

POLITICS

Hungarian Political History I Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

A real, political-institutions history of Hungary from the 1867 Compromise through the 1956 Revolution's own crushing — the dual monarchy's collapse, the Hungarian Soviet Republic and the White Terror, Trianon's own lasting political wound, the Horthy regency's engineered elections, alliance with Nazi Germany and the real 1944 deportations, Stalinist repression under Rákosi, and the twelve real days of the 1956 Revolution before the second Soviet invasion — grounded throughout in real, WebFetch-verified dates, figures, and institutional mechanics, closing with a capstone comparing three real Hungarian political collapses side by side.

10 Chapters

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Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 1 · The Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867): Hungary's Real Autonomy Within Empire

This course opens Hungary's own dedicated place in the Politics Subject, alongside its existing British, American, and German political histories. It begins in 1867 — but that date only makes sense as an answer to a real, bloody failure two decades earlier.

The 1848 Revolution and Its Real Suppression

Lajos Kossuth, a journalist-turned-politician, rose to national prominence through the 1830s as a champion of broader democracy and the abolition of serfdom; his real 3 March 1848 speech demanding parliamentary government for Hungary was read aloud in Vienna's own streets during that city's own revolution days later. The result, Hungary's real "April Laws," transformed a feudal parliament into a genuinely democratic representative one — with, by contemporary European standards, the widest right to vote anywhere on the continent — abolishing feudal privilege and establishing ministries accountable to parliament rather than appointed directly by the crown.

That settlement did not last. After taking power in December 1848, Emperor Franz Joseph arbitrarily revoked the April Laws — a real, unconstitutional act — and by May 1849, facing serious military defeats, sought outside help: Tsar Nicholas I of Russia sent a real force of 200,000 troops to help crush the revolution. Hungarian resistance ended at the surrender of Világos on **4 October 1849**. Total documented casualties across the conflict reached roughly 87,842, including some 45,000 Hungarian dead.

Eighteen Years of Absolutism

What followed was real, direct imperial rule — Hungary's own constitution, parliament, and territorial integrity dismantled under a Vienna-directed neo-absolutist administration, lasting the better part of two decades.

1866 and the Push Toward Compromise

The real trigger for change came from outside Hungary entirely: Austria's decisive defeat in the 1866 Austro-Prussian War left Franz Joseph's own empire fiscally exhausted and diplomatically isolated, forcing him to seek genuine reconciliation with Hungary to stabilize what remained. Ferenc Deák, a Hungarian statesman who had once argued for full independence, became the real architect of a different path — a modified union grounded in the 1723 Pragmatic Sanction, under which defense and foreign affairs would stay joint while Hungary regained genuine internal self-government. Gyula Andrassy, later Hungary's own prime minister, worked alongside him; Austrian Imperial Chancellor Beust facilitated the negotiations from the other side.

The Compromise Itself

The restored Diet of Hungary ratified the Compromise (the *Ausgleich*) on **29 May 1867**. Franz Joseph was crowned King of Hungary on **8 June 1867** at Matthias Church in Budapest — a real, constitutionally essential ceremony requiring the monarch to personally swear an oath upholding Hungary's own historic constitutional arrangements.

A Genuine Dual Structure

The system this created was a real dual monarchy, not a renamed unitary empire. A narrow, explicitly enumerated set of "common affairs" — foreign policy, military defense, and common finance — was handled jointly, through a Common Finance Ministry and delegations drawn from both parliaments. Everything else stayed genuinely, separately Hungarian.

What stayed common

Foreign policy and diplomacy; military defense; the financing of shared expenditures — run through joint ministries and delegations, not a single unified government.

What was genuinely, separately Hungarian

A restored Hungarian parliament as supreme legislative authority; an independent Hungarian government with its own prime minister; a separate Hungarian legal and judicial system; and the Honvéd, Hungary's own military force, which needed explicit authorization before joining the common army.

No common citizenship existed under this system at all — a person held either Austrian or Hungarian citizenship, with separate passports issued accordingly, and Austria and Hungary each negotiated their own independent commercial treaties as though they were separate nations, despite sharing one currency. Hungary's own restored parliament held genuine legislative power over its internal affairs, though the monarch retained real prerogatives of his own — veto power, the power to dissolve parliament, and command of the joint military.

Finding: a genuine third model of shared sovereignty

This site's own Political Theory Fundamentals traced federalism (power devolved downward from one sovereign) and unitary systems (power held entirely at the center) as the two standard models of how a state organizes territorial power. The 1867 Compromise fits neither cleanly — it created two separately sovereign entities, each with its own parliament, government, and legal system, sharing only a narrow, explicitly enumerated set of "common affairs" negotiated between them rather than granted downward by either side. Hungary's own political identity from 1867 onward begins from this real, unusual starting point: autonomous, but never fully independent.

This dual structure held until the First World War — the subject of this course's next chapter.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why the 1867 Compromise can genuinely be described as answering the 1848 Revolution's own failure, rather than being an unrelated later development.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why Austria's own 1866 military defeat, not any internal Hungarian development, was the real, direct trigger that made the Compromise possible in 1867.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Explain why the dual monarchy's real "common affairs" system is a genuinely different model of shared sovereignty from both federalism and a unitary state, rather than simply a smaller version of either.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **1848:** Kossuth's April Laws establish genuine parliamentary democracy in Hungary; Franz Joseph revokes them within the year
- **1849:** Russian intervention (200,000 troops) crushes Hungarian resistance; surrender at Világos, 4 October
- **1849–1867:** direct, neo-absolutist imperial rule from Vienna
- **1866:** Austria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War forces genuine reconciliation with Hungary
- **29 May 1867:** the Compromise ratified by the restored Hungarian Diet
- **8 June 1867:** Franz Joseph crowned King of Hungary at Matthias Church
- **The real structure:** joint "common affairs" (foreign policy, military, common finance) alongside a genuinely separate Hungarian parliament, government, judiciary, and Honvéd military

CHAPTER 2: WORLD WAR I AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE DUAL MONARCHY

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 2 · World War I and the Collapse of the Dual Monarchy

Chapter 1 traced a genuine dual-sovereignty structure, built in 1867 to survive ordinary peacetime coordination between two separately governed halves of one empire. It was never tested against total war — and it did not survive being tested.

