

## A BRIEF HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN KINGDOM BORDER

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**Abstract.** The title of this short article requires, from the very start of the discussion *sine ira et studio*, a number of clarifications. They are needed, as documents show, to remove any passionate views that are often encountered in the Hungarian historiography. We have used the term the Kingdom of Hungary for, ever since its emergence, the Hungarian state had taken the form of a monarchy. The rank of that monarchy was always that of kingdom, since its emergence until 1945, when the Republic was proclaimed.

**Keywords:** Hungarians, western/eastern Christendom, Hungarian Kingdom, boundary, expansion, conquests, etno-demographic realities.

As for the arrival of the Hungarians in Europe, that occurred later. This Finno-Ugric people<sup>1</sup> living in the central basin of the Volga River<sup>2</sup> was born from the mixture of two tribal unions, that of the Ugrians and of the Magyars<sup>3</sup>. The Turkic tribes of the Bashkirs would later join them<sup>4</sup>. Hence, the nickname “Bozgor” that appeared later on<sup>5</sup>.

Hungarian tribes pushed westwards, through the present-day territory of Ukraine. In 889 Turkic tribes of the Pechenegs were hit. The Hungarians would regroup. Following the Cossacks’ model, they would choose two leaders, namely Árpád and Kursan. They assumed the pompous, unjustified title of kings, although they led a mere union of tribes.

Basileus Leon VI skilfully used the Hungarians to fight against the Bulgarians, who had risen under Tsar Simeon (893-927). Consequently, in 895, the Hungarians led by Árpád and Kursan crossed the Wooded Carpathians and settled in the *puszta* where once the Roman province of Pannonia had been.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lucien Musset, *Les invasions: Le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe – XIe siècle)*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1965, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Virgil Ciocâltan, *Informațiile lui Guillaume de Rubruck despre români și bașkiri în lumina izvoarelor orientale*, in *Românii în istoria universală*, vol. 2, Univ. Al. I. Cuza, Iași, 1987, pp. 19-26; *idem*, *Români, unguri și ...bașkiri*, in “Magazin istoric”, vol. 29, no. 7 (1995), pp. 65-66.

The existence of a “no man’s land” in that area was profited from. German noblemen, the Moravian and Slavonic leaders of Slovenia and Croatia were barely trying to occupy the region. The horse-breeding Hungarians<sup>6</sup> found the area covered with vast pastures extremely convenient. Starting with 904, Árpád remained the only leader and established his headquarters at Esztergom. He took advantage of the legends told word of mouth, for the Hungarians were illiterate, listened to what was being said about the riches of Western Europe and began to organise plundering expeditions. Western Europe was taken by surprise by the newcomers’ invasion. They were said to have been the descendants of the Huns, of Áttila. As Hungarians had no ancestors, they assumed this unreal origin, and starting with the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, amplified it. Perhaps the destructive cruelty of these nomad horsemen coming from the steppe was thus grounded. Liutprand of Cremona wrote that they drank the blood of their victims or were even cannibals<sup>7</sup>, and in other cases they were shown to be hunting the neighbours – Germans, Slavs, etc. – and selling the prisoners as slaves<sup>8</sup>. The monks accused them of destroying many archives and objects of worship<sup>9</sup>.

By 955 they had conducted around 33 large predatory raids in Western Europe. They generally conquered monasteries and small localities. It is but explainable. They did not know how to fight against fortified castles for they had not learnt this kind of attack in the gallop of their steppe horses. They had one notable success. On 12 March 924 they plundered the Italian city of Pavia. They caught the people going to the religious service off guard and slaughtered them.

German King Heinrich der Finkler (919-936) had the castles systematically fortified and city reinforcements redone. The Catholic Church had the great monasteries surrounded by strong walls. However, the Hungarians continued to have several successes because Western Europeans had not blocked the ancient roads built by the Romans. Bavaria was devastated in 940 and in 954 the Hungarians sacked the Low Countries.

