In 1923, while an émigré in Vienna, Oskár Jászi wrote the following dedication to Lajos Kossuth in his book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*:

To the Manes of Louis Kossuth the most farseeing of Hungarians who predicted his country's disaster and clearly discerned the path to her recovery.¹

Jászi was also describing himself in this dedication. He wrote it in retrospect, after the failure of the Károlyi Revolution in January 1919. Like Kossuth, Jászi became an exile following the failure of a revolution in which he had played a significant role. Also like Kossuth, with the passing of time, Jászi became more mature and objective in his perspective of Hungarian affairs, especially on Hungary's role in the Danubian basin and its relationship to the various nationalities that lived within and outside its borders.

The first ten years following the Hungarian War of Independence were the most significant ones for Kossuth. During this brief and chaotic decade he was at the pinnacle of his influence in European affairs. It was during the latter half of the 1850's that his movements were scrutinized by the English Parliament for fear he might be able to formulate an alliance with Hungary's Danubian and Balkan neighbors, under the auspices of Napoleon III's France, and later, Cavour's Italy, against Austria, which would upset the delicate balance of power on the continent.² From 1849, when he became the focus of an eastern crisis as a prisoner of Turkey, until 10 November 1859, when France and Austria signed the Treaty of Zurich, ending the War of Austria with France and Piedmont, Kossuth remained the leader of the Hungarian nation even as an exile. The Hungarians waited for the opportunity to regain the constitutional rights and privileges they had won during the April days of 1848 and subsequently lost with their surrender at Világos in August 1849.

After 1859, Kossuth's influence in European affairs rapidly diminished. More important, in the spring of 1862, he publicly announced his ideas.
concerning Hungary’s future within a Danubian confederation that included Romania and Serbia. This plan lost him what was left of his support among the landowning classes in Hungary. Moreover, it diminished his importance among those individuals who mattered politically, and assisted them, under the guidance of Ferenc Deák, to come to an agreement with the Habsburgs, using the legality of the Pragmatic Sanction and the April Laws of 1848 as a basis for their negotiations. Kossuth’s rejection of a compromise with the Habsburgs was of valuable assistance to both parties—to Francis Joseph and the Hungarian Diet—in reaching a final settlement.

The basis for Kossuth’s confederation was first established in his letter of 15 June 1850 to László Teleki and in the Kiutahia Constitution of 1851. These sources, particularly the constitution, created an internal federation, not a confederated system. The democratic ideas Kossuth used in creating this constitution formed the basis of his plans for the Danubian Basin during the remainder of his life. Naturally his ideas would change throughout the years, the result of the realities of great power politics and the need to compromise with the other national groups. To succeed, Kossuth needed to be flexible in his negotiations with the leaders of the Danubian Principalities and Serbia, on whose cooperation his eventual success would depend.

The Constitution of Kiutahia was one of the most farsighted plans ever devised to develop democracy in Hungary. District borders were to be changed according to the national composition of the districts. A two-chamber parliament would be created with its participants chosen through democratic elections. The upper house, or Senate, would be composed of members from each county. Each district would elect its own senator; therefore, a Slovak county would naturally send a Slovak representative to parliament. Since almost one-half of Hungary’s population was composed of minorities, the district elections would send the equivalent number of minority senators to parliament. Each county would decide its own language; Magyar however, would be the language of the parliament because of the need for all the members to use a common language.

Kossuth’s ideas went further in attempting to accommodate the different nations within the region than anything developed during this period, including the works of Deák and József Eötvös. Kossuth’s ideas show a general development that started just before his resignation in August 1849. He continued to work with the idea of granting autonomous and democratic rights and failed to realize that more was needed to create an independent Hungary. Time was a major problem with the realization of Kossuth’s ideas. The opportunity to reach a possible accommodation with the nationalities was during the revolution, which disillusioned and forced them to side with the
monarchy. As the Romanians talked about joint cooperation through a Danubian Confederation, Kossuth continued to develop democracy for Hungary with the purpose of keeping the historic kingdom intact.

Regardless of Kossuth's democratic plans for Hungary, it was difficult for him to abandon his nationalist outlook. His confederation would be dominated by the Hungarians, the crown lands would remain intact, and the monarchy would experience the modernization processes of bourgeois democratization. The semifeudal structure of Hungary would be abandoned. Even as early as September 1848, Kossuth offered to resign as long as the April Laws and national self government were guaranteed. These were his real objectives, and his confederation was one of the ways of achieving them. Early in his emigration Kossuth reached the conclusion that the monarchy was obsolete, and that change was necessary if it was to survive. The emergence of a democratic Hungary required a give and take, but as long as Kossuth had power within the emigration, compromise with the Habsburgs was out of the question. Kossuth was left with two other alternatives. The first was to seek assistance from the West to keeping Russia from intervening in Hungary's future struggle for independence. This was a solution that would exclude the Danubian Principalities and Serbia from participation in the struggle, although their assistance would be considered quite valuable to the Hungarian cause. The support of the national minorities within Hungary would be awarded with the creation of a federated democratic state that would welcome their participation in its processes. The Croats, because of their historic constitution and tradition of statehood, would be given the opportunity for independence if they so desired. But Fiume with a corridor to the sea had to be given to Hungary as a price for this independence. Kossuth's second alternative was to reach an accommodation with the other nations in the Danubian basin for joint cooperation in creating a confederation for the mutual protection and benefit of each national group. It took Kossuth time to realize that he had to look beyond the Hungarian problem and include the other nations in a solution that could guarantee an independent and democratic Hungary. He needed to broaden his horizon and realize that the issues involved the whole basin and not just Hungary. More important, both of these solutions could only be successful if they were supported by England and France.

