

Great Power Decision-Making after World War II and the Hungarian Department for Preparing the Peace Regarding the Question of Transylvania

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“Every conference begins like a turtle, and reaches the finish line as a racing dog.”

(Harold Nicolson)

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IN CENTRAL Europe, the first half of the 20th century saw the parallel Hungarian and Romanian nation-building processes and also the consequences of the reorganization of the international political system. These important events led to two instances of redrawing the Romanian-Hungarian interstate border before 1945: first as a result of the Peace Treaty signed by the Allied and Associated Powers with Hungary at the end of the First World War (4 June 1920), and once again as a result of Great Power arbitration resulting in the Second Vienna Award (30 August 1940), which effectively cancelled the Peace Treaty signed only twenty years before. Both Vienna Awards came after failed direct negotiations between two different East-Central European states: the Second Vienna Award, which split Transylvania in two halves between Hungary and Romania, came only two years after the First Vienna

Award (2 November 1938) that helped Hungary regain the southeastern part of interwar Czechoslovakia, the former Upper Hungary, which was inhabited predominantly by ethnic Hungarians. The First Vienna Award was perceived by the Hungarian decision-making elite and public opinion leaders as a direct result of the Munich Agreement, made by the four Great Powers (Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy). The Second Vienna Award was settled two years later only by Germany and Italy.¹ At that moment, Germany was already at war with Great Britain and France after the invasion of Poland, compounded by an agreement on non-aggression terms with the Soviet Union, the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (23 August 1939).² Italy also entered the war against France and Great Britain, on 10 June 1940—a decision taken by Benito Mussolini, as the defeat of France was expected to happen soon.³

The Soviet Union accepted the result of the Second Vienna Award for the period between 30 August 1940 and 27 June 1941.⁴ On the other hand, Great Britain and the United States of America had reservations, as it contradicted the values represented by the Atlantic Charter, which stated that no change of borders made without consulting the involved nations or by aggression would be recognized.⁵

Regarding the changing position of the Soviet Union towards the Hungarian claims on Transylvania, one has to remember that the issue was addressed right after the German military invasion of USSR had begun, with an active participation of Finland and Romania in the invasion, but with no Hungarian troops. Molotov had called József Kristóffy, the Hungarian ambassador in Moscow, making him an offer: if Hungary stayed out of the war against the Soviet Union, the latter would support the Hungarian claims at the end of the war.⁶ Despite the offer, Hungary entered the armed conflict against the USSR on 27 June 1941. The Hungarian decision-makers had been convinced that the German success was imminent. Later in December 1941 Stalin referred to this when meeting with Anthony Eden, saying that Hungary would have to be exemplarily punished for the aggression against the USSR.⁷ As World War II unfolded in a way contrary to the Hungarian decision-making leaders' expectations, the Soviet leaders' views on Hungary became even more negative: Molotov declared on 7 June 1943 that “the responsibility was to be held not only by the Hungarian government, but also by the Hungarian people.”⁸ As a consequence, the Soviet position on the Second Vienna Award changed, with a view to ending its effects right after the end of war. For Hungarians, some hope could still be found in the document of the Litvinov Commission describing the postwar resettlement of Europe. When referring to the solution to be adopted for the question of Transylvania, the document contains important details.⁹ It starts with a short presentation of the historical turning points in the region's

past, then states the impossibility of adopting a solution that would satisfy both parties (Romania and Hungary), also pointing out that an ethnic line delimiting the two contending nations was impossible to draw, because of the mixed distribution of the population, and it further stated the impossibility of maintaining the decision adopted at the Second Vienna Award. There were several reasons for this: it was a decision made by the Axis Powers, which, by cutting Transylvania in two halves, tied both states to Germany's war effort.¹⁰ Also, rewarding Hungary by placing the entire region under its authority was dismissed as an option, because Hungary had joined the military aggression against the USSR without "any reason" back in 1941. It also lacked territorial claims "which are now used by Finland and Romania to argue for their decision to join the war against the Soviet Union," and as Hungary was a "partner in all anti-Soviet intrigues of Poland."¹¹ The set of possible solutions drawn up by the Litvinov Commission were:

- a confederate union of Transylvania with Hungary—but only if there was a complete turn in Hungarian policies in favor of the Soviet Union (mentioning immediately that it should be evaluated as an opportunistic decision of Hungary, motivated only by their claims regarding Transylvania);¹²
- reuniting Transylvania under the authority of Romania, but with a direct reference to a strong commitment to collaborate with the Soviet Union, and abandon any claims regarding Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina;¹³
- an independent Transylvanian state, as a tool of direct Soviet interest in the region, raising pro-Soviet feelings in both Romania and Hungary.¹⁴

For a detailed plan of a Transylvanian state, the work of Béla Geiger¹⁵ was integrated in the documentation of the Litvinov Commission.¹⁶ There was also a document arguing for an independent Transylvania, submitted by Valter Roman to the Litvinov Commission on 2 August 1944 (dated 28 July 1944). He proposed a very different solution compared with the position held by the leaders of the Communist Party of Romania: namely, to institutionalize an independent Transylvania, splitting it from both Romania and Hungary, having its borders on the Carpathian Mountains and the Tisza River, placed under the guarantees of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and United States of America.¹⁷ A decade later, Valter Roman remembered that among the leaders of the Communist Party of Hungary living in Moscow during the war there were different positions on the issue: Imre Nagy did not agree with Mátyás Rákosi and József Révai—the latter suggesting the idea that a Northern Transylvania still a part of Hungary even after 1944 would better serve the communists in Hungary.¹⁸ Mátyás Rákosi was remembered as referring to the immediate postwar situation as when "the Romanian side had the advantage of earlier engagement" to build a communist regime, which had influenced Stalin's position towards the solu-

tion adopted on the question of Transylvania.¹⁹ It was the same Mátyás Rákosi who pushed for elections to be held in Hungary as early as 1945, so as to ensure the Communist Party's victory. It gained only 16% of the votes. After those elections of November 1945, won by the Smallholders' Party (gaining 57% of the vote), but before 1947, Rákosi changed his stance towards the question of Transylvania, as any possible territorial gains for Hungary were then evaluated as strengthening the popularity of his political enemy.