It was their last success, their swan song. On 10 August 955, at Lechfeld, near Augsburg, 100,000 Hungarians led by Bulcsú and Lel<sup>10</sup> were crushed by German knights under Emperor Otto I’s command<sup>11</sup>. The two Hungarian leaders

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<sup>6</sup> They abandoned reindeer and starting raising horses (cf. L. Musset, *op. cit.*, p. 60).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Die Werke Liudprands von Cremona*, publ de Joseph BECKER, in the series *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, 41, Hahnsche Buchhandlung, Hannover, 1915, p. 69.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Karl Leyser, *Medieval German and Its Neighbours, 900-1250*, The Hambleton Press, London, 1982, pp. 48-49.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. L. Musset, *op.cit.*, p. 68, 271.

<sup>10</sup> Bulcsú was one of the best known Hungarian leaders. He spent part of his youth in Constantinople, where he was baptised. Upon return, he occupied the position of “karkhas” (supreme head). He led the expeditions of 954-955 in Germany (cf. L. Musset, *op. cit.*, p. 271)

<sup>11</sup> Otto I was Duke of Saxony and King of Germany in 936-972, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (962-973) and King of Italy (961-973).

were caught and executed in front of their captive troops. Of the 100,000 Hungarians, more than 70,000 are said to have perished. Since then that place has been called the “field of corpses” (Lechfeld).

It is very strange that chronicles written in Latin do not mention the names of the Hungarian leaders. They formed an amorphous mass. Things were different with the Normans; chronicles abound in names of their heads<sup>12</sup>.

The German knights and the Catholic Church realised they could stop this destructive people if they had them settled, Christianised and politically organised. They saw that the Hungarians had already started settling down<sup>13</sup> and they took advantage of that.

Following Lechfeld, it became obvious that Christianisation was a success. Two members of the Hungarian family of Árpád’s descendants became Christians in Constantinople. The daughter of one of them, Sarolta, married Géza, the leader of the Árpáadian family. In 996 or the following year, Géza’s son, Vajk, married Gisela, the daughter of Heinrich II, Duke of Bavaria, descending from the family of Otto I the Great. Shortly afterwards, in 1001, using this opportunity, Pope Sylvester II (999-1003)<sup>14</sup> and Emperor Otto III (996-1002) baptised Vajk, who was given the Christian name of Stephen. That particular moment, the year 1001, marked the beginning of forced Christianisation imposed on the high classes and ordinary people as well. It was a quick process, accomplished with the assistance of German monks and Catholic missionary monks. During this movement of Christianisation, two great episcopacies, Esztergom and Kalocsa, and 11 other small ones were created in the Kingdom of Hungary. All these Christian Church settlements were to be found west of the Tisa. It was an efficient network that controlled the entire population. King Stephen was beatified and then sanctified by the papacy that thus showed their gratitude for services he had devoted to them. After King Stephen’s death in 1038, he was therefore called Saint Stephen (*Szent István*).

It was during the years of Stephen I’s reign that the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary started to be spoken and written about. In those times, the notion of boundary, of border was different from that of the modern era. It was not just a line of demarcation between two countries. Then, in the Middle Ages and partially in the modern age, the border was a region where complex economic, political,

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. L. Musset, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

<sup>13</sup> The traveller Otton of Freising noted in 1147 that many huts of thatch and reed had been built in the Hungarian puszta (cf. [Otton de Freising], *Ottonis, episcopi frisingensis, Opera, ex recensione Rogeri Wilmans, in usum scholarum ex Monumentis Germaniae historicis recudi, in Scriptores rerum germanicarum in usum scholarum ex Monumenta germania historicio separatim editi*, Hahn, Hannoverae, 1867, p. 369).

<sup>14</sup> He was the first French pope; he introduced the Arabic numerals and decimal numbers in Europe (cf. Zoltan J. Kosztolnyik, *The Relations of Four Eleventh-Century Hungarian Kings with Rome in the Light of Papal Letters*, in *Church History*, 46 (1)/ 1977, pp. 33–47).

cultural interests intertwined<sup>15</sup>. This also explains the complexity of relationships between seniors and vassals<sup>16</sup>.

The Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation profited from this situation in order to expand their areas of influence in the Kingdom of Hungary. They extended the rule of the Árpádian royal house from the Hungarian puszta towards Moravia and Bohemia, where they perfected matrimonial alliances that were in fact political contracts. In time, especially in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, these alliances led to a certain expansion, at least in theory, of the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary towards Slovakia and Moravia. Alternatively, southwards, during the reigns of Ladislaus I, or Saint Ladislaus (1077-1095), and Koloman the Learned (1095-1116), unification with Croatia was accomplished. This dynastic union would last until 1918. At the same time, starting with late 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Kingdom of Hungary turned towards the areas lying east of the Tisa. A slow conquest of these areas began, which would reach the line of the Carpathians in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. These areas were to include Banatul de Câmpie, which had Timișoara as its centre, and Transylvania.

This created an oversized, theoretical, unreal expansion of the crown of Saint Stephen' Kingdom.

Very soon, this image was to be shattered.

As for Slovakia, Moravia and Bohemia, the Hungarians were quickly and efficiently removed by German emperors. It should not be forgotten that, though brought up at the court of the King of Hungary Charles Robert d'Anjou<sup>17</sup> (1308-1342), young Charles IV of Luxemburg (1346-1372) never ceded Slovakia, Moravia or Bohemia, he became Emperor of Germany in 1346 and King of Bohemia in 1347. Moreover, he abandoned the small Hungarian towns, revived upon the ruins of Roman settlements<sup>18</sup>, and settled in the golden city, Prague.

Southwards, Árpádian and, later, Angevine kingships had some success. There they set up the Banat of Slovenia and exerted their authority until the arrival

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Șerban Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii în secolul al XIII-lea*, Ed. Enciclopedică, București, 2001, pp. 134-135.

<sup>16</sup> For relationships between seniors and vassals, see Robert Boutruche, *Seigneurie et féodalité. I. Le premier âge des liens d'homme*, Aubier, Paris, 1959, passim; Radu Manolescu, *Societatea feudală în Europa Apuseană*, Ed. Științifică, București, 1974, pp. 56-67, 108-124, 239-256.

<sup>17</sup> The son of Charles Martel of Naples, prince of Salerno. He was able to take over the throne of the Kingdom of Hungary with the help of his paternal grandmother who was the daughter of the King of Hungary Stephen V (1270-1272) and sister of Ladislaus IV of Hungary, who died childless. He took the throne after his second coronation (27 November 1308). However, even after his last coronation (27 August 1310 – with the official crown recovered, at Szekesfehervar), his reign was more in name in most of the kingdom (cf. Pal Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, translated into English by Tamás Pálosfalvi, Taurus Publishers, New York/London, 2001, p. 130.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. L. Musset, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273; Buda was raised on the former Roman settlement Aquincum, Sopron on the ruins of Scarbantia, and Szombathely upon the ruins of Savaria.

of the Ottoman Turks. Things were different with the Banat of Severin where there were small units led by the bans, or better said the *bănișori* (small bans) of Orșova, Mehadia etc.<sup>19</sup> They controlled the west part of Banatul de Câmpie. The small banates of Caransebeș and Lugoj were an exception, for here there was a large autonomy of the Romanian population. This situation was faintly highlighted. It explains the absence of serfs in those areas. The east of Banatul de Munte, with the centre at the City of Severin, was included in the area where the Hungarian royalty intended to expand. The analysis we have made on the city of Severin shows that Árpáadian and Angevine kings were left with only the intention of ruling Severin. Inside that small stone city<sup>20</sup>, with thick walls of 3-4 metres, there are two churches of Orthodox denomination. The two churches measuring 12.5 x 7.5 metres have the interior divided according to the demands of Eastern rites: into altar, nave and pronave<sup>21</sup>.

The structure is completely different from that of Catholic churches where the space is divided into longitudinal naves.

On no account would the apostolic Hungarian kingship have consented, had they owned the City of Severin, to have Orthodox believers dwelling inside the fortifications. Hungarian kings would have required the garrison and inhabitants to be Catholic<sup>22</sup>.

