed the political conditions for the cities and towns. For a transitional period between 1870 and 1876, the Hungarian government experimented with an institution called City-Lord-Lieutenancy. The new office was based on the example of its county-type counterpart and introduced the joint supervision of certain groups of cities by a new City-Lord-Lieutenant. The new leaders, however, instead of representing the interests of the cities, often proved to be protagonists on behalf of enforced centralization, which led to a

[473] SÖPTEI: *Kőszeg szabad király város főispáni hivatala*, pp. 206–207.
[474] For Kálmán Tisza's public administration policies, see: GOTTAS: *Ungarn im Zeitalter des Hochliberalismus*, pp. 53-57.
[475] On the history of the legislation, see: SARLÓS: *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika,* pp. 117-153.; CSIZMADIA: *A magyar közigazgatás fejlődése,* pp. 145-160.; KOZÁRI: *A dualista rendszer*, pp. 221–232.

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series of legal and political conflicts. This was also the case in Western Hungary, where the four cities with a self-governing tradition struggled hard to preserve their self-governance under the supervision of their City-Lord-Lieutenant Mérey between 1872 and 1874. After the transitional period of joint supervision ended in 1876, it was only Sopron/*Ödenburg* that maintained its autonomy as a 'city with municipal rank', albeit a reduced one. The other three towns (Kőszeg/*Güns*, Kismarton/*Eisenstadt* and Ruszt/*Rust*) were all downgraded to 'cities of settled council and subordinated to their respective counties. Since these were mostly German-speaking towns, they proved to be an easy target of securitization. Their enforced incorporation into the counties was not just a matter of administration, but also a question of nation-state-building and national security. As Mérey, Lord-Lieutenant of the four cities, himself phrased it in his resignation letter in 1874, he had to work under critical circumstances "in those four German-minded, unpatriotic and wrongly educated cities".[476]

[476] Lord-Lieutenant Károly Mérey's resignation letter to Vilmos Tóth, Minister of Interior Affairs on 24 Jan. 1874: MNL OL, K148, 83. d, 1867. III, 19–20.

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IV. Dilemmas of Security in Western Hungary (1867-1914)

4.1 Making an Order: Public Safety and the "Betyár Crisis"

Before moving on to the ideologically motivated security dilemmas that prevailed in Western Hungary before the First World War, it is necessary to take a look at the issue of public safety, which is a rather traditional security topic. Whereas the military is first and foremost a national issue, policing can be seen also from the perspectives of the individuals, which provides us with more scope for applying the human-centric approaches of security studies. Historically, these two main fields were clearly separated from each other in most European countries by the end of the nineteenth century. In addition, law enforcement among the civil population was typically further divided into two main fields of operation: in many countries the police were responsible for maintaining public safety in urban areas, in contrast to the countryside where the Gendarmerie was assigned similar duties. Hungary was a rather special case in this respect, because it already had both the Police and the Gendarmerie before the Austro-Hungarian Compromise. These Austrian bodies of law enforcement were, however, infamous and widely considered as characteristic institutions of the much-hated Neo-absolutistic period (1849–1867).[477]

Consequently, one of the first moves of the Hungarian administration in the Dualist period was to dissolve the Austrian type of Police and Gendarmerie, which resulted in a difficult situation in the countryside.[478] For a lengthy transitional period, between 1867 and 1881, owing to the lack of a nationwide Police or Gendarmerie force, law-enforcement became once again the task of the municipalities (cities and counties), similarly to the period prior 1848. The so-called "pandurs" (in German: *Panduren*, in Hungarian: *pandúr*), an early modern kind of police officers in county service, enjoyed a controversial reputation among the population. On the one hand, they were the sole guarantors of public safety; on the other, they were also known as living examples of the meaning of the phrase "excessive use of force by law enforcement". Nonetheless, delivering public safety was a high priority for the county administrations, and this was mirrored in the annual county reports delivered by the vice-Lieutenants, in which security issues were thoroughly discussed.[479]

[477] DEÁK, Á.: *Zsandáros és policzájos idők*, pp. 32-122.
[478] IBID., pp. 539-549.
[479] Annual report on the year of 1875 by István Ferenczy, Vice-Lieutenant of Sopron County: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai (1872–1944), IV/B/401/2., no. 158. (1876. IV. 24.)

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Since the new Hungarian-type Gendarmerie was established only in 1881, and there was no police outside of the capital city either, the county authorities also had to undertake special police work, including gathering intelligence or monitoring suspicious elements. The Lords-Lieutenant of the counties were expected to report any activity in the territory of their respective counties that could be considered dangerous to the nation-state. In their own particular ways, the county authorities occasionally engaged in the surveillance of ordinary citizens and, if they discovered dangerous characters, spying on them could even become part of the every-day administration. Those who were found to be problematic – especially local actors in the political opposition, religious groups and national minorities – were occasionally securitized as potential traitors to the liberal and national state order established in 1867. The main focus of intelligence gathering and surveillance of citizens in the Dualist period was the nationality question.[480]

In times of politically insecure regimes or transitional periods crime often increases, and this indeed happened in Hungary by the end of the 1860s, when the re-organized county authorities had to face the last wave of the so-called "*betyár"* crisis. In the nineteenth century the *betyárs*, were armed criminals, who were hiding across the marshlands of the Great Plain or in the hills and woods of Hungary. They carried out a series of criminal activities, including banditry, murder, highway robbery, horse theft, train robbery, etc. Although many of them – among others Sándor Rózsa, Jóska Sobri and Márton Vidródzky – have become legendary Robin Hood-like figures in Hungarian folklore, in fact they posed a real danger to public safety.[481] Perhaps the most serious situation with the *betyárs* evolved in the Lower-Tisza region in Southern Hungary, where government commissioner Gedeon Ráday used Draconian means and methods to restore public order. Under his leadership, hundreds of crimes were investigated and several *betyárs* of nationwide notoriety were arrested and prosecuted between 1869 and 1871.[482] When these bandits began to appear in Western Hungary in the autumn of 1868, the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County was also appointed "Royal Commissioner" and was granted

[480] RESS, IMRE: *A kormányzati hírszolgálat átalakulása az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchiában a kiegyezés után 1867–1875* [The Transformation of the Governmental Intelligence Agency in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy after the Compromise 1867–1875], in: CSÓKA, FERENC (ED.): Szakszolgálat Magyarországon avagy tanulmányok a hírszerzés és titkos adatgyűjtés világából 1785–2011 [Intelligence Services in Hungary. About the World of Gathering Intelligence and Collecting Secret Data 1785–2011], Budapest, 2012, pp. 93–124.

[481] Learn more: MINAMIZUKA, SHINGO: *A Social Bandit in Nineteenth Century Hungary: Rózsa Sándor*, Brandeton 2008.; MINAMIZUKA, SHINGO: *Rózsa Sándor – Betyár vagy bandita?* [Rózsa Sándor. Betyár or Bandit?], Budapest, 2009.; KÜLLŐS, IMOLA: *Betyárok könyve. Néprajzi tanulmányok* [Book of Betyárs. Folklore Studies], Budapest, 1988.; SZABÓ, FERENC: *A dél-alföldi betyárvilág* [Betyár World in the Southern Plain] A Gyulai Erkel Ferenc Múzeum Kiadványai 53–54., Gyula, 1964.

[482] CSAPÓ, CSABA: *Ráday Gedeon és a szegedi királyi biztosság. A "betyárvilág" felszámolása.* [Gedeon Ráday and the Royal Commission in Szeged. Elimination of the "Betyár World"], Pécs, 2007, pp. 21-35 and pp. 83-104.

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extraordinary powers and law enforcement capabilities to fight against them and restore order.[483]

Taking all this into account, it is understandable that the liberal administration led by Kálmán Tisza finally decided to nationalize law enforcement in the countryside.[484] The fragmented county-based system that was quite difficult to coordinate was replaced by the new Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie in 1881. From this year on, Hungary was divided into six (from 1890 into eight) different Gendarmerie districts in terms of law enforcement, with the Western Hungarian counties belonging to the Pozsony (*Pressburg*, today: Bratislava, Slovakia) district. The Gendarmerie was subordinated to both the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, and its mission was twofold: policing and criminal investigation on the one hand, political law enforcement on the other. The Gendarmerie was not only used against criminals, but also in case of natural disasters (for example floods and fires) and political tensions (for example nationality or labour demonstrations). Nevertheless, it had no competency to gather intelligence or put people under surveillance, and these remained functions of the respective county administrations even after 1881, whereas law enforcement in the capital city of Budapest was carried out exclusively by the local city police.[485]

Like the *betyárs*, the Roma community was also considered by the local elites as a security threat.[486] Before the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries they were not yet settled down in Hungary, but rather migrated across the country.[487] Most of them remained hopelessly unintegrated and excluded from society. However, it is very difficult to examine the history of the Roma community because contemporary sources rarely mention them, and even when they do, it is only in connection with criminal activities such as illegal border crossing, robberies,

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[483] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, IV. 302/3, Vas Vármegye Főispáni Elnöki Iratok 1868 (Királybiztosi iratok), no. 5045/8 (1868. XI. 18.)

[484] GOTTAS: *Ungarn im Zeitalter des Hochliberalismus*, pp. 57-58.

[485] CSAPÓ, CSABA: *A Magyar Királyi Csendőrség Története 1881-1914* [History of the Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie 1881-1914], Pécs, 1999, pp. 20-65.; KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/2, pp. 1245-1246.

[486] For the historical background of labelling the Gypsies as "enemy within", who pose threat to the Habsburg Monarchy, see: STEINER, STEPHAN: *Combating the Hydra. Violence and Resistance in the Habsburg Empire, 1500–1900*, West Lafayette, 2023, pp. 105-117.; ZAHRA, TARA: *Condemned to Rootlessness and Unable to Budge': Roma, Migration Panics, and Internment in the Habsburg Empire*, in: The American Historical Review, Volume 122, 2017, 3, pp. 702–726.

[487] Learn more: HEGEDŰS, SÁNDOR: *Cigány kronológia* [Gypsy Chronology], Piliscsaba, 2000, pp. 34-47.; PÓCZIK, SZILVESZTER: *Roma-Gruppen in Ungarn bis Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts – Eine historische Skizze,* in: KROPF, RUDOLF – POLSTER, GERT (eds.): Die Volksgruppe der Roma und Sinti bis 1938, Eisenstadt, 2016, pp. 29-44.; VARGA, J. JÁNOS: *Fürsorglicher Gutsherr, fürsorglicher Staat. Zigeuner in Westtransdanubien im 17-18. Jahrhundert,* in: KROPF – POLSTER (eds.): Die Volksgruppe der Roma und Sinti bis 1938, pp. 89-44.; SOÓS, ISTVÁN: *Assimilation oder Integration? Staatliche und administrative Versuche zur gesellschaftlichen Einfügung der Roma im Königreich Ungarn (18-19. Jahrhundert),* in: KROPF – POLSTER (eds.): Die Volksgruppe der Roma und Sinti bis 1938, pp. 101-122.

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theft, or even beggary.[488] This approach by the local authorities to the Roma people strengthened the preconceptions of the society, by labelling the Roma people in general as a security issue.

As the protocol of the Vas County Assembly in 1870 put it, the most effective way to discipline the "gypsies" was to make them starve in prison. Otherwise, they argued, "the wandering of this race, living under shanties in the woods, distant from settlements, can hardly be prevented, because they do not like to work, so they do not do day-labor, they rather got used to begging and sneak-thieving, and they are not even afraid of imprisonment because then they have a roof over their heads and a meal on their plate."[489] In the light of the sources, not much progress was made by the local elites in the era of Dualism in this regard. In 1909, the vice-president of the Economic Association of Moson County submitted a plan to the Prime Minister's Office and to the counties to regulate the situation of the "wandering gypsies". Gyula Damolivics simply described the Roma on the road as "godless savages", threatening them with enforced removal from the country.[490]

4.2 Securing the Souls: Anti-Semitism and Politicization of Religion in the 1880s and 1890s

Theories about the socially constructed nature of security are providing historians with an excellent opportunity to examine certain topics from historical security perspectives which have not traditionally been considered as issues of security or security policy. In the case of Dualist Hungary, several political and social questions based on or relating to a system of ideas and ideals were high on the agenda, which should be interpreted as security issues. Some of these ideologically motivated issues were already important and influential at the very beginning of the period, whereas others already had deeply submerged roots, but broke to the surface only later as modernity gained momentum in more and more spheres of public life. In both cases, the elites had to face enormous challenges in attempting to prevent the escalation of the events.

There was a special community in the era of Dualist Hungary that, in the terms of its proportion within the entire population, could be discussed as part of the nationality question, and yet is usually analysed as a separate topic. There is a very good reason for this: Hungarian

[488] NAGY, PÁL: *Források a magyarországi cigányság történetéből 1758-1999* [Sources from the History of the Roma in Hungary 1758-1999], Gödöllő, 2011, pp. 6-8. 34-47.
[489] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, IV. 303, Vasvármegye Bizottmányi Gyűléseinek Jegyzőkönyve 1870 Január-December, no. 2016/870, 300–1. (1870. V. 6.)
[490] NAGY: *Források a magyarországi cigányság történetéből*, pp. 204-207.

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Jewry, namely the community of citizens of Jewish religion and/or ethnic background, identified themselves in official documents most typically as Hungarians.

The overwhelming majority of the Hungarian Jews had immigrated to Hungary in the nineteenth century. In sharp contrast to the non-Hungarian minorities of Christian religion, they saw not an oppressive measure but rather a great opportunity in the liberal and individualist nationality and religious laws of Dualist era Hungary.[491] Therefore, many of them were willing to integrate, if not assimilate, into Hungarian society, especially in the case of Budapest that slowly but surely grew into a city of international significance. The liberal Hungarian elites supported and promoted the integration and assimilation of the Jews in the hope of boosting modernization in the economy and society, which, as they finally admitted, also served Hungarian national interests.[492] Historical research today, however, rejects the popular opinion of the interwar period (even among historians like Gyula Szekfű) that claimed that in the Dualist era there was an extraordinarily massive Jewish immigration to Hungary. The myth of "being overrun by the Jews from Galicia" was rather just an optical illusion of contemporary observers that can be explained as the result of various factors.[493] Firstly, there was in fact a Jewish exodus from Russia, but primarily not towards Austria-Hungary but Western Europe and North America in the late 19th century, although the westward route of their mass migration did indeed cross the Habsburg lands.[494] Secondly, Hungarian Jewry was one of the most mobile social groups in the country, and as pioneers of internal migration they moved from the countryside to the capital in great numbers, where they eventually segregated in certain districts.[495] Thirdly, it is true that in the Carpathian basin the number of citizens of Jewish background rose sharply during the long nineteenth century, but the main waves of migration were already concluded by the end of the 1860s[496] – though the political and social consequences indeed became apparent only in the last two or three decades of the century.[497]

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[491] KATZBURG, NATHANIEL: *Fejezetek az újkori zsidó történelemből Magyarországon* [Chapters of Modern Jewish History in Hungary], Budapest, 1999, pp. 53-58.
[492] HAUMANN, HEIKO: *A History of East European Jews,* Budapest, 2002, pp. 190-193.; MCCAGG, WILLIAM O.: *A History of Habsburg Jews,* Bloomington, 1992, pp. 123-139; KARÁDY, VIKTOR: *Zsidóság és modernizáció a történelmi Magyarországon* [The Jewry and Modernization in Historical Hungary], in: VARGA, LÁSZLÓ (ed.): Zsidóság a dualizmus kori Magyarországon [Jewry in Dualist era Hungary], Budapest, 2005, pp. 190-217.
[493] KONRÁD, MIKLÓS: *A galíciai zsidó bevándorlás mítosza* [The Myth of the Jewish Immigration from Galicia], in: Századok, (152) 2018, 1, pp. 31–60.
[494] HAUMANN: *A History of East European Jews,* pp. 175-189.
[495] GYURGYÁK, JÁNOS: *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* [The Jewish Question in Hungary], Budapest, 2001, pp. 76–79.
[496] On the political journey of the Hungarian Jewry to 1867, see KONRÁD, MIKLÓS: *Jewish Emancipation as Compromise*, in: GYÁNI (ed.): The Creation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, pp. 229-258.
[497] Similar tendencies took place in Cisleithania too: RECHTER, DAVID: *Becoming Habsburg. The Jews of Austrian Bukovina 1774-1918*, Oxford, 2013, pp. 176-180.

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Howsoever exaggerated the contemporary complaints about the Jewish influx were, it is a historical fact that the Hungarian-Jewish cohabitation was not an easy process at all, and – as in case of many other mass immigrations in history – the host population was challenged if not shocked by the very appearance of the newcomers in their life, which was typically described by contemporary anti-Semites as "space-gaining" (*térnyerés*) in the society. On the one hand, Jewish immigration and integration was a success story in Hungary in the spheres of economy, education and culture in particular, but on the other hand it carried in itself the seeds of potential political or social conflicts in the future. The reception and assimilation of the Jews was a very difficult and slow process, full of social tensions.[498] Consequently, political anti-Semitism was more or less ever-present in the public life of Hungary from the very beginning of the Dualist era – though with dynamically changing intensity and impact on politics.[499] In spite of its obvious viciousness and aggression, the anti-Semitism of the Austro-Hungarian era did not correspond directly with its counterpart in the interwar period: whereas the latter was based on modern type of racism, the former was rather based on traditional religious prejudices.[500] Nevertheless, it still raises several historical security aspects.

Anti-semitsim became a nationwide issue in Hungary in the years of the so-called Tiszaeszlár-affair.[501] On 1 April 1882, a Christian maid-servant, Eszter Solymosi, went missing in the village of Tiszaeszlár in Szabolcs County. The local Jews were at once accused of ritually murdering the Hungarian girl, with fifteen of them being arrested and taken to court. Thanks to – among many others – the efforts made by their highly-respected lawyer, Károly Eötvös, they were released from the charges at the end of the trial – though a large current of public opinion still considered them guilty.[502] Similarly to the Dreyfuss-affair in France, the Tiszaeszlár-affair resulted in a serious wave of tensions as well as a heated debate in Hungarian domestic politics.

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[498] GYÁNI, GÁBOR: *Zsidó−magyar, magyar−zsidó polgár. Akkulturáció mint polgárosodás* [Jewish-Hungarian, Hungarian-Jewish Burgher. Acculturation as Bourgeoisification], in: BALOGH, JUDIT – PAP, JÓZSEF (eds.): Nemesi és polgári szerepek, reprezentáció és interpretáció [Noble and Burgher Functions. Representation and Interpretation], Eger, 2016, pp. 169-178.

[499] MCCAGG: *A History of Habsburg Jews,* pp. 181-200.

[500] On the ethnic prejudices of the late Habsburg Hungarian society, see: HANÁK, PÉTER: *A másokról alkotott kép. Polgárosodás és etnikai előítéletek a magyar társadalomban (a 19. század második felében)* [The Constructed Image of the Other. Civil Transformation and Ethnic Prejudices in the Hungarian Society (in the second half of the 19th century)], in: VARGA (ed.): Zsidóság a dualizmus kori Magyaországon, pp. 167-189.

[501] KUBINSZKY, JUDIT: *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon 1875–1890* [Political Anti-Semitism in Hungary 1875–1890], Budapest, 1976, pp. 88-105.

[502] On the detailed history of this infamous case, see: KÖVÉR, GYÖRGY: *A tiszaeszlári dráma* [The Drama of Tiszaeszlár], Budapest, 2011.; KATZBURG: *Fejezetek az újkori zsidó történelemből Magyarországon,* pp. 121-136.

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A series of smaller and bigger anti-Semitic insults and crimes[503] took place all over the country in the succeeding years.[504]

In Western Hungary, for example, on 1 November 1882, in the village of Nyulas/*Jois* in Moson County, angry locals broke into the house of Jewish tradesman Móricz Steiner. They not only robbed and damaged his home, but shot his wife, who was trying to escape from a lynch mob, to death. Similar anti-Semitic rioting also took place in other nearby villages. In response, the Lord-Lieutenant of Moson County was appointed as Royal Commissioner and thereby granted extraordinary powers to restore public safety with military assistance.[505] According to the report filed by Lord-Lieutenant, Baron Imre Miske, to Prime Minister Tisza, the locals attacked the Jews because they blamed them for their own poverty and misery.

Meanwhile, in the nearby city of Sopron reports claimed that not only had common people demonstrated anti-Semitic attitudes, but so had more and more intellectuals such as clergymen and schoolteachers. However, Lord-Lieutenant prince Pál Esterházy warned the government not to make the mistake of generalization.[506] This was not an entirely new phenomena: in the city of Pozsony (*Pressburg*), Iván Simonyi had published a German-language newspaper ten years earlier, in which he laid the foundation for the spread of anti-Semitic hate-speech in Hungarian public life. Although the speedy moves of the liberal Tisza administration were able to prevent the escalation of physical atrocities in the country, the ghost of political anti-Semitism had already been released from the bottle.[507]

It was only a matter of time before a group of extremists established a new, openly anti-Semitic political party. The sole political goal of this party, led by Győző Istóczy from Vas County, was to articulate the Jewish question as Hungary's main and nationwide security issue. The so-called National Anti-Semitic Party was founded in 1883 and ceased to exist as early as 1892, yet they were still able to secure some seats in Parliament in two consecutive national

[503] NEMES, ROBERT: *Hungary's Antisemitic Provinces: Violence and Ritual Murder in the 1880s,* in: Slavic Review, Volume 66, 2007, 1, pp. 20–44.; KUBINSZKY: *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, pp. 105-130.
[504] Learn more about late 19th century Central and Eastern European anti-semitic violence: ENGEL, DAVID: *What's in Pogrom? European Jews in the Age of Violence*, in: DEKEL-CHEN, JONATHAN – GAUNT, DAVID – MEIR, NATAN M. – BARTAL, ISRAEL (eds.): Anti-Jewish Violence. Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History, Bloomington – Indianapolis, 2010, pp. 19-40.; UNOWSKY, DANIEL: *Local Violence, Regional Politics, and State Crisis: The 1898 Anti-Jewish Riots in Habsburg Galicia*, in: NEMES, ROBERT – UNOWSKY, DANIEL (eds.): Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, Lebanon, New Hampshire, 2014, pp. 13-35.
[505] Prime Minister of Hungary Kálmán Tisza's telegram correspondence with baron Imre Miske, Lord-Lieutenant of Moson County: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Moson Vámegyei Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai (1872–1923), IV/B/901/b, no. 171. (1882. XI. 4.)
[506] Reports by Prince Pál Esterházy, Lord–Lieutenant of Sopron County to Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza. MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai (1872–1944), IV/B/401/9, no. 205. (8 Sept. 1883) and no. 228. (7 Oct. 1883).
[507] GOTTAS: *Ungarn im Zeitalter des Hochliberalismus*, pp. 164-178.;

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elections (1884 and 1887) and thus to spread their extremist ideas on a national level.[508] In their political programme, in their newspapers and also in their parliamentary speeches (speech act), Istóczy and his followers addressed the entire population of the country apart from the Jews (audience), so Hungarians as well as non-Hungarians, who were simultaneously depicted as the community in danger (referent object) by the threat the Jews allegedly posed to them. In their programme, they called upon "all citizens of the homeland, all Christian confessions, all the nationalities and all the social classes – whatever differences they may have on other questions (for example in the constitutional question) – to recognize altogether the danger they are in. That would mean, of course, that they supported the National Anti-Semitic Party in its 'lawful and constitutional struggle'".[509]

The antisemites dealt in such general and primitive messages as "crushing Jewish power and counter-balancing the Jewish influence in the spheres of politics, society and economy", but also came up with some very precise suggestions, such as "banning Jews from selling alcohol", or "withdrawing the proposed law aimed at allowing marriage between Jews and Christians".[510] All this is evidence that Hungarian anti-Semites in the Dualist era were engaged with a rather absurd experiment: they attempted to unify the otherwise multiply-fragmented Hungarian society for the sake of one single ideological cause. Although it was an obviously impossible mission, it was still easier to forge an alliance *against* something than *in favour of* a respectable cause, thus they were able to leave their mark on public opinion. From this point on, securitization attempts with respect to the Jewish community as well as de-securitization attempts by the liberal elites remained high on the agenda of Hungarian public life throughout the entire period.[511]

Traces of anti-Semitism can be discovered the best in the case of the debate over the church policy laws in the 1890s. This topic can also be investigated from historical security perspectives, because this was the time when modern ideological debates started to reshape the political arena in Hungary. Unlike in other countries in contemporary Europe, Hungarian political life – at least in the late nineteenth century – was not divided along the lines of mainstream ideologies (conservatism vs. liberalism) but by political attitudes towards Austria and the Habsburg dynasty. The ruling liberal party promoted the system of 1867 as a reasonably

[508] KUBINSZKY: *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, pp. 131-162; pp. 179-230; KATZBURG: *Fejezetek az újkori zsidó történelemből Magyarországon,* pp. 137-142; GOTTAS: *Ungarn im Zeitalter des Hochliberalismus*, pp. 179-185.
[509] PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. században*, p. 662.
[510] Ibid., p. 662.
[511] GYURGYÁK: *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon*, pp. 314–331.

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good basis for promoting national interests, whereas the main opposition forces demanded more independence from Vienna. Between the two big parties one could find some minor political forces – from time to time certain groups left one or other of the big parties only to merge with one of them later – but each of the minor parties gravitated to one or other of two basic constitutional stances: one could be either a 67er or 48er.

As we have seen previously, the Hungarian elites certainly espoused a nationalist, state-building paradigm, but it is noteworthy that this paradigm was not accompanied by conservatism but by classical liberal and progressive social thought and policies.[512] Consequently, one of the main wishes of the governing liberal party was the emancipation of the different churches and confessions, including the Jewish, through effectively disestablishing the privileged position of the Catholic church, or, as a contemporary expression put it, creating the autonomy of the Catholic Church.[513] This referred to the controversial separation of the state from the Catholic Church, which historically had exercised state-church functions in Hungary.

One of the main elements in this process was the introduction of civil marriage in parallel to church marriage. From today's perspective, this seems to be a natural consequence of modernity; in the eyes of many contemporaries, however, it was like the destruction of the world as they knew it and had inherited it from their ancestors. As a direct result, the individual and collective sense of security trembled, and a cultural identity that was taken for granted became all at once a matter of dispute.[514] The identity of the vast majority of Hungarian society, especially in the countryside, was still determined by local traditional culture, where the churches played a crucial role. In those regions where the Catholic Church played that role, the reform of the church policy laws triggered repugnance and resistance against the ruling liberal party.[515]

All this crystalized in a political form in late 1894 and early 1895 when, following an initiative by influential Catholic priest Ottokár Prohászka, two aristocrats, Count Nándor Zichy

[512] This hybrid liberal-nationalist paradigm invoked a process which scholarship describes as "nationalisation of religion". Learn more: WESSEL, MARTIN SCHULZE: *Einleitung. Die Nationalisierung der Religion und die Sakralisierung der Nation im östlichen Europa*, in: WESSEL (ed.): Die Nationalisierung der Religion und die Sakralisierung der Nation im östlichen Europa, pp. 7–14.; BRADY, JOEL – HAJDARPASIC, EDIN: Religion and ethnicity: conflicting and converging identifications, in: LIVEZEANU, IRINA – VON KLIMÓ, ÁRPÁD (eds.): The Routledge History of East Central Europe since 1700, London – New York, 2017, pp. 176-215.

[513] For the details of the domestic political debate over the Church policies, see: GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora I.*, pp. 290-312.; Hanák (ed.): *Magyarország története 7/1*, pp. 73-106.

[514] GERGELY – SZÁSZ: *Kiegyezés után*, pp. 192-197.; KÓSA – SZEGEDY-MASZÁK – VALUCH: *A Cultural History of Hungary*, pp. 85-99.

[515] For more on the history of the Catholic Church and the Catholic People's Party in Dualist era Hungary, see: KLEISTENITZ, TIBOR: *Modern katolicizmus? Vallási megújulás és politikai törekvések a dualizmus korában* [Modern Catholicism? Religious Revival and Political Aspirations in the Era of Dualism], in: CSIBI – SCHWARCZWÖLDER (eds.): *Modernizáció és nemzetállam–építés*, pp. 263–81.

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and Count Miklós Móricz Esterházy, established a new political force.[516] The Catholic People's Party came into existence with the openly declared aim of thwarting the liberal church policy laws.[517] Although it failed in this goal, the Catholic People's Party soon became a strong opposition party that was able to secure dozens of seats in the Parliament. As for the constitutional question, the People's Party declared itself a 67-er political group, but firmly refused to adopt the liberal paradigm and rather saw its mission – as they put it – as "preserving the Christian nature of our society, and healing the harms the Catholic Church and Christianity in general have suffered, and also to represent the political and economic interests of the nation and the people".[518]

In order to do this effectively, they came up with quite radical and at the time unusual social demands that mirrored Pope Leo XIII's encyclical "*Rerum novarum*" (Of new things, on the Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor) issued in 1891. At the same time, the Catholic People's Party acknowledged and supported the demands of nationality movements which did not question the integrity of the Hungarian state. While the leaders of the party fought their liberal opponents in the parliament, a social movement evolved around the party as an increasing number of committed voters joined their cause, including many intellectuals and clergymen. In a short period of time the party became so popular in certain counties that the liberal administration (actor) commanded the county authorities to put the politically-active Catholics under surveillance, including members of the clergy, securitizing them as "traditionalists" who endangered the vision of the liberal nation-state (referent object). At the same time, the liberal elites were accused in the newspapers and by proponents of the Catholic movement of "extremist secularization and modernization".[519]

The movement not only attacked the government in newspapers and with flyers but also agitated in the churches and schools. In their counter-securitizing moves one can clearly recognize the traces of the anti-Semitic movement of the 1880s.[520] A pro-Catholic flyer from 1910 recalls the times of the foundation of the party in the following way: "When economic liberalism pushed the commoner into poverty, when the people had enough of deprivation and

[516] In the very same years, the Christian socialist movement gained momentum in Austrian domestic politics, and thus heavily influenced the Hungarian developments. Learn more: MADARAS, ÉVA: Az osztrák keresztényszociális mozgalom a pártalakulás évtizedében (1887-1897) [The Austrian Christian Socialist Movement in the Decade of the Party Formation (1887-1897], Budapest, 1989, pp. 20-83.
[517] SZABÓ, DÁNIEL: *A Néppárt megalakulása* [The Formation of the People's Party], in: Történelmi Szemle, (20) 1977, 2, pp. 169–208.
[518] PAJKOSSY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, p. 716.
[519] Political leaflet by the Catholic People's Association (Katholikus Népszövetség). MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Főispáni Elnöki Iratok 1908–1911, IV/401/a/5, 1910, res. 20, 5 May 1910.
[520] KATZBURG: *Fejezetek az újkori zsidó történelemből Magyarországon,* pp. 143-147.

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mortification, when the power of the liberal tyrants was getting unbearable, when the impertinence of the Jews had no limits, when the liberals openly attacked the Church and the faithful Catholic people, in that time of crisis, the Divine Providence gave Count Nándor Zichy to the Hungarian people, whose 80th birthday is only being celebrated by us."[521]

Although the church policy laws favoured the forces of modernization in the long run, the Catholic People's Party paved the way for the competition of ideologies in Hungarian politics, which can be hardly interpreted otherwise than as a hotbed of securitization.[522]

4.3 National Elections as Security Risk: the 1905 Election in Kőszeg

Security and securitization emerged as important factors all over Hungary at times of national elections. In Western Hungary, the voters typically elected pro-1867 candidates, and this tradition was first questioned only in the 1890s, when the Catholic People's Party gained momentum in this countryside region. In the early twentieth century, the 48-er Independence Party also broke through in western Hungary because of a nationwide discontent with the ruling 67-er liberals. Despite some serious deficiencies, in the age of dualism Hungary had a functioning parliamentary system with regular elections, although only between six and eight per cent of the population enjoyed voting rights.[523] The representatives in parliament were elected in individual electoral districts (constituencies) within the counties and cities, and the local election campaigns were often infamous for violence and corruption on both sides.[524] Furthermore, the ruling liberal party benefited from the unfair advantage of using public administration as a source of information and as a tool for exerting pressure.

As József Ernuszt, Lord-Lieutenant (*főispán*) of Vas County told the district administrators of his municipality during the critical 1905 election campaign, the right of free

[521] A Katholikus Népszövetség röpirata (1910. V 5.): MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Főispáni Elnöki Iratok 1908–1911, IV/401/a/5, 1910, res. 20.

[522] Following in the footsteps of its Austrian counterpart and the Catholic People's Party, the Hungarian Christian Socialist movement also appeared on the political scene after the turn-of-the-century. Learn more: GERGELY, JENŐ: *A kereszténységszocializmus Magyarországon 1903-1923* [Christian Socialism in Hungary 1903-1923], Budapest, 1977, pp. 9-63.; For the ideological fragmentation of Hungarian political and intellectual life before the Great War, see: HORVÁTH, ZOLTÁN: *Die Jahhundertwende in Ungarn. Geschichte der zweiten Reformgeneration (1896-1914),* Budapest, 1966, pp. 224-264, pp. 316-353.; HANEBRINK, PAUL A.: *The Origins of Christian Nationalism, 1890–1914." In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism, 1890–1944*, Ithaca, 2006, pp. 10–46.

