

Paul Bódy (ed.), *Hungarian Statesmen of Destiny, 1860–1960*. Highland Lakes, NJ: Atlantic Research and Publications, 1989. Social Sciences Monograph series (Boulder, CO), Distributed by Columbia University Press. xx + 209 pp.

Péter Gosztonyi, *A kormányzó, Horthy Miklós* [The Regent, Miklós Horthy]. Budapest: Téka, 1990. 174 pp.

István Bethlen, *Bethlen István emlékirata, 1944* [István Bethlen's Memoir, 1944], ed. Ignác Romsics. Budapest: Zrínyi Katonai Kiadó, 1988. With introductions by Ignác Romsics and Ilona Bolza. 174 pp.

The first Hungarian statesman that comes to mind when one thinks of the age of the two world wars of the first half of our century is István Tisza. As the man who directed his country's destiny from 1903 to 1905 and from 1913 to 1917, Tisza is considered to have been the most controversial Hungarian politician of his day. The second such person must be Miklós Horthy, the Regent of Hungary from 1920 to 1944. Who the third most important Hungarian statesman of this era was, might not be obvious to those who are only casually familiar with the course of Hungarian history. But to the specialists it must be obvious that this person is none other than István Bethlen, Hungary's Prime Minister during the 1920s and a man who wielded considerable influence also during parts of each of the world wars. The books at hand contain useful information and new interpretations on the policies and ideas of these three historical personalities.

Paul Bódy's collection of essays provides case studies of eight Hungarian statesmen who had been leaders of the Magyar people between the middle of the nineteenth and the middle of the twentieth centuries. These eight are Ferenc Deák, József Eötvös, Gyula Andrássy, István Tisza, Miklós Horthy, István Bethlen, Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, and Imre Nagy.<sup>1</sup> The writers who deal with these individuals are highly qualified and experienced scholars. Béla K. Király, the author of the chapter on Deák, is a biographer of Deák.<sup>2</sup> Paul Bódy, the volume's editor and the author of the paper on Eötvös, has published a book-length study on the ideas and work of this man.<sup>3</sup> The same is true of János Décsy as far as Andrássy is concerned.<sup>4</sup> Gábor Vermes too, has written a comprehensive political biography of his subject, István Tisza.<sup>5</sup> The authors of the chapters on the next four statesmen have also published extensively on the period they deal with, though not every one of them is a biographer of the person they deal with (or, at least, not yet).<sup>6</sup> Whether written by a recognized biographer or not, the chapters in this book offer authoritative and quite up-to-date overviews of the ideas and politics of the statesmen treated.

The two most controversial men covered in Bódy's volume are Tisza and Horthy. The main reason why they achieved this status is no doubt the fact that they had been leaders of their nation during wartime. In this book both of these men are portrayed in a way that deviates from the image that is held by many people.

István Tisza was a towering figure on the Hungarian political scene during the first three years of World War I. His contemporaries, both within and outside of Hungary, were of divided opinion about him. He inspired some with respect and admiration, others with awe and resentment. Historians have reacted to him similarly; however, most researchers in the West ever since 1918, and nearly everyone in Hungary after the Communist takeover in 1948, treated him as a villain. In the words of one historian, he has been described as "an arch-conservative, a callous defender of an unjust system, a warmonger personally responsible for the outbreak of the First World War and for the Hungarian participation in it". It is this highly negative assessment that is revised by Gábor Vermes, the author of the chapter on Tisza.

According to Vermes, "Tisza's leadership centered around a delicate balancing act between a forceful conservative statecraft and liberal constitutionalism" (p. 83). Behind his politics there was a "passionately-felt Hungarian nationalism". Tisza's nationalism was influenced mainly by two factors: a "profound attachment to Hungary's liberal heritage", and "persistent fears for his nation's survival" (p. 84). These fears stemmed from Hungary's demographic and geopolitical circumstances: Hungarians constituted only a half of the population of the Kingdom of Hungary, and they lived in a part of Europe that was populated largely by Slavs, and was wedged between the world of the Germans and the Russians.

