

TRIANON - JUNE 1920: AN ONGOING CASE STUDY

PhD Viorica MOISUC

The achievement of Romania's sovereignty within its national territory and in international relations, the consolidation of this sovereignty on a political and legal level through the fundamental acts of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-1920 represents, especially in the perspective of time, a positive historical experience and, through this, a contribution to international theory and practice in the political, diplomatic and legal fields.

The value of this experience resides in the fact that the modern Romanian unitary national state was the objective result of a long process of development and affirmation of the Romanian nation in the economic, cultural and political realm, it was the expression of the struggle and will of this nation in its entirety, in 1918; also, the value of this experience is also given by the plebiscite Decisions of March, November and December 1918 (Chisinau, Chernivtsi and Alba-Iulia) which expressed the historical progress from that stage in the sense of establishing a new international political order based on the acceptance of the principle of nationalities and national self-determination, of real equality between states, the elimination of the use of war, of force, in interstate relations, the renunciation of secret diplomacy; this new order announced the opening of an era of peace and collaboration between peoples and states, regardless of their size, within the framework of the application and respect of the principles of international law.

The establishment of the Romanian national-unitary state in 1918 was part of a vast process of political-economic-social restructuring in Central and South-Eastern Europe, a process fueled by the irreversible crisis of the anachronistic multinational empires that held under occupation, by force and threat of force, dozens of nations and foreign territories: the war of aggression of Austria-Hungary and Germany against Serbia started in 1914 and quickly expanded on a world scale, hastened the process mentioned above, completed in 1918 in this entire geographical space. The Paris Peace Conference of 1919-1920 registered the new political-territorial

configuration decided by the will of the liberated nations and gave it international recognition through the Peace Treaties of Versailles (Germany), Saint-Germain (Austria), Trianon (Hungary) and by the Covenant of the League of Nations (document that constitutes the Preamble of each peace treaty); through its provisions, the Pact guaranteed precisely the new order established by the nations in 1918.

This is actually the fundamental positive feature of the Peace Treaties after the First World War, recognized, moreover, by the defeated states by signing and ratifying the treaties that concerned them.

Starting from the postulate that history has never recorded a satisfactory peace for both the victors of a war and the vanquished, it is explainable that the defeated states were affected more or less by some provisions of the peace treaties, especially in the territorial fields, war reparations, military restrictions and many others. Equally explainable were their attempts to obtain, by various means, the modification of those undesirable provisions¹. All this is explainable but, transformed into imperative and priority objectives of foreign and domestic policy, they became unacceptable and extremely dangerous because they undermined peace and general security more and more and threw humanity into the chaos of a new war.

For Germany, the culmination was the regime and policies of Adolf Hitler, which failed miserably with the end of World War II; his acolyte, Miklos Horthy, took Hungary down the same path, with the same end.

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Am afirmat că Trianon-ul poate fi considerat „*un studiu de caz în continuă actualitate*” pentru că, o privire retrospectivă asupra celor **o sută șase ani** care s-au scurs de la prăbușirea sistemului monarhic dualist austro-ungar arată că de-a lungul acestei lungi perioade nu s-a ostit plânsul Budapestei după „*Ungaria milenară*”, nu s-a modificat cu nimic politica sa revendicativă privind teritoriile cândva ocupate *manu militari* de regii „*apostolici*”, politică îmbrăcată , după caz, în haine nu doar ungurești, ci și nemțești, rusești, britanice, franțuzești; în fruntea listei de revendicări s-a aflat întotdeauna părți ale teritoriului național al României .

¹ See this issue in Viorica Moisuc, The Premises of Romania's Political Isolation 1919-1840, Second Edition, revised and added, Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2023, p. 20-39.

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On December 1, 1918, in Alba-Iulia – the fortress that symbolizes the moment of the first union of the historical Romanian provinces carried out in 1659-1600 by Prince Michael the Brave –, "The National Assembly of all Romanians from Transylvania, Banat and Hungary, gathered through their representatives entitled to Alba-Iulia – as it is stated in the Declaration of the National Assembly – decrees the union of those Romanians and all the territories inhabited by them with Romania"². Seen in the retrospect of history, this Decision affirms the inalienable rights of the Romanian people over the territory they have always inhabited, a territory on which the Romanian language, unitary of the Romanian people, was built, civilization and culture were built, one and the same throughout this territory. Alba-Iulia was the last act of the Great Union of Romanians, carried out in a first stage in Chisinau, on March 27, 1918, then in Chernivtsi, on November 28, 1918.

It should be noted that on the entire geographical area between the Dniester-Wooded Carpathians-Danube and the Black Sea-Tisa, archaeological research confirms, starting from the Paleolithic era, the uninterrupted existence of a population with the same way of life, with the same features of material and spiritual culture. These characteristics have not undergone any change over time.