[523] SZENTE: *Kormányzás a dualizmus korában*, pp. 315-328.; For the link between the elective franchise and the nationality question, see: RÉVÉSZ, LÁSZLÓ: *Nationalitätenfrage und Wahlrecht in Ungarn 1848—1918,* in: Ungarn-Jahrbuch - Zeitschrift für die Kunde Ungarns und verwandte Gebiete, (3) 1971, pp. 88-122.

[524] For more, see PAP, JÓZSEF: *Parliamentary Representatives and Parliamentary Representation in Hungary 1848–1918*, Frankfurt am Main, 2017; GERŐ, ANDRÁS: *The Hungarian Parliament 1867–1918. A Mirage of Power*, New York, 1997.

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speech and gathering are core constitutional rights of all citizens; therefore, the "heavy agitation by the united opposition cannot be prohibited unless it goes beyond the law". In cases where this had allegedly happened, which was, of course, a gray zone of legal interpretation, the district administrators (*szolgabírák*) were expected to intervene 'wisely but forcefully', otherwise they were to be held responsible for the deterioration of public safety. They also had to report every important moment of the election day via telegram to the Lord-Lieutenant, who in cases of national significance immediately forwarded the information to the government.[525]

In the dualist era, it was not unusual for supporters of the different parties to clash on the streets during election campaigns, and for the county administration to request military assistance to restore public safety. However, it was quite unusual even for the most experienced contemporaries, if a candidate performed violent or threatening acts. This was the case in January 1905 in the Kőszeg/*Güns* constituency in Vas County. In this subchapter we will first analyse this infamous event as a case study for a scenario when a local election grew into a serious security issue, and then we will investigate the 1905–1906 domestic political crisis and its consequences for the Western Hungarian counties.

As is well-known, in January 1905 snap elections were held in Hungary that – after a short but unusually heated campaign on both sides – ended up with a sweeping victory for the so-called "United Opposition ". The surprising result not only put an end to István Tisza's first spell as prime minister of Hungary (1903–1905), but also upset the political status quo that had been in place for nearly forty years.[526] As we have seen previously, the system of the 1867 compromise in Transleithania was configured on the basis of the dominance of the 67-er liberal party, and there was no plan for a scenario in which the opposition won national elections. Although it was the king who appointed the prime minister, and thus the government, in a constitutional monarchy such decisions normally mirrored the political affiliation of the majority of the members in parliament. For this very reason, it is no exaggeration to say that the 1905 election led to a political earthquake in Hungarian domestic politics. Although the United Opposition's victory was decisive, the results, of course, showed a very heterogeneous picture varying from region to region. In the case of Vas County in Western Hungary, for instance, the opposition forces triumphed in all ten constituencies – though in most cases they defeated the pro-government liberal candidates only after a desperate struggle and by a narrow

[525] Instructions by József Ernuszt, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, to the district administrators of Vas County on 12 Jan. 1905 MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Főispáni Elnöki Iratok 1904–1907, IV/401/a/4, 1905, no. 6.
[526] GERGELY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. században*, pp. 504–507.

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margin.[527] This was the case, for instance, in the north-western corner of Vas County, which made up the Kőszeg/*Güns* constituency.[528]

The analysis of this rather unusual election history enables us not only to reconstruct the chain of the events, but also to gain a deeper insight into the social background of the region of Kőszeg in particular, and historical Western Hungary in general. Whereas the archival sources[529] reveal the statistical side of the election, the political struggle, the chain of events, as well as the general atmosphere of the campaign, including the scandals – if there were any – can be better reconstructed mostly from the local and regional newspapers. In spite of its relatively small size, there were several newspapers in the town of Kőszeg/*Güns*, for example the German-language *Günser Anzeiger* or the Hungarian *Kőszeg és vidéke*. However, these local newspapers had rather limited budgets and were published only in small numbers; therefore, they could not really afford to explicitly choose sides in political or ideological debates, even if they had a strong editorial opinion. The county newspapers, on the contrary, very much engaged themselves in the political struggle, so from a political history perspective the pro-government *Vasvármegye* and the pro-opposition *Szombathely Újság* can be regarded in this case as valuable sources. The former was in a more fortunate position as it operated as a daily newspaper, which meant that the financially stronger liberals could reach their audiences even on the very last day before the election. The latter, however, was just a weekly newspaper, so it published fewer reports and more essays and analyses. Although most of the opposition candidates in Vas County represented a 48-er indepententist programme, the *Szombathely Újság* rather mirrored the ideology of the Catholic People's Party.[530]

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[527] CSÁK, ZSÓFIA: *Egy kormánypárt látványos bukása. Az 1905-ös választás Vasvármegyében* [The Spectacular Fall of a Ruling Party. The 1905 Elections in Vas County], in: Vasi Szemle, 44 (1990), 1, pp. 86–94.

[528] SÖPTEI, IMRE: *A kőszegi Fő tér, mint a választási harcok színtere 1861 és 1908 között* [The Main Square of Kőszeg as the Space for Election Struggles between 1861 and 1908], in: MAYER, LÁSZLÓ –TILCSIK, GYÖRGY [eds.]: Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei No. 1. - Előadások Vas megye történetéből IV. [Studies on the history of Vas County], Szombathely, 2004, pp. 435–445.

[529] When it comes to research into a given local election in dualist Hungary, one can rely on the following six groups of primary sources in the county archives: 1. Archives of the Central Election Committee (In this case: (MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Központi Választmányának iratai, Iratok, 1905.); 2. Election protocols (MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár Vas vármegye ThB KV ir. Szavazási jegyzőkönyvek. Kőszeg, 1905. 1-53. fol.), 3. Register of the voters (MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár Vas vármegye ThB KV ir. Képviselőválasztók névjegyzéke. Kőszegi választókerületbeli ország- gyűlési képviselőválasztók 1903. évi névjegyzéke; 4. Archives of the Lord-Lieutenant (MNL Vas Vm. Vas vármegye főispánjának iratai, Elnöki iratok 6/1905. 1-109. Fol.; (MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár Főispáni Általános iratok, Iktatókönyv 46., 51., 65., 90/1905.); 5. Archives of the Vice-Lieutenant (MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár Vas vármegye alispánjának iratai, Közigazgatási iratok II. 1428/1905); 6. Archives of the district administrator (MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár A Kőszegi járás főszolgabírájának iratai. Közig. ir. Mutató 426., 1680., 4888., 4964/1905.)

[530] PÁL, FERENC: *A Vas vármegyei katolikus sajtó a 19–20. század fordulóján* [The Catholic Press in Vas County at the Turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries], in: Vasi Honismereti és Helytörténeti Közlemények, (35) 2008, 3, pp. 46–60.

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In contrast to the situation before 1848, the former free royal city of Kőszeg was no longer represented separately from Vas County in the Parliament: in the age of dualism the town was incorporated into the county and formed a constituency together with several neighboring towns and villages. The territory and the population of the constituency more or less coincided with those of the 'Kőszeg district' (*Kőszegi járás*) of the county administration. Beyond the town itself and some neighboring villages in the Southwest, most of the territory of this Kőszeg constituency/district can today be found in Burgenland, Austria and were already predominantly German-speaking at the time of the 1905 election. Although the protocols of the election were conducted in Hungarian, we can reasonably assume that most of the voters were native German-speakers, which means that the campaign must have been pursued in a bilingual manner, that is in either German or Hungarian depending on the ethno-linguistic background of a given village or town. Nevertheless, one should be aware of the fact that in the dualist era the town of Kőszeg/*Güns* went through a massive transformation in terms of ethnicity and national identity, and it was precisely during the early years of the twentieth century that the Hungarians first overtook the Germans as the largest group of inhabitants in the town.[531]

According to the census of 1880, about 75 per cent of the 8,000-strong town population still declared themselves German-speaking, whereas by the time of the 1910 census, Hungarians formed a relative majority. Ten years later (in the year of the Treaty of Trianon) about 5,000 citizens declared themselves Hungarian. Besides the two larger ethnic groups, the Croatian minority and the politically more active Jewish community must also be mentioned. As for religious background, like Western Hungary in general, Kőszeg and its surroundings was a predominantly Catholic region at this time, with a significant Lutheran minority (20–30 per cent) residing mostly in the town. The confessional aspect should not be underestimated, since the sources reveal that the parties still regarded religious identity as an important element of the political orientation of the citizens.

As for the social aspects, we can rely on the register of voters (1903), according to which only 539 citizens out of 8,000 enjoyed voting rights in the city itself.[532] According to electoral law in Dualist Hungary, one could claim the right to vote on several different grounds. In the case of Kőszeg (1903), twelve citizens possessed the right on the basis of the so-called "old right" (for example aristocrats, noblemen), 128 on the basis of ownership of agricultural estates,

[531] SÖPTEI, IMRE: *Németek és/vagy magyarok Kőszegen a 19. század második felétől a 20. század elejéig* [Germans and/or Hungarians in Kőszeg from the Second Half of the 19th Century until the Beginning of the 20th Century], in: MAYER –TILCSIK (eds.): *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei* No. 1., pp. 212–222.
[532] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, ThB KV ir. Kpv. Kőszeg, 1903.

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96 on the basis of ownership of a valuable house in the city, 255 on the basis of their annual income, and forty-eight on the basis of intellectual profession (teachers, priests, etc.). By comparison, in Rohonc/*Rechnitz*, which was the second biggest town in the constituency, only one single person (János Wenczl) held the "old right", 208 had votes by ownership of agricultural estates, three by ownership of valuable houses, 102 by personal income, and twenty-two by intellectual profession. It might not be a coincidence that the campaign became most heated in Kőszeg and Rohonc in January 1905. As for the third biggest community, Léka/*Lockenhaus*, exactly 100 voters were registered in 1903: seventy-three on the basis of land ownership, twenty by virtue of income and seven by profession. The three towns together contributed thirty-seven per cent of the voters in the constituency. As for the villages, generally speaking the overwhelming majority of their voters were registered on the basis of land ownership, with the addition of a few intellectuals. All in all, 3,036 citizens enjoyed voting rights in the Kőszeg constituency in 1905: thirteen on the basis of the "old right" (such persons lived only in Kőszeg and Rohonc), 1,887 on the basis of land ownership, ninety-nine through possession of valuable houses, 926 through income, and 138 through intellectual profession.[533]

These 3,036 people were asked in January 1905 whether they wanted the pro-government and liberal Gyula Szájbély, who had been MP for the Kőszeg constituency for the past 13 years, or the opposition candidate Hugó Laehne to become the next parliamentary representative of the town and its region. Although on 18 January gossip spread that the Social-democrats planned to run their own candidate, Géza Malasics – who was labelled by the pro-government newspaper as an "agitator from Budapest" – he did not manage to get his name on the ballot paper.[534] The short biographies of the two main political rivals can be reconstructed from the Almanac of the Lower House of the Hungarian Parliament.[535] Gyula Szájbély was born in 1846 in Bélabánya (today: Banská Belá in Slovakia) in Hont county in Upper Hungary, so he was not of Western-Hungarian background, and at the time of the 1905 elections he was already fifty-nine years old. He studied to become a lawyer but never finished university. Instead, he found success in agriculture and business: among other enterprises,[536] he bought an

[533] THIRRING: *Kőszeg népességének fejlődése és összetétele*, pp. 11–13.; TILCSIK, GYÖRGY: *Adatok Kőszeg és Szombathely polgárságának etnikai összetételéhez a 19. század első felében* [Data on the Ethnic Composition of the Citizens of Kőszeg and Szombathely in the First Half of the 19th Century], in: MAYER –TILCSIK (eds.): *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei* No. 1., pp. 129–169.

[534] *Szocziálista jelölt Kőszegen* [Socialist candidate in Kőszeg], in: Vasvármegye, 18 January 1905, p. 4.

[535] FABRÓ, HENRIK – ÚJLAKI, JÓZSEF (eds.): *A Sturm-féle országgyűlési almanach 1906–1911* [Almanac of the National Assembly by Sturm 1906–1911], Budapest, 1906, pp. 153–154.

[536] SÖPTEI, IMRE: *A "dunántúli vasútkirály", Szájbély Gyula 1846–1932* [The Pannonian Railway King, Gyula Szájbély 1846–1932], in: BANA, JÓZSEF – KATONA, CSABA (eds.): Szigorúan ellenőrzött vonatok. A Győri Mediawave Fesztivál keretében 2008. április 29-én megrendezett tudományos konferencia előadásai. [Closely

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agricultural estate near Rohonc/*Rechnitz* in Vas County in 1870, and soon developed it into a successful farm of nationwide reputation.[537] He first appeared in national politics in 1878 when he won the constituency of Kőszeg to become a Member of Parliament. In 1887, he was forced by the Liberal Party leadership to shift his candidacy to the neighboring constituency of Felsőőr/*Oberwart* constituency, where he also triumphed, but in 1892 on he returned to Kőszeg and remained its MP without intermission until the 1905 election. Until then, the most difficult challenge of his political career had been in the 1901 election, when he snatched only a narrow victory over István Kincs, the parish priest of Kőszeg, who challenged him under the banner of the Catholic People's Party.[538]

Like his opponent, Hugó Laehne came to politics from the business sector. He was born of German origin in 1871 in Sopron/*Ödenburg*, where his father was the director of the Lutheran boarding school. His German Lutheran family background may have been a factor in his selection as a candidate: the opposition party leaders probably hoped that he would be able to earn the trust of the German-speakers and/or Protestants of Kőszeg. At the same time, the main opposition newspaper expressed its doubts about whether Laehne was representing the programme of the Catholic People's Party or that of the 48-er Independentist Party in a constituency which they claimed to be "clearly pro-People's Party".[539] Although he was born in Western Hungary, Leahne had not had much to do with Kőszeg before 1905: he studied in Sopron, Lőcse (today Levoča, Slovakia), Budapest and Mosonmagyaróvár and worked in Arad (today in Romania), where he soon became a leading figure in the Economic Association of Arad county. He first touched upon politics in 1903, when Ignác Darányi, Minister of Agriculture, sent him on a research trip to Germany, after which Laehne published a book about his experiences. After 1905, Laehne was also elected as notary of the Independentist Party, but with the Great War and the collapse of Austro-Hungary his career and life took a rather unique direction.[540]

Watched Trains. Studies of the Scientific Conference Held on 29 April 2008 within the Framework of the Mediawave Festival in Győr], Budapest – Győr, 2009, pp. 145–148.

[537] According to the landowner database, he was registered as an owner of a land (2,620 kat. hold, which was equal to about 1,508 hectares) in the village of Nagyrécse in Zala County. Source: RUBINEK, GYULA (ed.): *Magyarországi gazdacímtár. Magyarország, Horvát - és Szlavonországok 100 kat. holdon felüli birtokosainak és bérlőinek címjegyzéke az egyes megyék részletes monográfiájával* [Hungary's Landowner Database, Register of owners of lands with size of at least 100 kat. hold (about 57,55 hectares) in Hungary, Croatia and Slavonia and the register of the tenants and the detailed monographies of the counties], Budapest, 1911, p. 869.

[538] SÖPTEI: *A kőszegi Fő tér, mint a választási harcok színtere*, p. 443.

[539] *Választások. Kőszeg* [Elections. Kőszeg], in: Szombathelyi Újság, 15 January 1905. pp. 3–4.

[540] In 1906, Hugó Laehne was re-elected in the Kőszeg district. In 1908 he was even awarded with Hungarian nobility with the prefix *kőszegfalvi*. In 1910, he was elected again, but this time in Nyírbátor in Szabolcs county. In the 1910s he joined the opposition political group led by Mihály Károlyi, who later became known as a key figure in the so-called "Aster revolution" and President of Hungary in 1918–1919. After the collapse of Austria-

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The campaign was pursued within the usual less than wholly democratic framework of the dualist-time elections, and events escalated mostly with the approach of election day. Since it was a snap election, the time for campaigning was rather limited: the Parliament was dissolved only in December 1904, with the new elections scheduled for 28 January 1905. According to the contemporary regulations, the candidates were announced officially just a few weeks before the elections, so outdoor campaign events took place mostly in the second half of January. Nevertheless, the newspapers engaged themselves in both positive and negative campaigning rather earlier. It was the pro-government *Vasvármegye* that opened the campaign on 6 January with a report on Szájbély, who had established a charity foundation worth 25.000 crowns to aid people in need across the Kőszeg region.[541] The pro-opposition *Szombathely Újság* questioned the humanitarian motives behind the move, claiming that Szájbély was driven at least partially by political interests.[542] In another report, the *Vasvármegye* praised the liberal candidate for his "Christmas gift" to the town in 1904, when he had successfully lobbied to upgrade the high school of Kőszeg into a "grand high school", which came with an annual 12,000 crown state sponsorship. The author of the report noted the good parish priest István Kincs's decision not to run again and wondered who the opposition candidate in his absence would be. In order to sow confusion among potential non-liberal voters, they cited opposition sources mentioning the twice misspelled "Vilmos Laehne" and "Vilmos Kühne" and insisting that an outsider would not stand a chance in Kőszeg.[543]

The doubts faded away only on 9 January, when the united opposition held a public gathering to announce Hugó Laehne as their candidate, who was described by the opposition weekly as a respected economic expert from Arad on the one hand, and a neighbour (from Sopron) on the other hand.[544] Szájbély was announced a day earlier in a similar but pro-government event organized by Tasziló Rupprecht and Gusztáv Czeke, local heads of the Liberal Party. Szájbély's campaign was launched by some prominent figures in local political and cultural life, for example the lawyer Sándor Szemző praised prime minister István Tisza, while the retired Lutheran pastor of Rohonc applauded Szájbély himself. Furthermore, the

Hungary, as state-secretary Hugó Laehne coordinated the move of the Academy of Selmecbánya (today: Banská Štiavnica, Slovakia) to Sopron. After the collapse of the Károlyi regime, he emigrated to the USA, because his name had allegedly come up in the investigation of the murder of former PM István Tisza on 31 October 1918). Sources: T. BOROS, LÁSZLÓ (ed.): *Magyar politikai lexikon* 1914–1929 [Hungarian Political Encyclopedia], Budapest, 1929, p. 253.; HAJDU, TIBOR: *Károlyi Mihály. Politikai életrajz* [Mihály Károly. A Political Biography], Budapest, 1978, p. 68; p. 354.; VICZIÁN, JÁNOS (ed.): *Magyar írók élete és munkái,* Új sorozat, 17. kötet [Life and Works of Hungarian Writers. New Series, Volume 17]. Budapest, 1995, pp. 877–878.

[541] *Szájbély Gyula alapítványa* [Foundation by Gyula Szájbély], in: Vasvármegye, 6 January 1905, pp. 2–3.

[542] *Választások. Kőszeg* [Elections. Kőszeg], in: Szombathely Újság, 15 January 1905, p. 3.

[543] *Választási mozgalom Kőszegen* [Election Movement in Kőszeg], in: Vasvármegye, 6 January 1905, p. 3.

[544] *Választások. Kőszeg* [Elections. Kőszeg] in: Szombathely Újság, 15 January 1905, pp. 3–4.

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liberals proudly claimed that the most respected and wealthiest aristocrat in Western Hungary, Miklós Esterházy, also among the Szájbély's supporters, for which they sent a letter of gratitude to his residence in Kismarton/*Eisenstadt*.[545]

After the announcements, both candidates started to travel across the constituency to address as many potential voters as possible. Laehne and Szájbély held their programme-announcing speeches in Kőszeg on 14 and 15 January respectively, after which they visited the rest of the towns and villages one after another. The pro-government daily lamented Laehne's campaign for his language use, meaning he was campaigning only in German in several places, including Edeháza (*Stuben*) and Mencsér (*Rettenbach*), both today in Burgenland, Austria. By this the liberals suggested that although their rival was officially representing a nationalist 48-er political programme, he had in fact no real respect for the official language of the state, which was Hungarian. They also claimed that Laehne's campaign events were attended by only a dozen people in many places (for example the town of Léka/*Lockenhaus*), which showed how unknown and unpopular he was.[546] At the same time the *Szombathely Újság* reported that the old chapel in the tiny village of Vasbenedek had collapsed, after which Szájbély quickly appeared on the scene to offer 200 forints to rebuild the precious monument. The opposition weekly recommended that the locals should accept the money but avoid spending it on the reconstruction work, because bricks bought with such money would certainly "fall out of the sacred walls".[547]

What is striking regarding the campaign is that whereas the 67-er liberals rather talked about local success stories and results achieved in past years, the 48-er opposition put national politics on the agenda. They had a good reason to do so: the more they spoke about István Tisza and the controversial if not scandalous issues of recent times attached to the name of the prime minister (for example the so-called "Handkerchief vote" of 18 November 1904), the more chance they had of winning the election. By these shrewd campaign techniques, remorselessly insisting on the relevance of high politics to the local level, the opposition could securitize the ruling party and their candidates in general as major threats to the constitutional order of Hungary. As opposed to this powerful but easily comprehensible message, Szájbély's attempt to highlight local achievements (grand high school, charity foundation, plans for railways towards both Szombathely and the Austrian border, etc.) remained rather ineffective. In his

[545] *Szájbély Gyula jelölése* [Nomination of Gyula Szájbély], in: Vasvármegye, 10 January 1905, pp. 2–3.
[546] *Választási mozgalmak a vármegyében* [Election movements in the County], in: Vasvármegye, 14 January 1905, p. 2.
[547] *Választások. Kőszeg* [Elections. Kőszeg], in: Szombathely Újság, 21 January 1905, p. 6.

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seventy-five-minute speech on 15 January he nevertheless attempted to de-securitize Tisza, when he claimed that "with obstruction and aggression the opposition merely jeopardizes calm governmental and parliamentary work", as opposed to the Liberal party which was on the side of the peaceful work, which was no less than "the spiritual and material consolidation of the Hungarian state".[548]

The most interesting moment of the campaign was Laehne's scandalous visit to the town of Rohonc/*Rechnitz* on 23 January 1905. The events can be reconstructed, because the pro-government newspaper did its utmost to keep the topic on the agenda as long as possible.[549] Tasziló Rupprecht, a prominent figure in the Liberal Party in Kőszeg, wrote a detailed report, accusing the opposition candidate of having a tendency of posing a threat to citizens. According to Rupprecht – who, of course, is a biased source – Laehne arrived in the courtyard of the Rózsa Restaurant in Rohonc with seven or eight coaches, where they were awaited by a group of pro-government locals. The "peaceful" group praised Szájbély and demanded that Laehne immediately leave the town where nobody was interested in hearing him. Laehne refused, and suddenly took out his revolver to threaten the members of the gathering. Luckily a local sailor lieutenant named "Hartlab" quickly intervened and twisted the weapon out of Laehne's hand. In Rupprecht's interpretation, Laehne committed a grave mistake; he should not have reacted in such an aggressive way to the peaceful demand of the locals. The opposition candidate's trip to Rohonc was an aggressive challenge to the peace of the local community, Rupprecht insisted, adding that the authorities, under the command of district administrator József Keresztúry, were already investigating the incident, while he himself only wrote the report to the "prevent the spread of fake news".

Lahne, of course, recalled events differently, claiming that he was a victim of provocation.[550] In his opinion, it was the local notary who had incited hatred against him among the locals. A 200-strong group of them had attempted to prevent him from holding an officially announced and authorized campaign event in Rohonc, and he had drawn the revolver only after he was verbally attacked and then jostled by the angry mob, so it was an act of self-defence to prevent further physical abuse and he had had no intention of actually firing the pistol. This was why he had immediately reported the incident to the authorities. Comparing the two narratives,

[548] *Szájbély Gyula a kőszegi választók előtt* [Gyula Szájbély in Front of the Voters in Kőszeg], in: Vasvármegye, 17 January 1905, p. 4.; Szájbély Gyula programja [Program by Gyula Szájbély], in: Vasvármegye, 18 January 1905, pp. 1–2.
[549] *Revolveres képviselőjelölt* [MP Candidate with Revolver], in: *Vasvármegye*, 24 January, 1905, pp. 2–3.
[550] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Alispáni közigazgatási iratok II. 1428/1905. Laehne Hugó levele Vas vármegye alispánjához. Arad, 1905. május 5.; MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Alispáni közigazgatási iratok II. 1428/1905. Laehne Hugó távirati panasza a belügyminiszterhez. Rohonc, 1905. január 22.

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Laehne's version seems more realistic: it is quite hard to imagine that a candidate hoping for a political career would suddenly start foolishly playing with his revolver without any reason in the middle of a heated campaign. However, the silence of the opposition newspapers on the matter suggests it was impossible to defend Laehne's behavior, even in front of the non-liberal voters.

The "revolver incident" in Rohonc was not the only one in Vas County during the elections in January 1905. In two villages belonging to the Szombathely constituency (Csajta/*Schachendorf* and Inczéd/*Dürnbach*, both today in Burgenland, Austria), serious clashes between groups of voters were reported.[551] In terms of public safety, these villages were also under the jurisdiction of the district administrator of Kőszeg, so he had to divide his personal and material resources between two constituencies, as he reported to József Ernuszt, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County.[552] Public order was so fragile that the Hungarian government requested military assistance from Austria: Graz, the capital city of Styria (*Steiermark*) deployed a contingent of seventy-five cavalry and 200 foot soldiers to Kőszeg in order to maintain peace during the elections.[553]

In spite of these precautions, election day (26 January) produced some further violence, though it did not directly affect the voting. The voting procedure was overseen by two committees who divided the towns and villages concerned between them, in two different places, the first in the Neumann house, the other in Freyberger's old clothing store.[554] Both buildings were located in Kőszeg, which meant that the countryside voters had to travel to the centre of the constituency in order to cast their votes. Voting started at 9 o'clock in the morning and lasted until 6 in the afternoon. According to the election protocol – which called for the summation of the counts in the two different committees – 2,020 valid votes were cast during the day, of which 942 (47 per cent) went to Szájbély, as opposed to the 1,078 (53 per cent) received by Laehne,[555] so that the opposition candidate won by 136 votes. Altogether 11 votes were found invalid, many of them because of trivial mistakes. According to the voting protocol István Molnár's vote, for instance, was disqualified purely because he was not able correctly to recite the name of Hugó Laehne, his preferred candidate, to the election committee.[556]

[551] *Választási mozgalmak* [Election movements], in: Vasvármegye, 25 January 1905, p. 2.
[552] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni elnöki iratok 6/1905. 1-109. fol.
[553] *Választási mozgalmak* [Election movements], in: Vasvármegye, 26 January 1905, p. 3.
[554] MNL Vas Megyei Levéltár, Vas vármegye ThB KV ir. Szjkv. Kőszeg, 1905. 49–51. fol.
[555] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas vármegye ThB KV ir. Szjkv. Kőszeg, 1905. 52–53. fol.
[556] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas vármegye ThB KV ir. Szjkv. Kőszeg, 1905. 44–45. fol.

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If we take a look behind the numbers, we can discover geographical patterns. In the town of Kőszeg, Laehne easily triumphed over Szájbély (283 vs 149). In Rohonc by contrast – Szájbély's personal fortress and the site of the 'revolver incident' – Laehne lost heavily (37 vs 217). However, if we count the villages surrounding the towns too, the picture alters: in the narrower Kőszeg region Szájbély claimed a slight victory, whereas in the Rohonc region Laehne surprisingly won, so in both cases the villagers overturned the decision of the town residents. In the small town of Léka/*Lockenhaus*, Laehne enjoyed a landslide victory (51 vs 13) precisely where he was previously accused by the pro-government newspaper of being miserably unpopular. The question remains: how could Laehne have achieved this rather unexpected victory?

Based on the numbers, it seems that Laehne's voters were most concentrated in either Kőszeg or in the smaller German-speaking communities across the constituency.[557] The former can be explained by the strategy of the opposition, who hoped that a Lutheran candidate might perform well in the historical town. Since the voting records obviously did not categorise voters according to religion, we cannot be certain of this explanation, but most of the Lutherans in the region lived in the town and the overwhelming majority of them were German-speaking,[558] so we can assume that many of them were sympathetic towards Laehne. It cannot be a coincidence either that the pro-government newspaper lamented that Laehne was campaigning in German too much. Of course, the constellation of reasons behind the making of individual voting decisions cannot be narrowed down to one or two identity factors and local aspects. We have to emphasize the role of the anti-Tisza atmosphere in national politics as well as the regional aspects: in Vas County, the opposition won all ten constituencies. Yet, it seems that the ethno-linguistic factor played a decisive role in Laehne's victory: choosing an outsider against a well-known local magnate may have been a risky decision for the opposition forces, but it had paid off after all.

The pro-government newspaper, which had been so confident during the campaign, could hardly choose any other title for its leading article on 27 January but "The Catastrophe". As they put it bitterly: "Blindfold people, misled masses triumphed over liberalism. […] This county of culture trampled on the flag of the liberals! Szombathely let [former Mayor and later MP] Gyula Éhen down, who first made a city out of the village and then an empire out of the city. Kőszeg has chosen a negligible outsider instead of its former representative of great merit,

[557] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár Vv. ThB KV ir. Szjkv. Kőszeg, 1905. 1–43. fol.
[558] THIRRING: *Kőszeg népességének fejlődése és összetétele*, pp. 11–15.

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who should be thanked by the town and the district for his many [achievements].”[559] According to the opposition media, it was not the misled masses but the nation itself that had made a judgment. “All the terrorism, foundations, statue inaugurations, promises were in vain”, they laughed.[560] Elsewhere they also added that “the struggle was not carried on between parties but between love for the homeland and corruption!” The local town newspaper took a more realistic approach when it claimed: “Thank God, we are now beyond the national excitement, the sea of the words, the bombastic speeches, the plethora of biased arguments, and the land of the never-to-be-fulfilled promises….”[561]

It was also the local paper, *Kőszeg és Vidéke*, that first reported about the victims of the election disturbances. According to the paper, restaurant-owner Lajos Gampert and veterinarian József Kukuljevics were both attacked on the street in daylight, while district judge Dénes Szluha was heavily beaten by an opposition mob.[562] According to the *Vasvármegye*, Szluha – who actively took part in Szájbély’s campaign – at first tried to run away from a lynch mob, but later hid in a wooden cabin in a courtyard in Kert street where the attackers found him and beat him so hard with clubs that he nearly died. The attackers allegedly chanted “The soul-buyer should be beaten to death!”, accusing Szluha of attempting to bribe voters.[563] Even if the reports of the liberal newspaper are exaggerated, it is a fact that police captain József Kőszegi had to arrest six people during election day, who were later handed over to the Office of the Royal Prosecutor. All this means that even with the assistance of the Austrian troops, the authorities were not able to maintain public safety in Kőszeg, where the election of January 1905 has become an infamous episode in the history of the town.

Public life in the town went back to normal very slowly, because some questioned the legitimacy of the result. According to gossip, Laehne had not met the criteria for eligibility as a parliamentary representative, but he rebuffed all the accusations in a newspaper article.[564] At the same time, no official objections were made against his election triumph. On 29 January, he was welcomed as the new MP by the Mayor of Kőszeg, Miklós Sisskovics, and parish priest, István Kincs, at a reception where Laehne received a copy of the election record as well as his

[559] *A katasztrófa* [Catastrophe], in: Vasvármegye, 27 January 1905, p. 1.
[560] *A nemzet ítélt. Kőszeg* [The Nation Judged. Kőszeg], in: Szombathely Újság, 29 January 1905, p. 4.
[561] *A városok közterhei* [Public Burdens of the Cities], in: Kőszeg és Vidéke, 29 January 1905, p. 1.
[562] *Hírek. A választási izgalom áldozatai* [News. Victims of the Election Excitement], in: Kőszeg és vidéke, 29 January 1905, p. 2.
[563] *Vérontás a kőszegi választáson* [Bloodshed at the Election in Kőszeg], in: Vasvármegye, 28 January 1905, p. 3.; *A választás áldozatai* [Victims of the Election], in: Vasvármegye, 29 January 1905, p. 4.; SÖPTEI: *A kőszegi Fő tér*, p. 444.
[564] *A kőszegi kerület választóinak figyelmébe!* [For the Attention of the Voters of the Kőszeg district!], in: *Szombathely Újság, 19 February 1905, p. 2.*

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letter of commission.[565] On the next day he travelled to the county centre of Szombathely, where he officially introduced himself to Lord-Lieutenant József Ernuszt and Vice-Lieutenant István Bezerédi. The two liberal leaders of Vas County would rather have shaken hands with Gyula Szájbély, but by then they had to acknowledge the result too.[566] In the afternoon, Laehne took a train to Budapest to take his seat in the Lower House of the Hungarian Parliament. In this new role, he could witness at close quarters not only the agony of the first Tisza administration, but also the desperate moves made by King Franz Joseph to disregard the new majority in the parliament to avoid further damage to the structure of the endangered dualist system.