In retrospect Kossuth made two major mistakes as governor of Hungary. The first and most catastrophic miscue was not granting democratic and autonomous concessions to the minorities once he assumed power. Ironically, in the years before the war, Kossuth advocated independence for Croatia. Had he followed the example of another Hungarian revolutionary, Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676–1735), and granted the minorities an equal place within the
kingdom they would have been useful allies against the Habsburgs during the war. Kossuth's second mistake was the dethronement of the Habsburgs on 14 April 1849. Although this act was constitutionally legal, it turned the conservatives in Hungary against his cause. His actions lost him the support of the most important and influential group that respected and supported this monarchial system. It changed the struggle from a revolution to a war of independence. Also, it made the conservatives seek a re-alignment with the monarchy. This is clearly explained by György Szabad:

Two main factors enabled the aristocracy to regain their position – shaken during the 1840's – as leaders of Hungary's public life: the immense income they continued to derive from their estates; and their close ties with the Imperial aristocracy through whom, by the early 1860's, they were again drawn to the court.

Some historians maintain that Kossuth's influence in Hungarian affairs lasted until Austria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. His long exile, however, left him out of touch with the moderate trends, championed by Deák, Eötvös, and the recently returned Count Gyula Andrássy, that were beginning to grow in influence within Hungary. Hungarians were neither prepared nor able to fulfill the Danubian designs that Kossuth had set for them. This realization caused Kossuth to change his views concerning the role of an independent Hungary. If Hungary was not powerful enough to secure her own independence without foreign assistance, then she would not be powerful enough to withstand the pressures of great power politics; therefore, she needed to be a member of a confederated system of Danubian states, which Hungary would naturally dominate, thus fulfilling her great power aspirations. Since the inclusion of Austria in any association with Hungary was anathema to Kossuth, he had to find a way for Hungary to replace Austria so the other powers, particularly Britain, would find it acceptable. More important, such a confederation would cause a drastic change between the Magyars and the nationalities living within and outside the lands of historic Hungary that the Hungarian landowning classes would never accept.

It is imperative to point out that political leaders, regardless of nationality or time period, in advocating a confederated or federated system as a possible solution to the nationality problem within the Danubian Basin, have always advocated this solution from a position of political weakness. This was the case with the Polish émigré, Adam Czartoryski, the Serbian minister of the Interior, Ilija Garašanin, the Czech leader Palacký, the Romanian leader Nicolae Bălcescu, Kossuth, Jászi, and even the Belvedere policy of Archduke Francis Ferdinand. They all advocated federation at times when they were not in a
position to implement such a policy. The proponents of federation schemes are not in the position to realize them. More often than not, then, they advocate such solutions when they are not faced with the political responsibilities for their projects.

Even if the Hungarians had been willing to accept Kossuth's advice, Great Britain opposed the idea of a Danubian confederation. The British, particularly Palmerston and Russell, were opposed to both Kossuth and his liberation movements because they feared that if successful they "would endanger the existence of Austria, considered indispensable in the given system of the balance of power." British policy regarding the Eastern Question and the issue of the Straits revolved around the continued existence of the Ottoman Empire and the use of Austria as a bulwark against Russian expansion into the Balkans. Without Hungary, Austria would lose its great power status, thereby creating an imbalance in the Balkans that could lead to the dissolution of Turkey, and would entail Russian control of the Straits. The Balkans, and possibly Central Europe, would become another appendage of the Russian Empire. Palmerston and Russell were both successful in undermining Kossuth's position while maintaining the status quo with little change in the balance of power.

After the revolution Britain continued to pressure Vienna to find a workable solution to its Hungarian problem. This policy will be discussed later in this work. Suffice it to say that Austria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 created the need to save the House of Habsburg's place in the European balance of power. Britain needed Austria to find some workable solution to the nationality problem that would allow the Habsburgs to concentrate on their role in the Eastern Question. The Austrian solution was in the Compromise in 1867, which joined the once rebellious Hungarians in a partnership with the House of Habsburg. The Compromise was abhorrent to Kossuth, and yet, ironically, the publication of his ideas concerning a Danubian confederation was a seminal event in the background of the agreement.

It was those years immediately before and after the war of 1859 when Kossuth began the process of becoming the "most farseeing Hungarian" that Jászi referred to in his introduction. Following the First World War and the dismemberment of Hungary at Trianon, Jászi wrote about Kossuth's predictions concerning the nationalities' problems and the need for a Danubian Confederation as their solution. Jászi maintained that if Kossuth's warning had been heeded to during the lean years of his exile, especially those years he was advocating the confederation, the dismemberment of Hungary could have been avoided, and more importantly, the First World War could have been
prevented. It is a quite remarkable concept that the historian István Deák has also shared. For Jásci, the war was the result of the failure of the monarchy to solve its nationality problems. Had the monarchy implemented a federated or confederated solution, similar to what Kossuth advocated, the monarchy could possibly have survived up to now. It is then possible to believe that the monarchy's nationality problems were the major force in perpetrating the war. It was these problems that threatened to change the balance of power in the Balkans.

Interestingly enough, Kossuth's predictions had their roots in the first decade of his years in exile. One might argue that they go back even further. Possibly the Revolution of 1848 had the greatest impact upon him? It cannot be denied that the revolution helped to influence and mold Kossuth as a statesman; however, it was his first ten years in exile that educated him. These years gave him the experience, knowledge, and understanding of European political affairs. It was during these years that he became familiar with the problems of the balance of power and the importance of Great Britain's role in it. Thus, at this point, it becomes essential to trace Kossuth's trail in 1849 Turkey, where his real education begins.