I will resume, to begin with, a short fragment from an excellent study written three years after the signing of the Trianon, by I. Dimitriu (professor at the University of Iasi), at a time when Hungary, a signatory of the Trianon Treaty (but which refused to recognize the legitimacy of the sovereign unitary states created on the ruins of the dualist monarchy) and had embroiled in a mad war for the restoration of the "Millennium Hungary" against Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Slovene Serbo-Croatian Kingdom, in criminal collusion with Lenin. Prof. I. Dimitriu writes:

² Bessarabia, Bucovina, Transylvania – Unity 1918, Annotated documents and introductory study by prof. univ. Dr. Viorica Moisuc, Department of Public Information, Publications Office for Foreign Affairs, Bucharest 1996, doc. no. 152, p. 500-528. "Minutes of the Great National Assembly of the Romanian People from Transylvania, Banat and the Hungarian Parts, held on Sunday 1 December 1918 in Alba-Iulia in the hall of the Military Circle in the Cetate".

"...ne descendons pas trop dans la nuit sombre de l'antiquité, et rapportons-nous seulement au moment où la gloire de Trajane eu raison de la vaillance de Décébal, au moment où l'empire des Daces fut soumis à la domination romaine. C'était au commencement du II-e siècle : la Dacie était limitée à l'Est par le Dniestr, au Sud par la Mer Noire et par le Danube, à l'Ouest par la Tissa (Theiss) et au Nord par la chaîne des Carpathes et la partie supérieure du Dniestr. Elle comprenait donc la Bessarabie, la Bukovine, la Moldavie, la Valachie, l'Olténie, La Transylvanie, le Banat de Temishana, le Banat de Crishana et le Maramouresh"³. ("...let us not descend too far into the dark night of antiquity, and let us only refer to the moment when the glory of Trajan got the better of the valor of Decebal, to the moment when the Dacian empire was subjected to Roman domination. It was at the beginning of the 2nd century: Dacia was limited to the east by the Dniester, to the south by the Black Sea and the Danube, to the west by the Tissa (Theiss) and to the north by the chain of the Carpathians and the upper part of the Dniester. It therefore included Bessarabia, Bukovina, Moldavia, Wallachia, Oltenia, Transylvania, Banat of Temishana, Banat of Crishana and Maramouresh.") (in french in the original text).

In 1918, Romania, a unitary national state, included all these territories.

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In the last century of the first millennium - during which the territory inhabited by the Romanians organized in state formations led by voivods - experienced the invasion of tribes migrating to Europe from distant Asia - the warlike tribes of the Hungarians appeared who entered the Romanian area through North. Their settlement in Pannonia and the establishment of a state formation that wanted to continue the old Hun kingdom led by Attila, marked the sedentarization of the nomadic tribes but not the beginning of a peaceful development in those places. He was attracted to the "Country beyond the forests!⁴" – which they knew from the time of the migration.

³ I. Dimitriu, professeur à l'Université de lassy, *Les Droits de la Roumanie sur la Bukovine. Rapports de la Bukovine avec la Pologne et l'Ukraine*, în volumul T. Ionesco, D. Hurmuzesco, V. Dimitriu, E. Pangrati, C-M Sipsion, J. Gavanesco, D. Negulesco, J. Ursu, *Les Questions roumaines du Temps présent. Avant-Propos de M. Raymond Poincaré*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1921, p. 43.

⁴ G. Popa-Lisseanu, *Izvoarele istoriei Românilor (The Origins of the Romanians)*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1934, pp. 73-117. See also Viorica Mosuc, *The Ordeal of the Romanians in the Struggle for Liberation and National Integration*, vol. II, Romanian and also French edition, Publishing House of the Romania of Tomorrow Foundation, Bucharest, 2022, chapter XXVIII Anonymus versus Rössler, pp. 225-241.

Because, as can be read in the Chronicle of the Anonymous Notary of King Bela, "that land is watered by the best rivers... gold is gathered from their sand, that the gold in that country is the best gold, that salt is extracted from there and salty substances..."⁵.

The chronicler talks about the "people of the earth"- "the inhabitants of the country" who were in constant armed conflict with the nomads. "The inhabitants feared the cruelty of the Hungarians more than can be said, and no one believed that they would be able to live by the kindness of Arpad⁶; **they saved themselves as best they could, some by running away, others by submission**". Anonymus talks about "the land of the Gelu Lake", rich in gold and salt, about the attack of the Hungarian tribes on the fortress in Bihor defended by "Duke Menumorut", about the attack on the fortress of "Duke Glad" in the Banat area which "was conquered, looted, the inhabitants plundered, the imprisoned hostages"⁷. It should be added that the accounts of the anonymous notary of the Hungarian king Bela are confirmed by another well-known chronicle, that of the Russian Nestor. Referring to the march of the Hungarian nomadic tribes led by Arpad to the West, he specifies: "*Les Hongrois, après avoir franchi de hautes montagnes - ce sont bien les Carpathes - se mirent à lutter contre les Valaques et les Slaves qui y vivaient*"⁸. ("The Hungarians, after having crossed high mountains – these are indeed the Carpathians – began to fight against the Vlachs and the Slavs who lived there") (in french in the original text).