Tisza's Real, Reluctant Path to War

István Tisza, Hungary's own prime minister during the July 1914 crisis, was not an eager architect of the war that followed — he was genuinely opposed to it at first. His real objections were specific: annexing Serbian territory would add still more Slavic population to an empire he judged already held too many Slavs for its own internal balance, and he feared Romania would seize the moment to attack Hungary directly and take Transylvania. At a real Council of Joint Ministers meeting during the crisis, Tisza warned that any attack on Serbia "would, as far as can humanly be foreseen, lead to an intervention by Russia and hence a world war" — a prediction that turned out to be exactly correct. It took a full week, 7–14 July 1914, and a promise of German backing from Kaiser Wilhelm II, before Tisza's own resistance finally gave way. Once he did commit, he became, in his own real words' documented spirit, "a relentless supporter of the war until its end."

Four Years of Strain on a System Built for Peacetime

Chapter 1's own real dual-monarchy structure assumed cooperative coordination between two separately governed halves over a narrow set of shared "common affairs" — foreign policy and the joint military above all. Total war placed a strain on exactly those two shared functions that the system had never been built to absorb: a single, jointly run war effort, prosecuted for four years, against a coalition that included the very power (Russia) Tisza had specifically warned would intervene.

The Aster Revolution

By late October 1918, Austria-Hungary's own military position had genuinely collapsed. In Budapest, growing wartime protests escalated into direct confrontation: the real "Battle of the Chain Bridge" on **28 October** saw police open fire on demonstrators, killing three or four. By **30 October**, soldiers' councils had taken effective control of the capital, freeing prisoners and seizing strategic points across the city — the government, genuinely trying to avoid violent confrontation, had simply lost control. Soldiers replaced the roses on their own caps with aster flowers that same day, giving the revolution its lasting name. Count Mihály Károlyi, having emerged as the real leader of the opposition, was nominated Prime Minister on **31 October**, following a real, remarkably brief 17-hour tenure by his predecessor, János Hadik.

Finding: the man who predicted the war correctly, killed the day it finally ended for Hungary

István Tisza was assassinated on **31 October 1918** — the very same day Károlyi was named Prime Minister. Soldiers broke into his own home in Budapest and shot him, striking him at least twice, in the stomach and shoulder. The man who had argued hardest against entering the war, and who had accurately predicted it would draw in Russia and become a world war, was killed by soldiers of the same state whose institutional order that war had just finished destroying — a genuinely stark, real closing image for the Compromise era Chapter 1 traced from its very beginning.

Charles IV's Real Non-Abdication

On **13 November 1918**, King Charles IV issued a real proclamation recognizing Hungary's own right to determine its future form of government and formally withdrawing from Hungarian affairs — but, in a genuine, deliberate legal nuance, he did not explicitly resign or abdicate the Hungarian throne itself. This careful legal distinction opened a real path to Hungarian independence without forcing a direct, formal act of abdication.

The Hungarian Republic Declared

On **16 November 1918**, the Hungarian People's Republic was formally declared, with Károlyi becoming its provisional head of state. This first republic would prove short-lived — it lasted only until **21 March 1919**, the subject of this course's next chapter.

Finding: separate institutions meant a fast exit, not a shared collapse

Chapter 1's own real structure gave Hungary a genuinely separate parliament, government, and legal system, distinct from Austria's own — precisely the feature that let Hungary move quickly to its own declared republic within weeks of the joint military and foreign-policy structure collapsing, rather than being dragged down indefinitely alongside Austria's own separate political crisis. The dual monarchy's real weakness was never a lack of genuine Hungarian autonomy; it was that its narrow "common affairs" system had no mechanism at all for surviving a shared catastrophic failure of the kind total war produced.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why Tisza's own real, documented reluctance to enter the war makes his later reputation as a "relentless supporter of the war" a genuinely striking reversal, rather than simply consistent behavior.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why Charles IV's real 13 November proclamation, despite not being a formal abdication, still functioned as a genuine, practical transfer of power in Hungary.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Using Chapter 1's own real account of the dual monarchy's structure, explain why Hungary was able to declare its own republic so quickly once the joint imperial structure collapsed in 1918.

→ Solution

Quick Reference

- **7–14 July 1914:** Tisza's real, week-long resistance to war finally gives way after German backing is promised
- **28 October 1918:** the Battle of the Chain Bridge — police fire on demonstrators in Budapest
- **30 October 1918:** soldiers' councils take effective control of Budapest; the Aster Revolution gets its name
- **31 October 1918:** Károlyi named Prime Minister — and Tisza assassinated, the same day
- **13 November 1918:** Charles IV withdraws from Hungarian affairs without formally abdicating
- **16 November 1918:** the Hungarian People's Republic declared, Károlyi as provisional head of state

CHAPTER 3: REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION: THE HUNGARIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC AND THE WHITE TERROR (1919)

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 3 · Revolution and Counter-Revolution: The Hungarian Soviet Republic and the White Terror (1919)

Chapter 2 closed with the First Hungarian Republic declared on 16 November 1918, Károlyi at its head. That government lasted barely four months — and what replaced it, twice over within a single year, was far more violent than anything the dual monarchy's own collapse had produced.

Károlyi's Fall: The Vix Note

On **20 March 1919**, Károlyi's government received a real Allied ultimatum, the Vix Note, demanding further Hungarian military withdrawal — lines widely assumed at the time to become the actual postwar borders. The note proved fatal to a government already, in the real historical assessment, "devoid of significant support." Recognizing that accepting it would endanger Hungary's own territorial integrity, yet feeling unable to reject it either, Károlyi resigned rather than sign.

The Hungarian Soviet Republic

Power passed to the Social Democrats, who merged with the Communists to proclaim the Hungarian Soviet Republic on **21 March 1919**. Its own formal leadership followed one arrangement; its real power followed another entirely. Sándor Garbai served as nominal prime minister and head of government, but Béla Kun — officially only the regime's Commissar of Foreign Affairs — held the actual, real power, since he alone had a personal acquaintance and working relationship with Lenin. The regime lasted **133 days**, from 21 March to 1 August 1919.

