Divides or Connects? The Danube as an International Border and Watercourse in History

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Abstract: Being the second longest river of Europe (the longest one is the Volga) the 2850 km long Danube connects different geographical, economic, political regions with various ethnic, religious, historical background. Touching 10 states it collects the waters of 14 countries in its 817 km² drainage basin and provides the connection with the seas for the countries of the continent. It is an important international watercourse which creates a natural link between the West and the East inside Europe. It has been so for more than 2000 years, having advantages and sometimes disadvantages, too. The geographical importance of the Danube has always been tremendous throughout history; at the same time, it has always played an important role concerning cultural-historic aspects. Since the end of the 20th century, the Rhein-Maine-Danube canal and international watercourse with its 3500 navigable lengths create a unique opportunity for the countries it connects. All this enjoys an important priority in the Danube-region strategy of the EU. The authors of the study provide a short historical outline of the role the Danube has played in Europe with special emphasis on the 19-20th centuries, concerning international legal aspects as well.

Keywords: Danube; border; DDSC; international watercourse

Being the second longest river of Europe (the longest one is the Volga), the 2850 km (Meyers, 1982, Band 2. p. 64). long Danube connects different geographical, economic, political regions with various ethnic, religious, historical background. Touching 10 states, it collects the waters of 14 countries in its 817 km (Zoltán & Zoltán, 2002) drainage basin and provides the connection with the seas for the countries of the continent. It is an important international watercourse which creates a natural link between the West and the East inside Europe and has been so for more than 2000 years (Weithmann, 2000), a notion having advantages and sometimes disadvantages, too.

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The geographical importance of the Danube has always been tremendous throughout history, at the same time it has always played an important role concerning cultural-historic aspects. The importance of rivers can be illustrated by drawing attention to the fact that two Mesopotamian cities already concluded international treaties for river trafficking in the 3rd millennium B.C: "Umma and Lagas settled their conflict over the distribution of irrigation water by international treaty." (Bruhács, 1986, p. 8.) The quoted contract was also the first international treaty in world history.

As early as Ancient Greek times, the Danube was also mentioned in ancient Greek sources. According to texts, the lower part of the river was called Ister (Istros) whereas the upper part was called Danuvius. Withal, the river was also cited in Greek. According to these mythoi, Hercules brought the branches of the olive tree from the sources of Ister, awarding the Olympic Game winners. (Pallas V. k. 583) In the 8th century, B. C. the geographic name of Istros was already cited by the Greek historian, Hesiodos. (Visy, 2003, p. 28)

The Danube Basin or the Danube Valley's historical obstacles can be documented at least until Roman times. (Visy, 2003, pp. 27-33). The river was already navigable in the pre-Roman times, although only at certain stages. Neverthelessits role was heightened by conquests during the reign of Augustus, linking the Black Sea, the Balkans (Constantinople) and the centre of Europe. (Visy, 2003, p. 27.). However, according to our main argument, the Danube just as much divides as it connects. In the Roman era, it served as natural border of the empire from Germania through Pannonia to Dacia to protect the Roman civilization against the Barbarians living on the left bank of the river. Hithertoin world history, it was only during the Roman Empire when the Danube went through one single state. (Visy, 2003, p. 32.)

"Much water had flown down in the Danube", as a Hungarian proverb says, until the Middle Ages when allforms of water became the property of the aristocracy and the ruling class, with which the owner was free to increase his wealth and income. At that time, various ship and freight rights were created, which greatly hindered shipping and trade. (Papp, 1943, p. 122).

In medieval Hungary, rivers played a particularly important role in transportation, while well-built Roman roads were still vitalforinland transport. In the Middle Ages, road construction was not common practice, thus the most reliableand trustworthy international route was the Danube itself, which was literally a European 'highway'. So much that in the 11th-13th century it was mainly used by pilgrims, crusaders, and merchants. (Font, 2003, pp. 39-46). In several successive waves, many of the pilgrims and crusaders from the western parts of the continent voted for the Danube route to reach the Holy Land safe and sound. Nevertheless, after the crusades had ended, shorter pilgrimages and merchant routes continued to be an alternative. Having already West-European trade relations, the upsurge of Danube trade can be traced back to the 13th century when urban developments in

Hungary started. Many cities owed their city privileges to the Danube trade including the city of Buda (1246), Győr (1271), Bratislava (1291), and surprisingly Sopron (1277) which issituated much farther from the river. Many among the German-speaking citizens who came and settled down in these cities throughout the 14th-15th centuries, were proved to be in close affinity with families of South German merchants along the Danube, such as the city of Regensburg. (Font, 2003, pp. 42-43)

Throughout the 16th-17th centuries, the Danube and the military road stretching along the river became an indispensable transport axis both for the Turkish perpetually preparing to expand Europe and for itsopposing Habsburg (or in other words, the 'Christian') army. In this fierce battle between powers, the Danube sometimes facilitated, yet sometimes also hindered free transportation and self-conduct. Hence the Danube distinctly connected or divided states. Speaking about geographical measures, the Danube often threatened the population and area of the river with frequent floods. It is no coincidence that the first Hungarian law on waters is related to the Danube, which was enacted by Hungarian KingMaximillien I under the name of ActXXI (1569). Against flood risks the law stipulated the following: "In half of the imposed working time of all serfs from Pozsony [Pressburg, Bratislava] and Komárom [Komarno] counties should devote their time to strengthen the embankment and dikes in the island of Csallóköz". The above quoted few lines of legislation clearly describe the consequences and possible prevention of flooding.