So this was the "vacuum" found by the Hungarian nomadic tribes in Transylvania, a vacuum that they conquered by hard fighting against a

⁵ Gesta Hungarorum (Deeds of the Hungarians) - the chronicle written by Anonymus, the notary of King Bela, was discovered in 1746 in the imperial library in Vienna by Johannes Georgius Schwandtner and published under the title Anonymi Belae regis Notarii Historia Hungarica, in 1765. In Romanian, the first translation (accompanied by the Latin text) was published in Sibiu in 1899. In Hungarian historiography, this document - the oldest writing on the history of the Hungarians - was vehemently contested, first by Sulzer, Engel and Rössler, who denied the existence and continuity of the Romanians in the Transylvanian space (the "vacuum" theory) and the theory of their "migration" to Transylvania in the 12th-14th centuries, coming from Albania/. These theses were taken up by Hungarian historians, publicists, politicians and are still used today.

⁶ Apud *Calvarul Românilor...*, vol. II, p. 240.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ N. S. Govora, *La Transylvanie roumaine*, Carpați Publishing House, Madrid, 1981, p. 13.

peaceful population of cultivators and animal breeders. Population that lived in this "void."

The testimonies of the chroniclers – appreciated positively until the appearance of Roesler's politicizing theories – were later declared apocryphal, the consequence being known: the exacerbation of historical falsifications, the launch of theories such as that of the "vacuum", of the "tolerance" of the political regime in Hungary towards the subjugated nations, to the various religious cults other than Catholicism; finally, two theses whose scientific inconsistency is beyond any comment and which borders on elementary morality: "Hungary's historical rights" over Transylvania" and the "Millennium Hungary" thesis.

Let us specify that Hungary has "historical rights" through the Trianon Peace Treaty of June 1920, when its territory was fixed within the limits of old Pannonia – the area where the nomadic Hungarian tribes came from Asia, organized their first state and they converted to Christianity in the year 1000: as far as "Millennium Hungary" is concerned, it is an elementary calculation error. The period when Hungary was under Ottoman military occupation with the status of pashalic (in 1526 - Mohacs), Transylvania with the status of autonomy under Ottoman suzerainty (as well as the status of the Romanian Principalities – Wallachia and Moldova) was omitted; The Austrian Empire freed Hungary from Ottoman occupation (peace of Karlowitz, 1699) and included it in the empire. In 1867, the Austro-Hungarian agreement regarding the creation of the anachronistic Austro-Hungarian union also provided for the incorporation of Transylvania into Hungary, a situation that was maintained until 1918, that is exactly 51 years. The period before the events of 1526 is added, but it must be specified that Transylvania had the status of a voivodeship. Therefore, where is the "Millennium Hungary"?⁹

The obsessive mentality regarding "Millennium Hungary" and its corollary - the reconstitution of the "Apostolic Kingdom of St. Stephen", which dominated and dominates Hungarian politics and propaganda since Trianon, is perfectly illustrated by the list of works published only in the first

⁹ A long discussion on these aberrant theses supported from Roessler onwards (i.e. for three centuries) by Hungarian and pro-Hungarian propaganda, see Calvarul...vol. I: chap. II (Mihai Eminescu in defense of Romanians from Transylvania and Bessarabia), chap. XI (The history of a criminal plan of the Hungarian government against the Romanians in 1907. Vol. II: chap. XXIV (Transylvania in the mixer of history inventors, chap. XXIII (Anonymus versus Roessler).

ten years after Trianon and brought to the attention of the general public in the book "Justice pour la Hongrie" printed by the publishing house of the "Pesti Hirlap" newspaper in 1931: 23 books and two maps in French, 24 volumes in English, 20 in Italian and 8 in German. Articles from magazines and newspapers, brochures etc etc are added. Who knows their numbers in the years that followed?