The Soviet leaders involved in postwar geopolitical planning had already known of Great Britain's plan made by Oxford University's staff (dated 17 December 1942), preferring an independent Transylvanian state, part of a confederation of states of the Danube region.²⁰ All plans involving federation/confederation in Central and Eastern Europe were upsetting the Soviet decision-making power elite: they saw those plans as undermining the direct control of the USSR upon the neighboring region. Winston Churchill had announced a "Balkan Federation" in March 1943, which provoked the same feelings in Moscow. Stalin was keen on convincing Edward Beneš to drop the earlier plan of a Polish-Czechoslovak Confederation, at a meeting in Moscow.²¹ Churchill had given his support to a plan for a Bavarian-Austrian-Hungarian Federation, which could isolate the "Prussian heart" of Germany, and could also maintain a part of the Central European region outside Moscow's influence.²² The plans devised by the government of the United States of America had also revealed a certain sympathy towards the idea of federalizing the region, emphasizing the role to be played by Hungary and the neighboring Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia—as stated in the plans produced by the State Department, published also by Ignác Romsics, in Hungarian translation.²³ The interest of the Hungarian decision-making elite in a federalized region became more important, as at the end of World War II all neighboring states were winners against or victims of Germany, therefore no sympathy for the Hungarian demands for revised interstate borders had great chances to be taken in consideration. At the beginning of 1944, Endre (Andrew) Bajcsy-Zsilinszky published in Geneva a plan for the federalization of Transylvania.²⁴ At the same time, György Barcza, the Hungarian ambassador in Bern, had succeeded in forwarding to Tibor Eckhardt in the United States of America the plan of a Danube Federation, made by István Bethlen, the "grand old man" of the Hungarian political elite.²⁵ The idea of adopting a customs union, "spiritualizing" the borders, had rapidly lost support in Czechoslovakia immediately after the war, as Edward Beneš directly negotiated his position with Stalin already in 1943. However, it gained support in Romania, where for a short period of time the communist-led government of Dr. Petru Groza had a special motivation, which this study will later consider.²⁶

As the war front drew closer to the national borders of Romania, Hungary came under military occupation by Germany on 19 March 1944. Both countries

were involved in talks with the Allied Powers about leaving the war alliance with Germany, both intended to come to agreements with the Western Powers, and were asked by the latter to directly address the Soviet Union. On 12 April 1944 a draft of a possible armistice for Romania was published, in which there was a direct reference to its right to reintegrate the whole of Transylvania. Signed weeks after Romania changed sides in World War II (23 August 1944), in the Armistice Agreement (11–12 September 1944, signed in Moscow) the following formula was introduced: “Transylvania in its entirety, or a greater part of it” should be reintegrated as part of Romania, stating also that later the Peace Conference was to finally decide on that issue. That formula represented the British position, which left the question of Transylvania partly open.²⁷ One might think that the reason behind it was to motivate a possible Hungarian change of sides. On 15 October 1944, Hungary failed to follow Romania’s example by changing sides in the war.²⁸ But it served well another interest put forward by the Soviet Union.

Stalin had appointed General Vinogradov to direct the Romanian Government in keeping with the Soviet interests. The act of 23 August 1944 was later evaluated as not serving the interest of the communists: it associated an important part of the Romanian traditional political elite with the Allied Powers; it therefore saved them and offered legitimacy to the political establishment headed by King Michael I of Romania. The Soviet interest was to increase pressure on the Romanian political decision-making center in the interest of the communists. Moving the political confrontation to the streets, the Soviet Military Authorities did not let the Romanian authorities enter the liberated (and Soviet-occupied) city of Cluj, on 11 October 1944. That symbolic act was followed by a demand to the Romanian authorities to leave Northern Transylvania, whose border had been set by the Second Vienna Award. That demand, presented in the name of the Allied Control Commission headed by General Vinogradov, was based formally on article no. 17 of the Armistice Agreement signed only a month before.²⁹ The real interest behind the decision was to control Northern Transylvania, to be used as an instrument of “political blackmail”: the Soviet demand stated that Transylvania could be reintegrated into Romania only if the King appointed the new, communist-led coalition to form a new Government.³⁰ In the meantime, a special and provisional administration under Soviet military control was introduced in Northern Transylvania,³¹ which was mistakenly seen by a part of the representative leaders of the Hungarian community as Soviet support for institutionalizing regional autonomy.³²

In the meantime, Winston Churchill met with I. V. Stalin in Moscow, between 9 and 12 October 1944. The direct negotiation between the two leaders led to the “percentage agreement” regarding the Great Powers’ interests in the states of Central and Southeast Europe. The manifest interest of the British

leader in preserving his position in Greece, crucial for controlling the Mediterranean routes of strategic value, and the Soviet interest in turning the immediately neighboring states into a buffer zone between the West and the USSR, were important from the perspective of geopolitics. They had not shared the liberal views of F. D. Roosevelt of a New Era, based on the vision of democratizing the world, opening the world markets, and institutionalizing the United Nations. This led to a lapse of trust between the US President and the British Prime Minister. From the point of view of the events about to happen in Romania, together with the Soviet military presence, a part of the recent historiography evaluated the Churchill–Stalin Agreement of October 1944 as an important element of the postwar architecture of Central and Eastern Europe. It certainly led to a desperate situation, as the political opponents of the communist regime learned about it through different sources.³³

Strengthening the Communist Party's position in neighboring Romania was of major interest for the Soviet Union. In that context, the final push to overthrow the ruling government in Romania came at the end of February–beginning of March 1945.³⁴ The result was the introduction of the communist-led Government, headed by Dr. Petru Groza, on 6 March 1945—an event of utmost importance for the changing Soviet position regarding the question of Transylvania. From that moment on, Stalin's interest was to raise the popularity of the new communist-led Government. Therefore, he pressed for a reintegration of the entire Transylvania into Romania. As it was also a major point of the national program of the post-wwii Romanian society, it was presented as a direct consequence of the establishment of a communist-led Government in Romania. That was symbolically represented by the telegram received from Stalin, and by the extraordinary session of the new Government, held in Cluj on 12 March 1945. In the new struggle for political power, the strategy of the National Front was applied.³⁵ The Communist Party's political program met the national agenda of postwar reconstruction, hiding from the public eyes the real strategic aim of social engineering, grounded in the Marxist-Leninist ideology. The policy of identifying the RCP with the main aim of the traditional national agenda was clear: regaining the territories held after the Trianon Peace Treaty, and partially lost to Hungary in 1940, was an immediate imperative, given the contrasting reality of the multi-ethnic identity of the party leadership majority—a party which had grown considerably since 1944, when it had had less than 1,000 members. In assessing the impact of those events, one has to remember that soon after that moment, the Communist Party of Romania changed its name to the Romanian Communist Party (October 1945). That was because Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, freed from a Romanian jail where he had been imprisoned since 1933, was favored by Stalin instead of the Moscow-based leaders. The prefer-

ence for Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej promoted an image of the party anchored in the national body of the proletariat. The legitimizing discourse of the Romanian Communist Party right after the war relied on the “territorial integrity” of the Romanian nation-state. To avoid any discussions on a negotiated revision of borders, the communists in power switched the paradigm of public debate to the political and legal integration of the Hungarian ethno-cultural minority in Romania, including the institutionalization of collective rights, and the integration of the network of educational and cultural institutions of the Hungarian community in Romania. All of this served the interests of the communist-led Government before the signing of the Peace Treaty, which came in 1947. It also underscored the Romanian Government’s public narrative on promoting the “spiritualization of frontiers” and the integration of the Danube region in a future economic federative solution. These ideas were presented publicly by Dr. Petru Groza.