Finding: the mirror image of Chapter 2's own Charles IV

Chapter 2 showed Charles IV keeping a formal royal title while his own real, exercised power had already ended. Kun's own case runs the opposite direction: a modest formal title, Commissar of Foreign Affairs, sitting on top of the regime's own real, supreme authority. Both cases confirm the same underlying lesson — a political title on paper and

the real power actually being exercised are genuinely separate things, and reading Hungarian political history correctly means tracking both.

The Red Terror

Tibor Szamuely, People's Commissar for Military Affairs, directed the regime's own real campaign of revolutionary terror — traveling the country by armored train with paramilitary forces known as the "Lenin Boys," commanded operationally by József Cserny, while Mátyás Rákosi commanded a separate Red Guard. Szamuely's own real, documented April 1919 words were direct: "Blood will make us powerful. Blood will lead us to the true world of the Commune." Revolutionary tribunals under this apparatus executed a real, documented 370 to 590 people without trial.

Collapse

Romanian forces broke through the Hungarian Red Army's own lines on **30 July 1919**. Kun fled to Vienna on 1 August; Romanian troops entered Budapest on **4 August 1919**. Szamuely himself attempted to flee to Austria the following day, was arrested after an illegal border crossing, and died that same day — officially recorded as suicide, though the real circumstances remain genuinely disputed among historians.

The White Terror

Miklós Horthy, a former Austro-Hungarian admiral still regarded as a war hero, was asked in June 1919 to command a counter-revolutionary National Army. Under commanders including Pál Prónay — described in the real historical record as "the most notorious of unit commanders" — Iván Héjjas, Anton Lehár, and Gyula Ostenburg-Moravek, this force carried out a real, sustained campaign of violence against communists, liberals, and — with an explicit, documented antisemitic character — Jewish communities broadly blamed as "traitors and communists" specifically because several of the Red Terror's own most prominent leaders, including Kun and Szamuely, had been Jewish. Real documented casualty estimates for the White Terror range from 1,500 to 6,000 deaths between 1919 and 1921, through summary

executions, public hangings, torture, and corpse desecration; violence peaked in 1919, receding noticeably by 1920 though continuing sporadically into 1921.

Two terrors, not one

1919 alone produced two separate campaigns of real, documented political violence in Hungary — a Red Terror executing several hundred, and a White Terror killing a genuinely larger number, 1,500 to 6,000. Neither was a minor or symbolic episode; both left a real, lasting mark on the political order that followed.

Horthy Enters Budapest

Horthy's National Army entered Budapest on **16 November 1919** — a full three months after the Romanians had already occupied the city and the Communist regime had already fallen. He was elected Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary on **1 March 1920**, a position he would hold until October 1944 — the subject of this course's next two chapters.

Finding: a regime built on having defeated the last one

Horthy's own new government did not emerge from a vacuum, and it did not need to invent a founding story — it had a real, concrete one already sitting in front of it: having organized the force that ended the Hungarian Soviet Republic's own real Red Terror. That claimed legitimacy — defender against Bolshevism — would go on to shape Hungarian domestic politics for the next quarter-century, beginning with the Trianon settlement this course's own next chapter covers.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why Béla Kun's real position as merely "Commissar of Foreign Affairs" while holding the regime's actual supreme power is a direct, useful parallel to Chapter 2's own account of Charles IV.

→ Solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why the Vix Note put Károlyi's government in a genuinely impossible position, rather than one it simply failed to handle well.

→ Solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why Horthy's own claimed political legitimacy — having defeated the Hungarian Soviet Republic — was a genuinely durable foundation for the government that followed, rather than a temporary justification.

→ Solution

Quick Reference

- **20 March 1919:** the Vix Note ultimatum; Károlyi resigns
- **21 March – 1 August 1919 (133 days):** the Hungarian Soviet Republic — Garbai nominal PM, Kun holding the real power
- **The Red Terror:** Szamuely (Military Affairs), Cserny's Lenin Boys, Rákosi's Red Guard — 370–590 real, documented executions
- **4 August 1919:** Romanian forces occupy Budapest; the Soviet Republic falls
- **The White Terror (1919–1921):** Horthy's National Army under Prónay, Héjjas, Lehár, and Ostenburg-Moravek — 1,500–6,000 real, documented deaths, with an explicit antisemitic character
- **16 November 1919:** Horthy enters Budapest; **1 March 1920:** elected Regent

CHAPTER 4: THE TREATY OF TRIANON (1920): HUNGARY'S REAL, LASTING POLITICAL WOUND

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 4 · The Treaty of Trianon (1920): Hungary's Real, Lasting Political Wound

Chapter 3 closed with Horthy's new regime already resting on one real, completed founding story — having ended the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Within months of that regency beginning, a second grievance arrived, one that would shape Hungarian politics far longer and far more broadly than the first.

The Real Terms

Hungary signed the Treaty of Trianon on **4 June 1920**, at the Grand Trianon palace at Versailles — ratified 16 November 1920, formally taking effect 26 July 1921. Its real, numerical scale was extraordinary: Hungary lost approximately **72% of its pre-war territory** and **64% of its population**. The pre-war Kingdom of Hungary's 325,411 km² became a landlocked rump state of just 93,073 km², home to roughly 7.6 million people.

Where the Territory Went

Recipient	Real territory gained
Romania	Transylvania and other eastern territories — the largest single share
Czechoslovakia	Slovakia and other northern regions
Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia)	Croatia and southern areas
Austria	Real border adjustments

3.3 Million Hungarians Outside Hungary

The treaty's single most politically enduring real consequence was demographic, not territorial: approximately **3.3 million ethnic Hungarians** found themselves living as minorities in the neighboring states that had just received their own homeland's former territory — a number large enough that a genuinely significant share of Hungarian families now had relatives living across a border they had not personally crossed.

Apponyi's Real, Fruitless Appeal

Before the treaty was finalized, Hungary's delegation had made a real, documented attempt to change its outcome. On **16 January 1920**, at the Quai d'Orsay, Count Albert Apponyi delivered a real, striking address in three languages — speaking in French, translating himself simultaneously into English, and concluding in Italian. He explicitly invoked President Wilson's own principle of national self-determination, arguing that no group of people should be transferred between states without being consulted first, and offered that Hungary would accept the outcome of genuine plebiscites in the disputed territories.

