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## **1938 as the End of Post-Habsburg Europe: The Impact of the Anschluss on the Mitteleuropean-Adriatic connections**

Recent scholarship has advanced our understanding of Habsburg continuities in business and banking networks, transport connections and trade infrastructures well into the 1920s and 1930s. After the fragmentation of the economic and commercial space in 1918-1919, local elites attempted to reorganise it with the help of imperial legacies. The collapse of the Habsburg Empire severely shattered the economic success of Trieste as its main sea outlet. Businessmen and politicians from the Adriatic port played a key role in renegotiating railway connections, trade flows and tariff conditions with Trieste's ex-imperial hinterland. However, their projects were based on the need to preserve Austrian independence, which was threatened by customs union projects with Weimar Germany and then by annexation by Nazi Germany.

This paper will analyse the local debates about Austrian annexation to Germany and its potential economic backlash on Trieste and its links with Danubian Europe and the Balkans. While trying to recover from the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire thanks to the imperial legacies in terms of infrastructures and networks, Trieste's elites were particularly hostile to the prospect of Anschluss, fearing that it would sever its trade links with Mitteleuropa while opening Balkan markets to Greater Germany. Trieste's businessmen and politicians urged the Fascist regime to defend Austria's independence, while at the same time discussing projects to revive the ex-Habsburg infrastructures and strengthen the Adriatic port's global connections. In March 1938 the Anschluss, dramatically affecting Trieste's elites and economic activities, made the Habsburg legacies increasingly irrelevant.

The paper will pay focus on the debates that took place in Trieste and followed the Anschluss and its European consequences. Finally, it will ask whether the collapse of the Habsburg Empire can be seen as a long process that finally came to an end in 1938.

Gyöngyi HELTAI (Ph.D.)

Transnational networks of Central European play-brokers and theatrical agents -  
Dr. Alexander /Sándor/ Marton (1871-1938) and Edmund Pauker /Pók Ödön/ (1887-1962)

The presentation examines the impact of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy on the operation and transnational network of Central European theatrical agents. The growing influence of theatrical agents and play brokers resulted from the professionalization and specialization of the theatre industry. Selling stage rights at home and abroad developed into a profession, a profitable business. However, the consequences of WWI forced the theatre agencies to reposition their export-import directions and business strategies. Drawing on archival material, the presentation focuses on the reaction to this geopolitical and cultural change by examining the relational business structures created by Alexander Marton in Budapest and Edmond Pauker in New York. Referring to the Transnational Theatre History the presentation discusses their operation, ways of transnational communication, and the role of family networks. The sources of the presentation: *The Stage (Színpad/Die Bühne)* a professional bulletin for theatres, playwrights, theatre agencies, actors, and theatre suppliers (1914-1917/ edited and published by Sándor Marton. Besides, the main primary source of the presentation is Edmond Pauker's business and private letters, and contracts held in the Billy Rose Theatre Division of the New Public Library (Edmond Pauker Papers \*T-Mss 1960-001). The presentation argues that besides their main commercial for-profit intention, Marton and Pauker were also transnational mediators and brokers of cultural and art ideas. Their activity and their cooperation helped the presence and the unprecedented popularity of the Central European theatre professionals, and authors in the US theatre and film industry in the 1920s-30s.

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PROJECTED PAPER TITLE: Transnational networks of Central European play-brokers and theatrical agents - Dr. Alexander /Sándor/ Marton (1871-1938) and Edmund Pauker /Pók Ödön/ (1887-1962)

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## **The Habsburg myth as a form of "symbolic power" in the Transylvanian traditional communities**

In the territories of the former Habsburg Empire, the myth of the "good emperor" or the "Habsburg myth" describes an idealized image of the emperor. It particularly developed among socially oppressed and marginalized groups, including peasants and lower-class individuals. The "good emperor" appears as the redeemer sent by God, who will administer justice to his subjects.

Despite the centralist efforts of the Romanian state after 1920, the influence of Habsburg rule left a lasting impact on the communities of Transylvania. This influence goes beyond mere physical appearances; it resonates in the mentality and mindset of individuals who interacted with the pre-war generation. During my field research conducted from 2015 to 2021, where I spoke with more than 100 people in Transylvania, I collected numerous mythical representations of the Austro-Hungarian period. Many of these narratives revolve around themes such as Emperor Franz Joseph, the First World War, and Vienna as the imperial capital.

During my field research in Transylvania, I observed that our understanding of how peasants used to think and relate to one another is often approximative and incomplete. Most of the individuals I encountered appeared to be *nationally indifferent*. Additionally, there were complex cultural and social representations that played a significant role in the lives of rural communities in the past. One of the most important aspects I discovered was the various forms of symbolic power present in the narratives I recorded during my research. In my proposed paper, I aimed to explore, beyond "national lenses, whether the Habsburg myth serves as a form of symbolic power. I formulated the following research questions: How did the Habsburg myth come into existence, and why has it been passed down from one generation to the next? Is the Habsburg myth indeed a form of symbolic power?