**Kossuth in Turkey**

On 11 August 1849, in the city of Arad, located east of Szeged on the Maros River in south-central Hungary, Kossuth, after having granted concessions to the Hungarian nationalities just days before, informed both the nation, and General Artúr Görgey, that he was resigning and handing over both civil and military control to Görgey, for the benefit and well being of the nation. He then left Hungary for self-imposed exile in Turkey.

As mentioned above, the presence of Kossuth and the other émigrés in Turkey caused an immediate problem for the great powers once Austria secured its control over Hungary. Both Russia and Austria regarded democratic principles as revolutionary and detrimental to their respective states. More than once, with the consent of Nicholas I, Metternich had suppressed liberal movements in Italy. Both had problems with the Polish émigrés of Paris, led by Czartoryski, and within their Polish possessions. In 1846, the Galician Poles had attempted to overthrow Austrian rule. Also, many Poles, including Joseph Bem, had given the Hungarians valuable assistance in their recent revolution. Both Russia and Austria knew that the émigrés could cause considerable problems among their fellow nationals at home. The Polish experience had taught them that émigrés would be willing to join in any
revolutionary movement if it could in some way benefit their cause. Kossuth’s popularity in the West was viewed with much apprehension in Vienna. There was the possibility that the Poles and Magyars could join together to form a common front against both their oppressors. With this understanding in mind, Austria and Russia put as much pressure as possible upon the Turkish Sultan Abdul Mejid to return Kossuth and the Hungarians to Austria, and the Poles to Russia, so they could stand trial.

Although the defeat of the Hungarians was more likely to help the established British policy in East Central Europe, Great Britain and France could not sit by idly while Russia and Austria forced the sultan to hand Kossuth over to “hangman Haynau.” Furthermore, they were putting a great deal of pressure upon Vienna because the former Hungarian leaders, who had been captured or elected to stay in Hungary, were being imprisoned or executed. During the revolution France and England virtually ignored Kossuth’s appeals for recognition and aid and only voiced minimum opposition when Russian troops entered Hungary. Furthermore, Russian assistance to Austria was watched with great concern by the British. Always fearful of Russian encroachment into the Balkans, Britain kept a watchful eye on the camaraderie between Vienna and St. Petersburg. Therefore, along with the French, Britain put diplomatic pressure on the sultan not to hand the émigrés over to the Russians and Austrians. Also, a joint Anglo-French fleet was sent to the Straits as a show of strength against the absolutist powers.

Early on, Kossuth was faced with the prospect of extradition or the adoption of Islam, as some Hungarians actually did convert. Instead, thanks to the persistence of Britain’s ambassador to the Porte, Stratford Canning, Kossuth was relegated to the position of a prisoner of the Turkish sultan. On 20 September 1849, Kossuth sent a letter to Palmerston that prompted Canning and Palmerston to intercede on behalf of the émigrés. In the letter he asked the following question:

are 5000 Christians set in the dreadful alternative to be sent to the scaffold, or to buy their life by abandoning their religion.

With British and French support for the émigrés, the absolutist powers found it necessary to withdraw their demands for extradition.

Meanwhile, Kossuth had not abandoned the revolution or doubted its eventual success. On 12 September, from Vidin, he sent a letter to the Hungarian envoys and agents in England and France. In it he analyzed the revolution, paying particular attention to Görgey’s role in the latter days of the rebellion. Görgey may have surrendered, he may have taken his thirty
pieces of silver, but Kossuth emphasized the fact that he himself was continuing the struggle.

Kossuth would languish in Turkey for over two years. Although international pressure had cooled somewhat regarding his presence within Turkey, the problem remained for all the powers involved. The Porte, regardless of its promises, wanted Kossuth out and the situation resolved. The Russian chancellor, Nesselrode, had already reached an agreement with Fuad Effendi, the Sultan's Representative in St. Petersburg, regarding the Polish émigrés. Under the agreement all the Poles were expelled from Ottoman territory, except for the leaders, whose positions were negotiated separately. Palmerston had hoped that the Austrian prime minister, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg, would have negotiated a similar agreement with the Porte. However, Austria still wanted the return of the émigrés, particularly the leaders, both political and military. Negotiations with the Porte had broken down, but Schwarzenberg reached an understanding with Constantinople that the refugees had to be detained until internal order was restored to Hungary. Kossuth's internment was worked out separately. It was eventually agreed to detain him for only one year, but under further Austrian pressure, he was confined for over a year and a half after arriving at Kiutahia on 12 April 1850.

Kossuth's activities had not helped the international situation. Tireless worker that he was, he continued to carry on discussions with the West and Danubian peoples through the emigration in Paris and through officials in Constantinople. These activities, aimed to secure Hungarian independence, led to extending Kossuth's internment longer than would have been necessary.