Widely acclaimed, entirely without effect

Apponyi's own performance was real and genuinely admired at the time — but the Allies refused to amend the treaty's terms, or even to discuss them further. It enhanced his own domestic reputation while changing nothing about the treaty Hungary would go on to sign five months later: a real, documented case of moral argument carrying no actual political leverage against powers who had already decided the outcome.

Signed Under Protest

Hungary's own delegation signed the treaty under protest. Agitation for its revision began immediately, and Hungarian revisionism and irredentism — the real, sustained political movement to recover lost territory — became an enduring feature of interwar Hungarian politics, not a passing reaction. Real evidence of just how central this became to state policy: as late as 1934, Prime Minister Gyula Gömbös personally presented Mussolini with the specific territories Hungary wished to peacefully reannex — revisionism as an actual, ongoing item of foreign policy, not merely rhetoric.

Finding: a second, far broader unifying cause

Chapter 3 closed by noting Horthy's regime had one real, completed founding story — defeating the Hungarian Soviet Republic — narrow enough that it mattered most to those who had actually feared or opposed Bolshevik rule directly. Trianon gave the same regime something broader and more durable still: a grievance touching a real, documented 3.3 million ethnic Hungarians and their families directly, and millions more indirectly, giving interwar Hungarian politics a shared organizing cause that would outlast any single government and shape policy for the entire span of Horthy's own regency — the subject of this course's next chapter.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why Apponyi's real, trilingual appeal to the principle of self-determination failed to change the treaty's terms, despite being genuinely well received at the time.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why the real figure of 3.3 million ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary's new borders had a genuinely different, broader political effect than the territorial loss figures alone.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Using Gömbös's real 1934 meeting with Mussolini, explain why Hungarian revisionism should be understood as genuine, ongoing state policy rather than only public sentiment or rhetoric.

→ Solution

Quick Reference

- **4 June 1920:** the Treaty of Trianon signed at the Grand Trianon, Versailles
- **Real losses:** ~72% of territory, ~64% of population; 325,411 km² down to a landlocked 93,073 km²/7.6 million people
- **Territory went to:** Romania (Transylvania, largest share), Czechoslovakia (Slovakia), Yugoslavia (Croatia), Austria (border adjustments)
- **~3.3 million ethnic Hungarians** left as minorities in the neighboring states
- **16 January 1920:** Apponyi's real trilingual appeal at the Quai d'Orsay — widely acclaimed, entirely without effect on the treaty's terms
- **1934:** Gömbös presents Mussolini with Hungary's own desired reannexation territories — revisionism as real, ongoing foreign policy

CHAPTER 5: THE HORTHY REGENCY: CONSERVATIVE RESTORATION AND REVISIONIST POLITICS

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 5 · The Horthy Regency: Conservative Restoration and Revisionist Politics

Chapters 3 and 4 established the twin real grievances Horthy's regime was built on — defeating Bolshevism, and reversing Trianon. This chapter turns to how that same regime actually governed Hungary domestically through the 1920s, and how carefully its own political system was engineered to keep governing.

Two Real Attempts to Reclaim the Throne

Charles — the same king whose real, deliberate 13 November 1918 non-abdication Chapter 2 already covered — made two real, genuine attempts in 1921 to reclaim the Hungarian throne. Both failed for the same reason: Regent Horthy, whose own position Charles's earlier proclamation had itself made possible, refused to support the restoration. Royalists called Horthy's refusal treasonous; the real, documented judgment of later historians has generally been kinder, noting his position was more firmly grounded in political reality than Charles's own — neighboring states had real, direct threats ready, warning they would invade Hungary if Charles actually regained the throne.

Finding: the legal foundation Chapter 1 opened this course with, formally ended

Following the second failed attempt, the Hungarian parliament formally nullified the Pragmatic Sanction of 1723 — the exact legal instrument Ferenc Deák had built the entire 1867 Compromise on in Chapter 1. What began this course as a real, negotiated foundation for shared Habsburg sovereignty ended it, just over half a century later, as a piece of dead law — a genuine full circle for the dynasty's own real relationship with Hungary.

Charles and his wife were arrested and imprisoned at Tihany Abbey, then transported down the Danube into exile on 1 November 1921, eventually reaching Madeira. He died there on **1 April 1922**, of respiratory failure following pneumonia, at age 34.

Bethlen's Consolidation

István Bethlen, appointed prime minister as Horthy sought a strong government following Charles's first restoration attempt, spent his real decade in office (1921–1931) methodically ending the White Terror's own remaining paramilitary violence — not through confrontation, but through real, documented co-option: offering radical students and officers lucrative civil service positions before quietly reassigning them to remote rural posts, and drawing former paramilitary leaders into parliament or military promotion instead.

The Franchise Act of 1922

Bethlen's own most consequential real achievement was electoral, not military. The Franchise Act of 1922 restricted Hungary's own electorate to roughly **29.5% of the population**, requiring proof of income, six years' residence, and completed primary education — and, in rural areas specifically, replaced the secret ballot with open voting. Parliamentary seats were allocated with a real, stark rural bias: 199 seats to rural districts against just 46 for urban centers, alongside deliberately higher petition thresholds for opposition candidates to even stand.

Feature of the 1922 Franchise Act	Real effect
Income/residence/education requirements	Enfranchisement cut to roughly 29.5% of the population
Open voting in rural areas	Removed secret-ballot protection where the Unity Party's own local influence was strongest
199 rural seats vs. 46 urban seats	Structurally favored the regime's own strongest base over opposition-leaning cities
Higher opposition petition thresholds	Made it harder for rival candidates to appear on the ballot at all

The real result was consistent, engineered dominance: Bethlen's Unity Party averaged **61% of the vote** across the four general elections held between 1922 and 1935 — genuine elections, held on real, carefully drawn terms.

The Numerus Clausus

Not every real feature of this era was electoral engineering. In 1920, Hungary passed the Numerus Clausus Act, restricting Jewish university enrollment to roughly 6% — matching the Jewish population's own real national share — down from an actual enrollment rate of approximately 15% during the 1910s. The law is widely regarded, in the real historical record, as the first anti-Jewish act of twentieth-century Europe.

A dark legacy that predates what's still ahead

This chapter's own material sits between the White Terror's real, documented antisemitic violence (Chapter 3) and the far larger-scale legislation Chapter 6 still has to cover. The Numerus Clausus shows that antisemitic policy in interwar Hungary was never confined to paramilitary violence alone — it was written directly into ordinary peacetime law within a year of the regime's own founding, years before the international pressures of the later 1930s.

