

Tibor Frank

# To Comply with English Taste

The Making of The Hungarian Quarterly,  
1934–1944

The foreign policy of interwar Hungary was built upon the idea of revisionism. The peace treaty of Trianon (1920) cut off more than two-thirds of historical Hungary, forcing over 3.5 million ethnic Hungarians to live across the borders in the neighbouring countries of newly created Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, as well as a much-aggrandized Romania.<sup>1</sup>

The response to these changes was overwhelming in Hungary. For the entire period between 1920 and the Second World War there was nothing more vital and urgent on the political agenda of subsequent Hungarian governments than treaty revision. Friends and foes of the country were selected on the basis of whether or not they supported or indeed opposed Hungary's bid for a reconsideration of the terms of the peace treaty. Almost everything that was planned or done by the governments of the newly established independent kingdom of Hungary was geared towards influencing the major powers of Europe to change their minds concerning Hungary's borders.

It seems natural that Trianon generated a major propaganda campaign in Hungary that lasted for decades. For the "children of Trianon" the "peacemaking was above all a triumph of propaganda".<sup>2</sup> They agreed with Harold Nicolson that the Paris Peace Conference was driven by an "emotional impulse", as he put it in

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<sup>1</sup> n For a succinct and very informative summary of Trianon, see Ignác Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century* (Budapest: Corvina–Osiris, 1999), pp. 117–125.

<sup>2</sup> n Stephen Borsody, "Hungary's Road To Trianon: Peacemaking and Propaganda", in Béla K. Király, Peter Pastor and Ivan Sanders, eds., *Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon* (Social Science Monographs, Brooklyn College Press; Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 26.

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his *Peacemaking 1919*, where

the new Serbia, the new Greece, the new Bohemia, the new Poland...made our hearts sing hymns at heaven's gate. This angle of emotional approach is very significant... one which will not be apparent from the documents in the case. ...Bias there was, and prejudice. But they proceeded, not from any revengeful desire to subjugate and penalise our late enemies, but from a fervent aspiration to create and fortify the new nations whom we regarded, with maternal instinct, as the justification of our sufferings and of our victory.<sup>3</sup>

The fundamental principle of the Foreign Office in 1918 was indeed not to be unfair when dealing with the losers but "to carry through a disinterested policy which has sought the best interest of all."<sup>4</sup> As time went by, however, not everybody felt in Britain like Harold Nicolson. Prime Minister David Lloyd George warned "that the creation of large Hungarian irredentas constituted an apparent injustice that could create a very unstable situation in Danubian Europe", and "urged his counterparts on the Allied Supreme Council to study the peace terms with a view to making possible concessions to Hungary".<sup>5</sup>

Yet the tone of Czech, Romanian, Serbian and indeed French propaganda was feverishly anti-Habsburg and anti-Hungarian. The overall mood was best expressed by Edvard Beneš's famous wartime pamphlet *Détruisez l'Autriche-Hongrie!*<sup>6</sup>

Though some of the relevant points in anti-Hungarian propaganda were justified—Hungary was not a democratic country, it oppressed its national minorities and it supported Germany's war efforts—the tremendous penalty for all this seemed unacceptable for most if not all Hungarians. The ensuing waves of Hungarian propaganda were therefore a response partly to British historian R. W. Seton-Watson and his journal *The New Europe*, partly to *The Times's* Vienna correspondent Henry Wickham Steed, and partly to the terms of the peace treaty itself.

Post-First World War Hungarian propaganda came close to a national effort and it took many and varied forms. "Justice for Hungary" became the national slogan and a wide variety of books, pamphlets, tracts, articles and maps were produced in several languages to convince public opinion primarily in the countries that defeated the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the First World War. Those in opposition to the emerging Horthy regime who reminded Hungary and the world of the country's own responsibilities, urging introspection and self-doubt as to the internal causes of Trianon, were silenced and forced to emigrate. Primarily, the propaganda war used the material that was produced by and for the peace delegation Hungary sent to Paris, a group that included distinguished

3 n Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1965), p. 33.

4 n Unsigned Foreign Office memo dated 13 Dec. 1918, Public Record Office, Cab 29/2, no. 52. Quoted by Thomas L. Sakmyster, "Great Britain and the Making of The Treaty of Trianon", in Béla K. Király, Peter Pastor and Ivan Sanders, eds., *op. cit.*, p. 107. Cf. Miklós Lojtkó, ed., *British Policy on Hungary 1918–1919* (London: SSEES, 1995), pp. 25–38.

5 n *Ibid.*

6 n Stephen Borsody, *op. cit.*, pp. 28–29.

experts such as cartographer Count Pál Teleki, a prospective prime minister.