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In 2014, the French historian Catherine Horel published a book of particular interest: knowing perfectly the history of Hungary after Trianon and analyzing the annexationist policy of the Horthy regime from 1938-1940 supported and carried out under the baton of Hitler, Mussolini and no less to Chamberlain and Daladier, the author tries to decipher the roots of Hungarian revisionism, a formula that covered the aggressive annexationist aims of the Horthy regime; Art. 19 of the Covenant of the League of Nations which provided for the possibility of revising "treaties that have become inapplicable" was used as a support for the "legal" promotion of requests for the revision of peace treaties. Anyway. it was obstinately invoked by states that saw in this article the possibility of modifying or even canceling peace treaties or even unwanted clauses.¹⁰

"Revisionism as the *raison d'être* of the Horthy regime – writes Catherine Horel – is the leading thread throughout the period between the two wars. The inability to emerge from the defeated camp in World War I draws Hungary into the Italo-German orbit. Revisionism becomes a system, it is the main propaganda tool of the regime, and the reconquest of some territories between 1938 and 1941 is glorified as the victory of the Regent"¹¹.

The historical support of Horthyst revisionism is the doctrine of the Holy Crown. "King Stephen the Holy becomes the privileged propaganda

¹⁰ The great jurists of the time, such as Nicolae Titulescu, Olof Hoijer, Mihai A. Antonescu, Ovidiu Vlădescu and many others, as well as great historians such as Nicolae Iorga, Gheorghe Brătianu, Gh. Sofronie demonstrated that the implementation of the provisions of art. 19 would have been practically impossible due to the extremely complicated procedure provided by the Pact. Anyway, the Peace Treaties that confirmed the new order based on the principle of self-determination of nations, could not be discussed.

¹¹ Catherine Horel, *Admiral Horthy, regent of Hungary* (original title: *L'Amiral Horthy, Régent de Hongrie*, Perrin, Paris, 2014), Humanitas, Bucharest, 2019, p. 19.

figure of the Horthy regime. Hungarian revisionism – states C. Horel – is built on the territorial integrity of Royal Hungary and only Croatian separatism justified by state law and the personal union of the two kingdoms is admitted. The other lost territories are considered as lands belonging to the Crown of the Empire". The French historian also noted the specifics of Horthyst revisionism: "Hungarian revisionism is directed especially against Romania, because Transylvania is considered an essential element of Hungarian identity, and against Czechoslovakia in order to recover at least the south of Slovakia where Hungarians are numerous...". His conclusion is that "revisionism poisoned Hungary's relations with its neighbors and with Westerners and also generated a rhetoric of victimization"¹².

The "official" anti-Trianon propaganda asserted itself in Hungary's domestic and foreign policy – reduced to its national territory – with the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian colossus and the proclamation of successor states. The Károlyi government established the National Propaganda Committee which launched the famous slogan "Can this stay like this? No, no, never!" (*Maradhat ez így? Nem, nem, soha!*)(in hungarian in the original text). In the following period, paramilitary organizations were established, not only on Hungarian territory, but also on the territories of Romania, Czechoslovakia, the Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom - everywhere where Hungary had territorial claims; "Everything forms - emphasizes Horel - a heterogeneous ensemble in which racial theories and historical phantasms mix." Turning to the current situation, the French historian does not lose sight of how the phantom of the "drama" of Trianon, the illusion of the Kingdom of St. Stephen and the "Millennium Hungary", continues to disturb interstate relations, the good coexistence between the various ethnic groups living in the same geographical space. "The trauma caused by Trianon is still used in its own interest by Jobbik, the current far-right organization ... the rehabilitation we are witnessing after the transition to democracy in Hungary masks the analysis of the man and the system. The repatriation of the Regent's ashes in 1993 occasioned a semi-official reburial, the significance of which must be analyzed"¹³ – draws attention Catherine Horel.

Indeed, without the intention of recalling the horrors committed by Horthy and his henchmen in the territories annexed by force by Hungary –

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 168. See also *Calvarul...*, vol. II, p. 162-163.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 14-19. *Calvarul...* vol II, p. 163.

with the help of his allies Hitler and Mussolini, in the years 1938-194, I believe that the national or semi-national funerals, official events organized on the occasion of the repatriation of Horthy's ashes have a special meaning: Horthy stands next to his ally Hitler, a war criminal, and next to Stalin, the author of equally heinous crimes, who encouraged and stimulated the Hungarian annexationist demands; the victims of the Horthist terror in Slovakia, Transylvania and the other territories occupied by Hungary in those years numbered in the hundreds of thousands, the destruction, the looting, the arrests and the mass murders, the terror with all their processions are not forgotten and cannot be forgotten because they remained buried in the collective memory. A war criminal with such a dark past became Hungary's national hero. It is a defiance to humanity. Today's Hungary is "in mourning" on June 4th and no less on December 1st. For one hundred and six years he has wept for the chimera of Great Hungary, and he has isolated himself in his great grief! Qui prodest?