4.5 The Local Dimensions of the 1905–1906 Domestic Political Crisis

The 1905 elections were beyond doubt a key event of the Hungarian domestic political turmoil, however, the roots of the crisis go back at least to the time of the Kálmán Széll administration (1899–1903). The debate over the defence forces – as in the 1880s – once again escalated tensions between the political parties in the Parliament.[567] The opposition, seeing no other effective means to pursue what they called "national interests", engaged in the highly controversial tactics of 'obstruction'.[568] The term refers to the political practice of deliberately delaying or preventing legislation through either "talking a bill to death" (filibustering) or creating clamour and disorder during parliamentary sessions. As a result of the obstruction, the ruling Liberal Party was simply not able to pass a series of essential laws, including regular legislation for the supply of the troops, which eventually led to the downfall of the Széll-cabinet in 1903.[569]

The moderate Széll, who was the most influential politician from Vas County in the era,[570] was replaced by the hard-liner Károly Khuen-Héderváry, the former Ban (Chief government official) of Croatia-Slavonia, but his time in office as Prime Minister of Hungary

[565] *Hírek. Az országos képviselő"* ["News. The Member of the Parliament"], in *Kőszeg és Vidéke*, 5 February 1905, p. 3.
[566] *Hírek. A kőszegi képviselő Szombathelyen* [News. The MP of Kőszeg in Szombathely], in: Szombathelyi Friss Újság, 31 January 1905, p. 1.
[567] KRONENBITTER, GÜNTHER: *"Krieg im Frieden. Die Führung der k.u.k. Armee und die Großmachtpolitik Österreich-Ungarn 1906-1904*, München, 2003, pp. 145-178.
[568] GRATZ, GUSZTÁV: *A dualizmus kora. Magyarország története 1867-1918. II. kötet* [The Age of Dualism. History of Hungary 1867-1918. Volume Two], Budapest, 1934, pp. 5-26.
[569] HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 407-442.
[570] BERTÉNYI IFJ., IVÁN: *Családi háttér és egyéni karrierépítés. Széll Kálmán útja a politikai elitbe* [Family Background and Individual Career-building. Kálmán Széll's Road to the Political Elite], in: BERTÉNYI IFJ., IVÁN (ed.): Törvény, jog, igazság. Széll Kálmán életműve [Act, Law, Justice. Life Achievements of Kálmán Széll], Budapest, 2015, pp. 47-90.

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was cut rather short due to the controversies over the so-called "Chlopy order". Franz Joseph issued a military order during a military exercise in Chlopy (today in Poland), in which he firmly reasserted his privileges as commander-in-chief of the Austro-Hungarian army as a whole, and excluded any options that would potentially lead to a new structural model within the military, and, in particular, to the separation of the Hungarian troops from the Austrian.[571] In his view, such developments would not only have endangered the unity of the armed forces, but posed a threat to the very existence of the realm. In this order, the Emperor-King referred to the Hungarians as just one of the several ethnic groups of his Empire. This remark caused a public outrage among a Hungarian public that still believed and insisted that dualism was founded on an equal partnership between the Hungarian nation-state and the imperial-federal Austrian state. The majority in the Parliament, including even many of his fellow liberal party members, turned against Khuen-Héderváry, blaming him for losing the confidence and the good-will of the Monarch. Franz Joseph therefore appointed a new prime minister, István Tisza, son of Kálmán Tisza, the longest serving (1875-1890) Hungarian prime minister of the period.[572]

Following in his father's footsteps, the young Tisza had gradually become the leading figure in the ruling Liberal Party.[573] As a former Speaker of the Parliament and new prime minister (1903–1905), he was determined to eliminate obstruction from public life in order to revitalize legislation and consolidate the dualist system before an even deeper crisis evolved.[574] Accordingly, he drafted new parliamentary rules of procedure that aimed to curtail the powers and capacities of the opposition on one hand, and to extend those of the Speaker of the House on the other. This important position was then held by Tisza's close ally Dezső Perczel, who on 18 November 1904 used a procedural ruse to secure Parliament's approval of the new rules, which has become infamous as the "Handkerchief vote". The furious opposition protested and immediately left the parliamentary session, accusing the government of fraud and anti-constitutional behaviour.[575]

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[571] STONE, NORMAN: *Army and Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1900-1914*, in: Past & Present, no. 33, 1966, pp. 95–111.
[572] VERMES: *Tisza István*, pp. 201-234.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 443-472.; GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 27-45.
[573] On István Tisza's rise in Hungarian domestic politics, see: HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 93-442.
[574] STONE, NORMAN: *Constitutional Crises in Hungary, 1903-1906,* in: (45) The Slavonic and East European Review, 1967, 104, pp. 163–82.
[575] Outsmarting the opposition representatives, Dezső Perczel was waving with his handkerchief as a sign for the ruling party MPs to vote for the new rules. VERMES: *Tisza István*, pp. 234-259.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 473-502.

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On the next day, a new anti-Tisza alliance was formed, which included not only the existing 48-er opposition, but some 67-er politicians and several other political groupings of varying sizes. This coalition, later called "United Opposition", included the '48-er Independence Party' led by Ferenc Kossuth and Gábor Ugron, the Catholic People's Party, the so-called "New Party" founded by former prime minister Dezső Bánffy, the "Democratic Party" headed by Vilmos Vázsonyi, and the "National Party" led by Albert Apponyi. A group of liberals also decided to leave the Tisza-dominated Liberal Party: the so-called "dissidents" followed Gyula Andrássy Jr. and Kálmán Széll, who eventually founded the 'Constitution Party'. The tensions rose sky high when the next parliamentary session took place on 13 December 1904. A radical group of opposition politicians went much further simply raising verbal political objections, and aggressively insulted the parliamentary guards and destroyed the state-of-the-art furniture of the Lower House.[576] At this point, holding a snap election was unavoidable, and Franz Joseph dissolved the Hungarian Parliament on 4 January 1905.[577]

As we have seen in the Kőszeg case study, the elections of January 1905 did not deliver the results for which Tisza and Franz Joseph had hoped. Whereas the Liberal Party secured only 159 seats, the United Opposition triumphed in 223 constituencies, of which 166 were claimed by the 48-er Independence Party.[578] It meant that for the first time in the history of the dualist system, the majority in the Lower House of the Hungarian Parliament was formed by an alliance which included expressly and avowedly anti-establishment forces. Mathematically, the 67-er forces still outnumbered the 48-ers, but the 67-er elements within the United Opposition refused to join forces with the remains of the Tisza-led Liberal Party. This not only prolonged the on-going and already serious domestic political crisis, but also became a persistent headache for Franz Joseph himself. Using his royal privileges but openly defying parliamentary tradition and the ethos of the constitutional monarchy, Franz Joseph initially refused to dismiss Prime Minister Tisza. In spite of the election results, Tisza remained in office and led a minority cabinet until June 1905. Effective and good governance of course was impossible under such circumstances, so it was just a matter of time before the Monarch ran out of patience.[579]

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[576] For the history of parliamentary violence in Dualist era Hungary, see: CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *A magyar Országgyűlés a dualizmus korában I. A képviselőház.* [The Hungarian National Assembly in the Era of Dualism I. The House of Representatives], Budapest, 2021, pp. 266-308.

[577] GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 46-63.

[578] DOLMÁNYOS, ISTVÁN: *A koalíció az 1905-1906. évi kormányzati válság idején, Budapest,* 1976, pp. 9-26.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 503-530.; GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 64-86.

[579] DOLMÁNYOS: *A koalíció az 1905-1906. évi kormányzati válság idején*, pp. 27-50.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 531-554.

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On 18 June 1905, Franz Joseph replaced Tisza with Géza Fejérváry, the former head of his personal guard.[580] This high-ranking military official was not bound by party affiliation and was expected to bring order to Hungarian politics. The "darabont government", as contemporaries termed it, provoked serious concern not only among the erstwhile opposition (and current parliamentary majority), but also among the liberals, as rumours spread over retaliations planned in Vienna. Even a military occupation of Hungary was envisioned in the event that the crisis failed to abate.[581] Initially, Fejérváry's technocratic government attempted to mediate between the Hungarian Parliament and the Viennese court but could not reach an agreement. Fejérváry resigned on 12 September 1905, but was re-appointed on 16 October, this time with a fundamentally different brief and approach.[582] Relying on his right-hand-man, Minister of Internal Affairs József Kristóffy, Fejérváry attempted a radical reform of Hungarian politics. Ruling by decree, he intervened in several issues that had been long disputed or avoided altogether by the Hungarian elites, including the military question, the nationality question, the labour question and the role of the Social-democrats, and the extension of the elective franchise.[583] While the United Opposition sought to resist the much-hated "non-parliamentary" Fejérváry-cabinet in the highest spheres of public life in Budapest and in the national media, a newly mutated manifestation of the historical county resistance movement evolved in parallel on the mezzo- and micro levels of the state.[584]

Resistance on the part of the municipalities (i.e. the counties and cities with municipality rights) was not a new invention; it had a long tradition in Hungarian history. For this very reason, the county resistance in 1905–1906 proved to be surprisingly successful, because it was able to draw on the central nationalist narrative about the constitutional role of the counties.[585] According to Hungarian nationalists, the counties had always played a role of great significance in the history of the nation. They were thought to have been created by the state-founder, King St. Stephen, as early as the eleventh century, and to have preserved the statehood of Hungary even in times of interregnum, foreign occupation or political turmoil. One example of such a

[580] GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 86-103.
[581] Hanák (ed.): *Magyarország története 7/1*, pp. 579-583.
[582] HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 555-602.
[583] The Fejérváry cabinet was heavily influenced by Austrian developments. Whereas in the Hungarian part of the Empire, less than eight percent of the society enjoyed voting rights, the universal franchise (for men over 24) was introduced already in 1906 in Austria. Learn more: SOMOGYI, ÉVA: *Választójog és parlamentarizmus Ausztriában (1861-1907)* [Elective Franchise and Parliamentarism in Austria (1861-1907)], Budapest, 1968, pp. 111-133.
[584] GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 103-120.; DOLMÁNYOS: *A koalíció az 1905-1906. évi kormányzati válság idején*, pp. 51-75.; 105-124.
[585] József Horváth, MP for Marosújvár, wrote the history of the county resistance in detail and published it in 1907 in Budapest. Although he is hardly an impartial witness, his work is an excellent source: HORVÁTH, JÓZSEF: *Az 1905–6. évi vármegyei ellenállás története* [History of the County Resistance in 1905–1906], Budapest, 1907.

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period was the age of the Ottoman invasion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Implicitly, the county resistance also involved anti-Habsburg sentiments: although the Hungarian state was restored by the end of the seventeenth century and the Habsburgs played a crucial role in its restoration, the nationalist narrative claimed that the Viennese royal dynasty had always displayed a predilection for violating the country's constitution, as for example during the reign of Joseph II (1780–1790) or under Franz Joseph during the period of Neoabsolutism (1849–1860). In those difficult times, the counties or the county administration were seen as fortresses to which the Hungarian elites could retreat and keep fighting, either through passive resistance or by openly sabotaging the implementation of "unconstitutional laws and decrees", which most typically meant resistance against the collection of taxes and the recruitment of new troops.

These early modern patterns and forms of county resistance broke out once more, rather unexpectedly, in the early twentieth century. In the eyes of unsympathetic contemporaries and in most of the historical literature, the county resistance resembled rather Don Quixote tilting at windmills than a modern political movement. Indeed, the powers and competencies of the counties had been massively curtailed because of a series of reforms in public administration implemented from the 1870s onward. All at once, however, the rights and privileges of the counties that remained part of the modern municipality system, even if apparently only as some sort of facade and empty forms of self-governance, assumed great political importance in 1905. The right to elect the officials of the public administration, including the district administrators and the Vice-Lieutenant, as well as the tradition that the county assemblies functioned as forums for debating national politics, enabled the counties effectively to undermine the policies of the central administration.

Typically, the Lords-Lieutenant were the trustees of the government, so they remained rather reluctant to take an active part in the resistance. In those counties where they did resist, the Fejérváry-cabinet appointed new loyal Lords-Lieutenant or assigned Royal or Government Commissioners equipped with the powers of Lords-Lieutenant to maintain order in a given county. The resistance movement, however, was mostly organized by the Vice-Lieutenants, who were elected by the county assemblies where most of the members often had pro-county and anti-government sentiments. Not taking Croatia-Slavonia into account, Hungary had altogether sixty-three counties at the time. According to the official journal of the National Association of the County Officials, on 31 December 1905 thirty-six of the sixty-three counties put up heavy resistance, nine were engaged in moderate resistance, while eight remained undecided and ten showed no desire at all to stand up against the central administration. In

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Western Hungary, Sopron County and Moson County were considered as "heavily resisting", and Vas County as moderately resisting.[586]

Indeed, Sopron County had taken firm steps as early as 8 August 1905, when its county assembly passed a resolution approving eight extraordinary measures.[587] (1) It was forbidden for all the towns and villages in the territory of the county to accept further tax payments destined for the state treasury or to transmit the yields of the already paid taxes. (The so-called indirect taxes were not included, but they were not sent to the state tax office but collected in a legally approved financial institution with offices in the city of Sopron or elsewhere in the county.) (2) County officials as well as the town and village magistrates were commanded to refuse all government orders in connection with the recruitment of new troops on the territory of the county, and not to cooperate with the officials of either the central government or the military. (3) The county assembly declared that this resolution could be appealed against only outside of the estate and was to be implemented immediately. (4) In case the government should seek to annul the resolution, Sopron County would declare the move invalid and disregard it. (5) Any injury or harm that county or village officials might suffer because of the implementation of the resolution was to be compensated, morally and materially, by the county. (6) The county would call an extraordinary assembly meeting on 20 September 1905 to discuss all matters connected with the resolution. (7) Supporting the county officials in their attempt to realize a unified procedure within the county administration, the county assembly would form a special committee which would elect its own chairman and vice-chairman. The Vice-Lieutenant, the chief notary and the chief prosecutor were to be ex officio members of the special committee. Furthermore, the county assembly urged the county offices and officials to urge citizens to withhold tax and take no part in recruitment of troops. All the recent orders of the government, including the so-called "warning message", were placed in the archives without implementation.

As expected, Minister of Internal Affairs József Kristóffy annulled the resolution on 7 September, and was answered by Vice-Lieutenant Endre Baán, who reported the conflict to the county assembly. In addition, the county assembly formed a committee of 100 members with the aim of further increasing the protection of county officials taking part in the resistance movement. The committee – headed by Antal Madarassy, parish priest of Németkereszttúr/*Deutschkreutz*, and landowner Ernő Mesterházy from Mesterháza, recruited

[586] HORVÁTH: Az *1905–6. évi vármegyei ellenállás*, pp. 267–268.
[587] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402, 8 August 1905

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members from all over the county: Hungarians and German-speakers, civilians and noblemen, even including a few aristocrats like Count Béla Cziráky from Dénesfa and prince Miklós Esterházy from Kismarton/*Eisenstadt*. At the time when the crisis broke out, the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County was vacant. This enabled Kristóffy to appoint a new county leader loyal only to him on 21 November 1905. The move caused public outrage in Sopron County, since Kristóffy did not pick an outsider but chief notary Zoltán Baditz. The proponents of the resistance were shocked: they expected retaliation, but not from within the county. Baditz was immediately accused by local public opinion of being a traitor who had sold his soul for financial and political benefits. What is more, on 4 December Kristóffy suspended Vice-Lieutenant Endre Baán from his position. As Vice Lieutenant, Baán had exercised the rights of the Lord-Lieutenant during the vacancy and was in fact the leading figure of the resistance in Sopron county. In response, the board of county officials, led by János Kakas, head of the chancery, officially expressed their sympathy toward Baán, demonstrating that they still considered him their rightful leader. At the same time, the Member of Parliament, Ábel Berecz, organized a torch-lit rally in Sopron to honour Baán's "heroic patriotism" in the name of the city.[588]

On 5 and 12 December respectively, first an extraordinary and then an ordinary county assembly meeting was held in Sopron.[589] These had been summoned by Baán before his suspension, so the assembly considered both sittings lawful, in contrast to another extraordinary assembly meeting initiated by Zoltán Baditz, which was scheduled for 14 December. The new Lord-Lieutenant had intended to take his seat on that day, but the assembly refused to gather. A serious legal dispute erupted between the two sides. Baditz considered himself both chief-notary and legally appointed Lord-Lieutenant, with the former position including the right to act on the behalf of the vacant office of the Vice-Lieutenant. In contrast, the vast majority of the county assembly neither accepted Baditz as the new county leader nor considered him any longer the lawful chief notary of the county. The county assembly therefore passed a resolution refusing to install Baditz as new Lord-Lieutenant or to organize the ceremony where he might take his oath of office according to the age-old tradition. The resolution was passed by 271 votes to two. While only the secretary of the "new" Lord-Lieutenant, István Dukavits and Baron Antal Augusztinetz voted against, even two close relatives of Baditz (József Baditz and Imre Mészáros, district administrators of Csepreg and Kismarton respectively) voted in favour. The

[588] HORVÁTH: *Az 1905-6. évi vármegyei ellenállás*, pp. 362–363.
[589] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402, 12 December 1905

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tensions rose so high that not only did Baditz's flat in Sopron have to be guarded by the gendarmerie, but so did the county hall itself. Under such circumstances, only fourteen members attended the extraordinary county assembly meeting on 14 December. In addition, unexpectedly nine non-members also showed up in the room.[590] On this occasion of highly dubious legitimacy, Baditz stepped down as chief notary and, after taking the oath, installed himself as Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County. His inauguration as Lord-Lieutenant of the city of Sopron went much more smoothly: forty genuine members of the city assembly attended the event, held on the same day as the county assembly. The Mayor of Sopron, Kálmán Töpler, and city assembly member Márton Szilvássy even greeted the new Lord-Lieutenant, reassuring him of the support of the city and its officials.[591]

On 27 December, the Minister of Internal Affairs suspended payments to Sopron County from the state budget as of January 1906. This was not a unique decision; Gyula Kristóffy punished all the rebellious counties from where the flow of taxes had stopped by withholding the annual state funding. The counties did not let themselves break financially,and started a fundraising operation in order to maintain the county administration independently, including the payment of the salaries of the county officials. The strategy of establishing a "resistance fund" proved to be partly successful: in Sopron County, where the salary of the elected county officials amounted annually to 121,250 crowns, the fund-raisers were able to collect about 51,000 crowns. It was less than half of the ordinary expenses, but in some counties, they were able to collect even more than was required.[592] In Moson county there were no such fund-raising actions, because the conflict with the government did not reach the level of financial punishment, while in Vas fundraising was organized too late. While Kristóffy attempted to break the county resistance from above through financial means, Baditz did his best to consolidate his power in Sopron County during January and February 1906. First, he fired first vice-notary Lajos Noszlopy, who according to law was next in line to administer the county (the offices of Vice-Lieutenant and Chief Notary were still vacant), but who had refused to cooperate, citing legal and personal reasons. Noszlopy was initially replaced by second vice-notary Jenő Fertsák, then by district administrator of Sopron István Molnár, and finally by local lawyer István Szóka. The new Lord-Lieutenant, who was granted extraordinary jurisdiction by the government, became even more unpopular when he appointed an infamous outsider, Béla

[590] According to József Horváth, these nine were "Swabian peasants". This derogatory, malevolent remark relies on the old nationalist topos about the traitor of the nation, who uses the help of foreigners against the patriots. HORVÁTH: Az *1905-6. évi vármegyei ellenállás*, pp. 53–54.
[591] IBID., p. 474.
[592] IBID., pp. 53–54.

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Kempelen from Abaúj County, to the position of first vice-notary. In spite of the chaotic management policies, the new leadership of the county administration soon began to deliver results as more and more villages in Sopron County gave up on financial resistance and re-started paying taxes to the state treasury.[593]

On 26 February 1906, a further county assembly meeting was held, chaired by Baditz himself. The vast majority of assembly members were still resisting and condemned those fellow members who had attended Baditz's inauguration in December the previous year and expressed their solidarity with Endre Baán and Lajos Noszlopy. In response, Baditz failed to countersign the resolutions passed by the assembly, so they did not enter into force. In March, the disciplinary committee exonerated former Vice-Lieutenant Baán from the charges, but he announced that he was not willing to hold an office under the current government, and therefore requested early retirement. Having lost their leader, seemingly for good, more and more still resisting members of the county assembly proposed "disabling the county officials" from participation in the movement. It was a reasonable initiative, because the tax collections had already restarted in several places. The proposal meant that the provisions of the county assembly resolution passed in August 1905 would no longer apply to county officials, so that they could implement the government's orders (on tax collection and recruiting troops), in the hope that they would once more receive their salaries from the state. The proposal, passed by the county assembly held on 26 March 1906, ended the county resistance at the administrative level (county offices), but it continued at the political level (county assembly).[594]

However, the next assembly meeting on 7 April was not about struggle but celebration: the nationwide political crisis came to an end when Franz Joseph agreed to re-start negotiations with the leaders of the United Opposition.[595] The secret "pact of April 1906" involved Hungarians giving up on the "national demands" regarding the military and accepting the extension of the customs union between Austria and Hungary, and of course the '67 Compromise as foundation of the empire. In return, the Fejérváry-government was dismissed, and new elections were held in Hungary in which the United Opposition achieved a landslide victory.[596] Tisza and the liberals did not even contest the election, their party was dissolved and they retreated into the background. In Sándor Wekerle's second cabinet (1906–1910), Gyula Andrássy Jr. was appointed to the key position of Minister of Internal Affairs. Andrássy, son of

[593] IBID., pp. 364–365.
[594] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402, 26 March 1906
[595] GERGELY (ed.): *Magyarország története a 19. században*, pp. 517–518.
[596] GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 121-146.

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one of the creators of the Compromise of 1867, but a well-known advocate of self-governance by the counties, withdrew all the restrictive and punitive measures and orders of his much-hated predecessor and restored the rights and privileges of the county administrations.[597] In Sopron County, both Endre Baán and Lajos Noszlopy were invited to return to their former offices of Vice-Lieutenant and first vice-notary respectively. Soon enough, Zoltán Baditz was relieved of his duties as county leader, and – acting on a proposal from Andrássy – King Franz Joseph appointed Baán as the new Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County and the free royal city of Sopron. From the perspective of the counties, the peace between the "most constitutional king" and his "beloved nation" was finally restored.[598]

In comparison to Sopron County, the crisis did not really escalate in Moson County. Yet, Moson County was among those thirty-six municipalities that were officially declared as undertaking heavy resistance against the Fejérváry government.[599] On 26 July 1905, slightly earlier than Sopron County, the assembly of Moson County passed the following resolution: (1) The rescript about the appointment of Géza Fejérváry as prime minister and his cabinet was simply to be archived. The county declared its distrust toward the government and protested it remaining in office. (2) The county would collect no tax and enlist no new troops. (3) The county commanded its officials not to collect and transmit either direct or indirect taxes, not to implement government orders regarding tax collection, and not to aid in recruiting new troops. This prohibition included the voluntary payment of taxes and voluntary applications for military service. (4) The Vice-Lieutenant was ordered to submit all government orders considered unlawful to the county assembly. (5) All the harms the county officials might suffer because of their resistance should be compensated by the county. (6) In order to implement the provisions of the resolution, the county assembly of Moson County established a twenty-member committee. Furthermore, the county assembly agreed to gather on a monthly basis during the extraordinary circumstances. The twenty-member committee, chaired by Count Tivadar Batthány, included members of both Hungarian and German origin, and of both common and noble background, and was the main organizing body of the resistance movement in Moson County. The resolutions passed by the county assembly in its succeeding meetings were also drafted by the committee. As was widely expected, the Minister of Internal Affairs annulled the

[597] SZALAI, MIKLÓS: *ifj. Andrássy Gyula élete és pályája* [The Life and Career of Gyula Andrássy Jr.], Budapest, 2003, pp. 45-61.
[598] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/402, April 1906
[599] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Mosonmagyaróvári Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/902, 26 July 1905

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July resolution of Moson County. In return, Moson County assembly simply ignored Kristóffy's decision. Furthermore, it declared its trust in the elected parliamentary majority and protested against the postponement of the sessions of the Lower House of the Parliament.[600]

In October 1905, the Moson County assembly even appealed directly to King seeking restoration of the constitutional order in Hungary.[601] Despite all these efforts, Kristóffy did not undertake any further retaliation against the county. State sponsorship of the county was not suspended, and no new Lord-Lieutenant or government Commissioner was appointed to impose discipline. The explanation lay in a strange combination of political manoeuvring, coincidence and luck. When József Őshegyi, Vice-Lieutenant of Moson County, was absent attending a meeting of the National Association of County Officials in Budapest, in accordance with protocol by the chief notary temporarily acted-up as head of the county administration in Mosonmagyaróvár. The chief notary, however, in spite of the prohibitions made earlier by the county assembly, forwarded the cabinet orders to the district administrators and village magistrates.[602] This move was interpreted by Kristóffy as law-abiding behaviour – though none of his controversial orders were in fact implemented in Moson County. Later the county assembly launched disciplinary procedures against the chief notary and continued the resistance against what they called non-parliamentary government.[603] Over the following months, the county assembly passed a series of resolutions protesting against government policies, including the continuation of recruitment, the annulment of county resolutions, the reform of the gendarmerie, the appointment of Royal Commissioners, the dissolution of parliament, the restrictions of press freedom and freedom of assembly. When the crisis was over in April 1906, the county assembly of Moson County proudly celebrated, claiming that the officials of the county had shown an exemplary patriotic attitude in their effort to protect the constitution of Hungary.[604]

Unlike Sopron and Moson, Vas County belonged to the "moderately resisting" group of counties. This meant that it declared itself a protesting county in principle, but that the declaration was not really followed by any serious actions. In July 1905, the county assembly of Vas county declared that it expected all of its county officials to "remain on the path of the

[600] HORVÁTH: Az *1905-6. évi vármegyei ellenállás*, p. 268.
[601] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Mosonmagyaróvári Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/902, October 1905
[602] HORVÁTH: Az *1905-6. évi vármegyei ellenállás*, pp. 267-268.
[603] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Mosonmagyaróvári Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/902, 8 November 1905
[604] MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Győri Levéltára, Mosonmagyaróvári Fióklevéltára, Moson Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/902, 26 April 1906

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law under all circumstances" and to "insist on the privileges" of the county determined by Law of 1886 XXI, according which they were not implement the collection of taxes and recruitment of new troops without the approval of Parliament.[605] The assembly members of Vas county, however, were much more politically divided than their fellows in Sopron and Moson, which is well demonstrated by the fact that the resolution on resistance was passed by only a narrow majority: seventy voted in favor, and fifty-five against. This also explains how József Ernuszt, who had been appointed as Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County during the dominance of the 67-er Liberal Party, could remain in office until the end of the crisis in April 1906.[606]

Since the county assembly of Vas County did not prohibit the voluntary payment of taxes or voluntary applications for military service, it left a legal loophole open for the central administration to get what it needed. In return, state-sponsorship did not stop and the public administration in Vas County could function as usual. Even at the end of 1905, when the Kristóffy-led Ministry of Internal Affairs engaged in harsh countermeasures against many of the resisting counties, including neighbouring Sopron County, still no committee was formed in Vas County to organize a more effective resistance. The situation only changed in February 1906, when Ernuszt requested that the Ministry relieve him from duty. In reaction, the county assembly of Vas County established its own "constitution-protecting" committee, with the aim of securing the financial basis for a long-term resistance. The fundraising action, however, was soon overtaken by events when the new coalition government came to power in the spring. Gyula Andrássy Jr., who succeeded Kristóffy as Minister of Internal Affairs, dismissed Ernuszt on 26 April 1906.[607]

As we have seen in this chapter, the cases of the 1905 elections and of the 1905–1906 country resistance movement show that domestic political crises in Hungary in the early years of the twentieth century provoked a range of interpretations of security and securitization. From an imperial/royal perspective, reforming, financing and strengthening the army of Austria-Hungary was of crucial importance. As international tensions rose around the turn of the century and the prospect of a potential international armed conflict became more and more threatening, Franz Joseph could not afford to lose control over the military just because of the national demands of the Hungarian opposition. Meeting those demands would not only divide and weaken the armed forces but would also undermine the delicate balance of power within the

[605] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/403/a, July 1905.
[606] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának Közgyűlési Jegyzőkönyve, IV.B/403/a, April 1906.
[607] HORVÁTH: Az *1905-6. évi vármegyei ellenállás*, p. 427.

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Dual Monarchy. The 67-er liberal Hungarian elites acknowledged the necessity of a strong and unified Austro-Hungarian military because they considered the existence of the Habsburg Monarchy to be the main plank in the security of their homeland. Although they had formed a majority in the Parliament for decades, after 1900 they were not able to pass what they saw as necessary reforms in the Parliament due to the obstruction, which proved to be a double-edged sword in the hands of the opposition.

When PM István Tisza attempted to circumvent this obstruction by his highly controversial methods, he triggered an avalanche in domestic politics that not only led to a fiercely contested snap election in January 1905, but also to the collapse of his ruling Liberal Party. The opposition metamorphosed into a majority, but Franz Joseph appointed a technocratic government that ruled by decree and against the will of the public. This provoked a nationwide resistance movement in the counties, which recycled past strategies: denying the collection of taxes and recruitment of new troops. As Gyula Szekfű, one of the most prominent Hungarian historians of the interwar period, put it in his best-known historical-political essay: "it was not a secret for non-biased viewers that the counties, neither before 1848 nor after, up until to the 'national resistance' at the beginning of the 20th century, were unable effectively to oppose the unlawful governments; the dice was cast always in the parliamentary bodies and not in the peripheral organizations, yet the nation still insisted on the beloved institution"[608]. Nevertheless, from the perspective of the counties, it was not the municipalities but the non-parliamentary government that threatened both the constitutional order and their own autonomy, and thus the fragile compromise of 1867 between Hungary and Austria.

4.5 The Nationality Question and the Germans in Western Hungary

The question regarding the national integration of Hungary and the national minorities was probably the most important issue in the Dualist era, and still today it generates a lot of controversies even a century after the fall of the Habsburg Empire.[609] This question was interconnected to nearly all the other important issues of the era, and several cultural, economic or social processes are simply incomprehensible without touching upon the ethno-linguistic aspects of any given topic. Hungary's highly complicated ethnographic conditions – even when

[608] SZEKFŰ, GYULA: *Három nemzedék és ami utána következik* [Three Generations. The History of a Decaying Epoch], Reprint, Budapest, 2007, p. 299.
[609] DÁCZ, ENIKŐ (ed.): *Minderheitenfragen in Ungarn und in den Nachbarländern im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert,* Baden-Baden, 2013.

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compared with other East Central European contexts – are really well-known, and historians have already learned a great deal about the political and cultural struggles of the different national movements.[610]

Recent research has also shed some additional light on communities that had dual or multiple identities in multi-ethnic areas, and we know the phenomenon of national indifference as well.[611] This concept brings those most typically peripheral social groups into the discourse, groups which – for a longer time than one would think – remained indifferent to or disinterested in the nationalist agitation that dominated the cities and towns in the late 19th century.[612] Discovering historical security aspects may further enrich our knowledge of the otherwise well-researched nationality question, while highlighting the type of mental constructedness of security, which derives from national identity and the political sense of danger and fear based on national identity. Security, as well as the sense of (in)security, plays a key role in the creation of individual and social identities, especially in the cases of such multi-ethnic and multilingual societies that existed all over the territory of the Habsburg Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary within it.[613]

This historical realm of the Kingdom of Hungary is not to be mistaken with today's Hungary; on one hand because of the form of the state (monarchy vs. republic) with all its decisive implications, on the other hand because of the territorial dimensions. The Slovak language even differentiates between the historical and modern Hungary ('Uhorsko' vs. 'Maďarsko'), whilst the latter does not include the territory of today's Slovakia. In historical context, 'Hungary' refers to a much greater area that covers basically the entire Carpathian Basin (about 283.000 square kilometres). It was home to several different nationalities, ethnic and language groups (most of which eventually evolved into modern nations, although some

[610] ARATÓ, ENDRE: *A magyarországi nemzetiségek nemzeti ideológiája* [The National Ideology of the Nationalities in Hungary], Budapest, 1983, pp. 244-265.; KOVÁCS (ed.): *Magyarország története 6/2*, pp. 1375-1394.; Hanák (ed.): *Magyarország története 7/2*, pp. 1019-1045.

[611] VAN GINDERACHTEER – FOX: *Introduction: National indifference and the History of Nationalism in Europe,* in*:* VAN GINDERACHTEER – FOX (eds.): National indifference, pp. 1-14.; ZAHRA: *Imagined Noncommunities*, pp. 93-119.

[612] On the phenomena of national indifference in the Czech-German rural language frontier in Cisleithania, see: JUDSON, PIETER M.: *Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria,* Cambridge, MA – London, 2006.; In Hungarian historiography, the potential of the concept of national indifference is yet to be discussed. On The first attempt has been made in Slovak-Hungarian relation: DEMMEL, JÓZSEF: *Pánszlávok a kastélyban* [Panslavs in the Castle], Budapest, 2014.; See also: EGRY, GÁBOR: *Beyond Politics: National Indifference as Everyday Ethnicity*, in: VAN GINDERACHTEER – FOX (eds.): *National indifference,* pp. 145-160.

[613] Peter Haslinger: *Gesellschaftliche Mehrsprachigkeit*, pp. 243-256.