Efforts to redraw the map of Danubian Europe continued through the 1920s and early 1930s. They included the activity of Lord Rothermere, who expressed great interest in “Hungary’s Place in the Sun” in his *Daily Mail* in 1927, as well as those of the British House of Commons, where two members, Sir Robert Gower and Frederick Llewellyn-Jones started a movement to reopen the case of the peace treaties in a new spirit.<sup>7</sup> Most of these endeavours were fuelled by Hungarian initiatives through the 1920s, though a more systematic attempt to win over British public opinion was yet to follow.

The early 1930s seemed more appropriate to try and convince Britain. Attempts to influence American common opinion were scant before the Second World War. In comparison to Britain, the U.S. was less appreciated as a power affecting Hungarian treaty revision and foreign policy. Hopes centered around Britain.

Probably the most talented and influential Hungarian statesman of interwar Hungary, Count István Bethlen made a number of important steps to influence foreign public opinion through articles, lectures abroad and other initiatives even after resigning his long tenure as prime minister in 1931. Bethlen was tireless in his arguments for the restoration of the integrity of “historical” Hungary and would not want to limit the country to the ethnic borders alone. Bethlen already had a functioning French review, *La Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, when he visited Britain in 1933. He gave a series of lectures that were to be published in London the following year as *The Treaty of Trianon and European Peace*.<sup>8</sup> Bethlen’s visit contributed to the speedy publication of *A History of the Roumanians: From Roman Times to the Completion of the Unity* by R. W. Seton-Watson, an influential scholarly supporter of Romanian claims to Transylvania.<sup>9</sup>

Bethlen was quick to realise the potential dangers of a publication such as Seton-Watson’s *History*, and his response was prompt. Soon after returning from London he made arrangements for a meeting with the leading figures in Hungarian economics, politics and scholarship, mostly personal friends and political allies with close ties to Britain. In an apparent effort to influence Britain in particular, he proposed two ventures on 3 July 1934:<sup>10</sup> *The Hungarian Quarterly*, a periodical in English, as well as *A History of Hungary*, in both

7 n Emil Nagy, *londoni levelei* (E.N.’s Letters from London) (Budapest: Singer és Wolfner, 1936), pp. 216–219. Cf. *Who’s Who of British Members of Parliament*, Vol. III, 1919–1945 (Sussex: The Harvester Press; New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979), pp. 132, 210. Both MPs received high Hungarian decorations for their support of Hungary.

8 n Ignác Romsics, *István Bethlen: A Great Conservative Statesman of Hungary, 1874–1946* (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs; New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 312–317. Cf. Count Stephen Bethlen, *The Treaty of Trianon and European Peace* (London–New York–Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1934).

9 n Ignác Romsics, *op. cit.*, p. 319. Cf. R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians: From Roman Times to the Completion of the Unity* (Cambridge: University Press, 1934).

English and French.

The *Quarterly* was to serve the same purpose as Bethlen's *Nouvelle Revue* in the Francophone world, "to introduce Hungary and Hungarian topics of interest to an Anglo-Saxon<sup>11</sup> readership. Moreover, it would be an important tool to win over leading personalities in the English-speaking world, both by seeking articles from them, which we would, of course, compensate in an adequate fashion, and by provoking argument in the British press on different topics, with reference to the H. Qu."<sup>12</sup> Trying to make his new review convincing in Britain, Bethlen thought of both content and form: "As regards the type and contents of the periodical, the great English-language ideals, the American *Foreign Affairs* and the British *Round Table* may be used as models."<sup>13</sup> Bethlen's emphasis was not only on impeccable English, he also expected the treatment of Hungarian subjects in a genuinely British nature and spirit. "It goes without saying that the lay-out of the periodical has carefully to comply with English taste: its make-up has to be equal to that of the best British periodicals."<sup>14</sup> The former prime minister set the standard very high: "The entire periodical, constructed in this fashion, would be in the service not of vulgarising and of cheap sensation hunting or propaganda, but would speak exclusively to the most educated in the Anglo-Saxon countries: to Parliaments, to universities, to the leading figures in economic and social life."<sup>15</sup>

Closely connected with *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Bethlen's other idea was a direct reaction to Seton-Watson's *A History of the Roumanians*. As chairman of the *Magyar Szemle Társaság*, an influential think tank of the interwar era, Bethlen initiated *A History of Hungary*, first in one volume, as that alone "can stand a chance when it comes to promotion".<sup>16</sup> By November 1934 a new idea had come up: to publish an abridged, two-volume edition of *Magyar Történet* by Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szekfű, which had just been concluded in Hungarian in eight volumes (1929–1933). Oxford University Press or Macmillan were designated as publishers, and it was planned to print some two thousand copies. Most of volume 1 was supposed to contain Hóman's original text, abridged and revised by József Deér, and the rest of the volume and the whole of volume 2 were to be (re)written by Professor Szekfű. The intention to match Seton-Watson's *History*

11 n "Anglo-Saxon" in the vocabulary of the period meant "English-speaking".

