

PREFACE TO THE SERIES

The present volume is the twentieth in a series that, when completed, will constitute a comprehensive survey of the many aspects of war and society in East Central Europe. The chapters of this and forthcoming volumes have been selected from papers presented at a series of international, interdisciplinary scholarly conferences conducted by the Brooklyn College Program on Society in Change in cooperation with other institutions of higher learning.

These volumes deal with the peoples whose homelands lie between the Germans to the west, the Russians to the east and north, and the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas to the south. They constitute a particular civilization, one that is an integral part of Europe, yet substantially different from the West. The area is characterized by rich variety in language, religion, and government, and, not surprisingly, a similar variety can also be observed in concepts of national defense, in the nature of armed forces, and in ways of waging war. The study of this complex subject demands a multidisciplinary approach, and, accordingly, our contributors represent several academic disciplines. They have been drawn from universities and other scholarly institutions in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe as well as in the East Central European socialist countries.

Our comparative investigation of military behavior and organization attempts to ascertain what is peculiar to particular nations and ethnic groups, what has been socially and culturally determined, and what has resulted from the exigencies of the moment. We try to define different patterns of military behaviour, including decision-making process, attitudes and actions of diverse social classes, and the degree of restraint (or lack thereof) typically shown in war. We endeavor to present considerable material that can help us to understand how the process of social, economic, political, and technological change as well as changes in the sciences and in international relations influenced the development of doctrines of national defense and altered actual practice in such areas as military organization, command, strategy, and tactics. We also present data on the social origins and mobility of the officer corps and the rank and file, on the differences between the officer corps of the various services, and, above all, on civil-military relations and the origins of the East Central European brand of militarism. The studies will, we hope, deepen our understanding of the societies, governments, and politics of East Central Europe.

Our methodology takes into account the changes in the study of war and national defense systems which have occurred in the last three decades. During

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that period, the study of war and national defense systems has moved away from a narrow focus on battles, campaigns, and leaders and now views a country's military history in the context of the evolution of the entire society. In fact, historians, political scientists, sociologists, philosophers, and other students of war and national defense have come to recognize the interdependence of changes in society and changes in warfare; they accept the proposition that military institutions closely reflect the character of the society of which they are a part. Recognition of this fact is a keystone of our approach to the subject.

Works in Western languages now provide adequate coverage of the diplomatic, political, intellectual, social, and economic histories of the peoples of East Central Europe. In contrast, few substantial studies of their national defense systems have yet appeared in Western languages. Similarly, though some comprehensive accounts of the nonmilitary aspects of the history of the entire region have been published in the West, there is as yet no comprehensive account of the area's national defense systems in any Western language. Nor is there any study of the mutual effects of the concepts and practices of national defense in East Central Europe. Thus, this comprehensive study of war and society in East Central Europe is a pioneering work. The present volume concentrates on the largely neglected, but unusually critical, period immediately following World War I, and is thus of particular significance.

As Editor-in-Chief, of course, I cheerfully take full responsibility for the comprehensiveness, cohesion, internal balance, and scholarly quality of the series I have launched. I intend this work to be neither a justification nor a condemnation of the policies, attitudes, and activities of any of the nations involved. At the same time, because the contributors represent so many different disciplines, languages, interpretations, schools of thought, our policy in this, as in past and future volumes, is to present their contributions without modification. In this sense, the volume is a sampling of the schools of thought and the standards of scholarship in the many countries to which our contributors belong.

Béla K. Király
Editor-in-Chief

INTRODUCTION

A number of earlier publications in the series *War and Society in East Central Europe*, have already examined the revolutionary effect of World War I on East Central Europe. The military defeat of Russia and then of the Central Powers, brought about national revolutions in East Central Europe; as midwife to changes it gave birth to Czechoslovakia, rebirth to Poland, and new life to a Hungarian state without an Austrian coequal. Being on the side of the victors led to considerable territorial growth for Romania and Serbia, which soon after the war came to be known as Yugoslavia. Romania, Serbia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland gained new frontiers at the expense of the vanquished states.

The new political situation in East Central Europe made possible the intrusion there of some of the victorious great powers, namely Italy and France. In this, the more powerful France, with troops in the Balkans, took the lead. Its intention to dominate East Central Europe, however, cannot be separated from Paris' attempt to do the same in Russia and the Ukraine. Several contributions to this volume make it clear that these efforts were interrelated.

In the 1960s, following the lead of Arno Mayer, historians saw France's involvement in Russia as part of the Entente's goal of crushing the "forces of movement" embracing Bolshevism. But, more recent research stresses France's involvement in the area on the basis of traditional French imperialism. Thus, fighting Bolshevism became a rationalization for such a policy. The papers of Torrey and Munholland and of this writer also gravitate toward this view.