Much to the displeasure of László Teleki, Kossuth's agent in Paris, Kossuth attempted to control the émigré movement himself. Strong leadership was a prerequisite for keeping the émigré community together because if needed to be under a unified political leadership if it was going to be successful. There are many examples in which emigrations have fallen apart when strong leadership was lacking; schisms develop within emigrations that lack such leadership, and more time is spent on useless internal squabbles than attempting to achieve their objectives. This was evident with the Polish emigration led by Czartoryski's Hôtel Lambert group and the Democratic Society of Joachim Lelewel. Immediately after Világos, Kossuth began to analyze the failure of the rebellion. He believed defeat was the result of a failure in leadership. Görgey had not followed orders and undermined his authority. In order for the next revolution to be successful both military and political control needed to be under one leader, namely himself. For this view the other émigrés, particularly Teleki, Andrásy, and later Bertalan Szemere, criticized Kossuth.
Some of Kossuth's most important contacts inside Turkey included an English officer, Charles Frederic Henningson, whom Palmerston had sent to the Balkans; the Polish émigré Count Wladislaw Zamoyski, who had come to Hungary from the Polish émigré capital of Paris and had fled to Turkey along with the Hungarians; and the Romanian émigrés: the Golescu brothers (Nicolae and Alexander) and particularly Ion Ghica, who had recently escaped from the failed Bucharest revolt of 1848–49.47 This is not taking into consideration Kossuth's association with the Hungarian émigrés, particularly Teleki, Andrássy, Ferenc Pulszky, Hungary's agent in London, and General György Klapka. It was during this period, from Vidin to Kütahya, that Kossuth, with the help of those nationals mentioned above, but particularly Teleki and the Romanian Nicolae Bălcescu in London, began working on the confederation.

In actuality, the initiative of the first confederation rested more with the Romanian than the Magyar émigrés. Even before Világos, the idea of such a system circulated among the exiled leaders.48 The Romanians took the most serious approach to the idea. As early as May 1848 Dumitru Brătianu went to Pest to discuss with Lajos Batthyány the construction of a confederation of Danubian states.49 Later in 1849, Bălcescu had conversations with Kossuth in Debrecen. They discussed the possibility of joint cooperation between the Hungarian and Romanian revolutionary movements.50 In the spring of 1850, Bălcescu played a vital role in convincing the Hungarians, particularly Teleki and Klapka, to support the confederation idea.51 More importantly, his influence on Klapka would continue long after Kossuth abandoned the idea of a confederation.

Suffice it to say that the idea of a confederation received enough support to warrant further development and discussion. Bălcescu had already made converts of Klapka and Teleki. Lajos Lukács examined the correspondence between Bălcescu and Ghica and showed that there was a gradual development of ideas supporting the establishment of the confederation. In January 1850, Bălcescu drew up a constitution for the Romanians, Magyars, and South Slavs in which a plebiscite would decide the borders of each state. Bălcescu's ideas eliminated old historic borders and boundaries. Blocks of nationalities were to be given to the appropriate nations to which they belonged: the nation of the same culture and language. Naturally he was addressing the question of Romanians in Transylvania. He maintained that the Transylvanian question could be discussed during the final rounds of talks, after all the other details had been concluded. Also, a central parliament composed of fifty members from each nation, one hundred-fifty members in all, would meet annually to decide common affairs: defense, foreign
affairs, commerce, and communication. Each year a different nation would host the parliament, whose language would be either French or German. But when Ghica approached Kossuth with the Romanians’ proposal, even though it had been endorsed by the Hungarian émigrés in London, he rejected them. Upon hearing of Kossuth’s rejection, Bălcescu remarked to Teleki that Kossuth was a “dead person... a representative of Hungary of the past, the past that is buried forever.” Nevertheless, Bălcescu and the other émigrés knew that without Kossuth’s approval nothing could be accomplished.

Kossuth’s counter-proposal to the Romanians was his letter to Teleki of 15 June 1850, which gave his reason why he was against autonomous territorial concessions to the nationalités. He believed that the integrity of historic Hungary would be ruined by joining all the Romanians of Transylvania to Romania. Also, it would only be a short while before the other nationalities, i.e., the Slovaks, Carpatho-Ukrainians and Germans, would want the same rights as the Romanians. The principle of majority was not a viable process to determine the structure of the state. Many areas of Transylvania had a mixed population and could not be determined ethnically as a majority for any nation. Hungary would create a dangerous precedent if it granted territorial concessions to the nationalities. But democratic rights, which would include individual language and cultural development, religious freedom, and local autonomy was another matter. Kossuth supported the idea of a federated Hungarian state with confederated ties to the other Danubian nations.

This letter to Teleki, Kossuth wrote about the organizational basis for such a system. Like Bălcescu, Kossuth wanted the confederation to have a common foreign, military, and economic policy and a common market with joint decisions on important economic questions. Also, Kossuth supported the creation of a council for deciding joint cooperation, which would have equal membership from all the nations. It would meet in Hungary at a place determined at a later date and be ruled by a president elected for one year. Every twenty-five years the alliance would go through a revision that would determine the constitutional status for each member of the alliance. Also, they could determine whether or not to remain in the confederation. Kossuth went on to state that the language of the parliament would be Hungarian, with the usage of local languages in the autonomous areas, in judicature and other local matters.

Previously, Bălcescu had questioned Klapka, whom he regarded as a man having a wide perspective as to the language of the future diet.

Klapka suggested a common diet with German and French the official language while others suggested they should have Latin familiar to both Hungarians and Poles and related to the Romanian language as well.
While Kossuth, in his nationalistic way, recommended Hungarian, Klapka, being more pragmatic, suggested German or French. It is interesting that of all the émigrés, Klapka and Teleki were to stand behind the confederation idea the longest, keeping it "from sinking into oblivion." Also, they were more willing to come to an amicable solution of the differences that existed between the nationalities, including concessions on the important territorial and language issues.