Recognizing the economic necessity of watercourses, the Habsburgs, still combatting and competing fiercely with the Ottoman Empire, concluded a contract in Vienna in 1616, in which the freedom of trade was mutually guaranteed in each other's territories. The Levantinische Handels-Compagnie, founded in 1671, made significant efforts to transport industrial products and agricultural products from German territories to states and provinces lying east of the Danube. (Gonda, 1899, p. 3)

Considering the 18th century, following the termination of the Rákóczi War of Independence the Habsburg rulers in accordance with imperial economic needs endeavoured to transport Hungary's agricultural products to the markets of the so-called 'inalienable provinces' (i.e. family estates in the Austrian branch of the Habsburg dynasty) in a cost-effective manner. It was an integral part of this idea that river regulation and channel construction had to be carried out for enhancing the watercoursetransport of the high-quality South-Hungarian wheat. In this respect, the Danube played a prominent role, but other rivers like the Temes, the Béga, the Kulpa and the Sava were also favoured routes. In order to make River Béga and Sava navigable, construction works had been carried out in the 1730s, which continued only after the renewed Turkish wars. Between 1758 and 1763,

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¹https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=56900021.TV&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D13.

however, a canal was built between the two rivers. Subsequently, the position of the watercourses in southern Hungary remained on the agenda. (Dóka, 2006, p. 2.) The Danube shipping became more frequent after the Peace Treatyof Požarevac, concluded in 1718 by the agents of the Turkish Sultan Ahmed and Charles III. In this legal document they mutually stipulated the rights of their subject to free Danube shipping and commercial activities. (Benda, 1982, p. 557). Though in 1738, the Belgrade Treaty reinforced the decisions of the Peace Treaty of Požarevac related to transportation via the Danube, in addition to a number of technical barriers to increasing the cost of shipping on the Danube, medieval customs collecting rights of the towns along the river continued to exist. (Gonda 1899, pp. 4-5). This materialised despite the fact that ActXV (1723) declared the illegality of customs clearance on rivers. Considering these difficulties, Empress Maria Theresa passed a law "on the free passage of ships and rafts that go up or down any river" that came into force under the titleActXVII in 1751.²At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, as part of the mercantilist economic policy of the Habsburg absolutist monarchy, canalization and initial river regulation and streamline river transportactivities were to flourish. Empress Maria Theresa's fourteen points of her Decree on Shipping and Water Services issued in 1780 provided for high-technical technical-economic management procedures. (Petrović, 1982, pp. 56-66) Her heir, Joseph II with this mercantilist economic policy also sought to include shipping and trade through the Danube. In 1784 he signed a trade agreement with the Turkish government under the name "Sined", in which they stipulated and supplemented the agreements specified in the Treaties of Požarevac and Belgrade. (Benda, 1982, p. 593). As a result, subjects of Habsburg rulers were allowed to sail freely on the Danube under the Turkish rule and also were given free access to the Black Sea. However, despite the incitement of the ruler, only a few of Habsburg subjectsceased the opportunity of free shipping options. (Gonda, 1899, pp. 6-10).

The most significant artificial watercourse of the time, the Franz Channel (Gonda, 1899, pp. 85-91., Petović, 1982) structured in 1802 and connecting River Tisza to the Danube, played an important role in the transportation of goods from the Hungarian Southern Great Plain to the West, towards Vienna, also to River Sava through River Kulpa to the cities of Trieste and Fiume. Crossing the richest grain-producing areas, the Channel shortened the route to the western markets by a total of 400 km. The Béga Channel also played a similar role in the agriculture of the Bánát region. (Fónagy, 2003, p. 37) (The Béga Channel, as a minor investment, was under constructionbetween 1758 and 1763, following the 1718 recultivation of

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Act XV, 1723: "On the elimination of dry and unnecessary customs, even on running water, and on the displacement of Jews", https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=72300015.TV&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D24.

 $^{^2} https://net.jogtar.hu/getpdf?docid=75100017.TV\&targetdate=\&printTitle=1751.+\%C3\%A9vi+XVII.\\ +t\%C3\%B6rv\%C3\%A9nycikk\&referer=1000ev.$

the surrounding area next to the Béga riverbank. (Pallas Vol. II. 1893, pp. 820-821.; Gonda, 1899, pp. 91-93))

The legal framework for international water relations was initiated in the last third of the 18thcentury, leading to significant developments in this area by the end of the 19th century. (Bruhács 1986 pp. 8-9). The concept of the "international river" was first created this time, although the terminology has gradually evolved over history. There was a period when the terminus was used only for navigable rivers. Today, in a broader sense of international law, "the definition of international rivers stands for allnatural watercourses that... pass through two or more states or form boundaries between states." (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy, 1983, p. 137)

The principle of free shipping on international rivers was first outlined in the Peace Treaty of Westphalia, signed in 1648. (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy, 1983, p. 137) However, this principle existed for a long time merely on paper. In the preindustrial age, contracts for (border) rivers were not granted greater importance, and they were created by a simple diplomatic agreement. During the period of the industrial revolution, international river transport and water use were particularly important.

In the 18th century, Adam Smith, a prominent representative of the emerging economical science, explained in his main work, *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, how significant role cross-border rivers play in building relationships from the upper reaches of rivers down to the sea. As an example, the English author explicitly mentioned the Danube, the shipping of which to Bavaria, Austria, and Hungary would be of great benefit if the entire Danube section were brought under the same management to the Black Sea. (Smith, 1959; Strasser, 1994 p. 133).