The representatives of Great Britain and the United States of America at the Potsdam Conference (17 July–2 August 1945) referred to the newly established Romanian Government as not meeting the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe, because of the political pressure and direct involvement of the Soviet Union. The political opposition to the new Romanian Government also tried to use that to its advantage.³⁶ Under these circumstances the Government of Romania ascribed great importance the decision of the Hungarian People’s Union, a political organization allied with the Romanian Communist Party, which had offered a document showing its official position already on 17 November 1945, later integrated in the official documentation presented by the Romanian delegates at the Paris Peace Conference. It stated that a change in state borders would be a negative turn for the Hungarian minority, and the better solution was to integrate the collective rights of that minority in the new Romanian constitutional system. That had been followed by an open protest from various representative personalities and groups of the Hungarian community in Transylvania, which also questioned the quality of the Hungarian People’s Union as a representative organization.³⁷

THE NEW turn in the relations between the Great Powers had also led to a new approach regarding the question of Transylvania. As the newly inaugurated US President Harry Truman was very critical of the Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian governments established by direct Soviet intervention, the Western Allies refused to recognize them and contested their legitimacy. They also began to evaluate the question of Transylvania as an instrument for pressuring the communist-led Government established in Romania, as it publicly legitimized itself as the one who succeeded to fulfill that major goal of

the Romanian national agenda. For the same reason, at the first session of the Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London (11 September–2 October 1945) the Western Allies challenged the Soviet intention to solve the Transylvanian question by the wholesale reintegration of the region into Romania.³⁸ The US representative Byrnes represented a view in favor of discussing the possibility of a partial revision of the Romanian-Hungarian interstate borders.³⁹ George Bidault, representing France, favored the decision to make corrections to the Peace Treaty of Trianon, in order to adopt a solution that more accurately reflected the ethnic border.⁴⁰ The British representative, Ernest Bevin, emphasized the importance of a solution for the Romanian-Hungarian interstate border “which is just in itself.”⁴¹ The direct answer of Molotov, on 20 September 1945, argued that the Soviet Union agreed with the decision made by the Western Great Powers in 1920. Their argument was this: in Transylvania it is impossible to draw an ethnic line to separate the two nations; the majority was clearly of Romanian ethnicity; the wartime situation was simply impossible to maintain, as it had been set by Hitler; Romania had been part of the Allied military effort to defeat Germany, which was not the case with Hungary.⁴² The session held in London was postponed sine die on 2 October 1945, without an agreement between the represented Great Powers on the issue of the peace treaties.

The momentary interest of the Western Great Powers had collaterally offered Hungary a possibility to try to put two issues on the agenda: on the one hand, the federalization of the states in the Danube region,⁴³ and, on the other hand, the partial revision of the Romanian-Hungarian interstate border, arguing that it would bring a significant part of the almost two million ethnic Hungarians from Romania back to Hungary.⁴⁴ As for the projected border revision, representatives of the Hungarian authorities considered that having almost similar numbers of ethnic Romanians in Hungary and ethnic Hungarians in Romania would generate a more equitable relation between the two states.

The next period—from the summer of 1945 to the first months of 1946—was a very difficult one for that communist-led Government in Romania, as the Western Great Powers refused to recognize it. In these circumstances, the Romanian Prime Minister, Dr. Petru Groza, publicly voiced the possibility of enacting plans for a regional customs union, a unity of nations “from the Leitha River to the Black Sea,” built around the union of Hungary and Romania, etc. These public statements of Dr. Petru Groza regarding the Danube region were passed on by László Réczei,⁴⁵ special representative of Hungary in Romania, present in Bucharest since March 1945, as they came in parallel with Josip Broz Tito’s public speech on federalizing the Balkans.⁴⁶ In the immediate postwar period, the Hungarian Government had considered the federalization of the states

in the Danube region as a cornerstone of its strategy regarding the new peace.⁴⁷ Surrounded by states that had all been associated with the victorious Allied Powers—of which only Romania was to be re-evaluated as a defeated state at the Paris Peace Conference in 1946—and lacking all resources for any optimistic perspective of postwar economic reconstruction, all leaders of the antagonized political forces of Hungary were showing a certain interest in a possible customs union, seeking to avoid the consequences of once again losing contact with the regions regained by way of the decisions taken by the Great Powers in wartime. Seeking popularity, as the Communist Party was in desperate need to anchor itself in the national body in Hungary, Ernő Gerő, the first leader of the postwar Communist Party of Hungary, had also shown his interest: he supported in early 1945 a partial revision of the borders, evaluated as an open demonstration “of the communists’ ability to succeed where the former political regime had failed.”⁴⁸ Mátyás Rákosi, arriving from Moscow in the spring of 1945, shared Gerő’s interest before the elections held in November 1945, and advocated that some of the borders set by the wartime Great Powers arbitration between Hungary and Romania should be maintained.⁴⁹ As for the federalization of the Danube region, the Hungarian leaders of the Communist Party knew what their political opponents learned only later: for the Soviet Union, the suggestions to federalize the states of Central and Southeast Europe appeared as challenges to its authority. After 1947, the control was to be severely tightened in the states of the emerging Soviet bloc: the public discourses on federalizing the Danube region came to be seen as anti-Soviet views.

Hungary was in a much weaker position to negotiate than Romania in 1945–1947: it had declared war on Germany only late, on 28 December 1944, a week after the creation of a Provisional Government in Debrecen. The Government, led by General Béla Miklós Dálnoki, had sought refuge on the Soviet side after the failed attempt at leaving the war on 15 October 1944. Hungary signed an Armistice Agreement with the Allied Powers on 20 January 1945. There was no continuity in the institutional functioning of the representative political decision-making elite. This was different from the Romanian case, where King Michael I led Romania after the act of 23 August 1944. The Provisional Government was set up prior to 21 December 1944 in Moscow by the direct will of Stalin, communicated through Molotov. The Hungarian armed forces had only a symbolic presence, as the Soviet Union had no interest in arming and aiding a local military force in Central and Eastern Europe. For these reasons, the new Government of Hungary lacked any chance to use its armed forces against the German military.⁵⁰ Before the immediate postwar negotiation of its future, the government was in urgent need to re-establish the Hungarian Department for Peace Preparations, which was already organized in 1943.⁵¹ After the begin-

ning of the German occupation of Hungary, on 19 March 1944, it ceased its activities. This was the first consequence of the German military occupation and the loss of Hungary's sovereignty as a state. In early 1945, the reformed Hungarian Department for Peace Preparations, led by István Kertész, had to restart the documentation, editing, publication and institutional representation of the Hungarian interests before the start of the peace negotiations. Kertész was a good organizer, and also knew the American plans concerning international policy: he had benefited from a Rockefeller scholarship in the 1930s in the US, and had published in the *Foreign Affairs' Yearbook of Hungary* a text on the issue of the US strategic objectives in world politics already in 1941.⁵² In 1942 he was working at the Hungarian Embassy in Bucharest, as first secretary of the legation. In 1944 he was arrested by the extreme right-wing authorities. He survived the siege of Budapest, and then succeeded to join the Provisional Government in March 1945.⁵³ He had the support of János Gyöngyösi, the minister for Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Government.⁵⁴ The first result of his work was a document presented on 28 June 1945 to the Hungarian coalition of governing parties on the organization of the Department for Preparing the Peace.⁵⁵ On 24 July the Department had put forward the first document on the conceptual background for the peace negotiations. This stated that the Soviet Union was directly interested in the possible impact of any revision of the Hungarian-Romanian border, because it could endanger the position of Dr. Petru Groza's Government, and that it was also to be considered as a possible partner in directly negotiating a solution, for the sake of the Hungarian community in Transylvania.⁵⁶ Starting from there, the Department soon put forward the alternative plans for:

- *a partial revision* of the western border of Romania, and the return to Hungary of Satu Mare, Carei, Oradea, Salonta and Arad, with the neighboring network of villages;
- *the regional autonomy* of the Szeklerland;
- *a plan for an independent Transylvania* (as the Litvinov Commission's documentation had also suggested a similar solution in 1944);⁵⁷
- *an international treaty protecting the rights of national minorities* (similar to the one signed on 9 December 1919 by Romania, as an instrument for the interwar League of Nations, to be instituted now under the aegis of the United Nations);
- *a federalization of the region*, and the importance of economic coherence, possibly helped by a customs union of the states of the Danube region, as emphasized in the document prepared for the Hungarian Government on 14 August 1945, to be used as a primary position before the Great Powers represented in the Allied Control Commission regarding its peace-making interests.⁵⁸

That idea was once again presented to the Great Powers in a document sent on 12 November 1945, which emphasized the geographic unity of the Carpathian basin, with a certain impact on the transport routes represented by the rivers, especially the Danube down to the Black Sea.⁵⁹

The Hungarian Government also decided to contact the Romanian Government for negotiating a bilateral agreement even before the opening of the Paris Peace Conference. On 1 November 1945, Dr. Petru Groza met the Hungarian delegation led by Sándor Nékám.⁶⁰ The Romanian Prime Minister declared that the question of border revision had to be closed once and for all, reminding of a possible revitalization of the Little Entente, and that Stalin was also committed to rejecting any revision of Romania's western borders. This was something Stalin had made clear to Groza during a consultation in Moscow shortly before the Hungarian delegation arrived in Bucharest. He offered to discuss the "spiritualization" of the borders, a possible customs union, "for the Transylvanian question to be solved through the friendship of Romanians and Hungarians, not by the Great Powers."⁶¹ This position was reemphasized in the Romanian Government's official position, dated 15 January 1946, and later sent to Zoltán Tildy.⁶²

The strategy previously put forward by the Western Great Powers had changed in the meantime, with dramatic consequences for the states of Central and Southeast Europe: Harry Truman, the President of the United States of America, declared that the priority was to close the chapter of the peace treaties to be signed with the European allies of the defeated Germany (Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Italy). He expected this to cause the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces, in conformity with the principles stated by the Declaration on Liberated Europe, signed at the Yalta Conference. This change in the strategic view on the possible turn of events led to the agreement made between the representatives of the Great Powers at the Moscow Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers (15–27 December 1945),⁶³ that stated the immediate recognition by the Western Great Powers of the Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian Governments, right after including a representative of the political opposition in the communist-led arrangement enforced earlier by the Soviet Union. The Western Great Powers' representative leaders also put some conditions for recognizing the communist-led governments: they were to organize democratic elections—which would produce representative legislative bodies; these, in turn, would legitimate new executive bodies, which would then sign peace treaties as soon as possible. That had to be followed, in their own thinking, by the withdrawal of the Soviet Army from the entire region. From that point on, the leaders of the communists' political opposition in the region were regularly reminded by the representatives of the US Government that the quicker the peace treaties were

signed, the sooner the Soviet military presence would cease—an illusion with dire consequences, as they later learned. The decision made in Moscow was applied through the Harimann–Clark–Kerr–Vyshinsky mission to the states of the region, which were already separated from the Free World by the Iron Curtain drawn by the Soviets. On 4 February 1946 the Western Great Powers officially recognized those communist-led governments. In Romania, this was followed by the elections of 19 November 1946: the results were falsified, as they were used to legitimize the ruling communist-led Government. The will of the voters was to be ignored—it was not their vote that decided the results, but the counting authority as controlled by the communists in power, as A. I. Vyshinsky stated.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the Western Great Powers recognized the Government chosen in such a manner. They stuck to their illusions: they urged the signing of the peace treaties, which they expected to be followed by the withdrawal of the Soviet military. It did not happen, and even the US President had to admit this after 10 February 1947. It was a revealing moment that led directly to the announcement of the “Truman doctrine” on 12 March 1947. The new strategic doctrine introduced the concept of “containment” of the Soviet bloc, which for the states already in the bloc meant that the geopolitical division of Europe had been accepted. The Western Powers saw it as the limit of Soviet expansion, and it was part of a defensive strategy.

That logic of the events that happened between December 1945 and February 1947 led to the gradual disappearance of any reason for the communist-led Government in Romania to fear that Western Powers would not recognize its legitimacy. As the official recognition of the Romanian Government took place in February 1946—months before the opening of the Paris Peace Conference (29 July 1946)—there was no hope that the Western Powers would keep the question of Transylvania on the agenda. A possible revision of the Hungarian-Romanian interstate border could only complicate the negotiation of the peace treaties, and the leaders of the US were eagerly interested in closing them. On the other hand, the Hungarian Government understood that the Soviet Union was committed to defending the legitimacy of the communist-led Government in Romania, and also to avoiding any border revision. Stalin had no reason to prefer the Hungarian Government to the Romanian one, as a possible gain of territory by Hungary would offer a victory to the political enemy of the communists: that was confirmed by the results of the elections held on 4 November 1945 in Hungary, which saw the defeat of the Communist Party.⁶⁵ General Voroshilov, the Soviet leader of the Allied Control Commission, still enforced a Government coalition in which the communists held strategic positions, but the fight for power in Hungary lasted until 1948. For the leaders of the governing Hungarian Smallholders’ Party the direct consequence was to turn all remaining

