

Should we laugh on them while crying or should we cry on them while laughing? Hungarian so-called “kings” since transition

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Abstract

In this paper, I examine a totally marginal and peculiar political force in present-day Hungary, the lives, and activities of the so-called Hungarian “kings”. Although the republic was proclaimed in Hungary on 1 February 1946 and the last coronation of a king took place in 1916, there were and are candidates since the transition who would like to imagine themselves on the throne of Hungary. They are utterly frivolous, illegitimate, self-styled aspirants, and I leave it to the reader to decide whether they are in fact well-meaning fools, psychiatric cases, phantasms, provocateurs, or impostors. Of course, in my introduction I will briefly review the lives of the real, former kings and heirs to the throne in the region, so I will briefly discuss the Hungarian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Albanian, Russian, and Turkish situations. I will then focus only on Hungary and outline the careers and activities of the late “József Daka of the House of Árpád”, “His Majesty Levente I Apostolic King of Hungary” and József Borbély “Governor of Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary”, currently “József I Nimrod Bátor Atilla Apostolic Hungarian and World King”, which are full of wonderful and astonishing elements. However, I would like to state emphatically that, the actions of these “kings” fall into the category of political nonsense or a joke, but perhaps a political psychologist or psychiatrist would disagree with me. In Hungary, since the change of regime, there has been no serious monarchist or legitimist force present, and support for the republic among the population and parliamentary parties is unquestionable.

Keywords: king, monarchy, József Daka, House of Árpád, Levente I, József Borbély

Introduction

During the transition in 1989 and in the decades that followed, many countries in Central and Eastern Europe saw the return of former rulers or their direct descendants. Although restorationist, monarchist forces have been strengthened in many places, no royal coronation has yet taken place in this region. However, I would like to say at the outset that, in my opinion, the so-called Hungarian “kings” discussed later are undoubtedly funny and humorous. Their statements are not without elements of cabaret, often making their audience laugh and provoking them at the same time. The activities of the so-called Hungarian “kings” belong to the

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category of political absurdity. But, before I discuss them in more detail, let us look at the no less interesting and often astonishing stories of the real kings and heirs to the throne in Central and Eastern Europe. Their return was greeted with enthusiastic respect and joy by most of the population and the political elite in this region.

On real kings and their descendants

Otto von Habsburg (1912-2011) was very much in the public eye in Hungary during the transition period. He was “the last heir to the Hungarian throne, politician, and writer, was born in Reichenau an der Rax, Austria, in 1912, the eldest son of the last Austrian Emperor and King of Hungary, Charles IV (In Austria: Charles I) and his wife Empress Zita, and godson of Emperor Franz Joseph. He first appeared in public in 1916, at the funeral of Emperor Franz Joseph, and a month later he attended his father’s coronation as King of Hungary. After two years of Charles IV’s reign, Austria and Hungary were proclaimed republics. Charles IV twice attempted to return to the Hungarian throne but was legally dethroned in Hungary in 1921. After the dissolution of the Monarchy, the family was banished to the Portuguese island of Madeira. After Charles’s death in 1922, Otto became the future heir to the throne, and from the age of 18, head of the Habsburg dynasty. From 1925 he lived in Belgium, the USA, France, Spain and, since 1954, in Pöcking, Germany. He has been a member of the Pan-European Union since 1936, Vice-President since 1957, President since 1973 and later Honorary President. In 1935 he obtained a doctorate in political and social sciences. Archduke Otto was married on 10 May 1951 to Princess Regina of Saxe-Meiningen, by whom he had seven children. His youngest son, George, was born on 16 December 1964 in Starnberg, Bavaria, and is currently Hungary’s ambassador in Paris. Otto von Habsburg was a member of the Christian Democrat CSU group in the European Parliament for 20 years from 1979, twice serving as the group’s oldest member. In 1989 he was chair of the body’s delegation for Hungarian affairs. In 1989 he was the main patron and one of the organisers of the »Pan-European Picnic« on the Hungarian-Austrian border, which saw 700 East Germans cross into Austria. The Pan-European Picnic was an important milestone in the processes that led to German reunification. He was fluent in several languages, including Hungarian, and became a citizen of four countries - Germany, Austria, Croatia, and Hungary. In Hungary, he was elected honorary citizen of sixty municipalities.”¹ But neither he nor his son George ever made any claim to the Hungarian throne, and Otto even politely refused to be nominated for the presidency of the republic by the Independent Smallholders’ Party.

In Romania, King Michael I (1921-2017), son of King Charles II of the Hohenzollern family, was the ruler of Romania from 1927 to 1930 and from 1940 to

¹ Szarvas, István (2011): “Habsburg Ottó, a megkoronázatlan király elhunyt [Otto Habsburg, the uncrowned king, has died]”, hethetatar.hu (04.07.2011); available at <https://hethetatar.hu/hethatar/?p=14906> (21 November, 2022).

1947. He played a key role in the turnaround of 23 August 1944, when Romania, which had become a theatre of war, broke with its allies, the Axis Powers, and sided with the anti-fascist coalition. On 30 December 1947, the Romanian Communists called for the abdication of the throne and proclaimed the end of the kingdom and the establishment of a People's Republic. He resigned a few days later and was expelled from the country on 3 January 1948, along with several members of the royal family. Later that year, he was stripped of his citizenship.² After the fall of the communist regime, which lasted for more than 40 years, he was allowed to return home for the first time in Easter 1992, but the post-communist government of Ion Iliescu, frightened by the former king's enormous popularity, banned him from the country for another five years. His situation was finally resolved in 1997, with the election of Emil Constantinescu as head of state: he regained his Romanian citizenship and was free to visit his country. In fact, he regained his former hunting lodge, if not his estates, and was able to use the Elizabeth Palace in Bucharest for the rest of his life.³ Although he was no longer an active figure in Romanian public life, he was highly respected in his native country and his personal prestige has contributed to the growing popularity of the idea of kingship in Romania over the last decade.⁴

In Bulgaria Simeon Saxecoburggotski, formerly Simeon II, also known as Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha or Simeon Saksoburggotski or Simeon Coburgotski, (born June 16, 1937, in Sofia, Bulgaria) was the last tsar of Bulgaria, reigning as a child from 1943 to 1946 as Simeon II. Later served as the country's prime minister (2001–2005). On August 28, 1943, his father, Boris III, died under mysterious circumstances - the cause of death being reported variously as heart attack or poisoning - and the six-year-old crown prince ascended the throne, overseen by a three-man regency comprising Boris's brother Prince Cyril, former war minister Lieutenant General Nikolai Michov, and former premier Bogdan Filov. After Bulgaria quit the Axis Powers and was overrun by the Soviet Red Army, the regents were arrested, and on February 2, 1945, all three were executed as enemies of the state and as collaborators with the Germans. A second regency was established, but on September 8, 1946, the monarchy was voted out of existence, and Simeon and his mother, Queen Ioanna, went into exile. Simeon eventually settled in Madrid, marrying a Spanish heiress. In 1996 Simeon visited Bulgaria and most of the royal

² [No Author] (2017): "Elhunyt I. Mihály román király [Romanian King Michael I has died]", szabadsag.ro (05.12.2017): available at <http://szabadsag.ro/-/elhunyt-i-mihaly-roman-kiraly> (22 November, 2022).

³ Szerencsi, Ágnes (2008): "Margit hercegnő a román trón várományosa [Princess Margaret is a candidate for the Romanian throne]", kitekinto.hu (02.01.2008): available at https://web.archive.org/web/20180207005008/http://kitekinto.hu/europa/2008/01/02/margit_hercegn_a_roman_tron_varomanyosa (22 November, 2022).