Kossuth's ideas had a democratic basis and, except for the language decree and the territorial concessions, were an excellent basis for negotiations with the other nations. Granted, Kossuth planned to keep Hungary in a position of primary importance within the basin, but he was willing to give more rights than ever before to the nationalities. He was willing to share power in a confederation if the basis for such cooperation could be worked out. Kossuth believed in the viability and necessity of the existence of historic Hungary, not only for Hungary's future but for the basin's as well. A large and powerful Hungary in the midst of such a confederation would be a force in world affairs. Hungary would then be in a position to defend itself from external enemies. But the émigré communities were disappointed with Kossuth's reply because they put so much emphasis on the territorial solution as the basis of cooperation. Unfortunately for Kossuth, nationalism played a greater role in these negotiations than democracy, but he cannot be criticized for his willingness to bring bourgeois democracy to the region.

In May 1851, Kossuth wrote his Kutahiai alkotmányterv (The Constitution Plan of Kiutahia). He was against the nationalities forming independent territorial entities within Hungary, but he supported the development of an autonomous infrastructure that allowed the nationalities to control their own democratic development within the communities, counties, and state. Kossuth used the term "Universal Suffrage" in describing the democratic processes that would determine individual participation within the country. According to historian Domokos Kosáry, Kossuth's constitution relied upon the declaration of civic equality in 1848, the Nationalities Law of 1849, and "harmonized the structure of the state with the principle and practice of the democratic self-determination of the nationalities."

Kossuth addressed the language issue by using the United States as an example for overcoming this problem. He cited the varieties of languages used by the population and that language was not an issue amongst them. Also, he alluded to Switzerland with German, French, and Italian in use among its population. Kossuth still supported the use of Hungarian as the language of state but only for practical reasons of joint communication and administration. He supported the nationalities' rights to use their own language in its
communities, counties, churches, and schools. Also, in counties of mixed nationalities, the schools must offer the languages that are used by its peoples. In addition, the county assembly must offer its citizens the right to use their languages. Also, their elected representatives needed to have a minimum knowledge of the languages of their constituents.60

The national parliament would be elected from the different counties by universal suffrage. Minorities would naturally be allowed to send their own representatives to the two-house parliament. Since almost one-half of Hungary’s population was non-Magyar, the parliament would reflect the population. Hungarian would be the language of the councils, but all legislation and transcripts would be available in every language of the state.61 Kossuth made provisions for the different branches of government and the right of succession of the monarch.62 Parliament was to have a president that could rule in case the monarch became ill. Kossuth even gave the age requirements of recruits who would constitute Hungary’s citizen army.

Kossuth believed the idea of a Danubian confederation could actually be realized. Once again, he used the United States as an example to be emulated. Although Kossuth still adhered to the idea of Hungary’s territorial integrity, he saw the confederation developing into a federated system structured like the state system in America. Domestic affairs would be the concern of each individual national territory within the confederation. He again reiterated his willingness to give Croatia the option of leaving the kingdom. Fiume would have to remain under the joint protection of Hungary and Croatia, and Hungary’s access to the port must be a prerequisite for any settlement. Kossuth was emphatic in stating that Transylvania could not be compared with Croatia, and solutions applied to the latter did not apply to Transylvania. Transylvania would decide whether to join with Hungary’s parliament or have its own, but Transylvania would remain with Hungary, since the Transylvanian population was thoroughly mixed. Historically Transylvania was Hungarian and it would remain under the Holy Crown. However, Kossuth mentioned that the individual democratic rights concerning the nationalities in his constitution applied to all nations of Transylvania.63

The Kiutahia Constitution granted democratic rights to all the nations of Hungary. Except for the issue of territorial concessions and the use of Hungarian as the state language, Kossuth had granted almost every possible right that could be accorded in structuring a democratic state. He had devised a way to accommodate nationalism within a multi-national state. But according to Lajos Lukács, none of the émigrés approved of Kossuth’s plan. Teleki criticized his ideas as out of harmony with the ideas of democratic co-existence.64 Denis Jánossy saw Kossuth as a staunch defender of historic rights
over the principle of nationality. But it is difficult to examine Kossuth's constitution and understand how any of the other émigrés could have gone further in granting concessions to the diverse nations of the Danubian basin if they were in Kossuth's place. Kossuth's main shortcoming at the time was that he was not willing to grant territorial concessions. However, the other nations were not required to give territorial concessions for their participation in the confederation. Naturally, heavy concentrations of Hungarian were absent from Serbia or the Danubian Principalities; this is one reason that Garasanin and Bălcescu were not afraid to stress territorial concessions over the concept of historic right. Also, it was a reason why they demanded Hungarian territory for their participation in the confederation.

Negotiations with the Serbs were conducted with Ilija Garasanin, the most important Serbian statesman in the nineteenth century. In 1844, he developed his Načertanije (Outline), a plan that became the basis of Serbia's foreign and national policies until its eventual success in 1919. The Načertanije was a three-stage program that outlined the liberation of South Slavs from Turkish and Austrian rule and their unification in a state under the Serbian monarchy. In this program Garasanin stated:

[Serbia] must realize that she is still small, that she cannot remain so, and that she can achieve her future only in alliance with other surrounding peoples.

Garasanin's ultimate objective was the recreation of the Great Serbian Empire of the Middle Ages.