The most weighty issues that preoccupied Tisza during his two terms in office stemmed from these circumstances. One of these issues was Hungary's relationship with one part of the German realm, Austria. On this question Tisza put aside his nationalist passion and listened to reason. He persistently and resolutely re-

sisted the demands of some of his compatriots for Hungarian independence, believing that the tie to Austria was essential for the protection of Hungary. He even refrained from advancing demands for a greater role for Hungary within the Habsburg Empire in the military and economic spheres, "above all to avoid antagonizing Austria" (85). On the question of the position of the Magyars in a kingdom where half the population was non-Magyar, Tisza also held strong views. He had formulated these early during his political career. The fact was that Rumanian peasants constituted nearly a half of the population of Bihar, Tisza's own home county. Already in 1893 he was calling for a fair and lawful treatment of Hungary's nationalities. He declared that moral example rather than government decrees would assure the minorities' loyalty to the Hungarian state. Then and later, Tisza insisted that ethnic minorities should be guaranteed the right to cultivate their own language and culture. In return, he expected these groups to be loyal to the Hungarian state, and to learn its official language (pp. 89-90). Tisza's efforts to make Hungarian the *lingua franca* of the Kingdom, however, got him few converts among the minorities, and his attempts to reach a compromise with the Rumanians floundered. They did so because by the time of Tisza's term in office cultural concessions could not placate the Rumanian nationalists, while the re-organization of Hungary into a loose confederation of regions was unthinkable to Tisza and the vast majority of his Magyar compatriots.

In 1914 Tisza at first reacted to the prospect of an Austro-Hungarian war against Serbia with revulsion. In the councils of the Habsburg state, for two weeks he single-handedly resisted the Austrian and German demands for the declaration of war. But the threat of losing Berlin as an ally of Vienna, as well as damaging his own reputation "as the Monarchy's strongman", caused him to change his mind (p. 92).

Once Tisza ended his opposition to the declaration of war on Serbia, he devoted his energies to the war effort. His "sense of mission" became stronger than ever, and he continued to uphold the old order in the face of mounting strains produced by total war. For Tisza, resisting the demand for change involved not only the obstructing of various plans for expansion of the suffrage or the federalization of the Monarchy, but also the opposing of calls for a more centralized and more authoritarian forms of wartime government. In the end, the forces calling for change gained the upper hand. Its advocates consolidated their power around the person of the new Emperor-King, Charles IV, who dismissed the Hungarian prime minister. Tisza spent part of the rest of the war as an officer of his old regiment, fighting on the Eastern front. In the fall of 1918 he witnessed the collapse of the Axis war effort and found his "entire life's work in ruins" (p. 94). He was spared witnessing the agony his country had to suffer in the next two years: on October 31st, in the midst of growing revolutionary chaos, a band of roving soldiers broke into his home and shot him.

For all his failures and shortcomings, according to Vermes, Tisza was a practitioner of conservative liberalism more akin to the liberalism of the aloof and aristocratic Lord Salisbury than to that of David Lloyd George. Both of these British statesmen were Tisza's contemporaries, but while Tisza's political attitudes underwent little change from the time of the former to that of the latter, the change that had taken place in British politics was "immense and drastic". According to Vermes, the tragedy of Tisza and Hungary was that "social and national considerations doomed Tisza's liberalism... to a strictly defensive position" (p. 92).

The image that the general public has of Miklós Horthy is often just as negative as that of István Tisza. He has been seen by many as a leader of a fascist country, a man tainted by chauvinism and anti-Semitism, and has been described by some as one of the architects of Hungary's alliance with Nazi Germany. While these views have been questioned by several historians, they have been most authoritatively revised or qualified by Thomas Sakmyster. Already in his introductory paragraphs, he points out that though Horthy has been accused of being rightwing and had no experience as a diplomat, he was one of the few statesmen who was "able to hold his own against Adolf Hitler". In connection with the Regent's alleged anti-Semitism, Sakmyster reminds his readers that this "notorious" anti-Semite is "often credited with saving" the Jewish community of Budapest in 1944 (p. 98). Yet, Sakmyster admits that Horthy was hardly suited by his training and intellect to lead a nation in wartime. His linguistic abilities notwithstanding (Horthy spoke several languages), the Regent's intellectual capacity is described as "modest at best", and his perspective on politics as "narrow and unsophisticated". All in all, Sakmyster suggests, Horthy would have been more at home in eighteenth century society than in the subject of the twentieth.