This assertion is supported by the fact that the first ban of Severin, probably Luca<sup>23</sup> appointed by the Árpáadian king Andrew II (1205-1235)<sup>24</sup>, had his residence in the city of Mehadia in 1233.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. M. Holban, *Din cronica relațiilor româno-maghiare în secolele XIII-XIV*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1981, p. 120 and following.; Viorel Achim, *Der Stellenwert des Deutschen Ordens in der Geschichte des Banats von Severin*, în *Generalprobe Burzenland. Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens in Siebenbürgen und im Banat*, Herausgegeben von Konrad Gündisch, Böhlau Verlag, Köln, Weimar, Wien, 2013, pp. 177-188.

<sup>20</sup> The size of the city was roughly 70 x 20 m. City walls was flanked by 5 towers, with the biggest on the north side (cf. Al. Bărcăcilă, *Cetatea Severinului (Început de cercetări arheologice)*, în *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice*, An XXX, Fasc. 94, Octombrie-December 1937, pp. 149-166; idem, *Cetatea Severinului*, în B.C.M.I, An XXXII, Fasc. 100, April-Iunie 1939, pp. 74-88.

<sup>21</sup> The plans of these churches and discussion on the similitude, in terms of plan, with other Orthodox churches in Grigore Ionescu, *Istoria arhitecturii în România*, vol. I - *De la orânduirea comunei primitive până la sfârșitul veacului al XVI-lea*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1963, p. 69; church plans are reproduced in the same work, p. 69, fig. 28.

<sup>22</sup> This is also shown by the reckless act of King Charles Robert who, after having conquered the City of Severin in September 1330, destroyed one of the two small Orthodox churches, the one located in the south part of the city (cf. Al. Bărcăcilă, *Cetatea Severinului*, în B.C.M.I, An XXXII, Fasc. 100, April-Iunie 1939, pp. 74-88; Grigore Ionescu, op. cit., vol. I, ed. cit., p. 69).

<sup>23</sup> Documents on the history of Romania, C. *Transilvania veacul XI, XII, XIII*, vol. I (1075-1250), Editura Academiei, București, 1951, p. 264 (further cited D.I.R.); to re-discuss the name of this ban and for Mehadia, see Maria Holban, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

The city, destroyed in 1241 by the Tartars led by Khan Kadan<sup>25</sup>, was quickly rebuilt and expanded by local, unfortunately unnamed, Romanian princes<sup>26</sup>.

There is no question of local political leaders lacking money. In 1275, the rulers of present-day northern Oltenia, of Țara Litvei, had enough money to redeem Bărbat, Litovoi's brother<sup>27</sup>, from captivity from the Hungarian King Ladislaus the Cuman (1272-1290). In 1330, chronicler Peter von Duisburg wrote that Basarab I the Founder had offered the French king of Hungary Charles Robert d'Anjou an enormous amount of money to end the fight and conclude peace<sup>28</sup>. Even though the sum is exaggerated, it shows the richness of local Romanian noblemen. Therefore, there would not have been such a huge effort for them to rebuild the City of Severin.

Finally, the City of Severin was part of a local defensive system which blocked the access from the Kingdom of Hungary, on the road to Câmpul Pâinii, towards Bălăciței Piedmont, where the large estates that produced wheat for the local population were. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the defensive system of the City of Severin comprised the fortified princely monasteries of Vodița<sup>29</sup> and Tismana<sup>30</sup>, and the manorial monastery of Coșuștea-Crivelnic<sup>31</sup>.

That the City of Severin belonged to Romanian lords is also proven by the events of September 1330. It was then that King Charles Robert attacked Basarab I the Founder and conquered the City of Severin. So on no consideration would one attack and conquer a city that was theirs.

All these elements clearly point to the fact that the border of the Kingdom of Hungary did not include the eastern area of Banatul de Munte. This one belonged to the Romanians. Starting with late 13<sup>th</sup> century, after 1290, it would undoubtedly become a part of Wallachia. The careful analysis of the Diploma of the Ioannites

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Aurel Decei, *Relații româno-orientale*, București, 1978, p. 205.