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disappeared) with the ethnic Hungarians being only one of them, though in a clearly dominant position for various political and sociological reasons.[614]

"Since all citizens of Hungary, according to the principles of the constitution, form from a political point of view one nation – the indivisible and unitary Hungarian nation – of which every citizen of the homeland is a member, no matter to what nationality he or she belongs", reads the preamble of the Act XLIV. of 1868, known also as the Nationality Law of 1868.[615] This law determined the nationality policies in Transleithania throughout the entire period of Austro-Hungarian Dualism. The text of the law mirrors the theoretical considerations of Eötvös[616], but was translated into a legal form by Deák. Although the ideals of Eötvös suggested a rather "neutral" state with regard to nationality policies, following the example of the separation of state and church, Deák insisted on the concept of nation-state.[617] However, Deák himself was also very much aware of the fact that the ethnic Hungarians, who enjoyed only a relative majority over the other ethnic-groups of the kingdom, would hardly be able to form a classic, unified and strong nation-state in the long run. Thus, he discovered the solution in a legal fiction based on historical assumptions: the concept of the politically united Hungarian nation.[618]

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[614] Nations in the sense defined by the ethno-symbolic approach. SMITH, ANTHONY D.: *The Genealogy of Nations: An Ethno-Symbolic Approach*, in: ICHIJO, ATSUKO – UZELAC, GORDANA (eds.): When is the Nation? Towards an Understanding of Theories of Nationalism, London, 2005, p. 95.; See also: SMITH, ANTHONY D.: *The Antiquity of Nations, Cambridge*, 2004, pp. 181-210. On modernist approach, see: HOBESBAWM, ERIC J.: *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge, 1990.; For the Hungarian perspective, see: SZŰCS, JENŐ: *The Historical Construction of National Consciousness,* Selected Writings. Edited by Gábor Klaniczay, Balázs Trencsényi, Gábor Gyáni, Budapest – Vienna – New York, 2022.

[615] On the parliamentary debate on the nationality law, see: KEMÉNY G., GÁBOR (ed.): *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez a dualizmus korában. I. kötet 1867–1892* [Documents on the History of the Nationality Question in the Era of Dualism, Volume I, 1867-1892], Budapest, 1952, pp. 129–167.; SCHLETT, ISTVÁN: *A nemzetiségi törvényjavaslat országgyűlési vitája 1868* [The Parliamentary Debate on the Nationality Law Proposal 1868], Budapest, 2002.

[616] On József Eötvös's political philosophy, see: BÉNYEI, MIKLÓS: *Eötvös József könyvei és eszméi* [Books and ideas of József Eötvös], Debrecen, 1996, pp. 107-120.; GÁNGÓ, GÁBOR: *Eötvös József az emigrációban* [József Eötvös in Exile], Debrecen, 1999, pp. 140-181.; SCHLETT, ISTVÁN: *Eötvös József,* Budapest, 1987, pp. 140-158.; BÖDY, PAUL: *Joseph Eötvös and the Modernization of Hungary, 1840-1870. A Study of Ideas of Individuality and Social Pluralism in Modern Politics*, in: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Volume 61, Part 2, 1972, pp. 1-134.

[617] KATUS, LÁSZLÓ: *József Eötvös and Ferenc Deák: Laws on Nationalities,* in: ROMSICS, IGNÁC – KIRÁLY, BÉLA K.: Geopolitics in the Danube Region. Hungarian reconciliation Efforts 1848-1998, Oxford, 2006, pp. 133–160.; PÉTER: *Az Elbától keletre,* pp. 264-274.; TEVESZ, LÁSZLÓ: *Eötvös József nemzetiségpolitikai koncepciója és a Deák párt által képviselt alkotmányos-nemzeti hagyomány 1860–1868* [József Eötvös's Nationality Policy Concept and the Constitutional-National Tradition Represented by the Deák Party 1860–1868], in: Aetas, (27) (2012), 1, pp. 105–124.

[618] GYURGYÁK, JÁNOS: *Ezzé lett magyar hazátok* [This is What Your Hungarian Homeland Has Become], Budapest, 2007, pp. 67-76.; See also: TURDA, MARIUS: *The Idea of National Superiority in Central Europe, 1880-1918,* Lewiston, New York, 2004, pp. 67-97.

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In early-modern times up to the mid-19th century, the historical concept of the Hungarian nation (in Latin: *Natio Hungarica*) involved all the nobility, including those non-ethnic-Hungarians who enjoyed noble privileges, and in most cases lived in the country and owned an estate. The cultural counterpart of the concept of *Natio Hungarica* was the so-called *Hungarus*-identity that referred to those, first and foremost intellectuals and *Bürgers* (most typically German-speaking residents of free royal cities), who were born in Hungary of non-Hungarian descent, but remained self-consciously and expressly loyal to the country. One such *Hungarus* was the ethnic-Slovak polymath Matthias Bel (1683-1749), born in the village of Ocsova/Očová in Upper Hungary (today Slovakia), who allegedly described himself as "*lingua Slavus, natione Hungarus, eruditione Germanus*", meaning by language a Slav/Slovak, by nation a Hungarian, by learning a German.[619]

Another example could be Franz Liszt (1811-1886), who was born in the village of Doborján/Raiding in Western Hungary (today in Burgenland, Austria).[620] In spite of being an ethnic-German, the world famous romantic composer wrote to a friend in 1873: "regardless of my lamentable ignorance of the Hungarian language, I remain from birth to the grave, in heart and mind, a Magyar".[621] Nevertheless, the modern concepts of the Hungarian political nation and nation-state were inspired by the example of French nationalism and therefore, in Deák's vision, they should have been acceptable to all citizens regardless of their ethnic or linguistic background.[622] Even at the high water mark of European nationalisms, that was certainly a liberal and optimistic, if not naive, idea which, despite ensuring significant rights to non-Hungarian individuals to cherish their own language and ethnic culture, denied opportunity for the nationalities to become factors as political communities.[623]

Since the biggest ethnic group, the ethnic Hungarian, directly overlapped with the concept of the political nation, which overlap itself led to a series of confusions and

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[619] RAINER, RUDOLF — ULREICH, EDUARD: *Karpatendeutsches biographisches Lexikon, Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Karpatendeutschen aus der Slowakei* (1 ed.). Stuttgart, 1988, p. 368; WESTON, EVANS – ROBERT, JOHN: *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe*, Oxford, 2006, pp. 139–140.

[620] CIEGER, ANDRÁS: *Liszt Ferenc és a politikai átalakulás Magyarországon 1867 után* [Franz Liszt and the Political Transformation in Hungary after 1867], in DOBSZAY, TAMÁS – ERDŐDY, GÁBOR – MANHERCZ, ORSOLYA (eds.): Milyen nemzet, kinek és hogyan? Tanulmányok Magyarország történelméről 1780-1948 [What kind of Nation, for Whom and How? Studies on the History of Hungary 1780-1948], Budapest, 2012, pp. 9-18.

[621] KOKORZ, GREGOR: *Border, Transborder, and Unification: Music and Its Divergent Roles in the Nineteenth-Century Habsburg Territories*, in: MITTERBAUER, HELGA – SMITH-PREI, CARRIE (eds.): Crossing Central Europe: Continuities and Transformations, 1900 and 2000, Toronto, 2017, pp. 50–79., How Hungarian was Liszt? (August 15, 2006), in: "Essays by Coby Lubliner". http://faculty.ce.berkeley.edu/coby/essays/index.html [20.06.2024]

[622] On the problematic transformation of Hungarian nationalism, see: LAJTAI, LÁSZLÓ L.: *Between Patriotism and Ethnicity: Hardships of Defining the Modern Concept of a Hungarian Nation at the Mid-19th Century*, in: GYÁNI (ed.): The Creation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, pp. 149-173.

[623] For the dilemmas of the Hungarian character-discourse, see: TRENCSÉNYI, BALÁZS: *The Politics of "National Character". A study on interwar East European thought*, London, 2012, pp. 71-99.

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controversies in contemporary discourse, the national minority movements firmly rejected the idea of the unified political nation.[624] The makers of the so-called Law of Nationalities of 1868 probably did not have the oppression of minorities in mind, but the opposite: by de-securitizing the nationality question, they were trying hard to prevent the newly-formed and modernizing Hungarian state from itself becoming a security issue that had the potential to escalate into a state crisis. From today's perspective, it seems obvious, as several contemporary observers would also recognize in the succeeding decades, that regardless of the intentions of the lawmakers, the concept of the single and unified Hungarian political nation was no more than an illusion, if not a fatal mistake.[625]

All the various nationalities and ethnic groups of Hungary had entered the different phases of the great competition of the 19th century: becoming a modern nation.[626] Not only did the economically and culturally more advanced Saxons in Transylvania demand their collective national rights, but so did the Serbs and Romanians (who could lean on the strong relative autonomy of their churches) and also the Slovaks, who slowly but surely discovered their own language and cultural identity.[627] From the perspectives of the nationalities, the nationality policies of the Hungarian governments in the Dualist era were seen as a massive setback in comparison to the transitional period between the eras of Neoabsolutism and Dualism . In the era of 1860-1867, as an attempt to de-securitize the Hungarian question, Vienna openly encouraged the nationalities for demanding territorial autonomy and extended language rights within Hungary. In Arad County for example, in 1860 an ethnic Romanian was appointed Lord-Lieutenant, whereas in 1863, the General Assembly of Transylvania adopted a law on the emancipation of Romanian nation and language.[628]

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[624] VÖRÖS, LÁSZLÓ: "*Veszedelmes pánszlávok." A magyar uralkodó elit képe a szlovák mozgalomról a 19-20. század fordulóján.* [Dangerous Panslavs. The Hungarian Ruling Elite's Perception of the Slovak Movement around the turn of the 19th and 20th century], in: SZARKA, LÁSZLÓ (ed.): Párhuzamos nemzetépítés, konfliktusos együttélés [Parallel Nation-building, Conflictful Co-existence], Budapest, 2017, pp. 159-192.

[625] GYURGYÁK: *Ezzé lett magyar hazátok*, pp. 77-90.

[626] HROCH: *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, pp. 3-30.

[627] KAMUSELLA: *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe,* pp. 522-568.; DEMMEL, JÓZSEF: *A szlovák nemzet születése: Ludovit Štúr és a szlovák társadalom a 19. századi Magyarországon* [The Birth of the Slovak Nation: Ľudovít Štúr and Slovak Society in Hungary in the Nineteenth Century], Bratislava, 2011.; HROCH: *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, pp. 98-116.

[628] DEÁK, ÁGNES: *Soknemzetiségű nemzetállam és soknemzetiségű birodalom erőterében – Nemzetiségpolitikai alternatívák 1868 előtt* [In the Field of Force of a Multi-ethnic Nation-State and a Multi-ethnic Empire – Alternatives of Nationality Policies], in: Századvég (13) 2008, 4, pp. 51–77.; CSERNUS-LUKÁCS, SZILVESZTER: *A nemzetiségi és nyelvi kérdés szabályozása Magyarországon és Erdélyben az Októberi Diplomától a Nemzetiségi törvényig* [Regulation of the Nationality and Language Question in Hungary and Transylvania from the October Diploma to the Law of Nationalities], in: NAGY, NOÉMI: Nemzetiségi-nyelvi szuverenitás a hosszú 19. században, [Ethno-lingual Sovereignty in the Long 19th Century], Budapest, 2020, pp. 66-98.

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In the first half of the Dualist era, however, the different nationality movements had to fight for their respective causes individually vis-à-vis the Hungarian elites, and in their despair they occasionally turned to Vienna in the hope the Emperor-King would deliver justice for them. Probably the most famous instance was the so-called "Transylvanian Memorandum" in 1892, when the leaders of the Transylvanian Romanians petitioned the Monarch to stop what they regarded as Budapest's policies of Magyarization. Since by this time Franz Joseph considered the nationality question as an internal issue of Hungarian politics, these attempts were barren of results. The nationality leaders were driven to conclude that they could achieve their aims only if they first joined forces, and second if they promoted their political programmes among the masses of their nationally still indifferent compatriots, and thirdly, but most importantly, if instead of looking to Vienna they developed the capacity to attract the attention of the international public and of foreign leaders.[629]

One of the first signs of this revised strategy, which produced results mostly after the turn-of-the-century, were the creation of the so-called "Nationality Congress" in 1895 and the protest against the Millennial festivities in 1896.[630] These festivities were a large-scale and symbolic state ceremony to celebrate the 1,000th anniversary of the Hungarian settlement in the Carpathian Basin.[631] According to a protest petition signed by the Executive Committee of the Nationality Congress on 30 April 1896, "the chief corypheuses of today's Hungary are spending a vast amount of money to hold an artificial celebration for Europe, which on one hand lacks of historical basis, and on the other can be seen as an offence to millions, the majority of the peoples composing the homeland".[632] The document (speech act) also claims that the problem lay not with the holding such millennial festivities, but with the Hungarian elites, who were using the occasion as the basis of a claim to a historic right to oppress other nationalities. The Law of Nationalities of 1868 was based on false premises, said the authors (actors) of the petition, who therefore attempted to turn the Millenium into a security issue in the eyes of their audiences. According to them, the "vast majority of Hungary's population" (referent object) is

[629] KOVÁCS (ed.): Magyarország története 6/2, pp. 1333-1363.; NAGY, MARIANN: *Közös haza vagy magyar ország? A soknemzetiségű ország realitásai és mítoszai* [Shared Homeland or Hungarian Country? Realities and Myths of the Multinational Country], in: SZARKA: Párhuzamos nemzetépítés, konfliktusos együttélés, pp. 139-158.
[630] GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora I.*, pp. 370-393.
[631] VARGA, BÁLINT: *The Monumental Nation. Magyar Nationalism and Symbolic Politics in Fin-de-siècle Hungary*, New York, 2016, pp. 159-175.
[632] KEMÉNY G., GÁBOR (ed.): *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez a dualizmus korában. II. kötet 1892–1900* [Documents on the History of the Nationality Question in the Era of Dualism, Volume II, 1892-1900], Budapest, 1956, pp. 468-482.

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threatened with being depicted in front of the educated world as rather contented and – as a result of modernization – satisfied groups of ethnic minorities.

The protesters also came up with an alternative vision of the future: "If our wishes were all fulfilled at once, we would see Hungary placed on its natural basis, that coincides with the ethnic and historical conditions, where the emancipations of nationalities are indeed carried into execution, where nationality can see its selfhood being secured through public administration, where Hungary in general would not be a country of one single ethnic group, but the old and respectful Hungaria, and then we too would be glad to celebrate the 1000th anniversary of the existence of the Hungarian state."[633] As is very well-known from history: the turn of events took the precisely opposite direction after the turn of the century: while the Hungarian elites launched new language and education policy manuoeuvres with the clear aim of assimilating as many non-Hungarians as possible, the leaders of the nationality movements started to imagine the future of their peoples outside of the borders of the Hungarian state.[634]

In the case of Western Hungary the nationality question did not escalate before the turn-of-the-century. Moson, Sopron, and Vas counties taken together, reflecting the situation in the nation as a whole, the ethnic Hungarians enjoyed only a relative majority over non-Hungarian minorities. Furthermore, Moson County was the only one of the sixty-three counties where Germans enjoyed an absolute majority over other ethnic groups. The western border area was predominantly inhabited by German-speakers, which meant that the Hungarian authorities tended to see a potential national security issue in Great-German nationalism and separatism.[635]

The worries about German nationalism in Western Hungary were not entirely artificial.[636] In 1908, Josef Patry, a Bohemian-born German journalist, published a groundbreaking political pamphlet titled "Westungarn zu Deutschösterreich" (Western Hungary to German Austria). This publication, widely circulated by the Viennese Great-German journal *Alldeutsches Tageblatt*, is considered a significant precursor to the post-war Western Hungarian crisis. Patry's innovative vision introduced the term "Western Hungary" as a geopolitical concept and outlined a plan for the creation of German-Austria from the remnants of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This new state would ideally unite all German-speaking

[633] KEMÉNY G. (ed.): *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez* II., p. 482.
[634] SEEWANN, GERHARD: *Geschichte der Deutschen in Ungarn*, Band 2: 1860 bis 2006, Marburg, 2012, pp. 20-44.
[635] On the political movements of the ethnic German communities of Hungary in the era of Dualism, see: IBID., pp. 129-151.
[636] TÓTH: *Két anschluss között*, pp. 39-48.

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populations within the Habsburg territories, with the ultimate goal of unification with Germany.[637]

Geographically, uniting ethnic Germans in Hungary, Transylvania, Bohemia, and Moravia with German-Austria was unfeasible due to their dispersed locations. However, with the anticipated collapse of Austro-Hungarian Dualism, Patry proposed a significant redrawing of Central and Eastern European borders. He suggested Hungary shall cede Western Hungary to Austria in exchange for Dalmatia and Bosnia, while demanding a large swath of land between the Rába/Raab River and the Danube. Although rejecting military solutions, Patry encouraged Austrian Parliament members to protect their ethnic German compatriots living in Western Hungary from "culturally inferior Hungarians," and called on German-speaking intellectuals, students, and tourists to support the cause.

The leaflet obviously sparked fury in Hungary. On February 26, 1908, the issue of the Western border was brought before the Hungarian Parliament in Budapest by Hugó Laehne, MP for the Kőszeg/Güns district.[638] Despite being born in Sopron/Ödenburg to a prominent Lutheran family of German ethnicity, Laehne was a member of the Hungarian nationalist Party of Independence and a staunch advocate for Hungarian sovereignty. He vehemently demanded an end to Great-German propaganda regarding Western Hungary. Addressing his colleagues in Parliament, Laehne declared: “This movement should not be eliminated when it has already delivered results but in the very beginning. […] We must not let citizens of foreign states stir up emotions and question the territorial integrity of our country”.[639]

Meanwhile in a major political newspaper, another resident of Western Hungary vehemently rebuked recent speculation about his home region.[640] János Breit, from Sopronkeresztúr/Deutschkreuz, warned Hungarian authorities about the threat of pan-Germanism emanating from Austria and called for a swift end to such propaganda. As Breit put it: “We, Hungarians cannot do anything but draw the urgent conclusion that the twelfth hour has arrived.”[641] Highlighting the anti-Habsburg leanings of the pan-German movement, Breit also urged Austrian authorities to investigate Josef Patry's activities in Vienna. The argument made sense: as long as both Austria and Hungary remained under the legitimate rule of the

[637] SAAGE, RICHARD: *Die Deutsche Frage. Die Erste Republik im Spannungsfeld zwischen österreichischer und deutscher Identität*, in: KONRAD, HELMUT – MADERTHANER, WOLFGANG (eds.): Das Werden der Ersten Republik… der Rest ist Österreich, Band I, Wien, 2008, pp. 65-82.
[638] Képviselőházi Napló (1910) XVI. kötet [Diary of the House of Representatives of the Hungarian Parliament called in 1910, Volume 14], pp. 128–129.
[639] IBID., p. 129.
[640] *Nyugatmagyarországot a németeknek!* [Western Hungary to the Germans], in: *Budapesti Hírlap*, 22 February 1908, pp. 5–6.
[641] IBID., p. 6.

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Habsburgs, border disputes were inconceivable. The Habsburg question remained an important factor also after the war when Western Hungary's longstanding loyalty to the monarchy and the Habsburgs made its integration into the predominantly left-wing Austrian Republic particularly challenging.

The threat of Great-German nationalism quickly became a daily concern in Western Hungary's public administration. For instance, just prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the district administrators of Németújvár/Güssing and Szentgotthárd/St. Gotthard in Vas County were instructed by the Lord-Lieutenant to investigate potential links between local peasant groups and a Budapest-based Pan-German organization named ""*Deutscher Bauernbund aus den Ländern der Ungarischen Krone*". [642] The investigation revealed the activities of Carl Wollinger, an ethnic German accused of using local banks to disseminate German nationalist ideas. As a result of his influence, some villages had begun demanding the use of German instead of Hungarian in local administration. A few years later, facing the potential disintegration of Western Hungary, the Hungarian authorities would have been ready to concede this demand to appease the German-speaking population, but not yet in the year that changed everything.

4.6 The Slavic Question and the so-called "Vend action"

Since the Croatian minority in Western Hungary were sporadically scattered in several greater or smaller language islands along the border, their national awakening did not really reach a level that gave rise to significant securitization processes. The case of the Slovenes (Vends) living in the region, however, was very different, because they formed a compact ethno-linguistic bloc in two Southern districts of Vas County and a northwestern district of Zala County. The roots of the Slovene (Vend) question in Western Hungary go back at least to the early years of the Dualist era. However, at that time the question did not really appear as a security issue cantered around the national consciousness or identity of the Vend community itself, but as one aspect or ramification of the general Pan-Slavic threat. Hungarian worries over Pan-Slavic aspirations were not entirely unfounded but based on historical experience, for example the Croatian military manoeuvres in 1848, the anti-Hungarian pogroms by the Serbs in Vojvodina in 1848–1849, and the Tsarist Russian intervention in late summer 1849 that

[642] Letter from the Ministry of Interior Affairs to István Békássy, the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, on 29 March 1914. MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok 1914, IV.401/a/7, res 51.

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crushed the anti-Habsburg war for independence, not to mention the Voivodeship of Serbia and Banat of Temesvár (1849-1861), which was infamous for anti-Hungarian policies.

The Slovene national movement in the mid-nineteenth century, however, was in a relatively early phase compared to the Serb and Croat movements, and at the time it was not yet at all clear whether Slovenian was going to become an independent language, and thus a nation, or not.[643] In spite of the big hopes of 1848, the Slovene national movement could gain momentum in Carniola and Carinthia only by the 19th century. The first Slovene novel *Deseti brat* (*The Tenth Brother*), for example, was published only in 1866 by Josip Jurčič, who along with Fran Levstik represented the romantic realist approach that enriched the Slovene language by extensive borrowings from Serbo-Croatian. By the end of the century this tendency was reversed as more and more Slovene authors, most notably Ivan Cankar, worked toward a "pure" Slovene language which should be as independent from its South Slavic relatives as possible. As for the Vend people of Western Hungary, they used neither of these competing literary dialects, but a rather archaic, oral version of the Slovene language that remained, socially as well as culturally, rather isolated from the mainstream Slovene spoken widely among the common people in Carniola and Carinthia, heavily Slovene provinces of the Austrian empire. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the competition to "nationalize" the Vend people had clearly begun between the Slovenes, the Croats and the Hungarians. Whereas the first enjoyed a linguistic advantage over the Hungarians, the Hungarians could themselves rely on their historical and political authority over the Vends.[644]

One case illustrating these early developments is that of a Lutheran pastor named János Kardos, who as early as 20 August 1872 openly expressed his discontent with some South Slavic grammar school books used in the education of Vend-speaking children.[645] Kardos, whose name suggests he was probably of ethnic Hungarian background, was raised as a poor peasant child in the early nineteenth century, but thanks to the charity of the wealthy aristocratic Batthyány family[646], he was able to attend high school in Sopron/*Ödenburg*. After advanced

[643] In the first decades of the Slovenian national movement, see: HÖSLER, JOACHIM: *Von Krain zu Slowenien. Die Anfänge der nationalen Differenzieurungsprozesse in Krain und der Untersteiermark von der Aufklärung bis zur Revolution 1768 bis 1848,* München, 2006, pp. 339-355. MERCHIERS, INGRID: *Cultural Nationalism in the South Slav Habsburg Lands in the Early Nineteenth Century: The Scholarly Network of Jernej Kopitar (1780-1844)*, München, 2007.

[644] On the general tendencies of nation-building and nationalism in Southern Eastern Europe, see: CLEWING, KONRAD – SCHMITT, OLIVER JENS (eds.): *Geschichte Südosteuropas. Vom frühen Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Regensburg, 2011, pp. 708-729.

[645] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas vármegyei Tanfelügyelői iratok. Eb. ir. 15/1873.

[646] SCHOEBER, FRANZ JOSEF: *Die Grafen Batthyány als Gutsbesitzer im heute slowenischen Prekmurje (Übermurgebiet). Ein Blick über die einstige steirisch-ungarische Grenze*, in: KROPF (ed.): Die Familie Batthyány, pp. 55-78.

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theological studies in Germany, he returned to Hungary to serve as Lutheran pastor in two Vend villages: Szepetnek in Zala County between 1830 and 1835, and Őrihodos in Vas County (today *Hodoš*, Slovenia) from 1835 until his death in 1875. He was known not only for translating several schoolbooks and children's books from Hungarian to Slovene (*Vend*), but also for translating some famous Hungarian poets (János Arany, Sándor Petőfi, Mihály Vörösmarty) who were the leading literary figures of romantic Hungarian nationalism. In his works, Kardos attempted to deliver their art and ideas to the Vends on one hand, and to reduce the grammatical and vocabulary gap between the Vend dialect spoken in Southwestern Hungary and the mainstream Slovene language on the other hand.[647]

In his 1872 report to the royal educational supervisor of Vas County, however, Kardos criticized two schoolbooks entitled *Abcednik* and *Perce Knigecstenya*, respectively. Heavily criticizing the grammatical approach of the two books under six heads (phonology, morphology, declination, etc.), he concluded that the authors were more inspired by South-Slavic ideological aspirations, namely Croatian and/or Illyrian nationalism, than educational professionalism. As he commented on the second book: "… the South-Slavic spirit strikes one so tangibly from the words as well as the propositions, that it becomes clear from this complete [work] too, that it was not written to educate the spirit of poor Vend children but to promote certain Pan-Slavic tendencies".[648] What is most striking in Kardos's activity and words is that at this time neither the Hungarian state authorities in Budapest nor the county administration in Szombathely really intervened in the cultural and educational life of this remote micro-region. Instead, it was the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches that determined the cultural identity of the Vend people. The priests and pastors, however, saw no danger either in the very existence of the Vend culture, nor of any threat from the side of the mainstream Slovene language. On the contrary, they identified Pan-Slavism and the influence of the Serb and Croat languages as the main problem to which the Hungarian authorities should pay attention.

Besides education policies, place names gave rise to the most typical controversies when it came to language policies and the nationality question. In the Vend region, or more precisely in the Muraszombat district of Vas County, this issue was put on the agenda at the end of the

[647] *A Vendvidéken forgalomban lévő délszláv nyelvű tankönyvek nyelvészeti kritikája. Kardos János evangélikus lelkész jelentése a tanfelügyelőnek (részlet), 1872. Augusztus 20.* [Linguistic Critique of the South-Slavic Schoolbooks distributed in the Vend region. Report by Lutheran pastor János Kardos to the Educational Supervisor (extraction), 20 August 1872], in: MAYER, LÁSZLÓ – MOLNÁR, ANDRÁS (eds.): *Források a Muravidék történetéhez/Viri za zgodovino Prekmurja, Szöveggyűjtemény/Zbirka dokumentov*, II. kötet / 2. zvezek [Sources from the History of the Mura Region, Volume 2, 1850–1921], Szombathely-Zalaegerszeg, 2008, pp. 77–78.
[648] IBID., p. 80.

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1880s.[649] The standardization of place or geographical names, however, should not be interpreted only from the perspective of nationalism studies; the question was at least as much interconnected with the increasing demands of modernization. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, the modern institutions and structures (such as the postal service or the railway) and a unified public administration, all required a systematically and logically structured order of place names in every country, preferably in the official language of the given state. In Hungary, the first official book of place names (*Helységnévtár*) was published in 1873, and it revealed a picture of the (ethno-)linguistically heterogeneous country which Hungary in fact was. From this point onward, in a strange type of countermovement, more and more counties – especially those where Hungarian-speakers were challenged or even outnumbered by primarily non-Hungarian-speakers – were requested by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to allow changes to the names of certain villages on their territory.[650]

In the beginning these "Magyarization" aspirations simply followed in the footsteps of previous decades, which basically meant that in official documents regarding a bi- or multilingual village they just tended to give preference to the Hungarian version over the non-Hungarian version of its name. Sometimes this resulted in the re-introduction of long-forgotten historical Hungarian names that had been in use centuries ago but had disappeared as a result of ethnographic changes. From the second half of the 1880s, however, many enthusiastic initiators of place name changes went much further, and attempted to remove the non-Hungarian sounding variant entirely. In some cases, they invented new, parallel, Hungarian names based on the etymology of the original non-Hungarian names; in other cases, they created an entirely new Hungarian name derived from some aspect or feature of the given community, or from the name of a historic person or family to whom they wanted to pay tribute.[651] All this led to a plethora of changes in place names in some areas of Hungary during the course of the 1880s and 1890s. For example, in the overwhelmingly Slovak-speaking Zólyom County (home of Béla Grünwald, who was known as a controversial proponent of Hungarian supremacy), altogether 111 village place names were replaced by more Hungarian-sounding ones in 1885. Nor did Vas County lag far behind when it came to "Magyarization" policies regarding place names. In 1887, in order to replace the mostly old Slavic-sounding

[649] *A helységnevek magyarosítása a muraszombati járásban. Vas Vármegye Közigazgatási Bizottságának határozata (részlet)* [Magyarization of Location Names in the Muraszombat District. Resolution by the Public Administration Committee of Vas County (extraction)], in: IBID., pp. 117–121.
[650] IBID., pp. 117–118.
[651] MEZŐ, ANDRÁS: *A magyar hivatalos helységnévadás* [Official Hungarian Location Name-giving], Nyelvészeti tanulmányok 22, Budapest, 1982., pp. 50-78.

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(Vend) (and in some cases Germanic) names of certain villages, the county introduced ninety new Hungarian village names in the Muraszombat district alone.[652]

According to the record of the Assembly of Vas County, which exercised jurisdiction over all the villages located on the territory of the county, the ninety villages in the Muraszombat district voluntarily proposed to change their names to "more Hungarian-sounding" ones, and the new names were also proposed by the leadership of the given villages themselves.[653] The county assembly was, "in complete agreement with the wishes of the villages driven by patriotic sentiments", thus it approved the changes in nearly every case and supportively forwarded their requests to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In three cases, however, the county assembly rejected the proposed names, and instead recommended the use of what they considered more appropriate forms.[654] The county assembly also calculated the total cost of the name changes (for example administrative costs, new documents, new seals, new road signs, etc.) as about 500 forints but indicated its readiness to cover half the expenditure from the county budget. Given the fact that these villages were considered among the poorest in all Vas County, the county assembly made an additional request to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to cover the other half of the cost directly from the national budget.

Even setting aside the historical context, changing the names of the places where people live can have a massive impact on the identity of individuals and communities in the long run, and thus can be interpreted as a security issue. Even if there are good reasons for desiring a

[652] The semantic-etymological logic behind the name changes would be almost impossible to translate literally. The list of the villages that changed their names is as follows, in alphatical order of their original names: *Csernelócz* - Kis-Szombat; *Frankócz* – Ferenczfalva; *Gradistya* – Várhely; *Kupsincz* – Halmos; *Lukasócz* – Lukácsfa; *Mladetincz* – Málnás; *Mura-Csernecz* - Mura-Csermely; *Nemsócz* – Nemesd; *Norsincz* – Tölgyes; *Petáncz* – Deákvár; *Rakicsán* – Batthyányfalva; *Szvetahócz* – Muraszentes; *Tissina* – Csendlak; *Tropócz* – Murafüzes; *Vancsavész* – Ivánfalva; *Vescsica* – Falud; *Sztrukócz* – Sürűház; *Puzsócz* – Pálmafa; *O'Beznócz* – Buzahely; *Bodoncz* – Bodóhegy; *Tivadarcz* – Tiborfa; *Poznanócz* – Pálhegy; *Pordasincz* – Kisfalu; *Janosócz* – Jánosfa; *Gerencserócz* – Gerőház; *Tessanócz* – Mezővár; *Falkócz* – Urdomb; *Ivánócz* - Szent Benedek; *Kernecz* – Kislak; *Martyáncz* – Mártonhely; *Szembiborcz* - Szent Bibor; *Andreicz* – Andorhegy; Szottina – Hegyszoros; *Szinnersdorf* – Határfalva; *Szerdicza* – Seregháza; *Szent György* – Vízlendva; *Roprecsa* – Rétállás; *Rogasócz* – Szarvaslak; *Pertócsa* – Perestó; *Nuszkova* – Dióslak; *Guizenhof* – Gedóudvar; *Görlincz* – Görhegy; *Füxlincz* – Máriahavas; *Dankócz* – Orfalu; *Kustanócz* – Gesztenyés; *Kancsócz* – Benedek; *Kükecs* – Kökényes; *Ratkócz* – Rátkalak; *Pananócz* – Uriszék; *Peszkócz* – Petőfa; *Macskócz* – Mátyásdomb; *Sztányócz* – Szabadhegy; *Neradnócz* – Nádorfa; *Süllincz* – Sándorvölgy;*Pecsnarócz* – Ottóháza; *Luczova* – Lakháza; *Gyanavla* – Gyanafa; *Adriáncz* – Andorháza; *Felső Petrócz* – Péterhegy; *Brezócz* - Vas-Nyíres; *Goricza* – Halmosfő; *Markusócz* – Márkusháza; *Pecsarócz* - Sz[en]t Sebestyén; *Predanócz* – Rónafő; *Polona* - Vas-Polony; *Salamoncz* – Salamon; *Vanecsa* – Vaslak; Vidoncz – Vidorlak; *Kovacsócz* - Vend-Kovácsi; *Kruplivnik* - Vas-Korpád; *Rádócz* – Radófalva; *Két-Dolics* – Völgyköz; *Felső-Szlavecsa* - Felső-Csalogány; *Alsó-Szlavecsa* - Alsó-Csalogány; *Mottovilecz* – Motolyád; *Borecsa* – Borháza; *Domaincz* – Dombalja; *Felső-Csernecz* – Királyszék; *Gederócz* – Kőhida; *Korosecz* – Károlyfa; *Krajna* – Véghely; *Krásics* – Királyfa; *Szkakócz-Poláncz* – Széchenyifalva; *Szodosincz* – Bírószék; *Topolócz* – Jegenyés; *Új-Beznócz* – Borostyán; *Dolina* – Völgyes.

[653] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vasvármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottságának iratai, Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvek 340/1887.

[654] The three disputed cases were as follows in alphabetical order of the original names: Puczinc – Batthyánd instead of Batthyándi; Vecseszlavecz - Vas-Vecsés instead of *Zenértelep*; Zenkócz – Csengő instead of *Zengő*.