12 n Memorandum, 3 July 1934. Országos Széchényi Könyvtár Kézirattára (OSzK), József Balogh Papers: Litteræ Originale (Litt. Orig.), Fond 1/1525.

13 n *Ibid.*

14 n *Ibid.*

15 n *Ibid.*

16 n *Magyar Történet* in English and French, 1 November 1934 [?], OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/75/475.

17 n *Magyar Történet* in English and French, 1 November 1934 [?], OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/75/475–476. See Tibor Frank, "Luring the English Speaking World: Hungarian History Diverted",

of the Roumanians was so strong that even advance royalties were estimated on the basis of Seton-Watson's Cambridge University Press publication.<sup>17</sup>

The cost of starting the twin ventures of the *Quarterly* and the *History* was estimated at the very considerable sum of 100,000 pengős. Towards the end of 1934, Bethlen persuaded Hungary's ministers to Britain and the U.S., Count László Széchenyi and János Pelényi, to put forward to the Hungarian ministry of foreign affairs as their own idea the plan to launch the *Quarterly*. Thus Bethlen was able to secure some 60 per cent of the money from government funds. By February 1935, the former prime minister convened a meeting to discuss the rest of the finances of the *Quarterly* and the *History of Hungary*. Those present at the meeting included some of Hungary's richest and most influential people: industrialists such as Ferenc Chorin, Baron Móric Kornfeld, Pál Bíró and Pál Fellner, as well as financiers and bankers such as Béla Imrédy, Baron Frigyes Korányi, Baron Marcell Madarassy-Beck, Lajos Reményi-Schneller, Tibor Scitovszky, Fülöp Weiss and others. Leaders of the Hungarian National Bank (MNB), the Association of Savings Depositories and Banks (TÉBE) and the Organisation of Industrialists (GyOSz) instantly proposed to secure the lacking 40,000 pengős by 1938. Even so, as prospective co-editor, József Balogh noted that the double venture meant such a heavy reliance on Hungary's governmental resources "that it required an entire year of hard work as well as Count István Bethlen's considerable personal support" to provide all the necessary finances.

Nor was it money alone that was needed for the undertaking. The *Quarterly* was in fact an English-language offspring of *Magyar Szemle*, a quality review, nationalist in spirit, published for the educated middle class in post-war Hungary, accompanied by different series of informative books. Under the chairmanship of Count Bethlen and within *Magyar Szemle Társaság* a "Society for *The Hungarian Quarterly*" was founded, consisting of prominent people with strong ties to Britain or the United States. Apart from most of the people whose money helped launch the *Quarterly*, the list included Habsburg Archduke Albrecht, aristocrats such as Count György Apponyi, Prince György Festetics, Count Béla Hadik, Count József Mailáth, Jr., Counts János and Pál Teleki, Countesses Albert Apponyi and Rafael Zichy, Budapest university professors Gyula Szekfű and Arthur B. Yolland, the minister of cult and education Bálint Hóman, the ex-foreign minister Gusztáv Gratz, the renowned scholar and parliamentarian Gyula Kornis, the Calvinist Bishop László Ravasz, the internationally known orientalist Sir Aurel Stein, and the popular authors Zsolt Harsányi, Cecile Tormay and Lajos Zilahy. A highly conservative list indeed. Advisory boards were set up in London and Washington, D.C., again in a rather conservative spirit. As the new review was considered pre-eminently a "periodical addressed to Britain", the "Anglo-Hungarian Society" was revitalised, with Lord Londonderry as chair. The "Anglo-Hungarian Society" was especially active in trying to solicit subscribers for the *Quarterly*, first and foremost among the British aristocracy.

Right from the beginning, *The Hungarian Quarterly* was considered a joint, semi-official publication of the circle around Count Bethlen and the foreign ministry. As the editor put it in 1941, “the HQ is not a mouthpiece of official Hungarian foreign policy, but a social endowment, and as such, a synthesis of national foreign policy.”<sup>18</sup> Balogh regarded only the prime minister, the foreign minister, Count Bethlen and co-editor György Ottlik as those who were to instruct him in delicate political matters.<sup>19</sup> Yet the opinion expressed by Bethlen’s reviews was regarded as that of the Hungarian government. Bethlen’s leadership was no formality: all through the short life of the review the former prime minister provided instructions “in matters political, administrative and budgetary”.<sup>20</sup> Just like other supporters of the *Quarterly*, such as Baron Móric Kornfeld, he wrote for the review, entertained and provided information to its potential British and American authors, and wrote articles himself.