<sup>26</sup> No connection can be made with "Roi de Blaquie" mentioned by Philippe Mouskées, or Mishelav, mentioned by the Persian chronicler Reshid od Dîn (ibid., p. 190 and following; R. Șt. Ciobanu (Vergatti), *Știri despre români la Philippe Mouskée, cronicar francez din secolul al XIII-lea*, in "Revista Muzeului Național de Istorie", III/1976, pp. 249-256).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. document of 8 January 1285, in *D.I.R., B. Țara Românească, Veac. XIII-XV (1247-1500)*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1953, p. 7; *D.I.R. C. Transilvania, veacul XIII*, vol. II (1251-1300), Ed. Academiei, București, 1952, p. 272.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Peter von Duisburg, *Cronica terre Prusiae*, in *Scriptores rerum prussicarum. Die Geschichtsquellen der preussischen Vorzeit bis zum ungerange der Ordensherrschaft*, publ. by Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Streihlke tom I, Leipzig, 1861, p. 183.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Probleme ale cronologiei ruinelor fostei Mănăstiri Vodița*, in "SCIV", tom 22, 1971, no. 3, pp. 469-477.

<sup>30</sup> *Documenta Romaniae Historica, B. Țara Românească* (further cited D.R.H.) Vol. I (1247-1500), Ed. Academiei, București, 1966, doc. no. 31, p. 67-68.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Al. Bărcăcilă, *Mănăstirea Coșuștea-Crivelnicu, Mehedinți. Descoperire arheologică*, in "Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice" (further cited B.C.M.I), anul XXVIII, fascicula 83, Ian.-Mart. 1935, pp. 165-184.

Knights<sup>32</sup> and that of Louis the Great's campaign to conquer Vidin and Benedict Himffy's settling there in 1368-1369 confirm what has been previously asserted. The Hungarian royalty did not rule over the entire Banatul de Munte. The eastern part belonged to the Romanians until 1419 when it was partially conquered by Sigismund of Luxemburg. But even from that moment the border route is still debatable. Sigismund of Luxemburg was forced to give a number of privileges to Vodița Monastery that was not on the territories under his exclusive possession<sup>33</sup>. The route of the medieval border passed across a valley lying east of the City of Severin, near its fortifications. Consequently, one may state that the largest part of Banatul de Munte continued to remain in the possession of Wallachian princes. This is also proven by the title borne by Wallachian princes. The situation is different in the case of Banatul de Câmpie, with Timișoara as its centre. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, it became part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The great, powerful City of Timișoara, whose population formed an ethnic mosaic in south-eastern Europe, with a legal system that did not allow imposition of serfdom, was, up to 1316, King Charles Robert's residence.

The issue of the Hungarian Kingdom borders does not end here. In Transylvania, the Hungarian conquest was gradual<sup>34</sup>. The Duchies of Amlaș and Făgăraș remained for a long time – the 14<sup>th</sup> century – in the possession of Wallachian princes<sup>35</sup>. It was only in 1519, during Neagoe Basarab's rule (1512-1521) that the route of the border between Wallachia and the Kingdom of Hungary was settled<sup>36</sup>.

The Hungarian royalty attempted to map out the boundary established along the peaks of the Southern Carpathians towards Wallachia, towards Moldavia as well. It was a difficult situation. The princes of Moldavia also had possessions in Transylvania. We should only mention the cities of Ciceu and Cetatea de Baltă, owned by Stephen the Great (1457-1504) and the connections Petru Rareș (1527-1538; 1541-1546) had with the town of Bistrița.

The Kingdom of Hungary failed to set out its boundary towards Moldavia. After the wobbly king Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490) tried to

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Sorin Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir și dosarul Diplomei cavalerilor ioaniți*, Ed. Academiei, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj Napoca, 2009, passim.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *D.R.H. B. Țara Românească*, Vol. I, ed. cit., doc. no. 44 of 14 July 1418, Hagenau, pp. 88-90; idem, doc. no. 47 of 28 October 1419, Vodița, pp. 93-94.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Ștefan Pascu, *Voievodatul Transilvaniei*, vol. I, ed. I, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1971, passim.