⁴ [No Author] (2017): "Elhunyt I. Mihály román király [Romanian King Michael I has died]", szabadsag.ro (05.12.2017): available at <http://szabadsag.ro/-/elhunyt-i-mihaly-roman-kiraly> (22 November, 2022).

property was later returned to him. In April 2001 he announced the formation of the National Movement for Simeon II, an organization that set out to field candidates in the national legislative elections scheduled in June. When the courts ruled that the party had not met all the requirements for registration, it joined two minor parties' coalition and was thereby allowed to participate in the election. The party won 120 of the 240 seats and formed a coalition with the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, which represented the country's Turkish minority. On July 24, 2001, Simeon became the country's prime minister. Upon taking office, Simeon took as his surname Saxecoburggotski, the Bulgarian form of the name of his royal house, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Saxecoburggotski, who appointed professionals and those lacking political experience to his cabinet, vowed to introduce economic reforms and end corruption. He also stressed the importance of preparing Bulgaria for membership in the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and in 2004 the country became a member of the latter. In the 2005 elections Saxecoburggotski's party finished second in the voting, and he was replaced as prime minister by Sergei Stanishev of the Bulgarian Socialist Party.⁵ In the 2009 elections, his party failed to enter parliament. After that Simeon wrote his autobiography in French that was released in Bulgaria on October 28, 2014.

In Serbia Peter II, reigned from 1934 to 1945, when the monarchy was abolished. Peter II's son Alexander Karađorđević was born in 1945, London and was raised in the United Kingdom, where he made a career in banking. Following the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1992, the revival of royalist sentiment in Serbia led to his reluctant emergence as a focus of democratic opposition to the regime of Slobodan Milošević. In 2001 Alexander, styling himself as crown prince (the title he bore at the time of the monarchy's demise), returned to Serbia, where he successfully recovered much of the land and private property that was once his family's.⁶ Crown Prince Alexander has been a tireless contributor in the process of co-operation and unity amongst the democratic political parties. During the previous decade Crown Prince travelled extensively, met with numerous world leaders, politicians, parliamentarians, world bodies and had many interviews to the media.⁷

In 2011 Prince Nikola (born 1944) was officially welcomed by Montenegro's President and Prime Minister in the former royal capital of Cetinje. Montenegro's Crown Prince Nikola II Petrovic said he is "entirely satisfied" with a law

⁵ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (undated): "Simeon Saxecoburggotski. prime minister and former king of Bulgaria", [britannica.com: available at https://www.britannica.com/biography/Simeon-Saxecoburggotski](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Simeon-Saxecoburggotski) (22 November, 2022).

⁶ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (undated): "Karađorđević dynasty", [britannica.com: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Karadjordjevic-dynasty](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Karadjordjevic-dynasty) (22 November, 2022).

⁷ "The Royal Family of Serbia" (undated): available at <https://royalfamily.org/royal-family/hrh-crown-prince-alexander-ii/> (22 November, 2022).

rehabilitating his family, which was dethroned in 1918.⁸ Prince Nicola is a French-born architect and the Head of the House of Petrović-Njegoš, which reigned over Montenegro from 1696 to 1766 and again from 1782 to 1918.

Albania was ruled by the late Ahmet Zogu I, father of Crown Prince Leka I (1939-2011), from 1928 until April 1939, when the Italian army invaded Albania and the royal family - with newborn Leka - had to flee the country. In 1946, Albania's communist rulers abolished the monarchy. After the collapse of the communist regime, he returned home first in 1993 and then in 1997, and on his return, Albania rejected the restoration of the kingdom in a referendum. Even before the results were known, he conceded defeat, but nevertheless stormed the electoral commission building with a group of armed supporters. In the resulting melee, one person was killed, and several others injured, and he left Albania in haste. In 1999, an Albanian court sentenced him to three years' imprisonment on charges of organising an armed rebellion, but the charge was later reduced to unauthorised possession of weapons and the self-proclaimed heir to the throne was pardoned. He finally moved back to his country with his family in June 2002, and in 2006 the Zogu family was given back the Royal Palace in Tirana by a decision of the Parliament.⁹ Leka I died on 30 November 2011 from a heart attack in Mother Teresa Hospital, Tirana.¹⁰

It should also be mentioned that on 24 September 2021 a strange and remarkable event happened in Russian Federation: George Mikhailovich Romanov, great-grandson of Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich Romanov, who was first cousin to Nicholas II, the ill-fated final Tsar of Russia, is Grand Duke and Sovereign Heir to the throne — at least according to some, has wed Italian consultant and author Rebecca Bettarini in the first royal wedding in St Petersburg for over a century. Ever since Nicholas II abdicated in March 1917, his dynasty has been a spent force.¹¹ Tsar Nicholas Romanov II, his wife, 4 daughters and son were murdered by the Bolsheviks with extreme brutality in Ekaterinburg in the spring of 1918. Whatever the hopes kindled by some of the surviving aristocratic diaspora, the Romanovs are not returning to the throne any time soon. Only 3 per cent of Russians want to return to the feudal days of old tsarism. Yet support for a

⁸ Kadivar, Darius (2011): "Montenegro Welcomes Back It's Crown Prince and Royal Family", iranian.com (09.08.2011): available at <https://iranian.com/main/blog/darius-kadivar/montenegro-welcomes-back-its-crown-prince-and-royal-family.html> (22 November, 2022).

⁹ MTI [Hungarian News Agency] (2011): "Meghalt az albán trónörökös [The heir to the Albanian throne has died]", mult-kor.hu (30.11.2011): available at https://mult-kor.hu/20111130_meghalt_az_alban_tronorokos (22 November, 2022).

¹⁰ Semini, Llazar (2011): "Albania's self-styled King Leka dies at 72", sandiegouniontribune.com (30.11.2011): available at <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-albanias-self-styled-king-leka-dies-at-72-2011nov30-story.html> (22 November, 2022).

¹¹ Galeotti, Mark (2021): "Is Russia ready for a Romanov restoration?", spectator.co.uk (04.10.2021): available at <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/is-russia-ready-for-a-romanov-restoration/> (22 November, 2022).

constitutional monarch, devoid of the powers of the old emperor, is about equal to those who remain opposed to any form of monarchy.¹²

The truth is that since 1991, the succession to the former Russian throne has been in dispute, due to disagreements over the validity of dynasts' marriages: Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna (born 1953) is the most widely acknowledged pretender to the throne of Russia. This great-great-granddaughter of Alexander II, who was Tsar of Russia until his assassination in 1881, now lives in Spain. Her father, Vladimir Kirillovich, was born in exile in Finland in 1917, and from 1938 claimed to be head of the Russian imperial family. When Grand Duke Vladimir died in 1992, his daughter succeeded him in this claim, and calls her son, the Grand Duke George Mikhailovich, the heir apparent. However, Maria Vladimirovna has never belonged to the Romanov Family Association, founded in 1979 to unite descendants, because its members include non-dynastic Romanovs (those whose ancestors married outside the dynasty), whom she and her supporters believe do not have a legitimate claim to the throne. Prince Andrew Romanov (1923-2021) was the great-great-grandson of Nicholas I, who was Tsar of Russia until his death in 1855. He was also the grandson of Duchess Xenia, who fled Russia in 1917 along with her mother and others on a warship sent by her cousin, Britain's King George V. Born in London in 1923, he has lived for years in California, and was an artist and author. After the death of Prince Dmitri Romanovich in December 2016, Prince Andrew inherited the rival claim to the throne supported by the Romanov Family Association.¹³ And there are many living descendants of the Romanov dynasty besides the two of them.