The French Revolution Convention, in 1792, stated freedom of movement and freedom of navigation on international rivers alongside the principles of freedom, equality, and fraternity as fundamental human rights. (Strasser, 1994 p. 134).

The subjectmatter of freedom of navigation on the Danube at the level of international diplomacy was first raised by the French in 1798 at the Rattatt Congress (1797-1799) without any particular consequences. (Pallas Volume V. 1893, p. 595; Révai Vol. VI.; Meyers Band 2,. 1982 p. 64). In 1779 in the Peace Treaty of Teschen, signed by Empress Maria Theresa and ambassadors of the Prussian ruler Frederick II, the Habsburgs resigned from Bavaria, but in the form of a bilateral treaty between the Habsburg Empire and Bavaria, the conditions for joint use of the Danube, the River Inn, and the River Salzach were stipulated. The contract was renewed in 1816. (Pallas Volume V. 1893, p. 595. Benda Vol. II., 1982, p. 590).

Following the Treaty of Paris in 1814, which enforced the principle of free shipping on the Rhine, the 1815 Vienna Congress also dealt with the questions of free-flowing shipping. According to this, crossing rivers bordering states or going though states are a free right granted for every citizen from the first navigable point

to the mouth and back. It was also stipulated that it was not forbidden to trade under the condition of the sailors followed the rules of the river regulation being in force. The final document of the congress on the freedom of river shipping determined the rights and duties of the coastal states, which were applied to several rivers, but the document did not mention the Danube. (Palotás, 1984, pp. 9-10).

The principal decisions of the Vienna Congress in the first decades of the 19th century regarding rivers of the German territories were manifested in multilateral contracts of the coastal states involved. Thus, e.g. the fast-moving economic circumstances forced the conclusion of specific contracts for the sailing of the River Rhine, the River Oder, and the River Elbe. In 1821, an exemplary freeshipping agreement was reached on the River Elbe for international river shipping. According to the "Elbeschiffahrtsacte", shipping on the river from the Czech city, Melnik to the North Sea is free, all extraordinary tax collection should be abolished and only a moderate duty could be levied on ships and goods. The number of places with the right to customs clearance was reduced from 35 to 13. In the next decades, the administrative and technical conditions of Elba's shipping were further simplified, (Pallas V. k., 1893, p. 833) an issue that was ultimately solved by the German unification in the last third of the 19th century. Later the treaty of "Elbeschiffahrtsacte" and its later upgraded version has become an important precedent for the transformation of the Danube into an international watercourse. (Palotás, 1984, p. 25)

Following the flow of history, in the first half of the 19th century Russia had a decisive role in shipping the Danube estuary, which was a major disadvantage for international Danube shipping. The Bucharest Peace Treaty in 1812, which terminated the Russian-Turkish wars, marked Kiliyabranch as a natural border for Russia. In 1826, Russia acquired the control over the Sulina branch in 1826 and in the Peace Treaty of Drinapolis of 1829, over the southernmost St. George's branch, which attempts resulted in acquiring entire Danube Delta under Russian supervision accordingly. The treaty in principle ruled out the liberalization of trade and shipping on the Danube. In practice, however, under Russian management, the application of various customs duties andquarantinesalong with the absence of river regulation of the Danube Delta resulting in sliminess adversely affected shipping. The agreement between the Habsburg Empire and Russia concluded in 1840, which initially attempted to overcome these problems, failed to materialize in practice. The agreement signed in St.Petersburg was the first legal instrument in which both parties declared their intention to apply the free shipping regulations came into force after the Vienna Congress of 1815 through the running meters of the Danube crossing the territories of both parties. Among these decrees, the principle and practice of non-prohibition of river commerce was of outstanding importance according with the concept that there were no other fees, e.g. such as customs duties, other than those imposed. Russia undertook to bring and maintain the Sulina-branch of the Danube Delta under in a navigable condition. However,

this latter promise was not kept in the years to come. (Fekete, 1984, pp. 437-438., Palotás, 1984, pp. 11-12).

The foundation of the First Imperial and Royal Danube Steamboat Shipping Company, (Erste k. Donau-Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft /DDSC/, hereinafter referred to as the Company) in 1829 has "imploded" into the then-contemporary international political situation. (Grössing-Funk-Sauer-Binder, 1979, pp. 21-22., pp. 38-56). From the second half of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century, it was one of the major industrial companies of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and one of the major industrial corporations of Hungary and Austria between the two world wars. At the same time, the Company was also considered the "flagship" of enterprises in the South Transdanubian economic region of Hungary. All the above-mentioned actualities were basically due to the fact that the valuable Mecsek Mountains (Mecsek is a mountain range in southern Hungary) back coal was consequently linked in the economic circulation of the large-scale mining industry started by DDSCin a modern form of the period. This has laid the foundations for the European standard and reputation of the coal mining industry in Pécs (county capital located on the slopes of the Mecsek in the south-west of the country), which has already more than two centuries of history. (Huszár, 2013 pp. 31-54., pp. 115-134). DDSCsought to transcend the Carpathian Basin, in particular, the Danube, both vertically and horizontally. There were over one hundred shipping stations in the Danube Basin, therefore DDSC started buying coal mines in the Mecsek near Pécs, while operating shipbuilding and repair facilities in Korneuburg, Galatz, and the most significant one in Óbuda (central Hungary). The transportation of coal was to be solved by the construction of the railway system between Mohács and Pécs (1854-1857) under DDSC jurisdiction and supervision. (Huszár 1993 pp. 205-218). The Mecsek black coal with excellent calorific inspired the Company to firmly take its feet in the coal pool in Pécs since the high quality coal mines were relatively close to the Danube, primarily to the port of Mohács. Between 1852 and 1923 all mines around Pécs were bought or leased by DDSC. Consequently, a large enterprise with a strong economic, commercial and, finally, with significant political capital continued its carrier in the Mecsek coal mining industry with high level of production capacity. For nearly a century, the great economic power of DDSC, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, itsdominant relations to the Austrian and Hungarian political circles after the First World War all had a major influence on the life of Pécs and South-East Transdanubia. (Huszár, 1995, pp. 149-159).