<sup>35</sup> See the titles of Wallachian princes. Cf. D. Onciul, *Titlul lui Mircea cel Bătrân și posesiunile lui*, in idem, *Scrieri istorice*. Ediție critică îngrijită și cuvânt înainte de Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, vol II, Editura Științifică, București, 1968, pp. 19-142.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *D.R.H. B. Țara Românească*, vol. II (1501-1525), Ed. Academiei, București, 1972, pp. 375-379; Radu Ștefan Vergatti, *Neagoe Basarab*, Ed. Episcopiei Argeșului, Curtea de Argeș, 2009, p. 131.

expand to the west, unaware that Hungarians could not penetrate properly into the structured western civilisation, Buda suffered a number of defeats. It was hit by the offensive of the Ottoman Turks. The victorious resistance of 1456, at Belgrade, with Christian armies commanded by John Hunyadi, was a singular episode. The Ottomans advanced tempestuously. Led by Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512), they conquered Chilia and Cetatea Albă and consolidated their position in Crimea<sup>37</sup>. Then, under the command of Sultan Suleiman Kanuni, whom Europeans called the Magnificent (1520-1566), the Ottomans advanced towards the centre of Europe. In 1521, they conquered the City of Belgrade and thus opened the road to Vienna. The two pillars of the Danubian fortification – Chilia and Blegrade – had fallen. As a result, they were able to change the direction of the Ottomans' conquering offensive: it was heading towards the centre of Europe. In 1524, the Ottomans also seized the small city of Severin.

Finally, on 29 August 1626, at Mohács, the small royal army led by the bishop of Kálocsa, numbering roughly 26,000 men, was crushed, in only two hours, by the artillery fire of the Janissaries and violent attacks of Sipahi. The young King Ladislaus II (1516-1526) received no help from his relatives, the Habsburgs. He tried to flee. He didn't make it. He drowned in the nearby swamps.

In fact, this defeat suffered by the Hungarian royalty, that also owned, in theory, the crown of Croatia and Bohemia, meant the dissolution of the Kingdom of Hungary.

Lower nobility chose as king of Hungary the richest land owner in Transylvania, John Zápolya (1526-1541). He could have ruled over Transylvania. But he was contested by the high nobility that instead chose Ferdinand of Habsburg (1527-1564), brother of Charles V, as their king.

In such circumstances, the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary disappeared.

The chaos created by the Hungarian nobility worsened in 1540 when Isabella Jagiellon, young wife of John Zápolya, gave birth to a son, John Sigismund, and in 1541 when Buda was conquered. The former capital of the Kingdom of Hungary was shortly turned into a pashalik.

It was a legal and political act very well thought in Istanbul. The Kingdom of Hungary, as political entity, vanished from the map of Europe. It was but natural. Habsburg attempted to save the territories of royal Hungary. He was well aware that to the east Transylvania had become an autonomous principality. Therefore, to avoid troubles with the chaotic Hungarian nobility and perfidious monk György Martinuzzi (George Martinuzzi, of Croatian origin), Ferdinand of Habsburg decided to confine to royal Hungary, that is, to