Finally, Turkey should also be mentioned, where the Ottoman dynasty was expelled from Turkey in 1924. The Ottoman dynasty's descendants were forced to scatter around the world after the collapse of the empire and they were sent into exile starting from 1924. In 1952, female members of the dynasty were granted amnesty and the men were allowed to return to Turkey in 1974. Yet, few returned to Turkey as most of them had already built new lives after living abroad for decades. For example, on January 2021 Prince Dündar Abdülkerim Osmanoğlu, the last heir to the throne of the now-defunct Ottoman Empire, passed away in Damascus, Syria, at the age of ninety. Osmanoğlu, was living alone in Damascus where he was born after his parents were expelled from Turkey upon the abolition of the caliphate in 1924. Osmanoğlu is the grandson of Prince Mehmet Selim Efendi, son of Abdülhamid II, the legendary Ottoman sultan credited with prolonging the survival of the Ottoman Empire, which was well past its glory days in the last years of the

¹² Galeotti, Mark (2021): "Is Russia ready for a Romanov restoration?", *spectator.co.uk* (04.10.2021): available at <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/is-russia-ready-for-a-romanov-restoration/> (22 November, 2022).

¹³ Pruitt, Sarah (2019): "The Romanov Family Tree: Real Descendants and Wannabes", *history.com* (29.03.2019): available at <https://www.history.com/news/romanov-family-tree-descendants-imposters-claims> (22 November, 2022).

19th century. As the oldest member, he was the head of the family of sultans' grandchildren since the 2017 death of Osman Bayezid Osmanoglu, the son of Ibrahim Tevfik, who was the grandson of Sultan Abdülmeçid I.¹⁴

But anyone who expects such a serious history of rulers with a distinguished past from this study will be disappointed. Those about whom I write are or have been remarkable achievers, but they might be more likely to be in the world of political esoterica or to be rather in the pages of satirical and humorous newspapers. Although they take themselves entirely seriously and have a handful of believers who are convinced of their truth, these “kings” belong more in the category of jokes and burlesque. They are typical examples of the political gag in Hungary. The life and activities of the Hungarian “kings” discussed in this paper could be the field of political psychology, perhaps they are fools or perhaps they are “holy madmen”, let the readers decide, but it is not by chance that the title above came to mind in connection with their story. We can either laugh or cry at them, especially as they have been picked up by the Hungarian tabloid media from time to time and have then found their way into the wider public consciousness. This is a sweet, funny, and sad vision of Hungary at the turn of the millennium, where the proclamation of the republic on 1 February 1946 marked the end of the kingdom.

But who are they really, loonies, medical (psychiatric) cases, fantasts, harmless fools, or impostors? One thing is certain; however, they and their narrow fan base believed/believe in their principles and goals. They indulge in spectacular, provocative actions, they have a strong social media presence (Facebook, YouTube etc.), they realize varied performances. One of them is now deceased (“József Daka of the House of Árpád”), but the other two “kings” (“His Majesty Levente I Apostolic King of Hungary” and József Borbély “Governor of Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary”, currently “József I Nimrod Bátor Atilla Apostolic Hungarian and World King”) are still active with varying intensity in Hungary, where there is currently no serious monarchist or legitimist party or movement. Although there are traditionalists of the Habsburg dynasty, I believe that nostalgia for the former dynasty, which also ruled Hungary, has also died down with the death of the last heir to the throne, Otto Habsburg. Other Hungarian and foreign aristocratic families have not, to my knowledge, harboured any pretensions to the throne since the transition. What distinguishes the contemporary Hungarian “kings” from the increasingly well-known so-called frivolous or joke political parties (e.g. the Official Monster Raving Loony Party in the UK, Die PARTEI in Germany, the Hungarian Two Tailed Dog Party in Hungary) is that they take themselves seriously, believe their views almost messianistically and are convinced that they are right. I invite the reader on a special and “spiritual” journey, let’s get started:

¹⁴ Daily Sabah (2021): “Last heir to Ottoman throne passes away at 90”, [dailysabah.com](https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/diaspora/last-heir-to-ottoman-throne-passes-away-at-90) (19.01.2021): available at <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/diaspora/last-heir-to-ottoman-throne-passes-away-at-90> (22 November, 2022).

The late “József Daka of the House of Árpád”

The amazing story of József Daka (1919-2016) was all over the internet and the Hungarian press a few years ago. He has told on several occasions his life story, which is full of legendary elements, is made up out of thin air, almost completely devoid of reality, and has never been proven by official Hungarian historiography. Compared to him, I think, Elek Benedek¹⁵'s fairy tale character, “the big-talking lad”, or Zoltán Kodály¹⁶'s song play title character, János Hány¹⁷, the big-talking obsit, were just humble beginners. He was a real Hungarian “Baron Münchhausen¹⁸”, so I will confine myself to describing only the most important elements of his “flood” of incredible adventures.

According to it during the Mongol (“Tatar”) invasion of 1241-1242, the dreaded Kadan Khan, who led the Mongol armies, made a peace treaty with King Béla IV of Hungary. According to the deal, the Khan secretly (!) married the king's daughter, Jolanda¹⁹. In return, the conquerors withdrew from the country. Jolanda, however, was an intriguing beauty: she persuaded the fierce conqueror to abdicate the Tatar throne (?) and move back home to Hungary. The couple then settled in Szeged. Kadan was baptised and, by changing the letters of his name, became Daka. Soon after, they had a child, Béla Daka of Árpád House.²⁰ Unfortunately, the secret, but still incredibly happy marriage that ensued lasted only a brief time, because the husband, Kadan Khan (Daka), died 5 years after the marriage, at a young age. After Kadan's death, Jolanda married Prince Boleslo Kalinczki (later Grand Duke of Poland), who never found out about the secret marriage. Béla IV raised his grandson secretly with the help of foster parents. The child's full name was Béla Daka of the House of Árpád. To be on the safe side, the grandfather dropped the name of the child from the Árpád House, leaving only Béla Daka, so his identity was never revealed.²¹

Béla Daka's existence, and that of his descendants, was a “family state secret” kept for centuries. According to tradition, the head of the family could only pass on the secret to the eldest son when he came of age, thus ensuring the survival of the “royal bloodline”. This, however, did not prevent them from always being very,

¹⁵ Benedek, Elek (1859-1929) was a Hungarian journalist, writer and fairy tale writer.

¹⁶ Kodály, Zoltán (1882-1967) was a Hungarian composer, musicologist, ethnomusicologist, pedagogue.

¹⁷ “János Hány” is a popular Hungarian folk opera by Zoltán Kodály.

¹⁸ Baron Karl Friedrich Hieronymus von Münchhausen (1720-1797) was a German military officer whose name was synonymous with big mouth and mendacity.

¹⁹ Yolanda of Poland or Yolanda of Hungary, later Blessed Yolanda (1235-1298), was the daughter of King Béla IV of Hungary and member of Order of Poor Clares.

²⁰ Németh, Csaba (2016): “Az Árpádok köztünk járnak? [Are the Árpáds among us?]”, posztit.hu (02.02.2016) available at <http://posztit.hu/az-arpadok-koztunk-jarnak/> (15 November, 2022).