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The fierceness of Hungary against the recognition by the Peace Conference of the self-determination of the nations that had been under its occupation, was also given on the diplomatic level with methods and means not at all diplomatic. The so-called "defense" of Hungary's rights was based on lies, gross material errors, misrepresentation the facts, the total lack of lucidity in formulating some value judgments regarding the internal situation in Hungary, the regime of nationalities, the exacerbation of some dangers to Europe, to the Western states that only a royal Hungary, with a strong army, sitting on the ridges of the Carpathians could have to counter them.

Some examples.

At the Conference, Count Apponyi, the head of the Hungarian delegation, denied the objective realities through a tendentious and false documentation and made statements that damaged elementary logic. "The Hungarian government's memorandum of protest against the provisions of the Peace Treaty with Hungary, presented by the head of the delegation on May 17, specifies: "The Hungarian government protests in particular

against the obvious violation of the principle of self-determination which is the only means of removing the causes of disturbances and overthrows"¹⁴.

The self-determination that this document spoke of had been achieved in the Central European area in 1918, including Hungary - which was a republic. On the other hand, Apponyi claimed before the Congress that in Hungary "there was no national problem"¹⁵ and, therefore, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia would have been "imperialist creations" that would not have resulted from the application of the principle of nationalities, that "the mutilation of millennial Hungary appears as a historical mistake" that will lead to ruin and chaos throughout central and southern Europe you're like. Hungary demanded from the Peace Conference that it be assigned territories belonging to Austria, on which it threw the entire responsibility for the outbreak of the war.¹⁶ In this context, the involvement of the Vatican in the action of the Hungarian delegation at the Peace Conference should also be mentioned. Monsignor Majlath, the Hungarian bishop of Transylvania, addressed a message to the "Western peoples" on October 27, 1919, following the memorandum of September 8 of the same year, sent to the five members of the Peace Conference, in which, using a non-Christian language, he uttered many insults to the peoples of Central and South-Eastern Europe, claiming the "superiority" of Hungarian culture over "Orthodox Balkan culture"; he also emphasized, so that it would be known once and for all: "We belong to Western Europe and we do not want to become Balkans"¹⁷.

Another head of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Monsignor Boros, was appointed by the Budapest government at the end of 1918 as a member of the Commission in charge of preparing documentation for the

¹⁴ Romanian Foreign Affairs Archive, Convention Fund, vol I, Report of the Romanian Delegation to the Peace Conference, reg. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with no. 13702/June 20, 1920.

¹⁵ *Arh, MAE -Paris, Série A- Paix, „Notes de la Délégation hongroise”, vol. 121-122. Anexa 34 : La réesponsabilité de la nation magyare dans la guerre” și anexa 40 : „Les principes du traité de paix autrichienne peuvent être appliqués à la Hongrie”.*

¹⁶ See these matters in detail in Viorica Moisuc, *The premises of the political isolation of Romania 1919-1940*, 2nd edition revised and added, Romania de Măine Foundation Publishing House, Bucharest, 2023, chap. III, The danger of Hungarian revisionism. The project of the Danubian Confederation. Attempt to reinstate the Habsburgs, 73.

¹⁷ Apud Silviu Dragomir, *La Transylvanie roumaine et ses minorités ethniques*, București, „*Monitorul Oficial*”, 1934 p. 147-148. Vezi și Viorica Moisuc, *Premisele*, „p. 74-75.

Hungarian delegation to the Peace Conference and then became a member of the delegation. Using the context, he carried out, for two years, a fierce propaganda against Romania in France, Holland and England¹⁸.

This kind of subversive actions aimed at destabilizing and causing hatred were well known at the time. American professor Andrew C. Janos, chairman of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, wrote: "it is significant that in 1920 the Hungarian Catholic Church asserted itself as the champion of the revisionist cause", collaborating closely with the Vatican"¹⁹.

This offensive action of Hungary at the Peace Conference took place in a context conducive to the idea - agreed in Paris, London, Rome and even in Washington - that the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian colossus from Central Europe would sharpen the dangers that may come from the East. The fall of Tsarism and the establishment of the Bolshevik regime in Russia created many unknowns in front of which the security of the West felt threatened. As a result, many Western political circles did not frown upon the maintenance of the Astro-Hungarian colossus in Central Europe as a counterweight to a reborn Russian empire.

At the end of 1919, Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian carried out a joint action in Paris and other capitals against the way the Hungarian delegation vehemently asserted its demand to preserve the borders of the old Hungary. From the capital of Czechoslovakia, the French ambassador Clément-Simon wrote to the Quai d'Orsay on December 31, 1919: The Hungarian action created a lot of concern in the South-Eastern European states, because "personalities from the Entente countries are discussing this eventuality as if it were it is a perfectly admissible possibility. This reproach is directed more at the English than at the French."²⁰

On January 2, 1920, the French government was forced to send to its diplomatic representatives, through a circular telegram, a number of

¹⁸ After completing his mission, he returned to Romania in 1921 and resumed his old positions as vicar of the Unitarian Episcopate and professor at the Theological Academy. By Royal Decree, Boros was confirmed as bishop of the Unitarian cult in Romania, receiving substantial stipendia from the Romanian state.