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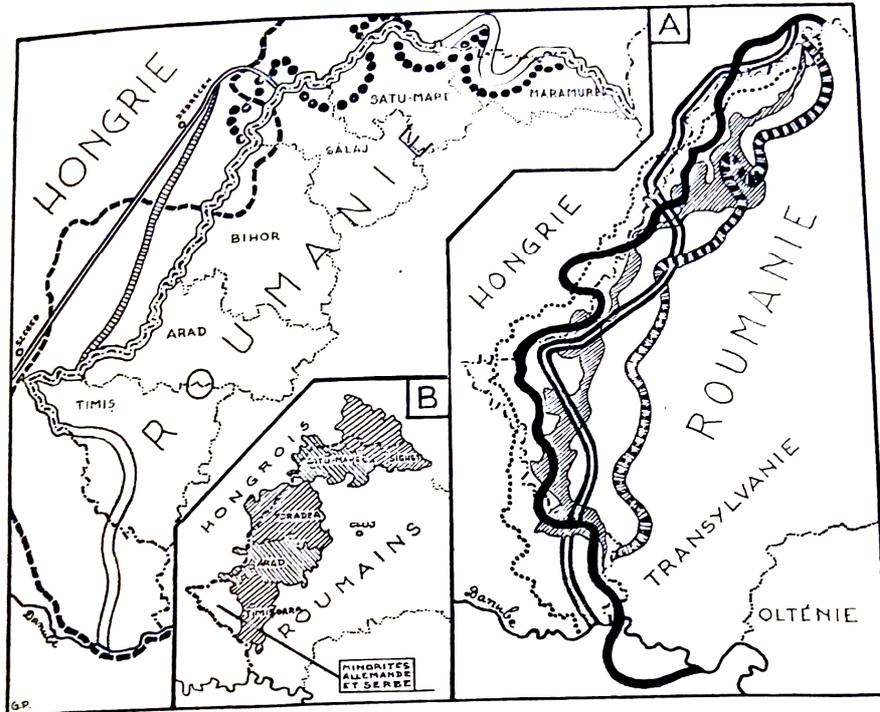
<sup>37</sup> Cf. Halil Inalcik, *Imperiul Otoman. Epoca clasică*, Ed. Enciclopedică, București, 1993, p. 75.

territories west of the Tisa, towards Croatia. He began the construction of several fortifications which formed an arc that was approaching the Tisa and the borders of Buda pashalik. It was an expensive action that required spending 500,000 ducats. He decided to make this sacrifice in order to keep a part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The other two parts of what once had been the Kingdom of Hungary were the pashalik of Buda and the autonomous Principality of Transylvania.

Basically, the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary disappeared during 1524-1541. It was natural. No state, no borders.

Only after peace had been signed at Karlowitz (26 January 1699) was the issue of reviving the Kingdom of Hungary raised again. Its legal status internationally should not be forgotten. It was part of the Habsburg Empire. **Therefore, it did not have its own borders.** It was only in 1867, following a tenacious, obstinate struggle of the irredentist Hungarian nobility, that ever since the revolution of 1848-1849 had initiated a movement of recognition of the Hungarian Kingdom led by Lajos Kossuth, Lajos and Kázmér Batthyány, László Teleki IV, Gyula Andrássy, Kálmán Tisza etc., taking advantage of Helmuth von Moltke's victory over troops commanded by Ludwig von Benedek on 3 July 1866, at Königgrätz (Sadowa) in Bohemia, that duality and the formation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire became possible. The act signed in 1867, extending over a period of 40 years, stipulated a union between the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. The Hungarian nobility sought to rip off as large a territory as possible in the east, in Transylvania. They hoped they would be able to, for things were stable in the rest of the Empire.

East of the Tisa, Banat and Bukovina remained under imperial administration at all times. The situation was the same with Saxon towns and Serbian localities which could not be integrated into the Kingdom of Hungary. So, Andrássy's laws of 1869 could only be enforced on the people living in the territories under the administration of Budapest. The governments of the Kingdom of Hungary, especially those led by counts Tisza, Kálmán and Istvan, father and son, tried to change boundaries within the dualist empire in favour of Hungarians. Their irredentism irritated and annoyed Vienna. In 1906, when the agreement on the dualist pact was supposed to be prolonged, for the 40 years' period initially envisaged was over, Emperor Franz Joseph sent soldiers from the imperial guard to the Parliament of Budapest. Hungarian deputies were forced, in the presence of imperial guard soldiers, to vote a 10 years' extension of the duality, keeping the former borders of the Kingdom of Hungary within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



Diverses interprétations de l'expansion ethnique roumaine à la frontière occidentale de la Transylvanie