²¹ Szilvás, István (2008): “Hogyan él egy mai király? - Árpád-házi Daka József története. [How does a modern king live? - The story of Joseph Daka of Árpád]”, kiralysag.network.hu, (18.03.2008): available at <http://kiralysag.network.hu/blog/kiralysag-hirei/hogyan-el-egy-mai-kiraly-arpad-hazi-daka-jozsef-tortenete> (15 November, 2022).

very close to the fire as secret shapers of Hungarian history: one Daka, for example, was János Hunyadi²²'s chef, another was Lajos Kossuth²³'s secret advisor and Sándor Petőfi²⁴'s best friend: the first signed copy of the "*Nemzeti dal*" ["National song"] is still a family heirloom.²⁵

József's grandfather, Mihály Daka, saved the lives of three hundred people in 1879 during the great flood in Szeged. The painting by the painter Pál Vágó²⁶, which can be seen in the Móra Ferenc Museum in Szeged, depicts the scene when his grandfather is sitting in the boat and reports to the emperor that he has saved three hundred people from certain death. The emperor therefore gave him the title of Baron. His grandfather told his father that he muttered under his moustache, "if you knew who I was, you would hang me, not give me the title of baron". The grandfather, sensing that the emperor's men were on his trail, fled to a small remote village in the Banat called Óbéba - now near the Hungarian-Romanian-Serbian triple border - to avoid being caught by the emperor. There he died.

Later the history of Daka family was that, as they were from Szeged, and József's father met Miklós Horthy²⁷ there, with whom also served in the military in World War I. His father later left the army and took a job in the railways. He informed the Minister of War through his acquaintance in Szeged that the Daka family was a direct descendant of King Béla IV. This brought to Miklós Horthy's knowledge that the House of Árpád had not died out, and Horthy was also pleased to learn that his comrade had just had a son, which ensured the succession of the House of Árpád.²⁸

According to József Daka, Miklós Horthy wanted to put an end to the clique fights that had broken out in 1944 over the deputy governor's post vacated after his son's death. This is how he remembered him, whom he knew to be a descendant of the House of Árpád and knew Daka's father from Szeged. So, he crowned him, but the whole thing had to be kept secret, because that was the terms of Horthy's agreement with Hitler. The Führer feared that the news of the coronation would

²² Hunyadi, János (1407-1456) was a Hungarian warlord, politician and governor of the Kingdom of Hungary (1446-1453).

²³ Kossuth, Lajos (1802-1894) was a Hungarian nobleman, lawyer, journalist, politician, minister of finance, statesman and Governor-president of Hungary after the Declaration of Independence (14 April, 1849).

²⁴ Petőfi, Sándor (1823-1849) was a Hungarian poet, revolutionary, politician, freedom fighter and military officer.

²⁵ Németh, Csaba (2016): "Az Árpádok köztünk járnak? [Are the Árpáds among us?]", posztit.hu (02.02.2016) available at <http://posztit.hu/az-arpadok-koztunk-jarnak/> (15 November, 2022).

²⁶ Vágó, Pál (1853-1928) was a Hungarian painter.

²⁷ Horthy, Miklós (1868-1957) was a Hungarian admiral, politician, statesman and governor of the Kingdom of Hungary (1920-1944).

²⁸ Szilvás, István (2008): "Hogyan él egy mai király? - Árpád-házi Daka József története. [How does a modern king live? - The story of Joseph Daka of Árpád]", kiralysag.network.hu, (18.03.2008): available at <http://kiralysag.network.hu/blog/kiralysag-hirei/hogyan-el-egy-mai-kiraly-arpad-hazi-daka-jozsef-tortenete> (15 November, 2022).

cause a revolt in Austria, which had been annexed to Germany.²⁹ And how exactly did the coronation take place? Perhaps it is best to quote word for word from the crowned “king” himself:

“Governor Miklós Horthy ordered that on 25 June 1944 at 10 o’clock in the morning, Major General Ács³⁰, dressed in his uniform, should escort me to the Governor’s residence in Buda Castle. On entering the room, I saw the Governor’s aide-de-camp, the Admiral, the Prime Minister, Hungarian ministers, a representative of the German government (in civilian clothes), Cardinal Prince Primate Serédi Jusztinián³¹, and a few other dignitaries unknown to me. After saluting, the Governor told me that what was going to happen in this room would be the best birthday present I had ever received. He then called on those present to swear that what they were about to see would remain secret and would not be divulged under any circumstances. After the oath, the Governor said:

‘We are heading for a world war; the end is not yet decided and who will be the victor. If we do lose the war, the first thing the enemy will do will be to seize the coronation supplies. Therefore, as Governor, to end the controversy surrounding the election of a Deputy Governor, I have decided to ask the permission of the German government (as of March 18-19, 1944, the German army occupied Hungary) to have the Holy Crown officially placed on the head of an Archduke of the House of Árpád. In this way, the election of a Deputy Governor and the coronation of King Joseph I of the House of Árpád will be resolved.’

The crown was handed by the Governor to the Cardinal, with the intention of placing it on my head. I had to kneel on a prayer stool. The ceremony ended with the Cardinal placing the crown on my head and blessing me. After the ceremony, the Governor said: ‘Thank God that my wish has been fulfilled. Congratulations, my son, and never forget that you are Hungarian.’ The man in civilian clothes approached me and said in German: ‘Your Majesty, good luck, much happiness, and may you bring justice to the Hungarian people.’ The Cardinal said: ‘May God bless the Hungarian people with good fortune.’ Everyone wished me well. We then went to the Royal Palace, where the ceremony continued in the Throne Room. I was seated in the throne chair placed there, and then the Cardinal blessed me. The crown was on my head the whole time. The seating part of the throne chair was woven with gold

²⁹ Tóth-Szenesi, Attila (2010): “Daka József magyar király szeretne lenni. [József Daka wants to be King of Hungary]”, index.hu (10.11.2010): available at https://index.hu/belfold/2010/11/10/daka_jozsef_bejelentkezett_a_magyar_tronra/ (15 November, 2022).

³⁰ Áts, Zoltán (1882-?) was a Hungarian army officer, Major General.

³¹ Serédi, Jusztinián (1884-1945) was a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church and Archbishop of Esztergom and Prince Primate of Hungary (1928-1945).

ornaments. One golden thread was torn off without my noticing, and I keep it. The throne chair disappeared during the war, but this gold thread was left. At the end of the ceremony, we retired to the Governor's residence, where Cardinal Serédi took the Holy Crown from my head and handed it to the Governor. Afterwards, the distinguished guests were bid farewell. (It was clear to me beforehand that the coronation was conducted under oath of secrecy because Hitler feared that if the Austrians got wind of the coronation, the road and supply line to the then nearby Russian front might be endangered.) Finally, the Governor ordered us to appear the next day ready for the journey, together with Major General Ács. The next day, Major General Ács received the travel papers. The Governor said goodbye to me: 'Major, never forget that you are Hungarian! My son, God bless you!' He embraced me and extended his hand. I thanked him for everything, then we saluted and left'³²

The question may arise: what evidence is there for this? However, József Daka's answer is clear: *"Nothing, it had to be kept secret, there was no photographer, we had to swear that nothing would be published outside the walls of the residence."*³³

József Daka wanted to fight in vain on the ever-closer Eastern Front, but Horthy sent him to Vienna, to the Wehrmacht's technical unit for secret weapons. After the war, he returned home with a grave secret, which he did not even tell his first wife, and only three years ago he told his second wife, who had since died. *"I was afraid of women's gossip, lest one of my wives should boast about me,"* he says. After the Second World War, he set up a small electrician's shop, which was nationalised. He became a technician at IKV (Property Management Company), then a lecturer at the company that maintained the state office buildings, from where he retired. He has no direct line of succession ("it was not my fault"), but his sister has a 30-year-old grandson, Gábor, who is delighted to might be heir to the throne.³⁴ József Daka of the House of Árpád, finally submitted his claim to the throne in writing to the Hungarian Parliament in 2010 (*"I see that the Habsburgs are starting to move again, and in my anger I announced my claim to the throne"*, he said), despite the fact that there is no longer any throne or kingdom. Not to mention the rest. He had

³² Szilvás, István (2008): "Hogyan él egy mai király? - Árpád-házi Daka József története. [How does a modern king live? - The story of Joseph Daka of Árpád]", kiralysag.network.hu, (18.03.2008): available at <http://kiralysag.network.hu/blog/kiralysag-hirei/hogyan-el-egy-mai-kiraly-arpad-hazi-daka-jozsef-tortenete> (15 November, 2022).

