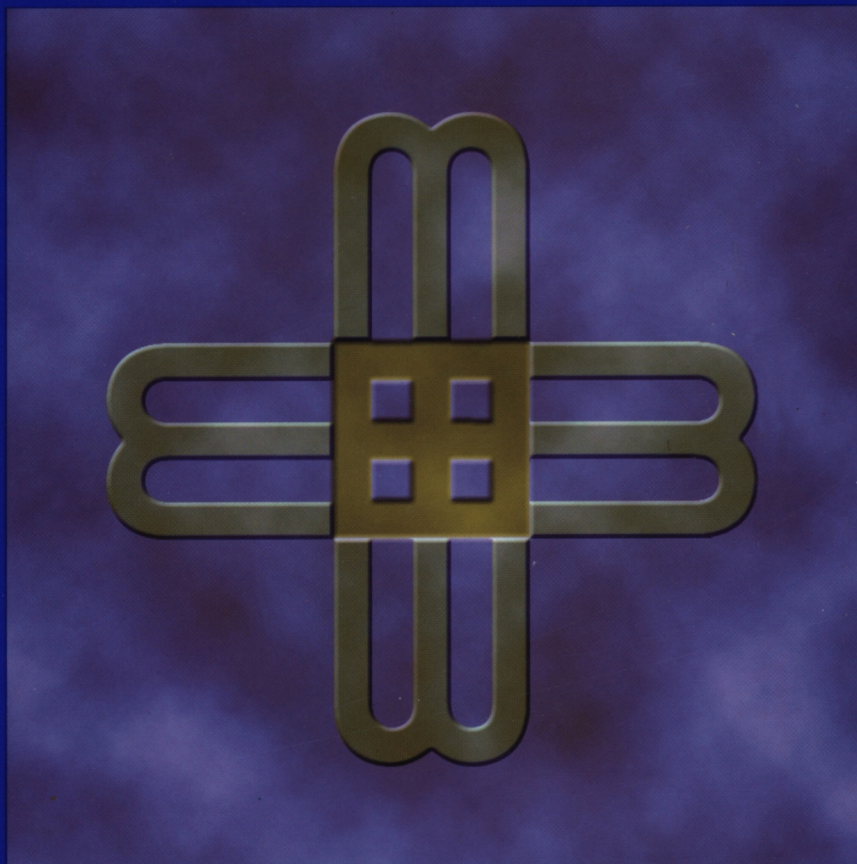


# HUNGARIAN MINORITIES and CENTRAL EUROPE

Regionalism, National and Religious Identity



Publications of the Research  
Group of Regional and Minority Cultures



Pázmány Péter Catholic University  
Faculty of Humanities

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Centre of European Studies

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Regionalism, National and Religious Identity

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Pázmány Péter Catholic University  
Faculty of Humanities  
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## FOREWORD

The political changes of 1989–1990 resulted into a new situation in Central and Eastern Europe. The fall of Communism made possible the reintegration of the region into Europe. Central and Eastern Europe originally belonged to Europe and were only separated from it during the Soviet occupation. In the meantime, the political constellation of the western part of Europe changed drastically as well. In this part of Europe, the European Union was established replacing the system of the traditional national states. At present, the Central and Eastern European region must resolve the following two issues: First, it has to work out the negative experiences and past conflicts as well as regenerate the national and cultural identities that were suppressed in former times. Second, Central Europe must prepare for integration, including aspects ranging from political, economic and religious life to the legal system and the mentality of its people.

Within the framework of the European Union, Western Europe was largely able to work through the dramatic historic experiences of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Central and Eastern Europe, this process only began in the early 1990s. Non-ethnic Hungarian minorities had suffered traumatic experiences under the Hungarian government during the period of the Hungarian kingdom (1867–1920) and ethnic Hungarian minorities have experienced the same in the post-Trianon (1920) successor states. The fact that some of the articles in this volume are written with a passion unknown to western observers is due to the fact that nowadays these topics can be discussed freely, something not allowed under Communism. Some articles also point out, however, that the emotional side of nationalism is getting weaker among ethnic minorities, especially among the Hungarian ones and is being replaced by cultural and regional identities. Sometimes the revival of national and cultural identities is not free from extremism but this seems to be an unavoidable step in creating a balance between regional, national and supranational identities. It is also observed that linguistic and cultural cross-border cooperation includes the common elements of identity and national self-image consisting of language, literature, art, religious and historic traditions. This kind of cultural community building is similar to the ones that already have a rich historic tradition in Western Europe (see the Netherlands and Flemish Belgium, Southern Tyrol and Austria).

In this volume, several articles discuss the past of the Hungarians and other Central European peoples. The articles do not represent the historic facts in a chronological order but focus on the guiding principles that have been in the background of historic phenomena and have affected individual actors on the historic scene.

The editors are indebted to the Hungarian–Dutch Exchange Program for Higher Education. The Hungarian Ministry of Education represents this program on behalf of Hungary and the Office Cross coordinates the educational cooperation with Central Europe from the Dutch side. This volume is the third installment within the framework of this project. Two earlier volumes, “Magyar tükör” (Hungarian Mirror, textbook of Hungarian studies), Budapest–Amsterdam, 1995.; “Útkeresés és integráció” (Pioneering and Integration. A Selection of the Documents of the Civil Organizations of the Hungarian Minorities in Central Europe, 1989–1999), Budapest, 2000, were published in the Hungarian language.

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Amsterdam, 2001

# I. GLOBALIZATION AND REGIONALISM



KRISZTINA ANDRÁSSY

At the Border of Two Ages  
(After Communist Internationalism,  
Before Liberal Globalization)

Why is it that there are so many researchers, politicians, economic experts and businessmen dealing with globalization today? Why are there newer and newer opinions of different points of view surfacing about this phenomenon of our age? And why is there room for research exploring the background of globalization in a volume of studies about Hungary? As a brief introductory answer to these questions, and also to find a justification for this study, let us turn to a quotation:

“With the ideology of globalization we can say that there is a supranational consensus between governments and transnational companies. The consequence of this consensus is that states are compelled to modify their national economic policies according to the requirements of a global world economy. In this sense, the structural and process changes of the economy do not occur as a corollary of the spontaneous collective activities of economically active individuals – as the economic theory would have us believe – but they occur as a result of competing social, political and economic interests, which obey the supposedly global requirements.”

Viktor Segesváry: Globalization and World Economy  
– Valóság, April 1998

We believe that at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are compelled to experience the dawn of a new era. The modern age, which provided the conditions of international existence for a number of states, thus ensuring a sovereign status for them in the international system, seems to belong irrevocably to the past. Today, we often experience the fact – worrying to both individuals and their communities – that governments no longer possess the complete freedom to act not only in the area of international systems, but within their own borders they do not even have the means necessary to influence economic and social processes. It is certain that there are new actors emerging in the system, who – unlike a state – are characterized by complete sovereignty, that is to say, by a kind of absolute power and uncontrolled freedom of action. We are the witnesses of both the decline of the modern era and the emergence of something new. This transition is especially painful because of an accompanying phenomenon: The modern age – through a self-destructive process including the destruction of its own achievement – is

eliminating its own value norms and is beginning to disappear from the stage of history. At the same time, we can observe a nascent process with an opposite content about which we cannot ascertain whether it is the uncoordinated set of those defense reflexes inherited from the modern age, or in fact it is the medium of the value norms of the new age.

In our introduction, it is worth outlining some interpretations of the modern age since, in the first part of our study, we will try to interpret the concept of globalization and understand its internal contradictions according to its most important components. The modern age and modernity become interesting for us from two aspects. From one point, as a category of social science, modern society appears as the opposite of traditional society in the vocabulary of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century sociology.

From another point, it is interesting in regard to the social philosophical context of the concept, in respect to the way the man of the age of Enlightenment defined the phenomenon of modernity. Specifically, we are speaking of the utopia of welfare, which presents mankind with the reign of reason. The faith in the omnipotence of reason justified the pursuit according to which the principles of society can be explored and understood – moreover, controlled and directed. The irrevocable legitimacy of the existence of the nation state thus can be seen as the fulfillment of this process, which was considered in the modern age as the perfection of individual freedom. In the first part of the study, we consider this context of globalization, that is to say, its social philosophical aspect and then we turn to those global interest relations that result from it.

### **Globalization as a Qualitative Novelty in the International System**

Globalization, as a qualitative change occurring in the system of international relations, has become a cliché answer to many of the phenomena and problems of our age. A feature of clichés is that we keep a certain distance from them, that is to say, in so much as there is a lack of personal connection with and responsibility for a problem, even if physical contact has already occurred between the phenomenon and the individual. *We believe that globalization has – and in the near future will have even more – such a direct, essential and qualitative change effecting the individual, as well as his or her communities, which determines personal, family and other types of identity, that in order to make these relations more conscious we have to direct the attention to our personal involvement in the interest of conscious attitude.* Conscious personal involvement can be realized through the analysis of directly observable social, economic, environmental, welfare, etc., effects and expected outcomes. However, we cannot avoid analyzing and introducing the ideological background, content and stages of development of the phenomenon. Without

this, it would be very difficult to point out the internal contradictions of the process, as well as to point out the special – but by no means global – interest serving role of the phraseology utilizing these internal contradictions of the process.

To understand globalization completely, we must first explore its relation with the social philosophical system – especially in its power and social theoretical aspects, which provided the foundation for the “necessity” of globalization as it achieved its position in the modern thought system and world view as the highest degree of social development. We are talking about the ideological system of liberalism, whose role in Western social development is evaluated differently these days. The characteristic feature of these evaluations is that they are very one-sided; they are views determined by the value orientation of individuals as being either positive or negative. Another point is that in the modern Western-type societal view, liberalism is becoming a value unto itself; it is qualified as the historical peak of social development. I think that none of the above-mentioned views bring us closer to understanding the essence of globalization, although we believe we can find its roots connected to liberalism.

### **On the Relation of Globalization and Liberalism – Its Social Philosophical Background**

The West prospered in the period after World War II, though not because it preferred market to state. Rather, it flourished so much the more because it refused both the ultra left and the ultra right ideologies and instead it chose democratic pluralism. This meant a system of government that was based on the equilibrium of government, market and civil society.

David C. Korten: World Rule of Capital Companies – Kapu, 1998.

First of all, we have to call attention to a peculiarity of Western development, one which is not characteristic of any other civilizations in the world and one which had a decisive influence on European and through this on the formation of American and Anglo-Saxon civilizations. European culture shaped by Western Christianity had already from the early Middle Ages made secular and transcendental relations independent of one another, something unique in the world. The result of this was that although the Western Christian Catholic church had a significant influence on the determination of social relations and common law for a long time, as well as a supporting and even stimulating role in promoting cultural and scientific life, it was later unable to influence this direction and growth and to bind it according to the limits of the transcendental



world. We do not believe it necessary to set forth this thought in detail, since a number of excellent thinkers have already done so and have determined its correspondence to the formation of European cultural and economic systems. Herein, we merely want to emphasize the fact that rational society and economy building systems, which highlight secular values and objectives, and which legitimize them, can be represented to a great extent as the consequences of separate secular and ecclesiastic structures, which were able to become independent of one another. In the life of other civilizations, and even in Orthodox Christian societies in the eastern part of Europe (not to mention the theocratic structure of the Ottoman Turkish empire), the ecclesiastic, transcendently centered system was in close and inseparable connection with the state system and it also fulfilled certain secular positions. In states of theocratic structure, the emperor possessed power by the grace of God, and this transcendental legitimacy made the secularization of the state system impossible. Also due to this, rationalism could not become an exclusive principle for societal organization. The role of the Western church in the development of Western culture is also significant. *Religion and faith is constantly a base for the creation of an independent spirit, as within Western Catholicism – and later to a greater extent with the Reformation – individual convictions and the conceptual content of religiousness become of primary importance.*

In our opinion, the liberal, “enlightened” world view, which started to develop from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, is the peak and perfection of this rationalism, of the society-level emancipation of human thinking. We cannot undertake the task to present completely the liberal conceptual system of the Enlightenment within the frame of this work, but we will examine the effects of the liberal conceptual system on Western-type social structure – the relation between the individual, society and state – and on the formation of the concept of power, that is to say, on the role of state. In our view, the process, which can be defined as globalization – compared to the international system dominated by the modern state system – shows qualitative differences in these two areas.

In Europe, in the historical period of Enlightenment, it is the liberal conception through which the complete society-level emancipation of human individuality was first realized and remained unique for a long time thereafter. The capacity for thought as a defining feature in determining individuals and the human ideal based on rationality are the starting points and bases necessary for the social structure known as liberal democracy. Its focal point is the free, independent individual, whose intention is self-realization and the maximization of rational interest, that is to say, the *homo economicus*. His personal freedom and the ability to enforce his interests are not limited by anything else but the extension of the rights of other individuals based on the same principles. The formulation of personal freedom first appeared in the Declaration of Human and

Civil Rights. Later, however, it was composed not merely in relation to the law enforcement ability of other individuals, but it attained its complete development in the process of becoming independent of power, in particular of state power. The man of liberalism is not only independent of ecclesiastic but of secular power: He is an autonomous being with absolute individual freedom.

This is the point where we can see the very essence and indefensibility of the social theoretical creed of liberalism. Namely, the priority of individual interests oppose any kind of community interests. Although this value concept can be argued from the point of view of social ethics, let us not pay attention to the critical comments of a wider range of values and let us examine the problem merely from the point of view of personal development, that is to say, let us remain in the otherwise narrow borderland that is offered by the liberal interpretation of individual freedom. It is a fact that this support of personal development is the basis of the balanced existence and furthermore for the economic development of modern Western society. The “development of the individual”, his self-realization, is, however, a notion that practically cannot be interpreted. It can be practiced and understood if we give a point of reference within the framework of a – family, work place, home, trade union, religious, ethnic, national, etc. – community. We can view the level of individual freedom or limits through the community, its relation systems and internal system of rules. In this respect, it is a secondary question whether this relation means obligations or rather a source of possibilities for the individual. Our picture of individual freedom is only credible and not misleading if we see man – intent on freedom – not as a lone, isolated individual, but as a social creature and if we see him through his existing and inevitable connections. These connections are not only inevitable from the point of view of personal relations to society; they cannot be neglected as internal necessities of human character. Our important statement is that *we do not consider the notion of individual freedom as something absolute*. It is in this context that all those rights of individuals – personal and public, alike – attain meaning and it is in their enforcement and practice that personal freedom can be made complete.

The negligence of personal attachment to community stands in direct relation to the liberal legal concept in which human rights are basically defined as individual rights. Very interestingly, so do even those rights that cannot be practiced individually. Belonging to different communities is a secondary aspect in the self-determination of an individual. So, too, is the example of belonging to a nation merely a secondary component of identity and can be interpreted primarily as one possible area of the realization and enforcement of individual rights. The man without community identity becomes defenseless, disoriented and can be manipulated. *The basic community units of modern society, whether in private or public life, appear only as areas of personal self-expression and self-determination.*

In the context of globalization, we must mention the terms of the power theory of liberalism, which is comprised partly by the theory of absolute freedom of the individual, and partly by the anti-state character of the thought system. From these two theories, we can deduce the anti-power charter of liberalism. From these two basic principles and from the negligence of individual connections to society, it follows that liberalism attributes a negative role to power and wishes to limit and divide it by all means. Liberalism denies its function of serving social and public interests. It does not acknowledge either the social and public redistributive role of power as a positive value, or the necessity to intervene in the fields of education and culture, not to mention the positive possibilities of its economic undertakings.

The social and economic structures based on the system of liberal ideas in the above-mentioned pure form have never become an exclusive practice of social organization in modern society, even though its basic principles such as tolerance, anti-despotism, the appreciation of human freedom and the representative and multiple party systems have become an organic part of both European civilization and our political culture. Modern European states, in the course of building their political structure, surpassed these principles and they combined and formed them with the values represented by other thought systems and models of society building. In Europe, from liberal democracy, plural democracy developed, which builds social consensus on the representation of different social groups and on the balance of their interest enforcement abilities. In practice, besides the natural predominance of the personal rights of voting, *the different social attachments of individuals play a society building and – to an even greater extent – a stabilizing role.*

We think that modern state-building system theories were able to fulfill completely their functions by establishing the relative integrity of welfare states and by forming the system of objectives of the ecological-social market economy as a commonly accepted value. In this context, they acknowledged the role of the state both in the economy based on liberal market organizing principles and in the establishment of social integrity, as well as establishing the social responsibility of the state and society, its solidarity with every subgroup and the responsibility of present society towards the life possibilities of the future generation. Why does it still seem that in the recent years, governments seem to retreat from this level of consensus of high value content? What causes this nearly simultaneous regression in the life of modern societies? We believe that we should not seek the answer within the framework of the state, but rather beyond the zenith of the modern age. However, it can be noted that in connection with the phenomena of globalization, as well as in the field of international relations, we cannot experience the same value consensus as was established in the modern state by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this process, it is only the values formulated by liberalism – namely: the complete freedom of

market through the widest possible suppression of state involvement; the unlimited predominance of personal entrepreneurial freedom; the negligence of social interests; environmental values and the cultural and other community identities – that stand out. What is the reason for this dissonance and difference, which have never been experienced to such a great extent and in any other historical period, between the value choices of the state and international economic and political systems?

### **The Choice of Values of Modern Western Society**

Before delving into detail about the interest relations of globalization, it is worth defining the most characteristic basic values of modern Western societies, which function as a value norm for Western people in civil, democratic societies. Firstly, we discuss *secularization*, which is becoming increasingly complete, and in connection with this, the increasing role of the sciences, which replace the transcendental relations of human beings. By *sciences*, here we mean increasingly less the human sciences; it is rather natural science research that is emphasized and stimulated financially. The third element is the increasing dominance of the *economic* sphere over other components of social systems. Fourthly, we emphasize the role of *democratic institutions*; although the omnipotent and definitive faith in them sometimes poses an obstacle to realization and attempts to treat the structural problems of the relation systems of modern society. The man of the Western world believes that these principles embody everything that has become an absolute value for him in the course of history and it is on this basis that would like to arrange other parts of the world. To the increasingly overwhelming internal tensions of modern Western society, the solution is not the discovery of the roots of the problem and the creation and execution of the necessary social reforms, but rather the expansion of the problematic system itself and thus the externalization of the tensions and costs incurred, which others are made to pay. The question is whether the roots of the emerging tensions can be found within the framework of the state, and whether there are any means available to treat the problems.

Let us question the above-mentioned values for a while, and let us see for how long we can consider them as the eternal truth and source of our well-being. Can we consider them as an existing reality at all? One of the most decisive and thus most influential consequences of secularization on society is that the bases of its social and economic structure are not determined by moral laws. They have become relative: acceptable or negligible. Socially correct and incorrect value contents are determined by laws created by man and by rules and directives justified by authorities. Behind these values, many times exclusively and in our age even more frequently, the principle of economic efficiency appears and this is due to the significant differences that have taken place in the

interest enforcing abilities of different social groups compared to one another. Due to the relative character of morality, the direction of human activity is decided along the lines of personal and group interests. On the basis of the majority principle of democracy – taking into consideration our current value system – the law adopted by man can be accepted as legitimate, but what is the basis for the stability of democracy? It is the activity that builds on individual participation, on conscious responsibility taken by different social groups, on public participation, on the ability of analysis based on the necessary amount of information, that comes from credible sources and therefore reflects truth. All of these make public participation and truly free elections possible.

Can our society ensure these? What are the conditions necessary for personal and public responsibility and access to information? The basic condition for all these is the given level of independence in existence, that is to say, working for salary as an accepted universal social value. In addition to the priority of economic life whose most important aspect is the economic efficiency of production – this is assisted by financial incentives to scientific research more strongly than ever – it is not clear that working for money, as the basis of democratic social structure, will be able to preserve its absolute value acknowledged by society in the long run. Regarding these ideas, the problem of employment does not arise merely as a social question, but as one of the most important problems endangering democratic social structure. Moreover, the latest results of scientific research are bringing new problems to the surface, which means new dangers with which to cope. These problems are very difficult – if not impossible – to treat without moral and common ethical bases. We cannot set aside the problem of free access to an acceptable amount of information. The critics of global phenomena – following economic phenomena – generally give priority to the overwhelming amount of homogeneous news sources, which are tailored to a given form and style. This is the least suitable form to receive the wide range of information that is necessary for the formation of opinions either about our direct environment or about world events. This form of the globalization of information circulation is, however, perfectly suitable to give rise to the illusion that people are able to define themselves, and that as a result of this, the management of their destiny is in their own hands.

In connection with our statements above, let us return to the role of the modern state fulfilled in social and economic organization, which we have already touched on in the section on liberalism. Many think that we are already far from the necessity of state ventures in a Keynesian sense, and by now it has become evident – especially with the fall of the socialist state with its active economic role – that the state must withdraw from the “night watchman” role based on liberal principles. In our opinion, we can obtain a valid answer to the question about the nature and extent of state ventures if we relate our statement to a society with the interest relations of globalization. After determining the

value norms of modern Western societies – in accordance with the above-mentioned ideas – let us return to the question of the causes of the dissonance in the value choices of state and international economic, political systems in the age of globalization.

### **The Interest Relations of Globalization**

What is globalization? The answers to this question are not only relatively diverse, but also very different from each other. There are also answers that differ from one another essentially. We suppose that qualitative differences in the answers reflect differences in the interests of respondents concerning their relation to globalization. This time we set aside those – in Hungary increasingly accepted but in other regions of the world less accepted – stereotypical answers, which focus on trade, which is becoming global, on the uncontrolled international money markets, their increasingly complete independence from the production sector or on the unsolved treatment of global environmental problems, on the flow of information, on the globalization of communication, or on the world-wide, homogeneous market of cultural goods. In spite of the fact that these processes really characterize the new context of the globalizing world, we now rather search for the answer to the question: what globalization is relative to the ideas mentioned above. That is why we will examine the contradictions of the ideological, social and philosophical backgrounds and roots of the process, and not their consequences and results. However, we will draw attention to the relations evident between the two.

The process of globalization – in this context – means the world-wide spread of the social and economic building practice of the over-mature Western civilization, which in its current state wants to treat the problems that are emerging as a result of internal contradictions between the modern social and economic systems in a way that has always been done throughout history, that is to say, by placing social and economic limits outside of the area concerned. What we are talking about here is that the realization of economic rationality based on unlimited liberalism – as we have already touched upon in the chapter about liberalism – collides with those obstacles that are set by the welfare state, that is to say into the system of rules established to protect the social, ecological and cultural interests and values of plural democracies as well as into the social structures and sub-structures, which are “ameliorated” by the values of liberal democracy, social democracy and conservatism. For the economic sphere, however, these principles are independent of rationality, economic efficiency and are difficult to interpret; furthermore, they are unacceptable. On the other hand, in the political system of democratic legitimacy, these values are difficult to attack through the system of arguments of economic efficiency, free trade and macro-economic indices. In democratic societies, the electors are ready to

legitimize the possessors of power on the condition that under given circumstances, they are able to harmonize their promises with reality to a necessary extent. That is, every community and social sub-group must have a share of the commonly established social and economic values to a certain extent through the policy of state redistribution. Thus within given social, economic and state boundaries, the limits at most can be softened and under certain circumstances they can be eased so that later the “pendulum would swing to the other side” and other interests of social groups would come into the spotlight. In this system, economic interests mean only a part of different social interests, even if their interest enforcement abilities are the strongest. Their power, however, is limited.

In the process of globalization, the system of rules settled and applied by the state, and legitimized and sustained through the political system of plural democracy can be eschewed and the economic capital, which is transformed into power capital and which went through a quality change due to the process, is able to nullify these rules. Let us follow the development and mechanism of this process and the way it affects the societies of Western civilization.

Globalization as a concept supposes a certain amount of mutuality and interdependence, in fact a partnership relation between regions, countries and country groups that are in contact. On the other hand, many think that the concept rather expresses that – with the fall of the state building model based on socialist and communist ideologies and individualism – rational, market-based economy; and the usefulness of a modern, Western social model, which is based on democratic society-building principles, has become a clear and unquestionable axiom for the whole world. This is the one and only road, which leads us to the future expected and supported by everyone, wherein everyone receives a share according to his or her necessities from the goods produced on Earth through the great financial, information, commercial, etc., world systems, which have been established in the meantime. This supposition is, without any doubt, proven by the results achieved in welfare societies. According to this idealistic thought, mutuality means the general and global acceptance and application of Western principles, so it by no means expresses the idea that the principles and “products” of cultures existing in the world and having different philosophical suppositions can become mutually acknowledged and accepted.