hopes to the Western Powers.⁶⁶ But at the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in London (18 January–20 April 1946), the US representative James Dunn, while previously committed to leave open the question of a possible revision of the Hungarian-Romanian border, finally concluded that the entire setting was too ambiguous, and it was not worth taking it into consideration, as it halted the preparation of the Peace Conference.⁶⁷ That was a first sign for the Hungarian leaders that the Western Powers were no longer willing to have further debates on the issue of borders, as the strategic value of contesting the legitimacy of the communist-led Romanian Government had changed. James Byrnes had softened its prior position on 10 April 1946, intimating to the Soviet representative that the version for the peace treaties of Hungary and Romania put forward by Molotov could be accepted, while still leaving open the possibility of direct negotiations between the two states' representatives regarding a partial revision of the border, if it could lead "to a sensible reduction in the numbers of individuals put under foreign rule."⁶⁸ Washington and London were indicating that the key to the entire affair was once again located in Moscow. Ferenc Nagy, the Hungarian Prime Minister, presented his position regarding the peace directly to Stalin, on 11 April 1946. He was redirected to negotiate directly with the Romanians.⁶⁹ Then, for one last time, the Hungarian Government's representatives turned to Bucharest, trying to negotiate directly with Dr. Petru Groza's Government of Romania, just before the opening of the Paris Peace Conference.⁷⁰ The direct mission to Bucharest, led by Pál Sebestyén, started on 23 April 1946. The Hungarian special delegate presented the offer to Dr. Petru Groza and Gheorghe Tătărescu, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs⁷¹: Sebestyén supported the plan—the one presented in advance to Stalin—of a partial revision of the border with Romania (the territory claimed by Hungary was reduced to a strip neighboring the former interstate border, of no more than 20,000 square kilometers, including the cities of Satu Mare, Carei, and Oradea), declaring that without accepting that demand, the question of the Hungarian community in Transylvania could not be fairly solved. The Romanian Prime Minister refused to even discuss the matter, using two reasons. The formal one was that the two states would not act properly if they decided before the Great Powers to present their solution; the real one was that he could not accept any act that would alter the integrity of Transylvania. The idea of an exchange of population was rejected by the Hungarian side, because it had already produced a humanitarian catastrophe in the earlier case with the Czechoslovak Government. The Hungarian diplomacy had already made considerable efforts to halt the exchange with the Czechoslovaks on the international panel,⁷² and also tried to negotiate directly with the Czechoslovak leaders,⁷³ which led to the signing of a treaty on 27 February 1946.⁷⁴ The removal of Hungarians

from Czechoslovak territory had already taken place. The US delegate, who met with the Hungarian one in 1946, rejected any further act of massive population relocation, because similar acts involving the German communities of Central and Eastern Europe after the Potsdam Conference had produced many negative effects, as the assessments made in Washington D.C. indicated.⁷⁵ Also, in London, Ernest Bevin later reassured the visiting Hungarian Prime Minister that the relocation of ethnic Hungarians from the neighboring countries was not a solution favored by his Government.⁷⁶ The mission led by Pál Sebestyén ended without any result.

On the idea of a treaty safeguarding the rights of the national minorities, to be introduced as an annex, or as an integral part in the form of a general clause of the peace treaties to be signed, the position of the representatives of the US and of Great Britain differed: the former suggested that it was a case to be addressed by the United Nations, and the latter envisaged a general *codex iuris* functioning as part of the international law, considered more adequate than its integration in the peace treaties to be signed then.⁷⁷ In the end, none of the possible solutions were to be enacted by the Great Powers in the immediate postwar era.

THE CONFERENCE of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Paris (25 April–16 May 1946 and 16 June–12 July 1946)⁷⁸ had to decide on the final drafts of the Peace Treaties with Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Italy, right before the opening of the Paris Peace Conference (29 July–15 October 1946). As Harold Nicolson once wrote: “Every conference begins like a turtle, and reaches the finish line as a racing dog. Never in my life had I experienced such a difference between the beginning and the end of a conference. The first six weeks were painfully slow in advancing; in the last four weeks a breath cutting race happened to put an end to it.”⁷⁹ Given the decision of the US government to further rush the conclusion of the peace (its new strategy was based on the conviction that the Soviet military presence would have to end right after the signing of the peace treaties), one might realize how little time was available for the deep analysis of every issue. The memoirs of the head of the Hungarian Department for Preparing the Peace speak of the infernal rhythm in advancing to the main event. Sometimes, a documented presentation of the official delegate to be presented at the Peace Conference was requested only a fraction of a day in advance.⁸⁰ Before the opening of the conference, the Hungarian Department for Preparing the Peace had edited a synthesis, reflecting the general situation of the ethnic Hungarians in Romania, with an annexed chronological list of the events covering the period between August 1944 and May 1946.⁸¹ The leading figure of the editorial board of all memoirs regarding territorial claims was István Révay, the director of the Teleki Institute. The first

drafts of all texts were made in the Hungarian language, translated into English, French, and Russian by high representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Then, the text was given a final form by István Kertész, who had to personally control all the documentation presented to the Peace Conference. The civil servants involved in the work of the Secretariat and the translation team of the delegation worked shifts of 24, often 48 hours, because of the last-minute announcements made to the delegations by the Conference.⁸²

The first meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers at the Palais du Luxembourg began on 25 April 1946.⁸³ It had adopted “without amendments” the proposal of Molotov on the Draft Rules of Procedure, previously submitted by the French Delegation to the Deputies. Byrnes had announced a US memorandum on Austria, and Bidault a memorandum of the French Delegation on Germany. After a week, Bidault confessed to Byrnes⁸⁴ that he was discouraged by the complete lack of progress shown in the Council meetings, and showed extreme anxiety over the Russian (Soviet) intensions. As the Soviet delegation was of 300 people, he suggested smaller meetings, consisting of just the four ministers and their interpreters. Byrnes agreed and also proposed that Bidault should directly ask Molotov about it. In case of a refusal, “he is going to suggest that the meetings be thrown open to the public so that the world opinion can see just what the situation is and just where stumbling blocks lie.”⁸⁵ He mentioned that the popularity of the Soviet Union, which a year before had been very high in the US, had been completely dissipated by the Soviet Government’s policies. Then he asked Bidault directly if he thought whether Soviet policy “was based on a desire for security or expansion.” Bidault responded: “security through expansion, probably,” but in the “present state of the French forces” he could not show very strong opposition to the Soviets.⁸⁶ A week later, the Council of Foreign Ministers had on the table the Peace Treaty with Romania. The points to be discussed were, in succession: Transylvania, frontiers other than the Romanian-Hungarian frontier, the international control of the Danube, the dissolution of fascist organizations, war criminals.⁸⁷ After that came the debate concerning the Peace Treaty with Bulgaria. The third chapter to be discussed was the Peace Treaty with Hungary, as follows: the cancellation of the Vienna Award, frontier problems other than the problem of the frontier between Hungary and Romania, reparations.⁸⁸ The Peace Treaty with Finland ended the session.

Concerning the Romanian-Hungarian frontier, two points remained in dispute. The Soviet draft article contained a sentence to the effect that the whole of Transylvania should be included into Romania, and the other delegations had proposed the deletion of that sentence—as the US delegation had suggested before an addition in brackets as follows: “Nevertheless, the Allied and Associated Powers would be prepared to recognize any rectification of the Rumanian-Hun-

garian frontier that may subsequently be mutually agreed between the parties directly concerned and which would substantially reduce the number of persons living under alien rule.”⁸⁹ Very soon after that Byrnes proposed that if the Soviet delegation withdrew the words in the first bracket, then the US delegation would withdraw the words in the second bracket.⁹⁰ As Molotov and then also Ernest Bevin representing Great Britain agreed, they advanced to the next issue: the other frontiers of Romania. Earlier, at the London Conference, Molotov had proposed that reference should only be made in the treaty to the frontier which was in dispute, that with Hungary. He thought it was not necessary to refer in the same terms to other frontiers of Romania “since they were not in dispute,”⁹¹ but the other delegations had insisted that other boundaries should also be mentioned in the treaty. In Paris, on 7 May, the other delegations were no longer insisting on the matter, passing it to the deputies for examination. Then they swiftly passed on to the next issue: the Danube River, which was the object of a debate between the Soviet and the British delegations, and no decision was reached in the end.⁹² After that all delegations agreed on the dissolution of fascist organizations. On the issue concerning war criminals, the delegates’ position was to apply what had been agreed during the Italian peace treaty talks. In the end, Byrnes raised an additional question: that of “equality of economic opportunity” in Romania for all interested Great Powers—that meant “equal access to trade, raw materials, and industry, access to ports, waterways, and aviation facilities.”⁹³ That point stirred a lot of conflicting arguments between the Soviet and US delegations. In the end, Ernest Bevin stated on behalf of the delegation of Great Britain that “it was essential from the point of view of the United Kingdom that it know where it stood with these countries economically. Mr. Bevin was afraid that he did not know now.”⁹⁴ One can therefore observe that the economic dispute had remained the only really debated issue, as for the borders of Romania it was “case settled and closed.”