³³ Tóth-Szenesi, Attila (2010): "Daka József magyar király szeretne lenni. [József Daka wants to be King of Hungary]", index.hu (10.11.2010): available at https://index.hu/belfold/2010/11/10/daka_jozsef_bejelentkezett_a_magyar_tronra/ (15 November, 2022).

³⁴ Tóth-Szenesi, Attila (2010): "Daka József magyar király szeretne lenni. [József Daka wants to be King of Hungary]", index.hu (10.11.2010): available at https://index.hu/belfold/2010/11/10/daka_jozsef_bejelentkezett_a_magyar_tronra/ (15 November, 2022).

no children, so if the House of Árpád did not die out in 1290, or 1301, it died out on male branch with his death in 2016.³⁵

“His Majesty Levente I Apostolic King of Hungary”

In the following, I would like to introduce another “king”, His Majesty Levente I of the House of Levente, who by the grace of God has been the apostolic (!) ruler of Hungary since 1 January 2008.

Levente I - who, I suppose, is also a joke or a medical case - is primarily targeting Hungarian politics. As the current system is not very monarchy-friendly, the “king” would have some demands: He wants the Palace of Buda returned to him, a vote on the court budget, the right of Catholic priests to marry, and “His Majesty wishes for a more intelligent world, with more love!” The King’s website contains several speeches, but there are also several video messages, photos, and articles about him. We can also find out about positive communication or the latest news from the Hungarian Royal Party. In my opinion, the official website of “King Levente I” is a veritable “treasure trove” for the researcher. In addition to the Royal Court of Hungary, we can find information on royal political science, the Royal Constitution, which is of course based on the Holy Crown Doctrine³⁶. We will also find detailed information on the Royal Chancellery, the Royal Commander, the royal and national property, and Hungarian politics. Also noteworthy is the section on the “Hungarian economy”, which opens with the sentence “His Majesty King Levente I wishes to increase Hungarian property, to increase the Hungarian economy to a GDP of 400 billion euros per year.” The website is interactive. It has - among other things - a guestbook, FAQ, forum, royal postcard, blog diary and of course you can send a letter to His Majesty. We can find detailed information on royal court etiquette, the royal bank, royal audiences, royal foundations, and the Hungarian royal anthem. Then, when I read the passages on world kingship and world government, the irrational and banal content of which I will spare the reader any further elaboration, I became convinced that the “King” might be a psychological case.³⁷

³⁵ Németh, Csaba (2016): “Az Árpádok köztünk járnak? [Are the Árpáds among us?]”, posztit.hu (02.02.2016) available at <http://posztit.hu/az-arpadok-koztunk-jarnak/> (15 November, 2022).

³⁶ Connected to the Holy Crown, there is a doctrine which speaks of the significance of the Crown to Hungary. According to the Doctrine of the Holy Crown, the Crown itself has a personhood that is identical to Hungary. The Doctrine holds that Hungary is of the Holy Crown, everything that Hungary is, belongs to the Crown himself. The ruler only rules in the name of the Crown, but he is subordinate to its will – that which is the will of Hungarians. See more: Lili Zemplényi: Legends, Tales, and the Doctrine of the Holy Crown of Hungary, Hungarian Conservative: available at https://www.hungarianconservative.com/articles/culture_society/legends-tales-and-the-doctrine-of-the-holy-crown-of-hungary/ (25 January, 2023).

³⁷ “Magyar Királyi Udvar honlapja [Website of the Hungarian Royal Court]” (undated): available at <http://kiralyiudvar.lapunk.hu/> (27 November, 2022).

A post on the King's "official website" dated 1 January 2012 tells us a lot about him and his objectives: "His Majesty King Levente I is '*Minister Dei, Rex et sacerdos*'. The King is the Ruler of the Kingdom of Hungary. The King was born in 1977 and ascended the Hungarian Throne at the age of thirty by the will of God, founding the House of Levente, the new Royal Hungarian Ruling Dynasty." This is what he thinks of the "King and the Kingdom of Hungary: His Majesty the King is the Sovereign of Hungary. His Majesty is a constitutional and absolute monarch, a personage above the constitutional order. The Nation must obey the orders of the King, as it is always in the interest of the Nation and ensures its progress! The symbol of the alliance between the King and the Nation is the Holy Crown and the Coronation." I think it is easy to see the legal nonsense and contradictory nature of these statements.

What is the role of the Monarchy? We can also find out from him: "The monarchy is the oldest type of government in Hungary. In a monarchy, the King and Queen, the royal couple, are the heads of state. The head of state is sovereign. Legislative power is vested in Parliament, which has an Upper and Lower House. The Lower House of Parliament is an elected parliament which ensures democratic functioning. The King of Hungary has a political and executive role. The King has both constitutional and representative roles, based on thousands of years of tradition. In addition to the state roles, the role of the Sovereign as Head of State ensures formality. The Sovereign puts national identity, unity, and pride at the centre, giving a sense of stability and continuity; it formally recognises success and excellence. In this role, the Sovereign is supported by his immediate family and relatives."

Of course, it also describes the relationship between the King and the Government: "It is the duty of all Hungarians to obey the King's commands, as they are issued for the advancement of the Nation. The governance of the country is in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. The King transmits the Royal Orders to the Royal Chancellor, His Excellency Dr. János Áder³⁸ (Since 10 May 2022, Her Excellency Katalin Novák³⁹). The King's Chancellor represents His Majesty in the Upper House⁴⁰ of Parliament and the Emperor in the Lower House of the Hungarian Parliament. It is the King's wish that a congruent Hungarian Government be formed, which will promote the development, growth, and prosperity of the country!" The King also announces his intention to create "The Upper House of Parliament: His Majesty's wish and Royal command is to establish an Upper House of Parliament from the members of the Hungarian Nobility!"

³⁸ Áder, János (1959-) is a Hungarian lawyer, politician, MP who served as President of Hungary from 2012 to 2022.

³⁹ Novák, Katalin (1977-) is a Hungarian politician who is serving as the current president of Hungary since 2022.

⁴⁰ An upper house is one of two chambers of a bicameral legislature, the other chamber being the lower house.