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modern and unified public administration, it is hardly deniable that seeking to engineer people's geographical identity and forcing them to use place names different from those familiar in their native language may cause frustration and uncertainty, if not political tensions. In case of the Vend villages, three scenarios can be conceived: either the locals did indeed themselves propose the changes, as the county record claimed, or some Hungarian activists, who perhaps formed the minority at the local level, were the initiators of the peculiar process, or the county administration was behind the whole process. In the first case, the changes might be explained through the economic-financial situation of the Vend villages and the influence of the nationalist ideology that dominated public affairs at the time. This would mean that the leadership of the Vend villages as it were self-securitized their own community, due to their fear of lagging even further behind either economically or culturally in the succeeding decades. If the change was instead initiated from Hungarian circles, either locally or regionally, then we can speak about a preventive securitization process: taking away the foreign-sounding name of the villages served the purpose of not letting the Vends grow into a self-conscious ethno-linguistic community that could have become a political threat to the Hungarian nation-state in the future.

Initiatives to deal with the nationality issue at a higher level most typically use whichever medium is the most effective in raising the attention of the public or, in case of a security issue, in delivering the message of alleged threat to their respective audiences. In that smaller part of the Vend region that belonged not to Vas County but to Zala County lies the town of Alsó-Lendva (today *Lendava*, Slovenia), where the local newspaper, entitled *Alsó-Lendvai Híradó*, had already promoted the importance of teaching the Hungarian language in the late 1880s.[655] In one of their articles, published on 27 January 1889, they pointed out that Alsó-Lendva fulfilled a "special mission of being on watch" in the remote Southwestern corner of Hungary, where the Hungarian nation finds itself "exposed" to a difficult situation "between Styria and Croatia". The article lamented that although most of the population of Alsó-Lendva, especially the middle class, were Hungarian-speakers, about 20,000 Vend people living in the neighboring villages were not able to say a single word in the official language of the state. According to the newspaper, it was certainly not because of their hostile attitude, since the Vend people in general showed great sympathy towards the Hungarians. The problem was negligence in terms of education, which was, the article pointed out, the responsibility of the authorities. Admitting that there had recently been efforts to improve the Hungarian language skills of the

[655] Alsó-Lendvai Híradó, 27 January 1889.

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Vend people, the newspaper called on every patriot to engage in further measures in order to avoid future accusations of neglect and indifference. At the same time, the article praised the decision of the government to assign Hungarian teachers to schools where only non-Hungarian educators had worked before and highlighted the role of the Catholic school of Alsó-Lendva which, under the leadership of an enthusiastic director, was thought to be play a crucial role in the lingual "Magyarization" of the Vend region.

The reasons behind the complaints of the newspaper can be discovered in the legal background of education in Dualist era Hungary. It is noteworthy that the famously controversial nationality law of 1868 did grant a wide range of individual rights to use and preserve national languages and cultures, including at primary and intermediate levels of education. According to the law, not only were the villages, parishes and civil associations allowed to decide on their language use, but the state itself was also obliged to ensure that in regions with sizable national minorities the citizens could use their own native language in education. In the beginning, even the teaching of Hungarian as a second language was not obligatory because of the lack of Hungarian-speaking teachers and bilingual educational materials. In 1879, however, the Hungarian Parliament passed a new law that obliged all schools not using Hungarian as the main language of education to teach the official language of the state as an individual subject. The lawmakers cited not the interests of the Hungarian state, but those of every citizen of a national minority background who would benefit from learning the language of the national administration. Furthermore, they repeatedly connected the issue of modernization and material progress with cultural expectations, meaning that state-funded schools often provided better conditions for studying in exchange for learning and using Hungarian.[656]

At the same time of course, the law corresponded with the priorities of the nation-state-building tendencies and the Hungarian elites' vision of the integrity of their state. In the creation of a unified political nation, whose members were supposed to share a common identity, education was seen to play a key role. First, the intellectuals and middle classes were targeted by the so-called "Magyarization" policies with the aim that over time they would deliver the process to the lower classes as well. This is the reason why the newly established state-funded schools were most typically located in multi-ethnic or non-Hungarian regions of the country. Besides the experiments of the central legislative and executive powers, the counties also played

[656] VON PUTTKAMMER, JOACHIM: *Nationale Peripherien. Strukturen und Deutungsmuster im ungarischen Schulwesen 1867-1914*, in: HÁRS – MÜLLER-FUNK – REBER – RUTHNER (eds.): Zentren, Peripherien und kollektive Identitäten in Österreich-Ungarn, pp. 97-110.

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their part in the effort at the mezzo-level of state administration. In the Western Hungarian counties, for instance, they organized language courses for non-Hungarians and regularly rewarded teachers who delivered exemplary results in teaching the Hungarian language in national minority areas. In spite of these developments, it would be a misjudgement to describe the "Magyarization" tendencies of the late nineteenth century as a political programme for fully-fledged ethnic or racial assimilation. Unlike that of the interwar period, the "Zeitgeist" of the Dualist era was at least as much liberal as nationalist, which did not really enable contemporary actors to fantasize about such extreme endeavours. Still, it certainly left enough room to speculate about the cultural and linguistic assimilation of certain groups, above all the middle classes, of the non-Hungarian minorities.

To a certain degree, such cultural-linguistic assimilation was a spontaneous phenomenon that naturally resulted from everyday living in a modernizing country. Those non-Hungarians, who wanted to study and work at a higher level and to have a successful career, especially in the cities and towns, had no other realistic option but to learn and master the Hungarian language. At the same time most of the rural population, in the periphery in particular, could maintain their pre-modern form of life without any major difficulties, and were not forced to use Hungarian either in the churches or in the schools, not to mention the marketplace. This spontaneous assimilation, however, did not reach the speed and degree the Hungarian elites expected, so they looked for some further means of boosting the process in a more organized manner. This was realized in the form of the creation of the so-called "Public Culture Associations" all over the country. These organizations, initiated by minister of religion and education József Eötvös at the very beginning of the period, with the initial aim of educating the poor, became the flagship of cultural "Magyarization" policies from the 1880s onward. At the top of the hierarchy were the associations of the main geographical regions of Hungary: the one in Upper-Hungary (*Felvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egylet*) was founded in 1882, the Transylvanian one (*Erdélyrészi Közművelődési Egyesület*) in 1885, and the Transdanubian one (*Dunántúli Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület*) in 1892. Compared to the Upper-Hungarian and the Transylvanian situation, the Transdanubian Association, which was chaired by well-known politician Kálmán Széll, did not face such urgent and enormous challenges in terms of ethnographic conditions. Still, both South-Slavic and German "threats" in Transdanubia – though rarely explicitly identified as such – were something to which attention had to be paid, especially in such multi-ethnic areas of Transdanubia as Western Hungary.[657]

[657] BERTÉNYI IFJ., IVÁN: *Széll Kálmán és a Dunántúli Közművelődési Egyesület* [Kálmán Széll and the Transdanubian Public Culture Association], in: BERTÉNYI IFJ., IVÁN – GÉRA, ELEONÓRA – RICHLY, GÁBOR (eds.):

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The creation of these big regional umbrella organizations was followed by the establishment of local branches. In the Slovene-speaking area of Western Hungary, the so-called "Vend-Region Hungarian Public Culture Association" (*Vendvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület*) was established on 28 October 1897 in the town of Muraszombat in Vas County, under the leadership of secretary Ferenc Kolossa and chairman István R. Takács. It was not an entirely new initiative in that it was created on the basis of the previously existing "Magyarization section" (*magyarosító szakosztály*) of the Association of Teachers of the Muraszombat District (*Muraszombati Járás Tanítóinak Társasága*). The budget of the "Vend-Region Hungarian Public Culture Association" was partly raised by the members' annual subscriptions and partly covered from the county budgets (400 corona per year), plus charitable donations and fundraising permitted by the county administration. The fundamental regulation of the association left few doubts over the main purpose of the project: "The aim of the association is to spread the Hungarian language, culture and patriotic spirit among the Vend-speaking people in the Muraszombat and Szentgotthárd districts of Vas County, and in the Alsó-Lendva District of Zala County."[658] In order to achieve this goal, the pro-Hungarian association vowed: (1) to support educational institutions (day-care facilities, kindergartens, schools, etc.); (2) to support the region's already existing and yet-to-be established civil associations (libraries, singing clubs, reading clubs, etc.); (3) to circulate patriotic materials (magazines, books, songbooks, prayer books, etc.) preferably in Hungarian or in bilingual format; and (4) to reward talented children delivering exemplary results in Hungarian-learning.[659]

In addition to the above-mentioned activities, the association soon took over the editing of the local weekly paper entitled *Muraszombat és Vidéke*. The newspaper was first published in 1884, but under the influence of the Vend-Region Hungarian Public Culture Association it became an openly pro-Hungarian and pro-assimilation paper around the turn of the century. An example to illustrate this is a front-page article entitled "Let us become Hungarians" (*Magyarosodjunk*). Although the piece was published on 1 April 1900, the author did not mean it as a joke. On the contrary, he strongly and enthusiastically argued for the voluntary

"Taníts minket úgy számlálni napjainkat…". Tanulmányok a 70 éves Kósa László tiszteletére ["Teach us counting our days in the way...". Studies in the honour of the 70-year-old László Kósa], Budapest, 2012, pp. 37–63.

[658] A Vendvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület alapszabályai 2.§, Vasvármegyei egyesületek alapszabályainak gyűjteménye, Muraszombat. MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegyei alispáni iratok, közigazgatási iratok IV. 221/1903.

[659] *A Vendvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület Alapszabályai. Részletek az alapszabályból* [The Fundamental Regulation of the Vend-Region Hungarian Public Culture Association. Extractions from the Fundamental Regulation], in: MAYER – MOLNÁR (eds.): *Források a Muravidék történetéhez II*, pp. 158–162.

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assimilation of the Vend people.[660] Praising the efforts of the Hungarian civil associations and educational institutions in the region, he urged the locals to change their personal and family names to more Hungarian-sounding ones. As in the case of place names, this also became a mass phenomenon in the 1880s, promoted by the media and later also by state authorities. It would be an exaggeration to claim that people were forced to change their names, but the general atmosphere made it a highly popular procedure.[661] Of course, the history of the "Magyarization" wave in personal names has a very complicated social aspect: some people decided to do it voluntarily and proudly in order to become an exemplary citizen of the country, while many others probably made this move purely because of increasing external pressure coming from the actors in cultural or political life.[662] Either way, the author of the *Muraszombat és Vidéke* article claimed that the change should also be made because of the foreign perspective. In their dealings abroad, he said, many Hungarian nationals were not recognized as such: for example, Hungarian traders and merchants were often regarded as Austrians, or at most Austro-Hungarians, instead of Hungarians. In his argument, the author did not depict the issue as a matter of nationalism but as a demand of modernization: "We shall break with the old approach, according to which we are supposed to remain what we were born. Mankind has a purpose: progress". Furthermore, in his view, there was an urgent need to demonstrate on the international stage that "there is not an intermingled people here made up of citizens of several different nationalities, but a strong, viable and unified Hungarian nation".[663]

Around the turn of the century, even as the Hungarians were doing their utmost to intensify the "Magyarization" process by all possible legal means at local levels, slowly but surely the Slovenes were also discovering their "compatriots" living in Southwestern Hungary. In this endeavour, the journalist, writer, and theater historian Anton Trstenjak played a key role.[664] Born in Kertschovina, Styria, Austria (today *Krčevina*, Slovenia) in 1853, he soon

[660] *Buzdítás a névmagyarosításra. Részletek egy újságcikkből. 1900. április 1.* [Campaign for Magyarization of Names. Extractions from a Newspaper Article, 1 April 1900], in: IBID., pp. 173–176.
[661] Learn more: KARÁDY, VIKTOR – KOZMA, ISTVÁN: *Név és nemzet. Családnév-változás, névpolitika és nemzetiségi erőviszonyok Magyarországon a feudalizmustól a kommunizmusig* [Name and Nation. Changes in Family Names, Name Policies and Ethnic Power Relations in Hungary from Feudalism to Communism], Budapest, 2002.; BALOGH, SÁNDOR – SIPOS, LEVENTE (eds.): *A magyar állam és a nemzetiségek. A magyarországi nemzetiségi kérdés történetének jogforrásai 1848–1993* [The Hungarian State and the Nationalities. Legal Sources of the History of Nationality Question in Hungary 1848–1993], Budapest, 2002.
[662] Similar phenomena took place all over the country, including in Transylvania. Learn more: BERECZ, ÁGOSOTON: *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries. The Entangled Nationalization of Names and Naming in a Late Habsburg Borderland*, New York – Oxford, 2020.
[663] Muraszombat és Vidéke, 1 April 1900, pp. 1–2.
[664] For more about Anton Trstenjak in Slovenian, see: BRUMEN, BORUT: *Anton Trstenjak – Slovenci na Ogrskem* [Anton Trstenjak – Slovenians in Hungary], in: KREMENŠEK, SLAVKO – GRADIŠNIK, INGRID SLAVEC – ERŽEN, TATJANA DOLŽAN (eds.): Slovensko etnološko društvo, Ljubljana, 1989, pp. 49–59.; FUJS, METKA: *Prekmurje podoba prostora [Prekmurje, Image of Space]*, in: *Podravina,* no. 6, 2006, pp. 49–62.; LOŽAR-PODLOGAR,

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became an adherent of Slovenian national awakening and Pan-Slavic ideas. Between 1883 and 1903 he travelled several times to Hungary to explore the region between the river Mura/*Mur* and the river Rába/*Raab/Raba* in Vas and Zala counties. He summarized his travel notes in 1903 in a book entitled *Slovenes in Hungary*, in which he analysed, among many other factors, the geography, population, traditions and culture, and the ethnic and religious background of the local people, as well as some important figures he had met while on the road. Trstenjak was first and foremost interested in the countryside and the life of the village people, but he also visited the town of Muraszombat, the administrative centre of the region – though he labelled it "a large but sloppy Jewish nest". Worrying about the spread of the Hungarian language and culture at the expense of the Slovene in the region, he thoroughly documented his observations from village to village. When he paid a visit, for example, to the village of Apátistvánfalva (still today in Vas County, Hungary), he lamented the many Hungarian words the locals had borrowed and added to their language instead of using the proper Slovene expressions.[665]

In the village of Bodonc (today *Bodonci*, Slovenia), to give another example, Trstenjak met the local priest, named Sinič. Although he proudly introduced himself as an ethnic Slovenian, he was surprised by the news the visitor told him about the Slovene national awakening in Austria. "Sinič and others too were amazed when I was telling them that there is a Slovene theatre in Ljubljana. They've never heard of it, and they thought that in our place [in Austria] everything is German, just as everything in Hungary is Hungarian."[666] According to Trstenjak, the Slovenes of Hungary knew just as little about their compatriots in Austria as those compatriots knew about them, so he found his personal mission in changing both perspectives. In spite of all these difficulties, Trstenjak emphasized the importance of the common language, which he called an unbreakable bond between the Slovenes of the Habsburg Monarchy. Beyond this cultural dimension, in his travel notes Trstenjak regularly mentioned a more tangible instrument of nation-building: the so-called "Hermagoras Society" (in Hungarian: *Szent Mohor Társulat*) which also had several members in Hungary. This Catholic association, named after Saint Hermagoras of Aquileia, was founded in Klagenfurt, Carinthia,

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HELENA: *Anton Trstenjak o ljudskem življenju v Prekmurju* [Anton Trstenjak on Folk Life in Prekmurje], in: Traditiones, no. 18, 1989, pp. 147–166.; In Hungarian, see: M. KOZÁR, MÁRIA: *Anton Trstenjak útleírása a 19. század végi Vas vármegye szlovének lakta településeiről* [Travel Diary by Anton Trstenjak about the Slovene-inhabited Settlements of Vas County at the End of the 19th Century], in: MAYER, LÁSZLÓ – TILCSIK, GYÖRGY (eds.): *Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei* 7. - *Előadások Vas megye történetéről* VI. [Studies on the history of Vas County, Volume 6], Szombathely, 2015, pp. 63–76.

[665] *Szlovének Magyarországon a 19–20. Század fordulóján. Részletek Anton Trstenjak útleírásából. 1903* [Slovenes in Hungary at the turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries. Extractions from the Travel Diary by Anton Trstenjak, 1903], in: MAYER – MOLNÁR (eds.): Források a Muravidék történetéhez II, p. 202.

[666] IBID., pp. 203–204.

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Austria, in 1851, with the aim of paving the way for Slovene national awakening, especially in Carinthia, Carniola and Styria. From around the turn of the century, it expanded its political horizons to encompass Southwestern Hungary as well, smuggling more and more Slovenian books and materials to the other side of the border.

At this point, however, the Slovene-question became an issue at national governmental level in Hungary, which was later simply called the "Vend action" (*Vend akció*). The term "action" was not coined specifically for the Vend region. Very similar government programs were carried out in the first decade of the 20th century in other peripheral regions of Hungary such as certain areas of Northern Hungary (Felvidék, today in Slovakia), Transcarpathia (Kárpátalja, today in Ukraine) and Szeklerland (Székelyföld, today in Romania) in Transylvania. The common feature was the the issue of modernization and economic development intermingled with the nationality question, and thus they action programs were seen as issues of national security. [667]

The roots of the "Vend action" go back to 10 January 1903, when Prime Minister of Hungary, Kálmán Széll sent a memorandum to his Minister of Religion and Education, Gyula Wlassics, with regard to the topic of the "Vend" ethnic group in Vas county.[668] Having a Western Hungarian background, the Prime Minister probably held his beloved Vas County close to his heart, even at a time when he had to deal with more urgent national matters. In his letter, Széll explained to Wlassics that when he had made inquiries about whether the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County had recently experienced increasing Pan-German political activity or propaganda on the territory of his municipality, either from the Transylvanian Saxons or other "Alldeutsch" circles, Ede Reiszig had given a rather comforting answer regarding the general attitude of the German-speaking community in Vas County. However, at the same time he drew the attention of the Prime Minister to the nearly forgotten Slovenian-speaking minority, who were historically called "Vend" by the Hungarians.[669]

Although no South Slavic nationalist movement had yet developed among the Vends, Reiszig reported that the authorities in the Muraszombat district had become aware of the

[667] NAGY, MARIANN: *A felvidéki akció. Állami gazdaságpolitika a peremvidék felzárkóztatása érdekében* [The Highland Action. Economic State Policies for the Development of thePeriphery], in: Közép-Európai Közlemények, (2) 2009, 2-3, pp. 22-30.; BALATON, PETRA: *Állami akciók a lemaradó régiók fejlesztésére a dualizmus korában* [State Actions for the Development of Regions Lagging Behind in the Era of Dualism], in: VERESS, PÉTER: (ed.) *Bartha Miklós és kora: Regionális fejlesztések*, Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc, Romania), 2013, pp. 69-81.; BALATON, PETRA: *A székely akció története* [History of the Szekler Action], Budapest, 2004.

[668] KEMÉNY G., GÁBOR (ed.): *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez a dualizmus korában. III. kötet 1900–1903* [Documents on the History of the Nationality Question in the Era of Dualism, Volume III, 1900–1903], Budapest, 1964, pp. 596–597.

[669] IBID., p. 597.

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activity of some foreign literary associations from the neighboring Austrian provinces that had significant South-Slavic populations. These associations were accused of distributing Slavic literary materials among the Slovene-speakers in Hungary, which – according to Reiszig – might be counterbalanced with the assistance of the Catholic clergy that still enjoyed a dominant cultural influence over the rural population. Based on the report by the Lord-Lieutenant, the Prime Minister sent a letter to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Szombathely, Dr. Vilmos István, asking for his opinion on the matter. According to the Bishop, the [Hungarian] patriotism of the Vend people could not be questioned for now, but the foreign religious and literary materials did pose a real threat that could eventually stir up South Slavic nationalist emotions. In order to avoid that scenario, the Bishop suggested distributing similar materials written in the archaic dialect of the Vend people. The Prime Minister asked the cabinet member dealing with cultural affairs to find a way to cover the costs of this enterprise.[670]

Not much later, the Minister of Education and Religion, Wlassics, got in touch with the Bishop of Szombathely to discuss the Vend issue.[671] The Bishop argued for establishing a pro-Hungarian Vend literary association in order to compete with the pro-Slovene "Mohor" association based in Marburg, Carinthia, Austria (today *Maribor*, Slovenia). In István's view, the more the ancient Vend dialect was encouraged and reinforced, the more isolated and independent it would become from the mainstream Slovene language spoken widely in the Austrian provinces of Carniola and Carinthia. The Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, however, held a very different opinion: according to Reiszig, strengthening the local Vend culture would only serve further to jeopardize the strength of Hungarian influence in the micro region, which had been promoted for some time by the so-called "Hungarian Cultural Association of the Vend Region" (*Vendvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület*). Creating a Vend Association might give the unintended impression that it was aimed against this Hungarian association. Furthermore, the Bishop's plan to counterbalance the "Mohor" propaganda would be an explicitly Catholic movement, which could divide the local Vend population, about half of which belonged to the Lutheran church, and thus might eventually lead to the creation of a Protestant Vend Association. In that unfortunate scenario, the Hungarian Association would suddenly face two non-Hungarian rivals in the Vend region.

In his report to Károly Khuen-Héderváry, who in the meantime had replaced Széll as Prime Minister, Wlassics presented both arguments, but sided firmly with the Lord-

[670] IBID.
[671] IBID., p. 598.

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Lieutenant.[672] In his opinion, creating a Vend literary association would recognize the demand of the non-Hungarian minorities in general, according to which "other lingual groups shall prevail at the expense of the Hungarian culture". As for the Southwestern part of Vas County, it would also result in the artificial bolstering of an archaic oral dialect, namely the Vend, which had had thus far no literary tradition. Even the temporary solution of publishing and distributing some pro-Hungarian popular books and calendars in the Vend dialect would endanger the Hungarian position. As Wlassics explained, it might discourage the Vend youth from learning Hungarian, and thereby naturally and unconsciously growing into Hungarian culture. Instead, Wlassics suggested distributing even more literary materials in Hungarian among the Vends, who – at least according to the report by the Lord-Lieutenant – had increasingly improved their Hungarian over the last few decades. Wlassics suggested that in order to resolve the conflict of interests between the Catholic Church and the Vend-Region Hungarian Cultural Association, both should be involved in the distribution work.[673]

In addition, the Minister of Education and Religion urged the Bishop of Szombathely to prohibit the parish priests under his jurisdiction, including the native Slovene-speakers in the Vend region, from using or distributing religious materials sent to Hungary by the securitized "Mohor" association, and at the same time to provide them with Hungarian materials of the same kind. Furthermore, Wlassich – citing the opinion of the Lord Lieutenant about the positive attitude of the locals towards state education – also envisioned the nationalization of elementary education in the Vend region. This would mean that the state took over schools formerly administered by the church in the hope of providing better conditions and at the same time further boosting the "Magyarization" of the Vend people. In Wlassics's view, these two methods – namely strict measures against the non-Hungarian-enthusiast clergy in the Vend region and the nationalization of education – could effectively prevent the danger posed by South Slavic aspirations from growing into a serious concern.[674]

The Vend question remained on the agenda even after Wlassics was replaced by Albert Berzeviczy as Minister of Religion and Education. In his report to the new Minister on 1 April 1904, Reiszig was already referring to the policy as the "so-called Vend action".[675] The Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County basically repeated his former opinion, with the addition of further details and suggestions. Reiszig now claimed that he had long been paying a special attention

[672] IBID., pp. 598–600.
[673] IBID., p. 599.
[674] IBID., p. 600.
[675] IBID., pp. 600–602.

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to the Vend question, which he called a "duty of high priority" of the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County. In his view, the situation "can be still improved today", especially if the "Catholic clergy finally breaks with the South Slavic literary circles for good", which meant stopping the distribution of their materials on the one hand and preventing similar activity by others within the Catholic hierarchy on the other. Reiszig still argued against the creation of a Vend association or envisaged it as at best only a temporary solution which should be coordinated by the already existing Hungarian association in the region. In their attempt to deliver "exclusively patriotic literary products" to the locals, the Hungarian association should be given financial aid, he insisted, adding that the calculation of the costs required more time on his part. Furthermore, the political conflict between the Catholic clergy and the Hungarian association should be resolved as soon as possible, which could only be achieved by the intervention of the Bishop of Szombathely, who was described by Reiszig as someone of "impeccable Hungarian patriotic sentiments".[676]

According to the Lord-Lieutenant, the main problem was that the materials to be sent to the Vend people were mostly religious ones, so producing and editing them required the involvement of the local clergy, which was rather reluctant to cooperate with the Hungarian association, if not openly opposed to Hungarian supremacy. In any case, warned Reiszig, the Vend literary action must not reach a level that created a new nationality group. As he put it: "the [idea] of editing Vend literary products should be dropped rather than creating a threat by them". Consequently, the Lord Lieutenant disapproved of the Bishop of Szombathely's idea, according to which the Vend people should be targeted first by materials written in their own dialect, by bilingual products (namely Vend and Hungarian) in the medium term, and by exclusively Hungarian content only in the long run. In Reiszig's view, a Vend literary association would necessarily exhibit a national character, in spite of the good intentions of the bishop. Reiszig pointed out that it was Bishop István himself who had recently shown the right path by ordering the printing of hundreds of copies of a Vend-language Catholic calendar to be circulated among the locals, and he had achieved this without creating a Vend literary association. Further products, however, did not follow due a lack of financial means.[677]

The Lord Lieutenant of Vas County also argued that a state funded Vend association would discourage and demoralize the members of the Hungarian association. For this very reason, he strongly recommended that the Minister of Religion and Culture, Berzeviczy, discuss the issue personally not only with the bishop but also with the leadership of the "Hungarian

[676] IBID.
[677] IBID., p. 601.

DOI: 10.15774/PPKE.BTK.2025.025

Cultural Association of the Vend Region". As he put it: "skipping [this negotiation] would leave dangers lurking unseen that would put all the results achieved so far at great risk". Reiterating an argument made by the predecessors of the Minister, Reiszig promoted the idea of the establishment of the state-run elementary school system in the region, which he described as "the most effective instrument to reinforce the Hungarian [supremacy]". He pointed out that regardless of the nationality question this relatively poor region was in great need of a state-financed education. Concluding his report, Reiszig envisioned that "by raising the number of the state teachers, the Hungarian [cause] gains a body which under proper leadership will triumphantly repel the attack from the side of the South Slavs against our patriotic Vend people".[678]

Having consulted with the different parties, the Minister of Religion and Culture made his proposal to the Prime Minister István Tisza, successor of Károly Khuen-Héderváry, on 14 May 1904.[679] First of all, he asked the Prime Minister to order the prohibition in Hungary of all the products made and delivered by the Marburg-based Slavic association "Mohor", which he accused of deliberately spreading fake news about the vision of the Hungarian state and its constitutional order. Citing the royal educational supervisors of Vas County, Berzeviczy noted that the "Mohor" products were not delivered by post but by priests from Styria. An unofficial carrier delivered the products in great numbers from the town of Radkersburg (today *Bad Radkersburg*, Austria) directly to the Vend parish priests, who further distributed them among the local members of "Mohor". The minister therefore recommended delivering Hungarian books specifically to those Vend people who had already learned the language to a sufficient level. At the same time, however, Berzeviczy did not propose giving financial aid to the "Hungarian Cultural Association of the Vend Region" as the Lord-Lieutenant had suggested. On the contrary, he approved of the strategy of the Bishop of Szombathely who, within his own authority and budget, was already engaged in the experiment to counterbalance the "Mohor" influence with religious and patriotic materials written in local Vend dialect.[680]

In order to counterbalance the South-Slavic influence and to reinforce the patriotic spirit and spread and consolidate the Hungarian language among the Vend people, Berzeviczy recommended that the Prime Minister establish new state-funded Kindergartens, elementary schools, youth associations and youth libraries in the region. Sharing his decree sent to Ferenc Halász, the royal educational supervisor of Vas County, the Minister noted that thus far in Vas

[678] IBID., pp. 601–602.
[679] IBID., pp. 602–603.
[680] IBID., pp. 602–603.

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County twenty-four Vend villages had state-funded elementary schools, but only two of them, Gyanafa and Mezővár (today *Ženavlje* and *Tešanovci*, both in Slovenia) were equipped with youth libraries containing twenty-four and 118 volumes, respectively. Therefore, he instructed the supervisor to carry out a thorough investigation with the aim of indicating villages in which the state should consider establishing new Kindergartens, elementary schools, youth associations and youth libraries, and what contributions these villages could provide for the sake of the cause. As Berzevicy put it in his letter to Ferenc Halász: "In the western periphery of the county that is bordered by Austria, in the villages of Vend population, the acclimatization and reinforcement of the Hungarian national culture can be achieved only by good, patriotic elementary schools that use Hungarian as the language of education."[681]

The domestic political crisis of 1905–1906 temporarily took several questions off the political agenda, but that does not mean that in the time of the so-called coalition government (1906–1910) the national tensions disappeared or even eased. As for the Vend issue, the county administration once again confronted the Catholic Church in 1909. The reason for a confidential letter from István Bezerédj, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, to Vilmos István, Bishop of Szombathely, was the controversy over the publication of a religious calendar targeting the Vend people.[682] In his letter, Bezerédj reminded the Bishop of the danger posed by the "Illyric movement" that had sprung up among the Slovenes of Hungary a few years earlier. Acknowledging the efforts made by the Bishop personally to counterbalance the influence of the "Mohor" association in Western Hungary, the county leader complained about the content and editorial approach of the calendar, citing the "Vend Regional Hungarian Public Cultural Association" as well as the administrator of the Muraszombat district as his sources. Furthermore, he recommended including a brief history of the Hungarian nation in the next year's volume, similar to what the 1909 edition had included about the history of the Slavic people. In addition, the Lord-Lieutenant insisted on the use of the proper Hungarian place names as formulated by the Law of 1898 IV. Last, but not least, Bezerédj reminded the Bishop of the fact that the Mohor association had numerous members in Hungary, including some of the priests serving the Roman Catholic Diocese of Szombathely.[683] In order to reinforce his argument, the Lord-Lieutenant attached a copy of the letter he had received from the

[681] IBID., p. 603.
[682] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai, Elnöki iratok 7/1909.
[683] *A szlovén nyelvű katolikus kalendáriumok magyar történelmi szemlélete. Bezerédj István, Vas vármegyei főispán levele István Vilmos szombathelyi megyés püspökhöz és Pósfay Pongrác levele a főispánhoz. 1909. január 26.* [The Perception of Hungarian History in Slovene Catholic Calendars. Letter by István Bezerédj, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County to Vilmos István, Bishop of Szombathely and a Letter by Pongrác Pósfay to the Lord-Lieutenant, 26 January 1909], in: MAYER – MOLNÁR (eds.): *Források a Muravidék történetéhez, II*, pp. 233–235.

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administrator of Muraszombat. The local head of the county administration, Pongrác Pósfay, used much stronger words to describe the threat the Slovene movement posed to the interests of the Hungarian nation-state. As he put it: "In spite being a Roman Catholic I have been struggling with my own priests for decades, and not because of personal differences but for the sake of Hungarian interests, because if we are not engaging in an effective re-action, these good gentlemen will turn our district into a South-Slavic province."[684]

The administrator of Muraszombat was indeed a key actor in the securitization process of the Slovene-speaking community, because he received information on the attitude and behavior of the locals on a regular basis. On 6 April 1909, for example, a schoolteacher from Murahalmos (today *Kupšinci*, in Slovenia) proudly reported to Pósfay that he had successfully persuaded parents of two children from the village of Rónafő (today *Predanovci*, in Slovenia) to send their children to an ethnic Hungarian village for the duration of the summer vacation. The teacher, Iván Titán, explained that the two pupils, named Ferenc Ficzkó and Ferenc Podleszek respectively, had previously been attending school in the village of Battyánd (today *Puconci*, in Slovenia), and their knowledge of Hungarian was lagging far behind that of their peers. The idea of this special summer language course was not an individual expedient invented by the local teacher, but part of the most recent activities of the "Vend Regional Hungarian Public Cultural Association". The pro-Hungarian association organized these types of vacations in relatively great numbers at their own cost in the years before the Great War. Having, however, a rather bad reputation among the Slovenes, they needed the influence of the local teachers and priests, who could persuade the families to let their children go for "Hungarian-learning" vacations. The endeavour could turn into a great experience or a nightmare, depending on the general behaviour and attitude of the Hungarian families who took the children for the summer. This was the main reason why the schoolteacher of Murahalmos had addressed the district administrator, asking him to send the boys to a "possibly good place".[685]

It was also district administrator Pósfay who pioneered the plans for the establishment of a new, state-funded Hungarian secondary school (*alreáliskola*) in the town of Muraszombat (today *Murska Sobota*, Slovenia). His letter, sent on 11 February 1912 to István Békássy, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, is a valuable historical source, not only because of the school itself

[684] IBID., p. 236.
[685] *Magyarosítási törekvés a Muravidéken. Titán István murahalmosi tanító levele a főszolgabíróhoz. 1909. Április 6.* [Attempts of Magyarization in the Mura Region. Letter by István Titán, teacher from Murahalmos to the District Administrator, 6 April 1909], in: IBID., pp. 241–244.