József Balogh (1893–1944) became first co-editor, later editor of the *Quarterly*. He was the offspring of a Jewish-Hungarian family with a learned father and a highly educated background. He converted to Catholicism and studied classical philology, becoming a translator of Saint Augustine and a scholar of Hungary’s Christian heritage. Balogh was a student of Greek and Latin, but he also spoke German, French, English and Italian fluently. His father was a tutor in the Weiss and Kornfeld families, and young József soon became friends with Baron Móric Kornfeld, a patron of Count Bethlen’s reviews. This explains his privileged position as editor, and his influence, all the way up to early 1944, in the select circle of Count Bethlen.<sup>21</sup>

Balogh deeply believed that the *Quarterly* could make a much bigger impact if using a voice familiar to the British public. He requested his Hungarian authors to keep “simple, Anglo-Saxon and Diltheyan thinking” in mind and repeatedly said that he preferred those “who stood close to Anglo-Saxon thinking”.<sup>22</sup> He made every effort to request articles from reputable British authors, whom he carefully monitored and kept in touch with. The editor went out of his way to recruit, both personally every year and through his gigantic correspondence, influential British public figures, members of both houses of Parliament, writers, journalists and scholars, to contribute to *The Hungarian Quarterly*.

18 n József Balogh to Count István Bethlen, 6 March 1941. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/322.

19 n József Balogh to László Bárdossy (as minister to Bucharest), 18 April 1939. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/212.

20 n József Balogh to Count István Bethlen, 20 October 1936. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/322/3196.

21 n Tibor Frank, “Editing as Politics: József Balogh and *The Hungarian Quarterly*”, *The Hungarian Quarterly*. Vol. 34, No. 129, Spring 1993, pp. 5–13 and, completed with notes, in Tibor Frank, *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-Making: Studies on Hungarian Connections to Britain and America 1848–1945* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999), pp. 265–275.

22 n József Balogh to Dezső Keresztury, 4 October 1935, József Balogh to Lajos Zilahy, 12 June

Balogh in fact wrote several of the “British” articles himself: he was tireless in preparing “briefs” for prospective British authors, supplying material for their much-wanted articles.<sup>23</sup> In a letter of early 1937, Balogh was so successful in persuading the Labour politician Lord Allen of Hurtwood (Reginald Clifford Allen) to write an article for the *Quarterly* on “Hungarian minorities in the detached territories” that he accepted Balogh’s text making few revisions only. As the editor put it:

The relation between the League of Nations and the national minorities are of paramount importance for us, as we have three and a half millions of Hungarian minority subjects in the Succession States.

Hungary has always nourished the hope that the minority procedure might be improved, and since the reform of the Covenant has become a tangible possibility, the question has gained actuality. But so far we have not seen it discussed in the English Press.

The paper contains no proposals for a possible reform, as we believe that to be a different question needing separate treatment.<sup>24</sup>

Lord Allen noticed some of the problematic sentences only in proof stage.

I have not had time to check up carefully your very emphatic statement about the Czech promises to the Ruthenians, but I should like the sentence to be deleted not because I believe it to be inaccurate, but because I am so anxious that the general line of argument in the article should be sympathetically received in all quarters. We do not want to arouse hostility if we can help it, and I do not think we weaken the argument by removing this illustration.<sup>25</sup>

“The League of Nations’ Reform and the Minorities” by Lord Allen of Hurtwood was published as the leading article of the *Quarterly* in the summer of 1937. Balogh acknowledged the fact that the article was actually signed only by its titular author.

**B**alogh tried to get an article or two from leading British personalities for possibly every one of his numbers. He was a snob and thought in terms of the titled rather than the professional. In fact his tables of contents look a bit like a Central European combination of Burke’s *Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage* and Dodd’s *Parliamentary Companion*. Thus he convinced, among others, the Marquess of Londonderry, Lord Newton, Earl Winterton, the Duchess of Atholl,<sup>26</sup> Sir John Fisher Williams, Sir John Marriott, Lord Queenborough, G. P. Gooch, Lord Stamp, Sir Charles Petrie, the Countess of Listowel, Sir Arthur Willert, Lord Elton, Lord Davies, Vice Admiral C. V. Usborne, Sir Arnold Wilson, Col. Sir Thomas Cun-

23 n Editors of the *Quarterly* prepared the material for an article on Regent Horthy to be written by American journalist George Creel for *Collier’s Magazine*. See Tibor Frank, ed., *Discussing Hitler: Advisers of U.S. Diplomacy in Central Europe 1934–1941* (Budapest—New York: CEU Press, 2003), p. 60.

24 n József Balogh to Lord Allen of Hurtwood, 8 January 1937. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/39/233.

25 n Lord Allen of Hurtwood to József Balogh [?], 26 April 1937. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/39/238.