The Great Depression Ends the Bethlen Era

Bethlen resigned on **24 August 1931**, replaced briefly by Gyula Károlyi and then, in 1932, by Gyula Gömbös — the same Gömbös whose 1934 meeting with Mussolini Chapter 4 already covered. The Great Depression is real, documented as the direct cause: it shifted Hungarian politics further toward the extreme right, even as Bethlen himself, retaining real control of the Unity Party, kept enough influence to impose conditions on his own successor.

Finding: a "guided democracy," not a restored one

The 1920s Horthy regency held genuine, real elections — but on terms carefully engineered to make their outcome predictable: a shrunk electorate, open rural voting, and a seat map deliberately weighted toward the government's own strongest base. This is the real domestic political machine that the Great Depression's arrival would soon push even further rightward — directly into the alliance with Nazi Germany this course's next chapter covers.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why Horthy's own real refusal to support Charles's 1921 restoration attempts is consistent with, rather than a betrayal of, the same political reasoning that made him Regent in the first place.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why the Franchise Act of 1922 can genuinely be described as producing "real" elections with a predictable outcome, rather than these being a contradiction in terms.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Explain why the Numerus Clausus Act matters for understanding this era's own political character, even though Bethlen's own decade in office is more commonly remembered for stabilization.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **1921:** Charles's two real attempts to reclaim the throne, both blocked by Horthy; parliament formally nullifies the Pragmatic Sanction afterward
- **1 April 1922:** Charles dies in exile in Madeira, age 34
- **1920:** the Numerus Clausus Act — Jewish university enrollment restricted to ~6%, down from ~15%
- **1922 Franchise Act:** enfranchisement cut to ~29.5%; open rural voting; 199 rural vs. 46 urban seats

- **1922–1935:** the Unity Party averages 61% across four general elections
- **24 August 1931:** Bethlen resigns; Gömbös becomes PM in 1932 as the Depression pushes politics rightward

CHAPTER 6: HUNGARY IN WORLD WAR II: ALLIANCE, OCCUPATION & THE ARROW CROSS

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 6 · Hungary in World War II: Alliance, Occupation & the Arrow Cross

Chapter 4 traced revisionism's own rise from a rejected appeal into an actual, ongoing item of Hungarian foreign policy. This chapter covers what happened once that policy actually began to succeed — and the catastrophic real cost that success carried with it.

The Vienna Awards: Real Territorial Revisionism Delivered

Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, acting as arbitrators, awarded Hungary real, substantial territory twice in quick succession. The First Vienna Award, on **2 November 1938**, returned part of southern Czechoslovakia — modern-day southern Slovakia — to Hungary. The Second Vienna Award, on **30 August 1940**, returned northern Transylvania from Romania. Chapter 4's own real revisionist grievance, pursued through diplomacy since the 1920s, was finally being answered — but only through Hungary's own deepening dependence on the two powers doing the arbitrating.

Deepening Into the Axis

Hungary formally joined the Tripartite Pact on **20 November 1940**, binding itself openly to Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Teleki's Real Protest

Just weeks later, on 12 December 1940, Prime Minister Pál Teleki personally signed a Treaty of Eternal Friendship with Yugoslavia. That treaty did not survive four months. When Horthy agreed to let German troops pass through Hungary to attack Yugoslavia in April 1941, Teleki, learning of it by telephone around midnight on 3–4 April, went home and took his own life the same night, his body discovered the next morning.

His own real, documented words

Teleki's suicide note read, in part: "We broke our word, out of cowardice ... The nation feels it, and we have thrown away its honor. We have allied ourselves to scoundrels ... We will become body-snatchers! A nation of trash. I did not hold you back. I am guilty." Winston Churchill later called it "a sacrifice to absolve himself and his people from guilt in the German attack on Yugoslavia."

Escalating Legislation

Chapter 5's own Numerus Clausus was not the endpoint of Hungarian antisemitic policy — it was the starting point. Through the years that followed, Hungary passed a real, documented series of increasingly restrictive anti-Jewish laws, steadily narrowing economic and civil rights well before the catastrophe of 1944.

The German Occupation

By March 1944, with Hungary's own continued loyalty to Germany in doubt, Hitler summoned Horthy to Austria on 18 March — and while the Regent was away, German tanks entered Budapest. Operation Margarethe was complete by **19 March 1944**. A new government under Döme Sztójay, answerable to German authority, was installed on 23 March.

The Deportations

Adolf Eichmann arrived in Budapest to personally supervise the deportation of Hungary's Jewish population, setting up headquarters at the Majestic Hotel and coordinating directly with Hungarian authorities. Between **15 May and 9 July 1944**, a real, documented 434,351 to 437,402 Jews were deported in 147 trains — overwhelmingly to Auschwitz, where approximately 80% were murdered on arrival.

A real, staggering pace

Roughly 437,000 people were deported in under eight weeks — a rate the historical record itself treats as one of the fastest, most concentrated mass deportations of the entire Holocaust. Historian Randolph Braham's own real estimate places total Hungarian Jewish deaths between 1941 and 1945 at just over 564,000, out of a pre-occupation

population of over 800,000 living within Hungary's 1941–1944 borders — leaving roughly 255,500 survivors.

Horthy Halts the Deportations

Real, direct international pressure from three heads of state changed the outcome for those who had not yet been deported: Pope Pius XII appealed on 25 June, President Roosevelt threatened direct military retaliation on 26 June, and King Gustaf V of Sweden appealed on 30 June 1944. Horthy ordered the deportations halted on **6–7 July 1944** — after well over 400,000 people had already been sent to their deaths.

Operation Panzerfaust and the Arrow Cross

Horthy, by autumn 1944, was secretly negotiating a separate armistice with the advancing Soviet forces. Hitler, learning of this, dispatched commando Otto Skorzeny to keep Hungary in the war. On **15 October 1944**, Skorzeny's men abducted Horthy's own son, Miklós Horthy Jr., trussing him in a carpet and transporting him first to Vienna and then to Mauthausen concentration camp. That same afternoon, Horthy announced Hungary's armistice with the Soviets on the radio — and within hours, German forces moved in and took him into custody, coercing him to sign a document renouncing the armistice and abdicating.