The controversial subject of Horthy's relationship with Hitler is explored in detail. Horthy had misgivings about the German leader because of the latter's vulgarity and predilection for theatrics. The Regent, however, was impressed by Hitler's success in destroying the Versailles settlement, and was attracted by his hos-

tility to Communism and Czechoslovakia. Yet in August of 1938, when Hitler told Horthy that he wanted to move against this country, Horthy responded by refusing to commit Hungary's cooperation in such venture and by warning the Führer that in a European war England would prevail. Events of the next two years, however, did much to erode Horthy's distaste for collaboration with Germany. The collapse of France and the regaining of lost Hungarian territories with the help of Germany, made Horthy more prone to going along with the Germans. Not surprisingly, in the crises of the spring of 1941, Horthy failed to prevent his country's involvement in the war on Germany's side.

No sooner than the decision to join Germany was made, second thoughts began developing among the leaders in Hungary. Already in September, Horthy was warned of a "long and bloody war" in which his country could gain nothing (p. 113). The defeat of the German armies at Stalingrad, and of the Hungarian 2nd Army at Voronezh, gave further impetus to Hungarian efforts to leave the war. Despite secret negotiations with the Allies to this end, Hungary could not get out of the tentacles of the German alliance. If anything, evidence of Hungary's duplicity stiffened Hitler's resolve to occupy the country.

In the meantime, at home Horthy resisted calls for the ending of the pluralistic political system that had prevailed in Hungary since the 1920s. The socialist and liberal opposition continued to be tolerated and Jews were protected, despite demands from Berlin — and from radical right-wing elements in Hungary — to the contrary. All this ended in 1944. In March of that year the country was occupied by the Wehrmacht and, after the ill-fated attempt of October 15th to sign an armistice with Russia, Horthy was removed from power and was taken to Germany as prisoner.

In the final analysis, Sakmyster absolves Horthy of most charges held against him by his detractors. He reminds us that in Horthy's prisons communist leaders survived, while many of their colleagues were liquidated in Stalin's Russia. In early 1944, Sakmyster adds, "Hungary was the only country in Hitler's Europe to preserve a semblance of the rule of law and a pluralistic society" (p. 120). He suggests that Horthy should be "regarded as the last of the Hungarian kings". He had carried out his responsibilities as head-of-state "in a dignified and dutiful manner reminiscent of Francis Joseph. Like many successful monarchs, he became a symbol of authority and a link with a more glorious national past" (p. 119). Horthy could have used this authority to establish a dictatorship, but he did not do this because he believed that inhumanity was not a "Hungarian quality" and because he had a "fundamental respect for Hungarian political traditions" (p. 120). In the end Horthy, much like Tisza during the First World War, became the victim of circumstances far beyond his ability to control.

\*

Historian Péter Gosztonyi presents a picture of Horthy similar to that offered by Sakmyster.<sup>8</sup> His book is a revised edition of a biography of Horthy he had written in German during the 1970s. With the political changes in Hungary in the late-1980s, it became possible to take steps toward the publication of such a work there as well.

Gosztonyi's study is a fast-paced, easy-to-read biography. It treats both Horthy's career as a naval officer and his post-1920 record as a statesman. It points out how on more than one occasion Horthy was in the "right place at the right time" to receive boosts in his ascent to prominence. One of these was early in 1918 when he was appointed commander of the Austro-Hungarian Navy. In this promotion nearly fifty officers with more seniority were passed over. The second such occasion happened two years later, during the period of communist rule in Budapest, when Hungarian politicians in exile looked to Admiral Horthy as the next Minister of War, mainly because the army generals in their midst would not tolerate the appointment of any one of their own kind to this exalted position. Because Horthy was the only senior admiral available for a prominent role, fate made sure that he would not be doomed to the obscurity to which many senior Habsburg officers were condemned after the collapse of Austria-Hungary.