The above-mentioned corporate characteristics were equally implemented at DDSC's Danube bases and stations, so that its employees, if the company's interest desired accordingly, could be easily transferred from one place to another. (Huszár, 2013, pp. 97-111).

Hence, we think that the history of DDSC in the Danube Basin can be considered an unintentional integration experiment since the employees from different ISSN: 2065-0272

geographic areas were arranged to work in unified working order and a sophisticated social network served their needs. With this great organizational and corporate social responsibility behaviour, DDSCalso set an example for other companies in the Central European region. If we look at the DDSC ethos from the employee side, working for the Company betokened both rank and prestige. Among the Company's personnel, equally in the shipping and mining fields, there was a large number of multi-generation employee families greatly supported taken up by corporate human policy. "From the cradle to the grave" was possible to work at DDSC for the whole lifespan, and this resulted in forming a special partnership between parties, i.e. a unique DDSC spirit. Even nowadays, at DDSC's former major stations in Vienna, Linz and Regensburg¹DDSCfriendship circles are still operating. At their regular meetings, at their regular meetings not only ponder about events of the glorious past, but still help and support each other. As a continuation of the 'biography' of the Danube, it is important to mention that in 1851 the Habsburg Empire concluded a streamtenure agreement with Bavaria, which made it easier for both two sides to mutually navigate on each other's watercourses. (Pallas V. k., 1893, p. 597.)

Despite the Danube shipping agreements outlined above and the difficulties in complying with them, the Danube estuary had energetic ship traffic in the 1840s and 1850s. (See **Table 1**.) The compilation of the European Commission of the Danube (ECD) shows, broken down by ship number and tonnage of goods transported, which countries between the period of 1847 and 1856 were transport ships and goods to the Danube estuary. The "number of ships" section does not distinguish between the types of vessels, so we cannot really calculatewhat was the exact number of steamboats and other rowing and sailing ships. Henry Hajnal's statistics make an exception for Austrian and French steamers. (Hajnal, 1920, pp. 164-165) It can be affirmed that the Austrian steamboats were owned by DDSC and/or Austrian Lloyd. However, it is clear from the table that countries near the estuary of the Danube with old shipping traditions such as Greece and Turkey delivered most goods. At the same time, if the weight of goods transported by "Austria-Hungary" and "Austrian steamboats" are added, then after the size of Greek freight ships from the Habsburg Empire gets the silver medal.

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¹Zoltán Huszár was also granted the opportunity to take part in DDSG informal events in Vienna in 2003 and in Regensburg in 2004.

Table 1. Broken Down by Ship Number and Tonnage of Goods Transported, the Table Prepared by ECD Shows which Countries During the Period of 1847-1856 Sent Ships and Goods to the Estuary of the Danube