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but also because of the general argument presented by Pósfay, in which he highlighted the "Vend question" as an urgent matter of security.[686] Pósfay pointed out that the 100,000 Vend-speakers living in about 180 villages in the valley of the Mura river were exposed to the influence of the neighbouring Austrian provinces in terms of economy. The region's agricultural and forestry products were mostly sold on the Styrian, Carinthian and Carniolian markets because of the great distances and high costs of transport towards other regions of Hungary. The frequent economic contact had had a great impact on cultural exchange too, which was supported by the shared language of the Slovenes living in the two halves of the Dual Monarchy. In order to counterbalance the region's economic gravitational attraction toward Austria, the patriotic audience of the district and the county joined forces to create a new railway line between the towns of Muraszombat and Körmend, and thus toward the central areas of Hungary. As for the culture, Pósfay said that the "Vend Regional Hungarian Public Cultural Association" has carried out a great number of activities in recent years, "without any violence, but with the weapon of persuasion, in a social way", adding that in combination with enthusiastic school teachers, it had attempted "to gain [the confidence] of the exposed Slavic-speaking Vends for the patriotic interests of the Hungarian homeland".[687]

According to the district administrator, in contrast to the mono-lingual and mono-confessional countries, where the integrity of the state was secured by "shared visions and guidelines", in a country such as Hungary, which was divided by different nationalities and confessions, the "nationality-based power aspirations manifested themselves in all sectors of public life". Listing the results achieved so far, for example the diminution of the "Sveti Mohor" religious and literary products and the substitution of Hungarian/Vend ones, the district administrator argued for further measures, above all the establishment of the new school in Muraszombat. For the sake of the great cause, the patriotic locals had offered a site plus 70,000 coronas for the construction works. The new school would welcome the Vend youth who at the time could attend secondary education only in Graz, Marburg/*Maribor*, or Cilli/*Celje*, all in Styria at the time, or in Varasd/*Varaždin* or Zágráb/*Zagreb* in Croatia. Admitting that the Germans and the Slovenes were already in "a life-and-death-struggle" in the neighboring Austrian provinces, Pósfay noted that more and more Slovene agitators were paying a visit to Hungary to incite Pan-Slavic emotions among the Vend people. These operations had allegedly

[686] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas Vármegye Főispánjának Iratai, Elnöki iratok, 20/1912.
[687] *Magyar tannyelvű állami alreáliskola terve Muraszombatban. Pósfay Pongrác muraszombati főszolgabíró felterjesztése. 1912. február 11.* [Plans for a Hungarian Secondary School in Muraszombat. Proposal by the District Administrator of Muraszombat, Pongrác Pósfay, 11 February 1912], in MAYER – MOLNÁR (eds.): *Források a Muravidék történetéhez, II*, pp. 254–255.

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been coordinated lately from the village of Wernsee in Styria (today *Veržej*, in Slovenia), where a Salesian monastery was under construction, funded by a foreign foundation with the aim of involving more and more Slovenes of Austria and Hungary in the Pan-Slavic movement. Taking all this into account, the district administrator asked the Lord-Lieutenant to support the idea of the new school and to recommend the plan to the government. István Békássy did accede to the request, and the Minister of Religion and Education personally received a delegation from Muraszombat. Although János Zichy approved the plans, the forthcoming war prevented the realization of the new Hungarian secondary school in the Vend region.[688]

The war period in Western Hungary will be discussed in another chapter of this work, and at this point we should just mention a story that illustrates clearly how the debates on securitization were radicalized in the new atmosphere generated by the Great War. On 12 September 1914, a reviewer of the customs police named Ferenc Őry from the village of Bírószék (today *Sodišinci*, in Slovenia), filed a report to the Financial Directorate of Szombathely about the anti-state and anti-Hungarian agitation of a Vend-born person, named Victor Sbüll. The officer claimed that he had received the information from a schoolteacher, Károly Maár, that the suspect, who was born in Murapetróc (today *Murski Petrovci*, in Slovenia), had made the following statement in a private circle: "What do you know! We want to create an independent Slavic Kingdom, to which would belong Abázia (today *Opatija* in Croatia), Dalmatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Croatia and its joint countries, plus the Serbs in Southern Hungary, Styria from the south of Marburg (*Maribor*), and the Vend-region of Vas County."[689]

Saying such words was not only scandalous and unlawful at the time, but politically reckless as well as personally dangerous, especially when they came out of the mouth of a clergyman. The investigation revealed that Victor Sbüll had made the highly controversial statement while paying a visit to his parents' village just after he was inaugurated as a Catholic priest in the Franciscan Monastery of Varasd (today *Varaždin*, Croatia), when he celebrated his first mass in the village of Csendlak (today *Tišina*, Slovenia). According to the Hungarian customs police officer, the young priest must have been indoctrinated with "Slavism" within the walls of the monastery, which needed to be reported immediately to the highest level. The case was taken so seriously that it was investigated not only by the district administrator of Muraszombat and the offices of the Vice- and Lord-Lieutenants of Vas County, but also by the Hungarian Ministries of Finance, Defence and Internal Affairs and the Office of the Croatian

[688] IBID., pp. 256–258.
[689] MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Vas vármegye főispánjának iratai, Elnöki iratok, 269/1914

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Ban. The case was finally handed over to the Chief Prosecutor of Zagreb, who exercised jurisdiction over the town of Varasd, to where Victor Sbüll had returned after "committing the crime against his homeland".[690]

As we have seen, by the approach of the Great War the "Vend question" had evolved into a new phase. In a way reminiscent of the beginning of the period, it was once again the Pan-Slavic tendencies that worried the Hungarian authorities the most, in contrast to the influence of the specifically Slovene nationalism that dominated the discourse on the matter around the turn-of-the-century. In the wake of the Balkan wars and again after the outbreak of the First World War, the Pan-Slavic danger gained a new meaning in Hungary: in the eyes of the authorities, everyone and everything capable of being connected to Pan-Slavism could be labelled a threat, and thus a potential target of securitization.[691] Up until 1918, the Vend region remained relatively remote from the front line of war, and, like other regions of Western Hungary, suffered mostly in the form of the disappeared men, economic decline, shortages of goods, demoralization of society, and also the arrival of a great number of refugees. In 1919 and 1920, however, the region itself became a war zone between the Yugoslav occupying forces and the Hungarian (between March and July 1919 Communist) troops. In the end, the future brought the worst nightmare of the Dualist time Hungarian elites: despite all the "Magyarization" and securitization efforts, the region of the valley of the Mura River was indeed "turned into a South-Slavic province".[692]

[690] *Délszláv agitáció Csendlakon. Őri Ferenc bírószéki magyar királyi pénzügyőri szemlész jelentése. 1914. szeptember 12.* [South-Slavic Agitation in Csendlak. Report by Ferenc Őri, Royal Hungarian Excise Reviewer in Bírószék, 12 September 1914], in: MAYER – MOLNÁR (eds.): *Források a Muravidék történetéhez, II*, pp. 265–267.
[691] STIBBE, MATTHEW: *The Internment of Political Suspects in Austria-Hungary during the First World War*, in: SCHWARTZ (ed.): Gender and Modernity in Central Europe, pp. 203-218.
[692] ZAWISTOWSKA, RENATA: *Prekmurje – Separation from Hungary and Connection to Slovenia (1919–1920)*, in: Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, (47) 2012, 1, pp. 187-215.; GÖNCZ, LÁSZLÓ: *A Muravidék útja a délszláv királyságba* [The Road of the Mura Region to The South Slavic Kingdom], Szombathely, 2024.

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V. Towards the Disintegration of Historical Western Hungary

5.1 The Great War and War-Time Difficulties in Western Hungary (1914–1918)

The First World War famously resulted in the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. However, it is often forgotten that the two defeated allies, Austria and Hungary, not only lost significant territory to neighbouring states but also became embroiled in a substantial border dispute with each other from 1918 to 1921. As one contemporary expert on the topic points out in her dissertation project, the agony of historic Western Hungary and the birth of Burgenland were an extremely complicated process, in which "the chronology, historical events and occurrences alone hint at the interplay of the international and national politics throughout the whole process".[693]

Having read the existing literature on the topic, one might have the impression that the post-war border conflict between Austria and Hungary erupted out of nowhere in the autumn of 1918. As we have seen in the previous chapters, this was not the case. On the contrary, the post-war conflict was deeply rooted in pre-war developments in the region, especially when it comes to the question of security. Still, without a major stimulus, which radically changed the political attitude of both the elites and the ordinary people, the idea of moving the Austria-Hungary border tens of kilometres eastward would have not appealed to many. It is in this very respect that what we have witnessed concerning the pre-war era appeared at most the activity of some political adventurers or visionaries, who might have sufficient intellectual capacity to become protagonists of a cause, but certainly lacked the power and political influence to realise their ambitions. Recent research on East Central European political thought points out that "one of the most unintended consequences" of the First World War was that it served as a "laboratory for testing the radical doctrines" of the turn of the century, including social Darwinism's vision of life as a zero-sum game, in real life and on real people.[694]

Was it the war and its resulting upheaval that shattered the indifference of Western Hungarian peoples towards nationalist appeals? The academic concept of "national indifference," a key concept in contemporary studies of nations and nationalism, offers a compelling argument that this might be the case.[695] This concept posits that the nationalist

[693] VARES: *The Question of Western Hungary/Burgenland*, p. 12.
[694] TRENCSÉNYI, BALÁZS – JANOWSKI, MACIEJ – BAAR, MONIKA –FALINA, MARIA – KOPECEK, MICHAL: *History of Modern Political Thought in East Central Europe*, Volume I, Oxford, 2016, p. 631.
[695] VAN GINDERACHTEER – FOX: *Introduction: National indifference and the History of Nationalism in Europe,* in*:* VAN GINDERACHTEER – FOX (eds.): *National indifference,* pp. 1-14.

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movements that arose in Habsburg-ruled territories before the war were not fuelled by popular support for the nation, but instead were propelled by the widespread indifference, ambivalence, and opportunism of ordinary individuals when confronted with questions of national identity and the demands put forth by nationalist leaders. Rogers Brubaker, a pioneer of the concept, and his followers took the constructivist paradigm further to challenge Anthony D. Smith's ethno-symbolist position, as well as Miroslav Hroch's phase theory of national movements and Michael Billig's analysis of the relentless spread in modern society of banal nationalism.[696] They argue that the nation itself is not a static, monolithic entity, but rather a dynamic social construct. Proponent of national indifference reject that there was a mass embrace of nationalism in the Habsburg lands before the Great War. Instead, they assert that it was the profound social breakdown caused by the war that created the conditions necessary for the "massification" of national movements. In this context, nationalist movements were able to gain traction by offering a compelling vision of a unified nation based on shared language, culture, and history.[697]

On June 28, 1914, when Gavrilo Princip assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife in Sarajevo, not many anticipated the ensuing four-year global conflict. While the ruling elites of the Dual Monarchy may have recognized the looming threat of war, ordinary citizens were not yet eager to sacrifice themselves for "sacred war aims".[698] Franz Ferdinand was unpopular in Hungary due to his "Belvedere circle" openly advocating for a reorganization of the Dual Monarchy at the territorial expanse of Hungary. A well-known proposal called "Vereinigte Staaten von Groß-Österreich" (United States of Greater Austria), drafted by Aurel Popovici, a close advisor of the heir, in 1906, would have resulted in a similar territorial loss for Hungary as the Treaty of Trianon did in 1920.[699] Historians have examined the proposal, but so far limited attention has been paid to the fact that it would have transferred the predominantly German-speaking regions of Western Hungary, including parts of Vas and Sopron Counties and all of Moson County, along with the cities of Sopron/Ödenburg and Pozsony/Pressburg, to German-Austria as one of fifteen federal states in the proposed Greater Austria. Franz Ferdinand's assassination shelved the proposal, only for it to resurface in a modified form four years later.

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[696] BRUBAKER, ROGERS: *Nationalism Reframed. Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 13–22.
[697] ZAHRA: *Imagined Noncommunities*, pp. 93–119.
[698] HAJDU, TIBOR – POLLMAN, FERENC: *A régi Magyarország utolsó háborúja 1914–1918* [The Last War of the Old Hungary 1914–1918], Budapest, 2014, p. 63.
[699] TURDA: *The Idea of National Superiority in Central Europe*, pp. 142-158.

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As heir to the Hungarian throne, the Archduke's death was met with nationwide mourning, including black flags on public buildings and cancelled events. Local authorities were informed by telegram, and a mass was held in Szombathely on July 1st. [700] On the same day, the imperial defense minister informed the Hungarian government of a planned "larger military exercise" near the Austro-Hungarian border, which was ultimately cancelled due to the war's outbreak.[701] On July 2nd, Sopron County's assembly sent condolences, with assembly member István Tálas comparing Franz Ferdinand's death to that of Crown Prince Rudolf in 1889 and highlighting the county's close ties to the Archduke, who had previously been colonel of the county's hussar regiment.[702] Moson County also expressed its condolences to the royal family.[703]

Although the literature on the Great War has exploded in recent years due to the centenary, the historical sources still offer contradictory information on the role of Franz Joseph in the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war on Serbia.[704] Some suggest the Monarch had been preparing for an international armed conflict for years before 1914, and so took a pro-war stance from the very beginning of the so-called “July crisis”.[705] Others point out that Franz Joseph hesitated for a long time before making the final decision on the attack against Serbia because he knew that it would probably provoke a Russian invasion. Nevertheless, the pro-war politicians, under the leadership of Foreign Minister Leopold Berchtold and Chief of the General Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army Conrad von Hötzendorf, successfully convinced the Emperor-King to declare war on Serbia. Ironically, it was Hungarian Prime Minister Tisza who had been reluctant to give his consent for weeks, because of his worries about Hungary’s fragile position within the Habsburg Monarchy even in the event of winning the war, not to mention in the opposite scenario.[706]

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[700] Minister of Internal Affairs János Sándor’s telegram to István Békássy, the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, 29 June 1914: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/7, Res. 80.

[701] Minister of Internal Affairs János Sándor’s letter to István Békássy, the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, on 7th of July 1914: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/7, Res. 86.

[702] The text of the mourning telegram was recorded in the record of the extraordinary assembly meeting of Sopron County on 2 July 1914: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/59, 453.bgy. 12097/914.

[703] *Vármegyénk közgyűlése* [Assembly of our County], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XII/57, 12 July 1914, p. 1.

[704] POLLMANN, FERENC: *Ferenc József és az első világháború*, in: FÓNAGY (ed.): A véreskezű kamasztól Ferenc Jóskáig, pp. 221–234.

[705] STONE, NORMAN: *Hungary and the Crisis of July 1914*, in: Journal of Contemporary History, (1) 1966, 3, pp. 153–70.

[706] For István Tisza’s position on the declaration of war and concerns over Hungary’s position, see: GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora II.*, pp. 282-298.; PÖLÖSKEI: *Kormányzati politikai és parlamenti ellenzék*, pp. 213-231.; VERMES: *Tisza István*, pp. 363-398.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 949-972.; GALÁNTAI, JÓZSEF: *Magyarország az első világháborúban 1914-1918* [Hungary in the First World War 1914-1918], Budapest, 1974, pp. 97-118., *HÖBELT, LOTHAR: “Stehen oder Fallen?” Österreichische Politik im Ersten Weltkrieg,* Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2015, pp. 11-44.

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The Great War broke out on 28 July 1914, when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.[707] While marching into battle, Hungarian soldiers sang about the old King who needed his army now, re-using the same lyrics their grandfathers had chanted back in 1849, simply replacing Kossuth's name with Franz Joseph's. The Dual Monarchy quickly found itself in a challenging war on two fronts. The Russian army easily advanced into Galicia and northeastern Hungary, while Italy joined the Entente in 1915, opening a third front in the southwest. In August 1916, Romania also joined the Entente and attacked from the southeast, aiming to annex Transylvania and the Banat region. Despite successfully repelling all these attacks with German assistance, the Romanian campaign diverted significant Austro-Hungarian resources. As hopes of a swift victory dwindled, it became clear that superior supplies and reinforcements would determine the war's outcome. In this regard, the Central Powers were disadvantaged compared to the Entente, especially after the United States entered the war in 1917.[708]

Despite its distance from the battlefields, Western Hungary suffered the ripple effects of the fighting as a hinterland of the war. Local authorities were forced to swiftly adapt to wartime governance, sacrificing traditional autonomy for the sake of the war effort.[709] This transition was relatively successful in the predominantly German-speaking district of Kismarton/Eisenstadt.[710] Lajos Wolf, who became known as the Vice-Lieutenant of Sopron County in the interwar period, helped to establish the local unit of the Red Cross, supported the left-behind poor families and organized a military hospital. His duties also included unpopular tasks like raising war loans and managing local military mobilizations, along with the requisition of food and supplies. Over time, these practices, combined with the hardships of war, alienated the local population from the authorities. In non-Hungarian areas, this discontent often manifested as anti-Hungarian sentiment. The situation worsened when local officials,

[707] On the military history of the Habsburg Monarchy in the Great War in general, see: RAUCHENSTEINER, MANFRIED: Der *Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie 1914-1918,* Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2013.; JEŘÁBEK, RUDOLF: Militärisches Potential und Kriegsverlauf 1914–1918, in RUMPLER, HELMUT (ed.): *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, Band XI, 1. Teilband, Wien, 2016, pp. 209–283.; ROTHENBERG, GUNTHER E.: *The Habsburg Army in First World War: 1914-1918,* in: KANN, ROBERT A. – KIRÁLY, BÉLA K. – FICHTNER, PAUL S. (eds.): The Habsburg Empire in World War I, New York, 1977, pp. 73-86.

[708] On the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian war machine: RAUCHENSTEINER, MANFRIED – JOSEF, BROUKAL: *Der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende des Habsburgermonarchie in aller Kürze*, Wien, 2015, pp. 191–230.; WEGS, ROBERT J.: *Transportation: The Achilles Heel of the Habsburg War Effort,* in: KANN – KIRÁLY – FICHTNER (eds.): The Habsburg Empire in World War I, pp. 73-86.

[709] KOLNHOFER, VINCE: *Der Krieg im Hinterland - Die Verwaltung im Komitat Vas/Eisenburg zur Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs*, in: BAYER, PIA – SZORGER, DIETER (eds.): Land im Krieg. Zwischen Schützengraben und Heimatfront. Burgenland 1914-1918., Eisenstadt, 2014, pp. 22-26.

[710] BALÁZS, TIBOR: *Gévay-Wolff Lajos Sopron Vármegyei Alispán (1920–1938) élete és munkássága* [The Life and Work of Lajos Gévay-Wolff, Vice-Lieutenant of Sopron county (1920–1938)], in: *Arrabona,* (41) 2003, pp. 191–192.

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whose salaries had been severely eroded by wartime inflation, engaged in corruption or abused their power.[711]

Among the many hardships of war, the loss of family members, particularly fathers or sons, affected nearly every family, irrespective of their ethnic background. In the first four months of 1915 alone, the Austro-Hungarian army suffered a staggering loss of 800,000 soldiers, either killed or captured, in the battles against Russia for the East Carpathian and Galician territories.[712] Although state censorship did its utmost to control publishing and newspapers, bad news spread anyway.[713] In the village of Káld, Vas County, a doctor named Gyula Götzl from the neighbouring town of Jánosháza was accused of spreading alarming rumours. A local district administrator's investigation revealed that he persistently shared tragic news from the front that contradicted official military reports. The doctor's actions unintentionally caused such panic and despair among the village women that local authorities were compelled to intervene.[714]

The immense loss of life and resources during the war not only demoralized the population but also severely disrupted agricultural and industrial production.[715] The scarcity of manpower[716] in farms and factories, coupled with increasing military demands for food, clothing, and equipment, drastically lowered the quality of life throughout the country.[717] Contrary to some claims, the elite were aware of the plight of the poor and attempted to address their needs, as evidenced by confidential correspondence from a cabinet member to the head of Vas County. [718] However, the deprivation of the majority coincided with the enrichment of a few. Some traders and landowners, acting as official or black-market suppliers to the army, amassed wealth rapidly, sparking widespread public anger. In many cases, villagers directed their resentment towards local officials rather than the distant magnates. These local tensions

[711] HAJDU – POLLMANN: *A régi Magyarország utolsó háborúja*, pp. 252–257.
[712] Statistics of the First World War casualties of Austria-Hungary: Weltkriegsstatistik Österreich-Ungarn 1914-1918, in: RUMPLER, HELMUT (ed.): Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, Band XI, 2. Teilband, Wien, 2014, pp. 161–182.
[713] Wartime instructions by István Békássy, the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, to the editorial groups of local newspaper: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/7, Res.176.
[714] Report on the investigation into the Gyula Götzl case, submitted by the local authorities to István Békássy, the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County on 14 September 1914: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/7, Res. 222.
[715] On Hungary's struggle for survival during the First Word War, see: MAY, ARTHUR J.: *The Passing of the Habsburg Monarchy 1914-1918*, Philadelphia, 1966, pp. 383-421 (Volume One), pp. 682-715 (Volume Two).
[716] BAYER, PIA: *Frauen im Krieg - Der Überlebenskampf an der Heimatfront*, in: BAYER – SZORGER (eds.): Land im Krieg, pp. 110-119.
[717] *Élelmiszernyomorúság* [Food misery], in: *Mosonvármegye*, no. XIII/33, 13 June 1915, p. 1; *Drágaság* [High prices], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XIV/22, 28 May 1916, p. 1.
[718] Minister of Interior Affairs János Sándor's letter to István Békássy, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, on 10 September 1914: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/7, Res.244.

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escalated, blending ethnic and class animosity, often manifesting as anti-Semitism and anti-Hungarian sentiment.[719]

The refugee crisis further fuelled the spread of ethnic hatred. In 1915-1916, tens of thousands were displaced from Galicia, Northeastern Hungary, and Transylvania due to Russian and Romanian attacks.[720] These refugees sought temporary shelter in Budapest, Vienna, and rural areas, including Western Hungary, straining local resources.[721] The Galician refugees, many of whom were Slavic or Jewish, experienced both generosity and discrimination from the local population.[722] Meanwhile, similar ethnic divisions emerged within the divers but previously functioning Austro-Hungarian army. These developments within a formerly functional multi-ethnic society foreshadowed the post-war hostilities between different ethnic groups.[723]

Due to Austria-Hungary's conflict with Serbia and Russia, Slavic people, particularly South Slavs and those of Orthodox faith, were viewed with suspicion from the war's onset.[724] Regardless of their status as prisoners of war[725], foreign nationals, or even Austro-Hungarian citizens, they were perceived as potential threats to the war effort, government, and military. This led to increased surveillance and suspicion of individuals and groups deemed potentially subversive. In Western Hungary, the Croatian minority was scattered and showed no signs of

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[719] PASTOR, PETER: *The Home Front in Hungary 1914-1918*, in: KIRÁLY, BÉLA K. – DREISZIGER, NÁNDOR F. (eds.): East Central European Society in World War I, New York, 1985, pp. 124-134.
[720] *Az erdélyi menekültek* [Refugees from Transylvania], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XIV/41, 8 October 1916, p. 1.
[721] Government and county plans for relocating of refugees on the territory of Vas County (9 January 1915): MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/7, Res.379.
[722] NEMES, ROBERT: *Refugees and Antisemitism in Hungary during the First World War*, in: NEMES – UNOWSKY (eds.): Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, pp. 236-254.; RUSZAŁA, KAMIL: *Fellow Citizens or Aliens? Galician Refugees during the First World War in Hungary*, in: Prace Historyczne, (148) 2021, 4, pp. 795-812.
[723] DEÁK I.: *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps,* pp. 190-204.; PLASCHKA, RICHARD G.: *Contradicting ideologies: The Pressure of Ideological Conflicts in the Austro-Hungarian Army of World War I,* in: KANN – KIRÁLY – FICHTNER (eds.): The Habsburg Empire in World War I, pp. 105-120.; LEIDINGER, HANNES: *Systematization of Hatred. Dangers of Escalation and Genocidal Violence in Habsburg Warfare, 1914–1918*, in: PSCHICHHOLZ, CHRISTIN (ed.): The First World War as a Caesura? Demographic Concepts, Population Policy, and Genocide in the Late Ottoman, Russian, and Habsburg Spheres, Berlin, 2020, pp. 125-134.; WATSON, ALEXANDER: *Managing an 'Army of Peoples': Identity, Command and Performance in the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1914–1918,* in: Contemporary European History, (25) 2016, 2, pp. 233–51.
[724] CORNWALL, MARK: *The Habsburg Elite and the Southern Slav Question 1914-1918*, in: HÖBELT, LOTHAR – OTTE, THOMAS G. (eds.): A Living Anachronism? European Diplomacy and the Habsburg Monarchy. Festschrift für Francis Roy Bridge zum 70. Geburtstag, Wien, 2010, pp. 239-270.; BARTH, ARNO: *The Securitization of Minorities as a Bedrock of Population Policy*, in: PSCHICHHOLZ (ed.): The First World War as a Caesura?, pp. 49-63.; BARTH, ARNO: "*Störfaktoren entfernen"? Minderheitenpolitik als Riskoabwägung im Langen Ersten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt – New York, 2021, pp. 69-108.
[725] BRETTL, HERBET: *Kriegsgefangenen- und Internierungslager auf dem Gebiet des heutigen Burgenlandes*, in: BAYER – SZORGER (eds.): Land im Krieg, pp. 170-175.; KOLNHOFER, VINCE: *Das Kriegsgefangenenlager von Ostffyasszonyfa*, in: BAYER – SZORGER (eds.): Land im Krieg, pp. 176-180.; MORITZ, VERENA: *The Treatment of Prisoners of War in Austria-Hungary 1914/1915: The Historiography of Prisoners of War in the Late Habsburg Empire,* in: BISCHOF, GÜNTER – KARLHOFER, FERDINAND – WILLIAMSON, SAMUEL R. (eds.): 1914: Austria-Hungary, the Origins, and the First Year of World War I, New Orleans, 2014, pp. 233-248.

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ethnic unrest, but the Slovenes formed a compact ethnic group in southwestern Vas County. This Muraköz/Medžimurje region led to concerns that Vas County could become a target of South Slavic aspirations. For example, in July 1915, the Ministry of Internal Affairs instructed officials in these counties to suppress a leaflet by the "South Slavic Student Association" that criticized the alleged oppression of Slavic people and urged them to support the Entente powers.[726] In contrast to the Pan-Slavic concerns, the issue of Pan-German nationalism was temporarily sidelined during the war due to the close military alliance with the German Empire.[727]

As the war dragged on, its devastating effects were felt even more acutely in major cities, particularly in the form of food rationing and shortages of coal and essential supplies.[728] The food crisis was more severe in Vienna than in Budapest, increasing Austria's reliance on Western Hungary.[729] Due to geographic proximity, farmers, artisans, and merchants in Western Hungary, especially those of German origin, had established trade connections with Viennese markets well before the war. The growing demand for agricultural products in the imperial capital further solidified this economic relationship. Throughout the war, Austria and Hungary remained a customs union under Habsburg rule, allowing Western Hungary to continue to gravitate economically towards Vienna. However, as the war progressed, legal trade could not keep up with the rising demand, leading to a thriving cross-border black market between Western Hungary and Vienna. This illicit trade intensified during the border crisis of 1918-1921, prompting the Hungarian border police to crack down on smuggling routes.[730] The looming end of the war and the potential dissolution of the Dual Monarchy raised the prospect of a hard border between Austria and Hungary. Such a border would not only cut off Vienna's

[726] Government warning to the local authorities of propaganda by the South-Slavic Student Association, aiming to recruit a South-Slavic legion in Austria-Hungary (29 January 1915): MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/10, Res 548.

[727] For the military and economic dependencies between Germany and Austria-Hungary in the First World War, see: HERWIG, HOLGER H.: *The First World War. Germany and Austria-Hungary 1914–1918*, London, 2014.

[728] For recent research on (post)war difficulties in Hungary, see: BÓDY, ZSOMBOR: *Élelmiszer-ellátás piac és kötött gazdálkodás között a háború és az összeomlás idején* [Food Supply Between Market and Controlled Economy in Times of War and Collapse], in: BÓDY, ZSOMBOR (ed.): Háborúból békébe: a magyar társadalom 1918 után [From War to Peace. Hungarian Society after 1918], Budapest, 2018, pp. 151-194.

[729] BERGER, PETER: *Exiles of Eden: Vienna and the Viennese during and after First World War,* in: BISCHOF – KARLHOFER – WILLIAMSON (eds.): 1914: Austria-Hungary, the Origins, and the First Year of World War I, pp. 167-186.; HEALY, MAUREEN: *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I,* Cambridge – New York, 2004, pp. 31-86.

[730] Letter by János Sándor, Minister of Interior Affairs, to all county leaders on the prevention of grain smuggling, 31 October 1915: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/12, Res. 869.

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food supply from Western Hungary but also harm the economic interests of the population in the border region, who relied on both legal and illegal trade.[731]

5.2 From National Indifference to Border Conflict (1918–1921)

As the defeat of Austria-Hungary became evident, the days of the old regime were numbered in both Vienna and Budapest. Even though the borders of the Monarchy remained intact, and its army still occupied enemy territory, the Dual Monarchy collapsed from the inside in the autumn of 1918. A wave of revolutions swept through the Habsburg lands, with "National Councils" established across the former Empire.[732] In Cisleithania, Emperor Charles I issued the Schönbrunn Proclamation on Armistice Day (November 11th), acknowledging the right of the Austrian people to determine their form of government. Two days later, as King Charles IV of Hungary, he signed a similar document, the Eckartsau Proclamation, for the Lands of the Holy Crown (Transleithania). While stepping back from governance in both realms, Charles did not abdicate either throne, leaving the door open for a potential return. On November 12th, 1918, the Austrian National Council in Vienna declared Austria a democratic republic, intended to be part of the newly formed German Republic.[733]

Meanwhile, in Budapest on November 16th, the Hungarian National Council proclaimed the independent Hungarian People's Republic, led by Mihály Károlyi. Known as the "Red Count," Károlyi and his leftist supporters assumed power following the so-called "Aster Revolution" in Budapest on October 31st, the same day István Tisza, a symbolic leader of the old regime, was assassinated.[734] In both countries, the new political leadership introduced a new ideology, promising a brighter future after the hardships of war. This marked the end of the 400-year bond between Austria and Hungary under the Habsburgs. Both republics adopted moderately left-wing and social-democratic policies domestically, aligned with pro-Entente foreign policies, while also fostering nationalist and anti-monarchist sentiments. [735]

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[731] For the decisive role of the food crisis in the post-war Austria-Hungary border crisis, see: MURBER: *Grenzziehung zwischen Ver- und Entflechtungen*, pp. 24-39.

[732] MADERTHANER, WOLFGANG: *Die eigenartige Größe der Beschränkung. Österreichs Revolution im mitteleuropäischen Spannungsfeld,* in: KONRAD – MADERTHANER (eds.): Das Werden der Ersten Republik, Volume 1, pp. 187–206.

[733] KOVÁCS, ELIZABETH: *Untergang oder Rettung der Donaumonarchie? Die österreichische Frage. Kaiser Karl und König Karl (I.) IV. und die Neuordnung Mitteleuropas (1916-1922)*, Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2004, pp. 252–257.

[734] VERMES: *Tisza István*, pp. 487-502.; HORÁNSZKY: *Tisza István és kora*, pp. 1325-1340.

[735] The Holy Crown of St. Stephen, for instance, was removed from the Coat-of-Arms of Hungary. *A magyar címer és lobogó* [The Hungarian Coat-of-Arms and Flag], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XVII/4. 26 January 1919, p. 1.

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Both Austria and Hungary grappled with shared challenges, such as a catastrophic economic situation, social unrest, food and coal shortages[736], and the chaotic return of tens of thousands of exhausted, traumatized, or even brutalized soldiers.[737] Moreover, in the following weeks and months, both countries lost vast territories to the successor states of the Habsburg Monarchy. Austria was forced by the Entente powers to cede South Tyrol to Italy, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Carniola, and parts of Carinthia to the Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom, Galicia to Poland, and Bohemia and Moravia to the Czechs and Slovaks. Simultaneously, the Romanian army occupied Transylvania and Eastern Hungary, the Serbs annexed Southern Hungary and Croatia, and Czech troops entered Northern Hungary to establish Czechoslovakia. Millions of German and Hungarian speakers suddenly became ethnic minorities in their own homelands. Additionally, both countries lost significant industrial and agricultural resources that would have been crucial for economic recovery.

A key distinction between post-war Austria and Hungary was the contrasting trajectories of their new governments. While Austria managed to survive its internal crisis under Social Democrat Chancellor Karl Renner, the Károlyi administration in Hungary failed to do so, leading to political radicalization.[738] This culminated in a coup d'état in Budapest on March 21st, 1919, which brought the extreme Left to power and established the Hungarian Republic of Councils. Emulating Soviet Russia, the Hungarian Communists, led by Béla Kun, incited class hatred and implemented Bolshevik policies through a "red terror" lasting 133 days. In their quest to create a corridor to Russia, the Hungarian Red Army launched attacks against Czech and Romanian forces, achieving success against the former but facing setbacks against the latter. During this period, the political situation in Vienna was also precarious, with a potential Bolshevik revolution looming. However, this did not materialize, allowing Austria to negotiate peace terms with the Entente powers in Paris. Although the Communist regime in Hungary collapsed by July 1919, political instability persisted until November, when right-

[736] BERGER, PETER: *Wealth, Poverty and Institutions in the Habsburg Empire's Successor States (1918-1929), in:* BISCHOF, GÜNTER – PLASSER, FRITZ – BERGER, PETER (eds.): From Empire to Republic. Post-World War I Austria, Innsbruck, 2010, pp. 370-398.