It is also clear that it is particularly important to clarify the relationship between “the King and the Law”, and between “the King and the Church”: “The King and the Law have been one for centuries. The Sovereign Ruler is the source of law. The Sovereign gives the mandate to the legitimate government, and moral legality is achieved through the legitimate government. The person of the King is above the Constitution and the Constitutional Court, the King’s role in law making is symbolic, and in necessary cases the royal command is authoritative.” Moreover “the King is the protector of the Church, which means that His Majesty has a special role in the Church as Apostolic King. The King reigns by the will of God, with the help of God he fights for the rise of the Nation! He asks the Roman Catholic Pope for the coronation in the Basilica of St. Stephen the King in Budapest! It is His Majesty’s wish that the clergy should marry, since God created man and woman for each other, as a couple; therefore, the next Roman Catholic Pope should be a married man!” The modern system is a constitutional monarchy, whose head is the king, who is the Head of State, embodies and focuses on the unity of the nation. As King of all Hungarians, he unites the Hungarians of the entire world. He is the Head of the Royal Family and the nobility and of the whole nation. He is the permanent, enduring royal symbol of the country, drawing on the Nation’s history and pointing the way forward to a glorious future and he is a person of worldwide renown.⁷⁴¹

And if this was not enough to convince the reader that Hungary is the home of determined, energetic “kings”, I would like to quote in full the last New Year’s Speech of His Majesty King Levente from 2021 I believe that in this speech, too, well-intentioned, well-founded, correct proposals and aspirations are mixed with fantasies and demagogic blunders:

“My loving Nation!

A year ago, no one could have imagined the challenge the pandemic would pose to the world. Our lives have changed dramatically since the spread of the virus. We hope that we will soon be able to overcome the situation. The spread of the virus should have been stopped in China, but instead it has spread around the world. That this could happen highlights areas where we have serious work to do. We need to improve health protection, medicine, the pharmaceutical industry, prevention, virus protection protocols, so that we can prevent the virus from spreading, so that no one gets it, and everyone is cured. The virus threat is still there, so we must protect ourselves and investigate what happened, who is responsible for what happened. We need to research and develop protective devices, protective equipment, treatment and cure, possible natural and artificial medicines, vaccines.

⁴¹ “Magyar Királyi Udvar honlapja [Website of the Hungarian Royal Court]” (2012): “Öfelsége Levente király. [His Majesty King Levente]”, available at <http://kiralyiudvar.lapunk.hu/ofelsege-a-kiraly-es-magyarorszag-kiralyi-csalad-656548#.Y1Z0UXZBxPY> (27 November, 2022).

Fortunately, we have a much stronger economy to protect ourselves from, which is the result of civil government. The country's financial situation is stable, we have substantial reserves, we have even managed to increase the gold reserve. The economy should and is functioning, but we need to get back on the path of economic growth, which China has managed to do in this situation, together with the containment of the epidemic. In the long term, Hungary's economy must grow competitive Hungarian-owned industry! We need to make progress in establishing fully Hungarian-owned utilities and in making Hungarian-owned food chains competitive, towards a fully self-sufficient Hungary. Let us have a national airline again! Privatised state assets should be returned to Hungarian ownership! We must continue to close the economic gap with Western Europe. We must continue to increase salaries, so that the average salary reaches HUF 800,000 a month! My government promises that medical salaries above HUF 2 million per month will soon be available. The social safety net must be further strengthened, providing shelter and livelihoods for all! The creation of ethical, fair banking must continue and be monitored! Fair banking means a clear increase in the wealth of their customers!

Let the Hungarian population grow, as it is in the interest of our nation to prosper! We must help people choose a partner, start a family, and have children! We must say what is right and normal, and we must defend our views! In the ideal family, the father is a man, the mother is a woman, they are married for life and the grandparents of the children are the parents of the father and the parents of the mother are also married for life. Ethical, moral life, fidelity should be considered a value! We must think as a nation, we must protect and support Hungarians beyond the borders! We must protect Hungary's borders! We must continue to increase, develop, and modernise our national defence, as well as to achieve improved diplomatic relations!

The task is to understand and correctly interpret our history! King Saint Stephen, the founder of the state, established a national kingdom, which is the only right way for Hungary! The sovereignty and independence of Hungary is one of the greatest values that we should take care of the most, which history has constantly proved and to which Hungary has the right! The current statue park in Heroes' Square is a guide to the correct interpretation of history. Only the national kings can be considered true Hungarian kings, and our freedom fighters, such as Rákóczi⁴² and Kossuth, can be considered true national heroes! At the time, a correct realisation was made at the Diet

⁴² Rákóczi, Ferenc (1676-1735) was a Hungarian aristocrat, Prince of Transylvania and leader of the War of Independence against the Habsburgs (1703-1711).

of 'Rákos mezeje'⁴³, according to which we need a national king, because a Hungarian man can best represent the interests of the Hungarians!

We need a national aristocracy, a Hungarian nobility! More human people, more Hungarian Hungarians in government! Hungary's parliament is currently a lower house, but we need an upper house, which is for the nobility, like the House of Lords in England. We need to assess how Hungarian the present government and political sphere is, whether it is making good use of the public wealth entrusted to it! Is it true that it is Hungarian at heart or is it primarily for political and economic gain. The economic situation of the country has obviously improved a lot in the previous years, but Hungarian noble control is obviously needed to control the management of wealth!

I have always considered and still consider it necessary to renovate castles, palaces, and royal palaces, but I must emphasise that this must be done on a national scale! Priority must be given to buildings of national character and national history! We need a National Palace Programme and a National Castle Programme, which is Hungarian in name! In the context of the renovation of the Royal Palace of Buda Castle, this means that statues of Rákóczi and Kossuth must be placed there, and only national coats of arms and national symbols must be restored!

The task is to understand and interpret religions correctly: all the signs are that the current religions were invented, written, and created by human beings. Religions can best be seen as a search for a path and a search for truth. This is borne out by the many religious movements that have emerged and by the constant shaping and changing of religions. According to this hypothesis, the God and the image of God that has been created is the result of imagination and the search for a way. We must constantly examine religions and compare them with our scientific knowledge! At the same time, religions have accumulated considerable human knowledge and wisdom, which we must be able to separate from imagination and fantasy!

We have a responsibility to recognise and to avert the challenges facing humanity. We must raise our global and cosmic consciousness! The task is to develop a national space programme, to create a Hungarian space fleet, to develop the Hungarian space industry and space technology, to explore and better understand the universe. We must create a global monitoring system and a solar system and universe observing system! Our task is to protect the climate, to monitor the planet's heat balance! Global warming is causing the melting of Arctic icebergs and glaciers! We need to restore the functioning of

⁴³ Although parliaments were held in many parts of the country during the Middle Ages (mostly in Buda), the Rákos field („Rákos mezeje”) east of Pest, along the Rákos stream, became synonymous with the Hungarian parliament or nation's assembly.

*the Ministry of Environment! Let the Hungarians unite, let the Nation unite!
Strength in unity!*

I wish you all a peaceful and happy New Year, perseverance, and hope that with unity and optimism everything will turn out for the better, and together everything will succeed! For the Hungarian Nation, for the Hungarian Homeland, for the sovereign, national, 'Kuruc' Hungarian Kingdom!"⁴⁴

It should be added that the “King” is cautiously pro-government. He also writes approvingly of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán⁴⁵. According to his Facebook page, Levente I mainly visits the sites of the Government of Hungary (kormany.hu) and the ruling party Fidesz (fidesz.hu), on which he sometimes comments positively.⁴⁶ The Facebook page of the Royal Hungarian Courtyard is relatively active. It informs about a lot of summer festivals, traditional events, and museum programmes. On 20 August 2022, the national holiday, it shared the news with the following text. “Her Excellency Dr. Katalin Novák, Royal Chancellor of Hungary, visited Székesfehérvár.” So, “King Levente I” refuses to accept the office of head of state of Katalin Novák, President of the Republic. According to the website, on 31 July 2022, “His Majesty King Levente” heard the Foreign Minister. On 24 May, “His Majesty King Levente” attended the “Good Mood Club” ball in Veszprém with a French lady. Also on this day, an important event took place, which the “King” interpreted in his own words: “The fourth government of His Majesty King Levente, led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, has been formed. Humane governance!” On this last wish, at least, I think we can agree with the “King” described above.⁴⁷ I believe that the life and activities of “King Levente I” are so surreal and absurd that he is probably in a role-playing frenzy and playing the part of the “king” and “court jester” too.