Analyses based on real empirical facts also reveal a rather one-sided direction, in which instead of mutuality – in the classical sense of the word, to which the necessary pluralism connects organically as well as the respect and completion of particular values – it is rather the universal goal of many centuries of Western civilization that appears. Under Universalism we understand an “obsession” primarily, which – feeding from the similar system of objectives of Christianity – became decisive for the secular experiences of European culture from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. In those times, for European man, cultures of

other worlds were not comparable to the Western scientific, secularizing civilization. Regarding scientific development, the unbelievable achievements of the unfolding industrial revolution, as well as the fact concerning the faith in unlimited development as a basis, the feeling of superiority of Western civilization easily etched itself into memory. The Western version of Universalism became complete by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries it affected world politics as well. Its essence is that the philosophical and value systems of Western culture, social systems and behavioral forms developed on the basis of their rationality and logic are destined for giving the adequate answers to the questions of human existence.

The question is to what extent all the processes included in the notion of globalization mean the essence of Western civilization, its real content and to what extent they have changed the internal essence of other civilizations and cultures. That is to say, the extent to which they could make the organic part of other cultures the theses of scientific world view, the system of rules of rational economy building, their priorities, and the principles of democratic society building of the world and make them accept it. We are probably not making a mistake if on one hand we state – by recalling our thoughts about modern Western society – that these principles really mean the essence and qualitative content of Western civilization, and on the other hand they have not caused deep changes in other cultures of the world. Concerning the qualitative content of the above-mentioned principles, they cannot cause such modifications in other cultures, as they are basically of institutional, organizational and technical character; that is, they have rather a civilization than a cultural content, as they have long lost their relation to the non-rational components of human existence; contents that do not reflect the essence and interpretation of existence of Western societies. The expected vacancy of concepts and principles – which first of all will have an effect in the field of their application, and will become evident for more and more people in the impediment and halt of economic development, and thus in the appearance of stable, structural unemployment – will cause crises related to self-identity and identity content in those societies that belong to Western culture. In other places, it will be possible to get through the crisis with the help of organizational, institutional reforms and through values, which determine the cultural identity of certain cultures and which offer a possibility of identification for the whole society, therefore preserving the integrity and internal cohesion of the society.

What causes the expected emptiness, the wearing out of these principles, or perhaps even the impossibility to develop them further? If we basically consider the notion of globalization as the expansion of Western civilization, then why do we see these crisis phenomena appearing in the Western Hemisphere as well? In our opinion, these reasons can be found in the interest



relations of globalization, and in the stratification of global society, as well as in the roots of all of them, *in the decline of modern age*.

Our basic idea is that in connection with globalization, we face a phenomenon that can be described by the formation, development, completion and decline of different cultures. According to our statement, globalization is the declining period of modern civilization, which is based on the European Judeo-Christian culture, in which it is not the soul and spirit, but the intellect and its most important projection, the practical brain; not philosophy or the metaphysical direction of man, but tangible success, technocracy, and the dominance and exclusiveness of the material-type value system that are the characteristics. *In this age, the individual is not dealing with the essential, internal questions of human existence but with the problem of external self-realization of civilized man, which can be observed best through expansion, growth, material accumulation, and not through the refinement of internal content.* It is through this context that we can see best what the West offers to the world through globalization. The self-contained rational facts, the person of the masses of urban life, who with his intelligence and skepticism ridicules and shatters his own tradition, culture and world view. It is this process, in which the rootless masses of big cities depart from the traditional groups of society, which are formed on the basis of community principles, and they experience it within their states and nations: they are speaking another language. Such a different language that it is not possible to study this language with the help of the traditional method, as the difference in the language appears in the difference of life style, tradition and relationships. This is how the nation state is forming and disintegrating; this is how traditional social relations are disappearing from it, as well as the interdependence of groups and their alliance towards the dominance of the state; this is how we get a picture about the social system of the globalized world, in which, according to the general truth of human societies, we can find the group that benefits and the group that suffers from the drawbacks of the system.

The social system of globalization is a type of world society whose most characteristic feature is that we find groups, which are determined by the same – primarily, almost exclusively – economic interests that not within the framework of the traditional modern state. On the one hand, the traditional, classical social layers of modern society have already partly or totally disintegrated. On the other hand, among the newly emerged groups – identified by the levels of consumption – relation systems are not formed at the state or national level, but with groups formed on the basis of the same principles within other states. Modern social structure is breaking up; the structure of the shaping new global world society does not carry the functionality of modern social groups any longer. They serve other interests, in order to acquire and maintain basically economic, but also political power.

The first thing we have to know about this society is that it does not mean the totality of the societies of the world – although the misleading expression globalization suggests it – and it does not comprise all social groups of the modern state. Thus, there are such – to use a misleading metaphor – modern groups that can now be considered as traditional ones whose members belong to the globalized world society, while others do not. Among these groups, we can find in the upper and quite narrow segment those who direct the phenomenon and direction of the globalization process. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to state that this group has already lost its national identity not just in a virtual sense, but in reality as well, and its activity within the framework of the state. The rule system legitimized by the rules of democracy cannot limit it at all. Their exclusive law is the individualism of classical liberalism. As in the process of globalization we have not yet reached the point where the state loses its sovereignty, we still consider states as one – although not the only and most dominant – participant of the international political and economic life; it is indispensable for the ruling group of the globalizing society to establish the “working” segment of our society, that is “the fifth column”. This last group – in the original sense of the expression – that constitutes a separate group within the framework of the nation, but from the point of view of existence, identity and its cultural relations as well, continues its sabotage actions, which it carries out not in the interest of the ruling segments of modern social welfare, but in the interest of the ruling segments of global society.

These social groups appear on the one hand in the management of transnational companies, in their local upper leadership, though from certain aspects at every employment level, as their wage possibilities – at least while their employment lasts – are not in connection with the wage categories of other employed segments. (Compared to the latter, the former’s wages are much higher.) We can find their representatives in the upper leadership of the banking sector, but here the linkage of the whole industry to the global society is not characteristic. We can place here the leaders of the financial sector, which is now significantly separated from the real sector, as well as the management of the more homogeneous character of communication, and entertainment sector. On the other hand, from the “national capital” sector of national or maybe “only” regional interest it is not only the employee or management layer that cannot be include in the global social group, but generally there are owners who do not belong to the circles of global society, who are independent of the capital strength and operating fields of the economic units that they lead. The stronger they are, and the larger their share of the local market is, the more they are exposed to the interest of global capital, which is by no means comforting for them. The ruling segment of the global society consists exclusively of the shareholders of large firm and multi- and transnational companies.

Many people call them the upper 20%, to differentiate from the 80% that for the time being is unable or perhaps unwilling to surpass the possibilities provided by state or regional frameworks. The above-mentioned two groups make up the layers of the global international system, while modern and traditional societies found themselves in a subjugated position. The sharp social borderline between the groups of global world society and the modern state is more striking than ever and is becoming distinct without any legitimacy.

On the basis of the above-mentioned thought systems, perhaps we succeeded in describing the process through which the value system of modern Western civilization that is limited to rationalism, and which wishes to serve the reorganization of the international system affects the Western political system; and how it deprives the legitimate political forces of their tools and thus nullifies – especially for the ruling layers of the global world society – the systems of rules, which were created by legitimate politics in order to protect the values of modern society. “Revolution devours its children!” – said Robespierre. Although in European societies, the principles promoted by liberalism could temporarily succeed in becoming digestible for people, and also in combining it with other values – independent of the rational mentality – in the world of nation states, it seems that in the later phase of modernity – behind the mask of globalization – the interest enforcement intention of liberalism returns in a pure form in such a way that it limits the room for movement of states and makes the international system anarchical.

### **A Possible Alternative for Central Europe in the Context of Globalization**

In the second part of our work, we plan to illustrate such a vision of the challenges, which we described in the theory of globalization – regarding on the one hand state ventures, on the other hand, the future possibilities of local societies – the realizations of which seem to be practicable and can be accepted from both the point of view of individuals and communities. At the same time, proclaiming the justification of the Central European region from the point of view of the economy, culture and politics, we propose this image of the future not merely for a social and an economic role. We are deeply convinced that whatever practical solution is born to fend off the negative effects of globalization, it must be based on the change of the Western world view, as well as on a change of moral paradigm. In fostering this, Central Europe will play a decisive role – if it is able to realize and undertake it. It does really matter whether in the historical period after a period of catching-up, Central European countries will have a real possibility to transform their society and economy, to catch up to the more modern part of the world, whether it means their welfare and the enlargement of their possibilities or the adaptation of an economic and social system struggling with structural problems.

From the statements in the first section of our work, it seems that the society and economy-organizing role of modern state is, to say the least, having some problems. The processes of globalization weakened the possibilities of state ventures, as well as the available political, financial, and economic political systems of means to such an extent that we think it will be difficult for them to regain their positions. This task will not only be a problem for states existing in the period of transition, or for the countries of semi-periphery or periphery. The rearrangement of the power relations of the micro- and macro-sphere seems to be definitive in the countries of welfare societies as well. If the state will only be able to fulfill its role in a limited way, or if any institution or institutional system of legal power will not be able to emerge to take up the role of the state, then in our opinion there are two ways of development for the international system of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As one possibility, due to the uncertainties of the current balance of power, we can imagine that the global international system becomes illegitimate, and its relation systems generally become anarchical. In order to avoid this – as a second possibility – we consider the motion towards the balance of power relations as an acceptable way where an evident method of treatment, even if not the only one – having the above-described problems of modern European civilization and culture in mind – is *strengthening the civil society and its networks*, which requires a strong and well-organized institutional system. Many search for the solution in the formation of regional structures and cooperation forms. Let us see how much reality it has in Central Europe.

### **Regions Besides States**

First of all, we believe it important to state that we must take into consideration the fact of globalization. Whatever opinion we have about the negative and positive effects of the process, we have to accept that throughout history, ideas of modernization with the help of isolation or enclosure have not been able to bring about the desired results either in the structural change of economy or in the degree of social integrity, nor in the increase of social well-being, etc. That is why we have to find those forms of adaptation and application through which we can elaborate and realize our own globalization strategy. What is really essential here is to prevent the Central European region from becoming the target of realization for the globalization strategy of others. We think that the concept described below is able to bring about changes in the international system in the long run; that is, to force the adaptation of stronger participants and through this, the elaboration and acceptance of regulative systems.

Departing from the above-mentioned facts as well as from the criteria of the process of globalization we think that it is necessary to establish the regional cooperation forms at different levels among the countries of Central Europe. The cohesive force of society is embodied in the community, in the relation systems

of the community, in their mutual ties, their independence from one another and from the state, and in the balance between their rights and obligations. The basis of modern society is also the community; the democratic structure based on plural interest enforcement and community relations, which simultaneously carry the contents of personal identity. People can experience the completion of their personality – their freedom in a community – through their activities and participation. All of these are valid not only for personal relation systems – they determine the political, public and professional identity of the individual, as well. With the decline of state, the very existence of communities is endangered, as their role, possibilities and room for maneuvering is determined by the institutional frameworks established by the state. Their decline and the increasing presence of unemployment have a destructive effect on the social networks of the modern state. The international system ruled by micro-integration not only does not offer protection to communities in building social subsystems, but it undoes the still-existing relations of different identity contents within the utopian phalanstery of the “global village”, as well.

With these questions in mind, we can determine the primary objective of regionalism: *saving those value contents of modern state structure that continue to preserve and recreate the moral and financial security of individuals and communities alike*. In this context, regional institutions must be set up in such a way that different social groups and sub-groups would find their new objectives and the more efficient representation of interest enforcing possibilities within the new regional frameworks. Thus, we see the basis and the deepest objective of the region in the *reintegration of the disintegrating societies and the recreation of their internal cohesion at a high level* – based on religiously, culturally and financially determined identity contents alike.

The reawakening of the geographic, societal, economical and economic historical traditions of a given territory, as well as the launching economic processes connected to the institutional system of the region are largely increasing interdependence, which gradually fosters the harmonization of the common decision-making mechanism. With the help of this strictly local, though at the same time, transregional level, this decision-making form of European and – in some cases – global character can be suitable to transform – in addition to economic interest – solidarity, the protection of traditional values, the safeguarding of local culture and – last but not least – the enrichment of cultural existence, an aspect that must be taken into consideration again. This form can ensure the possibility for the modern “homo economicus” to become a more complete personality on the one hand, and on the other hand, to build the balance of local societies on the widest possible public and political participation, moreover, on active participation. It is through this framework that individual and community activity can be manipulated the least, and where autonomous, responsible decisions can be expected, as their effects will be

sensed directly and the local possibilities will be utilized to the greatest extent for local society.

In this medium, the social mobility of individual can truly become complete. The community and similarity of cultural traditions can ensure secure room to maneuver for the individual, both in economic and political life. As a result of this, it is very important – especially for ethnically and religiously mixed Central Europe, which is also a region of common historical and cultural background – that through regional cooperation at different levels, the importance of the role of the claim to sovereignty in regard to state territory is decreasing, while the role of those identity contents that connect the interests of particular groups through dense social networks is increasing. With the loosening of the dependence on the state, its tension-generating role is also decreasing. It is an empirical fact that in Central Europe, the ethnic and religious conflicts are not so much the consequences of the problems resulting from the coexistence of local communities, though they come to the limelight and become destabilizing factors as the result of the conflict generating activity of central politics. Through the stable and multiple-level establishment of regional institution systems, civil society will receive an interest enforcing possibility, which will affect the experience of individual freedom positively – and not to the disadvantage of others – thus making possible the broadest social assertion of self.

The possibilities ensured by regionalism do not only establish a new, secure environment for the individual and for his communities, the civil society. In our opinion, the general acceptance of regional institutional forms could enable the reform of market relations, as well. International economic life has not become free or of equal opportunities at all, and there are unlimited possibilities for the creation of monopolies, who could realize their economic and power interests without any obstacles. We are convinced that the principle and the practice of the free market are not for displacing each other, and for serving stronger and more uninhibited market interests. This cannot also mean a legitimizing system of arguments for the social acceptance of increasing unemployment, mass-size impoverishment or for the significant weakening of the middle class. We cannot build a viable society on the pure principles of liberalism – as we have already outlined. The market must not have a displacing role, but it again must fulfill a harmonizing, administrative, mediating, etc., role, and through this it must ensure that prices function as a real measure of value. The monopolistic circumstances of globalization are gradually depriving the market of its traditional controlling role. Prices are connected less and less to the possibilities tailored by supply and demand, and instead are mainly determined in terms of the market interest of the supply monopoly.

Within the framework of regionalism, by taking advantage of local conditions and possibilities, and thus from the resulting interdependence and

mutual relation, the formation of monopolies is practically impossible. Quite the contrary: Regional independence can create the condition system of a diversified economic structure whose consequence could be a wide division of labor among the economically active units of the region. Significant results could be reached in the treatment of unemployment and impoverishment. On the one hand, in such an environment, those who live from wages and salaries cannot earn such a wage that does not ensure the creation of decent living conditions. Social relations systems and the established institutional systems operate according to principles that cannot allow the impoverishment and exclusion of certain groups. On the other hand, the above-described economic structure is much better for independent and proprietary economic activity, as well as for the spread of self-employment. The stable, regional institutional system in addition – by the appreciation of institutional forms, local traditions, cultural values, local relation systems – can force the main actors of global processes, the transnational companies, to better adaptation. Now, let us see whether all of these have a real possibility in the region, and if so, how it might manifest itself.

### **Factors Limiting and Fostering Regionalism in Central Europe**

The above-described aspects are even more important for Central Europe. It is doubtless that in order to prevent the negative effects of globalization, and to modernize the economy and society, a “strong and active” state with a suitable system of means would be necessary. Nevertheless, it is not only that the countries of the region do not coincide with the image of a strong state, but also from a number of aspects they are very much weaker than their Western European partners. They are more defenseless due to their internal relation structures, the transformation of their economic life and the constant change of their administrative and bureaucratic regulatory systems as well as the disintegration of their social relation systems. The power position of the state, the central government, is not expected to regenerate; at some point, it will be necessary to define the global environment of possible development strategies in the fields of industry, agriculture and service, while taking into consideration international trends and adjusting the national and regional concepts of modernization accordingly.

In these times, we can observe a unique parallel between the Western European answers given to the challenges of globalization and the regional cooperation urged and regarded as useful by many. The regionalism that occurs in the European Union and the multileveled, but more decisively regionally based institutional and financial objectives that organically connect to this process, are exceptionally suited to those concepts that see the Central European chances of catching up in the elaboration of regional cooperation forms as the most promising. Unfortunately, in spite of several initiatives in the past decades

concerning the creation of different Euroregional, transboundary institutional systems, it was either difficult or impossible to provide them with content; effective cooperation and the determination of concrete objectives never took place. We can say the same in connection with the national-level partner relations among countries. Unfortunately, it only managed to translate the prospective political initiatives into investment, relation and cultural capital to a very limited extent, with limited mutual benefit. It seems that the definition of both the systems of objectives and means is becoming mixed, and the sole objective in the foreign policy of Central European countries is the establishment of institutional frameworks: This is nothing more than a system of means created in the interest of further economic, cultural, etc. objectives.

The reasons for this are various. First of all – and this is perhaps the most important factor – the Western political attitude did not help and during the transformation of the structures of Western institutional systems, they did not take into account the different level cooperation possibilities of those countries undergoing transformation and who wished to join the European Union. There has been a slow movement in connection with the CBC–PHARE program, whose effect is very limited considering the available amount of sources. The EU saw a competitor in the formation of a Central European regional system – which has been able to establish more balanced relations in every field in the region as well as in its relation system with the EU. It was more efficient to keep the economic and political power positions towards the states that are in transition and inexperienced in the international field and in their new roles than towards a possible formation of country groups, or towards regions, which are forming at a sub-state level, but which also enjoy state support and which realize their own interests clearly.

Moreover – let us be honest – the tactic of making these countries compete for the title of “Who gets first into the European Union?” has proved to be a good one in earlier times in the hands of the West. Ten years had to pass before the Czech Republic and Poland, through Hungary and Slovakia to Bulgaria, realized the possibilities of cooperation. We would like to emphasize here that *we do not consider the regional cooperation forms as an alternative to Western integration*. The situation is the same with the multiple-level cooperation forms among Western countries, which are not mutually exclusive forms but which developed as forms that *complete* one another; that is to say, they realize the principle of subsidiarity.

This process was not helped by the fact that in the region, the process of becoming a nation and nationalism as a concomitant phenomenon, has reached a new wave of accomplishment by the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The dissonance that can be observed between the intensification of the contradictions in international trends (globalization, micro- and macro-integration) and the survival of prejudices felt towards one another in connection with nation state



sovereignty in Central and Eastern Europe – while the process itself is practically unrecognized and ignored – is very unfortunate. Both the burden of Communism and the political and historical unsettlement of the period impede the understanding of global dangers for the whole society and for the whole Central and Eastern European region, as well as the necessity for political and social collaboration and the awakening of national and regional feeling of solidarity in these countries.

Many people think that regional cooperation in Central Europe has very little chance. Those who think this, on one hand refer to the political relation systems burdened with problems, while on the other hand they refer to the conflicts feeding from ethnic problems that intensified in the last decades of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and – to a significant extent thanks to the peace settlement after World War I – became even more intensive in the 1920s and 1930s. It is unquestionable that 18<sup>th</sup> century nationalism found a totally different medium in Central Europe than in Western Europe. In the Western part of the continent, national self-determination had to oppose the absolute power of the state: Thus, they saw the role of nationalism in the legalization of civil rights; this was the primary objective. In Central Europe, there were not nor could there be nation states; thus, the intentions for the creation of a nation state did not only oppose the central state power, but also the intentions of other nations with similar ambitions. With the help of nationalism – thanks primarily to its geographical and ethnic characters – it was practically impossible to consolidate this region.

Nevertheless, the conditions of real belonging, indispensable for regional cooperation, mean a more stable base than in Western Europe. Here, we think of those traditions of the Middle Ages and Modern Times – production, economic cultures, ethnographic, cultural, religious traditions – which in reality are more deeply rooted in European history than in the political idea system organized around the nation state. All of these influenced more decisively private and community life throughout history than did the dependence on the state, or the relation system towards the state. Moreover, in Central Europe, the similarity and many times the congruency of living conditions were not limited to the culture of only one nation and the present state borders do not by any means signify any divisions at these levels of national belonging.

This is the point where we again have to draw attention to a fact – later to be discussed from another aspect – that *regionalism can be a cure for ethnic problems*. The trouble that appeared in the coexistence of local societies several times was not caused by a sudden lunatic turn of the nations living next to one another for centuries, but by the appearance of a new loyalty claim required by the state. In this context, the damage of state prestige does not necessarily mean a drawback, because if local communities can receive neither the protection even from the state institutional systems any longer, nor those interest enforcement

possibilities for which earlier it was worth curtailing local level relations and establishing a relation system increasingly closer to the central institutional system, then a process in the opposite direction can and does appreciate the importance of local relation systems.

The stake of the following years for the countries of the region is whether they will be able to influence the effects of globalization in the interest of their economic development and national objectives, or whether their “development” will depict a Latin American-type of passive subordination, and their economy will get out of domestic control for good. Unfortunately, there are several signs in the countries of Central Europe that project the occurrence of this latter possibility. If we consider the case of Hungary to demonstrate this, we can say that the ownership structure is unanimously dominated by foreign possession. Two-thirds of the industry is under foreign control; within this, 70% of the chemical industry, 90% of the communication industry, 60% of the energy sector, 70% of the financial sector and almost half of the trade. In other Central European countries, privatization and green-field foreign functioning capital were not proceeding at such a fast past as in Hungary, and the amount of foreign state debt did not affect so urgently the pace of privatization: In the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Bulgaria, they tried several different privatization strategies. In spite of this fact, they could not find those techniques through which the domestic ownership sector and domestic companies could be established and reinforced. The ex-state property of Central and Eastern European countries, mainly through secondary privatization (except for Hungary, where in connection with privatization – due to the great amount of foreign debt owed by the state – the participation of foreign functioning capital was preferred unanimously and exclusively) slowly but gradually gets into foreign ownership without ensuring the construction of a suitable guarantee system for the protection of the domestic capital and labor market, or for the enlargement of domestic supplier capacities.

In the period after the change of regime in Central and Eastern Europe, it would have been necessary to ensure institutional protection and financial support, at least in the beginning. Here, we do not mean broad protective measures or the total negligence of free trade principles. On the other hand, we are deeply convinced that market relations, the unregulated character of trade and economic competition conditions and the increasingly complete application of liberalism are not bringing the expected results in the fields of economic transformation and modernization. Moreover, they are generating social tension in the short and in the middle run (10–15–20 years) as well as fostering the development of such an economic structure that does not serve a suitable globalization strategy in accordance with national and regional interests. In regard to what was just mentioned, it would have been necessary to examine those international economic circumstances that – after the system change –

unambiguously and irrevocably define the Central European region, and within this the possibilities and room for maneuvering of these countries, and as a function of this it would have been necessary to survey the possibilities and the concrete directions of development strategies. Such a study of surroundings and such an economic strategy would have eased to a great extent the definition of the new identity of the region, and moreover, the realization of their interests and more efficient representation, either through EU accession agreements or through a faster realization of the advantages of regional relation systems. (It is worth drawing attention to the verifiable drawbacks and the unfavorable relation system between the CEFTA countries and the EU – at the expense of the former. Due to the excessively rapid and excessively large economic and commercial liberalization required by the EU, an unfavorable competition situation developed in the relations among CEFTA-countries, thus hindering significantly the elaboration of regional cooperation forms.)

In the meantime, as a consequence of the above-mentioned facts, we would like to mention that the tendency to urge the enforcement of liberal market economic principles is nothing but an economic-philosophical system whose objective is decisively to efficiently serve the enforcement of economic interests. Evidence sufficient to demonstrate this is the fact that when the realization of this principle system means a drawback for its propagators (e.g. for the economic actors of the United States in connection with its trade to Japan; for the EU in connection with the protection of its agricultural market) the necessity to protect the internal market immediately emerges by thrusting into the limelight the interest of domestic producers, as well as the necessity for the controlled and regulated exchange of goods. The consequences of the immediate and involuntary application of liberal market principles after the change of regime are well illustrated by the lingering budget difficulties of Central European countries, by the increasing social tensions, by the almost final separation of unnecessarily large groups of society from the middle class, the weakness of the domestic ownership sector , etc.