| | 1847 | | 1848 | | 1849 | | 1850 | | 1851 | | 1852 | | 1853 | | 1854 | | 1855 | | 1856 | | Összesen | |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| | vessel | tons | Vessel | tons |
| America | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 190 | - | - | 1 | 102 | - | - | 3 | 670 | 2 | 642 | 7 | 1604 |
| Austria- | 144 | 28975 | 102 | 22408 | 135 | 31618 | 96 | 19487 | 105 | 21054 | 149 | 30004 | 111 | 19555 | 40 | 8910 | 363 | 84463 | 239 | 56163 | 1484 | 322637 |
| Hungary | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Belgium | 5 | 889 | 2 | 345 | 1 | 224 | 1 | 184 | 1 | 224 | 3 | 527 | 5 | 854 | - | - | 5 | 907 | 7 | 1043 | 30 | 5197 |
| Denmark | 8 | 922 | 1 | 92 | - | | - | - | 2 | 216 | 17 | 1817 | 8 | 947 | - | - | 12 | 1432 | 16 | 1979 | 64 | 7405 |
| France | 45 | 6127 | 8 | 1071 | 9 | 1426 | 2 | 352 | - 5 | 879 | 12 | 1551 | 36 | 4233 | 2 | 241 | 3 | 515 | 34 | 4078 | 156 | 20743 |
| Great Britain | 151 | 22614 | 133 | 21248 | 132 | 21843 | 108 | 17709 | 306 | 54064 | 343 | 62540 | 205 | 35241 | 45 | 7840 | - | - | 161 | 32046 | 1584 | 27514 |
| Greece | 630 | 94500 | 532 | 90440 | 880 | 158400 | 860 | 154800 | 951 | 161670 | 973 | 171248 | 1049 | 199310 | 520 | 109200 | 2151 | 451710 | 962 | 202020 | 9508 | 1793298 |
| Hannover | 3 | 262 | - | - | 1 | 265 | 1 | 158 | 5 | 685 | 28 | 3691 | 11 | 895 | - | - | 44 | 7285 | 65 | 7594 | 157 | 21105 |
| Neherlands | 5 | 712 | - | | | | | - | 1 | 142 | 19 | 4008 | 56 | 8402 | 18 | 3242 | 83 | 10434 | 104 | 11031 | 286 | 37971 |
| Ionian- | 14 | 1887 | 29 | 4635 | 36 | 5529 | 27 | 3830 | 52 | 7660 | 58 | 9355 | 72 | 8967 | 10 | 1240 | - | - | 34 | 4927 | 332 | 47760 |
| islands | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mecklenburg | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 647 | 10 | 22866 | 7 | 1647 | - | - | 3 | 753 | 36 | 9577 | 8 | 1617 | 67 | 16527 |
| Moldavia | 14 | 3342 | 19 | 5528 | 3 | 644 | 9 | 1742 | 6 | 896 | 15 | 2058 | 13 | 1308 | 4 | 645 | 8 | 1188 | 38 | 4341 | 129 | 21692 |
| Norway | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | 402 | 13 | 1642 | 3 | 389 | 51 | 7426 | 33 | 4986 | 106 | 14845 |
| Oldenburg | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | 900 | 17 | 2132 | 9 | 976 | - | - | 19 | 3548 | 36 | 6384 | 89 | 13940 |
| Prussia | 11 | 2287 | - | - | 1 | 200 | 11 | 2230 | 24 | 5143 | 17 | 3707 | 4 | 852 | 3 | 920 | 11 | 2762 | 12 | 2834 | 94 | 20935 |
| Russia | 125 | 22845 | 72 | 14665 | 110 | 22297 | 61 | 12287 | 74 | 16156 | 67 | 11148 | 63 | 9644 | 4 | 364 | - | - | 8 | 876 | 584 | 110283 |
| Samos | 14 | 1151 | 8 | 912 | 18 | 1916 | 11 | 1353 | 15 | 1466 | 18 | 1467 | 45 | 3004 | - | - | 1 | 105 | 16 | 1537 | 146 | 12911 |
| Sardinia | 151 | 18799 | 67 | 10141 | 49 | 7557 | 37 | 5475 | 95 | 15490 | 99 | 14995 | 144 | 20441 | 14 | 1977 | - | - | 75 | 10342 | 731 | 105217 |
| Serbia | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 240 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 125 | - | - | 25 | 3359 | 12 | 1364 | 39 | 5088 |
| Sicily | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9 | 1944 | 22 | 5304 | 2 | 223 | 5 | 730 | 2 | 394 | 40 | 8595 |
| Sveden | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16 | 2828 | 15 | 2382 | 1 | 131 | 6 | 1123 | 7 | 1132 | 45 | 7596 |
| Tuscany | 2 | 280 | 2 | 328 | 1 | 183 | - | - | 1 | 245 | 10 | 2018 | 3 | 475 | - | - | 47 | 11157 | 22 | 4024 | 88 | 18710 |
| Turkey | 663 | 76517 | 291 | 42923 | 214 | 37327 | 174 | 29433 | 372 | 59812 | 444 | 74525 | 406 | 56284 | - | | | - | 125 | 17077 | 2689 | 393898 |
| Valacchia | 43 | 585 | 30 | 3947 | 51 | 8083 | 47 | 7022 | 68 | 8840 | 92 | 12373 | 155 | 17779 | 8 | 1270 | 36 | 5159 | 81 | 8815 | 611 | 79109 |
| Hanza cities | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 402 | 3 | 356 | -3 | 382 | 10 | 1507 | 11 | 1400 | 30 | 4047 |
| Austrian | 36 | 11014 | 35 | 10561 | 35 | 12901 | 40 | 15386 | 52 | 12918 | 54 | 23742 | 40 | 14250 | - | - | 9 | 2262 | 83 | 19913 | 384 | 122947 |
| steamships | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| French | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 18 | 3865 | 18 | 3865 |
| steamships | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 2063 | 298975 | 1331 | 229244 | 1676 | 310413 | 1489 | 272353 | 2154 | 370945 | 2476 | 440400 | 2490 | 413058 | 680 | 137727 | 2928 | 607279 | 2211 | 412424 | 19498 | 3492800 |

Source: Hajnal 1920 pp. 156-157

Table 2. Shows Which Countries operating in the Lower Danube area Owned Vessels and the Carrying Capacity (Tons) They Carried