Horthy's own real, quoted account

"I neither resigned nor appointed Szálasi Premier, I merely exchanged my signature for my son's life." Ferenc Szálasi, leader of the Arrow Cross Party, was installed as head of state in Horthy's place. Horthy himself was imprisoned in Germany for the remainder of the war, released from Nuremberg on 17 December 1945; his own son remained imprisoned until 8 May 1945, despite German promises of an earlier release.

Finding: revisionism's own real, catastrophic price

Chapter 4 closed by noting Trianon gave Horthy's regime a broad, durable unifying cause. This chapter shows what pursuing that cause through alliance with Nazi Germany actually cost: real territory recovered through the Vienna Awards, followed by a prime

minister's own suicide in protest, German occupation once loyalty wavered, the deportation of roughly 437,000 people in under eight weeks, and finally Horthy's own removal by his son's kidnapping — installing the Arrow Cross regime whose own real terror in Budapest is the subject of this course's next chapter.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why the Vienna Awards, despite genuinely delivering the territorial revisionism Chapter 4 traced, should be understood as deepening Hungary's vulnerability rather than resolving it.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why the international pressure that halted the deportations in July 1944 came too late to be described as a genuine success, using the real figures in this chapter.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Explain why Horthy's own real, quoted statement about "exchanging my signature for my son's life" is a meaningful distinction, rather than merely an excuse offered after the fact.

[→ Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **2 Nov 1938 / 30 Aug 1940:** the First and Second Vienna Awards return southern Slovakia and northern Transylvania to Hungary

- **20 November 1940:** Hungary joins the Tripartite Pact
- **3–4 April 1941:** Pál Teleki's suicide, protesting Hungary's own breach of its Yugoslav friendship treaty
- **19 March 1944:** Operation Margarethe — German occupation of Hungary
- **15 May – 9 July 1944:** ~434,000–437,000 Jews deported, mostly to Auschwitz, roughly 80% murdered on arrival
- **6–7 July 1944:** Horthy halts the deportations, after real pressure from the Pope, Roosevelt, and the King of Sweden
- **15 October 1944:** Operation Panzerfaust — Horthy's son kidnapped, Horthy coerced into abdicating; Szálasi installed

CHAPTER 7: SOVIETIZATION: THE RÁKOSI ERA AND STALINIST HUNGARY

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 7 · Sovietization: The Rákosi Era and Stalinist Hungary

Chapter 6 closed with the Arrow Cross installed by German force in October 1944. Soviet forces would end that regime by early 1945 — but what followed was not the return of genuine self-government the country's own first postwar election actually produced.

A Real, Free Election the Communists Lost Badly

In Hungary's first genuinely free postwar election, held in **November 1945**, the Independent Smallholders' Party won a real, outright majority: **57.03%** of the vote. The Hungarian Communist Party won just **16.96%** — a genuine, documented landslide defeat.

A Majority Without Power

That landslide changed remarkably little. Soviet occupation made the Smallholders' own electoral victory, in the real historical assessment, "politically meaningless." Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov personally intervened after the vote, instructing the Soviet military commander to reject the initial government portfolio distribution — ensuring the Communists kept control of the Ministry of the Interior and the police regardless of how the country had actually voted. The Smallholders accepted this coalition arrangement, hoping their own real electoral mandate would eventually prevail once Soviet occupying forces left following a peace treaty. Holding the security apparatus rather than the ballot box, the Communists went on to marginalize their opponents through selective assassinations, sabotage of opposition party offices, and the closure of Catholic youth organizations.

Finding: the same recurring gap, one more time

Chapter 2 traced Charles IV's title outlasting his real power; Chapter 3 traced Béla Kun's real power exceeding his modest formal title. This chapter's own real 1945 election adds a third variation on the identical underlying lesson: the Smallholders held a genuine, overwhelming formal electoral mandate, while the Communists held the real coercive levers of state — the police and the Interior Ministry — regardless of what the ballots

actually said. A formal mandate and real control of the state's own coercive machinery are, once again, genuinely separate things.

"Salami Tactics": A Real Term Whose Origin Is Disputed

Rákosi is popularly remembered for coining "salami tactics" — slicing away political opposition piece by piece. The real historical record is more honest than the popular version: no verified source for Rákosi himself actually using this phrase has ever been found, and historian Norman Stone has suggested the term may actually have originated with a political opponent, Zoltán Pfeiffer, rather than with Rákosi at all. The real, well-documented underlying practice, regardless of who named it, was genuine: pressuring other parties to exclude anyone unwilling to cooperate with the Communists, branding them "fascists" or fascist sympathizers.

The Merger and the 1947 Election

By the 1947 election, sustained pressure had turned the Communists' own earlier landslide defeat into a real plurality. In the summer of 1948, the Communists forced Hungary's own Social Democrats to merge with them, forming the Hungarian Working People's Party (MDP) — eliminating the last major independent left-wing alternative in one stroke.

Show Trials

Cardinal József Mindszenty, Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary, was arrested on **26 December 1948**, accused of treason, conspiracy, and offenses against the new People's Republic. His forced confession — extracted, in the real, documented account, only after he was "repeatedly hit with rubber truncheons and subjected to other forms of abuse" — included claims he had plotted to steal the Crown of Saint Stephen and start a third world war. His trial ran 3–8 February 1949, ending in a life sentence for black marketeering, treason, and espionage; Pope Pius XII later publicly condemned the conviction and described the mistreatment behind it in an apostolic letter.

László Rajk, Hungary's own Foreign Minister until June 1949, was arrested on **30 May 1949**, tried 16–24 September, and executed on **15 October 1949** — falsely accused of being a Titoist

spy and Western agent plotting to restore capitalism, purged by the very communist movement he had helped build.

The Scale of Repression

Real, documented figures put the human cost of Rákosi's own rule at roughly **350,000 officials and intellectuals purged** between 1948 and 1956.