Garasanin had an excellent relationship with the Polish émigrés under Czartoryski and the French government, both of which pursued a policy of undermining Russian influence in Europe and the Near East. Before the Polish Revolution of 1830, Czartoryski, the former foreign minister to Russian Tsar Alexander I, advised the South Slavs to unite under Russian leadership. However, after the revolution, Czartoryski, aided with French financial and diplomatic support, pursued a policy that sought to reestablish an independent Poland. Since 1804, Serbia, although still under Ottoman suzerainty, enjoyed domestic autonomy generally recognized by other states. Also, the Serbs were the only Slavs, besides the Russians, to have a degree of political independence in Europe. This, along with its important geographic location in the Balkans, made Serbia the focus of numerous schemes by different powers to achieve political advantage over each other. Both the Poles and Magyars hoped to use the Serbs for their own purposes. Thus Garasanin approached each group cautiously and always negotiated in a manner to get the most for Serbia's interests.
Another important émigré for the Serbs was the Czech František Zach, who became Hôtel Lambert's envoy in Belgrade in 1843. Zach, along with Czartoryski, supported the plans for the creation of a large South Slav state under Serbia's aegis. In a memorandum to Czartoryski, Zach “stressed the Austrian threat to Serbia and urged the Serbs to cultivate the Austrian Slavs and cooperate with the Porte against Russia.” 69 Serbia would form the nucleus of the future South Slav state once the Ottoman Empire disintegrated and would be a bulwark against Russian and Austrian expansion into the Balkans. 70 Both Zach and Czartoryski’s ideas played a role in helping Garasánin formulate the Načertanije. The one major difference between their ideas was that Garasánin believed that his goal was more attainable with Russian support. He cautiously rejected the negative view of Russia held by Czartoryski and Zach.

The idea of an independent South Slav state under Serbian leadership was discussed during the early stages of the revolution in 1848. From March to May, Garasánin began discussions with the Croatian leader Josip Jelačić concerning joint cooperation against the Hungarians. 71 And in July, immediately following his correspondence with Garasánin, Jelačić and Batthyány met in Vienna to negotiate Croatia’s relationship to Hungary. But Jelačić, who could have acquired Croatian independence from Hungary, refused to negotiate with the Hungarian president. On 29 July, Batthyány said:

*We shall negotiate, if need be, with hell itself; we shall negotiate, if negotiate we must, on purely Croatian grounds, perhaps even with Jelačić; but we shall never negotiate with reactionaries who would curb Hungary’s independence.* 72

By refusing to negotiate with the Hungarians, Jelačić missed an opportunity to achieve Croatian independence. Also, the promotion of Serbo-Croat cooperation, supported by Garasánin, Bishop Juraj Strossmayer, 73 and Ljudevit Gaj 74 among others, might have had a chance to develop on the path to a South Slav or Illyrian state.

Following the revolution, negotiations continued with the Serbs through Garasánin, Henningsen, and Zamoyski. Of all the participants, Garasánin and the Serbs were the least supportive of the confederation. As previously mentioned, Garasánin’s Načertanije entailed incorporating all territories inhabited by Serbs and Croats into a South Slav state. After supporting the fight against the Hungarians in 1848–49, Garasánin, like almost all the national leaders, tried to gain the most he could out of the situation. He had no faith in the confederation and hoped, like every other participant, to use it as a means to achieve his national end: Greater Serbia. This was apparent in his
LOST OPPORTUNITIES

negotiations with the Hungarians, and he was supported by the Poles who could not understand Hungary’s refusal to grant territorial concessions for the good of the confederation. It was apparent that Kossuth was adamant in not surrendering any of Hungary’s territory with the possible exception of Croatia. Needless to say, he would not even begin to consider giving Serbia the Bánát and Bácska for their support or for participation in the confederation. Although Kossuth received much of the criticism for the stall in negotiations, it was the Serbs who adopted a wait and see attitude towards the idea and who expected the Hungarians to make the territorial sacrifices for their support.

As early as 2 November 1849, Henningsen wrote a letter addressed to Zamoyski that discussed such a confederation. Henningsen credited Kossuth and the Hungarians for the basis of the plan, but for some reason Henningsen never forwarded the letter. Its contents favor the creation of a large Serbian state within the confederation. Greater Serbia was an idea that the Serbs had been pursuing for quite some time. In the letter Henningsen confessed that Kossuth’s ideas “startled [him] at first by [their] boldness.” In the letter the following proposals were given:

1. ...to gain the co-operation of Serbia by giving up to them Slavonia, (and leaving them the option of unifying or not with Croatia as they might agree,) but the whole to be as Serbia now under the protectorate of the Porte.

2. The price (for Serbia) would be offensive and defensive alliance, abolition of quarantine duties and a common system of lines of communication – in fact a free trade Zollverein.

3. ...the protectorate of the Porte for Hungary itself. Hungary would in fact accept its suzerainty on terms somewhat analogous to those, determining the actual inter-relations of Serbia and the Porte and Serbia, according as it could agree with the Croatians, might enter into fusion with them.

4. The Hungarians only stipulation was for a sea port and uninterrupted right of way to that point (Fiume).

5. Poland, Dalmatia, Wallachia, Moldavia etc. might not be indisposed to enter with this confederation under Turkish protectorate.

Henningsen was to act as intermediary with the Serbs, was naturally favorable towards the idea. The plan held distinct advantages, Henningsen believed, for the British position in the Balkans. The proposal could actually extend the Ottoman Empire to the Baltic and erect a permanent “barrier against Russia,” that would help to consolidate the empire.
consolidation, it was believed, that the empire's centralizing forces would become stronger, strengthening Turkey against the external and internal threats of invasion and dissolution. But it is difficult to imagine how Turkey, facing so many problems on so many fronts could possibly be consolidated and centralized with the addition of further multinational populations of such revolutionary, nationalistic character as the Poles and Magyars, who had just recently fought for their own independence. Of course, Henningsen was examining the idea from the standpoint of Britain's role in the balance of power. Naturally, a strengthened Ottoman Empire of such magnitude could replace Austria's role in Britain's scheme. Also, Hungarians and Poles believed that the achievement of independence for their countries would be easier with the weak Ottoman Empire as an adversary than it could ever be against the combined absolutist powers. Why would they consider subjecting themselves to a power they regarded as inferior to their own unless they just hoped to win British approval and eventual independence?