### **Some Practical Arguments in Favor of a Regionalized Central Europe**

In the life of the European Union, it was a well known phenomenon that the acceleration of the process of integration, and through this the more complete internal liberalization of the economic processes did not decrease the backwardness of the already less developed areas, but rather increased the economic and social difficulties. As a result of this phenomenon, they began to search for compensation and support formulas that correspond to the special needs of these areas. This means that the regionalism in Western European countries has also served the purpose of making those disadvantageous regions equal, in such a way that the process of integration should not slow and that these regions can also benefit as far as possible from its advantages.

All of these naturally support the supposition that for Central Europe, as a yet less developed sub-region of the European continent, the deepening of sub-state level regionalism is a necessity. It is especially valid if these countries want to make the supposed advantages of integration available for their whole society – and the maintenance of an integrated society in relation to the possibilities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century occupies an important place in their plans.

The economic situation of Hungary and its neighboring countries does not reach the average level of development of the European Union at present. It is especially valid for the Eastern part of the Carpathian basin, which is expected to become the Eastern border, the eastern “gate” of the European Union after the accession of Hungary. It can be assumed that the present support system of the European Union, either the Structural or Cohesion Funds, or the CAP supporting agriculture, will not be operational at the time of the accession of the Central European countries. We cannot expect that the less developed areas of Hungary, which border on even less developed territories – whether we take into consideration the eastern part of Slovakia or the areas bordering on Romania – will receive support from the European Union in order to ease their transition. On the other hand, with the accession of Hungary, both from a global context and from the point of view of the European involvement as a whole, the value of these marginal territories can be increased to such an extent that the disadvantages can become potential advantages.

We primarily think of the increasing interest of the two other actors on the global stage besides Europe, namely, Japan and the United States. Their market actors would like to acquire such economic positions until the accession of Hungary to the European Union – the outlines of which could be seen in the northern region of Hungary – that would not only ensure a position of possession for them but also the possibility to take advantage of this border role through the still-forming Euroregional initiatives. In this context, the situation of the eastern marginal area is appreciated: Its present peripheral situation can become a potential comparative advantage; moreover, it can be a factor in strengthening their negotiation positions. Realizing this circumstance, the still-forming regions can contribute to the counter-balancing of those imbalances within the country and the region generated by the process of globalization. In some respects, they can even control the process itself. However, this role cannot be enforced merely at a county, a district or a local government level. It is necessary that regions with 1–2 million inhabitants that have existing operating institutional systems and a clear picture concerning the kind of development strategy that could best suit their own economic development, as well as the global involvement of the region, would appear before the potential investors. In this way, it is possible for the region to avoid becoming dependent on others, as well as being subservient to other globalization strategies: It is by recognizing the system of means ensured by this new situation that this region can be competitive.

We must also consider a fact that is not only important from the point of view of the Central European countries, but from the standpoint of the strategic enlargement of the European Union as well. Namely, the enormous possibilities lying in the development of eastern relations. The connection between the Central European region and Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States can be considered a provisional one. We cannot expect that trade or economic relations will shift or develop from today's very low level. In the age of globalization, "vacuum situations" cannot be maintained for a long. In the global competition, it is the very interest of every center to broaden relations and take advantage of the possibilities. In this context, the Central European sub-region – within this, the Euroregions operating here – can again acquire an eminent position, for them the enlargement of the East-West relations can ensure a new role. Besides the evident advantages – such as the proximity of Eastern markets, low labor costs, highly qualified labor force, etc. – that mean a natural attraction for foreign investments, these regions can take on such important roles in our age as setting up logistical centers built on the East-West commercial relations.

Other arguments in favor of regions and Euroregions, in addition to the advantages originating from global and integration processes, could have economic aspects as well. We think of the problems that derive from the lack of resources, which – through regionalism – could assist the coordination of development strategies and the concentration of resources for those areas that belong together. It can aid the formulation of the optimal company size as well as cross borders, which are otherwise of a limiting and isolating nature, as they work against development – a characteristic feature of all national borders in Central Europe. It is very important during the presentation of these advantages to draw attention – especially in the case of those economies under transformation – to an aspect that is difficult to realize and which can be a key factor in bridging the gap between countries or regions: This is the development of small- and middle-sized enterprises of domestic and regional interest. This priority seems to be a political aspect in the eyes of many, and naturally, it cannot be neglected in Central Europe. However, when talking about utilizing the advantages of regionalism, the successful role of the region is determined by the extent to which the small- and middle-sized enterprises – which play an important role in the treatment of employment problems – can establish regional relations between themselves and even within their own relation systems. We think that it is very important to re-emphasize that although Central European regionalism has its own positive values at the moment, its success must be ensured by the supporting background of European integration and regional processes.

Economically and politically motivated regionalism could mean a solution to the treatment of the emerging social problems in the countries under

transition. Our statement is proven here, at the end of this study, by the fact that – firstly, the real necessity of the micro-economy can be better followed and secondly, the criteria of social help can be better linked to the real need – while the active, that is to say, not aid-based social policy can develop broader room in a region with a diversified micro-economic structure, which at the same time helps the growth and strengthening of the middle class traditionally linked to European culture. Arriving at the social type, welfare problems of the modern state, the need to reformulate the viewpoints that relate to the system of tasks becomes very striking. This entails the moral renewal of the man of modern Western values. We think that the need for social solidarity among social segments and age groups should not only be a higher level value represented by the European institutional system, but it should become a reality for both the individual and the social community. Patriotism, which can be listed among the traditional European values, developed through regionalism can again gain some strength. The development of this social view can be supported by the fact that we must not only and primarily identify with all this on the basis of Christian values, but in our own interest – as long as we ourselves are not in need of similar assistance.

We believe that Central Europe has a very important position to fill in this respect. There is a great necessity among the region's societies for integration and the values associated with it. It is doubtless that the state must take on a new role. The individual, however, can preserve the awareness of and the need for social solidarity, which under any circumstances must come before the exclusiveness of Western consumer views.

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## The Euroregion as a peculiar spatial manifestation of European integration

In Western Europe, after World War Two, and particularly from the '60s–'70s on, we witnessed the emergence of various forms, organisational and institutional types of regional cooperation – more specifically, and most importantly, of the cooperation of transfrontier regions. The aim of the present study is to examine the characteristics, and the spatial and chronological spread in our continent, of one of the most effective and most characteristic forms of transfrontier cooperation, namely, the *euroregion*.

### The types of regionalism

Before getting down to the topic, however, it would seem useful to scrutinise the question in a wider social-historical context. The multiplicity of classifications and categorisations as to the European regionalist movements after World War Two is well known (1). From the standpoint of our topic, the typology of Winfried Lang seems best to follow (2). Lang distinguishes three types of regionalism:

- 1.) *Regionalism within a national framework*. This has two cases:
  - a) it starts from certain regions which have a historically strong tradition of autonomy – in this case, we're dealing with the kind of *regionalism that builds from the ground up (=federalism)*
  - b) the territorial-local manifestation of the state's parcelling up of its functions: this is the kind of *regionalism that builds from the top down (=decentralization)*
- 2.) *Transnational (=transfrontier) regionalism*: the case of certain culturally or economically unitary geographical regions.

It is the smooth development of the latter that the concept of “*a Europe of regions*” is designed to help. The concept is, concurrently, an alternative to De Gaulle's “*a Europe of homelands*”, inspired by a pattern of thought centred on the nation-state.

(The dilemma is, incidentally, almost impossible to resolve: on the one hand, the border regions seek at least partial emancipation in opposition to the policy of centralization; on the other hand, they often do, in fact, need the blessings of centralization in order to overcome the handicaps caused by their border or peripheral situation.)



### 3.) *International regionalism*

A movement which has been growing in strength since World War Two. It is characterized by the fact that, increasingly, it is taking upon itself functions originally incumbent on the state. The highest form of this kind of regionalism is the process of European integration.

(Less successful forms of regionalism may be found in the Third World as well, witness ASEAN, ECOWAS, and the numerous cooperation formations of the Latin American countries.)

- The process we're here concerned with obviously falls within the second category.

In the framework of the process outlined above, the '70s–'80s brought a distinct upswing in the cooperation of transfrontier regions and a subsequent *process of institutionalization*. The changing (expanding) contents of cooperation were signalled by new concepts and *organisational frameworks*, most important of which are the “*working community*” (Alps–Adriatic Working Community, Jura Working Community, Working Community of Danubian Countries, etc.), the “*community of interest*” (Central Alsace – Breisgau Community of Interest), the “*council*” (Lake Geneva Council, EUROREGIO Council), and the “*eurometropolis*”.

The list below illustrates the chronological and spatial process of the spread of transfrontier cooperation:

### **The European formations of transnational regionalism 1963–1990**

#### 1.) *Regio Basiliensis*

The Regio Basiliensis Association was formed on February 25, 1963, based on the Swiss law of association

#### 2.) *Moyenne Alsace – Breisgau Community of Interest (CIMAB)*

November 16, 1964, an association, its seat is in Colmar.

#### 3.) *Working Community of Alpine Countries (ARGE ALP)*

Was formed on October 12/13, 1972, in Mösern/Tirol.

*Members:* Bavaria, and Trient and Bozen- South Tirol Autonomous Province (Italy)

Gränbünden, St-Gallen Canton (Switzerland), Lombardy (Italy)

Tirol, Vorarlberg Province (Austria)

#### 4.) *Euroregio*

EUROREGIO – Council, April 15, 1978

Cooperation of two Dutch (Twente, Oost-Gelderland) and one German settlement association (Rhein-Ems e. V.), representing a total of 92 village communities and districts

5.) *Alps-Adriatic Working Community*

November 20, 1978

Was founded by the provinces and regions of the Eastern Alps region. Was expanded in 1989. Its members include:

From Austria: Burgenland, Karintia, Upper Austria, Styria, Salzburg

From Italy: Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Alto-Adige, Lombardy (observer)

From the Federal Republic of Germany: Bavaria

From the former Yugoslavia: Croatia, Slovenia

From Hungary: Győr-Sopron, Vas, Somogy and Zala Counties

6.) *Working Community of the Cantons and Regions of the Western Alps*

Was formed in Marseilles, on April 2, 1982, with the participation of 9 regions and cantons:

(Provence, Alpes-Cote d'Azur, Rhone-Alpes, Liguria, Piemont, Val d'Aosta, Genève, Valais, Vaud)

7.) *Pyrenees Working Community*

Was formed in Bordeaux, on April 15, 1983. Its members: Aquitaine, Aragon, Catalogne, Euzkadi, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées, Navarre, Andorra.

7.) *Jura Working Community*

Was formed on May 3, 1985. Its members: Jura, Bern, and Neuchatel cantons, and, from France, the Franche-Comté region.

8.) *Lake Geneva Council*

May 17, 1987. Members: Vaud, Valais, and Genève cantons, and the departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie (France).

9.) *Working Community of Danubian Countries*

May 17, 1990. Members: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and the Danubian regions of Moldova. The districts of Southern Moldova and Western Slovakia have observer status (3).

To sum up what has been said so far, it can fairly be argued that, from the '70s-'80s onwards, there occurred a shift in the ideology of (Western) European regionalism and in the practice conforming to that ideology: whereas, after

World War Two, state-centred regionalism was the dominant form, the period just referred to witnessed a gradual move to centrestage of the type of regionalism that builds from the ground up, which primarily affected the frontier regions.

Obviously, the European institutions, too, had to react to the comprehensive and constantly spreading process, which was crossing national boundaries. *The institutionalization of international regional cooperation* was carried out, in the framework of the Council of Europe, as far back as 1980. That is the purpose served by the Madrid Convention (May 21, 1980), or – to give its official title – European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation Between Territorial Communities or Authorities.<sup>1</sup> The aims of the Convention might be summed up in the following points:

#### Article 1

Each Contracting Party undertakes to facilitate and foster transfrontier cooperation between territorial communities or authorities within its jurisdiction and territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of other Contracting Parties. It shall endeavour to promote the conclusion of any agreements and arrangements that may prove necessary for this purpose with due regard to the different constitutional provisions of each Party.

#### Article 2

1. For the purpose of this Convention, transfrontier cooperation shall mean any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose. Transfrontier cooperation shall take place in the framework of territorial communities' or authorities' powers as defined in domestic law. The scope and nature of such powers shall not be altered by this Convention.
2. For the purpose of this Convention, the expression "territorial communities or authorities" shall mean communities, authorities or bodies exercising local and regional functions and regarded as such under the domestic law of each State. However, each Contracting Party may, at the signing of this Convention or by subsequent notification to the Secretary general of the Council of Europe, name the communities, authorities or bodies, subjects and forms to which it intends to confine the scope of the Convention or which it intends to exclude from its scope.

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<sup>1</sup> Hungary acceded to the Convention on April 6, 1992; this was ratified by Parliament, on March 26, 1993, by a Resolution of Parliament; finally, it was promulgated by Act XXIV of 1997.

## Article 4

Each Contracting Party shall endeavour to resolve any legal, administrative or technical difficulties liable to hamper the development and smooth running of transfrontier cooperation and shall consult with the other Contracting Party or Parties concerned to the extent required.

Source: Collection of Prevailing Legal Regulations.

The Convention owes its special significance to the fact that it serves as a model for the framing of cooperation treaties, by featuring, in an annex, the *model inter-state* agreements and the outline agreements, statutes and contracts *between local authorities*.

It is the latter that is especially important from the standpoint of our topic; it is, therefore, worthwhile quoting the relevant recommendation:

### 2.6 “Outline agreement on the setting up of organs of transfrontier cooperation between local authorities”

*Introductory note:* It is assumed that several local authorities may get together and form a legally based organisation with a view to providing and operating some public utility, service or facility body.

The creation and functioning of such an association or syndicate will mainly depend on the applicable legislation and the provisions of any previous interstate agreement authorising this form of cooperation (see model agreement 1.5).

There follows a list of the provisions that the articles of association should include, insofar as they are not embodied in the applicable legislation.

*The articles of association should specify inter alia:*

1. the names of the founding members of the association and the conditions on which new members may join;
2. the name, headquarters, duration and legal status of the association (with references to the law conferring legal status upon it);
3. the object of the association, the way in which it is to be pursued and the resources at the association’s disposal;
4. the way in which the registered capital is to be constituted;
5. the scope and limits of members’ liabilities;
6. the procedure for appointing and dismissing administrators or managers of the association, as well as their powers;
7. The association’s relations with its members, third parties and higher authorities, especially as regards the communication of budgets, balance sheets and accounts;

8. The people with responsibility for financial and technical control over the activity of the association and the reports arising out of such control;
9. The conditions for altering the articles of association and for the dissolution of the association;
10. The rules applying to personnel;
11. The rules applying to languages.

As is apparent from the above enumeration, the past twenty to twenty-five years have witnessed, parallel with the institutionalization process, a swift spatial and chronological spreading of the various forms of transfrontier cooperation. At the beginning of the '90s, in Western Europe, according to the data of Iván Illés, the cooperation schemes kept on record involved 46 regions (4).

France and Germany are the countries that are participating most intensively in the cooperation. France is involved in 20 regional cooperation projects, Germany in 19. But, actually, in the case of Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland – owing to their smaller territories and shorter boundary lines – this cooperation is even more intensive: Holland participates in 11 regional cooperation schemes, with Belgium and Switzerland each active in 10 such projects (5).

A substantial proportion of the formations taking part in transfrontier cooperation call themselves euroregion.

### **The concept of the euroregion**

No general, scientifically or institutionally accepted definition of the term “euroregion” has crystallized so far. In any case, the latest developments – such as the setting up of the Committee of Regions in the framework of the EU – have compelled the “Eurocrats” to formulate a working version of the possible definition, which runs like this:

At the same time, we’re dealing with an accepted concept, widely used in practice. It is especially the German literature in the field that excels in offering practical definitions (which, to be sure, must have more than a little to do with Germany’s own involvement with projects of this kind); so that it may not be overstating the case to speak of a German doctrine of euroregions. This doctrine, alongside a pragmatic approach – “euroregions are considered to be a traditional form, and the most effective one as well, of transfrontier cooperation, and their institution offers us access to a comparatively flexible instrument of cooperation”;

- “The euroregion means nothing other than an institutionalized form of cooperation between transfrontier regions. As regards its legal form, it is a registered association within the national legal system to which the body territorially belongs. And, at the supra-frontier level, it is the assembly of the

euroregions that performs the function of the highest decision-making body” – it summarizes the characteristics of the euroregions in six points:

- Euroregions are the most effective forms of transfrontier cooperation
- Euroregions help eliminate the developmental discrepancies between particular frontier areas
- Euroregions strengthen trust and cooperation between people
- Euroregions are proving grounds for good-neighbourliness and integration
- Euroregions help transcend the negative legacy of the past
- Euroregions are important elements in the integration of Central European states into the European Union (6).

Recently, the Hungarian monographic literature, too, has come up with some definitions – varying in their quality and level of sophistication – of the euroregion. Let us see two of these:

The euroregion is a geographically relatively clearly defined area which comprises territorial divisions of several countries. (7)

The term “euroregion” is used to designate an area where exist for mutual interregional or transfrontier cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, and other fields between two or more states or their local governments. The euroregion, then, denotes a delimited geographical area which includes specified areas from two or more countries which have agreed to coordinate their activity with a view to developing more effectively the frontier regions.

Under the impulse of the above initiatives, the so-called “euroregional view” is constantly gaining strength in Western Europe. According to this view, the Europe of the future might be construed not only as the Europe of nation-states but also as a Europe of regions formed of (frontier) areas having identical economic interests. A euroregion reaching across national boundaries might be suitable for managing hitherto unresolved conflicts both within and between states (8).

For all the unquestionably attractive definitions, the skeptical (East-) Central European analyst will inevitably be asking himself, “Aren’t the above definitions – for the moment, anyway – no more than wishful thinking?”

## **Euroregions in Western Europe**

The post-World War Two Western European integration process got underway with the formation of the Common Market (1957). Soon the euroregions – as a regional manifestation of that process, as *the territorial-spatial form of integration* – entered the scene. The prototype and European model of euroregions was the *Regio Basiliensis*, active to this day, which was formed in

February 1963, on the basis of the Swiss law of association, and which, as a groundbreaking enterprise, might be worth discussing in some detail.

The euroregion is located in the Upper Rhineland, in the area of the German–French–Swiss triple frontier – Feiburg, Colmar, and Basel. This area once formed a single coherent cultural unit. This is attested even today by the similar structure of settlements, the near-identical customs, the similar foods and beverages, and, last but not least, by the characteristic Alemannic dialect.

It was Basel, a city squeezed between the French border and the Rhine, that first championed the idea of building transfrontier relations. Back in 1963, the concept of transfrontier cooperation was, as yet, translated into practice only at the territorial level, with the foundation of the Regio Basiliensis association. The French answered the Swiss initiative, in 1965, by calling into existence, in Mülhausen, the Regio de Haut–Rhin; while, on the German side, the Regio Society was formed in Freiburg. The trilateral cooperation means, beyond day-to-day contacts – employment, shopping, tourism etc. – the holding of regular joint conferences and symposiums, the cooperation of official agencies, the setting up of professional committees, and the operation of a regional radio station. (Radio Dreyeckland, which started out in 1977 as a private radio station, has had a daily output of sixteen hours since 1988, running programmes in French and German, and in the Alemannic dialect. Broadcasting from Freiburg, it provides residents of the area with information of public interest.) Later, the transport system and, subsequently, the entire regional development system were coordinated, and an integrated higher education system was put into place. To safeguard the accomplishments of the cooperation, a trilateral inter-governmental agreement was concluded. Based on all this, it can justly be claimed that the Upper Rhineland cooperation is one of the most fruitful cooperation projects between countries in Europe, and could therefore serve as a model for other frontier regions and states as well. It is no accident that, in their joint statement of late 1990, the German, French, and Swiss government leaders described this cooperation scheme as “exemplary”.

Following the example of the Regio Basiliensis, several euroregions were formed on the German–French and the German–Dutch borders.

In Western Europe, the heaviest concentrations of euroregions are located in the area of the Belgian–Dutch–Luxembourg–French–German frontier regions.

In this area – in the region bounded by the Maas, the Rhine, and the North Sea – there are currently seven euroregions operating.

Of these, we will have a closer look at the *Maas-Rhine* region, as a kind of exponent of the Western European model.

The Maas-Rhine Euroregion was officially formed in March 1991, as a foundation registered in accordance with the Dutch law of association – although, in practice, it had been operating since 1976. The region includes five

regions of three countries: Limburg and Liège Provinces, in Belgium; the southern portion of Limbourg Province, in Holland; the district of Aachen; and, as the fifth component, the German community of Belgium inhabiting the environs of Liège, who joined the euroregion later, in June 1992, as a separate legal entity.

<b>Population and territorial structure of the Euregion Meuse-Rhin</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Region, province</b>	<b>Population (person)</b>
Belgium	Limburg	761.593
	Liège	942.897
	Liège*	68.471
Netherlands	Limbourg	793.331
Germany	Aachen	1.200.921
<b>total</b>		<b>3.767.213</b>
* German population in Belgium		

Source: G. Pire: The Euroregio Meuse-Rhin.

This is the proper place to mention that – even though, officially, the oldest euroregion is the Regio Basiliensis, mentioned earlier on – real transfrontier cooperation (of the sort that rendered national boundaries all but irrelevant) began in the catchment basin of the Rhine, in the Dutch–German border area, in 1957–58. This *Euregio*, so called, encompasses Northern Rhine- Westphalia and Lower Saxony, and certain sectors of three Dutch provinces – i.e. Drenthe, Gelderland, and Overijssel. The formal community of the Euregio was formed in April 1978. It has, since then, evolved into a model of an integrated regional labour market – a process especially marked after 1987, when a new concept of regional development was prepared (9). (In Europe today, there are, in all, ten regions where there exists transfrontier cooperation between the national labour organisations; these are the so-called EURES regions, of which the Euregio is one.) (10)

Coming back to the Maas-Rhine Euroregion, it quite clearly occupies a central position in Northwestern Europe. It lies along the most important transport and shipping routes, in both railway and road traffic, air and maritime traffic.

Building on the highly developed infrastructure, it represents a powerful economic potential. The chief factors of this are a qualified labour force, highly



developed industries and technologies, an excellent system of institutions in education and research, environmental culture (housing construction, natural environment, environmental protection). Added to this are certain sociological characteristics such as a euroregional trilinguality, similar living conditions, a high level of the quality of life, traditional prosperity, a strong civic consciousness, and the increasingly symbolic nature of the borders.

As regards the organisational structure of the euroregion, the supreme controlling authority is the board of directors. It is the board of directors that makes the strategic decisions, approving the annual budget and expressing its stance on the ongoing programmes and the decisions and initiatives concerning development. The day-to-day work goes on in the framework of the bureau maintained by the foundation. All five partners are represented in the bureau. This, in effect, represents a regional secretariat, which, on the one hand, administers the European structural funds and, on the other, coordinates the regional working groups – in addition to the traditional functions of a secretariat.

The organisational structure of the euroregion has, in the meanwhile, been further refined: the assembly was established, and, in January 1995, the Euroregion Council was constituted in Maastricht. In addition to the political parties, all the important factors and organisations of the euroregion were admitted into the Council, allowing a wide-ranging discussion, and considerable legitimization, of opinions, structures, programmes, projects, and the budget itself (11).

## **Euroregions east of the former Iron Curtain**

Following the paradigm shift of 1989/1990, there occurred a veritable explosion of euroregions in the countries of the former east bloc – a sort of regional-spatial manifestation, really, of the revision of the governmental system.

At the eastern rim of a unified Germany, eight euroregions were formed in 1992–93. Six of these are located on the border of the former GDR, with two others situated on the Bavarian–Czech border.

### **Euroregions on Germany's common borders with the Czech Republic and Poland**

<b>Name of euroregion</b>	<b>countries</b>	<b>land area (in square kilometre)</b>	<b>population</b>	<b>density of population (person/km)</b>	<b>type</b>
Neisse	Germany Czech Republic Poland	12 248	1 723 000	140,7	pure
Elba	Germany Czech Republic	5 547	1 430 000	257,8	pure

(Continued)

Egrensis	Germany (1) Czech Republic	16 000	1 884 500	117,8	mixed
Erzgebirge	Germany Czech Republic	4 673	765 950	163,9	pure
Bavarien-forest	Germany (1) Czech Republic Austria	16 345	1 260 000	77,1	mixed
Pomeránia	Germany Poland	16 300	1 252 000	76,8	pure
Spree/ Niesse	Germany Poland	7 500	730 000	97,3	pure
Pro Europa	Germany Poland	9 067	760 800	83,9	pure

### (1) Bavaria

Source: Deutschland, No. 3, 1995, p. 31.