According to Gosztonyi, Horthy was a conscientious officer who cared for his men. He valued loyalty and tradition. When fate thrust a great deal of power into his hands, he refused to use it to enhance his influence even further. Horthy expected respect from others but he never wished to become a dictator of his country. Like Sakmyster and other historians, Gosztonyi argues that Horthy refused to take the path of some of his contemporaries, such as Mussolini or even Pilsudsky. Unlike Sakmyster and others, he argues that in some of his moves Horthy demonstrated considerable political acumen. But Gosztonyi agrees with most of those who had studied Horthy that his conservative upbringing and outlook prevented him from accepting

many of the new ideas and ideals that were current in the twentieth century. He was suspicious of all radicalisms and hated communism with a particular vehemence. His sympathy for the Hungarian peasant did not extend to his country's masses of agrarian laborers, or to its workingmen. While he did not initiate the White Terror that became widespread in parts of Hungary after the collapse of Béla Kun's Commune, he was slow to curb it and was reluctant to bring its perpetrators to account. On the controversial question of Horthy's anti-semitism, Gosztonyi comes to the conclusion that the Admiral was not a hater of Jews, but was no philo-Semite either. He possessed what might be called gentlemanly anti-semitism that was far removed from the anti-semitism of people such as Hitler.

Throughout most of the 1920s Horthy was content to leave the administration of Hungary to his prime ministers, in particular to István Bethlen. In the 1930s, with the Great Depression, the increased influence of right-radical ideologies, and the growing international instability, Horthy found himself involved in decision making on several occasions. Gosztonyi rarely finds grounds for criticizing Horthy for the stands he had taken on these occasions. Many historians, and even memoir writers, have condemned Horthy for not doing more to prevent Hungary's complicity in the German attack on Yugoslavia in April of 1941; but not so Gosztonyi. He argues that in the light of Hungary's past record of friendship toward Germany, a denial of Hitler's request for passage through Hungary would not have been possible. Nor does Gosztonyi blame Horthy for Hungary's declaration of war on the Soviet Union and the United States. For the latter, he places the blame squarely on the shoulders of the then Prime Minister, László Bárdossy. In his sympathetic treatment of Horthy, Gosztonyi goes so far as to say that Horthy realized, long before other Axis statesmen, that Hitler would not have his quick victory in Russia and began to guide Hungary's fate accordingly. His first act was to dismiss the Chief-of-Staff, the pro-German Henrik Werth, in the fall of 1941. In early 1942 Horthy continued his efforts. His most important step was to replace Prime Minister Bárdossy with Miklós Kállay under whose leadership parliamentary government, respect for human rights, freedom of the press, and protection for refugees from Axis lands were the order of the day to a greater extent than in any other Axis country. Many German demands were denied by Kállay and contacts were made with Allied agents to prepare for Hungary's defection from the German camp. These efforts had limited success only, as Hungary's defection hinged on British and American troops reaching her borders.

While Gosztonyi explicitly approves Horthy's choice of Kállay as Hungary's leader in those difficult times, he acquits the Regent for some of his own actions during this time. He refutes the charges, made by the Regent's contemporary and latter-day critics, that Horthy thought of setting up a Horthy dynasty when he arranged that his son be made deputy Regent. This act, according to Gosztonyi, was designed to make sure that if the elder Horthy was prevented from performing his duties as head-of-state — by illness, death or abduction — Hungary would have a leader that would have the respect of her people and whose sympathies were squarely with the English and the Americans. Gosztonyi also disagrees completely with those detractors of the Regent who have suggested that when in March of 1944 Hitler threatened to occupy Hungary, Horthy should have resigned. By staying on, Gosztonyi argues, the Regent made the best choice in a very difficult situation.