[737] For the psychosociological consequences of the war on the Austro-Hungarian troops, see: KUZMICS, HELMUT: *Der k.u.k. Armeehabitus im Ersten Weltkrieg*, in: KUZMICS, HELMUT – HARING, SABINE A. (eds.): *Emotion, Habitus und Erster Weltkrieg. Soziologische Studien zum militärischen Untergang der Habsburger Monarchie*, Göttingen, 2013, pp. 169-268.

[738] For the comparison of post-war Austria and Hungary, see: SWANSON, JOHN C.: *Remnants of the Habsburg Monarchy: The Shaping of Modern Austria and Hungary, 1918-1922,* New York, 2001.

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wing counter-revolutionaries led by Miklós Horthy seized power and retaliated infamously against the revolutionaries with a "white terror".[739]

In Western Hungary, local branches of the Hungarian National Council, composed of nationalist-independentist or left-wing democrats, were formed in late October and early November 1918, ready to assume control of public administration.[740] These individuals shared the belief that the long-standing union with Habsburg Austria had been a tragic historical episode in Hungary.[741] However, they soon realized that Austria would not easily relinquish its claims: the government of German-Austria (*Staatsrat*) officially declared its intention to annex the German-inhabited territories of Moson, Sopron, and Vas counties, including the city of Pozsony/Pressburg/Bratislava, on November 12th, 1918.[742] As Mari Vares points out, neither the formation of the Republic of Austria nor the struggle for Western Hungary can be adequately interpreted without taking into account the context of Great German nationalism in the former Habsburg Monarchy.[743] The desire among Germans within the Habsburg Empire to form their own state and potentially unite with Germany fuelled the Austrian government's decision to define "Germanness" in alignment with Wilsonian principles, emphasizing the voluntary union of German people as the basis for the new Austrian state.

Although a delegation of ethnic German farmers from Western Hungary expressed support for annexation in Vienna, most of the Western Hungarian society remained unconvinced. To address this, the Austrian government established the Westungarische Kanzlei (Western Hungary Bureau) in Vienna, tasked with facilitating annexation through a vigorous propaganda campaign that ultimately hastened the disintegration of the historical region.[744] In the following weeks, Austrian agents and agitators infiltrated the border villages, spreading pro-Austrian and anti-Hungarian propaganda among the German-speaking residents. Early in November, locals in Nagymarton/Mattersburg expelled Hungarian officials, and children

[739] BODÓ, BÉLA: *The White Terror: Political and Antisemitic Violence in Hungary, 1919–1923*, New York – London, 2019.; GERWARTH, ROBERT: *The Central European Counter-Revolution: Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War*, in: Past & Present, 2008, No. 200, pp. 175-209.
[740] Abstract of the protocol of the extraordinary county assembly meeting in Sopron County held on 18 November 1918: MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/59, nr.18043, 27 November 1918
[741] *Megalakult a vármegyei Nemzeti Tanács* [The National Council of the County has been established], in: Sopronvármegye, 19 November 1918, pp. 1–2. (MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/59, nr.18043, 1918. november 27.)
[742] IMRE, JOSEPH: *Burgenland and the Austria-Hungary Border Dispute in International Perspective, 1918-22*, in: Region, Volume 4, no. 2, Special Issue: The Great War and Eastern Europe, 2015, pp. 219–246.
[743] VARES: *The Question of Western Hungary/Burgenland*, pp. 94–96.
[744] BOTLIK: *Nyugat-Magyarország sorsa 1918–1922*, p. 24.

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defiantly discarded their textbooks, chanting "We don't want to learn Hungarian anymore."[745] On November 17th, a joint gathering in the border villages of Savanyúkút/Bad Sauerbrunn and Pecsenyéd/Pöttsching saw locals declare their intention to join Austria.[746] On December 2nd, Austrian officers visited the village of Szentmargitbánya/St. Margarethen, encouraging the local stone miners to instigate civil unrest in the nearby town of Ruszt/Rust.[747] Three days later, a truck carrying 300 rifles from Wiener Neustadt in Lower Austria arrived in Lajtaújfalu/Neufeld an der Leitha, but the Hungarian police intercepted the shipment and arrested the crew.

On December 5th, another shipment of weapons reached Nagymarton/Mattersburg, successfully arming pro-Austrian locals who then seized control of the surrounding area.[748] The next day, a local Social Democrat, Hans Suchard, proclaimed the Republic of Heinzenland in the town, named after a local German dialect group. This short-lived mini state was created to separate a portion of Hungarian territory and pave the way for its annexation to Austria. The following day, the Hungarian army dispatched an armoured train and machine-gun unit to the town, compelling the rebels to surrender peacefully. Despite evidence to the contrary uncovered during interrogations in Sopron/Ödenburg, the Austrian government denied any involvement in these events or any connection to the Republic of Heinzenland. Vienna sought to avoid open conflict with Hungary, although maintaining good relations with its eastern neighbour was not a top priority. Post-war Austrian foreign policy focused primarily on persuading Entente diplomats of the Republic's core interests, such as minimizing territorial losses in the north and south and preserving the possibility of a future union with Germany.[749]

Meanwhile, Hungary's territory dwindled daily. The Károlyi administration, either unwilling or unable to mount a significant defense against the invading Czech, Romanian, and Serbian forces, clung to the hope of a fair peace treaty from the Great Powers in Paris.[750] Oszkár Jászi, the Minister of Nationalities, unsuccessfully tried to appease the Romanians, Serbs, and Slovaks by offering them substantial autonomy within Hungary. Jászi, more renowned as a

[745] *Osztrák ügynökök szítják Nagymartonban az elszakadás gondolatát* [Austrian Agents Propagate Separatism in Nagymarton], in: Sopronvármegye, 19 November 1918, p. 3. (MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/59, nr.18043, 1918. november 27.)

[746] A savanyúkúti hazaárulók [The Traitors of the Homeland in Savanyúkút], in: Soproni Napló, 20 November 1918, p. 3. (MNL Gy-M-S Vm. Soproni Levéltára, Sopron Vármegye Törvényhatósági Bizottsága Közgyűlési Iratai, IV/402/b/59, nr.18043, 27 November 1918)

[747] BOTLIK: *Nyugat-Magyarország sorsa 1918–1922*, p. 25.

[748] IBID., pp. 25–27.

[749] HANISCH, ERNST: *Im Zeichen von Otto Bauer. Deutschösterreichs Außenpolitik in den Jahren 1918 und 1919*, in: KONRAD – MADERTHANER (eds.): Das Werden der Ersten Republik, Volume 1, pp. 207–222.

[750] On Hungary's failure to organize military resistance in late 1918/early 1919 see: RÉVÉSZ, TAMÁS: *Nem akartak katonát látni?* [They Did Not Want to See Any Soldiers?], Budapest, 2019, pp. 170-174.

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scholar[751] than a politician, even envisioned a Switzerland-like Danube Confederation, echoing earlier proposals for a "Great Austria."[752] The prospect of ethnic autonomy temporarily stalled border changes in the West, as an influential group of Germans in Western Hungary, represented by the German National Council, found the idea of an autonomous German region within Hungary more appealing than either annexation by Austria.[753] On January 28th, 1919, the Károlyi government passed a law granting self-governance to German-speaking communities in Hungary, including the Western Hungary border region. However, defining the boundaries, structure, and limits of this autonomy, as well as integrating it with existing administrative structures, led to numerous local conflicts during the remaining months of the struggling Republic.[754]

The question of German autonomy in Western Hungary persisted during the Communist dictatorship (March 19th – August 1st, 1919). The Bolshevik leaders viewed Western Hungary as a stepping stone to Austria, hoping it would be the next site of the World Revolution. The first "Gaurat für Deutsch Westungarn" (Council for German Western Hungary) was held in Sopron/Ödenburg in late April 1919, establishing an autonomous ethnic German territory for the first time in the region's history. From then on, the Austria-Hungary border area was considered an autonomous entity within the Hungarian Republic of Councils, administered by the German Regional Council in Sopron and the "German-Western Hungarian Regional People's Office." However, in many multi-ethnic towns and villages, German autonomy coexisted with the new Communist system, alongside remnants of the traditional administration. This multiplicity of authorities resulted in further local conflicts and even chaos. Ultimately, the Communist experiment significantly contributed to the disintegration of historic Western Hungary. It not only separated a specific area from the territories of Moson, Sopron, and Vas counties but also alienated the predominantly Catholic, conservative, and rural

[751] One of his most important scholarly contributions from the prewar era was about the nationality question: JÁSZI, OSZKÁR: *A nemzeti államok kialakulása és a nemzetiségi kérdés* [The Creation of Nation-States and the Nationality Question], Budapest, 1912. After the war, Jászi also published his views on the collapse of the Monarchy: JÁSZI, OSZKÁR: *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy*, Chicago, 1929.

[752] JÁSZI, OSZKÁR: *Magyarország jövője és a Dunai Egyesült Államok* [The Future of Hungary and the United States of the Danube area], Budapest, 1918.

[753] The autonomy vs. annexation dilemma of local Germans was discussed by both sides: see ZSOMBOR, GÉZA: *Westungarn. Zu Ungarn oder zu Österreich*?, Sopron/Ödenburg, 1919.; VON PFLAUNDER, RICHARD: *Die Zukunft der Deutschen in Westungarn*, Vienna, 1919.

[754] The local journal of Moson County thoroughly discussed the issues around German Autonomy: *Mosonvármegye és a német kérdés* [Moson county and the German question], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XVII/1, 5 January 1919, p.1.; *A nyugat-magyarországi németség* [The Germans of Western Hungary], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XVII/2, 12 January 1919, pp. 1–2.; *A német autonómia és a nemzeti tanács* [German autonomy and the National Council], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XVII/8, 23 February 1919, p.1; *A német autonómia* [German Autonomy], in: Mosonvármegye, no. XVII/11, 16 March 1919, p.1.

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population of Western Hungary due to its Bolshevik policies. Furthermore, Vienna could convincingly argue to the Entente powers that annexation to Austria was the only way to protect the region from Communist influence.[755]

Austria's fate was sealed with the signing of the Treaty of Saint-Germain on September 10th, 1919.[756] After extensive negotiations, the Entente powers and Vienna agreed to dissolve the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, holding it responsible for the war. Austria was compelled to recognize the independence of successor states, including Hungary. Former Cisleithanian Austria lost roughly 60% of its pre-war territory, most of which was already occupied by the Entente armies. Additionally, Austria was strictly forbidden to use the name "German-Austria" or unite with Germany. However, the treaty awarded the western portions of Moson, Sopron, and Vas Counties, including Sopron/Ödenburg, to Austria, albeit with a smaller territory than anticipated: a total of 4,364 square kilometers with 350,000 inhabitants, including 250,000 German speakers. The treaty also rejected Prague's proposal for a "Slavic corridor" through Western Hungary, connecting Czechoslovakia and the Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom.

Hungary's fate was determined later, on June 4th, 1920, with the Treaty of Trianon.[757] Due to political turmoil, including the Romanian invasion of Northern Transdanubia and the counter-revolution, the new Hungarian regime in Budapest stabilized only in November 1919. The Kingdom was restored without the Habsburgs, with Miklós Horthy, leader of the counter-revolution, elected regent on March 1st, 1920. Despite Hungarian diplomats' efforts, the Trianon Treaty reflected the existing situation: Hungary lost 71% of its pre-war territory, including the western parts awarded to Austria. Unlike other lost territories, Western Hungary remained under some form of Hungarian administration until November 1921. Hungary delayed evacuation, hoping for a regional plebiscite or a shift in power dynamics, while Austria lacked the military means to enforce it. Furthermore, after the fall of the Communist regime, the regional political forces in Western Hungary leaned towards counter-revolutionary Hungary rather than socialist Austria.

With the new Hungarian regime consolidating power in August 1919, public administration in Western Hungary underwent a restructuring under an institution named "Government Commission for Western Hungary." This authority, based in Szombathely, the region's largest Hungarian-populated city and administrative center of Vas County, aimed to

[755] MURBER: *Grenzziehung zwischen Ver- und Entflechtungen*, pp. 39-53.
[756] MIKOLETZKY, LORENZ: *Saint Germain und Karl Renner. Eine Republik wird 'diktiert'*, in: KONRAD – MADERTHANER (eds.): Das Werden der Ersten Republik, Volume 1, pp. 179–186.
[757] For detailed analysis of the Treaty of Trianon, see: ROMSICS, IGNÁC: *The Dismantling of Historic Hungary: The Peace Treaty of Trianon 1920*, New York, 2002, pp. 53-74.

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reorganize and coordinate the administration of Zala, Vas, Sopron, and Moson Counties. Under commissioners Antal Sigray and József Cziráky, any remaining vestiges of German autonomy were dissolved, and traditional county administration was reinstated in Western Hungary. However, due to the ongoing border dispute and the possibility of a future plebiscite, public servants were constantly reminded to be mindful of the needs of German-speaking citizens, including their right to use their native language in local affairs.[758]

On February 18, 1920, Western Hungarian representatives in the National Assembly submitted a report to the Ministry of Nationalities advocating for a more nuanced approach to the German question in their region. They emphasized that economic support and improved living conditions, rather than sending agitators from Budapest, would be the most effective way to gain local trust.[759] Simultaneously, the issue of the Croatian minority surfaced. Péter Jandresevits, the Catholic priest of Pásztorháza/Stinatz/Stinjaki and self-proclaimed representative of Western Hungary's Croatian community, initiated discussions with both county and national authorities. He demanded expanded minority rights in administration and education in exchange for the Croats' demonstrated loyalty to Hungary. Jandresevits also cautioned that the deteriorating economic situation could hasten the region's fragmentation.[760]

The fate of Western Hungary remained uncertain. Throughout 1920 and 1921, Austria and Hungary engaged in ongoing negotiations and intense diplomatic rivalry over the disputed territory.[761] Austria demanded that the Entente powers compel Hungary to withdraw from the area and continued covert propaganda among the German-speaking border population. Meanwhile, Hungary leveraged its administrative control to counteract the disintegration process, seeking to revise the Austria-Hungary border established in the peace treaties or, at minimum, secure a plebiscite in the disputed territories. Hungarian Prime Minister Pál Teleki linked the Western Hungary issue to the unresolved matter of Baranya County in South Transdanubia, still under Serb occupation despite the Treaty of Trianon. To mediate between the two sides, the Entente powers deployed the Inter-Allied Military Mission to Sopron/Ödenburg, tasked with overseeing the evacuation and preventing further escalation. After multiple proposals to divide the territory, Hungary ultimately regained control of Baranya County on August 27, 1921, in exchange for relinquishing Western Hungary on the same day.

[758] Letter by Ödön Beniczky, Minister of Interior Affairs to József Cziráky, Government Commissioner for Vas County, on 29 February 1920: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni Elnöki Iratok, IV.401/a/18, Res. 16.
[759] Opinion of the parliamentary representatives of Western Hungary on the internal situation in Western Hungary: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni elnöki iratok, IV.401/a/18, 1920, 536/920.
[760] Letter by Péter Jandresevits, representative of Western-Hungarian Croats, to József Cziráky, Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, on 16 November 1920: MNL Vas Vm. Levéltár, Főispáni elnöki iratok, IV.401/a/19., Res. 23.
[761] VARES: *The Question of Western Hungary/Burgenland*, pp. 208–211.

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The agreement stipulated that Hungarian authorities would transfer the territory to the Inter-Allied Military Mission, which would then hand it over to the incoming Austrian authorities.[762]

On August 28th, when Austrian gendarmes, officials, and civilians crossed the historic border towards Sopron/Ödenburg, both sides likely assumed the crisis was nearing its end. However, local rebels unexpectedly attacked in the nearby village of Ágfalva/Agendorf, forcing the Austrians to retreat. This marked the start of the "Western Hungarian uprising," lasting until October 14th.[763] The few hundred rebels, nicknamed the "scrubby guard," launched a month-long guerrilla campaign across the region later known as Burgenland. Led by Pál Prónai, a former officer in the Horthy army notorious for his role in the White Terror, the rebels included locals, students, ex-soldiers, political adventurers, and even a group of Bosnian Muslims. Many, like prominent figure Viktor Mádersprach, felt they had not had a chance to defend their own home regions and saw this as an opportunity to fight for Western Hungary.[764]

The "scrubby guard" successfully repelled multiple waves of Austrian gendarmes and customs officers attempting to occupy the region, ultimately securing the entire disputed territory to establish the short-lived Banate of Leitha with its own postage stamps.[765] This controversial mini state, headquartered in the predominantly Hungarian-speaking town of Felsőőr/Oberwart, existed from October 4th to November 5th, 1921, with the aim of preventing annexation by Austria, even if it could not remain part of Hungary. Despite frequent contact with Budapest and unofficial Hungarian support, the Hungarian government could not control the uprising. Many rebels felt betrayed by the Horthy regime's evacuation of the region. However, Hungary could leverage the uprising to demonstrate to the Entente powers that the local population did not want to join Austria. To resolve the crisis, Italy mediated between Austria and Hungary, resulting in the Venice Protocol on October 13th, 1921. Hungary agreed to dismantle the Banate of Leitha, disarm the rebels, and fully evacuate the territory granted to Austria by the Treaty of Saint-Germain. In return, Austria finally consented to a plebiscite in Sopron/Ödenburg and its surrounding villages.[766]

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[762] IBID., pp. 222–238.; MURBER: *Grenzziehung zwischen Ver- und Entflechtungen*, pp. 71-92.
[763] KING, JEREMY – HOLYOKE, MOUNT: *Austria vs Hungary: Nationhood, Statehood, and Violence since 1867,* in: THER, PHILIPP – SUNDHAUSSEN, HOLM: (eds.): Nationalitätenkonflikte im 20. Jahrhundert. Ursachen von inter-ethnischer Gewalt im Vergleich, Wiesbaden, 2001, pp. 163-182.
[764] Viktor Madersprach's memoirs, first published as a series of newspaper articles in the late 1920s, were republished as a book in 2014: MADERSPRACH, VIKTOR: *Élményeim a nyugat-magyarországi szabadságharcból* [My Memories of the War for Freedom in Western Hungary], Budapest, 2014, pp. 9–16.
[765] BRAND, ULRICH: *Die Zerschlagung Ungarns. Aus Westungarn wird das österreichische Burgenland* (Kriege und Frieden: 1914 und die Folgen no. 40), Bad Emser Hefte, Nr. 426, 2014, pp. 4-10.
[766] VARES: *The Question of Western Hungary/Burgenland*, pp. 247–250.

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The execution of the Venice Protocol was unexpectedly delayed by the surprising return of Charles, the former Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, to Western Hungary in his second attempt to reclaim his throne.[767] While his first attempt in Easter 1921 was peacefully thwarted, his second "Royal coup d'état" led to a significant conflict. After gaining support from legitimist groups in Western Hungary, many of whom had participated in the uprising, Charles landed near the village of Dénesfa. He promptly established an alternative government in Sopron/Ödenburg and raised a small royalist army to march on Budapest. Faced with threats of military intervention from the Little Entente powers if the Habsburg monarchy was restored, Horthy resolved to stop Charles by any means necessary. The legitimists were defeated by pro-government forces at the Battle of Budaörs on October 23rd, and Charles was placed under custody in the Tihany Monastery. Though he never abdicated, he was exiled to Madeira, where he died of Spanish flu a few months later. To avert intervention by the Little Entente, the Hungarian Parliament passed a law dethroning the Habsburgs, while technically retaining the monarchy.[768]

The former Western Hungarian border area (almost 4,000 square kilometers) was officially integrated into Austria on December 5th, 1921, leading to the establishment of Burgenland on January 1st, 1922. However, contrary to the original plan, Eisenstadt/Kismarton became the new Austrian state's capital instead of Sopron/Ödenburg, as the plebiscite in Sopron and eight surrounding villages favoured remaining with Hungary. The vote took place between December 14th and 16th, 1921, under the supervision of the Inter-Allied Mission, with both sides engaging in intense campaigns involving flyers, posters, newspapers, and demonstrations.[769] According to the 1920 census, the plebiscite district had a population of approximately 50,000, with 55% German, 39% Hungarian, 5% Croatian, and 1% of other ethnic backgrounds. In the city itself, Hungarians and Germans each comprised nearly half the population.[770] Of the 26,879 eligible voters, 89.5% participated in the plebiscite. The results showed 15,334 votes for Hungary (65%), 8,227 for Austria (35%), and 502 invalid votes. In Sopron, 72% of voters favoured Hungary, indicating that even many German-speaking citizens opposed joining Austria. However, Austria won with overwhelming majorities in five of the eight villages. As a result of the plebiscite, contrary to the Treaties of Saint-Germain and

[767] BOTLIK: *Nyugat-Magyarország sorsa*, pp. 285–295.
[768] KOVÁCS: *Untergang oder Rettung der Donaumonarchie?,* pp. 609–650.
[769] RÁSKY, BÉLA: *Vom Schärfen der Unschärfe. Die Grenze zwischen Österreich und Ungarn 1918-1924*, in: KONRAD – MADERTHANER (eds.): Das Werden der Ersten Republik, Volume 1, pp. 150–155.
[770] *Az 1920. évi népszámlálás, I. rész: A népesség főbb demográfiai adatai* [The 1920 census, Part I: The main demographic data on the population], published by KSH, Budapest, 1923, p. 29.

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Trianon, Hungary regained 257 square kilometres of its former territory and a city of symbolic and regional importance. Although the Austrian government questioned the outcome's legitimacy, accusing Hungary of unfair campaigning and irregularities like transporting voters to Sopron, the Entente powers confirmed the decision, ending the three-year border conflict between Austria and Hungary.

Despite the resolution of the border dispute, nationalist tensions persisted in both Budapest and Vienna throughout the interwar period, manifesting as mutual accusations, irredentist claims, and speculation about Burgenland's future. For Hungarians, the loss of this historic western territory was seen as one of the many "heartbreaking and unjust" consequences of the post-war peace treaties. Conversely, in Austria, Ödenburg was long mourned as the “lost heart of Burgenland”.[771]

[771] See: HASLINGER: *Der ungarische Revisionismus und das Burgenland,* pp. 193-198.; TÓTH: *Két anschluss között*, pp. 203-248.; TÓTH, IMRE: *Mítosz és valóság. Sopron hűsége a 20. századi (emlékezet)politikában* [Myth and Reality: Sopron’s Loyalty in the 20th Century Memory of Politics], in: Világtörténet, (12) 2022, 2, pp. 345-360.

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VI. Conclusion: A History of Security in Western Hungary 1867–1918

The exploration of the history of security in Western Hungary in the era of Austro-Hungarian Dualism (1867-1914) necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the historical evolution and theoretical frameworks of the concept of security. Having delved into the history of ideas of security, we traced its origins in premodern times to the emergence of modern schools of thought in the 20th century, including the liberal and realist approaches, the constructivist turn, and the rise of critical security studies. A key takeaway from this is the recognition that security is not a static or monolithic concept but rather a dynamic and contested terrain. The meaning and significance of security have evolved over time, shaped by political, social, cultural, and economic forces. The rise of social constructivism in the late 1980s marked a significant turning point in security studies. This approach challenged traditional state-centric interpretations, emphasizing the role of identity, discourse, and social practices in shaping security concerns. With its focus on speech acts and the construction of threats, the concept of securitization provides a powerful analytical tool for understanding how security issues are framed and addressed, also in historical context. Historical security research offers a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence. By examining how security concerns were perceived and addressed in specific historical contexts, we can gain valuable insights into the complex dynamics of security, modernization, and identity formation.

In the context of the Habsburg Empire, historical security research can shed light on the multifaceted ways in which security concerns shaped the empire's development. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, a pivotal juncture in Hungarian and East Central European history, established the Dual Monarchy, a unique political entity born from the ashes of failed revolutions and constitutional experiments in the Habsburg Empire. In retrospect, the Austro-Hungarian Compromise was a complex and multifaceted response to the challenges of governing a multi-ethnic empire in the modern era. It was a delicate balancing act between imperial interests, national aspirations, and the desire for security and stability. The Compromise, however, was not an ultimate solution for the deep-rooted tensions simmering beneath the surface. The empire remained a conglomerate of ethnicities, each with its own distinct aspirations and grievances. The Hungarian elites, while securing the sovereignty for their nation within the empire, struggled to reconcile the pre-modern concept of the "lands of the Holy Crown" with the modern ideal of a unified Hungarian nation-state. This internal conflict was further complicated by the unresolved issue of the non-Hungarian nationalities within the country, especially in peripheral regions.

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The carefully orchestrated cult of personality surrounding Emperor/King Franz Joseph promoted a sense of loyalty and stability among some segments of the population, but it also masked the underlying tensions and historical grievances that continued to fester. The competing narratives of the past, particularly concerning the events of 1848-1849 and the subsequent period of neo-absolutism, remained a source of contention, hindering true reconciliation between the dynasty and its subjects. The "defence forces debate" of the late 1880s, for instance, exposed the inherent fragility of the Compromise. The controversy surrounding military recruitment and army language policies highlighted the ongoing struggle between imperial security interests and Hungarian national aspirations. The debate, fuelled by the growing influence of the media, sparked widespread protests and political turmoil, ultimately leading to the downfall of the longest-serving Hungarian Prime Minister of the era, Kálmán Tisza. Despite these challenges, the period between 1867 and 1914 was marked by remarkable economic and social progress in Hungary. The relative peace, security, and stability of the era, often referred to as the "happy times of peace," allowed for modernization, industrialization, and cultural development.

Similarly to the national level, the period from 1867 to 1914 in Western Hungary was a complex tapestry of evolving security dilemmas. Traditional security concerns, such as the "betyár" crisis and the treatment of the Roma community, necessitated a shift towards centralized law enforcement and revealed deep-seated societal prejudices. These challenges prompted the government to adapt its security apparatus, transitioning from a fragmented county-based system to a nationalized Gendarmerie. However, the persistence of discriminatory attitudes highlighted the limitations of institutional solutions in addressing broader social issues. Simultaneously, the rise of anti-Semitism and the politicization of religion introduced new and insidious dimensions to security concerns. The Tiszaeszlár affair, a blood libel case that gripped the nation in the 1880s, ignited a wave of anti-Semitic sentiment and violence even in Western Hungary. The subsequent establishment of the National Anti-Semitic Party demonstrated the growing influence of extremist ideologies in exploiting and amplifying public fears for political gain. This marked a dangerous turning point, as the Jewish community became increasingly securitized. The debate over church policy laws further exacerbated these ideological tensions. The clash between liberal modernizers, who sought to separate church and state, and Catholic traditionalists, who saw these reforms as an attack on their identity, created a fertile ground for mutual securitization. The emergence of the Catholic People's Party, with its conservative agenda and embrace of anti-Semitic rhetoric, exemplified the potential for different strands of insecurity to converge and fuel each other. In addition, the government's

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surveillance of the party's members showcased the escalating nature of these conflicts and the willingness of authorities to deploy security measures against perceived internal threats.

Through extended research further dilemmas of security not explicitly addressed in this study, could be explored in the future. For instance, a closer examination of mass migration from Habsburg lands to America from a security perspective would reveal how this demographic shift impacted the region's socio-economic landscape. Additionally, a detailed investigation would show how turn-of-the-century labour, socialist, and agrarian movements shaped the region's political landscape. A closer look at the lower levels of public life and society, particularly in villages, would shed light on how the security issues were experienced and addressed by individuals and micro-communities. Furthermore, examining environmental and industrial issues that were high on the agenda of the time, such as the regulation of the rivers, policies towards railway constructions, the impact of diseases and pandemics and other natural catastrophes, would reveal the interplay between environmental factors and societal security. In essence, we can conclude that this period laid bare the underlying vulnerabilities and anxieties within the contemporary society. It marked a transition from traditional security concerns to a more complex landscape where ideology played an increasingly dominant role in shaping perceptions of threat and defining the boundaries of belonging. The legacy of these security dilemmas would continue to haunt the society, contributing to the political instability and social unrest that characterized the tumultuous years leading up to and following World War I.

The 1905-1906 domestic political crisis in Hungary, with its profound implications for Vas, Sopron, and Moson counties, serves as a microcosm of the broader challenges faced by Hungary and the Dual Monarchy in the early 20th century. The crisis, triggered by Prime Minister István Tisza's controversial parliamentary tactics and the subsequent snap election, exposed the deep-seated tensions between the Hungarian aspirations in military question and the imperial vision of a unified military force. The case of the 1905 election in Kőszeg showcases the domestic political turmoil. Marked by intense campaigning, mutual accusations of corruption, and even a scandalous "revolver incident," the local events highlighted the high stakes and heated passions that accompanied the nationwide political situation. The victory of the opposition candidate, Hugó Laehne, over the incumbent Gyula Szájbély, reflected a growing dissatisfaction with the ruling Liberal Party and a desire for change among the electorate. The Kőszeg election also shed light on the complex interplay of social, ethnic, and religious factors that shaped political allegiances in Western Hungary. The aftermath of the election saw continued tensions and violence resulted in the need for military intervention to

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maintain order, which highlighted the fragility of public safety and the potential for political events to escalate into security crises. Ultimately, the 1905 election in Kőszeg, while a local event, resonated far beyond the confines of the constituency. It contributed to the broader political crisis that engulfed Hungary in 1905-1906, ultimately leading to the downfall of the István Tisza government and a realignment of political forces within the country. The ensuing power struggle, marked by the appointment of a technocratic government led by Géza Fejérváry, further exacerbated these tensions and led to a widespread county resistance movement.

The events in Vas, Sopron, and Moson Counties during this tumultuous period reveals the complex interplay between local and national politics, as well as the diverse forms that resistance to centralized authority can take. The varying degrees of resistance in these counties reflect the political landscapes and historical traditions of each region, as well as the differing calculations of local elites regarding the potential risks and rewards of defying the government. In Vas County, the resistance was initially muted, characterized by a divided county assembly and a reluctance to take decisive action against the government. However, the eventual dismissal of Lord-Lieutenant József Ernuszt signalled a growing willingness to challenge the government's authority. In Sopron County, the resistance was far more pronounced, with the county assembly passing a series of resolutions aimed at obstructing the government's policies on taxation and military recruitment. The appointment of Zoltán Baditz as the new Lord-Lieutenant, seen as a betrayal by many in the county, further fuelled the resistance and led to a prolonged period of political deadlock. Moson County, while officially declared as heavily resisting, experienced a more nuanced form of opposition. The county assembly passed resolutions condemning the government's policies and affirming its loyalty to the elected parliamentary majority. The resolution of the crisis in April 1906, marked by the dismissal of the Fejérváry government and the formation of a new coalition government under Sándor Wekerle, represented a temporary compromise between the competing interests. The 1905-1906 crisis serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of political systems and the struggle to reconcile competing visions of national identity and security.

One of the main conclusions of this work concerns the benefits historical security research can offer to history-writing, in this case to the study of the late Habsburg Empire. Our findings confirm that as actors in the sphere of security the late Habsburg leadership, including the dynasty, the imperial, national, regional and local elites, increasingly and typically declared themselves to be existentially threatened, and therefore to have a legitimate claim to survive the dangerous transition from pre-modern to modern times. At the same time, they also attempted

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to de-legitimate their real and imaginary rivals, whosoever they were thought to be. In both cases, they could lean on the then recently invented modern media, namely mass-produced printed newspapers that increasingly exerted influence on the society by the end of the 19th century. To successfully declare something a security issue, one has to showcase an ideal situation that needs to be protected from the allegedly approaching threats. In the attempt to make people believe in this vision, the homogenizing force of modernization proves to be of great service. It is also striking that most of the security issues raised in the period, especially those with an ideological aspect and background, seem to be interconnected with modernity, in many cases constituting the dark sides of enforced modernization. Certain questions could not even be raised in the early modern period, and the reason behind their emergence is to be found in the social change that sped up dramatically in the second half of the 19th century.

In a way parallel to nation-state-building, modernization and bourgeoisification, the second half of the 19th century was also a turning point in terms of security. Unlike previously, in the new and modern era the state had to deal with more and more pressure in order to secure the safety of the people. Increasingly, winning or successfully avoiding armed conflicts was no longer enough in the eyes of the public. Peace guarantees at the most the physical *safety* of the people, but not necessarily their feeling or sense of *security*. Moreover, in case of war or other emergency many security issues, which are of great significance and matter of dispute in peacetime, are simply suspended. In the Foucauldian notion of *gouvermentailité* – which plays a key role in critical security studies – the modernizing state takes over more and more tasks while attempting to control the various spheres of society. By the end of the 19th century, the increasingly bureaucratic states had established or were establishing those new institutions, procedures, and micro-power strategies, which are the main technical prerequisites of security measures. At the same time, politics broke out from the narrow circle of the monarchs and their councilors as the masses became a political factor due to extensions of the franchise. Influencing them proved to be crucial, therefore the role of propaganda and media further strengthened. The political actors also discovered that creating fear is as effective a tool in mobilizing voters as providing security.