Despite the German activity, the most spectacular development is to be registered in the case of Poland: between 1991–96, nine euroregions were formed along its borders. Admittedly, four of these are joint Polish–German projects (see the above table). The other euroregions:

- Silesia–Moravia (Polish–Czech border, September 1992)
- Glacencis Euroregion (Polish–Czech border, October 1996)
- Tatra Euroregion (Polish–Slovak border, August 1994)
- Carpathians Euroregion (Polish–Ukrainian–Slovak–Hungarian border area, February 1993)
- Bug Euroregion (Polish–Ukrainian–Byelorussian border area, September 1995) (12)

It seems that, in the eastern portion of Europe, too, there is an inexorable trend for the spread of euroregions, which has reached the Baltic, Ukraine, and Byelarus. Russia has not been left out of that process, either.

### **An attempt at transcending the past: cooperation on what was once the toughest border in Europe**

Regional cooperation has reached, too, the northeastern corner of Europe, creating one of the most interesting euroregions. The euroregion includes a region – bounded by the Arctic Circle and the Barents Sea – from Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia.

### The territorial breakdown of the Barents region:

<i>Area, Region</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area of the land</i>
Lapland County (Finland.)	202 000	99 000
Finnmark County (Norway)	76 000	46 000
Nordland County (Norway)	240 000	36 000
Troms County (Norway)	149 000	25 000
Arkhangelsk district	1 561 000	587 000
Murmansk district	1 135 000	145 000
Republic of Karelia	798 000	172 000
Norrbottn County (Sweden.)	266 000	99 000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4 427 000</b>	<b>1 209 000</b>

Source: The Euro-Arctic Barents Cooperation

It can be seen that the vast majority of both the population and of the land area – 78.9 per cent and 74.8 per cent, respectively – belong to the Russian Federation. The Barents cooperation was formalized with the Kirkenes Declaration, signed on January 11, 1993. On the basis of the Declaration, the cooperation has the following objectives:

- to secure a peaceful and stable development
- to strengthen and develop the cultural ties between the people
- to encourage the establishment of new and the expansion of existing bilateral and multilateral relations
- to lay the foundation for a strong economical and social development with emphasis on an active and sustainable management of the nature and resources
- to contribute to a development which take into account the interest of the indigenous peoples and for their active participation (13).

The deeper meaning and true intent of the establishment of the euroregion is to ensure peace and stability in the northern periphery of Europe. This requirement is justified by the peculiar geopolitical characteristics of the region: the Finnish–Russian border runs at a length of 1300 km, and even the Norwegian–Russian border is several hundred kilometres long. The disparities between the Scandinavian countries and Russia in terms of living standards and the quality of life are all too well known. Naturally enough, this also poses a security policy risk to the decision-makers of the countries concerned. Into the bargain, there was a dramatic rise in the number of border crossings following the political changes: while, in 1990, at the almost hermetically closed border, at

Storskog, for instance, 3,000 border crossings were registered – the majority of these, too, were by Scandinavian citizens – the comparable figure for 1997 was 92,000. The fear, on the part of local residents and of the central governments on the Scandinavian side, of crime, illegal immigration, black market labour, etc. is, therefore, understandable. This is compounded by the shocking state of environmental protection in Russia. The present writer had the opportunity of observing, on the spot, the refuse dumps of the town of Nikkel (a name only too fitting), located some 20 kilometres from the Norwegian–Russian border, and the pitch-black smoke billowing, unpurified, into the atmosphere from the heavy metal furnaces. And all this just a few kilometres away from a country which has one of the most stringent environmental protection regulations in the world!

With all that in mind, it is understandable why the Scandinavian countries – not least because of their own interest – are making considerable efforts to eliminate the above complex hazards.

Taking the lead in this battle is Norway, which is directly affected. (It is probably no accident that even the Chief Secretariat of the Barents region is in Kirkenes, in Norway.) Since 1993, Norway has supported 164 projects in the framework of the Barents programme, to the tune of some 82.5 million kroner. The Project Directory for 1997 is a good index of the multilateral character of the cooperation. One of the fundamental rules of this is that all projects must involve Russian participants as well. (Indeed, a quarter of the projects is targeted exclusively onto Russian territory.)

### **Projects financing in the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation, 1994–1997**

Activity, content of the projects	Project in Scandinavia	Geographical Scandinavia + Russia	Project in Russia	Total number of projects
culture	2	12	3	17
basic education	-	5	3	8
higher education and research	-	6	3	9
aboriginal	2	7	5	14
agriculture, rural development and reindeer breeding	-	4	6	10
industry and trade	-	9	13	22
plant protection	-	5	5	10

(Continued)

environment protection	-	9	4	13
health	-	7	8	15
communication	-	3	1	4
information	-	1	3	4
information-technology	-	3	1	4
total:	4	71	55	130
percentage	3,1	54,6	42,3	100,0

Source: Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation-Norway  
Project Directory 1997

The most interesting projects – in the same order as categories are found in the chart:

Ad 1. Film Festival in Murmansk, creation/establishment of Kola-Island's independent environmental protection movement

Ad 2. Establishment of a Russian-Norwegian bilingual school in Murmansk; scholarship for two Russian students

Ad 3. Training/Education of Russian students in/at Norwegian Colleges or Universities; Training of civil servants, politician and managers who play the main role in local politic

Ad 4. Establishment of a Cultural Institute for Laps, living in Murmansk area, and for Nenec living in Narjan-Mar area; Manager courses for inhabitants; Artisan courses at Kola-Peninsula; Language courses for Nenec

Ad 5. Potato production – appropriate potato for the weather circumstances of Murmansk and Arhangelsk area; Support of agricultural schools; Support of reindeer breeding at Nenec Autonomy Area; Development of sheep breeding, Modernisation of forestry

Ad 6. Implementation of a new regulatory-system in the field of trade and industry; Revision of Russian constructional regulations/rules; Establishment of tourist institutions at the Russian side of the border; Establishment of a bread making factory/bakery in Murmansk and a sawmill in Karelia

Ad 7. Female/Gender manager training; Establishment of a Crisis-Centre in Murmansk

Ad 8. Improvement of the quality of drinking water in Kola–Peninsula

Ad 9. Medical centre for inhabitants in Lap and Nenec area; Child-friendly hospitals; Improvement of the quality of national welfare; Hospital equipment for the Russian area; Holiday for disabled children in Norway; Anti drug and anti-alcoholism Conferences; Combat against diphtheria

Ad 10. Improvement of the quality of Russian Postal Service

Ad 11. Establishment of Information Centres – providing information on Barents Euro-Arctic Region – in Petrozavodsk and in Archangelsk and a regional secretariat in Murmansk

Ad 12. Popularisation of Internet at the Russian area of the region

It also appears from the project Directory that the targets of the schemes directed at Russian territory are almost exclusively the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk districts, while Karelia hardly gets anything. To get an answer, one only has to look at the map: while the former areas adjoin Norway, the latter is a neighbour of Finland.

To sum up the above, it can fairly be argued that this remote euroregion is an attractive attempt to resolve a serious security policy dilemma.

## **Hungary and the euroregions**

Although the topic of the paper is the experience of the Western European euroregional organisations, it would seem useful to provide at least a rough outline of Hungary's involvement.

Hungary – known for its instrumentality in dismantling the Iron Curtain – had a similarly crucial role in the establishment of the first euroregion of the region, namely, the *Carpathians Euroregion*.

Numerous studies have been published on the functioning – or dysfunctionality, as the case may be – of the Carpathians Euroregion (15), so I will not discuss that topic here. However, it might be worth while saying this much as a general lesson – and precisely as a contrast to the Western European development – that the Carpathians Euroregion has, from the outset, had to contend with the conflicting pressures of disagreements at the state policy level, on the one hand, and positive local initiatives and a desire for cooperation, on the other hand. In my opinion, the future of the Carpathians Euroregion – and, for that matter, the future of the other euroregions operating in the region – will be determined by which of the two antithetical trends prevails. Will these euroregions – battling from below, as it were, relying on the strength and solidarity of civil society – be able to secure the possibility for integrated development, as their Western European cousins have done? Or will the political

fears of central governments prevail – central governments that regard regionalism as the first step along the road to autonomy, and autonomy, in turn, as “the thin edge of the wedge” leading to secession?

Beyond the Carpathians Euroregion, Hungary is involved in the operation of several other euroregions.

These – in the order of their formation – are as follows:

- Danube–Maros–Tisza Regional Cooperation (November 21, 1997)  
The DMT Euroregion encompasses nine counties and/or provinces from three countries. Its members:  
Hungary – Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Csongrád, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Counties;  
Romania – Arad, Hunyad, Krassó-Szörény, Temes Counties;  
Yugoslavia – Province of Vojvodina.

The DMT, it seems, has learnt from the mistakes of the Carpathians Euroregion: it scrupulously avoids the pitfalls of “big politics” – indeed, the events that took place in Temesvár and Vojvodina over the last couple of years have, in any case, served as a warning in that regard – and it concentrates exclusively on the development of truly local or regional ties. According to the wording of the Charter (Protocol):

“The aim of the DMT regional cooperation is to develop and widen the relations between local communities and local governments in the fields of the economy, education, culture, and sports, and their cooperation, which leads towards integration into the frameworks of modern European processes.”

- EUROREGIO West/Nyugat PANNONIA (October 7, 1998)  
The partners taking part in the cooperation:  
The province of Burgenland, Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas Counties.
- Danube–Dráva–Száva Euroregional Cooperation (November 28, 1998)  
The area of the cooperation:  
Hungary  
Baranya County  
The city of Pécs  
Croatia  
Eszék-Baranya County  
The town of Eszék  
Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Tuzla-Drina Canton  
The town of Tuzla

Of late, two further declarations of intent have been produced on the constitution of euroregions along Hungary's borders.

These include

- The Ipoly Euroregion (April 14, 1999)  
Its extent: the catchment area of the Ipoly, and the area of the Börzsöny, Cserhát, and Karancs Mountains
- The Vág–Danube–Ipoly Euroregion (April 28, 1999)

Its area: Nyitra district

Komárom-Esztergom County

Nógrád County

Pest County

## Summary

To sum up, it might fairly be argued, based on what has been said so far, that the euroregions are the most effective form of transfrontier cooperation and of the development of frontier regions. There is a broad consensus of opinion that the euroregions have been greatly instrumental in the unification process of Western Europe. In our region, it is of particular importance that they integrate those – predominantly peripheral and/or severely depressed – frontier regions which, riddled with multiple handicaps, are apt to fall behind.

Later on, in the process of European integration, the territorial differences and the disparities in living standards will probably be reduced both between the euroregions and within the particular euroregions. Thus the euroregion – in addition to its many other important characteristics – is, as a result of the equalizing effect just mentioned, an instrument of reducing differences in the level of territorial development.

Last, but not least, it is, concurrently, a workshop for a local or regional identity that is acquiring a continually increasing role. It is therefore desirable that the Western European experiences be utilized in our region as well.



## Notes

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4. Illés, Iván: Frontiers and Transfrontier Cooperation in Western and Eastern  
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## II. IDENTITIES AND NATIONAL IMAGES



## Changes in Hungarian National Consciousness

People from other nations often state that Hungarians deal too much with their own history, or else with history itself – as if there were an internationally acknowledged standard to which it would be possible to compare and as if not every nation would be as interested in its own past, or in history in general. However, we cannot dismiss the critical comments with a wave of hand, because they do indicate something. Hungarians are too inclined to explain a lot of their social problems with a historical event, and to assign the blame to them. It is a cliché that history can be explained in various ways from the perspective of succeeding generations, though it usually turns out that in a given situation – if we could choose at all – only some versions of history had a chance. As the interpretation of history is at the same time the explanation of the present, it also projects the future. That is why the future has multiple possibilities, for history is not fatalistic. Those who oppose this standpoint think that history is an inevitable fate, in which – if there is any chance for choice – only one has a reality. The emergence and survival of the communist dictatorships was accounted for by their “historical necessity”. Due to the tragic turning points in the Hungarian history of the past one-and-a-half centuries, the national public opinion is inclined to accept fatalism in their everyday thinking. The moral and emotional saturation of the notion of fate (it is not by chance that the Hungarian Anthem mentions ill fate), and naturally the very impressive interpreters of history, among them the “fate believer Hungarians” (a word creation of László Németh) contributed to this.

The consciousness of a nation, the idea about itself is known to be very complex. It is influenced by its internal and foreign policy situation, by the state of its economy, society, and the interpretation of history as well, and in my opinion mainly this last aspect. It does not only meet the scientific and everyday interpretation of history, but other elements of self as well, and often covers them. It can interweave with collective values, value systems, often with cultural canons. Of course, the weight of the history and world explanations, which are born during everyday and friendly discussions, debates, and at classes is different than ones empirical sociology can fix (or could have fixed, if it had existed centuries ago), and it differs from the widely spread thoughts of the very impressive, outstanding personalities, which are considered by the intellectual critics. My work is about history interpretations and about historical situation explanations. Perhaps, I do not have to emphasize that the one-thousand-year overview can only be directed towards the most important events. The material of the selection is quite rich, but it does not have its own objective measure, that

is why we cannot eliminate personal judgement. On the other hand, I try to concentrate, besides the wide effects, on the future concepts and on the ones developed in systems, as well as on the continuity of concepts. These are usually ideally based, but on the other hand – and I must say this in advance – in spite of the philosophical aspects of the topic, there are no deep connections with different philosophies of history. Perhaps this is in connection with the fact that no significant philosophical works have been written in Hungarian. Rather, there are more connections with political ideologies. The topic, however, cannot avoid historiographic aspects at times: When confronting certain cases, the “help” of scientific historiography will be needed.

We know from modern analogies that the consciousness of belonging together among the members of tribal societies is strong, their past is real, and its mythological knowledge is rich. As far as our topic is concerned, the question is what filtered from the tribal status of Hungarians to the times after the foundation of the state. Yet, if we have only suppositions about the starting stage, what can we think about its effects? According to historical research, the Hungarian conquest must have been forced to a certain extent, though the foundation of the state and the adoption of Christianity were conscious and planned decisions (both happened in 1000 AD). There are very few direct written records and documents on the subject, which prove that one or more people drew the conclusions necessary for the explanation of the decisions made prior to that point in the history and situations of the Hungarians. It is probable that among other things they had historical considerations, and as a result of them they saw a purpose in the establishment of a new state; otherwise, it is difficult to imagine the birth of Hungary. We are not aware of a contemporary evaluation of the works of Prince Géza (who reigned between 971 and 997), and his son Saint Steven, the first Hungarian king (who reigned from 997–1038); all the appreciation is from the succeeding generations.

After the Mongol invasion (1241–42), in the period often called the second foundation of the state, we are not dependent on guesses. King Béla IV, in his letter written to Pope Innocent IV formulated for the first time that the fight against the Mongols originated from the belief in Christian and European unity. The defense of the country is identical with the protection of Christianity. The voice of complaint and loneliness was also present in the letter: the neighbors, the Galicians, and the Austrian princes were inculcating and blackmailing the Hungarian king during his fight. This thought had a great future. The consciousness of the shield and bastion role of Hungary to protect Europe emerged from this. (However, it is true that we can find similar elements in the Polish, Croatian, Slovakian, Romanian and Greek national traditions.) The complaint of loneliness is an inseparable twin as well. For the time being all of this is valid to the Hungarian king only.

The more the state ideology and the idea of the vocation of state strengthened in the late Middle Ages, the more the protective shield role was spread through the country, and through its fighting people. The connection of the origin of the Árpád house and Attila contributed to this, as well as the Hun-Hungarian connection. According to this, the ancestors of Hungarians came from Scythia and brought their bravery from there. Due its bravery and heroism the Hungarian nation was created for a protective role, and not only the leaders but the whole nobility thought so. The new danger appearing at the southern borders, the Ottoman Turks, proved again the necessity of the protection of the Christian community and that of self-defense. The first Hungarian–Turkish military clash (1364) happened during the reign of King Lajos I, and the last war between the Hungarians and the Turks took place during the reign of Joseph II in 1788–89. More than four centuries passed between the two dates.

The bastion and shield role became complete by the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Its reason for existence was again justified by such events of world history like the fall of Constantinople (1453), or the internationally reached triumph in Nándorfehérvár (1456). In the meantime, the complaint in the letters of the Hungarian kings became stronger, partly as a diplomatic technique to get more help, partly because of the weakening of Christian solidarity as the basis of the idea of protective role. It is known that the event preceding the battle at Mohács (1526) – which caused the fall of the Hungarian Kingdom in the Middle Ages – was the League of Cognac, which was established as Turkish–French–Venetian alliance against the Habsburgs.

The above-mentioned historical vocational interpretation was seriously shaken after losing the battle at Mohács. It was one thing to be a protector of borders, quite another to be the scene of the battles. The enemy penetrated into the bastion. In the literature and correspondence of the age, we still find encouragement for fight and protection, but with less self-confidence than before. It had to be admitted that the nation proud of its bravery and considering itself as one of Scythian origin, got worn out in the long fight and suffered from humiliation. While the defense was slowly driven back to the borders of the state, the sense of remaining alone was increasing. Hungary is a victim, because Europe is not helping her to the necessary extent to ease the burdening pressure. In this situation, the Reformation opened up a new future.

One thought of Old Testament origin found fertile ground in Hungary: Both the devastation of the enemy and the natural disasters are punishments of God; the Turks, the Germans, the Serbs, the plague, the radical sects are the consequences of turning away from God. Although at the beginning – as the perpetrators of all this – they were pointing at one another, later this explanation was accepted not only by the Protestants, but also by every denomination, except for anti-Trinitarians. Preachers often mentioned among the sins against God drunkenness, adultery, laziness, lack of unity, even the practice of Turkish

customs. But social sins appear as well, sins against man and society, for example autocracy, the spoliation of the poor, the naming of which was qualified by Marxist historiography as an anti-feudal manifestation, though it was not. At the beginning, many thought that on the basis of Old Testament prophecies, if the nation repents, exercises self-examination and penitence, God will free it, and the expected political change will take place. The unity of the country will be restored. After the fall of the capital, Buda (1541), the enlargement of the territory occupied by the Turks, the fruitless attempts to unify Hungary torn into the Habsburg empire and the Principality of Transylvania, the Peace of Drinápoly, which fixed the status quo (1547), an eschatological thinking became dominant. This, however, was not far from the Reformation, and from the world of the late Middle Ages. It is impossible to come to an agreement with the great power, who is the master of the world. Faith, punishment, strict penitence, and even death must be tolerated. The captain of the southern Hungarian fortress of Temesvár, which was worn down, the Catholic István Losonczy wrote: "We are in health and gladly waiting for the hour when we must pay the last debt." (1552). A detail from the letter of the Lutheran Miklós Zrínyi, a captain who wrote not long before the siege of Szigetvár: "I am locking myself in Sziget to serve with a happy face the great God and my dear country, which came into final deterioration, to serve with fidelity, persistently, with the shedding of my blood, and if necessary by sacrificing my life." (1566).

In the interpretation of the clergy, the Turks are invincible, the "nation of Gog from the Bible". The last times are approaching; everybody has to behave according to this. That is to say to undertake everything that was meted out to the Hungarians, because it is not inconsequential how they stand in front of God's tribunal. There are other consequences resulting from the Biblical examples and parallels. The concept of "the God punishes His people for their sin" made the Biblical Jeremiad literary genre popular, which is echoed even in the Hungarian national Anthem written in 1823 ("Oh, but because of our sins/ anger flamed in your heart"). God not only punishes, but also tests. Although the individual can die because of the sins of the whole nation, the nation can win mercy. The believers are the people chosen by God. The Protestants of the time put a sign of equality between the Old Testament Jews and the Hungarians. It is only God who does not leave the Hungarians, because they are the chosen nation, just like the Jews. To broaden with a New Testament thought: For the sons of God and the saints of Christ, death is not meaningless; in this world it is a punishment, but it is also redemption and apotheosis.

The atmosphere of destiny was abandoned during the fifteen-year war (1590–1606) at the end of the century: The Turks are not invincible! István Bocskai, the prince of Transylvania (1604–1606) appears in the clerical literature as the envoy of God: He is the liberator. Bocskai really indicated an objective after a long time, he gave an agenda: the reinforcement of estate rights,

the realization of the freedom of religion and keeping Transylvania as an independent principality but not abandoning the prospect of unity. (The hope to become independent from self-effort was dawning for the country)

However, parallel with this the basis of the constitutional duality was outlined, which had been taking shape since the dual – Habsburg and national – election of a king after the battle of Mohács (1526), and it will accompany Hungarian history for more than three centuries: Is Hungary viable with or without the house of Habsburg? The hate towards the Germans is becoming stronger, which is not of ethnic base, but it is towards the foreign enemy. Even Péter Pázmány (1570–1637), Catholic archbishop, primate, the outstanding figure of Counter-Reformation, who trusted in the alliance of the Habsburgs noted in his letter sent to the Calvinist Gábor Bethlen (1580–1629), prince of Transylvania that we must be careful because the “German spits under our collar”. To find a solution between the Austrian and the Turkish power poles is a problem for Hungary under the Habsburg kingdom, the Principality of Transylvania, and for those who live under Turkish occupation. It culminates in the work and activity of Miklós Zrínyi (1620–1664), poet and politician. Two quotations are enough to demonstrate it. The first is the title of one of his leaflets: “The Medicine Against the Turkish Morphine”, and the other his frequently quoted sentence from the letter written to György Rákóczi II, prince of Transylvania: “Do not believe the Germans, and in their sweet talk, flattery, lies.” (1654). The feeling of the lack of a trustworthy outside alliance, the consciousness of being the stepchild of Europe sounds this way in the wording of an unknown soldier-poet of the era: “Between two pagans, blood is flowing for one homeland.” In the end, those who lost faith in foreign help and in the waiting for help, were wrong. Christian solidarity showed itself once again and for the last time in European history: It expelled the Turks from Vienna (1683) and liberated Buda (1686). Peace, however, only came after the war of independence (1703–1711), led by Ferenc Rákóczi II, the elected prince of the noble confederation, and after an internal agreement.

After the final expulsion of the Turks, a new estimate of the situation took shape, which had a number of contributors, mainly the Hungarian Jesuits, then the zealously religious nobles, and the poets respecting Mary: Hungary is the country of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Regnum Marianum*. The preponderance of Catholic power and strong religious feelings were naturally needed, as well as the almost cult-like respect for history, which became especially strong during this period. The concept itself was not completely new; it was known in earlier centuries, though it did not have an important role. Its root is the legend according to which Saint Steven, the first Hungarian king received his crown from Pope Sylvester, and offered it to the Blessed Virgin Mary who benevolently accepted it and became the patron of the country ever since. Thus, the country can thank its glorious past and its liberation from troubles to Our Lady.



The richly elaborated concept included a retrospective historical explanation and justification of the state of peace that replaced the previous contentions between the various classes and the emperor, now based on mutual acknowledgement. Saint Steven, the apostolic ruler, from the outset divided power with the orders founded by him, which elected him as king, but they did not resign from their ancient rights.

This historical interpretation was very optimistic, completely opposing the desperation of the previous two centuries. However, it does not forget the “century of the Hungarian deterioration” (according to the poet, Miklós Zrínyi), but it recalls the Middle Ages and the glorious images of vanquishing the Turks in the past, and thus prepares the way for noble Romanticism. This is the time when the formation of the view of Hungarian history as a process occurred (which is called national history later), as did the pantheon of the outstanding figures of Hungarian history. In this same vein came the formation of the national character – many elements of which are still alive: the love of freedom and chivalric virtues, loyalty to the emperor, generosity and hospitality. The image of the wealthy and rich homeland, and the baroque splendor provided excellent “scenery” for this entire concept.

As for the “country of the Blessed Virgin”, it is not only its past that was bright: The patron did not only protect the country that fell into sin from the final destruction, it ensured a great future (and virtues) for it. Such an optimistic view of history cannot be found in Hungarian history either before or since. And this is true even if we know that less than half of the population of the narrower band of Hungary and the principality of Transylvania was Catholic. Those with Byzantine rites, the Jews and the Protestants were excluded from this concept, but they accepted social balance and they enjoyed its tranquility. Its memory made a deep imprint on the historical consciousness. At the same time, it was the last complex religious historical interpretation.