József Borbély “Governor of Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary”, currently “József I Nimrod Bátor Atilla Apostolic Hungarian and World King”

The most problematic and controversial figure of the Hungarian “kings” “*Pantheon*” is József Borbély. “József I Nimrod Bátor Atilla Apostolic Hungarian

⁴⁴ “Magyar Királyi Udvar honlapja [Website of the Hungarian Royal Court]” (2021): “Őfelsége Levente király újévi trónbeszède 2021. [New Year’s Speech of His Majesty King Levente]”, available at <http://kiralyiudvar.lapunk.hu/ofelsege-levente-kiraly-ujevi-tronbeszede-2021-773435#.Y1Z0GXZBxPY> (27 November, 2022).

⁴⁵ Orbán, Viktor (1963-) is a Hungarian lawyer, politician, MP, party leader and Prime Minister of Hungary (1998-2002 and since 2010).

⁴⁶ Domján, Tibor (2014): “Orbán Viktort támogatja, Őfelsége I. Levente, apostoli magyar király. [Viktor Orbán is supported by His Majesty King Levente I, Apostolic King of Hungary]”, hirarena.com (09.06.2014): available at http://hirarena.com/orban-viktort-tamogatja--ofelsege--i--levente--apostoli-magyar-kiraly-_360 (27 November, 2022).

⁴⁷ “Magyar Királyi Udvar Facebook oldala [Facebook page of the Hungarian Royal Court]” (2022): available at <https://www.facebook.com/kiralyiudvar/> (27 November, 2022).

and World King”, whose civil name was József Borbély, was a former carpenter and owner of a furniture factory in Kecskemét, until he woke up on 13 June 2009 to the fact that Hungary was a kingdom, and he was the volunteer governor. It was not enough for him to be the president of a micro-party, the Clean Energy Party for Hungary (Tempo), he needed the (semblance of) an empire.

On November 11, 2011, on a boat on the Danube, he reinstated the kingdom, calling Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary an illegitimate leader. He signalled the takeover to 40 countries, sending a letter to “King Juan Carlos Alfonso of Spain” too. On 28 December 2011, he created the Office of the Governor, at the same time banning all political parties in Hungary (the question arises, including his own?). Later that year, the “Bank of the Holy Crown” (*“Szent Korona Bank”*) was launched. According to Borbély, “the Holy Crown has now divided itself into small pieces for us, so much so that it has become money, albeit only electronic money”. In a highly creative way, the currency became the “Holy Crown” (*“Szent Korona”*) (1 “Holy Crown” = 200 HUF). The bank was not registered by the PSZÁF (State Supervisory Authority for Financial Organisations). When opening an account, all Hungarians are granted an unconditional basic income of HUF 400,000, and the money accumulated since 2011 is not small. You can’t use the “Holy Crown” to make purchases, but you can use it to make calls at a discount for fleet members.⁴⁸ Of course, proceedings have since been launched against the “bank”. The Hungarian National Bank has distanced itself from the confusing virtual institution: “Despite its misleading name, ‘Bank of the Holy Crown’ is not a bank, it is not entitled to provide financial services, and the certificates issued by it cannot be used to settle payment obligations.” As the article on the case notes: “The Bank of the Holy Crown and its currency can be taken as seriously as the ‘Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary’ is taken seriously today. However, this is hardly a harmless game because of the wider gullible public. Some debtors, in fact, wish to meet their outstanding payment obligations by means of the certificate of performance thus obtained instead of Hungary’s legal tender.”⁴⁹

In February 2012, Borbély and his loyal subjects toppled the flagpole in the Visegrád citadel, replaced the Republic’s flag with that of the new kingdom, then put the flagpole back up and took the oath of allegiance. He was followed by the commanders of the royal army, the White Army, on 1 March in front of the Buda Castle Palace. Given all this, it is only natural that Borbély also makes the laws. In

⁴⁸ Zug Táltos (2020): “Putyin is tudja már, hogy itt van velünk Borbély József exkormányzó, a »világok ura« [Putin already knows that ex-Governor József Borbély, the »Lord of the Worlds«, is here with us]”, [szentkoronaradio.com](https://szentkoronaradio.com/blog/2020/07/07/putyin-is-tudja-mar-hogy-itt-van-velunk-borbely-jozsef-exkormanyzo-a-vilagok-ura/) (07.07.2020): available at <https://szentkoronaradio.com/blog/2020/07/07/putyin-is-tudja-mar-hogy-itt-van-velunk-borbely-jozsef-exkormanyzo-a-vilagok-ura/> (28 November, 2022).

⁴⁹ LG (2014): “Büntetőeljárás a Szent Korona Bank ellen. [Criminal proceedings against the Bank of the Holy Crown]”, [azenzem.hu](https://www.azenzem.hu) (06.02.2014): available at <https://www.azenzem.hu/cikkek/buntetoeljaras-a-szent-korona-bank-ellen/1657/> (28 November, 2022).

2012, he issued the second ‘Golden Bull’⁵⁰ and suspended the judiciary. All the secret services, the prosecution, and the police work for him. He can function as a prosecutor in trials, although he has no law degree.⁵¹ On December 7, 2012, József Borbély, the party leader who calls himself the apostolic Hungarian governor, was taken away from a defamation trial by riot police. The judge in the case placed the former industrialist, who is the president of the Tempo Party, under pre-trial detention and placed him under compulsory psychiatric observation. *Atlatzo.hu* reported that “three commandos entered the courtroom, restrained, and handcuffed Borbély, who then called on the prosecutor to ‘restore the legal situation and arrest the judge’. As a reason for the remand, the judge referred to the forensic expert appointed in the case, who said that Borbély had withdrawn from the examination ordered by the court, and the judge concluded that the defendant's cooperation, i.e., his participation in the psychiatric examination, could not be ensured otherwise.”⁵²

In 2016, in defiance of the elements, he symbolically placed a copy of the Holy Crown on a leather armchair and preached the word in the Kossuth Square, Budapest, but before that he announced the event with his *Lada Niva*, which served as a “governor’s mobile”, using a loudspeaker mounted on the roof, at an inhuman volume. It also turned out that the Parliament House is now in Kecskemét. According to an article about him, despite the many sounding titles, his biggest appearance was in a popular TV show. He became a source of humour in *Péter Hajdú’s Frizbi* TV show. I can agree with the author of the article, which also reports on the programme, when he states that „unfortunately, he also expresses real ideas and statements (criticism of democracy, anti-republicanism), which are treated as a joke by the audience, just like when he proclaims himself a world lord. Borbély’s greatest sin is that he couples his many dilettantes and loony ideas with high-minded ideas presented at a low level, so that to the average person everything appears to be an unacceptable lunacy.” His further statements of fact: there is an apostolic kingdom everywhere in the world (France, Russia, etc.), only they may not know it yet; Putin and Barack Obama know that he is the ruler of the world; there is an illegitimate state everywhere but not here; “Everything is in Hungarian,

⁵⁰ Golden Bull of 1222, charter granted by King Andrew II of Hungary, which stated the basic rights and privileges of the Hungarian nobility and clergymen and the limits of the monarch’s powers. The Hungarian nobles, aroused by Andrew’s excesses and extravagances, forced him to promulgate the Golden Bull. It contained 31 articles, reaffirming previously granted rights and bestowing new ones. In: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Golden-Bull-of-1222>. Accessed 25 January 2023.