The occupation of Hungary by the Wehrmacht in the late winter of 1943–44 was a watershed in the country's wartime history. In its wake the full burden of total war was visited on the country's people. Hitler insisted on the appointment of a pro-Nazi government, on Hungary's full support for the Axis war effort, and on the "solution" of Hungary's "Jewish question". Starting with the spring of 1944 Hungary lost her immunity from Allied bombing raids, while opposition elements were dealt with by the Gestapo who often acted as if they operated in occupied enemy territory. Further, the deportation of Hungary's Jews started under the supervision of Adolf Eichmann.

For a while Horthy watched these developments as if he had been in exile, but in June he began to take steps to try to ameliorate his country's sad situation. He appealed to Hitler to stop the Germans' worst excesses. At the same time he also consulted with his most trusted soldiers on the matter of armed resistance to German rule. In the end, he replaced the government the Germans had insisted on in March, and appointed a military cabinet whose task it was to prepare Hungary's exit from the war. Earlier, he had stopped the deportations of Jews from Hungary, just before these were to be extended to the large Jewish community of Budapest. It is only in this connection that Gosztonyi expresses regret that the Regent had not acted sooner.

In the summer of 1944 Horthy's days as Regent of Hungary were numbered. He was determined to end Hungary's involvement in the war, and persisted even after he was told by the Allies that he would have to surrender unconditionally to the Soviets. According to Gosztonyi, Hungary's attempt to leave the war failed mainly for two reasons. The Germans found out about it and took timely counter-measures (such as abducting Horthy's only living child, Miklós Horthy Jr.), and pro-German elements of Hungary's officer corps deserted the Regent in the hour of greatest need.

Horthy was not treated as a war criminal after the war. Marshal Tito's efforts to put him on trial were resisted by the English and the Americans, while the similar designs of Hungary's communists were discouraged by Stalin who apparently saw no need to try the "old man". So, in 1948 the octogenarian Horthy was allowed to start his exile in Portugal.<sup>9</sup> In exile, Horthy stayed away from emigre politics, but remained a keen observer of world events and developments in Hungary. The crushing of the Hungarian Revolution by the Soviets late in 1956 dealt a great blow to his morale. He died early in the new year at the age of 88.

István Bethlen, the author of much of the third volume under review here and the subject of three essays (two in this book and one in Bódy's volume), was undoubtedly one of the outstanding Hungarian statesmen of our century. Though not a member of any of his country's wartime governments, he was an influential politician during both world wars.<sup>10</sup> In the interwar years, he was even more powerful. During the 1920s he was Hungary's Prime Minister. Though out of office in the 1930s, he continued to wield a great deal of power as one of Horthy's most trusted advisers. After the outbreak of the war, however, his ability to influence his country's policies declined, and reached its nadir in 1941.

In that year Hungary became entangled in the war. From the very beginning of Budapest's involvement in the conflict, Bethlen became part of that element of Hungary's elite which had second thoughts about their country's association with the Axis. The members of this elite strove to reduce Nazi influence in Hungary and to find a way to leave the war. In March of 1944 Hitler put an end to these efforts when he ordered the Wehrmacht to occupy Hungary. With the German military came agents of the Gestapo who began abducting Hungarians opposed to the Axis war effort. Under the changed circumstances Bethlen had to go into hiding. From this time until the war's end he would stay with friends or relatives in the countryside, changing hiding places occasionally to make it difficult for the Germans to track him down. Occasionally he would be smuggled into Budapest by trusted members of the Hungarian military, for consultation with Horthy.

Bethlen used his involuntary exile from Budapest to write an assessment of his country's involvement and role in the war. He entitled it "Hungarian Politics in the Second World War: A Study in Politics or an Indictment". In his essay Bethlen did not take issue with the direction of Hungarian foreign policy in the pre-war period, and not even during the first year of the war. The dismemberment of Hungary by the peacemakers after the First World War, according to him, made it impossible for Hungary to follow policies that did not aim for treaty revision. The most logical of such policies was cooperation with a Germany that gradually, without resort to war, re-asserted its dominant position in Europe and dismantled the post-war international order. Indeed, this had been Hungary's policy in the late 1930s and it resulted in a re-adjustment of the country's borders in its favor on three separate occasions. Bethlen basically approved the policies that achieved these treaty revisions, even though in one case (before the Second Vienna Award which resulted in the return to Hungary of Northern Transylvania) Budapest threatened war with Rumania, and another occasion (in the re-acquisition of Sub-Carpathia), under extenuating circumstances, Hungary resorted to the use of force.