What disturbed this response? The Enlightenment and one of its productive branches, nationalism, appeared in Hungary and the neighboring nations simultaneously at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Modern national sentiment is a manifold phenomenon. In different communities, it was formed with both similar and different – and later on – opposite features. Hereby, we refer to only one, originally subjective, but later very important moment, which is unique to Hungarians, and whose historical role cannot be questioned. This is the so-called “prophecy of Herder”. Johann Gottfried Herder, the famous German philosopher and writer mentioned in a few lines of one of his works that Hungarians were an isolated nation living between the Slavs and the Romanians, and their language would soon disappear. There is no evidence that he was driven by some kind of antipathy. He took the idea from the work of another contemporary German scientist, August Ludwig von Schlözer. It is a special chance event that Count István Széchenyi, who was perhaps the most influential personality of 19<sup>th</sup>

century Hungarian history was born on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1791, and the aforementioned work of Herder got into circulation a month thereafter. It became known very quickly in Hungary. Later, it exerted a great influence on the consciousness of Széchenyi; it fundamentally affected his whole concept of language. When he said that the country could be preserved, though the language may not, he thought of this. The “prophecy of Herder” had a great career in the Hungarian national consciousness, from the frequently quoted line of the Szózat, respected as the second national Anthem (“The grave where a nation sinks,/Is surrounded by peoples”, 1844) till the publication of one of the leading Hungarian poets of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gyula Illyés (“Answer to Herder and Ady”; 1977). A new sense of danger was born; the fear that the Hungarian language and culture would disappear in the narrowing circle of the neighboring nations. The Hungarians became aware of their linguistic isolation, while all the other nations in the vicinity of the Hungarians discovered their relations through language.

The figure of István Széchenyi, is inevitable because he was outstanding, and because he was probably the most quoted personality and to whom the most reference was given in Hungarian modern times. Nevertheless, we mention his inevitability separately because Széchenyi originally did not belong to those great interpreters of history who were glancing back. He accepted a historically shaped situation as a point of departure, which the nation that was destined for great things and was able to change must leave behind as something unacceptable and shameful, although he did not really search for the underlying reasons in the distant past. It is without doubt that as a starting point, the reasons for the national sins, for example, must be clarified (vanity, self-conceit, ephemeral enthusiasm, public laziness, discord), and this itself was historical interpretation, but he was first and foremost interested in the future. That is why he penned and published his three famous political writings in 1830–33: 1. “Credit” (the main obstacles of transformation). 2. “World” (the program for the rise of the nation based on the cooperation of educated people). 3. “Stadium” (suggested laws to assist civil transformation). At the same time, he began to put his ideas in practice with great efforts. Later, when he observed that his ideas did not only induce reform intentions, but a revolutionary atmosphere as well – although this was not his intention – he began to immerse himself in larger historical perspectives. He predicted that if his political adversary, Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894) and his followers, the exaggerators, prevailed, there would be revolution, which would be followed by absolutism and the results would be destroyed. His glimpses were partly justified in the 1848–49 revolution, and in the war of independence against the Habsburgs.

Some months after the collapse of the fight for liberation, a new interpretation of the historical situation came to existence. Zsigmond Kemény, a writer and political thinker of Transylvanian origin, quickly published two long

leaflets one after the other: “After the Revolution” (1850), “One More Word after the Revolution” (1851). Both in his age and after his death, these works polarized standpoints, stirred debates, obviously due to the fact that although they were connected to events of the very recent past, they brought to the surface questions of perspective.

“After the Revolution” both at the time of its publication and later was explained by the fact that it tried to influence the Austrian military government as well moderate the reprisal. This is unquestionable, but the national characterology, which was created for this reason, became dominant for a long time. Kemény thought that the Hungarian nation is peaceful, of oriental laziness, prefers restfulness, is an observer, is passive and bides its time. It is unable to keep secrets and to organize, and is indifferent to revolutionary ideas. What happened in 1848 was nothing else but that a radical group led it into revolution. As its members left the country, the continuation of the uprising could not be expected. This was – and not just for tactical reasons – the real opinion of Kemény. A great part of the public read the polarized presentation with anger, and did not always notice the warnings, which were intended for them. In “One More Word after the Revolution”, the writer-politician gave a softer interpretation of history and a vision for the future. He echoed the ideas of Széchenyi. The slow, moderate and determined reforms are useful, the fall of the revolution also justifies this. Kemény believed in “destiny”, he talked about foreign policy constraints, that is to say the survival of the Habsburg empire in the contemporary international power constellation is a real concern: There are no other favorable possibilities for Hungary if she wants to survive and to avoid the threats from the nationalities. To support this idea, a national collaboration is needed, which transcends the parties. The ideas of Kemény were strongly criticized even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (by László Németh and István Bibó), although in reality it represented the program of civil transformation. His ideal was the educated citizen. He imagined the Austrian partner also as a civil state, refusing neo-absolutism. With this, he basically contributed to the preparation of the Austrian-Hungarian compromise of 1867. It is very important that just like his history interpreter antecedents, Kemény also analyzed the situation of Hungary in an international – and in particular, in an especially broad – context. The survival of the Habsburg Empire proved to be long lasting. However, it is true that Kemény had no idea about the situation after its disintegration.

The optimism of classical liberalism helped the country through a lot of difficulties. The almost religious faith in progress, the elevating feeling of social freedom, its effects solving the contradictions many times were representing a great force. The reappearance of social troubles and the emergence of new problems, however, must have been seen and experienced. The age of the Compromise opened up new perspectives in many fields of life, but it also had its drawbacks. The optimism and self-confidence in which the Hungarians

celebrated the one thousandth anniversary of the settlement of their ancestors in 1896, the Hungarian nationalism of the end of the century, cannot be understood without the peculiar Hungarian interpretation of Darwinism, or more precisely, social Darwinism. Darwinism announced the fight for the survival of the species, through natural selection. To apply this idea to the social history of Hungary, they talked about the struggle for ethnicity. The survival of the Hungarians is a historical proof of the competitive abilities among races. It speaks to their talent, aptitude to rule, political and cultural performance, historical tolerance, sense of vocation, love of freedom; its base is not only the natural selection, but also the state of being chosen. The word does not carry the original religious content, it has a secular meaning, though it did not lose its moral content (vocation), and it justified the leading role of the Hungarians within the country not only by the law of history, but by arguments of natural science as well. The struggle for survival is taking place continuously, but the results up until that time guarantee continued prosperity and increase. We do not have to go very far to see the English–French prototype and parallel, the interpretation of the vocation that attributes the role of maintaining a world empire, conquering colonies, civilizing and being superior to itself. We cannot see this kind of perspective in the case of the Hungarians, they only thought of the Balkans, or Bosnia. The optimistic atmosphere of the millenium was overshadowed – though not as much as previously – by the "prophecy of Herder", the strengthening minority movements, to which they answered with political strictness. The other dangerous factor, social tension could also be felt. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more and more people saw the signs of a catastrophe.

The catastrophe took place surpassing all expectations, with the loss of the world war, the civil revolution, the Communist dictatorship, the counter-revolution and with the peace treaty of Trianon – a decrease in the territory of the country to its one third its former size. It caused an unbelievably great shock, and finding historical reasons became very urgent, as well as the search for a treatment. The work of Gyula Szekfű, "Three Generations" (1920) was the first to carry out this task – not even waiting for the end of the events. The most talented and leading historical writer of the century exercised a great influence on intellectual public opinion and on the political elite with this work.

Szekfű did not really attribute a great importance to the complete state independence regained after so long a time because its price was too high. On the other hand, he very much appreciated the Austro-Hungarian Empire as the maintainer, and for a long time the guarantor of the historical country, his competent authority was the conservative István Széchenyi, the careful follower of liberal ideas, and thus he thought that moderate, thoughtful reforms are the really effective ones. The list of reasons and the figures he accused are numerous: exaggerated liberalism rooted in the Enlightenment, the prevailing political exaggerators, then the expansionist Jews as well as capitalism, which

did not always serve the interests of the country. He considered the Austrian-Hungarian Compromise as an absolute success: He saw the fulfillment of the claims of 1848 within it. The collapse in 1918–19 unambiguously resulted from the blamed internal factors, while the unfair peace of Trianon (1920), and the curtailment of the country were forced onto the Hungarian state from outside. This work was perfectly suited to justify the political system of the 1920s. It was critical in essential areas and at important points, though it was apt at self-exculpation. It disregarded important aspects or left them unstressed. For example, it condemned the historical middle class for its intertwining with liberalism, though Szekfű did not accuse it of adherence to an old-fashioned social role. He criticized the independence, anti-Austrian agitation for its political blindness and endangering the compromise, but in regard to its adversary, the prepossessed friend of Austria, he refrained from criticism. He maintained the idea according to which the historical country could be restored. Though when considering the injustice that badly shook the Hungarians, he did not take into account the rightful demands of the neighboring nation. He only hoped for the establishment of an idealized relationship, but he did not try to work out a new type of compromise. In spite of the success of the book, opposing concepts were expected to appear soon.

Before discussing these concepts, we cannot forget about one of the consequences of the peace of Trianon, about the fact that a separate consciousness, and an interpretation of the historical role of the Hungarians living as minorities separated from Hungary in the neighboring countries appeared. We only mention the most important ones.

1. "Transylvaniam" is a range of ideas strongly imbued with democratic civil humanism, which supposed the existence of a common Transylvanian consciousness, a "Transylvanian soul" based on the identical or similar elements in the culture of the three leading Transylvanian ethnic groups (Hungarian, Romanian, German). The main features were the openness of culture and thinking and acceptance and conveyance of Western cultural trends. To keep them alive and make them stronger were the conditions of the survival of the peculiarities of Transylvania – and of course of the Hungarians living there. They imagined these features as a European multicultural model.
2. "Vocations of Minorities, Missionary Zeal, Messianism" are attached to the aforementioned notions, though it did not have only Romanian, but Czechoslovakian versions as well. The Hungarian minority interprets its situation in such a way that it considers it as suited for great tasks; first and foremost, the representation of humanity and not only in the Hungarian respect, but in European perspective as well. In Transylvania it is the multicultural aspect, in Slovakia the new minority existence that forms the historical base.

3. The notion of the "bridge role" is the creation of Miklós Krenner (1931) but it had already been part of the two other spheres of ideas. The bridge metaphor concentrated the historical tasks originating from being the minority on mediation between nations and cultures. Like the two previous situational interpretations, its intellectual incentive power was significant and successful. Its star was rising much higher than that of the others. It spread roots in politics, and – although almost devoid of content – it can sometimes be found in political and diplomatic phraseology even today.
4. Although from a typological point of view, it did not fit into this order, because of its multifarious relations we mention separately the standpoints of the debate we call the "possible or not" polemic. These standpoints were formulated after the resignation of Sándor Makkai, writer, and Calvinist bishop from Transylvania (1936). One of the sides basically questioned the possibility of everything that was outlined in the previous three spheres of ideas, because they considered being a minority as anti-human and without any prospect. The other side insisted on the existing ideas and vocation, considering it as destiny, at the cost of sacrifice or being a martyr, possibly because of the lack of the possibility to choose.

In spite of the borders and the separate minority consciousness, the common past, the cultural heritage and the language maintained the intellectual circulation and interactions for those Hungarians torn into different countries. Between the two world wars, the main thought trend of the age, the history of ideas proved to be suitable for the creation of a number of new historical situational interpretations that often oppose each other. The conflicts were mainly centered around three points: 1. The social structure, the modernity of social stratification, the question concerning the "historical" and civil middle classes. 2. Social problems, in which the severely unequal distribution of land became the focal point, due to the agrarian character of the country. 3. The modification of the relations with the neighboring nations was from the outset supposed by the concepts of minorities. The main question pertained to the extent to which the governments of the majority nations in question were ready – if they were ready at all – to revise the new situation. From the Hungarian side, no one considered the peace treaty of Trianon as final. The opinions differ depending on such aspects as whether the revision should be complete or partial; if it should take place through negotiations or by armed conflict. The key word of the period, especially in the 1930s, just like a century before, was reform, but it included several meanings. It meant something different for the governing political elite, something different for the quite fragmented civil-opposition groups, and something different for the movement of writers and publicists urging very complex and radical solutions to the social problems of the agrarian population that made up the majority of the society. From this complicated

context, we would like to stress some thoughts of the writer László Németh (1901–1975), partly due to his sharp debates with historian Gyula Szekfű and partly because of its wide intellectual effects.

Among his works interpreting historical situations, the most often mentioned is perhaps "In Minority" (1939), which is a passionate and energetic essay. The title refers to a double minority situation: the Hungarians live in minority in a number of nation states in Central Europe, and those whom Németh takes into account in this development also live in minority within the Hungarian population. Any kind of minority existence has sense if the minority is the elite, that is to say, if it rises from its surroundings. Németh seemingly uses the examples of belles-lettres to develop his concept, but in reality he talks about the flow of Hungarian history, and about the chances emerging in political history. The focal points of this piece of work are two pairs of metaphorical notions that he created: "deep-thin" and "pure blood-newcomer" Hungarians. The pairs did not cover their opposite sides. The representatives of the continuous tradition belong to the first conceptual pair, those who are the creators of serious works expressing the Hungarian essence, as well as those who come importing superficial works of incompatible foreign patterns that are in opposition to the previous ones. The other pair refers to the non-assimilated and the assimilated Hungarians. Among the others there are excellent authors, but they brought with themselves foreign mentalities that differ from the original Hungarian, which most of the time caused trouble. It is not surprising that the "thin" Hungarians and the "newcomer" Hungarians are to be blamed for the historical failure, and thus in many aspects for the exaggeration of 1848–49. On the one hand, Németh condemned the Austrian–Hungarian compromise. He thought that it was the surrender of independence, and a fatal blow, with which Hungary attached herself to the Habsburg Empire that was hurtling towards catastrophe. It was inevitably pressured by the Germanophobia, which became stronger due to the threatening effects of the Third Reich, the new neighbor of Hungary. On the other hand, it was a great mistake to create such dividing and opposing, as well as suggestive conceptual pairs in such a dangerous situation. The work received serious criticism; its contradictions were pointed out one after the other, and the writer has been blamed for his mistakes up until the present. Although he never withdrew these arguments, he did not refer to them any more. However, László Németh gave a very sharp critic of contemporary Hungarian society and about its leading group, firmly speaking of the striking social injustice.

An outstanding successor and debater of the history and society criticism of László Németh was István Bibó (1911–1979). Now we direct our attention to two studies of Bibó: "The Misery of Eastern European Small States" (1946), "Deformed Hungarian Structure, Dead-end Hungarian History" (1948). Both of them are many sided, though the second one is the elaboration of the central

theses of the first one. Between the German and the Russian blocks, the Poles, the Czechs and the Hungarians in some stages of their modern history, felt the affinity to transform themselves into democratic nations following the English and French examples. Due to foreign intervention, internal social weaknesses, and the prevailing feeling of cultural-linguistic endangerment, these processes were interrupted from time to time. Historical borders did not coincide with the linguistic borders, that is why these nations were involved in continuous border and neighbor conflicts, and these sometimes ended up in national tragedies. Bibó saw the objective and the solution in the creation of nation states so much that in favor of them, he thought that referendums with the necessary guarantees and the population exchange could be possible. The actual political aspect of the essay is evident. Bibó, along with others, hoped in good faith that Hungary could conclude a mutually satisfying peace with its neighbors after World War II. We know that none of the expectations came true. The idea of nation-state today, in the age of the European Union, and of the realization of the idea of Europe can hardly be said to be prospectively topical, nor was it in the past in our region. Bibó saw the “misery” of the Hungarians in the territory delimited by him in the fact that our political leadership was unable for correct history interpretation between 1848 and 1944, and the result of the wrong situation recognition was that the Hungarian society got into a series of dead-end. The truth of this statement can hardly be argued, unlike the condemnation of the Austrian–Hungarian compromise. Without starting a detailed debate with Bibó, let us refer to Hungarian historiography, which gradually abandoned the vehement anti-compromise concept of the 1950s and today predominantly thinks that the compromise was successful considering the conditions, because it largely assisted the Hungarian civil transformation. This of course does not mean its celebration, or making it absolute. Today, more and more people are inclined to consider retrospectively the Habsburg “Danube monarchy” in Central Europe as the one and only viable state integration of modern ages. This again does not mean the uncritical, one-sided aspect of the Austrian–Hungarian relation, and the development of the history of Hungary, not even talking about the serious problems of the final years of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. Let us add: It is not proven that the adaptation of the Western European civil state models without changes in Central Europe would solve the basic problems of our region. Lastly, let us say in reference to the Bibó study in question that we think it is almost impossible that he would not have seen what happened as a consequence of the presence of Soviet troops.

A great loss of the Hungarian intellectual and political life is that the discussion and reception of the work of István Bibó was put aside for a long time due to the Communist take-over in 1948. The reception is a merit of the Hungarian emigration to Western Europe after the revolution in 1956. In the



1970s, the non-public evaluation of his works in Hungary was followed by – initially a selective – public reception.

For more than half a century, István Bibó has been the last public writer figure in the Hungarian political thought, who strove for a complex way of thinking, and who was widely accepted at the same time. It is possible that authors of similar talent were born in the age of Communism. If so, they were not allowed to talk, and due to the atmosphere and the lack of possibilities they could not become political thinkers. It is due to the lack of outstanding history interpreting minds and works that we are forced to turn completely to historical science.

The change of political power is often accompanied by the fact that the new power elite sees history from a generally different perspective. It decides what it prefers, and what it relegates to the background. Civil structures do not press and unlike dictatorships, they do not tend to be exclusive. It is known how uniquely coarsely the Communist ideologists acted after 1945. They divided the actors and the events into good and bad. They took the “reformer-reactionary” contrasting pair from the simplified heritage of the Enlightenment and they completed it with the duality of the exploited and exploiter, subordinating everything to the central category of Marxism: the class struggle. The concept of “progressive tradition” was born whose content changed from time to time. Thus, in a paradoxical manner, it could sometimes offer protection to important values. Its direct consequences were repetitive simplification, dishonest falsification, concealment and prohibition. It was not announced explicitly, but the final objective was the deterioration of the national historical consciousness and the interruption of its continuity. One of the lines of the Internationale is the following in paraphrase: “We will erase the past for good.” On the other hand, the daily political propaganda was frequently repeating that Hungary was “the last satellite of fascism”. Compared to this, the notorious sentence of Mátyás Rákosi (1892–1971), the Communist party leader, really sounds humorous: “Our country is not a gap, but a strong bastion in the front of peace”. Factually, we still do not know how the Communist denouncement of “guilty nation” that stigmatized Hungarians was formed; though it was not written down, it still spread. We are facing the perfect example of desecration: In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the guilty nation was the “chosen” one; this attributive was left out this time.

The Hungarian historiography, which came under close Communist party direction, gradually became free from this direction, though it only became completely free from party control by the end of the 1980s. The Marxist historians first discredited the bourgeois historiography dominant between the two wars by saying that it was reactionary, unpatriotic and anti-people. As the end of World War II was still near, they successfully emphasized the Germanophobic tradition of independence while at the same time, they often mixed this with social conflicts and identified them with the struggle of the

classes. When this trend was compromised, due to the exaggerations and falsifications, the disillusioning approach came from the beginning of the 1960s. The debate about the historical role of the nation brought up new aspects, but at the same time it led to the degradation and the depreciation of the national question. The conclusion was that only the Communist ideology could give the correct answers to the national questions. Not only in political history, but also in the observations of the past of the culture, the negligence of the aspects outside the country territory after the peace treaty of Trianon (1920) gained a place.

From the beginning of the 1980s, we can observe the unmendable tearing of the Marxist ideological net, and the intention of removing it, at first carefully – later on, decisively. The foreign policy aspect, the reference to the real or supposed sensibility of neighbors was gradually fading, at times together with the obligation to “respect” Soviet foreign policy interests in the background. The detailed survey keeps us waiting, because the processes that are not free of contradictions have not yet come to an end, though it can be stated generally that the changes in 1989–90 were preceded by the fact that it is again possible to talk and write about the history of Hungary independent of the Communist ideology.

What did not occur? The complex and detailed history interpretation with a similar effect to the examples that we also mentioned, the summary of the historical morals for the broader publicity of the society and in the interest of the future is still missing in connection with 1945 and 1956. No works were taken out from the drawers either in the emigration or in Hungary, although there are a number of precious historical works and memoirs dealing with the revolution in 1956. Time is passing, but no significant work was born about 1989–90, which, even if it would divide the intellectuals, would at least force them to take a standpoint. Zsigmond Kemény made his first cited manuscript in the most difficult months of the repression. Gyula Szekfű was also ready with his book when the thread of important events had just ended. László Németh and István Bibó tried to give correct answers to the relevant questions of their age before the aforementioned time-span. Are not they needed? Did the era pass in which they were born? Should we listen to those who, due to special interests, suggest or recite that we should leave history in peace and we should not deal with the past? Should we not listen to the experience of those who think that historical clarification is an important condition of a clearer future, and that its postponement causes disorder? Should we forget the truth, known for a long time as a cliché: Without historical interpretations, there is no vision of the future? I am convinced that we must not answer with ‘yes’ to these questions.

(The present study is a slightly modified version of the Hungarian paper published in “Európai Utas”, 2000/3–4.)

LÁSZLÓ MARÁCZ

## Legal Culture as a Feature of Hungarian National and Cultural Identity

### Hungary

**Population:**

1980 10,710,000

1990 10,354,842

1995 10,245,700

GDP per capita in 1998 \$4,650,-

Ethnic groups: Hungarian 89.9%, Roma 4%, German 2.6%, Serb 2%, Slovak 0.8%, Romanian 0.7%

Area: total: 93,030 sq. Km

PPP \$6,793

National capital: Budapest

National Parliament (*országház*): 365 seats

Administrative divisions: 19 counties (*megyék*, singular: *megye*).

Constitution: 18 August 1949, effective 20 August 1949, revised 19 April 1972; 18 October 1989 revision ensured legal rights for individuals and constitutional checks on the authority of the prime minister and also established the principle of parliamentary oversight; 1997 amendment streamlined the judicial system.

### Introduction

In this paper, I will discuss some aspects of legal culture in Hungary after the political turnover of 1989. This research was executed as a part of a comparative research on behalf of the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR). The goal of the research targeting Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia was to investigate the changes affecting legal culture in the past decade in the light of the European integration. In this paper, I will discuss the following topics, including legal education (I); legal profession (II); access to legal aid (III); the courts (IV); criminal justice (V); administrative review (VI) and constitutional review (VII).

During communism the Hungarian legal system has been centralized and governed by the interests of communist politics. In the past decade some essential features of legal culture in Hungary have been re-established rather quickly. The possibilities of legal education have been improved and extended. Legal education has been adapted to the requirements of the European Union.

The number of professionals operative in the legal field, such as attorneys, has grown enormously. The legal system is open to all citizens of the Republic of Hungary. Some institutions of the judiciary, the Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman and other institutions of the state, like the State Audit Office, have been established without having historic tradition.

Hungarians are said to be a people of lawyers with a strong legalistic tradition. In building new institutions, professors as well as high court judges frequently refer to pre-war Hungary. This is the more astounding, as most law had been case law in Hungary before 1945, for example the body of civil law was not built on a uniform civil code but was formed by a multitude of legal regulations and court decisions [Varga, 1995]. Nevertheless, a strong principle of the unity of judicial interpretation was applied. High court decisions were considered to be binding on all regular courts. In 1959 the Supreme Court gained the codification competence of Hungarian civil law. Being trained in terms of legal positivism, judges could maintain a standard of legality which rendered them immune from many ad-hoc interventions of government directives and communist party policies. Actually, it were reformist members of the communist party who already in the 1980s prepared the return to an independent judiciary.

This made the return to Hungarian legal traditions easier for the new regime after 1989. Independence of the judiciary was re-established by Act LXIII on the Amendment to the Constitution, Act LXVII of 1991 and later Act XCI of 1993. These Acts formulate strong principles of political abstinence in the recruitment and professional performance of judges and institutionalized with the National Judiciary Council established in 1997, defines judicial autonomy *more* strongly than any Western legal system. Not only all organizational competence, but also the entire budget of the judiciary was laid in the hands of a professional self-governing body.

On the other hand, with the introduction of a Constitutional Court a new element of judicial hierarchy came into play. Independent of the regular judiciary, it can strike down any legal rule for being unconstitutional. Invoked by the President, members of Parliament or other organs of the state it guards the constitutionality of the entire program of legislation. In the first years of the transformation with its many legislative projects, the Hungarian court has become famous for risking conflicts with groups in Parliament by repeatedly asking for reconsideration and amendments. Furthermore, following the German model, it can be invoked by anyone affected by Hungarian law which opens the gates for a multitude of political issues being brought to a legal forum. But a third access of regular courts asking whether binding law would violate constitutional norms might be the most important avenue for *constitutionalizing* the Hungarian tradition of legal positivism. As under the principle of continuity all provisions of law remained valid after the turn-over unless either changed by legislative act or challenged before the Constitutional Court, its review obtains a central position in the process of transformation.