After a break, the Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers continued its twelfth meeting on 7 May 1946, including the debate on the Peace Treaty with Hungary.⁹⁵ It started with the draft of the Peace Treaty with Bulgaria—including a discussion on the withdrawal of Allied troops: there was an open reference to the fact that “the line of communication to the Soviet zone in Austria did run through Romania.” Molotov objected, stating that “the line of communication ran not only across Rumania but also along the Danube, which went through Bulgaria as well as Rumania,” a very important sign which could have raised the attention of Western Allies regarding the illusion of a Soviet military withdrawal.⁹⁶ About the frontiers of Hungary, the US delegation had a new proposal, which covered not only the annulment of the Vienna Award, but all frontiers:

- the frontiers of Hungary with Austria and with Yugoslavia shall be those which existed on 1 January 1938;
- the decisions of the Vienna Award of 30 August 1940, are declared null and void. The frontier between Hungary and Romania existing on 1 January 1938 is hereby restored;
- the frontier between Hungary and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, from the point common to the frontier of those two states and of Romania to the point common to the frontiers of those two states and of Czechoslovakia, is fixed along the former frontier between Hungary and Czechoslovakia as it existed on 1 January 1938;
- the decisions of the Vienna Arbitration Award of 2 November 1938 are declared null and void. The frontier between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, from the point common to the frontiers of those two states and Austria to the point common to the frontiers of those two states and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is hereby restored as it existed on 1 January 1938.

The proposal was followed by a note: "This text should be considered as tentative until the Governments of Czechoslovakia and Hungary have had an opportunity to present orally to the Council of Foreign Ministers or to the Peace Conference their respective views on this subject."⁹⁷ As one can see, it did not bring any change to the question of Transylvania, in relation to the decisions concerning the Peace Treaty with Romania. Then, once again, the major interest was in economic issues, starting from the subject of Hungarian reparations.⁹⁸

As the decision of the Great Powers was made on 7 May 1946, the US representative to Hungary, Schoenfeld, sent a secret and urgent telegram to the US Secretary of State, James Byrnes, on the same day (the latter being present as US Delegate at the Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris). In that telegram, Schoenfeld informed Byrnes about the meeting he had had with Ferenc Nagy, the Hungarian Prime Minister, and János Gyöngyösi, the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs. They both pointed out that in a report sent to them by Ádám Bede (the special envoy of the Hungarian Government to London) the British Foreign Office was quoted as saying: "it would be embarrassing for British Government to raise the Hungarian proposal for solution of territorial controversy with Romania along lines set forth in Hungarian memo April 25 transmitted to Department, Paris, London, Moscow and Bucharest."⁹⁹ A copy of that memo was in Paris, in the possession of Pál Auer, the Hungarian Prime Minister addressing a direct call to the US Delegate to use that memo, as a "relatively disinterested Great Power," before the Council of Foreign Ministers would reach a decision. Schoenfeld had previously warned the Secretary of State: "While current issues remain unsettled, political tension will of course persist with attendant possibilities of political coups."¹⁰⁰ But the US Delegate's

intervention in Paris was not to happen, as the Hungarian Government representatives had learned from the decisions announced by the Council of Foreign Ministers. Also, the Hungarian Minister of Finance was informed that there was no prospect of an Ex-Im Bank loan to Hungary at that time, and was asked not to travel to Washington. Nevertheless, he did go, as the voyage had been previously arranged.¹⁰¹ The Hungarian Minister of Finance expressed his surprise and disappointment, and also his hope that the decision could be reconsidered, in a statement that also said: “coming on top of the decision yesterday on the Transylvanian border, the rejection of a request for a loan negotiation would be widely interpreted as complete lack of interest on the part of the United States in the fate of Hungary.”¹⁰² On the other hand, János Gyöngyösi, the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, informed Schoenfeld in Budapest that after learning about the decision of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris he had turned to the Soviet Union’s representative with the desire to visit Moscow and discuss that question with Molotov. He was officially informed that such a visit would serve no useful purpose, since the decision of the CFM on Transylvania had been taken at the insistence of the US Secretary of State, James Byrnes.¹⁰³ On 4 June 1946 came the answer of James Byrnes, US Secretary of State, to Schoenfeld in Budapest:

*Since FonMin [Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs] claims to have been officially informed by Soviets in matter we think that for record you might at suitable opportunity tell FonMin that decision of CFM on Transylvania was taken upon Soviet initiative. From time negotiation armistice Soviets have insisted all Transylvania be returned Rumania. US Govt endeavored obtain arrangement permitting minor rectifications on ethnic grounds and subsequently favored adoption treaty language at least envisaging direct negotiations that connection between Hungary and Rumania. However, Soviet view that whole territory be returned Rumania without qualification and without reference subsequent direct negotiations finally prevailed.*¹⁰⁴

Given the personal and direct impressions of Ferenc Nagy, the Hungarian Prime Minister, as a result of an official visit paid to Washington D.C. (11–19 June 1946), and London (19–24 June 1946), followed by meetings in Paris, on the way back, with Georges Bidault, Ernest Bevin, and Vyacheslav Molotov, the French, the British and the Soviet Ministers of Foreign Affairs,¹⁰⁵ there remained no room for illusions right before the opening of the Paris Peace Conference.