26 n For Balogh’s letter to “Her Grace The Duchess of Atholl, O.B.E., M.P.,” asking her to write on

ninghame, Sir Thomas Hohler, Adm. Mark Kerr, Lord Gorell, and Viscountess Snowden to contribute to the *Quarterly*. Sometimes, of course, he received flat refusals. Lord Addison, for example, was unwilling to write for the Hungarian review as "I am at present engaged in political work with a view to entering political life and it would probably be unwise for me to express in any publication views which in public life require to be toned down."<sup>27</sup> Bethlen approached William Somerset Maugham and asked him to write a book on Hungary, modelled on his book on Spain, *Don Fernando*. He was instantly refused: "...Don Fernando was the result not only of an acquaintance with Spain lasting over thirty years intensive work. I am too old now, and have besides too much work on my hands, to enter upon so large a subject as Hungary. I am sure you will understand my feeling. It is no good doing a thing unless you think you can do it really well."<sup>28</sup>

Some of Balogh's British contacts noticed his mistaken editorial intentions and the prospective propagandistic nature of the *Quarterly* even before the first number was published. Not only was L. S. Amery unwilling to write an article on the "Danubian situation", but he cautioned the editor not to agitate for treaty revision.

Nor am I sure, if I did, that the article would give great satisfaction in Hungary, for though I have great sympathy for that delightful people, I doubt whether it is any good their agitating for the restoration of even a portion of their old territories, and would advise them to make the best of the status quo by working for the creation of a general Danubian, and eventually European, confederation. Also, I am all for this country leaving Europe to settle its own affairs.<sup>29</sup>

When the first number was finally out, Balogh's closer friends voiced their concern emphatically. Though he became a frequent contributor for several years himself, Vernon Duckworth Barker was openly disapproving of the partisan nature of the review.

Thank you for the copy of "Quarterly" which reached me here some time ago. I read it carefully and with interest, but I have the feeling that it has still far to go before it will be up to the level of the N[ouvelle] R[evue de] H[ongrie]. Too much of the new review looks to me like veiled propaganda and there seems to my way of thinking a far too frequent repetition of the clichés about Hungary's historical mission and divine call, which cut very little ice with the kind of people you need to reach in England. I am not sure that the policy of having so many articles by peeresses and other titled commentators or non-professional writers is a wise one. Perhaps this was forced on you by private considerations. I have a very strong feeling that in its present form the "Quarterly" will tend most to please its contributors in England and its readers in Hungary.<sup>30</sup>

27 n Lord (Christopher) Addison to József Balogh, 22 December 1938. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/13/63.

28 n William Somerset Maugham to József Balogh, 1 September 1937. OSzK: Litt. Orig. Fond 1/2210.

29 n L. S. Amery to the editor, London, 18 September 1935. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/62/329.

30 n Vernon Duckworth Barker to József Balogh, 28 November 1936. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/221.

Barker gave a negative assessment of the potential impact of the *Quarterly* upon the British reading public.

...I...feel that the review at present seems rather remote from the really vital interests of the more progressive public in England. You have in some ways an uphill fight to attract the serious attention of liberal-minded intellectuals—who unquestionably represent the best of English thought at this moment—through a review which strikes me as being obviously anxious not to risk offending Fascist powers. I think one has to keep in mind that an English reader starts from a view-point which is quite peculiar to him. The kind of arguments which may impress a Hungarian or an Italian will often fail to make the same appeal to him. We still think democracy incomparably better than Fascism of any brand, and if a review like the “Quarterly” seems to lean rather obviously to the Right, I think your problem of attracting the kind of sympathy Hungary needs becomes much harder.<sup>31</sup>

Barker was perhaps the very first who tried to bring home to Balogh that it was impossible to court the British while remaining dedicated to the Fascist powers, a double loyalty maintained in the hope of regaining lost territories. Circles around Counts István Bethlen and Pál Teleki tried cautiously to uphold this hopelessly contradictory policy quite until the Second World War actually reached Hungary.

Such an article as the one stressing the similarity between Hungarian institutions and the “Corporation” system might, I think, do a certain amount of harm to the reputation which should be won for Hungarian culture—not with the Society guests of the Legation (who know Hungary already in most cases), but with the writers, publicists, scholars and men of affairs who are either indifferent now or influenced by liberal publicists (who do not aim at Society) to look upon Hungary with some suspicion. Mayfair and Belgravia are as Conservative now as ever and from them I have no doubt that all the “Quarterly” articles would win golden opinions, but what do they really amount to at the present time? It is an incontrovertible fact that the best minds of the country tend at this period away from the extreme Right, and dislike of Fascism will turn them against any publication which seems anxious to propitiate forces that are felt to be alien to the English mind even by most Conservatives. I believe that the “Quarterly” would do better in the long run to become a purely scientific and non-political publication than to attempt to favour both British and Fascist traditions, for fear of alienating either.<sup>32</sup>

The intricacies of this political “double-bind” were also felt on the other side. Sometimes it was the Hungarian government that refrained from giving permission to publish a British article. A case in point was the article by the military expert Basil (subsequently Sir Basil) Liddell Hart, which was not recommended for publication by Rudolf Andorka, then head of Section 2 of the Chief of Staff’s Office. “The author wants to exert a decisive influence on the course of Hungarian foreign policy”, Andorka wrote to Balogh, and the Foreign Ministry

<sup>31</sup> n *Ibid.*

supported his opinion. The case of Liddell Hart's article showed how close the *Quarterly* was to the Hungarian government and how far the review could go with its British schemes.