¹⁹ Andrew C. Janos, *The Politics of backwardness in Hungary 1925-1945*. See these matters extensively in *Calvarul*, ...vol . II, cap XXX.

²⁰ Archives of the French Land Army (EMAT-Vincennes), Board 7-N 3054 (unpagged), telegram no. 453, Prague, December 31, 1919, signed Clément-Simon.

clarifications that specified: "We do not ignore the fact that the Hungarians are preparing to claim before the Conference a good part of the territories assigned by it to the allied nations. We also know that in some official English circles, especially outside the Foreign-Office, there is a regrettable complacency towards the Hungarians.

The French Government is determined, as far as it is concerned, to be firmly opposed to any reversal, on the part of the Conference, of decisions which have been long considered and which have taken into account all the elements of the question²¹.

While in Paris the Conference was debating the Peace Treaty with Hungary, in Budapest the government was drawing the lines of a large-scale action intended to lead to the realization, if not total, at least partial, of the ghostly "Millennium Hungary". It was about the Project of the "Danube Confederation" - cherished dream in Budapest, with ancient origins. On May 30, 1918, The Council of Ministers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, concerned about the extent of national movements, penciled in a series of foreign policy directions, namely:

- ["The idea of a Yugoslav state is against the interests of the monarchy!"

- "The idea of a Czechoslovak state is also contrary to the interests of the Monarchy"

- "A Romania including Transylvania is inadmissible"

It was proposed "the annexation of Serbia and Montenegro to Austria and Hungary, respectively, specifying that both Serbs and Montenegrins will be quickly assimilated by the German and Hungarian elements, respectively"²².

It would not be useless to recall that the oldest German-Austro-Hungarian bilateral agreements already provided for a division of the territories of Central and South-Eastern Europe between the two powers as follows:

²¹ The General Staff of the French Land Army, Historical Service, Vincennes (in account EMAT – Vincennes), Board 7N (not paginated), tel. circ., Paris, November 2, 1920 signed Berthelot. According to *The Premises...*p. 76-77.

²² *Protokolle des gemeinsamen Ministerrates der Österreichischen-Ungarischen Monarchie (1916-1918)*, Budapest, Akademiai Kiado, 1966, p. 662-668.

- The annexation to Germany of the provinces bordering Russia as well as a "rectification" of the border towards Poland
- The extension of Austro-Hungarian rule over Romania, Serbia and Montenegro

When such plans were being hatched in Vienna and Budapest, the dangers that a possible German-Austrian Anschluss heralded for France were intensively discussed in Paris. Hence the idea that a possible Danubian Confederation would cancel Germany's prospect of capturing Austria and would smooth the way for France to attract Austria into its orbit. An interesting analysis material of this problem that concerned the French political and financial circles, was elaborated at the Quai d'Orsay, in September 1939:

"The Danubian confederation is a must - it was obvious from the very beginning. If France really wants to maintain the independence of Austria, it (Austria) must become, if not the co-ruler, at least a headquarters of the Danubian Confederation. European peace and balance will thus be saved"²³.

This issue was related to France's interests in achieving hegemony in Central and South-Eastern Europe. The analysis from the Quai d'Orsay was clear: "The Danubian confederation would provide a wide field of action for France politically, economically, culturally in the entire area of Central and South-Eastern Europe. Vienna lends itself admirably to an action of this kind. Vienna is, by tradition, international. Vienna is the point of contact of trade routes from the West and the East. Its banks still dominate the Balkans, Turkey, Asia Minor." In addition, "The Danubian Confederation with Austria and Vienna as its center could be a barrier both to German imperialism and to possible German-Russian connivance. Contact between Russia and Germanism could very well be overseen by France through Vienna"²⁴.

In these circumstances, the ruling circles in Budapest moved on to concretize the project of the Danubian Confederation. On March 17 and 18, 1920, Horthy's emissary, Dr. Halmos, held meetings at the Quai d'Orsay with Maurice Paléologue, Secretary General. Starting in his plea, from the idea that "a definitive and stable peace could not be achieved in the Danube countries without a calm and satisfied Hungary", the emissary of

²³ *Arch. MAE Paris, Série Europe 1918-1929, Allemagne, vol 121, p. 147. P. 147. „La question d'Autriche, 24 septembre 1919.”*

²⁴ *Ibidem.*

Budapest advanced proposals for so-called collaboration with France which actually meant the subordination of the entire Hungarian economy to French interests: "I offer the close rallying of Hungary to France and the other nations friendly to France, both economically and politically, the open inauguration of a net Franco-phile policy and the guarantee of the stability of this process".²⁵

A few days later, in the context of the goodwill shown by Paris, Horthy concretized his demands:

- Repairing the injustices done to Hungary, the biggest being "the loss of Transylvania"

- "Modification of the communicated borders so that a large part of Transylvania returns to the Hungarian Motherland", and in the rest of the territory "plebiscite" is organized.