The resulting plurality of high court institutions with the Constitutional Court frequently correcting the legislator as well as standing judicial interpretations, risks contradictions with the Supreme Court which follows the line of traditional positivist jurisprudence. To many Hungarian jurists, judicial decision making gets so fragmented, that they miss the *certainty of law* which is a central value in positivist jurisprudence. However, it is quite clear that such controversies of legal culture remain among the professionals, the public still perceives judicial institutions as *part of the state powers* which might best be distrusted for all practical purposes.

Two fundamental observations can be made in connection with the regeneration of legal culture in Hungary. First of all, legal culture has been re-introduced within a relatively short period of time. One might even state that its spirit has been there all the time even during the communist period when legal culture has been suppressed and obscured. Secondly, probably the most important development affecting the legal system has been the introduction of the National Judiciary Council which defines judicial independence even more stronger than any Western legal system. With the establishment of the National Judiciary Council, the judiciary has been separated from legislature and the executive power and hence contributes to the decentralization of state power. In the final section, I will provide an explanation for these two observations in terms of the Hungarian cultural identity. Let us first examine legal culture in more detail.

## **I. Legal Education**

Law studies were popular in Hungary in 1938; almost 40 percent of all students were law students. It was impossible to get a job in public administration without having successfully completed the law examinations [int. prof. Herczegh].

Communist policy tried to shift the emphasis away from law studies, and engineering was promoted. Law studies were not considered to be important. Subsequently, some traditional law faculties were closed (p.e. at the University of Debrecen). Throughout the communist period, legal education was specialized for each of the legal occupations such as judges, public prosecutors or advocates. Various examinations had to be passed after a university education of 4.5 years, then came two years of practical training, and finally a professional entrance examination to a judicial career. There was a fixed quota of law students, and all students had to pass an entrance examination in order to enroll for university education.

In the 1980s, however, a surplus of engineers on the labour market along with a lack of a legal elite was signalled. Consequently, candidates from the communist nomenclatura began entering the program, sometimes receiving better scores on the entrance exam [Int. prof. Herczegh].

After the political turnover of 1989 uniform legal education was re-introduced in accordance with Act LXXX of 1993 on Higher education [Kengyel, 91]. The five-year study and ensuing state examination are followed by a period of three years of training in either courts, prosecution, public administration, or with practising advocates. A second state examination follows the practical training period.

Student numbers at law faculties grew quickly. Four university law faculties – Budapest, Pécs, Szeged and Miskolc – offer a full program of legal studies. Specialized law studies can be followed at the Pázmány Péter, the Catholic University of Budapest, the University of Debrecen, at Kecskemét and Gyôr. The regular program in law [*jogász szak*] takes five years. After the first year of mandatory courses in constitutional law, the history of Hungarian law, Roman law and Latin language, ethics, philosophy, and economy, three years are devoted to classical training in all fields of substantive and procedural law. Recently courses in the law of the European Union were included in the core of obligatory courses, replacing the former mandatory marxists courses. The fifth year is devoted to preparing for the final state examination consisting of civil and criminal law, public and constitutional law, philosophy of law and political sciences [Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Budapest (1999) Órarend–Tanrend], [Kengyel, 1999, Máthé, 1996].

The number of students of the Faculty of Public Administration and Law of the ELTE University should give an impression of the growth:

*Table 1.1.: Numbers of students in law*

	1990/1991	1994/1995	1998/1999
ELTE University Budapest	750	1,750	2,250

Source: Int. Gátos

While 2,000 applicants apply to ELTE University each year, a numerus clausus is fixed at 450 new students. Law faculties are burdened by overcrowded lecture halls and overpopulated exams. Moreover, the growth of the teaching staff lags behind the growth of the number of students. Apart from the regular generational change, there have been few changes in the teaching staff. Nevertheless, students feel pressured to keep up with new law. Because the legal situation is changing quickly, they tackle the flood of new legislation on their own. Since law books are quickly out-dated, they favor new media such as CD ROM subscriptions which furnish new copies at least once a year [int. Zsombay].

Also companies require their employees to follow up on recent legal developments. Special courses in law are offered at the Economic University of

Budapest, and the Agricultural University of Gödöllő as well as at institutions of higher education, like police academies and academies for public administration. Evening and correspondence courses are popular. Recently, most universities have introduced postgraduate courses of one or two academic years. They try to meet the demand for courses on new fields of law and legislation leading to legal expert diplomas in banking and company law, insurance law, European law, traffic law, economic criminal law, and environmental protection law [int. Tari and Muhi].

## II. Legal profession

### Advocates/*ügyvéd*

Most law graduates nowadays choose to apply for candidacy at a lawyers' office. Candidates have to register with the Hungarian Bar Association (*magyar ügyvédi kamara*) with a contract for three years (until recently two years). Within a year after concluding the training period the candidate lawyer has to pass a professional examination. If they do not want to open an office of their own, they will be able to serve as lawyer-replacer in the near future.

In the past decade, the number of practising lawyers has grown enormously. Immediately after the turnover many former law-advisors (*jogtanácsos*) of state companies (about 8000 before privatization) requested registration with the Hungarian Bar Association after passing the relevant examinations [Letter Hung. Bar Ass.]. This growth continued as a result of the lucrative business under the new political and economic conditions. In 1999, 8,400 advocates were registered with the Hungarian Bar Association, many of them women. Half of the lawyers have their offices in and around the capital of Budapest.

Table 2.1.: Number of advocates

	1980	1990	1995	1999
Total number of registered advocates <sup>1</sup>	1,600	1,800	5,500	8,400
of whom female	320	600	2,200	

Source: Hungarian Bar Association.

1. Access to the profession was liberalised by Act No. XXII of 1991.

With much of the modern law business in the hands of large, foreign firms, the president of the Hungarian Bar Association, dr. Jenő Horváth, is concerned about the rapid growth in the number of advocates. He maintains that private

legal problems as well as economic life do not require the high number of practising lawyers [Letter of Hung. Bar Ass.] Like Horváth, many professional lawyers warn of a surplus of law graduates and argue in favor of limiting some of the educational capacity.

### **Notary public/közjegyző**

Notaries managed to keep their numbers small, even though privatization and real estate are skyrocketing. In theory, candidates who have worked as an assistant notary for three years can apply, but in reality they have to wait until a position opens. The Chamber of Notaries (*közjegyző kamara*) determines the qualification of the candidate, often by oral examination.

*Table 2.2.: Number of Notaries*

	1980	1990	1995
total number of registered notaries <sup>1</sup>	206	210	228

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

### 1. Fundamental changes in their status was effected by Act No. XLI of 1991

### **Judges/bíró**

Under the communist regime judges in leading positions had to be members of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party. Promotion was a matter of political reliability, and the prestige of the judiciary was low. But since it offered favourable working conditions and an intrinsic quality of professional work, judgeship under communism became a mostly female profession..

After the political turnover of 1989 all judges in leading positions – court presidents, members of constitutional courts – were examined for their commitment to the communist past. The Constitutional Court rejected initiatives to widen the circle of personal activities which fall under lustration law (*átvilágítás*). Thus, the replacement of judges in Hungary is dependent on a slow generational change [Napi Magyarország, 1999, 30 June]. (Figures from the US Freedom House that 45 percent of the judges appointed during the communist period have been replaced seem to our respondents to be too high [int. Gátos])

According to the rules, professional judges are required to be Hungarian citizens of more than 24 years of age, to have graduated from a law faculty, and to possess the right to vote and a clean criminal record. They are eligible for appointment after passing the professional examination. They may not be members of political parties, nor are they allowed to carry out political activities. They are, however, allowed to join associations for the protection of interest and other social organizations. Except for teaching and professional research, they are not to perform any other jobs.



Aspiring judges work as court secretaries for two years before they can apply for a position as judge. Recommendations for candidacy will be made by the presidents of regional courts in agreement with a competent body of judges. The Minister of Justice makes nominations with the approval of the National Judiciary Council (NJC). The final appointment remains the prerogative of the President of the Republic.

Act LXVIII on the Legal Status and Remuneration of Judges of 1997 marks an important step towards the professional as well as organizational independence of judges and courts. Candidates for judgeship have to participate in competition. Their first appointment is for a period of three years, tenured appointments are only granted after the performance during the first three years is assessed. Once appointed, judges may stay in their positions until the age of seventy. Since 1999, all Hungarian judges have to follow courses on the legal system of the European Union [int. Gátos].

With the new law also came a raise in salaries for judges in order to ensure their independence. The system of remuneration enacted on 1 July 1998 is fixed by law. Advancement should be based on seniority and merit; and should exclude any possibility that would restrict the independence of the judges by modifying their remuneration.

The salary of judges is no longer dependent on the salary of civil servants. The Act sets the basic salary of a beginning judge at HUF 160 000,- (f. 1600). Supplements will be expressed in the percentage of the basic salary. Judges will be entitled to supplements according to their assignment (to regional court, high court of justice or to the Supreme Court). After having spent six years at the same court level, judges with outstanding activity may be scaled by the NJC to a higher salary-class corresponding to the salary of a higher court. The basis for advancement is exclusively the length of service. Judges advance to a higher class once every three years. Placement to a higher degree for exceptional efficiency can be effected twice during a judge's career. Under the new salary system a local court judge who has served for 12 years will earn HUF 200,000 (f. 2000), while a regional court judge with the same length of service will earn HUF 232 000 (f. 2320). After 30 years of service the salary of a Supreme Court judge will be HUF 344 000 (f. 3440). Although this new system improved the pay of judges, their salaries still fall below the top incomes of notaries or advocates.

Thus, general opinion still holds that judges are not paid well. They compare the salary of a beginning judge at the start of his career (HUF. 160 000, or f. 1600) to that of a police officer (HUF 150 000, or f. 1,500) or to the salary of a university (law) professor (HUF 200 000, or f.. 2000) who can usually take on additional jobs to increase income [int. Gátos].

The introduction of a National Council of the Judiciary [NJC] also ensures organizational independence. First of all, the budget is directly responsible to

Parliament, which renders the NJC independent from the executive branch of the government. Second, the promotion and remuneration of judges are determined exclusively by law. Termination of judgeship can take place at one's own request, or after being found guilty of professional misconduct by a disciplinary council, or if one is pronounced incapable by his peers. Finally, unless the President of the Republic determines otherwise, judges enjoy immunity from prosecution and therefore cannot be arrested and detained or be subject to criminal proceedings [Karatnycky, 287].

*Table 2.3.: Number of Judges*

	1980	1990	1995
professional judges	1351	1816	2325
by type of judge		criminal: 567 other: 1,249	694 1631
by gender			male: 849 female: 1476

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

Already in the 1980s the number of professional judges increased considerably. But even though at present 2500 judges are active in Hungary (64 percent of them are women), there are nevertheless many complaints about the long delays in court. The procedures at each court level take an average of two years. Respondents explain this by the enormous increase in the number of legal procedures since 1989 and the enlargement of the jurisdiction of the courts by new legislation. The subject matter of cases requires factually and legally complex expertise not commanded by the present sitting judges. This leads to many appeals in complicated cases [Int. Gátos, Herczegh]. Furthermore judges of the old-generation hardly make use of new technology such as computers, so that backlogs cumulate without activities for relief.

### **Lay judges/ülnök**

The function of lay judges is considered less important in recent years. This is also attested by the fact that their number is dropping. Lay judges are presently effective in small, first level cases, and police and military courts.

*Table 2.4.: Number of lay judges*

	1980	1990	1995
lay judges	9 725	11 398	9 956

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

## **Prosecutors/ügyész**

Among all legal professionals prosecutors experienced the biggest loss of functions compared to communist institutions. While the prokuratura had the task of guarding legality of the entire public administration including parts of the collective economy, prosecutors are now reduced to criminal investigation and prosecuting in criminal courts. They do, however, enjoy the 'prerogative of accusation', unless the law entitles victims to initiate private prosecution. In the tradition of the legality principle this hardly entails any policy functions.

As far as recruitment is concerned, conditions are similar to those of judges. After passing the entrance exam for a judicial career they are required to practice for at least three years. Prosecutors shall be devoted to their office full time and cannot be members of political parties. The Chief Public Prosecutor is elected for six years by Parliament upon the recommendation of the President of the Republic. His deputies are appointed by the President of the Republic for an indefinite time. All other public prosecutors are appointed by the Chief Public Prosecutor in accordance with the opinion of the Public Prosecutor Board for an initial three-year term, and thereafter, for an indefinite term.

Unlike a number of West European countries, in Hungary criminal prosecution is not under the auspices of the Minister of Justice, and is thus not part of the executive branch. The Constitution provides for the Chief Public Prosecutor to be accountable to Parliament; prosecution performs its task independent of all other organs of the state as a centrally organized, hierarchical institution. The Chief Public Prosecutor's Office also frequently advises on draft laws and may even propose legal regulations.

*Table 2.5.: Number of Prosecutors*

	1980	1990	1995
number of prosecutors	998	966	1,103
of whom female	321	441	581

Source: Supreme Prosecutor's Office

One of the first changes on judicial organization of scope of the 1990 amendment to the Constitution was to curtail the mandate of the Prosecutors which had had the authority to supervise the public administrative system. Public Prosecution now is to perform criminal investigations in cases determined by law [Act LXIII of 1990 on the Amendment to the Constitution, par. 51–53]. Nevertheless, of the number of prosecutors increased in the 1990s, officially justified as attempt to cope with the increase of crime.

## Money collection professionals/végrehajtók

One of the frequent complaints about lack of efficacy of the growing courts has been the lack of supporting personnel. With the increase of debt collection one might expect that debt collectors would experience a rapid increase in their profession. However, up until 1998 their numbers had remained remarkably stable: 265 money collection professionals were active – 207 were independent debt collectors and 58 were regional money collection professionals.

Since the 1989 turnover the money collection profession was privatized. About 70% of the presently operating collection offices – most of them employing two or three persons – are identical to the offices operative before 1989 when they were embedded in the judiciary during the communist period.

The volume of money collection in 1998 was HUF 45,401,347,000 (f. 454,013,470). Of these a total of HUF 37,101,212,000 (f. 371,012,120) were effectively executed [Vavró 1999].

Table 2.6.: Number of registered money collection professionals<sup>1</sup>

	1980	1990	1995
registered money collectors	222	229	218

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary.

1. Fundamental changes in their status was effected by Act NO. LII of 1994.

## III. Access to law and Legal aid

### 3.1. Legal aid

In communist times law might not have played the central role in people's lives that it does now, but legal consultation was provided for everybody. Representation by a lawyer in civil court was not required, and requests for public defense in serious criminal cases were granted.

Nowadays, all parties in court have to be represented by a lawyer. Except for labour or family cases, the claiming party has to pay a court fee in advance. Legal aid for lawyer and court fees are granted to the very poor after passing an income test, even though many more people would need to consult lawyers for the many problems related to new regulations, housing problems and unemployment. The court has to apply a merits test to determine whether legal aid can be granted. In the end, all court and lawyer costs have to be covered by the losing side. In criminal cases, the court will nominate a public defender (*kirendelt védő*), with the state covering the costs.

Except for the activities of some NGOs, there is no legal aid for out-of-court consultation.

Table 3.1.: Expenditures for legal aid

	1980	1990	1995
costs of <i>in-court</i> legal aid for the year	1 753 000	21 627 000	82 459 000
of these: civil law	0	418 000	1 342 000
criminal law	1 753 000	21 209 000	81 117 000

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary.

### 3.2. Non governmental organizations (NGOs)

Hungary has about five NGOs active in monitoring the rule of law. All of them are seated in Budapest including the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC), the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU), the Legal Defence Bureau for National and Ethnic Minorities (LDBNEM), and Roma Rights Foundation (RRF). For financial reasons and to operate more effectively they divided their target issues. The HHC is involved with refugee cases, the HCLU is involved with the rights of (psychiatric) patients and the LDBNEM and RRF are involved with the rights of ethnic minorities [Fridli, 1997].

Another field of activities has been access to public information. Information is only given by the state when lawyers explicitly refer in their claim to the Act on the Right to access to public information of the year 1992. But even then, authorities like to use tricks to get rid of lawyers, like maintaining that 'the archive is closed' or 'the notes are not ready yet'. In concrete cases this is a matter for the courts to decide. The fact that 'access to public information' had to be explained to the authorities illustrates the problems of effectively implementing the many new laws [Int. Tari and Muhi].

Next to these NGOs there are some national watchdog organizations sponsored by the State. An organization for medical patients, HCLU, deals with the costs of hospitals, treatments and medicine. They are represented in hospitals and enjoy an advisory status with the government, advising on draft laws, and presenting comments before Parliament.

NGOs operating in the field of legal consultation are not more than small working groups of five to ten persons, mostly young trainees, recently graduated from the university. Most of them work voluntarily or are affiliated part-time with these NGOs. They collaborate with a network of legal aid lawyers and represent cases in court, because according to the law only lawyers may defend a case in court. In cases of police arrest, the police authorities appoint a lawyer. NGOs, however, may not officially be appointed, because the Hungarian Bar Association is monitoring its monopoly and will give a disciplinary punishment to lawyers who work under the name of organizations.

Nevertheless, the cooperative networks of NGOs are growing. MPs have the right to hear NGOs when legislation is being prepared. The Ministries involved regularly organize a hearing to which the relevant NGOs are invited. In cases of national and ethnic minorities NGOs collaborate with the representative of the so-called minority self-government. The LDBNEM has supported the Ombudsman for the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities in his efforts to improve the poor infrastructure of the hamlet Istvánmajor in the council of Emöd inhabited by citizens of Polish origin. The HCLU has collaborated with the Ombudsman for the Protection of Data and Freedom of Information in order to prevent the police from consulting the files of drug users and psychiatric patients without legal grounds. The HCLU has also addressed the Constitutional Court, sent in law initiatives and organized press campaigns.

In addition to providing a wide range of citizens basic information on where to go for legal services, NGOs felt a special need for activities in closed institutions such as hospitals, mental institutions and prisons. By providing medical patients information about their rights, propagating free abortion and rights to euthanasia, and demanding free speech and free information for inmates, the HCLU could exert some pressure on official policy. In May 1997, the Hungarian parliament passed Law No. XLII/1997 on the processing and protection of medical and related personal data. On the other side, the law grants patients access to their own medical data and the right to request a second opinion. Another result of their activities has been that drug users who consent to treatment of at least six months may not be prosecuted [Int. Helsinki Fed., 1999].

The success of NGOs is largely determined by their financial means, political contacts and interest of the media. International contacts are often crucial, as the sensitivity of the authorities to campaigns by Human Rights Watch and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee has repeatedly demonstrated.

## **IV. Courts**

### **National Judiciary Council [Országos Igazságügyi Tanács]**

Since October 1, 1997 the National Judiciary Council, an independent organ, supervises the organization of the judicial system, the administration of the courts and the budget of the judiciary. Because of the NJC, the independence of judges is strongly institutionalized. Hence the Ministry of Justice will basically only be involved in legislation, like amendments concerning the entire civil law code, and the judicial preparation of Hungary's accession to the EU.

The NJC consists of 15 members. Its president will be the president of the Supreme Court who is elected on the recommendation of the President of the Republic by a two-thirds majority vote of all members of parliament, for a period of six years. Nine members will be elected by the courts through

delegates: the Minister of Justice, the Chief Public Prosecutor, the President of the National Bar Association, and two members of Parliament (appointed by the Constitutional and Juridical Committee, as well as by the Budget and Financial Committee) are ex-officio members of the Council.

The principal functions of the NJC are:

- to prepare and submit to the Government its proposals concerning the next annual budget with respect to the courts. Should the bill on the budget, prepared and submitted to Parliament, differ from the proposals of the NJC, the Government shall indicate in detail the original proposals of the Council, stating the reasons for not accepting them;
- to appoint and dismiss the presidents of the high courts of justice and the regional courts, as well as the vice-presidents, the heads of the colleges, and the heads of its own Office;
- to orient and control the administrative activity of the court presidents;
- to determine the principles of the organizational and functional regulations of the courts and to approve the organizational and functional regulations of the high courts of justice and of the regional courts;
- to create regulations binding to courts, to make recommendations and to supervise their implementation;
- the President of the NJC submits a report to Parliament every year on the overall situation of the courts and the activities of the Council.

## Court system

Before the Second World War Hungary had a four-tier court system. From bottom to top: local [*járás*], county [*megye*], higher court of justice [*ítélőtábla*] and supreme court [*kuria*]. During the communist period the Higher Court of Justice was abolished. At present, there is a three-tier court system. At the local level there are 111 local or city courts dealing with civil and criminal matters [*helyi bíróság*] and 20 labour courts. The second level is a network of 20 regional courts [*megyei bíróság*], including the Metropolitan Court of Budapest. Primarily they hear appeals lodged against the decisions of the local courts, but in cases specified by the laws of procedure, they act as courts of first instance.

The Supreme Court (*a legfelsőbb bíróság*) reviews court petitions on their legal merit [Council of Europe, Nat. Report, Hungary, 213–219]. It also carries out the task of conceptually guiding lower courts.

The workload of the courts has increased substantially during the past decade. At the local and regional court level (i.e. civil courts, labour courts, social insurance courts, fiscal courts, administrative courts, criminal justice) the number of incoming cases rose from 296,812 in 1990 to 344,990 in 1995 [Office of the National Council of the Judiciary].

Table 4.1.: Civil courts: number of incoming cases, decisions and appeals

		1980	1990	1995
– first instance	local and county courts	– incoming 161,005	177 ,87	187,890
		– decided 163 985	161 782	183 669
– appeals lodged		26 155	22 014	24 172
+non-contentious		3888	3512	4200
– high court cases per year <sup>2</sup>		– incoming 960	462	2546
		– decided 973	479	2382

Source: Office of the National Council of Judiciary

2. Cases before High Court until 1990 concern protests of legality (*törvényes-ségi óvás*) (1980, 1990) which were dependent on the discretionary power of the Supreme Public Prosecutor. Since 1995 they are requests for revision (*felülvizsgálati kérelem*). See Act No. LXVIII of 1992.

Table 4.2.: Labour law cases: number of incoming cases, decisions and appeals

	1980	1990	1995
first instance local and county court	– incoming: 17 801	12 438	14 458
	G decided: 18 271	11 706	17 736
Number of incoming appeals	3,424	1535	4734
High court <sup>1</sup>	– incoming 349	228	909
	– decided 343	311	883

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

1. Cases of protest of legality (1980, 1990), resp. request for revision(1995).

Table 4.3.: Social insurance cases: number of incoming cases, decisions and appeals

	1980	1990
First instance	– incoming 5738	8 521
	– decided 5614	7 958
Number of incoming appeals	243	1109

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

Although budgets allocated to the administration of justice have increased somewhat over the last few years, there is still a widespread shortage of both



staff and material [Council of Europe, Nat. report, Hungary, 171]. With the working conditions at courts still lacking efficiency, judges who were often at a loss with complicated new subject matters, and parties using appeals more often (two levels of appeal and revision were offered by the system since 1990), complaints about the slowness of judicial procedures abounded.

In order to reduce the workload of the courts and to establish clear lines of authority, the Horn government (1994–1998) planned to introduce an additional level between the county courts and the Supreme Court. The former government decided to establish a level including four High Courts of Justice (*ítélőtáblák*) in order to take over the appellate functions of the Supreme Court and allow it to concentrate on issues of legal principle. So far, however, qualified judges for such High Courts were not available. The present Orbán government considered it better to postpone the issue [Népszabadság, 1999, 28 May; 1999, 1 June].

## V. Criminal justice

Comparing the rise of crime according to police registration with those of criminal courts shows the growing gap typical of modern crime which consists mainly of property offenses which cannot easily be cleared by the police. As a consequence the caseload of criminal courts does not nearly increase as much as the police registration might lead to expect; and the prison population even decreased. The unsatisfactory state of many prisons and lack of cell capacity might also keep judges from imposing prison sentences. [Int. Vavro]

Table 5.1.: Criminal justice

	1980	1990	1995
<b>Police crime figures</b>	130,470	341,061	502,036
<b>Courts</b>			
First instance			
– incoming	87,215	95,552	119,347
– decided	86,121	98,926	126,686
Appeals lodged	18,273	15,570	25,995
High Court			
– incoming	477	305	494
– decided	457	278	562
Number of persons sentenced to imprisonment			
– adult			
– juvenile	24,972	16,104	22,954
	1,553	1,771	2,091

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

Table 5.2.: Type of crime: homicide and theft, policemen, detention rates

	1980	1990	1995
Number of homicides	200	201	296
Incidence of theft (crimes against property)	78,643	265,937	391,062
Number of policemen	21,605	24,329	28,110
Number of prison detainees		12,319	12,455

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

With greater liberty of movement in the 1980s, the incidence of crime started to rise continuing steadily throughout the 1990s. While in the eighties most of the increase was accounted for by property crime, the rise has in recent times also included violent crime.