| | 18 | 356 | 1860 | | 18 | 370 | 18 | 880 | 18 | 390 | 1900 | | 1913 | |
|-------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Country | Number | Capacity |
| | of | (tons) |
| | vessels | | vessels | | vessels | | vessels | | vessels | | vessels | | vessels | |
| Great | 161 | 32.084 | 374 | 96.737 | 366 | 136.472 | 271 | 332.258 | 778 | 983.862 | 260 | 458.721 | 278 | 669.589 |
| Britain | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| France | 34 | 4.078 | 33 | 6.916 | 38 | 14.003 | 58 | 45.091 | 55 | 61.674 | 24 | 31.712 | 28 | 54.779 |
| Austria- | 239 | 46.035 | 186 | 45.516 | 223 | 86.377 | 111 | 49.151 | 109 | 80.560 | 81 | 131.503 | 158 | 313.219 |
| Hungary | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Italy | 99 | 13.136 | 237 | 39.878 | 374 | 159.076 | 52 | 15.239 | 60 | 58.560 | 86 | 127.426 | 118 | 181.860 |
| Germany | 132 | 19.509 | 59 | 12.322 | 13 | 3.862 | 5 | 3.493 | 34 | 34.858 | 16 | 22.429 | 23 | 52.927 |
| Greece | 996 | 157.821 | 1.354 | 163.764 | 724 | 110.471 | 722 | 156.757 | 235 | 164.993 | 197 | 256.128 | 112 | 211.729 |
| Netherlands | 104 | 9.817 | 40 | 4.800 | 7 | 1.136 | 1 | 1.030 | 11 | 11.151 | 3 | 5.333 | 8 | 18.729 |
| Norway | 33 | 4.886 | 25 | 3.927 | 42 | 11.323 | 4 | 4.045 | 26 | 29.215 | 3 | 4.842 | 8 | 15.484 |
| Romania | 119 | 8.246 | 148 | 13.394 | 54 | 7.343 | 19 | 1.644 | 5 | 594 | 33 | 43.156 | 57 | 77.547 |
| Russia | 8 | 946 | 48 | 7.409 | 82 | 14.152 | 62 | 8.803 | 96 | 30.844 | 191 | 89.418 | 66 | 65.979 |
| Turkey | 125 | 13.661 | 703 | 70.145 | 549 | 42.376 | 398 | 37.509 | 417 | 81.585 | 178 | 51.822 | 38 | 13.216 |
| Other | 60 | 7.123 | 81 | 9.871 | 29 | 7.197 | 10 | 3.043 | 2 | 1.549 | 29 | 27.819 | 42 | 62.849 |

Source: Hajnal 1920 pp. 164-165

The independent international role of the Danube had commenced during the Crimean War (1853-1856) and remained after it ended. (Kinder, H.-Hilgeman, W. 1995 p. 347). The forces that allied their powers with Russia have made the provision of free shipping on the Danube a prerequisite for peace. Within the frame of the Bessarabia border settlement the Peace Treaty of Paris (Palotás 1984 pp. 21-23) which was signed on 30 March 1856 and which ended the war not only deprived Russia from possessing and using the Danube-riverside areas and the Danube Delta but guaranteed free shipping along the Danube for states further form the stream. Article 15 of the Peace Treaty of Paris stated that the principles set out in the final document of the Vienna Congress of 1815 should be applied to the Danube which principally meant implementing the principle of free shipping into

practice. Europe as a signatory collectively guaranteed compliance. Furthermore, it was also stipulated that free shipping could not be hindered in any way, as well as no customs duty or tax could be levied on goods carried on board ships. Two international organizations were set up to manage the river. The European Commission of the Danube (ECD) was composed of the great powers, as non-Danube Member States, i.e. the Habsburg Empire, France, England, Prussia, Russia, the *Kingdom* of *Piedmont-Sardinia* (later it will be united Italy) and last but not least as a Danube-state, Turkey was also part of the agency. ECD's scope of authority was extended from Isakea (Isaccea) to Sulina while Galaz was chosen as headquarters. To legitimize their presence in South-Eastern Europe was also unquestionably important for the members of the committee. ECD originally convened on a temporary basis for a two-year period to manage both shipping and technical problems of the Danube estuary andmaintaining the river bed.

It was required to finance the necessary work from the fees collected from passing vessels. In this respect, the ships of all nations were treated equally. Another body was established to carry out permanent duties under the names of the Standing Committee of the Danube Member StatesorRiver Commission. Its members were the Habsburg Empire, Turkey, Württemberg, Bavaria, and three Danube principals, i.e. Moldova, Valacchia and Serbia. All delegates were appointed with the full consent of the Ottoman Empire with headquarters seating in Vienna. Its task was complex ranging from was to elaborate and enforce navigation and streamlining rules for the whole of the Danube area upwards from Iszacska, also to remove technical barriers to navigation, and to order and manage the maintenance required for the entire length of the Danube section supervised by the Commission. The Standing Committee of the Danube Member States was also safeguarding to take over the mandate of ECD after the expiry of thelatter's temporary mandate as well as to protect the navigability of the Danube estuaries and the high seas. The Standing Committee of the Danube Member Stateswas not supported by the non-Danube Member States (all major powers) signing the Peace Treaty of Paris. Maybe this is one of the reasons why this organization couldn't work effectively. (Pallas, 1893, V. k. 596. o., Palotás, 1984 pp. 21-22)

In the Part XV. Of the Peace Treaty of Paris, the freedom for free shipping on the Danube was declared in accordance with the principles of the Vienna Congress, but these points of the contract triggered a negative reaction in the Vienna court. This was of particular importance for the DSGT's shipping monopoly. (Palotás, 1982, p. 22, p. 25). The Standing Committee of the Danube Member States had drawn up a new international Danube shipping contract in Vienna signed on November 7, 1857 by the four sovereign states, i.e. Austria, Württemberg, Bavaria and Turkey. (Owing to fierce Turkish protest the three Danube principals were not invited to sign the document.) Fundamentally, the Danube-Navigation Act (Acte de navigation du Danube), which had been ratified by the signatory countries, specified the tasks assigned to the Standing Committee of the Danube Member

States in the Peace Treaty of Paris ensuring river shipping and river provost duty, etc.) (Palotás, 1984, pp. 28-29).

ECD was extended several times in the second half of the 19th century. First, the 2ndCongress of Paris in, where ECD's English and French members did not accept the provision stipulated in the 1857 Danube-Navigation Act. Following the decisions of the 3rd Congress of Paris in 1866, the organization continued to perform its duties. (Fekete, 1984, p. 438; Palotás, 1984, pp. 29-30).