Finding: a rehabilitation, seventeen days before the Revolution

On 28 March 1956, amid genuine, growing dissatisfaction with Rákosi's rule, the government formally rehabilitated Rajk — a real, public admission that his own 1949 conviction had been false. His reburial, on 6 October 1956, drew a real 100,000 mourners. Admitting one purge had been fabricated directly undermined Rákosi's own authority to explain away every other one — a real, dated event just seventeen days before the Hungarian Revolution this course's next chapter covers.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why the real 1945 election result should be understood as a genuine defeat for the Communists, even though they went on to govern Hungary regardless.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why the real, disputed origin of the "salami tactics" phrase does not change the underlying historical assessment of what the Communists actually did to eliminate their opposition.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Explain why Rajk's real 1956 rehabilitation was genuinely damaging to Rákosi's own authority, beyond simply correcting one individual case.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **November 1945:** the Smallholders win 57.03% to the Communists' 16.96% — yet Molotov secures Communist control of the police and Interior Ministry regardless
- **"Salami tactics":** a real, documented practice — the phrase itself has no verified source tying it to Rákosi
- **Summer 1948:** Social Democrats forced to merge into the Communist Party, forming the MDP
- **26 Dec 1948 – 8 Feb 1949:** Cardinal Mindszenty arrested, tortured into confession, sentenced to life
- **30 May – 15 Oct 1949:** László Rajk arrested, tried, and executed on false charges
- **1948–1956:** ~350,000 officials and intellectuals purged
- **28 March / 6 October 1956:** Rajk rehabilitated, then reburied before 100,000 mourners — 17 days before the Revolution

CHAPTER 8: THE 1956 HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION: CAUSES AND TWELVE DAYS OF FREEDOM

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 8 · The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: Causes and Twelve Days of Freedom

Chapter 7 closed just seventeen days before this chapter's own real events — Rajk's own reburial before 100,000 mourners, a public admission that Rákosi's own purges had been built on lies. What followed was the fastest, most complete political transformation this course has yet traced.

23 October: The Sixteen Points and the Fallen Statue

University students called on the public to gather at the Hungarian Parliament Building to protest Soviet domination, entering the Magyar Rádió building to broadcast a real list of sixteen demands for political and economic reform. The same day, demonstrators toppled Budapest's real 25-meter Stalin statue — looping a thick steel rope around its neck, then cutting through its bronze legs with oxygen cylinders and metal blowpipes brought in by truck. An hour later it fell. All that remained standing was the statue's own bronze boots, into which protesters planted a Hungarian flag, defacing the surrounding fragments with graffiti reading "W.C."

The Radio Building

A student delegation attempting to broadcast the sixteen demands was detained inside the radio building. When the crowd outside demanded their release, ÁVH security police opened fire, fatally shooting several students. The siege of the building that followed ran from shortly after midnight until roughly 8:00 a.m. — the real, specific moment that turned a political demonstration into an armed uprising.

Armed Uprising and Revolutionary Councils

Hungarians organized real revolutionary militias to fight the ÁVH directly. Local Communist officials and ÁVH policemen were captured and, in many real, documented cases, summarily executed; political prisoners were released and armed. Workers' councils — local soviets,

genuinely independent of the party apparatus — took over municipal government in towns and city districts across the country.

Nagy Returns

Imre Nagy returned to power as Prime Minister amid the uprising, and moved quickly: the ÁVH itself, the security apparatus responsible for Chapter 7's own show trials and repression, was formally disbanded on **28 October**. Two days later, on **30 October**, Nagy announced the restoration of a genuine multi-party political system.

Mindszenty's Release

The same day, **30 October 1956**, Cardinal Mindszenty — held since his own real 1948 arrest and forced confession, covered in Chapter 7 — was released from prison. He returned to Budapest the following day, publicly praised the insurgents on 2 November, and delivered a real radio broadcast in support of the Revolution's own anti-communist developments on 3 November.

Neutrality and Withdrawal

On **1 November 1956**, Nagy declared Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact entirely and pledged to hold genuinely free elections.

Finding: twelve days that undid a decade

In less than two weeks, Hungary moved from Chapter 7's own real Stalinist repression — show trials, a purged cardinal, 350,000 officials driven from public life — to a disbanded secret police, a released cardinal broadcasting freely, a restored multi-party system, and formal withdrawal from a Soviet-led military alliance. No chapter in this course has covered political change happening this fast. This course's next chapter turns to what happened once that speed, and that withdrawal specifically, met Moscow's own real response.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why the ÁVH shooting at the Radio Building specifically, rather than the earlier student demonstration itself, is the real turning point that made this an armed uprising.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why Nagy's real decision to disband the ÁVH on 28 October was a genuinely different, more decisive kind of reform than simply reducing its powers or replacing its leadership.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Using Chapter 7's own account of Mindszenty's 1948 arrest, explain why his own real actions between 30 October and 3 November 1956 carried particular symbolic weight for the Revolution.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **23 October 1956:** the sixteen-point demonstration; the Stalin statue toppled, only its boots left standing
- **Radio Building:** the ÁVH shooting turns protest into armed uprising overnight
- **28 October:** Nagy disbands the ÁVH
- **30 October:** Nagy announces a multi-party system; Mindszenty released from prison

- **1 November:** Nagy declares Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and pledges free elections
- **2–3 November:** Mindszenty publicly supports the Revolution and broadcasts on national radio

CHAPTER 9: CRUSHED: THE SOVIET INVASION AND ITS REAL POLITICAL AFTERMATH

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 9 · Crushed: The Soviet Invasion and Its Real Political Aftermath

Chapter 8 closed on 1 November 1956, Hungary formally withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact. Moscow's own real answer came three days later.

Operation Whirlwind

On **4 November 1956**, Soviet forces launched a real, overwhelming invasion — some 31,550 troops and 1,130 tanks, crushing the Revolution's own armed resistance within days.

Nagy's Real Fate

Nagy fled to the Yugoslav Embassy in the early morning hours of 4 November. On **22 November**, despite a real, written safe-conduct guarantee of free passage issued by János Kádár himself, Nagy was arrested by Soviet forces the moment he left the embassy and taken to Snagov, Romania. He was secretly tried, found guilty of organizing the overthrow of the Hungarian People's Republic and treason, and executed by hanging on **16 June 1958** — his trial and execution made public only after the sentence had already been carried out.

Finding: a written guarantee, broken in practice

This course has repeatedly traced the gap between a formal arrangement and what actually happens in practice — Charles IV's own outlasted title, Kun's modest title hiding real power, the Smallholders' own unusable 1945 majority. Kádár's written safe-conduct guarantee to Nagy is the starkest version yet: a real, documented, signed promise, broken the moment it was tested, ending not in a lost office but in a secret trial and an execution kept hidden from the public for years.