Under these auspices, István Kertész, the leading figure of the Hungarian Department for Peace Preparations, still had to find reasons to further the ef-

forts of all his dedicated partners when representing Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference. In a letter written on 17 June 1946 to one of his most dedicated men, Béla Demeter, who had organized the documentation in Transylvania, published recently in an excellent study on the subject, Kertész stated: “Now the question had been raised, what can be further done in the present situation. In my view, everything humanly possible still must be done, and we should not abandon hope—not until the last minute. In the underdeveloped state of the world—as also in Romania—a lot of things can still happen. In history there are no definite matters, and a nation is to perish only if it signs its own death sentence. This is the road on which, in my view, we are not allowed to step.”¹⁰⁶



Notes

1. Winston Churchill had referred to the signing of the Munich Agreement by stating: “You were given the choice between war and dishonor. You chose dishonor and you will have war.” See: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Munich-Agreement> (last accessed on 18.02.2017).
2. Roger Moorhouse, *The Devil's Alliance: Hitler's Pact with Stalin (1939–1941)* (London, 2014).
3. James J. Sadkovich, “Understanding Defeat: Reappraising Italy's Role in World War II,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 24 (1989): 27–61. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/002200948902400102> (last accessed on 18.02.2017).
4. Mihály Fülöp and Gábor Vincze, eds., *Revízió vagy autonómia? Iratok a magyar-román kapcsolatok történetéről (1945–1947)* (Budapest, 1998), 8.
5. David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s* (New York, 2006), 49–72. See also: https://fdrlibrary.org/documents/356632/390886/www_g.pdf/6cea70be-7267-4c90-9bf9-537156b03611 (last accessed on 18.02.2017).
6. Mihály Fülöp, “Az erdélyi magyar intézmények és szervezetek állásfoglalása a román-magyar határ kérdésében,” *Múltunk: Politikátörténeti folyóirat* (Budapest) 4 (1997): 98.
7. István Vida, “A magyar kérdés Párizsban,” in *Magyarok a Kárpát-medencében* (Budapest, 1989), 312.
8. Mihály Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió (Petru Groza és a magyar-román határ kérdés),” in *Tanulmányok Erdély történetéből*, ed. István Rác (Debrecen, 1988), 58.
9. Tofik Iszlamov, “Erdély a szovjet külpolitikában a második világháború alatt,” *Múltunk: Politikátörténeti folyóirat* 4 (1994): 42–43.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., 45.

12. Ibid., 46.
13. Ibid., 47.
14. Ibid.
15. Fülöp and Vincze, 9.
16. Ibid., 10.
17. Tofik Islamov, "Scrisoare către Petre Roman," *Provincia* (Cluj), 1, 6 (2000): 4–5.
18. Document no. 216, 10 October 1954, Bucharest: Report by Valter Roman regarding his visit to Budapest, and his meeting with M. Rakosi, in Andrea Andreescu et al., eds., *Minoritățile etnoculturale, mărturii documentare: Maghiarii din România (1956–1968)* (Cluj, 2003), 803.
19. Rákosi remarked that a decade later, in 1954, both states were "clearly engaged to build socialism," so "between brothers" a "much faired settlement" regarding Transylvania could be the case. Ibid., 799–803.
20. Iszlamov, 48.
21. Elizabeth W. Hazard, *Cold War Crucible: United States Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Romania (1943–1953)* (New York, 1996), 14. See also: György Gyarmati, "Kertész István pályafutása," in István Kertész, *Magyar békeillúziók (1945–1947): Oroszország és a Nyugat között* (Budapest, 1995), 513.
22. Gyarmati, 513.
23. Ignác Romsics, ed., *Amerikai béketervek a háború utáni Magyarországról: Az Egyesült Államok külügyminisztériumának titkos iratai 1942–1944* (Gödöllő, 1992).
24. Andrew Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, *Transylvania: Past and Future* (Geneva, 1944).
25. Gyarmati, 514. Tibor Eckhardt arrived in the US earlier to act as a representative of a Government in exile in case of a military occupation of Hungary.
26. Ibid., 512–514, 519.
27. Vasile Pușcaș, *Speranță și disperare: Negocieri româno-aliate, 1943–1944* (Bucharest, 1995), 29–41. The Armistice Agreement was signed long weeks after Romania broke the war alliance with Germany on 23 August 1944. In the meantime the state of war between Romania, on one side, and Germany and Hungary, on the other side, had intervened.
28. The Governor of Hungary, Miklós Horthy, who had tried to make a move similar to that of the Romanians of 23 August 1944, and had engaged in armistice talks with the Soviet Union, was arrested and taken away from Budapest, the extreme right-wing Arrow-Cross Party leader Szálasi put in power by the Germans keeping Hungary as an ally of Germany to the end of the war. See: Carlyle Aymler Macartney, *October 15th: A History of Modern Hungary (1929–1945)* (Edinburgh, 1956).
29. The Soviet interpretation was that the activity of the Maniu Guards behind the front had produced instability, which interfered with the direct interest of a Soviet Union engaged in the Second World War. See also: Virgiliu Țărău, "Problema Transilvaniei în ecuația comunizării României," in *Sovietizarea Nord-Vestului României (1944–1950)* (Satu Mare, 1996), 87–93.
30. Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului român* (Bucharest, 1997), 457.
31. For the best monograph referring to that, see Marcela Sălăgean, *Administrația sovietică în Nordul Transilvaniei (noiembrie 1944–martie 1945)* (Cluj-Napoca, 2002).

32. Gusztáv Molnár, “Önrendelkezési törekvések az Észak-erdélyi Köztársaság idején: 1944 október 11–1945 március 13,” in *Autonómia és integráció* (Budapest, 1993).
33. Nicolae Baciu, *Agonia României* (Bucharest, 1997), passim; Keith Hitchins, *România 1866–1947*, trans. (Bucharest, 1996), 535–536; A more balanced analysis in Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, *România și organizarea postbelică a lumii (1945–1947)* (Bucharest, 1988), 34–39.
34. Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră*, 457.
35. Eduard Mark, “*Revolution by Degrees*”: *Stalin’s National-Front Strategy for Europe (1941–1947)* (Washington, D.C., 2001). Source: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ACFB11.pdf>. (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
36. King Michael I of Romania had started what remained in history as the “royal strike,” challenging the authority of the communist-led Government. Ioan Chiper, Florin Constantiniu, and Adrian Pop, eds., *Sovietizarea României: Percepții anglo-americane* (Bucharest, 1993), 178–192; Camil Demetrescu, “Greva regală,” in *România cu și fără Antonescu*, ed. Gheorghe Buzatu (Iași, 1991), 322.
37. Tamás Lönhárt, “The Hungarian People’s Union inside the Romanian Political System: Representation of Minority Interests and the Establishment of the Communist Regime in Romania (1944–1947),” in *State and Minority in Transylvania, 1918–1989: Studies on the History of the Hungarian Community*, ed. Attila Gabor Hunyadi (New Jersey–New York, 2012), 258–304. Cluj County Directorate of the National Archives, coll. of the Cluj Police Inspectorate, file 627/1945–1946, note 22.181 of 31 Jan. 1946, note no. 19651 of 6 March 1946; file 168/1945–1946, note no. 2659 of 27 Nov. 1945; file 170/1946, note no. 9875 of 22 May 1946; note no. 3335 of 5 June 1946; Vincze and Fülöp, 50–53, 55–59, 63, 66–68, 123–125, 192–194; István Katona Szabó, “Az MNSZ marosvásárhelyi kiáltványa (1945 november 17),” *Múltunk: Politikatörténeti folyóirat* 4 (1997): 95; Fülöp, “Az erdélyi,” 97–99.
38. Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” 200. See also Radu Ciuceanu, Ioan Chiper, Florin Constantiniu, and Vitalie Văratec, eds., *Misiunile lui A. I. Vîșinski în România: Din istoria relațiilor româno-sovietice (1944–1946): Documente secrete* (Bucharest, 1997), 200–201.
39. Romsics, 203; Vida, 312.
40. Fülöp and Vincze, 15.
41. *Ibid.*, 15; Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” 199.
42. *Ibid.*, 200; Dobrinescu, 119.
43. “Az ideiglenes kormány jegyzéke a három szövetséges nagyhatalom budapesti képviselőihez Magyarország békecéljairól (1945. aug. 14),” in Kertész, 535–545 (Annexed documents).
44. Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” 198.
45. Gyarmati, 519.
46. *Ibid.*, 513, 519.
47. See the first draft clarifying the position of the Hungarian Government regarding the peace process, forwarded to the representatives of the Great Powers on 14 August 1945, published as part of the documents annexed to the memoirs of the leading figure of the Department for Preparing the Peace, István Kertész: “Az idej-