One of the most important decisions of the 1878 Congress of Berlin was connected to the Danube which made the Lower-Danube safe to navigate. Following the decision of the Congress, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was entrusted with the task. (Fekete 1984 p. 438.). The great work of the Lower-Danube, the Kazan Strait, the Danube breakthrough, and the Iron Gate control was undertaken by the Hungarian government. After nearly two decades of river regulation of altering intensity, on 27thSeptember, 1896, the Danube breakthrough section and the Iron Gate channel were opened for traffic. (Fekete, 1984, p. 438.). With this, the possibility of continuous shipping on the Danube without transhippingopened new opportunities.

The Conference of London on the Danube in 1883 adopted a new extension of the ECD's mandate for 21 years, by extending the mandate to another 3 years at the expiration of the term given that a member of the committee raises an objection one year before the expiration date. The ECD was practically unchanged until World War I. At the Conference of London, a decision was reached on the supervision of uniform navigation and river provost duty management from the Iron Gate to Brail (Braila). (Fekete, 1984, p. 438; Palotás, 1984, pp. 148-150).

After the end of the First World War, the interests of the victorious powers prevailed on the Danube. In 1918, the winners set up a Danube Navigation Command (Commandenet de la Navigation du Danube) directed by the English Admiral Ernest Troubridge. (Marczis, 1995, p. 86). The headquarters of the organization first became Belgrade and then Budapest. Later, the headquarters convertedinto a political committee under the name of Commission Interalliée du Danube. The body was responsible for the supply of the traffic and food needs of the Allied forces on the watercourse, for the restoration of the pre-war relations of the river shipping and for the commissioning of the ships seized from the Central Powers, last but not least for the continuation of the former Hungarian Iron Gate Service. (Papp, 1943, p. 132).

The issue of international rivers (Bruhács 1986 p. 120) had essentially governed by the same content regulation in the Peace Treaties of Versailles, which ended the World War, including the Treaty of Saint-Germain, (Kerekes, 1984, pp 42-49, Zöllner, 1998, pp. 371-378; Szávai, 1999, pp. 31-42; Szávai, 2004, pp. 45-106) Trianon, (Ormos, 1984, pp. 369-386; Ormos, 1998, pp. 81-85; Szávai, 1999, pp. 31-42, Szávai, 2004, pp. 45-106) Sevres, the ulteriortreaty was later replaced by the

Treaty of Lausanne. The winners tried to solve the Danube issue in the Peace Treaty of Trianon (1920) with Hungary. Several points of the Peace Treaty concerned the Danube issues. Part XII Articles 274-293 stipulated Danube-related provisions (Zeidler 2003 pp. 270-274), hitherto there more contradictions among the articles written in the spirit of freedom of navigation, not providing the same opportunities to the Allied and Associated Powers and to the citizens of Hungary in the "spirit of freedom of navigation" from Ulm to the internationally renowned Danube. Consequently, actors had to face the unjust situation that Hungary and the other defeated Danube Member States could not continue to "cabotage" (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy 1983 p. 138) sailing between the ports of the Little Entente states on the Danube-bank, while even a winning non-Danube state could freely transport persons or goods from one of the Hungarian ports to the other Hungarian port without the consent of the Hungarian government. (Papp, 1943, p. 124) Moreover, Article 284 of the Peace Treaty provided for the transfer of the fleet to the victorious powers.²

Among the special rules for the Danube, authors of the Peace Treaty of Trianon also confirmed the operation of international organizations. "The European Danube Commission (ECD H. Z.) will once again have the powers that it had before the war. For the time being, however, only representatives from Great Britain, France, Italy, and Romania will be members of this Commission."

The following article re-established the former Standing Committee of the Danube Member States, which did not carry out practical activities.⁴

In sum, ECD survived after the Treaties of Versailles ending the First World War. Its operation was guaranteed by the Danube Act (or the Paris Convention on the Danube), established at the Conference of Paris in 1921. However, according to the post-war international situation, England, France, Italy as major powers and Romania as a Danube-state participated in such a strengthened committee. (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy, 1983, p. 139). At the Conference of Paris, the International Danube Commission was established, with members from England, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania and the two Upper Danube German provinces, Bavaria and Württemberg. They also set up the Iron Gate and Danube Breakthrough Directorate from the representatives of Yugoslavia and Romania and with the participation of the International Danube Commission for the breakthrough region of the Danube. (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy, 1983, p. 139; Fekete, 1984, p. 438).

The Trianon Peace Treaty and the Conventions of Paris in 1921 and 1923 established principles for water utility and flood protection in the Danube Basin due to territorial changes, which had to be settled by bilateral agreements between

¹Article 274, Act XXXIII, 1921, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=92100033.TV.

²Article284, Act XXXIII, 1921, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=92100033.TV.

³Article285, Act XXXIII, 1921, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=92100033.TV.