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|-------|--|-------|---|
| ----- | Frontière actuelle (1920 et 1947)  | A     | Frontière actuelle (Ligne Clémenceau)                     |
| ===== | Ligne envisagée par le Traité du 4 août 1916   | ..... | Ligne Karl von Czörnig (1856)                             |
|       | Ligne d'expansion ethnique roumaine établie par l'État hongrois (1910)                           |       | Zones magyarisées (colonisations incluses) de 1900 à 1910 |
| ----- | Ligne James Caterly (1908)   | ===== | Ligne Kiepert (1876)                                      |
| ===== | Ligne Étienne Bethlen (1912)   | ===== | Ligne Kossuth   |
| ●●●●● | Ligne de l'Académicien hongrois Gyula Varga (1912)   |       | Ligne Lord Rothermere                                     |
|       |  | ..... | Limite méridionale de la Transylvanie                     |
| B     | Zones occidentales de la Transylvanie à majorité roumaine (d'après le Hongrois Wesselényi, 1843) |       |   |
|       | Frontière occidentale actuelle   |       |   |
| ..... | Autres limites de la Transylvanie  |       |   |

Cf. G. A. Pordea, op. cit., p. 49

To sign the peace treaty with the Kingdom of Hungary, on 4 June 1920, at Trianon, the Hungarian delegation led by an excellent diplomat, Count Albert Apponyi struggled skilfully, perfidiously, in order to subdue as large parts of Transylvania, Croatia and Slovakia as possible. They proposed maps with a curious, invading route, such as those suggested by L. Kossuth, Kiepert in 1876,

Istvan Bethlen in 1912, academician Gyula Varga in 1912, Georges Clemenceau in 1918<sup>38</sup>. During discussions on the peace treaty with Hungary the border of the re-emerged kingdom was drawn. In fact, it had been settled in December 1916, in London, by Lord Balfour and Lord Curzon of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. They had carefully worked with professional cartographers and ethnographers taking into account the territorial distribution of the population. Starting from them, the Georges Clemenceau line took shape, which later became Hungary's eastern boundary. At the same time, with a similar thoroughness, taking into account ethno-demographic and historical criteria, were frontiers with Slovakia and Croatia established.

The dissatisfaction of the government from Budapest was obvious. An extremist party emerged, "Arrow Cross", led by Ferenc Szalasi. He fostered an irredentist trend which stubbornly demanded changing of borders and return to the territory of Saint Stephen's Kingdom, a state that had never existed as such. These demands were embraced by Pal Teleki, a politician that even became Prime Minister. It was under the turbulent circumstances disrupting Europe at the end of the fourth decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the second award was drawn on 30 August 1940<sup>39</sup>. Then Hungarians supported especially by Count Galeazzo Ciano, Benito Mussolini's son-in-law and Italy's minister of foreign affairs<sup>40</sup>, got the chance of seizing a part of north-western Transylvania with an area of 43,492 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 2,609,000 souls, 1,316,654 of which were Romanians<sup>41</sup>, representing 50.4% (with an additional 37.1% Hungarians and Székelys only<sup>42</sup>).

The modification of boundaries imposed by Hungarian irredentists did not last. In 1945, on 9-13 March, the USSR transferred, not without incidents, the administration of territories in north-western Transylvania, conquered by Hungary, to the Kingdom of Romania<sup>43</sup>. The accurate, present-day borders of the Hungarian state were thus settled. They correspond to the ethno-demographic situation and historical past of the Hungarian people

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. G. A. Pordea, *Notes sur les relations Roumano-Hongroises*, Paris, 1982, p. 49.

<sup>39</sup> For the modification of the map of Romania, see R. Șt. Vergatti, *Harta etnodemografică a României în vara lui 1940*, in "Dosarele Istoriei", an XI, no. 6 (118), 2006, pp. 35-41; the article was initially submitted in the form of a scientific report, at the Romanian Academy, on 30 August 1990, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of north-western Transylvania's seizure by Hungary.

<sup>40</sup> Ciano's intervention was necessary because on 2 November 1938, during the First Vienna Award, Hungary had obtained a part of Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ukraine, lands taken from former Czechoslovakia; thus, at international level, it was considered that the Kingdom of Hungary had been fully satisfied.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. G. A. Pordea, op. cit., p. 12, N. 16.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. R. Șt. Vergatti, *Harta etnodemografică*, loc. cit., pp. 40-41.

<sup>43</sup> Transfer implicitly legalised by Law 160 of 4 April 1945 on legislation applicable in Northern Transylvania and on rights gained in this territory during the Hungarian operation, published in the Official Gazette no. 78/4 April 1945.