Barker's warnings did not change Balogh's mind and he continued to adorn a ll subsequent numbers of the *Quarterly* with some of the most illustrious names of the British aristocracy. His snobbery and antiquated priorities prevailed, whether in Hungary or in Britain: he was in love with the nobility. His Jewish origins and known homosexuality cast him into a double minority status which may have played a role in his strong attachment to title, rank and prestige.

Aristocratic patrons were indeed needed for Balogh, who was in a very precarious situation all through the years of the existence of the *Quarterly*. When publishing an article by U.S. university professor Michael T. Florinski on "The Lesson of the Saar", he unwillingly hurt the sensitivity of Sir Geoffrey Knox, formerly attached to the League of Nations but by then British minister to Hungary. Balogh immediately offered to apologise to Sir Geoffrey or even tender his resignation. In a position which was always "in between", he often got into trouble when trying to balance between serving the government and upholding the political sovereignty of his review, working for increasingly anti-Semitic Hungary and hiding his Jewish origins, and, most dangerously, maintaining an equilibrium, both official and personal, between Hungarian foreign policy towards Germany and Britain.

Though the *Quarterly* was driven by Dr. Balogh, it was powered by Count Bethlen. Representing political Hungary, Bethlen presided over the "Society for *The Hungarian Quarterly*", and the Transylvanian aristocrat took this job very seriously. As a confidante of Regent Admiral Horthy and a former prime minister, Count Bethlen's involvement meant high-level representation of official Hungary as well as a certain amount of independence. Bethlen gave a major reception in honour of Professor and Mrs. Arnold Toynbee, who visited Budapest in May 1937.<sup>33</sup> On subsequent occasions Dr. Balogh routinely asked Bethlen to receive in person distinguished visitors, such as American journalist and former propaganda chief George Creel in late 1936, as well as Lord Derwent, who came to Hungary in early 1939 with his wife, daughter of the Romanian chief of staff.<sup>34</sup> In June 1939 Bethlen acted as host to the new British minister to Belgrade.<sup>35</sup>

Bethlen's authority was also needed vis-à-vis Hungarian society. When the first issue of *The Hungarian Quarterly* was ready to appear, co-editor György Ottlik reverentially requested Bethlen

33 n József Balogh to Baron Móric Kornfeld, 28 April 1937. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/1826.

34 n Tibor Frank, ed., *Discussing Hitler*: op. cit., pp. 58–62; Emlékeztető feljegyzés Bethlen gróf Őexcellenciája számára (Memorandum for His Excellency Count Bethlen), Budapest, 13 January 1939. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/322.

35 n József Balogh to Baron György Bakach-Besseney, 30 May 1939. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/150.

to ask the editors-in-chief of the papers to give worthy attention to this new organ that demanded so much material and sacrifice of work at the moment when it enters the world stage. ...[T]he attention of the editors-in-chief could not be secured for the review in any other way but through the personality of Your Excellency. [...] If you revealed the significance of Anglo-Hungarian friendship, [and] the purpose of the review, we could then give information on its history and the first issue [...] I think it is not quite immaterial from the viewpoint of foreign policy either that England's attention should be focused on Hungary through your person when an English periodical is being published. Let me add: editors-in-chief would not come at my invitation and not even at that of [Professor] Kornis; should Eckhardt send out the invitations the papers would not even send a correspondent. Only your invitation would exert a significant and authoritative propaganda influence, both domestic and foreign.<sup>36</sup>

The new review was generally recognised as Bethlen's "own English-language foreign policy review".<sup>37</sup> When one of his articles was published by the *Danubian Review*, the periodical of the Hungarian Revisionist League (Magyar Revíziós Liga), he was immediately approached by the editors of the *Quarterly*, politely asking him to publish his articles in English "in his own review" alone. This gesture shows the remarkable turn in Hungarian propaganda that tried to find new avenues, new methods and a new style in the mid-1930s when approaching Britain in the matters of treaty revision. "You have used the right tone for England in the leading article of the first issue of the *Quarterly*; a coarser voice is now to be heard in the *Danubian Review*", Professor Kornis, representing the editors, confronted him in September 1936. "We request you, if you agree with us, to contain this double presence in England by requesting the editors of the *Danubian Review* not to translate and publish your Hungarian articles in any other way but in accordance with us."<sup>38</sup> Professor Kornis also questioned the necessity of the *Danubian Review*:

There will be articles, which could be allowed to be published without the *Danubian Review* doing any moral harm to the Hungarian cause and the H. Qu., if that periodical is to be maintained in its present form at all. [...] There will be others, which we shall suggest to be transferred into our review from the very first moment. Finally, there will be articles whose presentation in England we shall deem desirable neither in our own review nor in the *Danubian Review*, precisely in the interest of the national cause.<sup>39</sup>

36 n György Ottlik to József Balogh, Budapest, 13 March 1936. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/2440.