⁴Article 288, Act XXXIII, 1921, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=92100033.TV.

the countries concerned. (Bruhács, 1986, p. 123). The following was stipulated in Act XIV (1923): "Convention instituting the definitive statute of the Danube, signed at Paris, July 23, 1921".1

Creating a CRED² in 1923 was a major step forward. The contributing parties were Austria, Hungary, Romania, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia), Czechoslovakia and President of the Day from the Council of the United Nations.³ CRED was the forum for discussing professional tasks that were individually and/or jointly solved by all states belonging to the organization. In Hungary, one of the first active environmental and eco-conscious legislationwas certainly the issue of "forest use and reforestation". The professionalism of the organization could not be called into question by the contemporaries. During its operation, CRED achieved significant results in the operation of the water and emergency food service. However, its activity was temporarily paralyzed during World War II. The Peace Treaty of Paris in 1947, which replaced the 1920 Peace Treaty of Trianon, did not maintain the organization, subsequently it ceased to exist. (Bruhács, 1986, p. 128)

On the basis of the Convention of Sinaia, the Romanian Maritime Danube Commission was established between England, France, and Romania to strengthen the Danube power and Romanian interests in 1938. (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy 1983 p. 139; Fekete, 1984, p. 438). The Commission's work, which was often contradictory in detail, became even more difficult after the Anschlus, became even more difficult as Hitler's Third Reich declared the Danube to be a German national river upstream from Bratislava, therefore its international character was largely eliminated. The Convention of Bucharest was signed on March 1, 1939, by Germany and Italy. All the above-mentioned factors fundamentally changed the international order of Danube shipping. The body of ECD virtually lost control over shipping. Then, on September 12, 1940, Nazi Germany convened a conference with the participation of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Germany, Italy, and Slovakia. At the discussion, participants voted for abolishing the International Danube Commission established in Paris in 1921. At the same time, a new administrativeorganization, the Danube Council, (Papp, 1943 p. 133) i. e. River Council (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy, 1983, p. 139; Fekete, 1984, p. 438) was created A co-called body, the "Eisene Torvervaltung" (Papp, 1943, p. 133) was appointed as the sub-committee of the Danube Council for the management of the Lower-Danube Iron Gate. The institution was responsible for managing the traffic

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¹ActXIV, 1923. https://net.jogtar.hu/getpdf?docid=92300014.TV&targetdate=&printTitle=1923.+%C3%A9vi+XIV.+

t%C3%B6rv%C3%A9nycikk&referer=1000ev.

² CRED = Commission technique permanente du régime des eaux; English = Standing Committee on Water Technology for the Danube. Bruhács 1983 289. O.

³Act VII, 1925: On the enactment of the Convention in Paris as of 27 May 1923 regarding the approval of the rules for the competence and operation of the Standing Committee on Water Technology for the Danube. https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=92500007.TV&celpara=139&goto=-1.

and related matters of the Lower-Danube Iron Gate region. All these changes from a perspective can be interpreted as preparations for World War II.

After the end of World War II in 1947, the Peace Treaty of Versailles on Territorial Issues for Hungary, in addition to Bratislava's three settlements in Czechoslovakia, repeated the Peace Treaty of Trianon in practice. Due to the unbundling of the Bratislava bridgehead, the water regulations related to the Danube were also included in the Peace Document. However, the treaty did not mention the issues of shipping and water supply on the Danube. These problems were dealt with by the "Decree of the Council of Foreign Ministers dated on 12 December 1946" which served as a basis for the"International Convention on the Regulation of Navigation on the Danube, dated 18 August 1948 in Belgrade." The International Conference of Belgrade regulated the conditions of navigation on the Danube in detail. The signatories of the Convention were Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, and the Soviet Union. The conference was attended by representatives of Great Britain, France, and the United States, who did not sign the final document. The seven non-Danube Member States have established the Danube Commission, which was composed of representatives of the Danube countries, each country sending one representative.⁴ The Commission had its headquarters in Galați, then later from 1953 in Budapest. (Austria joined the Convention in 1960, the Federal Republic of Germany was an observer in the work of the Danube Commission. (Haraszti-Herczegh-Nagy, 1983, p. 139). The signatories of the convention considered the Danube navigable from Ulm to the Black Sea. All states were granted the possibility of commercial shipping. Warships of non-Danube Member States were not allowed to pass on the Danube, while warships of Danube Member States could only use their own river section. Warships were only allowed to traffic on the river section of another Danube state with the permission of that state/states.

The biography of the Danube as an international river was further complicated with the emergence of the bipolar world after World War II. The post-war period could be the subject of another study. Referring to the main developments of the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, it could be noted that in September 1992, the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal was made fully navigable. The basic idea of its fulllengthnavigation of dates back to the early Middle Ages, to reign of Charles the Great. At the same time, this trans-European watercourse is the longest inland watercourse in the world, with its 3,483 km, its water system of the connected river km.⁵ As sections exceeds 12,000 a symbol of Central-European interconnectedness, the Danube Region Strategy (DRS) demonstrates the

https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rajna%E2%80%93Majna%E2%80%93Duna-csatorna.

Canal,

¹Article 1 (4. c.), Act XVIII., 1947, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=94700018.TV.

²ActXIII.,1949,http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=94900013.TV.

³Act XIII, 1949, http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=94900013.TV.

⁴Act XIII, 1949, http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=94900013.TV.

⁵Rhine-Main-Danube

appreciation of the special role the River Danubeis attributed to play in our contemporary history, since the European Commissionproposed the adoption of the DRS in June 2009 during Hungary's EU Presidency in 2011. Being interconnected with Europe, the Danube perpetually encourages prospects to open up for the Danube Basin states, while all involved parties can seize all opportunities provided by the DRS to continue to view Danube as awater course which rather connects than divides.

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¹Danube Region Strategy – A Symbol of Central Europe, http://eu.kormany.hu/duna-regio-strategia1, http://dunaregiostrategia.kormany.hu/index.

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