Where Hungarian foreign policy began its calamitous course, according to Bethlen, was in acceding to the German-Italian-Japanese Tripartite Pact in November of 1940. Joining a pact designed to look after the interests of great powers offered nothing to Hungary, especially after her neighbors also joined. And it burdened the country with obligations that could not be assessed and foreseen in 1940. Hungary had no business risking entanglement in a struggle of great powers; therefore, it should have been her foremost task to stay clear of involvement in such confrontation.

The next blunders of Hungarian foreign policy, in Bethlen's view, were the declarations of war on the Soviet Union and the USA. In his opinion, the declaration of war against these great powers was an indirect consequence of Hungary's joining the Tripartite Pact, even though the actual letter of that agreement did not oblige Budapest to enter the war; however, membership in the league of aggressors made it difficult for Hun-

gary not to accede to the demands by her allies to join them in their struggle. Once the country became a partner in the Axis war, it became very difficult to reduce the scale of the Hungarian war effort, as steps in that direction were seen as treason by Hitler and resulted in the country's occupation and the imposition of a Quisling-like government. This is how Hungary became involved in the war, gradually, almost imperceptibly, against the wishes of her people and the best intentions of many of her leaders.

There were many in Hungary, Bethlen admits, who supported the idea of a military alliance with Germany. Bethlen spends several pages in outlining the reasoning of these men, and refutes it. He takes special pains to dispel the ideas that the First World War and the subsequent struggle against the Paris peace settlement consecrated a lasting Hungarian-German comradeship, and that the Nazi leadership could be trusted to have Hungary's interests at heart. And he accuses some of Hungary's pro-German politicians of hypocrisy when they argued that involvement in the war was necessary to make sure that the Germans did not return the territories Hungary had gained in 1938, 1939, and 1940, to her neighbors. Indeed, Bethlen argues that what these people had done through their ill-advised policies, was to risk the loss of these legitimately retained territories after the war as a consequence of Hungary's military alliance with the Axis.

Bethlen is convinced that Hungary could have stayed out of the war until the appearance of the Red Army on the slopes of the Carpathians. And even then, she might have avoided a German occupation if she had insisted on preventing the Soviets from entering on Hungarian soil. Had the Soviets refused to respect Hungarian neutrality and invaded Hungary, a Hungarian-German military partnership could then have been established. It would have been a defensive alliance for which the international community could not have blamed Hungary.

As Hungary's leadership had failed to avoid premature involvement in the war, by 1944 Hungary fell into a perilous situation unparalleled in the annals of modern Hungarian history, even though the country had suffered great disasters before, such as after the Hungarian War of Independence and in wake of the First World War. Bethlen attributes this calamity largely to the radicalization of Hungarian politics in the 1930s. He indicts most leading politicians of the time either for promoting this process, or for being too weak to stem it. With right-radicalism rampant in the country, entanglement in the Axis net became more difficult to avoid. Along with the radicalization of Hungarian politics, came the growth of Nazi influence, the worst aspect of which was systematic hate-mongering carried out by the Nazis and their Hungarian allies. These turned ethnic groups against each other, most significantly Hungary's German minority against her Magyar majority, and everyone against the Jews. Bethlen predicted that it would take a long time to heal the wounds inflicted this way during the war.