It needs to be mentioned that the Poles, particularly Zamoyski, strongly supported the confederation. Since 1831, they had been playing the game of émigré politics. By the time the Hungarians became émigrés in 1849, the Polish emigration was well established in its role and knew how to function in Europe's diplomatic community. It had established itself throughout Europe and the Near East with a network of agents willing to support any movement that might aid its cause. The number of Poles who supported Hungary in 1848 indicate their willingness to aid Europe's revolutionary movements. Also, Austria, Hungary's adversary in that struggle, was one of the powers which participated in the partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century. In other words, the Poles had been émigrés much longer than any other group and they hoped to use the experience along with their political connections, to lead Europe's revolutionary community in its struggle for freedom. Early on, they hoped to join with the Hungarians and Italians in an alliance of democratic revolutionaries that would aid in the liberation of nations oppressed by the absolutist powers.

One of the problems the Poles faced in negotiations with the Hungarians was their failure to comprehend Kossuth's ardent refusal to grant territorial and other concessions for the overall good of the confederation. In this, Kossuth was just as obstinate as the Polish émigrés who envisioned a re-creation of the Poland of the pre-partition period. The Poles would never have considered relinquishing their dreams of Poland at its apex in territory, power, and glory for the purpose of joining a confederation. There was never any discussions concerning what territorial sacrifices the Poles would give up for the good of the confederation. Indeed one of the objectives of the
confederation was the liberation and restoration of Poland. The confederation then, was merely a vehicle for the Poles to reclaim their state; it was just another of many ideas that circulated throughout Europe that they hoped to use to their advantage. Thus, although the Poles had certain advantages in their established emigration and their French connections, the other émigré communities were understandably unwilling to hand over the leadership of their specific groups to the Poles.

In 1848, Hôtel Lambert discussed the idea of a confederation with Teleki in Paris. However, by January 1850, Czartoryski put a halt to the confederation idea among his people in Turkey. Although this might create a new Poland, it was not the promised land. Also, the Poles could not come to grips with the Hungarian nationality question, or the Hungarian attitude towards that issue. Since many of the Polish leaders had been in exile since the Revolution of 1830, they were unaware of the effects nationalism was having on all the emerging nations in East-Central Europe. They believed that if the confederation wanted the Poles, Poland should come above all the other nations within the alliance. The problem was that Kossuth felt the same about Hungary's participation. Where Kossuth was willing to grant certain rights to the nationalities, Czartoryski was not even aware of their existence in historic Poland. Not only, thought Czartoryski, could this confederation be a vehicle for the re-creation of the Polish state, but it could also help perpetuate Panslavism of a Polish variety. Such ideas were anathema to the Hungarians, not to mention to the other nationalities, or to the more recent Polish émigrés who were slowly developing a schism with Hôtel Lambert's less than democratic leadership.

Czartoryski, like Kossuth, hoped, or rather expected to dominate and use the confederation for his own purposes. After all, the Hungarians and Poles viewed themselves as having the more advanced cultures. Both nations had recently experienced independent statehood, and more important, they had great historic pasts and a strongly felt sense of national identity. Also, they were, in the majority, Roman Catholic. Hungary had strong Calvinist and Lutheran traditions, but these looked westward. This orientation helped to re-enforce their attitudes of superiority when they compared themselves with their Balkan neighbors, who followed Eastern Orthodoxy or Islam. How could the Poles and Magyars be expected to share power with such eastern peoples? The confederation was just another scheme in which they hoped to regain their political independence, by supplanting Austria, or by rejoining the political arena as one of the great powers.

The confederation plan had no viable means of success. Everyone realized that France and England were not going to change the European equilibrium to benefit Hungary and Poland or to construct a Danubian confederation. It
would have to be a great catastrophe similar to the First World War, to accomplish such objectives, an event all the émigrés waited anxiously to happen. However, until such a war actually happened, the only way to achieve a degree of independence or autonomy laid through domestic compromises with the monarch or sultan and not foreign negotiations.

It is understandable how these nascent plans for a confederation would end in failure. In reality, there was always a plethora of ideas circulating in the émigré communities, and the Poles were extremely active in the ideological field. For instance, on 27 August 1849, Czartoryski and Zamoyski discussed a Turkish–Hungarian–Polish alliance against Russia and Austria. However, the different attitudes and objectives among the émigrés created a further widening of the gap which made any type of cooperation virtually impossible. These problems were also evident amongst each individual émigré community. The Hungarians, like the Poles before them, were beginning to develop a schism that would cause the émigré leaders to question Kossuth’s leadership and policies. Eventually this would lead to breaks within the Hungarian émigré community. Nevertheless, Kossuth’s power was so intact and strong that it was impossible to accomplish anything concerning Hungarian affairs unless he approved. After he dismissed the joint confederation plan of Bálcescu there was no need to discuss the matter any further. At that time he rejected the concept as impractical for the creation of an independent Hungary. When he received his invitation to come to America in 1851, he left his confederation ideas behind buried in Turkey. The Hungary of 1849 was still his immediate objective, and no one could convince him that it was unattainable. The knowledge and experience he acquired during his negotiations in Turkey would prove invaluable in the future. When Kossuth left for America he felt Hungary could achieve independence if Russia was prevented from intervening a second time against the Hungarians. Thus, while in Great Britain and America, he hoped to create an alliance of democratic states that could act as a deterrent to Russian interference. But during the next few years, until he fully came to understand the importance of the balance of power, Kossuth put the idea of the Danubian Confederation on hold.
Notes