The crusading spirit of fighting Bolshevism in Russia and the Ukraine, and the shortage of French troops, forced France to enlist surrogate forces, such as Greek and Romanian troops. Fischer-Galati and Stavrou point out that both Romanian and Greek leaders supported intervention not because they feared world revolution and the spread of Bolshevism into East Central Europe, but for the sake of territorial aggrandizement. In return for toeing the French line, Romania and Greece counted on French support for their claims.

The threatening specter of Bolshevism was utilized as justification for Romania's expansion into most of Transylvania. As Torrey's essay indicates, the Romanians blamed the Károlyi government for spreading Bolshevism in that area, which Romania ostensibly intended to prevent through occupation. Hungarian archival sources amply demonstrate that the Romanian charges were baseless. In fact, it was Romanian expansionism that led to the collapse of the Károlyi regime and to the rise of the Communist Hungarian Soviet Republic. This in turn, presented a perfect opportunity, as Fischer-Galati notes, for furthering Romania's political goals. After March 21, 1919, the crusade against Bolshevism called for the conquest of Hungary.

Before the rise of the Soviet Republic in Hungary, the two defeated states in East Central Europe, Hungary and Bulgaria, seemed to progress in a similar socio-political direction. Lampe shows that in Bulgaria statism as a solution, was favored; reforms from above was the order of the day under Stamboliski. And, Hungary took, it seemed, the same path under Károlyi. The February Land Reform Law that, owing to the fall of the Károlyi regime, was never put into practice except on the estates of Károlyi, was an executive, not a legislative act. The expected Socialist government following the aborted April 1919 elections also evinced the onset of statism in Hungary. Further similarities between Bulgaria and Hungary are indicated in Khristov's and Pastor's essay; since both Bulgarian and Hungarian territories were offered as compensation for supporting French policy, neither of these countries were asked to participate in the French intervention in Russia and the Ukraine.

The Hungarian Soviet Republic ushered in the only meaningful interwar European Communist system outside of the confines of the former Russian empire. This unique historical experience is the reason for this collection's stress of Hungary's revolutions.

The rise of the Hungarian Soviet Republic on March 21, 1919, was the result of the desperate reaction of Hungarians to what appeared to be a Carthaginian Peace. A Communist government in Budapest, it was assumed, could get the support of Moscow, which, as Torrey, Stavrou, Munholland, and Hajdu posit, was about to defeat the White and Entente forces in the Ukraine. It was expected that following victory, the Soviet Russian Red Army would then come to the aid of the Hungarian Red Army.

Although the statesmen around Hungary paid lip service to anticommunism in pursuance of nationalistic goals, Hungarian leaders, instead of working for the selfsame goals only by service in words to communism, took their Marxism seriously. Led by Béla Kun, they embarked on a doctrinaire Communist policy, domestic and foreign, which managed to alienate most social

groups as indicated in the general overview presented by Ignác Romsics and the specific example of the engineers given by György Péteri.

The desperate defense of national integrity was instrumental in establishing popular support behind the Soviet Republic in March 1919. The nationalistic component was perceived by most of the peace conferees in Paris. In fact, as Coppa shows, Benito Mussolini, the Italian Fascist leader, saw the pattern of National Socialism in the Hungarian example. Zsuppan finds that the British expected to ride out the storm and correctly assumed that the doctrinaire Hungarian communists would be their own grave diggers. Indeed, Romsics proves that this assessment was correct, for policies of the Hungarian Soviet Republic's government did alienate most social groups from the government.

Military intervention by Hungary's neighbors was supported by France, as were Hungarian counterrevolutionary organizations in French-occupied Szeged, as Tihany shows. Yugoslavia's reluctance in joining this Bolshevik crusade against Hungary is another indication that anti-Bolshevism was a mere cover for ulterior motives. Ormos suggests, and Kovačev demonstrates, that Serbia, satisfied with the occupation of Baranya, held no further claims against Hungary. Contesting with Romania the sovereignty of the Banat gave Yugoslavia additional reasons for abstaining from military intervention against Soviet Hungary.

Fogarassy sees in the Romanian military action in April 1919, the earliest intervention against Hungary. This action was made possible by the lack of movement on the part of the Soviet Russian Red Army in the Dniester area, which could have dissuaded Romania from fighting against Hungary. The evacuation of Odessa could have also contributed to the unleashing of the Romanian offensive. Stavrou argues that as a consequence of the Odessa fiasco, Greek troops were shifted to a defensive line on the Dniester. This redeployment, it appears, gave the Romanians the kind of security and confidence they needed in order to start operations against Hungary.