While Bethlen's indictment of Hungary's politics during the country's descent to the status of a German satellite is undoubtedly perceptive, it no doubt has benefited from hindsight. It tends to lack credibility in its treatment of Hungary's policy of collaboration with Germany. Bethlen condemns Hungary's involvement in Hitler's Russian campaign, but he condones her participation in the attack on Yugoslavia, on the grounds that (1) it came only after Croatia's declaration of independence when Yugoslavia had "ceased" to exist, (2) the Hungarian population in Voivodina had asked for intervention, and (3) the Yugoslav air force had bombed Hungarian cities in the first days of the German attack. Indeed, the sending of Hungarian troops into Voivodina is not on Bethlen's list of blunders committed by Hungary's leadership in 1941.<sup>11</sup>

Bethlen did not recommend a way out of Hungary's predicament. As we know, he was a proponent of a separate peace with the Anglo-Saxon powers, and when in the late summer of 1944 it became evident to him that this solution was unattainable, he advised Horthy to turn to the Soviets. But this is not an explicit part of Bethlen's memorandum. By outlining his country's disastrous situation in the summer of 1944, Bethlen is clearly preparing his audience — Horthy and his trusted generals in case the study remained uncirculated, but possibly his nation if circumstances made it possible to publish it — for drastic steps to remedy Hungary's desperate position. Those drastic steps were taken by Horthy in his attempt to reach an armistice with the Russians during mid-October. The attempt failed and Hungary plunged into an even more calamitous situation.

Bethlen's memoir is ably introduced by historian Ignác Romsics. The book also contains a second introduction by Ilona Bolza, a friend of the Bethlen family and an employee of Hungary's wartime Red Cross who in 1944 undertook to act as a secret go-between for the fugitive statesman. The manuscript was entrusted

to her and it was first made public in the West in 1985. Three years later the present Hungarian edition became possible. The new edition is enriched by Romsics's excellent biographical essay, his meticulous notes, as well as numerous illustrations and an index.

\*

Each of the volumes at hand contributes in its own way to our knowledge and understanding of the subject of Hungarian statesmen and statesmanship during the first half of our century. One of the main merits of Bódy's book is the publication of two significant essays on Hungary's most prominent leaders in World War I and World War II. His volume is of much use also to students of modern Hungarian history in peacetime. One can only regret that essays on a few more of Hungary's statesmen of destiny were not included in the collection, such as Pál Teleki and Miklós Kállay. However, these matters are often beyond the editor's control, as papers promised for such publications as this one, sometimes do not get completed on time. This shortcoming notwithstanding, the editor should be congratulated on putting a remarkable collection of papers together. *Hungarian Statesmen of Destiny* should serve as a companion volume to any textbook of modern Hungarian history, in fact, in view of the dearth of such volumes in English, it might well serve as one of the basic reference works in any course dealing with the history of Hungary.

While Bódy's book might help to refine and revise the historical assessment that is held about Tisza and Horthy in the English-speaking world, Gosztanyi's book will probably give impetus to the achievement of the same regarding Horthy in Hungary. In view of the negative, polemical treatment this statesman had received for decades, this might be a wholesome development. Hopefully, the revising of Horthy's image will not lead to Hungarian public opinion going to the other extreme, resulting in the re-birth of a Horthy cult in that country. The shortcomings of Hungarian society and statecraft in the so-called "Horthy era" should not be forgotten. The publication of Bethlen's 1944 work helps to remind us of some of these shortcomings.

At the end of the twentieth century we can say with some satisfaction that, after many decades of historiographical abuse, an image has emerged about István Tisza that will probably stand the test of future historical inquiry. Our understanding of István Bethlen's personality and ideas has also improved recently, and will probably continue to improve in the near future.<sup>12</sup> Horthy, however, will probably remain a controversial historical figure for some time. The general public, especially in Hungary, will be buffeted between the vituperations that had been heaped on this man in the four decades after his departure from Budapest, and the sympathetic accounts of him that have started to appear recently. A balanced image of Horthy has yet to emerge, just as a truly scholarly, full-fledged biography of him remains to be written.<sup>13</sup>