These changes in political culture of course did not happen in a day but took decades to occur. In the middle of the 19th century, most parts of the Habsburg Empire, including Hungary and its western periphery, had still appeared as the very image of an early modern entity with all the typical features, such as the unquestionable leadership of the aristocracy and nobility, the delicately balanced and hierarchized social networks, the predominantly agricultural economy, and a religion-centered cultural life. By the time of the Great War however, just two

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generations later, fundamentally new ideas and visions broke through in politics and culture, while the capitalist economy and industrialization had already begun reshaping the image of the old medieval towns and cities across the landscape. Modernization, however, came at a high price: the security of the individuals as well as that of smaller or larger communities became a matter of never-ending struggle in the new era.[772]

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 brought about a new era, with the Hungarian government striving to transform their pre-modern kingdom into a modern nation-state. In the previous centuries, the counties served as a refuge for Hungarian nobility's positions against the empire-building Habsburg administration and therefore also constituted an important arena of local political opinion making. However, after the Compromise of 1867, the counties found themselves threatened again by policies of centralization and unification. This time, however, the policies were not those of the Viennese court but of their own Hungarian government in Budapest. In the first half of the dualist era, the central government deprived the municipalities step by step of a series of legal and administrative responsibilities, though the regional authorities and assemblies did retain their function as forums of communication and debate for the politically dominant nobility. The resulting tension between the central government and the counties, known as "the county question", played out in parliamentary debates, legal reforms, and political discourse, often revealing underlying ideological divides and competing visions.

Certain actors emerged as proponents of greater centralization, arguing that a modernized and efficient administration was essential for addressing the challenges of the era, including the perceived threat of the nationality question. They viewed the counties as archaic institutions hindering progress and advocated for a stronger central government to implement national policies and foster a unified Hungarian identity. However, their efforts faced resistance from those who saw the counties as vital institutions for preserving local autonomy, historical traditions, and communal liberties. The debates surrounding the county question also reflected deeper ideological divides within Hungarian society. Municipalists argued for the preservation of county autonomy as a cornerstone of Hungarian identity, drawing on historical arguments and emphasizing the counties' role in safeguarding the nation's interests. Centralists, on the other hand, emphasized the need for a strong, unified state to address the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

[772] OSTERHAMMEL, JÜRGEN: T*he Transformation of the World. A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, Princeton – Oxford, 2014, pp. pp. 167-239.; pp. 572-635.

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Despite repeated attempts at reform, the county system remained largely unchanged throughout the second half of the Dualist era. The competing interests of the central government, the local elites, and various political factions prevented a comprehensive resolution of the county question. The complex interplay of historical traditions, political ambitions, and ideological differences resulted in a stalemate, with the counties retaining significant autonomy even as the central government gained greater control over national affairs. The case studies of Moson, Vas, and Sopron counties provide further insights into the dynamics of local politics and the impact of national reforms on regional administration. The role of influential figures like Prince Pál Esterházy highlights the importance of personal connections, family legacies, and symbolic acts in navigating the complexities of local governance.

The transformation of city policies in Dualist-era Western Hungary after the Compromise of 1867 was also complex and often contradictory process, driven by the government's ambitious project of creating a network of strong, modern, and predominantly Hungarian cities that would serve as engines of economic growth and cultural assimilation. However, this ambitious vision clashed with the historical realities of a diverse urban landscape and the deeply rooted traditions of self-governance in the free royal cities, which in the case of Western Hungary had predominantly German-speaking populations. The initial experiment with City-Lord-Lieutenancies, a new institution designed to provide centralized supervision over groups of cities, proved to be a contentious and ultimately unsuccessful endeavour. The City-Lord-Lieutenants, often outsiders appointed by the central government, frequently prioritized the interests of the Hungarian nation-state over those of the local communities they were tasked with overseeing. This led to numerous conflicts and growing resentment, in case of Western Hungary in the four free royal cities of Sopron, Kismarton, Ruszt, and Kőszeg, where the local elites desperately defended their historical autonomy and resisted what they perceived as unwarranted interference in their affairs.

Nevertheless, the subsequent abolition of many city municipalities and their incorporation into the counties further solidified the government's control over local affairs. This move was justified by the government as a necessary step towards streamlining administration and promoting national unity. However, it also had the effect of eroding the historical autonomy of the cities and consolidating the dominance of Hungarian language and culture in public life. In Western Hungary, while Sopron managed to preserve some degree of self-governance, it was ultimately subject to the authority of the Lord-Lieutenant of Sopron County, who also served as the city's Lord-Lieutenant. The experiences of Kőszeg, Kismarton,

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and Ruszt, which were downgraded to "cities with settled council" and incorporated into their respective counties, illustrate the vulnerability of smaller towns with non-Hungarian majorities to the government's centralizing policies. These towns, despite their historical significance and economic or cultural contributions, were viewed with suspicion by the government and subjected to increased scrutiny and control. Their loss of autonomy not only diminished their political power but was also aimed to accelerate the process of Magyarization with the desire that Hungarian language becoming increasingly dominant in local public life.

One of the main conclusions of the dissertation concerns the dominant approach in Hungarian history-writing to this question. Until now, the complicated relationship between the regional administration and local identities, interconnected with the nationality question, has not really been considered as a key disintegrative force in the era of Dualism. The traditional interpretations of the transformation of Hungary's historical territorial administration depicted the question first and foremost as linear development, which is a necessity of both modernization and nation-state-building. The term *contested self-governance* challenges this view through interpreting the loss of historic forms of autonomy as a security issue. Our findings prove that the decline of centuries-old structures and the creation of their modern counterparts posed a great challenge to those who promoted the transition, not to mention those who suffered from or were simply condemned to endure the changes. An organically evolved organization of a town, a region or a country is not just a matter of structure or administration, but also of culture and identity that historically contribute to the given organization. Here lies perhaps the key misunderstanding of the classical approach: being composed of counties, free royal cities, districts, etc., was not merely the structure of historical Hungary but the very essence of it. These units all became integral parts of the particular local, regional and national identities; a thorough investigation of the field, therefore, necessarily evokes certain processes of securitization.

The nationality question in Western Hungary during the Dualist era, while specific to its regional context, encapsulates the broader challenges faced by the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Hungarian state within in reconciling national identity with statehood. The Hungarian government's unwavering adherence to the concept of a unified political nation, while legally justifiable under the 1868 Nationality Law, ultimately proved unsustainable in the face of nationalist sentiments among the diverse ethnic groups within the kingdom. This insistence on a singular political identity, while intending to foster unity, inadvertently fuelled resentment and alienation among the non-Hungarian populations. The case of Western Hungary, distinguished by its substantial German-speaking population and proximity to Austria, further

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highlights the complexities of the matter. The region's unique demographics and geopolitical position made it particularly susceptible to the rising tide of Great-German nationalism, which sought to unite all German-speaking peoples under one banner. This sentiment manifested in calls for territorial adjustments and border revisions, as evidenced by Josef Patry's influential pamphlet published in 1908, "Westungarn zu Deutschösterreich" (Western Hungary to German Austria). This publication, and the subsequent reactions it provoked, foreshadowed the post-war crisis and the eventual redrawing of borders in the region. The Hungarian authorities' concerns about the potential security threat posed by German nationalism, while not entirely unfounded, also expose the limitations of their approach to the nationality question. By prioritizing the preservation of Hungarian sovereignty and suppressing nationalist sentiments through legal and administrative means, they neglected to address the underlying grievances and aspirations of the various ethnic groups residing within the kingdom. This failure to foster a more inclusive and accommodating national identity indirectly but ultimately contributed to the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the fragmentation of the region. The inability to find a lasting solution to the issue of national identity within a multinational state led to the redrawing of borders along ethnic lines, resulting in the displacement of populations and the creation of new minority groups after the war. Extending the analysis into the interwar period by examining and comparing national minority policies, language issues, public administration on both sides of the new border, therefore, would be a fruitful avenue for future research.

The case study on the “Vend action” in the southern area of Western Hungary serves as a cautionary tale about the contradictions inherent in nation-building processes within multi-ethnic states. At the same time, it also reveals the limitations of top-down assimilationist policies in the face of resilient cultural identities and the powerful role of regional and local dynamics in shaping national narratives and security concerns. The Hungarian state's efforts to assimilate the Vend population through education reforms, place name Magyarization, and the promotion of Hungarian cultural associations were met with ignorance from the local community and resistance from external South Slavic (Slovenian) influences. The actions and initiatives of local and regional actors, such as the Lord-Lieutenant of Vas County, the Bishop of Szombathely, and the "Vend Regional Hungarian Public Cultural Association," played a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of the Vend question. These local security actors, driven by a mix of nationalistic fervour, economic interests, and genuine concern for the future of the Vend region, engaged in a complex interplay of cooperation and conflict with the central government in Budapest. The "Vend action," aimed at Magyarizing the Vend population in the

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southern part of Vas County, ultimately proved unsuccessful as the region became part of Yugoslavia after World War I.

The history of Western Hungary during the World War reveals a region profoundly shaped by the conflict and its aftermath. The disastrous impacts of the war were felt across the Austro-Hungarian Empire with Western Hungary being no exception. The outbreak of the war shattered the pre-war indifference towards national identity, fuelling the rise of nationalist movements. The concept of national indifference helps to explain how the social upheaval of the war created fertile ground for these movements to gain traction. Western Hungary's position as a hinterland did not shield it from the devastating effects of the fighting. The region faced significant economic and social disruptions, including human losses, food shortages, and the influx of refugees. These hardships fuelled ethnic tensions and social unrest, setting the stage for post-war conflicts. The region's economic ties to Vienna, particularly in the agricultural sector, played a crucial role as the connections intensified during the war, leading to a thriving black market that further strengthened the region's economic gravitation to Austria. The end of the war brought the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as well as the prospect of a hard border threatened to sever Western Hungary's economic lifeline to Vienna.

The disintegration of the Austria-Hungary after the war unleashed a wave of nationalist movements across East Central Europe, each vying for territorial claims and self-determination. In the western reaches of the former Hungarian Kingdom, the region today known as Burgenland became a focal point of this struggle. The collapse of the Dual Monarchy, coupled with the rise of Great German nationalism, fuelled aspirations in Vienna for the region’s annexation to Austria. The political landscape in post-war Hungary was equally turbulent, with the brief Communist regime further exacerbating existing tensions and alienating many in the region. The decisions made by the Entente powers in the peace treaties of Saint-Germain and Trianon, awarding certain parts of Western Hungary to Austria, ignited a prolonged border conflict. Hungarian authorities, clinging to hopes of a plebiscite or a reversal of the decision, resisted relinquishing control, while Austria lacked the means to enforce the new border. The Western Hungarian uprising, led by a motley crew of para-military rebels, further complicated the situation, revealing the opposition to annexation among certain parts of the local population. The short-lived Western Hungarian mini state called Banate of Leitha, a defiant symbol of resistance, highlighted the complexities of national identity and allegiance in the region. The eventual resolution of the border conflict through the Venice Protocol and the Sopron plebiscite marked a turning point. While the western areas of historical Western Hungary were integrated

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into Austria as Burgenland, the plebiscite allowed Sopron and its surrounding villages to remain part of Hungary, a decision that continues to resonate in the region's identity still today.

In the final main conclusion, we need to emphasize that the disintegration of this region following the Great War was not a sudden rupture but rather the culmination of a complex, drawn-out process with roots reaching back decades before the conflict. Similar to a painful divorce after a centuries-long marriage, the separation of Austria and Hungary was fraught with complications. While recent research has pointed to the war's devastation and the resulting political turmoil as significant destabilizing factors, this study delved deeper back in time to demonstrated how the seemingly peaceful Western Hungarian landscape concealed underlying tensions. These vulnerabilities were exacerbated by the unintended consequences of pre-war nation-state building and modernization efforts, which inadvertently triggered a series of security issues. This study, therefore, aimed to expand upon existing scholarship by revealing a deeper understanding of the factors that led to the fragmentation of Western Hungary. We underscore the importance of examining the long-term historical processes and the unintended consequences of seemingly positive developments like modernization and nation-building. By doing so, one can better understand the complex factors that shape national, regional, and local identities and contribute to political and social upheavals, even in regions that appear initially stable and peaceful.

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VIII. Appendix

8.1 Tables

Demographic statistics of Western Hungary between 1870 and 1910 (Chapter 3.1)[773]

Population of the Counties and Cities of Western Hungary in 1870

	Moson County	Sopron County	Vas County	Sopron	Kismarton	Ruszt	Kőszeg
1870	75,486	230,158	331,602	16,699	2,343	1,260	5,989

Population of Western Hungary as a region between 1870 and 1910

1870	637,246
1880	687,747
1891	739,601
1900	789,325
1910	813,782

Confessions in Western Hungary in 1870

	Catholic	Protestant*	Jews
1870	500,584	109,028	18,582
1880	541,499	125,855	20,029
1891	581,611	132,610	20,698
1900	627,182	139,621	21,345
1910	653,764	140,093	22,965

* Lutherans and Calvinists combined

Confessions in Western Hungary between 1870 and 1910

	Western Hungary	Moson	Sopron	Vas
Catholic*	500,584	65,013	193,494	242,077
Lutheran	107,838	8,261	28,859	70,718
Jewish	18,582	2170	7,714	8,698

* Roman and Greek Catholics combined

Illiteracy in Western Hungary in 1870

	Western Hungary	Moson County	Sopron County	Vas County
able to read and write	294,456	43,318	122,567	128,571
able to read only	86,997	7,821	28,296	50,880
illiterate	253,793	22,347	79,295	152,151

[773] Source of data: *Census 1870, 1881, 1891, 1900, 1910.*

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Illiteracy in Western Hungarian counties in 1870

	Proportion of Population	National rank (out of 78 units)
Moson County	16,88 per cent	1st
Sopron	22,16 per cent	2nd
Vas County	34,96 per cent	15th

Illiteracy in Cities with Municipal Rank in Western Hungary (1870)

	Proportion of Population	National rank (out of 79 units)
Kőszeg	15,08 per cent	1st
Kismarton	17,83 per cent	2nd
Sopron	18,38 per cent	3rd
Ruszt	24,56 per cent	7th

Illiteracy in Western Hungary between 1870 and 1910

	Number of Illiterate Individuals	Percentage of the Population
1870	253,793	40,1 per cent
1910	224,389	27,6 per cent

Occupation of population in Western Hungarian counties in 1870

	Landowners and tenants	Farmworkers	Industry and handicraft	Trade and services	Intellectuals
Moson County	6,301	20,131	4,931	1,198	850
Sopron County	26,184	53,224	14,521	2,561	2,958
Vas County	40,594	79,142	14,398	2,203	2,956

Occupation of population in Western Hungary in 1870 and 1910

	Agriculture	Industry and trade	Intellectuals
Western Hungary in 1870	225,576*	39,794**	6,764
Western Hungary in 1910	502,088	211,605	22,227

* Landowners, tenants and farmworkers combined; **industry, handicraft, trade, services combined

Proportion of Population Employed in Certain Economic Sectors in Western Hungarian Counties in National Comparison (1870)

	Agriculture	National Rank (out of 78 units)	Industry and Trade	National Rank (out of 78 units)
Moson	35,02 per cent	27th	8,09 per cent	8th
Sopron	34,51 per cent	29th	7,42 per cent	9th
Vas	36,11 per cent	24th	5,01 per cent	29th

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Proportion of Population Employed in the Industrial and Trade Sectors in Western Hungarian Cities with Municipal Rank in National Comparison (1870)

	Industry and Trade	National Rank (out of 70 units)
Kőszeg	18,01 per cent	29th
Kismarton	16,93 per cent	34th
Sopron	15,15 per cent	38th
Ruszt	6,82 per cent	62nd

Native speakers in Moson County between 1881 and 1910

	1881	1891	1900	1910
Entire population	81,370	85,050	89,714	94,479
Hungarian	12,991 (16 per cent)	20,786 (24,1 per cent)	25,991 (29 per cent)	33,006 (34,9 per cent)
German	54,975 (67,6 per cent)	54,729 (64,3 per cent)	54,508 (60,8 per cent)	51,997 (55 per cent)

Native speakers in Sopron County between 1881 and 1910

	1881	1891	1900	1910
Entire population	245,787	259,602	279,796	283,510
Hungarian	109,798 (44,7 per cent)	122,334 (47,1 per cent)	136,616 (48,8 per cent)	136,616 (48,2 per cent)
German	97,677 (39,7 per cent)	105,043 (40,5 per cent)	109,369 (39,1 per cent)	108,446 (38,3 per cent)
Croatian	21,691 (8,8 per cent)	30,160 (11,6 per cent)	31,044 (11,1 per cent)	31,317 (11 per cent)

Native speakers in Vas County between 1881 and 1910

	1881	1891	1900	1910
Entire population	360,590	391,903	418,905	435,793
Hungarian	169,904 (47,1 per cent)	197,389 (50,4 per cent)	220,823 (52,7 per cent)	247,985 (56,9 per cent)
German	118,065 (32,7 per cent)	125,526 (32 per cent)	125,032 (29,8 per cent)	117,169 (26,9)
Slovene (Vend)	41,772 (11,6 per cent)	47,080 (12 per cent)	52,493 (12,5 per cent)	54,036 (12,4 per cent)
Croatian	16,189 (4,5 per cent)	18,197 (4,6 per cent)	17,843 (4,3 per cent)	16,230 (3,7 per cent)

Native speakers in Western Hungary between 1881 and 1910

	1881	1910	Difference	Change in Proportion
Entire population	687,747	813,782	+ 18,3 per cent	
Hungarian	292,693	417,607	+ 42,7 per cent	from 42,6 up to 51,3 per cent
German	270,717	277,619	+ 2,5 per cent	from 39,4 down to 34,1 percent
Slovene (Vend) or Croatian	88,116	109,393	+24,1 per cent	from 12,8 up to 13,4 percent

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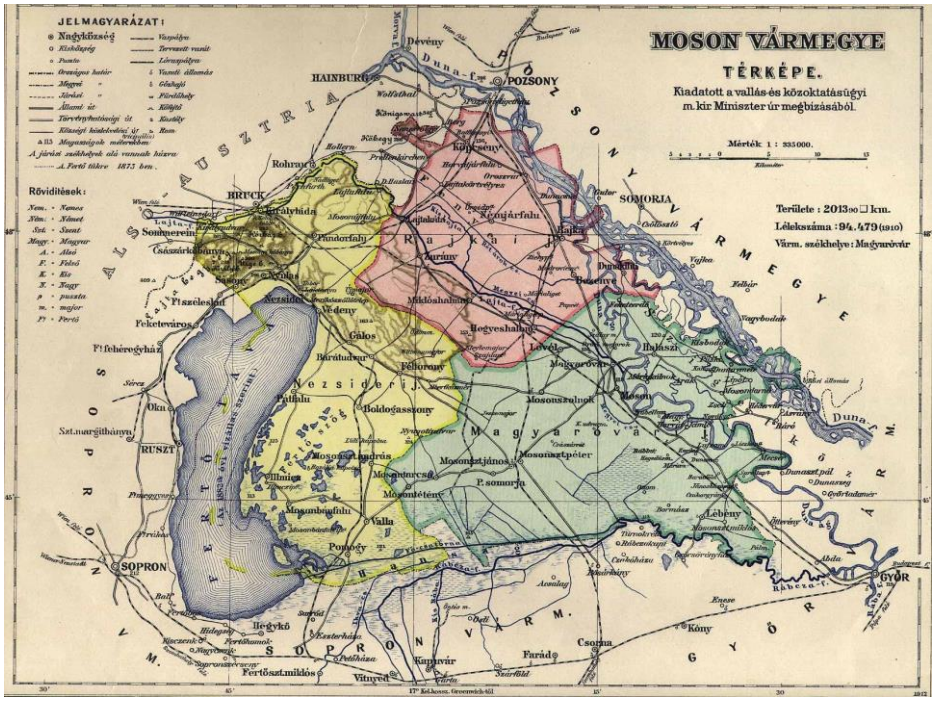
8.2 Maps

Administrative Maps of Moson (1912), Sopron (1911) and Vas Counties (1910)[774]



[774] Source: *Az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia vármegyéi a XX. század elején* [Counties in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the Beginning of the 20th Century. http://lazarus.elte.hu/hun/maps/1910/vmlista.htm [20.06.2024]

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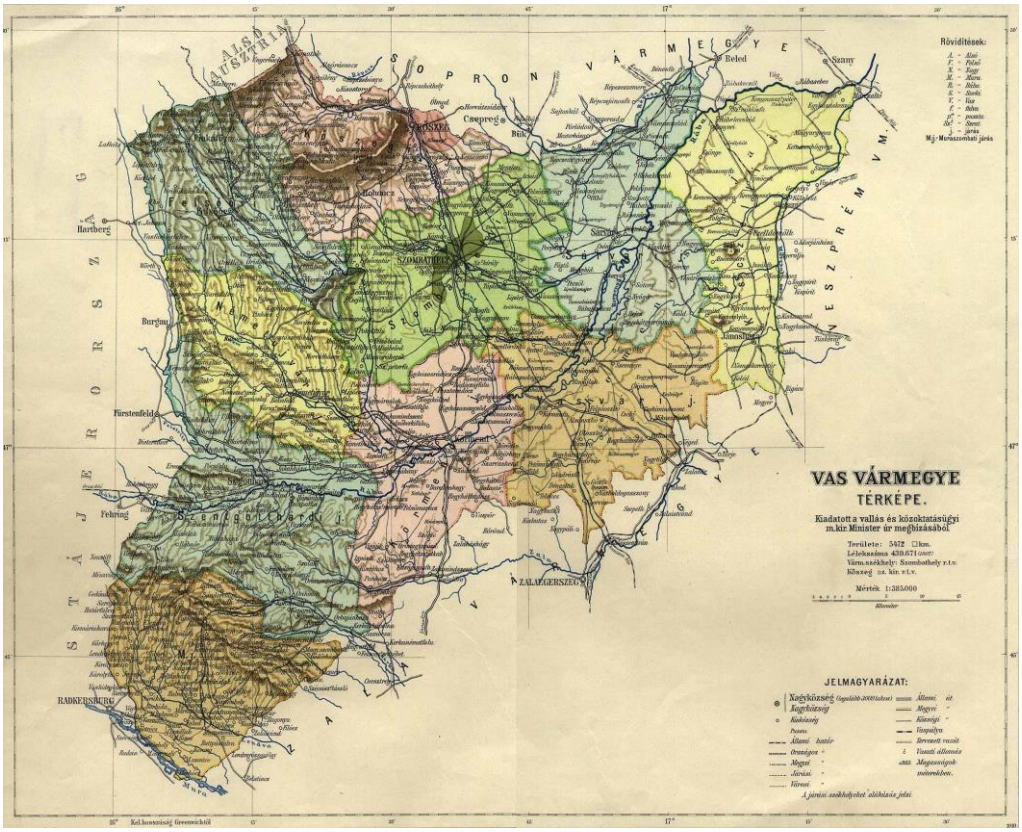

8.3 Summary

Contested Self-Governance: Dilemmas of Security in Western Hungary (1867-1918)

The society of historical Western Hungary (composed of Vas, Sopron and Moson counties, and the free royal cities of Sopron, Kismarton, Rust and Kőszeg) appeared stable on the surface, yet numerous tensions were hidden beneath, which culminated in a territorial conflict at the end of World War I, ultimately leading to the creation of Burgenland.

Before the Great War, various ethnic and religious groups coexisted peacefully in the region, with Hungarian, German, Croatian and Slovene-speaking communities living more or less separately. Despite the characteristic Magyarization efforts of the era, ethnic proportions hardly changed. While cities located on the language border were multilingual, smaller settlements remained ethnically homogeneous. Religious tolerance was prevalent, although anti-Semitic manifestations against the Jewish minority intensified from the 1880s onwards. Society remained hierarchical, with the peasantry constituting the largest group. However, industrialization and bourgeoisiefication created new social strata (industrial workers,

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bourgeoisie), transforming the social structure. The aristocracy and nobility continued to play a dominant role in the economy and politics.

Dualist-era Western Hungary faced numerous security challenges. Bandit groups and the nomadic Roma population were seen as public security challenges, to which authorities responded with extraordinary measures. In terms of administration, the autonomy of county and city governments was significantly reduced with the strengthening of central state power, and lord-lieutenants became representatives of national interests. Elections were characterized by corruption and violence, and the county resistance after the 1905 elections revealed the weaknesses of the dualist system. The handling of the nationality question was also unsuccessful: the assimilation of the Slovene (Vend) minority failed, and pan-German propaganda intensified among the German minority after the turn of the century.

The region's history should be examined from a security history perspective rather than solely from a perspective of nationalism studies. The conditions in Western Hungary during the Dualist era, such as public security issues, administrative reforms, problems with the electoral system, and ethnic tensions, as well as the regional dimensions of national security discourses, indirectly contributed to later territorial conflicts. Local elites, citing the deterioration of security, sought to maintain their positions, but unintentionally undermined social cohesion. Although a change in the historical Austro-Hungarian border would have been unlikely without the political and military collapse of World War I, the tensions accumulated during the decades of the Dualist era laid the groundwork for later conflicts.

The dissertation points out that the processes taking place in Western Hungary were not isolated, but closely linked to national political and social changes. The strengthening power of the nation-state, the rise of nationalism, and the challenges of modernization all contributed to the intensification of existing tensions in the region, ultimately leading to the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy, historical Hungary, and the Western Hungarian region. The dissertation interprets the concept of security more broadly than traditional historiography and points out that security is not only a military or political issue but is also influenced by social and cultural factors.

Umstrittene Selbstverwaltung: Die Dilemmas der Sicherheit in Westungarn (1867-1918)

Die Gesellschaft des historischen Westungarns (bestehend aus den Komitaten Eisenburg, Ödenburg und Wieselburg sowie den Freistädten Ödenburg, Güns, Eisenstadt und Rust) war oberflächlich stabil, verbarg jedoch zahlreiche Spannungen, die sich am Ende des Ersten

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Weltkriegs in einem territorialen Konflikt entluden und schließlich zur Gründung des Burgenlandes führten.

Vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg lebten in der Region verschiedene ethnische und religiöse Gruppen weitgehend friedlich nebeneinander, wobei ungarische, deutsche, kroatische und slowenische Gemeinschaften mehr oder weniger getrennt voneinander existierten. Trotz der für die Zeit typischen Magyarisierungsbestrebungen änderten sich die ethnischen Verhältnisse kaum. Obwohl die Städte an der Sprachgrenze mehrsprachig waren, blieben die kleineren Siedlungen ethnisch homogen. Religiöse Toleranz war zwar charakteristisch, jedoch verstärkten sich ab den 1880er Jahren antisemitische Äußerungen gegenüber der jüdischen Minderheit. Die Gesellschaft blieb weiterhin hierarchisch, während die Bauernschaft die größte Gruppe bildete. Die Industrialisierung und Verbürgerlichung brachten jedoch neue soziale Schichten hervor (Industriearbeiter, Bürgertum), was die Gesellschaftsstruktur veränderte. Aristokratie und Adel spielten weiterhin eine dominierende Rolle in Wirtschaft und Politik.

Das Westungarn der Dualismus-Ära stand vor zahlreichen Sicherheitsherausforderungen. Räuberbanden und die nomadisch lebende Roma-Bevölkerung wurden als Bedrohung der öffentlichen Sicherheit angesehen, auf die die Behörden mit außerordentlichen Maßnahmen reagierten. Die Autonomie der Komitats- und Stadtverwaltungen wurde durch die Stärkung der zentralstaatlichen Macht erheblich eingeschränkt, und die Obergespane wurden zu Vertretern der nationalen Interessen. Die Wahlen waren von Korruption und Gewalt geprägt, und der Widerstand der Komitate nach den Wahlen von 1905 offenbarte die Schwächen des dualistischen Systems. Der Umgang mit der nationalen Frage war ebenfalls nicht erfolgreich: Die Assimilation der slowenischen (wendischen) Minderheit scheiterte, und unter der deutschen Minderheit verstärkte sich nach der Jahrhundertwende die pangermanische Propaganda.

Die Geschichte der Region sollte nicht nur aus der Perspektive der Nationalismusgeschichte, sondern auch aus sicherheitshistorischer Sicht betrachtet werden. Die Verhältnisse in Westungarn der Dualismus-Ära, wie die Frage der öffentlichen Sicherheit, die Umgestaltung der Verwaltung, die Probleme des Wahlsystems und die ethnischen Spannungen, sowie die regionalen Dimensionen der nationalen Sicherheitsdiskurse, trugen indirekt zu den späteren territorialen Konflikten bei. Die lokalen Eliten versuchten, ihre Positionen unter Berufung auf die Gefährdung der Sicherheit zu erhalten, untergruben damit jedoch unbeabsichtigt den sozialen Zusammenhalt. Obwohl eine Veränderung der historischen österreichisch-ungarischen Grenze ohne den politischen und militärischen Zusammenbruch des

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Ersten Weltkriegs kaum möglich gewesen wäre, schufen die im Laufe der Jahrzehnte der Dualismus-Ära angesammelten Spannungen die Grundlage für spätere Konflikte.

Die Dissertation zeigt, dass die Prozesse in Westungarn nicht isoliert, sondern eng mit den politischen und sozialen Veränderungen im gesamten Land verbunden waren. Die Stärkung der nationalstaatlichen Macht, das Aufkommen des Nationalismus und die Herausforderungen der Modernisierung trugen dazu bei, dass sich die bestehenden Spannungen in der Region verstärkten und schließlich zum Zerfall der Habsburgermonarchie, des historischen Ungarn und der Region Westungarn führten. Die Dissertation interpretiert den Begriff der Sicherheit weiter gefasst als die traditionelle Geschichtsschreibung und weist darauf hin, dass Sicherheit nicht nur eine militärische oder politische Frage ist, sondern auch von sozialen und kulturellen Faktoren beeinflusst wird.

Elvitatott önkormányzás: A biztonság dilemmái Nyugat-Magyarországon (1867-1918)

A történelmi Nyugat-Magyarország (Vas, Sopron és Moson vármegye, valamint Sopron, Kismarton, Ruszt és Kőszeg szabad királyi városok) társadalma látszólag stabil volt, azonban a felszín alatt számos feszültség rejtőzött, amelyek az első világháború végén egy területi konfliktusban sűrűsödtek össze, ami végül Burgenland létrejöttéhez vezetett.

A nagy háborút megelőzően a régióban különböző etnikai és vallási csoportok békésen éltek egymás mellett, a magyar, német, horvát és szlovén nyelvű közösségek többé-kevésbé elkülönülve. A korra jellemző magyarosítási törekvések ellenére az etnikai arányok alig változtak, bár a nyelvhatáron elhelyezkedő városok többnyelvűek voltak, a kisebb települések etnikailag homogének maradtak. A vallási tolerancia jellemző volt, ugyanakkor a zsidó kisebbséggel szemben az 1880-as évektől felerősödtek az antiszemita megnyilvánulások. A társadalom továbbra is hierarchikus maradt miközben a legnagyobb csoportot a parasztság alkotta. Az iparosodás és polgárosodás azonban új társadalmi rétegeket hozott létre (ipari munkásság, polgárság), ami a társadalmi szerkezetet átalakította. Az arisztokrácia és a nemesség azonban továbbra is meghatározó szerepet játszott a gazdaságban és a politikában.

A dualizmus kori Nyugat-Magyarország számos biztonsági kihívással nézett szembe. A betyárbandákra és a nomád életmódot folytató cigányságra közbiztonsági kihívásként tekintettek, amire a hatóságok rendkívüli intézkedésekkel reagáltak. A közigazgatás terén a vármegyei és városi önkormányzatok autonómiája jelentősen csökkent a központi államhatalom erősödésével, a főispánok pedig a nemzetállami érdekek képviselőivé váltak. A választásokat korrupció és erőszak jellemezte, az 1905-ös választások utáni megyei ellenállás

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pedig rávilágított a dualista rendszer gyengeségeire. A nemzetiségi kérdés kezelése sem volt sikeres: a szlovén (vend) kisebbség asszimilációja kudarcba fulladt, a német kisebbség körében pedig a századfordulót követően felerősödött a pángermán propaganda.

A régió történetét a nacionalizmustörténet helyett érdemes biztonságtörténeti perspektívából vizsgálni. A dualizmus kori nyugat-magyarországi viszonyok, például a közbiztonság kérdése, a közigazgatás átalakítása, a választási rendszer problémái és a nemzetiségi feszültségek, valamint az országos biztonsági diskurzusok regionális dimenziói közvetve hozzájárulhattak a későbbi területi konfliktusokhoz. A helyi elitek a biztonság megrendülésére hivatkozva törekedtek pozícióik megőrzésére, de ezzel akaratlanul is aláásták a társadalmi kohéziót. Bár a történelmi osztrák-magyar határvonal megváltoztatása az első világháborús politikai-katonai összeomlás nélkül aligha lett volna lehetséges, a dualizmus kori évtizedek során felgyülemlett feszültségek megteremtették a későbbi konfliktusok alapjait.

A disszertáció rámutat arra, hogy a Nyugat-Magyarországon zajló folyamatok nem voltak elszigeteltek, hanem szorosan kapcsolódtak az országos politikai és társadalmi változásokhoz. A nemzetállami hatalom erősödése, a nacionalizmus térnyerése és a modernizáció kihívásai mind hozzájárultak ahhoz, hogy a régióban meglévő feszültségek felerősödjenek, és végül a Habsburg Monarchia, a történelem Magyarország és a nyugat-magyarországi régió felbomlásaihoz vezessenek. A disszertáció a biztonság fogalmát tágabban értelmezi, mint a hagyományos történetírás, és rámutat arra, hogy a biztonság nem csak katonai vagy politikai kérdés, hanem társadalmi és kulturális tényezők is befolyásolják.