5. Ibid., p. 552.
7. But they were not as progressive as the ideas of Zsigmond Kemény, Gábor Kemény, and Miklós Wesselényi on solving the nationality problems. The idea of relinquishing Hungarian territory to the minorities for their support never entered Kossuth’s plans until much later. Both Keménys and Wesselényi were farsighted enough to realize that concessions, other than democratic guarantees, needed to be given to the minorities. The Transylvanian situation was of particular concern for Wesselényi. His estate was attacked and destroyed during the revolution by Romanian peasants. He understood that territorial concessions could not be ignored. See: Zsolt Trócsányi, Wesselényi Miklós, Budapest, 1965; and Gábor Kemény, A nemzetek fejlődéséről, Kolozsvár, 1856.
8. Besides Kossuth, the Great Powers, Pan-Slavism, and Kossuth’s Hungarian contemporaries also played a major role in Hungary’s failure to accommodate the nationalities. For example, Sándor Petőfi was more radical in his opinion of a future society, but less tolerant towards the nationalities. István Széchenyi, on the other hand, was more tolerant towards the nationalities, but had conservative views on political change. Kossuth had to take their opinions into consideration when formulating political policy.
12. "Opposition to Kossuth’s Declaration of Independence stemmed from their conviction that it was a breach of legal continuity." In László Pusztaszeri, "General Görgey’s Military and Political Role: Civil-Military relations during the Hungarian Revolution," War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. IV, p. 477.
15. Andrásy was the Hungarian Minister in Constantinople when the Revolution ended. He had been hanged in absentia by the Austrians, and worked with Kossuth and the emigration until 1858. Afterwards, tired of Kossuth’s less than democratic leadership of the émigré circle, he returned to Hungary under a general amnesty.
16. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire*, p. 295; and David MacKenzie, *Ilija Garasanin*, (New York, 1985). It needs to be pointed out that Garasanin did not favor a confederated or federated system. Moreover, he viewed all south Slavs as Serbs, and believed they should be united in one Serbian state.


27. General Julius Haynau was the principle instigator of Austria’s reign of terror during and after the revolution of 1848–49. He became infamous for his brutality. In Italy he was called “the hyaena of Brescia,” and in Hungary “hangman Haynau” for hanging thirteen honvéd officers at Arad.


44. Lukács, Magyar politikai emigráció, pp. 51–55.
46. Lukács, Magyar politikai emigráció, p. 51.
50. Lukács, Magyar politikai emigráció, p. 52.
51. Ibid.
53. Bălcescu emlékirata, cited in Horváth, Teleki László II, pp. 236–239; also, Lukács, Magyar politikai emigráció, p. 53. In actuality, Bălcescu’s believed nationality was more important than liberty. “Liberty can be regained easily when it is lost, but nationality cannot... I believe that in the present position of our country it is necessary to concentrate more on preserving our nationality, which is so greatly menaced, than on liberty, which is not necessary for the development of our nationality.” From Bălcescu–A. G. Golescu, Trieste, 5 January 1849, Bălcescu, Corespondenta, p. 132, cited in Fryer, “Nicolae Bălcescu: Rumanian Liberal and Revolutionary,” p. 209.
55. Ibid., pp. 43–50.
60. Ibid., p. 61.
61. Ibid., pp. 62–63.
62. Ibid., pp. 64–68.
63. Ibid., pp. 70–74.
64. Lukács, Magyar politikai emigráció, pp. 53–54.
69. Ibid., p. 48.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid., p. 74.
73. Appointed bishop of Đakovo in 1849, Strossmayer was one of the most influential figures from Croatia supporting the Illyrian movement.
74. Born in 1809, Gaj, who inaugurated the Illyrian movement, was the most important figure among the Croatian intellectuals during this period. The Illyrian movement was the Croatian program for Yugoslav unity. Like Garašanin’s Načertanije, Illyrianism sought to unite all the South Slav people into one state. See: Wayne S. Vucinich, “Croatian Illyrism: Its Background and Genesis,” Intellectual Developments in the Habsburg Empire From Maria Theresa to World War I, Stanley B. Winters and Joseph Held eds., (New York, 1978), pp. 55–113.
76. Ibid., p. 453.
78. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. Lukács, Magyar politikai emigráció, p. 54.
83. One of their recent activities, the 1846 Galician uprising, ended in a complete failure. In March 1848, Bálcescu and A. G. Golescu-Negru, met Czartoryski in Hannover in which the latter proposed the creation of a Romanian–Polish alliance for the purpose of spreading the revolution throughout Eastern Europe. For more on Czartoryski’s Balkan policies see: Robert A. Berry, Czartoryski and the Balkan Policies of the Hôtel Lambert, 1832–1847, Ph. D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1974.
86. Hajnal, A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökörszágban, p. 381.
87. The more recent Polish émigrés under Lelewel began to disassociate themselves from the conservative policies of Hôtel Lambert.
88. Religion in the Kingdom of Hungary, 1839. (thousands)

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*including Transylvania