glenes kormány jegyzéke a három szövetséges nagyhatalom budapesti képviselőihez Magyarország békecéljairól (1945. aug. 14),” in *Magyar békeillúziók (1945–1947)*, 535–545 (Annexed documents).

48. *Ibid.*, 312.
49. Document no. 216, 10 October 1954, Bucharest, in Andreescu et al., 799–803.
50. Kertész, 320.
51. László Szűcs, “Horthy levele Sztálinhoz 1944 őszén,” *Századok* (Budapest) 4 (1970): 982–989.
52. Gyarmati, 511.
53. Kertész, 41–61.
54. Miklós Ivánfi, “Kertész István és a Békeelőkészítő Osztály,” in Viktor Attila Soós, ed., *Súlypontátthelyezés a diplomáciában: A NEB Külügyi Munkacsoportjának tanulmányai* (Budapest, 2015), 60–61, 69.
55. *Ibid.*, 72.
56. *Ibid.*; Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” 198.
57. Fülöp and Vincze, 405–443, 446–458.
58. “Az ideiglenes kormány jegyzéke a három szövetséges nagyhatalom budapesti képviselőihez Magyarország békecéljairól (1945. aug. 14),” in Kertész, 535–545 (first of the documents annexed to the volume of memoirs published by István Kertész).
59. Ivánfi, 73.
60. “Feljegyzés a Nékám Sándor-vezette politikai misszió Groza miniszterelnöknél tett látogatásról,” in Fülöp and Vincze, 72–76.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” 205; Dobrinescu, 31.
63. See also Kertész, 281–283.
64. “Two times two is sixteen” if the interest of the counting authority demands it. See Florin Constantiniu, *Doi ori doi fac șaisprezece: A început năzboiul rece în România?* (Bucharest, 1997). For the elections held in the states of the region in the following period of time, see also Virgiliu Țârău, *Alegeri fără opțiune: Primele alegeri parlamentare din Centrul și Estul Europei după încheierea celui de-al doilea război mondial* (Cluj, 2005).
65. István Vida, *Fejezetek a Kisgazda Párt történetéből (1930–1956): Tanulmányok* (Budapest, 2001).
66. Kertész, 332–334.
67. Vida, “A Magyar,” 312.
68. Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” 204.
69. “Jakabffy Imrének, az Államtudományi Intézet munkatársának magyar-román határterve. Budapest, 1946 április 3,” in Fülöp and Vincze, 418–427; “Feljegyzés a ‘partiumos’ területrendezés egy újabb változatáról az ún. ‘éjféli vonalról’ (Budapest, 1946 április 8),” in *ibid.*, 427–429.
70. Fülöp, “A Sebestyén-misszió,” *passim*.
71. *Ibid.*
72. Kertész, 233–240.

73. Ibid., 241–245, 249–251.
74. Ibid., 253.
75. Ibid., 324. See also “Documents no. 254–261 presenting the concern of the United States over the dispute between Hungary and Czechoslovakia regarding the exchange of populations and revision of frontiers.” Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
76. Kertész, 333.
77. Ibid., 330–333.
78. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/comp2> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
79. Kertész, 294.
80. Ibid., 318–319.
81. *Le Problème hongrois par rapport à la Roumanie*, edited by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Budapest, 1946).
82. Kertész, 317–318.
83. Record of Decisions, Council of Foreign Ministers, Second Session, First Meeting, Palais du Luxembourg, Paris, 25 April 1946, 5 p.m. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d66> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
84. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Matthews). Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d91> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. United States Delegation Record, Council of Foreign Ministers, Second Session, Eleventh Meeting, Paris, 7 May 1946, 11 a.m. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d105> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
88. Ibid., 259.
89. Ibid., 260.
90. The article on Transylvania had been drafted before, at the Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London, as follows: “The decision of the Vienna Award of August 30th, 1940, is declared null and void. The frontier between Roumania and Hungary existing on January 1st, 1938, is hereby restored, [the whole of Transylvania being thus included in the territory of Roumania]. [Nevertheless, the Allied and Associated Powers would be prepared to recognize any rectification of the Roumanian-Hungarian frontier that may subsequently be mutually agreed between the parties directly concerned and which would substantially reduce the number of persons living under alien rule.]” The brackets indicated here are in the source text. They identify unagreed language in the article. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d105> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
91. Ibid., 261.
92. Ibid., 261–264.
93. Ibid., 266.
94. Ibid., 270.

95. United States Delegation Record, Council of Foreign Ministers, Second Session, Twelfth Meeting, Paris, 7 May 1946, 5 p.m. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d107> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
96. *Ibid.*, 274.
97. *Ibid.*, 277. See also: Proposal by the United States Delegation to the Council of Foreign Ministers, 309–310. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d114> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
98. *Ibid.*, 278–283.
99. The Minister in Hungary (Schoenfeld) to Secretary of State, at Paris. Budapest, 7 May 1946—11 a.m., 285–286. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v02/d109> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
100. The Minister in Hungary (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State. Budapest, 6 March 1946—5 p.m. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06/d193> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
101. Memorandum by the Economic Counselor at the Embassy in France (Merchant) to the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Matthews). Paris, 9 May 1946. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06/d209> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
102. *Ibid.*
103. The Minister in Hungary (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State. Budapest, 24 May 1946—1 p.m. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06/d211> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
104. The Secretary of State to the Minister in Hungary (Schoenfeld). Washington, 4 June 1946—4 p.m. Source: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06/d214> (last accessed on 16.02.2017).
105. See Kertész, 330–334.
106. “Letter written by István Kertész to Béla Demeter. Paris, June 17th, 1946,” *Apud Ivánfi*, 78–79.

Abstract

Great Power Decision-Making after World War II and the Hungarian Department for Preparing the Peace Regarding the Question of Transylvania

At the end of the Second World War, Hungary and Romania found themselves embroiled in yet another dispute regarding their common border. The present paper examines the complex international context surrounding the negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference, the claims and the strategies of the countries involved, with a special focus on the efforts undertaken by the Hungarian authorities, as well as the position of the Great Powers in regard to these claims and strategies.

Keywords

Transylvania, Hungarian Department for Preparing the Peace, Great Powers, Hungarian-Romanian relations