⁵¹ ZugTáltos (2020): “Putyin is tudja már, hogy itt van velünk Borbély József exkormányzó, a »világok ura« [Putin already knows that ex-Governor József Borbély, the »Lord of the Worlds«, is here with us]”, *szentkoronaradio.com* (07.07.2020): available at <https://szentkoronaradio.com/blog/2020/07/07/putyin-is-tudja-mar-hogy-itt-van-velunk-borbely-jozsef-exkormanyzo-a-vilagok-ura/> (28 November, 2022).

⁵² Index (2013): “Elvitték az Apostoli Királyság kormányzóját [The Governor of the Apostolic Kingdom has been taken away]”, *index.hu* (02.01.2013): available at https://index.hu/belfold/2013/01/02/elvittek_az_apostoli_kiralysag_kormanyzojat/ (28 November, 2022).

just a bit distorted after the mess in Babel.”⁵³ In my opinion, this programme was a mixture of a political talk show and a cabaret.

Borbély has not disappeared since. In February 2020, he ran in a by-election for a Fejér County Member of Parliament (he came last with 26 votes) and held a consultation reception day and a legal aid service information session for people with credit problems in Dunaújváros. In the light of all this, it is legitimate to ask whether Borbély is sane. The public prosecutor’s office has repeatedly requested a psychiatric examination and that he be placed under guardianship, and he was taken away from one hearing by the Counter-Terrorism Command (TEK). Medical experts, however, concluded that he was “not mentally ill, not feeble-minded, his condition is not pathological, but his increased search for the truth and his tendency to litigate are indicative of delusions.”⁵⁴

Perhaps one of Borbély’s last moves was to launch a new internet portal under the name of “*Népszabadság*” [“Liberty of the People”], the once largest political daily that closed in 2016, under the name *nepszabadsag.eu*, with a logo that is deceptively identical to the old daily. The portal proclaims that „the re-launch of *Népszabadság* will restore the balance in mass information in a brief time. The nation will be strong and united again. Long live the Homeland! Long live Hungarian Freedom!” Since then, on this site, Borbély and his little team have been unscrupulously spilling the news and announcements. On 18 November 2021, it published a long and confusing statement entitled “Reconciliation”, in which it “is pleased to announce that the Governor of the Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary has reached an agreement of reconciliation with the leadership of the reigning 3rd Hungarian Republic for the peaceful transfer of power.” In the context of this paper, I do not have the opportunity to present the full content, so I will focus only on the “practical steps”, which are the follows “to withdraw politics from the economy and from all governance work in the country. To avoid anarchy and to ensure a smooth transition, everyone in the areas of governance and at the top of companies can remain in their posts for the time being, until the staff of the Office of the Governor’s Control of the Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary decide otherwise during the process of accountability. The previously announced amnesty decree is only applicable in criminal law and in case of cooperation, and the ill-gotten gains must

⁵³ “Frizbi Hajdú Péterrel - Borbély József az Apostoli Magyar Királyság Kormányzója (TV show). [Frisbee with Péter Hajdú - József Borbély Governor of the Hungarian Apostolic Kingdom (TV show)]”, (17.10.2013): available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iVu7wuPITQ> (28 November, 2022).

⁵⁴ ZugTáltos (2020): “Putyin is tudja már, hogy itt van velünk Borbély József exkormányzó, a »világok ura« [Putin already knows that ex-Governor József Borbély, the »Lord of the Worlds«, is here with us]”, *szentkoronaradio.com* (07.07.2020): available at <https://szentkoronaradio.com/blog/2020/07/07/putyin-is-tudja-mar-hogy-itt-van-velunk-borbely-jozsef-exkormanyzo-a-vilagok-ura/> (28 November, 2022).

be returned to all.”⁵⁵ Also on this day, Borbély published several decrees, according to which, for example, he dissolved the Hungarian Parliament for public interest, the Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary “is already in its rights”, whatever that means. Of course, he also emphasised the “fact” that on 13 June 2009, by voluntarily assuming the office of Governor, the State was represented as the Governor of the Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary by József Borbély. Among his many other tasks, Borbély informed György Matolcsy, President of the National Bank of Hungary too, about the merger of the National Bank of Hungary into the Szent Korona Bank. And there are many more interesting facts among the latest news.⁵⁶ The “apostolic Hungarian and world king Borbély”, ex-governor, is a tireless street fighter still doing his job for the nation today. I think he is a special mixture of a comedian, a politician, a provocateur, and a frustrated businessman.

Conclusion

To sum up, the three Hungarian “kings” (the late “József Daka of the House of Árpád”, “His Majesty Levente I Apostolic King of Hungary” and József Borbély “Governor of Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary”, currently “József I Nimrod Bátor Atilla Apostolic Hungarian and World King”) described above are illegitimate, with no constitutional basis for their rule. If we look back into Hungarian history “there were three conditions for the coronation of Hungarian monarchs in late medieval Hungary. Firstly, the monarch had to be crowned with the Holy Crown, secondly, the ceremony had to be performed by the Archbishop of Esztergom, and thirdly, the ceremony had to be held in Székesfehérvár.”⁵⁷ Of course, none of the three current Hungarian “kings” we have analysed fulfilled these conditions. At least, one can claim many things on this respect, but there is no proof. Absolutely none. These “kings” live in a dream world of their own making. Their irrational thoughts, words and actions are attention-grabbing, but they are profoundly bizarre and incoherent, to say the least. However, I believe that by briefly summarizing their life stories and actions, I have given a satiric, yet sad, view of the public conditions in post-regime Hungary, for instance where a singer, Jimmy Zábó (1958-2001), who was undoubtedly a very successful and talented, but also very divisive artist, was also called “king” by his fans, and he also called himself a “king”. Furthermore, we should not forget that in Hungary the saying “a man from far away can say what he likes” is still very much alive, and there is a long tradition of grandstanding and lying-in political life. I would also like to state emphatically that, apart from the handful of

⁵⁵ Borbély, József (2021a): “Kiegyezés. [Reconciliation]”, *nepszabadsag.eu* (08.11.2021): available at <http://nepszabadsag.eu/2021/11/18/kiegyezes> (28 November, 2022).

⁵⁶ Borbély, József. (2021b): “Friss hírek. [Latest news]”, *nepszabadsag.eu* (18.11.2021): available at <http://nepszabadsag.eu/> (28 November, 2022).

⁵⁷ Pálffy, Géza (2017): “Régi szokások-új kihívások: Uralkodókoronázások a kora újkori Magyarországon. [Old customs-new challenges: coronations in early modern Hungary]”, *Rubicon*, 28(1-2), 4, available at: https://epa.oszk.hu/03100/03122/00002/pdf/EPA03122_rubicon_2017_1-2_004-016.pdf (29 November, 2022).

followers of these three “kings”, there is currently no serious monarchist or legitimist party or movement in Hungary. At present, a political-economic-social situation in the country in which a majority of the electorate would opt for the restoration of the kingdom is unthinkable. The republicanism of the population is unquestionable, and none of the current parliamentary parties wants to restore the kingdom.