- In the areas inhabited by Szeklers and Saxons, "regional autonomy" should be granted.

- "The takeover by the Romanian state of an important part of the pre-war financial obligations of the Hungarian state"

- "The concession to Hungary of the exploitation of salt mines in Maramureş and the free use of their products"²⁶.

The so-called Hungarian-French "economic cooperation" meant the handing over of all state enterprises (railways, machine building, blast furnaces, steel mills, Győr cannon works, Diosgyor mechanical works, the construction and operation of Budapest harbor and related canals, the gas companies from Szolnok, the electricity companies, trams, the cement factories from Totis, the mines from Handlova and Uricani, etc.²⁷

Secret negotiations began with French industrial groups, such as Schneider-Creuzot, in the presence of government officials.

On May 12, 1920, in the context of these encouragements, the Hungarian Government sends, through the same Halmos, concrete claims of a political nature as a counterpart to the concessions economic, the peace treaty negotiations with Hungary being in the final phase,

²⁵ *Arh.MAE -Paris*, Série Europe, Hongrie, vol 58, p. 41-47. Lettre de M. Halmos, Paris, le 18 mars 1820.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 47-50

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 80. Letter of April 14, 1920 from Dr. Halmos to Paléologue. In Paléologue's handwritten Marginal Note, he only states that he "acknowledged" the contents of the letter (p. 93)

Below are some of the political claims made by Hungary:

- Modifying the borders fixed by the peace terms so that the territories with a clear Hungarian character forming a block united with the majority of the Hungarian race are not detached from Hungary.
- Keeping a part of the former territories that produce a minimum of raw materials and motive power, indispensable for maintaining the economic life and especially the industrial production of the country.
- Regional autonomy for territories mostly inhabited by Hungarians, Szeklers and Saxons, under Romanian domination. Freedom of worship, language and security of material existence for Hungarian minorities in territories with a Romanian, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav majority.
- Self-determination of Swabians and Hungarians in the western part of Hungary (located between the borders of Austria).
- Concession for the benefit of Hungary of the salt mines in Maramureş (exploitation and utilization of their products)²⁸.

It should be noted that the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maurice Paléologue, distanced himself through a diplomatic formula from the received document. The resolution placed on the last tab of the Note of May 12 stated: "Receiving this Note, I specified that I receive it only à titre d'information, without issuing any opinion on the matters that are listed, Paléologue, May 12."

However, the economic negotiations followed their course, so that on May 16, the Hungarian authorities put the last signatures on the documents containing the economic concessions made by Hungary.

In the following days, things got complicated on several levels:

On June 4, the signing of the peace treaty with Hungary at a time when its demands had not even been discussed, created a very difficult situation for Alexandre Millerand, in his double capacity as President of the Peace Conference and delegate of France. Already in the well-known letter delivered to the Hungarian delegation on May 6, 1920, Millerand was committed to respecting the Peace Treaty. At the same time, information was circulating in the French press about the government's intentions and the existence of secret negotiations with Hungary. The current of opinion created was clearly hostile to such an orientation. Under the headline "Tomorrow peace with Hungary", the "Paris Midi" newspaper of June 3

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 122, remitted grade by dr. Halmos to Paléologue, Paris, 12 mai 1920

wrote: "The object of the concluded agreement would be to give Budapest a dominant economic position in Central Europe. Hungary itself would become a leading center for the neighboring countries that would submit to it. If this is the goal pursued, we must hasten to prevent it. Neither the Czechoslovaks, nor the Romanians, nor the Yugoslavs are at all willing to accept Hungarian economic hegemony. If, unfortunately, French foreign policy has taken this false direction, a wave of protests will rise against France, a situation that is not only regrettable but also humiliating"²⁹.

Other newspapers directly accused the Foreign Office of "dragging France under public reproach"³⁰; the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber was asked to analyze the "extra-governmental" action of M. Paléologue. In the following period, far from putting an end to the Hungarian affair, things were complicated by England's desire to get involved in the economic, financial and political negotiations, the competition with France actually aiming at hegemony in Central and South-Eastern Europe. In this context, Horthy and the militaristic circles around him considered the political moment favorable to trigger the action to restore Greater Hungary, skilfully using the Franco-British differences.