### Notes

1. For the reader who is not familiar with Hungarian history it might be useful to outline very briefly who these statesmen were. Ferenc Deák (1803–76) was the architect of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 and the father of the political order that existed in Hungary during the period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867–1918). Writer, philosopher, and liberal politician, József Eötvös was one of Deák's colleagues and collaborators whose ideas were incorporated in the early educational and nationality policies of Hungary's post-Compromise regime. Gyula Andrassy (1823–90) was still another prominent figure of the post-1876 settlement. He served as Hungary's Prime Minister after the Compromise, and in 1871 became the Habsburg empire's foreign minister. Rounding out the overview of Hungarian statesmen of the 1867–1918 period is the essay on István Tisza (1861–1918), the Prime Minister of the country in the era of World War I. The next three statesmen, Miklós Horthy, István Bethlen, Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, achieved prominence during the interwar and World War II period. Horthy (1868–1957) was the country's Regent from 1920 to 1944; Bethlen (1874–1946) was one of his Prime Ministers and trusted advisors, while Bajcsy-Zsilinszky (1886–1944), was one of the prominent opposition politicians of this period. The last of the statesmen examined is Imre Nagy (1896–1958), the leader of the ill-fated revolutionary government that came to power in Hungary during the anti-Soviet uprising of 1956.

2. Béla K. Király, *Ferenc Deák* (Boston, 1975). Before his return in 1989 from American exile to enter the Parliament of post-communist Hungary, Király was generally regarded as the doyen of Hungarian historians living in North America.
3. Paul Bódy, *Joseph Eötvös and the Modernization of Hungary, 1840–1870* (Boulder, 1985).
4. János Decsy, *Prime Minister Gyula Andrassy's Influence on Habsburg Foreign Policy during the Franco-German War of 1870–1871* (New York, 1979).
5. Gábor Vermes, *István Tisza, The Liberal Vision and Conservative Statecraft of a Magyar Nationalist* (Boulder, 1985).
6. István Mocsy's most prominent publication is *The Effects of World War I, The Uprooted: Hungarian Refugees and Their Impact on Hungary's Domestic Politics, 1918–1921* (New York, 1983). Thomas Sakmyster's is *Hungary, the Great Powers, and the Danubian Crisis, 1936–1939* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1980).
7. This view of Tisza was shared by Stalinists as well as some of their opponents in post-1945 Hungary. See Géza Jeszenszky, "István Tisza: Villain or Tragic Hero? Reassessments in Hungary — Verdict in the U.S." XIV, 2 (Fall, 1987), p. 46. Jeszenszky disagrees with this assessment.
8. This is interesting as the background of these two writers is quite different. Sakmyster is American-born and American-trained, he is a university teacher who publishes in the foremost academic journals of North America. Gosztonyi (known to his German readers as Gosztony) is Hungarian-born and had received some of his higher education in Mátyás Rákosi's Hungary. After his departure from Hungary in 1956, he continued his studies in Switzerland where he later became a librarian and started to write for the general German and Magyar reading public interested in Hungarian military history. His most substantial work is probably the massive *A magyar honvédség a Második Világháborúban* (Rome, 1986). He has also published extensively on the 1956 revolution in Hungary.
9. To save him from poverty, a few of his sympathizers established a fund for him. Among those who were responsible for this was American diplomat John F. Montgomery and a handful of Hungarian Jews (p. 157).
10. Bethlen's political career is the subject of several studies by Ignác Romsics. See, for example, Graf István Bethlen's politische Ansichten (1901–1921). *Acta Historica* 32, nos. 3–4 (1986) pp. 271–289; and, Bethlen István konzervatívizmusa, (Szeged: Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, 1988), pp. 321–28. For off-prints of these articles I am indebted to Dr. Romsics. In Canada, research on Bethlen has been conducted by Professor Géza Charles Kuun of the University of New Brunswick. The results of some of this research have been presented at various meetings of the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada.
11. Historians might also take Bethlen to task on a few of his statements. Bethlen seems not to know that in June of 1941 no diplomatic *démarche* came from Berlin demanding that Hungary join the invasion of the USSR — the pressure was exerted through military channels. True, in June of 1941 Hitler certainly did not think that the Wehrmacht needed Hungarian help, but the situation had changed by the winter of 1942–43.
12. Ignác Romsics, *Bethlen István* (Magyarságkutató Intézet, Budapest, 1991).
13. In the United States Professor Sakmyster has been doing research that promises to lead to a scholarly biography of Horthy.

N. F. Dreisziger