Nevertheless, the rate of people in prison has not increased. The capacity of prisons is rather limited, the quality of prisons does not conform to EU standards.[Int. Vavró].

## VI. Administrative review

Continuity of law is apparent in the rules of administrative procedure which still rest on Act IV of 1957. However, an amendment established administrative review in 1990. Being proceeded according to the law of civil procedure, they soon reached a sizable volume of cases, mainly caused by numerous claims on social insurance and pension rights.

Table 6.1.: Administrative review: number of incoming cases, decisions and appeals

	1980	1990	1995 <sup>1</sup>
first instance	– incoming 1,315 – decided 1,331	1,518 1,430	27,441 26,589
appeals	543	592	3,547
High court cases <sup>2</sup>		115 59	591 500

Source: Office of the National Council of the Judiciary

1. Includes social insurance cases. The significant increase in the number of cases is due to Act No. XXVI of 1991 extending the scope of judicial review of administrative decisions.
2. Cases of protest of legality (*törvényességi óvás*) (1980, 1990) and request for review (*felülvizsgálati kérelem*) (1995). See Act No. LXVIII of 1992.

## 6.2. *The State Audit Office*

The State Audit Office (SAO) is the financial-economic control authority of Parliament (regulated by Act No. XXXVIII of 1989). The SAO has the right to supervise the state budget and its operation in terms of legality and effectiveness. The SAO reports the results of its investigations to Parliament. This report must be published in every case. The SAO has the right to investigate every organization holding state property. The SAO can supervise the economic activity of the political parties, too, but only from the point of view of legality [Galligan and Smilov, 121].

The SAO, as the institution of legislative power specialised in financial and economic audits, operates under the constitution and other relevant laws, independent of the executive authority. Its independence is guaranteed by the following:

- its President and Vice Presidents are elected by Parliament, a two-thirds majority of the vote is required;
- its duties are exclusively assigned by Parliament;
- its reports are disclosed to the public (with the laws on the protection of private information duly observed);
- the regime of the publication of its reports, the audit plan, the focal point and frequency of the audits and the methods of the examinations are established by the Office itself, within the law defined framework [State Audit Off., 1998].

One of the important tasks of the SAO is to examine cases of corruption and organized crime in the post-communist society [Interview Katona in EECR, 1997, 6.4.]. According to the President of the SAO, Dr. Árpád Kovács, one of the main sources of corruption is the fact that “the construction of the managing and administrative institution system was slow to start and is still lagging behind the change of the structure of ownership but the deficiencies of legal compliance and the intermingling of organizations, persons and entities are also related to the fact that income processes have been restructured.” The President of the SAO has also stated that the findings of the Hungarian audit office have indirectly proven the existence of an extensive black market economy and its connections with corruption. The black market economy is estimated to be about 30 percent of the GDP [State Audit Off., 1999].

## VI.3. *Ombudsman*

In 1989, at a round table conference on the political future of Hungary the decision was made to establish the institution of Ombudsman. This institution would replace the complaints' institution of the communist party (*központi népi ellenőrző bizottság*). The establishment of the Office of the National Ombudsman not only satisfied a social function but also a political one. The democratic opposition was afraid that the successor party of the communist party

would win the first elections. Hence the opposition was interested in the establishment of a system of checks and balances in society.

It took until 1993 for the National Assembly to pass Act No. LIX of 1993 on the Ombudsman Parliamentary Commissioner for Civil Rights. The Act speaks of an Ombudsman for the Protection of Human and Civil Rights and a special Ombudsman: "for the protection of certain constitutional rights Parliament may elect also a special ombudsman under Act No. LIX of 1993 section 2/(2). The special ombudsman has the right to take independent measures in his field". Two such special ombudsmen have been established at present. In fear of misuse of official databanks being matched without restraint, the former president of the Constitutional Court (Dr. Sólyom) instigated an ombudsman for the protection of privacy. Another Ombudsman (Parliamentary Commissioner) was installed for the protection of the Rights of Ethnic and National Minorities. He is charged with looking after the many violations of rights of the Roma. But with other groups, such as students or military service men, also asking for their own parliamentary commissioner the present ombudsmen get concerned that such demand might weaken all of them [Napi Magyarország, 1999, 4 June].

Hungarian Parliament was helped by the success of the Polish ombudsman who also offered practical help in establishing the Office [int. A. Varga]. Nevertheless, traditional Hungarian jurists still wonder whether the institution of Ombudsman fits into the system of judicial review, i.e., administrative courts. [Int. Prof. Herczegh]. Since 1998 some members of Parliament voice concern that the institution of the Ombudsman could easily be drawn into political disputes. An indication of this may be the refusal by Parliament to accept the recent report of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information on the content of police video tapes.

The Ombudsman is elected for a period of six years by a two-thirds majority vote of all members of Parliament and has to be fully independent. She or he cannot be a member of a political party. For this reason, a person in the academic profession is usually sought. The Ombudsman has to report annually to the parliament, has the right to check decisions taken by the parliament, has the right to express his/her opinion on laws that have not been adopted by Parliament, has the right to interpellate ministers, and may also request the help of the Constitutional Court. The Ombudsman does not have the right to bring a case to court.

The Ombudsman holds an office that is responsible for the tasks of administration and preparation. This is set forth in Act LIX of 1993 on the Ombudsman for Civil Rights [Section 28/(2)]. The operational costs of the ombudsman, his staff and office organization shall be determined in a special chapter of the state budget [Act LIX of 1993, section 28/(3)]. They are

frequently called upon to initiate *ex officio* examinations, like those in prisons, orphanages, mental institutions, or to investigate the situation of conscripts in the army. However, the impact of such reports remains dependent on support by the media, as their advice cannot be legally binding.

The Ombudsman generally takes sides with the victim, sometimes against public opinion [Napi Magyarország, 1999, 4 June; Népszabadság, 1999, 8 September]. That was the case when an Ombudsman supported a number of cases of Roma, who make up four percent of the total inhabitants of the country. The Roma are discriminated against by almost all institutions, regularly being stereotyped as criminals.[Hum. Rights Watch, 1996]. This makes the Ombudsman well known in socially weak groups and maybe among intellectuals, but in the middle classes it remains relatively unknown.

Nevertheless, the office of the Ombudsman receives a great number of complaints of all sorts, so that a strict selection is necessary. There must be legal grounds for the complaint, and all regular legal remedies have to have been exhausted before the Ombudsman will deal with it. This excludes, for example, all complaints on victimization under the communist regime as the lustration law was not applied on a wide-scale in Hungary. Independence of the judiciary also denies the Ombudsman any right to examine the functioning of courts of justice, even though judicial procedures give rise to a great number of complaints.

75–80 percent of the cases at the Office of the Ombudsman are not accepted. Two-thirds of the remaining 20–25 percent are rejected in the second round. Finally, the Ombudsman ends with a recommendation in approximately 80 percent of the remaining cases. The recommendation is sometimes formulated in very general terms. In some cases the “result” takes the shape of moral satisfaction.

## **VII. Constitutional remedies**

### **The Constitution**

Instead of entering the debate on an entirely new constitution, Parliament decided to introduce a series of amendments in 1989 and 1990. The patchwork which resulted from this process virtually altered all of the communist-era constitution. Many legal experts found its wording vague. As László Sólyom, the former President of the Constitutional Court, expressed in an interview “undoubtedly, the Constitution is not a fully coherent document” [Mink, 73].

This situation led to jurisdictional conflicts among government institutions and offices. In 1995, a newly-formed constitutional committee reached agreement on procedural rules for drafting and approving a new constitution. The coalition parties agreed that the opposition would contribute substantially to the process. The coalition also agreed that the constitutional committee would have 24 members, or four members from each party

represented in the parliament. The National Assembly then amended the constitution to state that the new rules in the Standing Order could only be enforced by a four-fifths majority. A new draft constitution has yet to be approved. [Karatnycky, 287]

The constitution declares that the state is responsible for ensuring the observance of Human Rights. Individual and human rights, freedom of speech and assembly, and social and property rights are extensively covered in the constitution. In 1996, the National Assembly passed a number of Penal Code amendments, including laws regulating freedom of the press, defamation, and the defense of minorities. Especially laws governing business and property rights quickly adapted to Western standards [Karatnycky, 287].

On July 7, 1993 the parliament passed Act No. LXXVII on National and Ethnic Minority Rights after nearly two years of preparatory work and several draft texts. The law bans discrimination against minorities, whose rights to national and ethnic self-identity are considered to be universal human rights and basic freedoms. The law recognizes all ethnic peoples who have lived in Hungary for at least a century and who are Hungarian citizens with their own language, culture, and traditions. These groups include Armenians, Bulgarians, Croations, Germans, Greeks, Poles, Roma, Romanians, Ruthenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenes, and Ukrainians. Nevertheless, Hungary's estimated 500,000 Roma continue to suffer severely from the effects of the economic restructuring of the country. They have also been the victims of attacks by skinheads and vigilantes.

In March 1996, after the acquittals of a number of perpetrators of hate crimes Parliament passed a penal code amendment that provides for up three years of imprisonment for anyone who incites hatred or acts in any other way that is capable of inciting hatred against the Hungarian nation or any other national, ethnic, or religious minority or race [Karatnycky, 289].

### **Constitutional Court**

In 1989, Parliament modified the constitution of 1949. Formally, the constitution of 1949 was not suspended but rather modified in essential parts in order to abolish the totalitarian past. It turned out to be a pragmatic solution in the light of the deep cleavages between political parties. The formulation of an entirely new constitution would have led to lengthy disputes on highly charged issues such as the abolition of the death penalty which Parliament might not have been able to resolve [Int. Prof. Herczegh].

After the political turnover of 1989 the constitutional court (*alkotmánybíróság*) played a major role. In a country with a long positivist tradition of jurisprudence, constitutional principles introduced a new element [See introduction to this report]. According to the European Community Studies Association (ECSA) (1993:33):

“In the Hungarian case, the most important change has undoubtedly been the establishment of an independent Constitutional Court, which began to work at the beginning of 1990. The Court’s competences are widely defined: it can examine the constitutionality of all pieces of parliamentary legislation as well as secondary legal regulations, and, in certain cases, individual decisions by governmental and administrative institutions. Importantly, the Court can exercise both different forms of ex-post concrete control and an abstract control of norms. The Court can annul a piece of legislation, a secondary legal act or a governmental or administrative decision, where it finds that it violates the Constitution.”

Constitutional review of parliamentary legislation as well as secondary legal regulations is especially important in a period of transition. The Constitutional Court not only decides whether legislation violates the constitution; it also declares it “not in agreement with the constitution with instance of omission (*mulasztás*).” In this vein it returned 40% of all pieces of legislation to Parliament for revision within certain limits of time. In many cases, political differences were so fundamental that Parliament could not fulfil this task.

Apart from the legislative function, the Hungarian Constitution grants the court an extensive right of constitutional complaint to everybody affected by Hungarian law [Act XXXII of 1989 on the Constitutional Court, 48 §]. The formal prerequisite is a 60-day period after exhaustion of all legal remedies. As a consequence of this very wide definition of access, the court is loaded with a high number of constitutional complaints.

The first president of the Constitutional Court, László Sólyom, who fulfilled this position from 1989 until 1998 played a very active role which brought him and the court into many a principled conflict with legislative politics. At the same time, the first president of the Supreme Court, Pál Solt, was pushing for the supremacy of positive law in regular courts [Council of Europe, Nat. Report, Hungary, 213–219]. President Sólyom set his stakes high by constantly correcting legislation of Parliament. Forty percent of all new statutes were sent back, partly on minor points. The new president, János Németh, has the reputation of sticking more positively to the letter of the law.

Most important among the qualifications for being appointed to the Constitutional Court are professional merits. Most of the judges have been university professors. As a rule, the political antecedents of the nominee are examined – lustration (*átvilágítás*) as it is called. This principle was not applied to the first five judges. The members of the Constitutional Court are nominated for a period of nine years. A judge can cease to perform his duties after being declared unqualified by his peers. Judges should not be above the age of 70 at the time of their appointment.

At present the Constitutional Court has 14 members, of which eleven are judges and three are attorneys. They are elected by a two-thirds majority vote of all members of Parliament. The president of the Constitutional Court is elected by the members of the Constitutional Court itself. The president is elected for a period of three years and can be re-elected once [Napi Magyarország, 1999, 23 June].

On the average, the court rules on approximately 150 cases annually. Of these, about 35 percent find some grounds for constitutional reclamation [Karatnycky, 267].

In view of the many objections to new legislation the question has been raised whether there should not be more prior consultation with Parliament. This, however, was rejected, because it would muddle the functional separation of powers: constitutional review has to remain limited to concrete questions, it cannot be consulted for an entire statute [int. Paczolai]. Among conventional jurists it is generally felt that the statute on the Constitutional Court, by wording its authority too abstractly, granted too much discretion. Importing the constitutional jurisprudence of other European countries often surprised professors and justices by novel interpretations.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Above I have presented some aspects of the Hungarian legal culture. We have observed that aspects of legal culture have been restored extremely quickly in the past decade and that the judiciary is represented by an independent organ, the National Judiciary Council. One could argue that the NJC has been established as a strong reaction to the experience of political dependence of the justices during the communist period. This might be true but this does not explain why Hungary did not follow the Western practice where the Ministry of Justice strongly determines the organization of the judiciary.

It is my contention that an explanation for these observations can be given in terms of the national culture and identity of the Hungarians. Legacy and constitutionalism have been a basic feature of the Hungarian national identity [Bibó, 155]. Until 1946 when the Hungarian kingdom was abolished the principle of the Hungarian Holy Crown has been operative. It would lead too far to discuss this principle in the context here. The reader is referred to Kocsis (1995) and Molnár et al (1999) for more extensive discussion. In short, this principle states that the Hungarian Holy Crown incorporated among others all the institutions of state power, the executive power, the legislature, the judiciary, the king, all the citizens of the state, and the territory of the state [Molnár et al, 276]. Because of the fact that the principle of the Hungarian Holy Crown became the constitution the distribution of power in Hungary was guaranteed. It



became impossible to bundle absolute power in one and the same person, even the king could not govern with absolute power [Kocsis, 110].

The independence of judiciary has a long tradition in Hungarian political thinking. This is illustrated for example by paragraph 1 of Act VIII of 1871 stipulating that judiciary is independent of the executive branch of power and the paragraphs 8, 15, 16, 19–21 of the same Act stipulate the independence and the responsibility of the judges. According to paragraph 8, a judge cannot be member of parliament; cannot be an attorney; and cannot be appointed in another function of legislature or the executive power.

Of course, nowadays the principle of the Holy Crown is not operative, although at January the First of 2000 the Hungarian Holy Crown has been placed in the main hall of the Parliament stressing the fact that it is an important symbol of Hungarian national identity in the new Hungary as well. One might state however that the independence of the judiciary has become a feature of the Hungarian national identity, political genius, as has been expressed by Count Apponyi Hungarian statesman in the Interwar period, during his visit to the Netherlands in 1927:

“Seit 6 Jahrhunderten ist diese grundlegende Auffassung des ungarischen Staatsrechtes, die im XIV. Jahrhundert zum Auffinden ihrer Formel herangereift war, eine unbezweifelte juristische Tatsache und sie ist heute ebenso lebendig, wie zur Zeit ihrer ersten Blüte. Die Seele der Nation blieb von ihr durchdrungen, die einfachsten Intellekte begreifen sie und jeder fühlt sich stolz durch ein Königtum, in dem er sich selber wiederfindet, als Teilhaber seiner Macht und seines Ansehens. Ich glaube nicht, dass der politische Genius irgend einer Nation je schöneres und gleichzeitig dauerhafteres geschaffen habe, als die Lehre von der Hl. ungarischen Krone; denn sie vereinigt die Bedingungen einer wirksamen Organisation der Macht mit reellen Garantien der Freiheit und sie besitzt jenes mystische Element, dessen Volksseele überall und jederzeit bedarf.” [Apponyi, 15].

In sum, the independence of the judiciary, the distribution of power is deeply rooted in Hungarian national identity and has been implemented in the post-communist period in the establishment of the National Judiciary Council.

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FERENC GEREBEN

## The National Identity of Hungarians in Hungary and in its Neighboring Countries

### The Concept of Identity Consciousness

The concept of identity emerged in the modern age<sup>2</sup>, which is considered – not without foundation – as the age of “Identity problems”, and it is again the modern, or the postmodern age, which questions the legitimacy of its continuous existence.<sup>3</sup>

Ferenc Pataki, the well-known Hungarian researcher of social identity, defined the notion of national identity in the following way: “National identity is an element of our ego-system, which originates from the consciousness and memory of belonging to a national-ethnic group (category) – together with all of their evaluating and emotional elements, as well as with their behavioral disposition.”<sup>4</sup> The wall inscription from Luxembourg in the motto, which means “*we want to remain who we are*”, expresses perfectly a very important feature of identity consciousness, to which small nations, communities living under subjugation and in danger are very susceptible: The intention to *survive*, the desire to *preserve the peculiar features, which are considered essential and the culture*, which in the end makes it possible for individuals and communities to be *permanently* identical with themselves. (This, of course, does not mean isolation from *all* types of changes.) The desire of the feeling of continuity on the other hand supposes the previous clarification of which are the *important* features wished to be preserved, that is to say *what it is like* that we want to remain: *who we are, what we are, what are our future possibilities*. We would like to clarify these and many other related questions on the basis of our questionnaire survey carried out between 1991 and 1997, among 2800 adults selected at random from the Hungarian population living in Hungary and in countries of Central Europe in the vicinity of Hungary.

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<sup>1</sup> Wall inscription from a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Luxembourg burghess house

<sup>2</sup> Erikson, E. H.: *Childhood and Society*. New York, 1950. Norton

<sup>3</sup> Marx, J. H.: *The Ideological Construction of Postmodern Identity Models in Contemporary Cultural Movements*. In Robertson, R., Holzner, B. (Eds.) *Identity and authority*. Oxford, 1980. Blackwell.

<sup>4</sup> Ferenc Pataki: *Nemzetkarakterológia? (Nation Characterology?) Magyar Tudomány 1997./2.* 177. p.

We consider identity consciousness as a complex – existing in a virtual space – “vertically” and “horizontally” oriented concept. As the “vertical” element of self-definition, the individual puts himself in a gradually increasing space (or as expanding concentric circles) of social power in order to clarify what kind of relations and connections he builds (or accepts) with *the different levels of social communities*, starting from the family – through the local, professional, etc, groups, religious, denominational and national communities – to humanity. These levels are not separated sharply, they build on each other harmoniously under good circumstances, and it is like this because – also under good circumstances – the value system of family socialization permeates the connections with other levels.

The other approach of the “virtual spatial” identity – the “horizontal” one – tends to introduce the different coexisting “scenes”, dimensions of the relations of the above-mentioned communities. These are e.g. the intellectual-emotional experience of belonging to a nation, group self-image, cultural and religious identity consciousness, etc.

The identity consciousness – in addition to the virtual spatiality – has a *time-dimension* as well, which ranges from images and narratives of the mind in connection with the (individual, family, local, national) *past*, – through the present – to the ideas about the *future* (vision of the future).

In the following section among the “vertical levels”, we emphasize the notion of *national identity*, and not only because it promises to be an *in-between* category – expressing relation that are neither too individual nor too general. Another reason for our choice is the fact that even though our survey comprises the citizens of eight Central European countries (Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria and Hungary), the people questioned belong to the same (Hungarian) nationality. The majority of them formed part of *minorities* (in the vicinity of Hungary there are 3 million Hungarian minority citizens), which creates a peculiar situation for living their own identity, which rightly stirs up the interest of a researcher.

As for the horizontal dimension of identity consciousness, we managed to gather the following information: consciousness of belonging to a nation, national self-image, future image, religious identity, historical consciousness and cultural identity. In what follows, we deal mainly with the first two categories.

Nevertheless, we must note something in advance. Both the international studies and the Hungarian research practice suggest that the problem of identity is inspired by ideology: On the one hand, with the aversion from the (national) identity, which is considered to be particular (and not modern anymore) as well as from the concept of nation itself; on the other hand, with the sometimes excessively emotional treatment of the question. In the meaning of the notion of “identity” there is a *conservative* feature from the outset (‘clarify who you are and follow your values, do not change them too easily’) – and there are many who are unable to combine it with a modern (or postmodern) trend.

As for the ideologically overheated state of the topic, my way of protection was not to think in a preliminary typology: I tried to register in the most correct way and with the help of empirical examining means that form of identity consciousness, which in many instances is quite unarticulated and amorphous; that is to say, *what* and (how) *it is in the minds* of the people. (Of course, it is not free from ideology, from the intellectual fashion trends generated by the authoritative social groups, but those ideologies are not brought into the system by the researcher.) Science cannot stop at presenting the particular cases of the multicolored social consciousness, but – as was our intention – we tended to create some kind of identity structure – *through an inductive method* – from the colorful mosaics of the individual confessions, and we planned to draw generalized conclusions. Of course, we cannot state that the value system of the researcher can be isolated entirely from these processes. The question is rather this: Does the researcher “confess” these value preferences or present them as a part of the “objective truth”? In my opinion, the first solution is a suitable one.

The (by now, thousands of) manifestations that have passed through my hands and came from the minorities, convinced me *that people consider national identity as a generally important value and as something that is worth preserving*. As something that can become jeopardized under minority circumstances many times; and in such situations – using the expression of András Sütő, a Transylvanian, Hungarian writer – in protection of the “dignity of particularity”, identity consciousness is inclined to become stronger. Convinced by this experience and respecting the nature of Central European identities, which I have already been studying, *I consider the durability of identity consciousness, and its value preserving feature as typical*, while in the meantime, I am open to sensing the generally atypical indifferent gestures as well as those that surrender or change identity.

### **The Types and Elements of the Consciousness of Belonging to a Nation**

After clarifying that the overwhelming majority of the almost 2800 people who were ready to answer the Hungarian questionnaires consider themselves – in this or in that way – Hungarian, we asked them: “*What does it mean to you to be Hungarian?*” The question was open. The categories, which were created on the basis of the answers – took into consideration the aspect system of previous research<sup>5</sup> – were worked up together with my colleagues in the first research

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<sup>5</sup> See: *Leena Kirstinä - Judit Lőrincz: Magyarok és finnek a fikció világában.* (Hungarians and the Finnish in the World of Fiction.) Bp. 1992, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 133-137. p.; *György Csepeli: Csoporttudat, nemzettudat* (Group Consciousness, National Consciousness) Budapest, 1987, Magvető K. 256. p.