The Bolshevik danger threatening Europe was the motivation Horthy found to assume the role of Europe's savior. In the first decade of July 1920, the Budapest Parliament formulated the request "for Europe to give Hungary a mandate to organize resistance in the Carpathians with its reconstituted army."³¹

Hungary's request was communicated to the governments of the allied states and on July 26, Horthy summoned the diplomatic representatives of the USA, Great Britain, Italy and France to request their support for the respective governments to grant Hungary the authorization to defend the Carpathians in military manner³².

In his presentation to the summoned diplomats, Teleki stressed: "The Prut line cannot be defended and, once crossed, the wave of invaders will advance without difficulty to the heart of the Carpathians. If the Red Army reaches the Carpathian ridges, it will descend without problems to the

²⁹ *Paris Midi*, June 3, 1920, *Demain, la paix avec la Hongrie*".

³⁰ *Bonsoir*, June 15, 1920

³¹ *Ibidem*, vol 47, p. 60-64 report 124, Budapest, July 19, 1920, signed Foucher (French High Commissioner) to Millerand

³² *Ibidem*, p. 78-80, telegram nr. 125-226-127, Budapest, July 26, 1920, signed by Foucher

plains and our current border will not be able to be defended". Communicating the above to his government, Fouchet added: "The authorization which the Hungarians request will enable them to reoccupy a part of their former territories from which they will probably never consent to leave; skillful means for them to evade, at least partially, the execution of the (peace) Treaty, to gain a common border with Poland. In order to play the Czechs' party. These are the cherished dreams here"³³.

In the face of this Hungarian offensive, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia reacted quickly. The three governments sent an ultimatum note to Hungary asking it to immediately ratify the Trianon Peace Treaty. At the same time, each of the three states declared that they had the means to defend their borders³⁴.

Far from laying down its arms, Hungary insisted in the following period on the imperative need to prevent the "Bolshevik danger" with its rebuilt army, claiming that none of the successor states would have had the ability to defend Europe! The position of France and England, and equally of the three neighboring states, determined the de-escalation of a conflict that was announced to be extremely dangerous.

In Hungary, however, the attempts to recover the lost territories were focused in the following period on the attempt to re-enthroned the Habsburg monarchy. Horthy and Count Bethlen wanted to bring the last king-emperor, Charles of Habsburg, considered to be the "legal holder of the Crown of St. Stephen" to the throne of Hungary as soon as possible. The action was also prepared militarily with the help of a significant number of Austrian monarchists refugees in Hungary who organized armed contingents ready to go into action. Again, the partisans in France of the idea of restoration of the monarchy considered that such a change of situation would serve the hegemonic interests of France in central and south-eastern Europe. French High Commissioner in Hungary he had repeated conversations with Archduke Joseph of Habsburg in his "magnificent palace in Buda". The claimant to the Hungarian throne believed that "only the monarchical authority is capable of leading Hungary to its new destiny", which could only have been achieved with the involvement of France. The future king read the text of the Proclamation to Fouchet after the long-awaited event had taken place. Apart from the

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, vol. 48, p. 95-96, telegram no. 292-293, Bucharest, July 4, 1920, signed by Daeschner

declarations regarding relations of good intentions in relations with neighbors, the Proclamation included a special reference to Romania: "As for Romania, I think we could understand each other, proceeding very delicately with Hungarian public opinion; the conventions would first be of an economic nature to then reach political concessions on the part of Romania, in Transylvania, using the support of the French government."³⁵

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Throughout the interwar period, Hungarian revisionism undermined the security of the states in Central-South-Eastern Europe. After 1933, the Nazi Germany became the main helper of the Hungarian policy of revising the peace treaties and preparing the war of revenge. Budapest was directly and concretely involved in the organization of international terrorism - the 1934 Marseille Crime, which fell victim to King Alexandru Karagheorghevi of Yugoslavia and Louis Barthou, the Foreign Minister of France, was prepared in the training camps in Hungary.

When Germany launched the action to break up Czechoslovakia, Hungary annexed important parts of the territory of this country, an action which it continued in 1939. In the fall of 1940, Horthyist Hungary with the support of the USSR managed to implement the plan seizure - admittedly partial - of Transylvania. What followed is known. Genocide ordered by Horthy, robbery, destruction, terror. After the war, the ghost of Great Hungary returned. The same demands: Transylvania, the autonomy of the area with a Hungarian population, the undermining of the sovereignty of the Romanian State through visible and invisible means.

For 106 years the Trianon Obsession, the Transylvania obsession remained as alive in the Hungarian mind.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, vol 47 EMA, 2-e Bureau Paris, August 25, 1920, „*Renseignements de Hongrie au sujet de la politique exterieure hongroise. Secret.*”