Whereas Hajdu attributes the failure of Trotsky's Red Army to link up with the Hungarians to bad military fortunes in spring and summer 1919, Ormos seems to accept this interpretation with a grain of salt. What seems to trouble her is that not only did Soviet Russia fail to provide military aid, but it also refrained from establishing diplomatic ties with Hungary. No prominent Soviet revolutionary leader was sent to bolster the morale of the Communists in Hungary.

We must also consider that the Red Army's bad military fortunes in the Ukraine, were neither due to outstanding abilities of the White military

leaders, nor was it due to the high morale among their troops. Rather it sprang from defections from the Communist camp. The switching of sides of Hatman Grigoriev and others was caused by Communist actions that alienated a considerable segment of the Ukrainian population from the Reds. Therefore a combination of faulty Communist conduct of affairs in the Ukraine and in Hungary it can be argued, were the major cause of the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Both Lenin and Kun would have had to change internal policies toward the peasants in order to help the Hungarian Revolution to survive.

On the battlefield, the Hungarian Red Army was successful against the Czechoslovaks in the Northern Campaign. Success in part was due to the fact that the Red Army was led by "specialists," professional officers, who according to Romsics and Szakály, were willing to serve the Red Army for patriotic reasons, even though people of their class had little sympathy for the Communist experiment. On June 16, 1919, in the wake of the Red Army's victory in the north, the Slovak Republic was declared in the eastern Slovakian town of Prešov (Eperjes), under the leadership of the Czech Communist, Antonin Janoušek. But, the withdrawal of Hungarian Red Army troops meant the collapse of this two-week experiment.

The departure of the Hungarian forces from Slovakia came as a consequence of the June 13 Clemenceau Memorandum. In his note to the Revolutionary Governing Council, Georges Clemenceau informed the Hungarian government of Hungary's new borders as decided by the Paris Peace Conference. The Hungarians were called upon to withdraw the Red Army from beyond the new frontiers in the north. In return he promised that following the Hungarian evacuation, the Romanians would withdraw from Hungarian territories. On June 19, upon Béla Kun's proposal the Congress of Soviets accepted the withdrawal of the Red Army from Slovakia, which began on the following day.

The judgment of historians on the wisdom of such a withdrawal is contradictory. Gosztony believes that the Northern Campaign boosted Red Army morale. The troops had patriotic pride, which, according to him was mistakenly deflated by Kun and the Communists. The battle flags, for example, were all red and did not include the Hungarian national colors. A halt to the campaign did not lead to a breathing spell, but in fact to the demoralization of the troops. Romsics also indicates that there was no further justification for the patriotic but anticommunist officers in the Red Army to remain loyal. Consequently, antigovernment conspiracies appeared even in the general staff. In the judgment of these historians, therefore, the decision to withdraw from Slovakia was a fatal mistake for the Soviet government.

Tibor Hetés, on the other hand, argues that by the time the Hungarian troops were withdrawn, the campaign had run out of steam and could not have been sustained any further. The ill-fated Tisza Campaign against the Romanians in July, as described by Nouzille and Torrey, could be marshaled as proof for either Gosztony's or Hetés's position. The easy defeat of the Red Army shows, as Hetés argues, that, for reasons of logistics, the Red Army was unable to mount a campaign. It is also evident that the government's failure to appeal to nationalism contributed to the low morale of the troops.

The Romanian victory led to the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and to the eventual rise of the counterrevolutionary Horthy regime, which intended to extirpate not only the achievements of the two preceding revolutions, but, as Hajdu demonstrates, also embarked on a campaign to blacken the myth of the revolution. In this effort it succeeded well. Unlike the ill-fated revolution of 1848-49, the Liberal Democratic and the Communist revolutions of 1918-19 still do not project a positive image in the national consciousness of the Hungarians.

In addition to the efforts of the Horthy-era publicists, Hajdu also faults Marxist historiography for this state of affairs. During the 1940s and 1950s Béla Kun, the victim of Stalin's purges, was a non-person. The other extreme was reached in the late fifties and sixties, with the development of "Kunism," a cult which was fostered following the posthumous rehabilitation of Kun. The dubious veracity of these interpretations seem to create objections in the minds of most Hungarians. Pastor's examination of the recent historiography of Kun and the Soviet Republic points out that, following a brief respite when historians attempted to offer an objective interpretation, there has been a return to "Kunism." Hajdu also attributes the negative myth of the revolutions to a contemporary problem. In the perspective of almost 70 years, Socialist Internationalism, a goal of the Kun and the Communists, seems to have been a pipe dream. This is demonstrated by the state of affairs in 1986 in the Socialist Danube valley. For, at least two of Hungary's Socialist neighbors oppress their Hungarian minority to an extent unknown in the history of nationalities of the area.

It is hoped that this collection of essays will contribute to a better understanding of the Central European revolutionary events of 1918-19 on both sides of the Atlantic.