37 n Gyula Kornis to Count István Bethlen, Budapest, 24 September 1936. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/322.

38 n *Ibid.*

39 n *Ibid.*

40 n "Hungarian Habsburgs" were given the Hungarian title "Royal Prince/ss" instead of the Austrian term "Archduke/Archduchess."

Soon Bethlen became quite convinced that the *Quarterly* and the Society attached to it were the only desirable tools also for Anglophile propaganda in Hungary. When Archduke József Ferenc,<sup>40</sup> one of the several Habsburgs who resided in Hungary, suggested the foundation of an Anglo-Hungarian Society, Bethlen immediately raised his voice in defense of his own institution. "The Society of *The Hungarian Quarterly*", he wrote to His Highness,

aims not only at presenting Hungary in England, but—for the moment and in a modest way—it serves the purposes of Anglophile propaganda also in Hungary. To this end [the Society] organised in the last year alone 10 lectures in English in Budapest. The success of its work is shown by the steady growth of the audiences at these lectures. Some 500 people attended the lecture of Hugh Rutledge, 400 were present at the recent lecture of Sir Ronald Storrs.

According to the agreement with the British Council, which works under the auspices of the Foreign Office and co-operates with us, we founded the Anglo-Hungarian circle in Szeged as its local branch with Professor Tivadar Surányi-Unger as president. For the opening ceremony we expect Sir Richard Winn Livingstone, president of Corpus Christi College, to be present on the occasion of the inauguration (3 April). [...]

It would be a pleasure for our Society if the aims of a new association to be initiated eventually by your Royal Highness could be co-ordinated [...] as the incomplete national forces ought to be increasingly co-ordinated, both spiritually and materially.<sup>41</sup>

Bethlen occasionally shared his social responsibilities with Baron Móric Kornfeld, who joined him in inviting important British guests to his townhouse at Lendvay utca or his country estate at Felsőíreg in Tolna county. Kornfeld's British guests included Arnold Toynbee, Sir Reginald Storrs and Horsfall Carter.<sup>42</sup> Baron Kornfeld was a member of the Weiss family, owners of Hungary's giant industrial plant at Csepel Island outside Budapest, and thus represented big business indeed. An intimate of Balogh, he was well informed of most confidential matters connected with the *Quarterly*, such as the correspondence with the editor of *The Round Table*, the British ideal of the Hungarian review, who was close to the circle of Lord Lothian.<sup>43</sup>

In a more modest way, Dr. Balogh himself imitated his aristocratic or industrialist patrons, inviting British visitors such as newspaper publisher W. B. Morrell and his father for dinner at home.<sup>44</sup>

41 n Count István Bethlen to Royal Prince József Ferenc [draft, n.d.], attached to József Balogh to Gyula Kornis, 15 February 1938. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/1828.

42 n József Balogh to Baron Móric Kornfeld, 28 April 1937, 20 January 1938, 29 April 1938. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/1826. I am grateful to Ms. Ágnes Széchenyi for sharing her research with reference to Baron Móric Kornfeld, to be published in her upcoming volume on Kornfeld.

43 n József Balogh to Baron Móric Kornfeld, 2 April 1938. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/1826.

44 n József Balogh to Count Kálmán Almásy, 12 September 1938. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/45/262.

It was in January 1939 when the editor first asked Count Bethlen to discuss the eventual transfer of the *Quarterly* to London and the *Revue* to Paris. "It is no longer possible to get articles from prominent politicians and journalists abroad that could completely avoid polite and fair criticism of Germany, when discussing Central or East European questions", Balogh complained. He compiled a long list of burning issues that were jeopardised by the volatile political situation in the continent of Europe, including Hungarian revision, the Polish–Hungarian border, Hungarian economic sovereignty vis-à-vis Germany and Hungarian independence in general, the minority problems of Hungary including German-Hungarians, and the co-operation of South-East European small states. He also asked Bethlen to discuss his own personal problems in the light of Hungary's Jew Bill.<sup>45</sup>

Nevertheless, the situation during the Teleki government (1939–1941) remained largely unchanged. Hungary effectively balanced between the Axis Powers and the West in a desperate effort to survive, to preserve her neutrality and to secure treaty revision all at the same time.<sup>46</sup> The editors and publishers of the *Quarterly* knew full well, of course, how precarious their position had become. "It strikes me", Balogh wrote to Bethlen in December 1940, "that the HQ may at any time be seriously endangered by Central European political necessities, and we have been perfectly aware for years that, at the behest of the government, we might possibly be compelled to cease publication. Your Excellency's opinion, however, was invariably that we ourselves must not, under any circumstances, precipitate the process; the most we can do is to defer to the fiat."<sup>47</sup> This was precisely the moment when Prime Minister Pál Teleki commissioned young historian Domokos Kosáry to publish his one-volume *A History of Hungary* in the U.S. in order to spread reliable historical information before it was too late.<sup>48</sup>