The Real Human Cost

Real, documented figures put the toll at 2,500–3,000 Hungarians killed and roughly 13,000 wounded. Approximately **200,000 people** fled to the West in the aftermath — one of the largest single refugee movements Europe had seen since the Second World War.

Kádár Installed

János Kádár took power as the new Soviet-backed leader from 4 November 1956 onward — the same Kádár whose own real, decades-long consolidation of "Goulash Communism" is the direct starting point of this course's own sibling course, German Political History II's own counterpart, Hungarian Political History II.

Finding: a reburial, thirty-one years later, and a name still to come

In 1989, Nagy was formally rehabilitated and reburied — on 16 June, the exact 31st anniversary of his own execution — before a real crowd estimated at 200,000 people. Among those who spoke that day, delivering his own first major public address, was a young Viktor Orbán. This course closes in 1956; the political career that speech launched is where Hungary's own next real political history course, Hungarian Political History II, eventually leads.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why Kádár's own broken safe-conduct guarantee to Nagy is a genuinely more severe example of the "formal arrangement vs. real outcome" pattern this course has traced repeatedly, compared to the earlier cases in Chapters 2, 3, and 7.

[→ Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

Explain why keeping Nagy's real trial and execution secret until after it had already happened served a genuine, practical political purpose for Kádár's own new government.

→ Solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why the real 200,000-person turnout at Nagy's 1989 reburial should be understood as more than a memorial for one man alone.

→ Solution

Quick Reference

- **4 November 1956:** Operation Whirlwind — ~31,550 troops, 1,130 tanks crush the Revolution
- **22 November 1956:** Nagy arrested leaving the Yugoslav Embassy, despite Kádár's own written safe-conduct guarantee
- **16 June 1958:** Nagy secretly tried and executed; made public only afterward
- **Real toll:** 2,500–3,000 killed, ~13,000 wounded, ~200,000 fled to the West
- **From 4 November 1956:** János Kádár installed as the new Soviet-backed leader
- **16 June 1989:** Nagy rehabilitated and reburied, exactly 31 years after his execution, before ~200,000 mourners — including a young Viktor Orbán's own first major public address

CHAPTER 10: CAPSTONE — THREE HUNGARIAN POLITICAL COLLAPSES, COMPARED (1918–1956)

Hungarian Political History I: Empire, Trianon & the Road to 1956

Chapter 10 · Capstone: Three Hungarian Political Collapses, Compared (1918–1956)

This course has traced one recurring thread from Chapter 2 onward: a formal arrangement — a title, a majority, a written guarantee — and the real power actually exercised are genuinely separate things. This capstone closes the course by tracing that thread in full, then applying it to the three moments Hungary's own political order actually collapsed by force.

The Recurring Thread, Traced in Full

Chapter	The formal arrangement	The real outcome
Chapter 2 (1918)	Charles IV kept his formal royal title	His real, exercised power had already ended in practice
Chapter 3 (1919)	Béla Kun held only the modest title of Commissar of Foreign Affairs	He held the Hungarian Soviet Republic's own real, supreme power
Chapter 7 (1945)	The Smallholders won a real, overwhelming 57.03% electoral majority	The Communists held the real coercive power — the police and Interior Ministry
Chapter 9 (1956)	Kádár issued a real, written safe-conduct guarantee to Nagy	Nagy was arrested the moment he acted on it, then secretly tried and executed

Three Collapses, Compared

Three moments in this course mark a genuine collapse of Hungary's own existing political order by outside force or crisis: the dual monarchy's own 1918–19 collapse into revolution and counter-revolution, the German-imposed Arrow Cross coup of October 1944, and the Soviet crushing of the 1956 Revolution.

Dimension	1918–19 (Ch.2–3)	1944 (Ch.6)	1956 (Ch.8–9)
What ended the prior order	WWI's military collapse and the Vix Note ultimatum	German occupation once Hungary's loyalty wavered	The second Soviet invasion, Operation Whirlwind
Real mechanism of transfer	Charles's non-abdication, Károlyi's resignation, then a proclaimed Soviet Republic	Horthy's son kidnapped; his own signature coerced in exchange	Kádár's broken written safe-conduct guarantee; Nagy's secret trial
Genuine popular support for what followed	Real, broad urban support for the Aster Revolution itself; the Soviet Republic's own mandate far more ambiguous	None — installed entirely by German force, with no electoral mandate at all	None for Kádár's new government; the Revolution it replaced had real, broad, documented popular support
Real documented human cost	Red Terror (370–590 executed) plus White Terror (1,500–6,000 killed)	~437,000 deported, ~564,000 total Hungarian Jewish deaths — the catastrophic outlier	2,500–3,000 killed; ~200,000 fled as refugees
What replaced it	Horthy's regency — a real, engineered "guided democracy"	The Arrow Cross's own short, brutal terror regime	Kádár's decades-long Soviet-backed rule

Finding: real popular support did not determine which regime actually survived

Two of this course's own three real collapses — 1918's own early republic and the 1956 Revolution — followed genuine, documented popular support, and both were undone by outside coercive force. The one collapse with no genuine popular mandate behind it at all, the Arrow Cross's October 1944 installation, succeeded completely, imposed entirely by German military force against a population that had never chosen it. Across this course's own real, documented history, raw coercive and military capacity — not popular legitimacy — is what actually determined which government held power in Hungary, again and again, from 1918 through 1956.

Chapter Attribution

Material	Chapter(s)
The dual monarchy and its real collapse	Chapters 1–2
Revolution, counter-revolution, and the two terrors	Chapter 3
Trianon and revisionism as real state policy	Chapter 4
The Horthy regency's own engineered political system	Chapter 5
Alliance, occupation, and the deportations	Chapter 6
Sovietization and the Rákosi era's own show trials	Chapter 7
The 1956 Revolution's own twelve days	Chapter 8
The Soviet invasion and its real aftermath	Chapter 9

Course 1 Complete

This closes Hungarian Political History I at 10/10 chapters. Hungarian Political History II picks up directly from this course's own final chapter — János Kádár's installation in November 1956 — tracing his real, decades-long consolidation of power through to Hungary's own real, modern political system, EU accession, and the still-live disputes of Fidesz-era Hungary today.