But it was too late. By April 1941 Prime Minister Count Teleki and his cautious policy of neutrality were dead, by June Hungary was at war with the Soviet Union. By November 1941 it became obvious that the war would no longer tolerate *The Hungarian Quarterly*. A letter by Count Bethlen to Prime Minister László Bárdossy might serve as an epitaph to this tragically hopeless venture.

I understand from the report of the secretary-general of our Society that Antal Ullein-Reviczky summoned him on the 5<sup>th</sup> inst. and disclosed to him the Government's desire that The Hungarian Quarterly, which has been produced by our Society for six years,

45 n József Balogh to Count István Bethlen, 12 January 1939. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/322. See the memorandum prepared and attached by Balogh for Bethlen's discussions with the foreign minister.

46 n Cf. Tibor Frank, "Treaty Revision and Doublespeak: Hungarian Neutrality, 1939–1941", in Neville Wylie, ed., *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents during the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 150–173.

47 n József Balogh to Count István Bethlen, 19 December 1940. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/322.

48 n Dominic G. Kosáry, *A History of Hungary* (Cleveland and New York: Benjamin Franklin Bibliophile Society, 1941). Cf. Tibor Frank, "Luring the English-Speaking World", op. cit., pp. 76–78.

should discontinue its publication with the December issue of this year. [...]

On behalf of the Society, which was founded by myself and a few others in 1934, and which has since accomplished salutary work, acknowledged by many, in respect of the enlightening of the two Anglo-Saxon empires, I must solicit you to reconsider this decision of your Cabinet. In my view nothing can warrant such dispositions at present when no proclamation of war has ensued between the United States and the Axis Powers, and diplomatic relations also continue to be maintained. It is not to be questioned that the discontinuing of *The Hungarian Quarterly* will, in the Anglo-Saxon quarters in which we are interested, elicit unfavourable comment. The interpretation given to this government measure will be that, of its own accord and ostentatiously, it wishes to adopt a completely biased tendency vis-à-vis the United States or, being no longer in possession of its own free will, it was compelled to sacrifice this organ. In both cases, they will draw far-reaching inferences from this fact.

The reprieve and further maintenance of *The Hungarian Quarterly*, so long as our diplomatic relations with the United States continue to exist, are, in my judgment, so much the easier because, as far as I know, no outside criticism of its publications has been pronounced as yet. Of late we have kept the paper at a distance from politics and are treating mainly historical and cultural themes of a scholarly nature. We may look with a certain self-pride upon this paper, the match of which has not been maintained by any single small European nation, which is the sole remaining English publication on the continent, and which has been pronounced by critics to be the equal of British and American reviews of the highest standing.

All these merits of *The Hungarian Quarterly* we wished to turn to account at a later date; our assumption was well grounded that, maintaining the paper until the end of the war, its existence and unblemished past will, at the time of the conclusion of peace, be put to the credit of the Magyars. The disappearance of *The Hungarian Quarterly* would frustrate this hope of ours, depriving us at the same time of the forum from which we could have taken up the fight with the increasingly active publicist activities of Czech and Hungarian emigrants.<sup>49</sup>

In December 1941 Hungary was to declare a state of war with both Britain and the United States. The *Quarterly* was to be discontinued. Nevertheless, Balogh and his associates did not stop working altogether. They compiled, as the 1942 volume of the *Quarterly*, *A Companion to Hungarian Studies*, a thick handbook with ample information on Hungary in good English, actually still published by "The Society of *The Hungarian Quarterly*" in 1943 and prefaced by Count Bethlen. *A Companion II* was also in the making but could not be published. A single number of the *Quarterly* would appear in early 1944. Then the war reached Hungary. Balogh was killed by the Nazis in 1944, and Bethlen was captured by the Soviets and taken possibly to Moscow, where he most probably died in 1946. None of the members of the "Society for *The Hungarian Quarterly*" were given any credit for what they were trying to do and were usually judged unfairly and treated badly after the war. Their futile efforts deserve to be remembered kindly.<sup>50</sup> B

49 n Count István Bethlen to László Bárdossy, 6 November 1941. OSzK: Litt. Orig., Fond 1/212.

50 n I have made use of my own earlier papers on *The Hungarian Quarterly*, József Balogh and *Hungarian History* as republished in Tibor Frank, *Ethnicity, op. cit.*, pp. 265–308. All translations from Hungarian by the author.