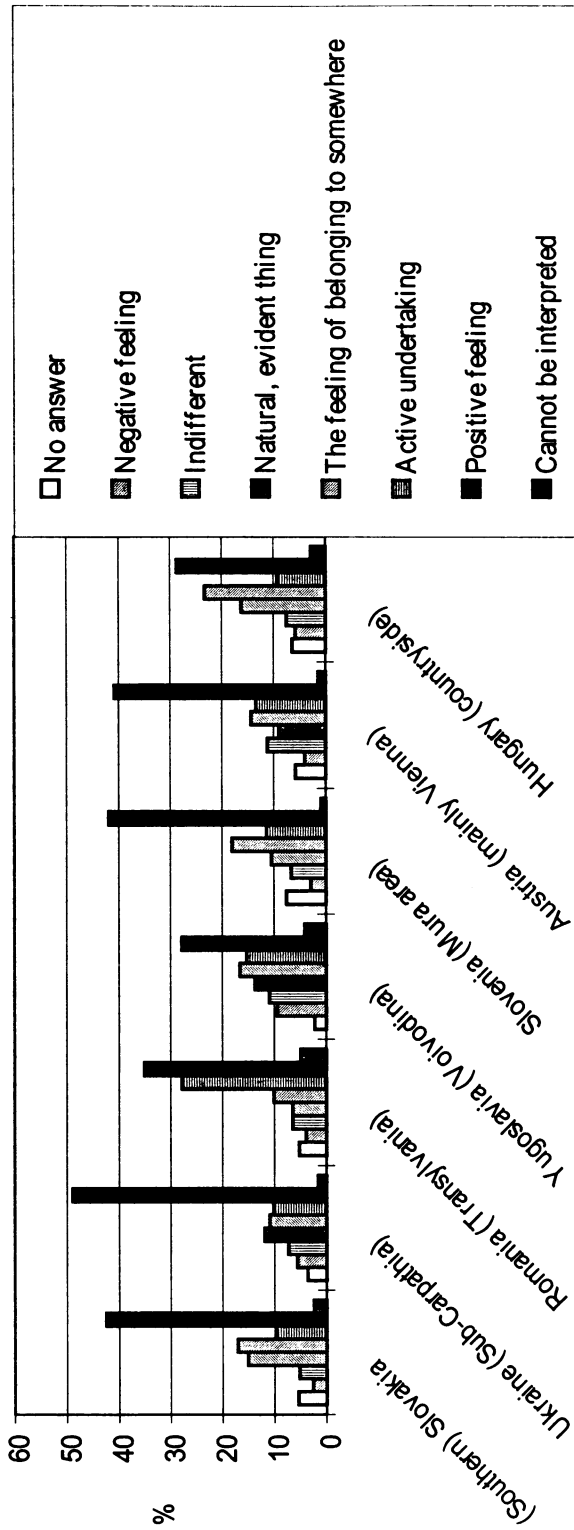
phase in 1991.<sup>6</sup> We tended to create such categories, which ensure room for categorizing the less reflexive answers of the less educated questioned people as well. (Thus the total ration of the unclassifiable /and missing/ answers was not too high; it was around 5–10% per country.) The ratio of the description of categories and the references by regions is showed in Figure 1. Our data suggest that the total ratio of the lack of (interpretable) answers, as well as the answers conveying indifferent and negative identity standpoints was the highest among Hungarians in Voivodina (Yugoslavia), in Hungary and in Austria (27 and 23–23%, respectively); and as for the behavior of undertaking national identity – in spite of the difficulties – we find pride and joy mainly in Romania (in Transylvania, 28%), and generally a positive feeling mostly in the Ukraine (in Sub-Carpathia, 49%), and among Slovakian and Slovenian Hungarians. *That is to say* – at least on the basis of the above-mentioned question – *Voivodina (Yugoslavia) and Hungary seems to be the least positive regions as far as the Hungarian consciousness is concerned, while the Transylvanians have the most determined and the most active identity; and the Hungarians living in Sub-Carpathia have the most positive emotional attitude.*

The Hungarian groups living outside the borders of Hungary are struggling with observable uncertainties of *belonging to somewhere*: the manifestation of national identity consciousness in the feeling of belonging to somewhere has a smaller ratio in every country than in Hungary. The fact that among the minority Hungarian groups in all examined regions we can observe that this uncertainty of belonging suggests that the *minority existence* (together with Communism) in their examined environment resulted in a certain feeling of instability, and the weakening of the consciousness of belonging together. The point is probably that “ethnic” Hungarians in Hungary – independent of the level of their identity consciousness – can connect self-evidently their being Hungarian to the country where they live. As for his or her belonging, the citizen living somewhere in Central Europe, but who is also Hungarian, is in a much more uncertain situation; from whom history has not only denied homeland, but (in the decades of “socialist internationalism”) it denied the *motherland*, which could have been behaved as a real mother; and thus this citizen was forced to construct an “internal”, virtual homeland for himself from cultural elements, feelings, and human manners.

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<sup>6</sup> We published experiences concerning Romania (Székely Land) and Slovakia (Csallóköz) in a separate volume: *Ferenc Gereben - Judit Lőrincz - Attila Nagy - Ferenc Vidra Szabó: Magyar olvasáskultúra határon innen és túl (Hungarian Reading Culture within and beyond the Border)* Bp. 1993. Közép-Európa Intézet.

Figure 1  
 "What does being Hungarian mean to you?"  
 (On the basis of the answers given by Hungarian nationals of seven countries  
 1991-1995)





Our category system, however, was not able to follow flexibly enough human opinions, as the answers were many times diverse, and they drifted into the particular types on the basis of the dominant answer element. That is why we analyzed the answers through a more flexible – *content analysis* – method, which resulted in a more detailed typology, and thus was more suitable to demonstrate the polychromatism of the answers. (See Table 1)

This revealing work was not based on our preliminary suppositions, but strictly on the analysis (on their content, many times on the use of words) of the answers. We examined the ratio of references of the separated answer motives in the individual groups of answer-givers. The method of content analysis makes it possible to both strengthen and soften our previous statements. It is visible (see the “total” row of Table 1) that except for Slovakia in an average one and a half (or almost one and a half) answer motives were mentioned in every region. It turns out from the *lack* of real answers that the reception of the question about identity consciousness was the coldest in Hungary (and in Slovenia). In the highest ratio of *indifferent* type (Voivodina) we may see the polite abstention from the question, the intention to avoid the answer, or simply the fear of national-minority problems. The motif of *natural feature* generally means a quite unnoticed answer type: However, it often contained the “I was born to be that” term; the emphasis is not on the descendant consciousness, but rather on a random (but undenied) feature, as well as on its unarticulated (“it happened like this, this is what we have here”) expression. The answer type was popular mainly among Hungarians living in the southern Slav region; in Transylvania – where the more conscious and detailed answers were favored – it reached an especially low number of responses.

We can again see that the “*to belong to somewhere*” answer type – both its narrower and broader versions – was dominantly a phenomenon of the mother country: The Hungarians living outside Hungary were generally using it very timidly. However, we can say that they are becoming more and more brave: The (majority of the) Slovenian and Austrian data are from the middle of the 1990s, and they suggest *finding the way back* to the circuit of a broader community.<sup>7</sup> This phenomenon refers to a no less important fact than that *the consciousness of belonging together from the point of view of national culture of the Hungarians living in different countries was shaken significantly in the decades of Communism, and to a certain extent it was strengthened again in the 1990s*. For the Hungarians living outside Hungary, the connection, the fixed points of belonging together – according to Table 1 – are first of all (mainly in Sub-Carpathia) the positive feelings, the mother tongue, the cultural, historical and religious traditions (mainly among Hungarians in the southern Slav region, in Transylvania and among the emigrants in Austria). Also for those with active commitments, who live national identity as a task; a moral position which

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<sup>7</sup> The Croatian data from the end of 1997 suggest the belonging to a *narrower* community, while the data of our 1998 - newer - Transylvanian research suggest *the strengthening of national affiliation*.

undergoes trials and conflicts for survival (the total ratio of them was high in Transylvania: 44%, in Hungary it was 14%). This also means that the notion of national identity – among the Hungarian groups living in Central Europe – does not have an ethnic meaning (thus it does not emphasize descent of blood and belonging together), but it has rather an ethical, cultural and emotional content. (This is more valid for the minority Hungarian groups living outside Hungary.) That is to say, in our situation we can bravely talk about – instead of ethnic – a national, or more precisely about a cultural national identity consciousness.<sup>8</sup>

The social background of the identity consciousness of Hungarians living in minority and the sociological pattern of certain identity types is very similar to that in Hungary: *the negative and indifferent identity types – within and beyond the borders (except for some cases) – were characteristics of the less educated and culturally less active social layers; the representatives of the positive attitude, and of undertaking an active identity consciousness were from the more qualified and culturally more active layers.* The national identity consciousness of the mother country's society and of the Hungarian communities outside the borders rather differs in the *diverse ratio* of certain identity types, and not in their peculiarities of stratification. The positive identity types were the ones that generally received (one of the least) number of mentions in Hungary, and the Hungarians living outside Hungary always evaluated these types higher. According to the signs, the tendency continues beyond the border as well: *in the regions where the Hungarian minority lives in great majority, in blocks, the positive elements of the identity consciousness are generally weaker; where they live in a definite minority (30% and under 10%) the identity consciousness – in one form or another – becomes stronger.* Thus the national identity consciousness can function as a *conscious self- and group protecting mechanism*: It is “turned on” where the national (minority) existence is in significant danger; it “lets off”, where they feel more protected.<sup>9</sup> Attila Nagy – as one of the experiences of the 1991 sociological survey about reading among secondary school students in Székelyudvarhely (Romania) – also registers this situation, when the unfavorable situation of the social group, which serves as a frame of identity, its hindered mobility, its limited possibilities increase the extent of identification, and the susceptibility towards identity models.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Transylvanian research of Valér Veres reached the same results: V. Veres: A Kolozs és Kovászna megyei magyarok kisebbségi identitástudatának néhány vonása (Some Features of the Identity Consciousness of the Hungarians in Kolozs and Kovászna Counties). Regio, 1997. /3-4.

<sup>9</sup> Ferenc Pataki describes this social psychological situation in the following way: F. Pataki: Az én és a társadalmi azonosság-tudat (The Ego and the Social Identity Consciousness) Bp. 1982. Kossuth K. p. 317.

<sup>10</sup> F. Gereben - J. Lőrincz - A. Nagy - F.: Vidra Szabó Cited work. p. 111.

Table 1

**"What does it mean to you to be a Hungarian?" (1991-1995) (The reference of answer motives explored by content analysis in percentage of the Hungarian adults in seven countries)**

Answer motives	(Southern Slovakia)	Ukraine (Sub-Carpathia)	Rumania (Transylvania)	Yugoslavia (Voivodina)	Slovenia (Mura area)	Austria (mainly Vienna)	Hungary (outside Budapest)
There is absolutely no answer	3,9	3,3	3,5	2,2	7,6	5,4	4,1
There is no substantial answer (does not know, etc.)	3,7	2,6	3,9	2,8	1,0	4,0	5,4
Bad feeling, does not mean any good (with endured attitude)	1,3	2,3	2,4	4,7	2,9	4,9	4,3
Indifferent, nothing special ("it does not matter what I am", etc.)	5,0	2,3	7,6	10,9	6,7	9,4	5,6
Natural feature	16,8	17,2	6,7	20,6	26,7	9,4	17,2
To belong to a narrower community (to a family, a settlement, an area, etc.)	5,6	1,0	3,5	2,5	1,9	4,1	14,4
To belong to a broader community (to an ethnic group, a nation, a homeland, etc.)	4,3	3,0	3,9	4,1	11,4	14,4	15,7

(Continued)

Mother tongue, language community	11,7	6,6	12,1	13,1	15,2	8,1	8,8
Cultural, historical tradition, (religious) customs, peculiar way of thinking	8,4	10,2	13,6	13,7	13,3	19,3	8,4
Pride, self-regard	17,1	27,7	17,4	13,4	15,2	17,0	8,4
Other positive feeling (joy, happiness, patriotism, etc.)	31,7	33,7	27,4	29,4	30,5	33,2	26,6
"You must live and die here" ("I was born here, I must die here", etc.)	7,6	6,6	5,2	7,5	1,9	2,2	14,0
Task, responsible action, obligation of passing to next generations	8,0	12,3	21,1	8,8	17,1	12,6	8,4
Undertaking difficulties, disadvantageous situations, fight for survival	7,3	12,2	23,3	15,0	3,8	4,1	5,2
Total	132,4	145,0	151,6	148,7	155,2	148,1	149,5
N=	463	303	536	320	105	223	464

## The Structure of Identity Consciousness

What is the connection between those factors, which we separated during the content analysis of the manifestations as the *elements* of the identity consciousness? Let us remember: the respondents mentioned an average of one and a half of these elements (text element) per country; that is, there were people who only mentioned one, but there were people who mentioned two or more elements at the same time. Thus, our real question is whether there was any typical synchronism: elements that were mentioned together in a larger proportion than the mathematical probability (so those ones that *attracted* one another), and whether there were elements that appeared less than the average, so they *repelled* one another.

We give the answer to the question in two steps. In the first step we have recourse to the help of the *Yule-Kendall-type association coefficient* (Q), which with its value between +1 and -1, expresses the fact and measure of attraction (plus values) and repulsion (negative values).<sup>1</sup> We calculated the value of Q for the mutual relation of all identity elements, as well as for each country. Hereby, we present the relation system of some more important “calling”-motives, for the sake of the increase of reliability – on the basis of the united database of *all respondents beyond the borders*. (As we are mainly interested in the *minority identity consciousness*, we assigned only a controlling role to the data from Hungary – just as we did to the minority regions, *respectively*.)

Let us say in advance that the *negative* and *indifferent* identity type had basically no relation system: if someone was ranked among these types, he or she practically did not mention any other elements. Let us see the more strongly attracted as well as the more repelled identity elements – separately – in regard to those oriented toward *mother tongue, pride and task*, in decreasing order of the intensity of the relations.

### “MOTHER TONGUE, LANGUAGE COMMUNITY”

<i>Attracted identity elements:</i>	<i>Q</i>
– Cultural, historical tradition, (religious) customs, peculiar way of thinking:	+0,659
– Task, responsible action, obligation of passing to next generations:	+0,611
– To belong to a broader community (to an ethnic group, a nation, a homeland, etc.):	+0,226

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<sup>11</sup> Attraction becomes stronger with the increase of positive values, while repulsion strengthens with the increase of negative values. This means that joint occurrences are above or under the statistically expected level. +1 indicates an absolute coincidence, -1 indicates a lack of common occurrence.

<i>Repulsed identity elements:</i>	<i>Q</i>
– Bad feeling, “does not mean any good”:	-1,0
– Indifferent, nothing special:	-0,911
– Pride, self-regard:	-0,600
– Natural feature:	-0,555

#### “PRIDE, SELF-REGARD”

*Attracted identity elements:*

<i>Repulsed identity elements:</i>	<i>Q</i>
– Indifferent, nothing special:	-0,942
– Bad feeling, “does not mean any good”:	-0,857
– To belong to a narrower community:	-0,673
– Mother tongue, language community:	-0,600
– Task, responsible action, obligation of passing to next generations	-0,559

#### “TASK, RESPONSIBLE ACTION”

<i>Attracted identity elements:</i>	<i>Q</i>
– Cultural, historical tradition, (religious) customs, peculiar way of thinking:	+0,653
– Mother tongue, language community:	+0,611
<i>Repulsed identity elements:</i>	<i>Q</i>
– Bad feeling, “does not mean any good”:	-1,0
– Indifferent, nothing special:	-0,916
– Pride, self-regard:	-0,559

Thus, the Hungarians living in minority, who in defining their nationality also mentioned (spontaneously) their *mother tongue* as an important element of their identity, felt a much stronger inclination for *cultural and historical traditions, peculiar mentality and world of traditions*, and for undertaking *an active, identity consciousness, which intends to pass special values to future generations*, as well as to make people aware of belonging to a *greater community* (nation) with its own culture. On the other hand, they strongly delimited themselves from the negative and indifferent identity types, and more moderately (it can be surprising to many people) from the emphasized feeling of *national pride* (and we will return to this topic later), as well as from the concept that considers identity as a merely *natural feature*.

Hereby, we must return to the identification type, which can be characterized by pride and self-esteem, which appeared as a repulsed category by mentioning the mother tongue. The average value of repulsion ( $Q = -0,600$ )

increased among Hungarians in Slovakia, the Ukraine, Yugoslavia, Slovakia (e.g.  $Q = -0,82$  in Slovakia), moreover this repulsive effect spread to the other identification category (“to be Hungarian is a *good feeling, joy, happiness*”, etc) of positive feelings in Slovakia and Transylvania. The explanation for this is that those who experienced their self-identity mainly at the level of positive feelings, were generally satisfied with stressing emotionality, and they rarely mentioned other motives. That is, *the identity types strongly referring to feelings had a low tendency of associating*; namely, they were quite simple and undifferentiated. Moreover, “pride” expressly repulsed the group that experienced its identity as a task ( $Q = -0,559$ ); this means that *the emotionally overwrought identity consciousness can become an obstacle to constructive action*.

The type of identity thinking in *task, responsible action* is mainly comprised by the mention of intellectual culture (cultivation of traditions, religion) and mother tongue. (Culture and mother tongue are close relatives in the language of the association coefficients: In addition to the fact that they attracted each other strongly, their other attractions and repulsions also coincided.)

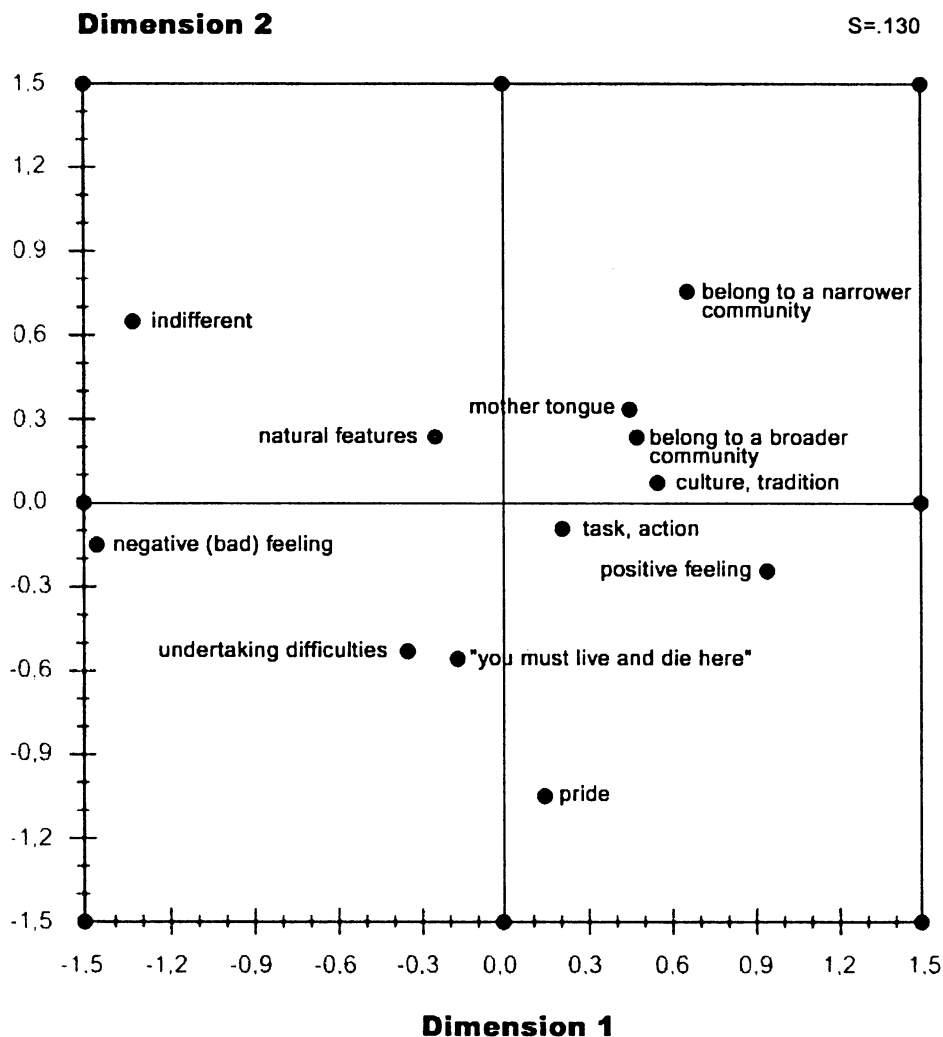
In the paragraphs above, we have examined the positive and negative fringe elements of the mother tongue and other identity elements within the structure of identity consciousness. Now – as a second step in our structural research – we *simultaneously* try to give a description of the *total structure* of identity consciousness that we were able to grasp. For this, we employ the MINISSA-procedure of multidimensional scaling (MDS), which can present the situation of the identity elements compared to one another in a map (See figure 2). The more or less often the respondents mentioned certain elements that diverged from their mathematical probability, the closer or farther the elements were from one another. The attraction and repulsion relations did not only operate in a bilateral direction, but at the same type in *every direction*; that is why we have information about the lines of force and principles of arrangement of the structure of identity consciousness. (All the identity elements that are detailed in Table 1 also appear – with a shorter description – in figure 2.) I would like to remind you that these elements became separated from one another during the content analysis of the spontaneous answers given to the open question “What does it mean to you to be a Hungarian?”

If we are looking for the *aspects of arrangement* appearing in each dimension of the identity structure of figure 2, – with a great simplification and with a little uncertainty – we then can discover the dimension of the “*negative*” and “*positive*” identity along the horizontal axis and we can call the vertical axis the dimension of *emotionality* and *reason*.

Figure 2

The space structure of the elements of identity consciousness among the adult Hungarian population (N=1950) beyond the Hungarian borders living in six Central-European countries (1991–1995)

3 dimension MINISSA-procedure



Let us see in detail the arrangement of identity elements along the *horizontal axis*. On the very edge of the negative domain, drifted the farthest from the center, we find the *negative identity*, which is experienced as something bad, and a little bit “above” this, also quite far from the center, it is the *indifferent* type:



That is, we encounter the cases of refused and averted identity consciousness in the “left side” of the system of coordinates – without any companion. Proceeding towards the positive domain (but before the origin), we meet the uncertain cases of identity acceptance: the opinion, which treats belonging to a nation as a *natural feature* (“I was born to be that”), and as a fact that does not require any special thought; as well as the “You must live and die here” type, which contains – though in a more poetic form – the “I was born here, and I am going to die here” type, but is, similarly to the previous one, a quite simplified opinion. (The real place of the opinion, which undergoes difficulties and conflicts for survival, would be on the positive side of the horizontal axis: it is possible that the distant relationship with the negative identity type with the negative elements inside it – though undertaken – attracted it to the negative side.) The uttermost point of the positive side is occupied by the category of “positive (good) feeling”; the other answer types offer a rich variety of undertaking identity and its positive attitude.

The negative sign (low) part of the *vertical axis* is the domain of emotions: the opinions that can be found here have strong (positive or negative) emotional attitudes. The end point of the minus sign domain of the axis is marked by *pride* and *self-esteem*, while the positive sign (above) phase is built from *more rational* and *more instrumental* elements. Here, identity consciousness is not connected so much (or in the first place) to feelings, but to certain social institutions: communities, cultural goods and mother tongue.

*Mother tongue* and *language community* as an identity element is relatively close to the origin, which emphasizes its *central role* within identity consciousness. In its vicinity, we find those identity elements that we have come to know earlier as close “relatives”: the (language) *community*, the goods of intellectual *culture*, and the identity type thinking in activity and *tasks*. Mother tongue can be found in such a field of the self-identity consciousness structure, which refers to both the *undertaking* of identity and mainly to a *rational-constructive* character of the approach.

Thus, *in the opinion of minority Hungarians in Central Europe, mother tongue plays an outstandingly important and central role in that to which a nation's people feel themselves to belong*, also gathering to its vicinity the strong majority of other (especially the significantly high efficient) decisive elements. This insistence towards the use of the mother tongue, however, does not mean the refusal of bilingualism (our research experienced the intensive use of the language of the majority nations in all regions), but the “Luxembourg” gesture of protecting and defending one’s own values; that is to say – opposing assimilation – the *intention* to maintain bilingualism.

## National Self-image

An organic part of identity consciousness is the image, which the nation creates about itself and preserves. In what follows, we do not intend to examine the reality content of this image, but from one aspect only – its nature. That is, we do not deal with the question *what Hungarians are like*, but with *what people* who belong to this nation *think* about this question.

We asked our respondents living in Hungary and beyond the borders the following – open – question: “In your opinion are there any features that generally characterize Hungarians? (And if so, which are these features?)” We thus gave the possibility for the respondents to refuse the “self-image construction”. (The proportion of them was between 15% and 25% in each country.)

The figure 3 compares the answers given in different regions from the aspect of the ratio of mentioned *positive and negative features*. The structure of answers of the Hungarians in the Ukraine, Romania, Yugoslavia, and to certain extent that of the Hungarians in Slovakia is very similar. (Hungarians living in Slovakia are a specialty: among them there was the highest mention of *no* Hungarian national features.) The highest proportion (see the black columns of the figure 3) of those who characterized the state of being Hungarian *only with positive features* is in those countries where the minority being – for political and/or economic reasons – is the most difficult – in Yugoslavia (Serbia), the Ukraine, Romania and Slovakia.<sup>2</sup> According to the signs, *the minority answer givers in the region counterbalance the burdening pressure on them by the strengthening of their awareness of self-values*<sup>3</sup>, and they cannot afford the (democratic) “luxury” of a more critical self-vision. The situation is not the same in *Slovenia* and *Austria*, where the circumstances are more favorable, and where the dominant answer type was the combined mention of good and bad features characterizing Hungarians, which gave the possibility for a more self-critical, real group self-image.

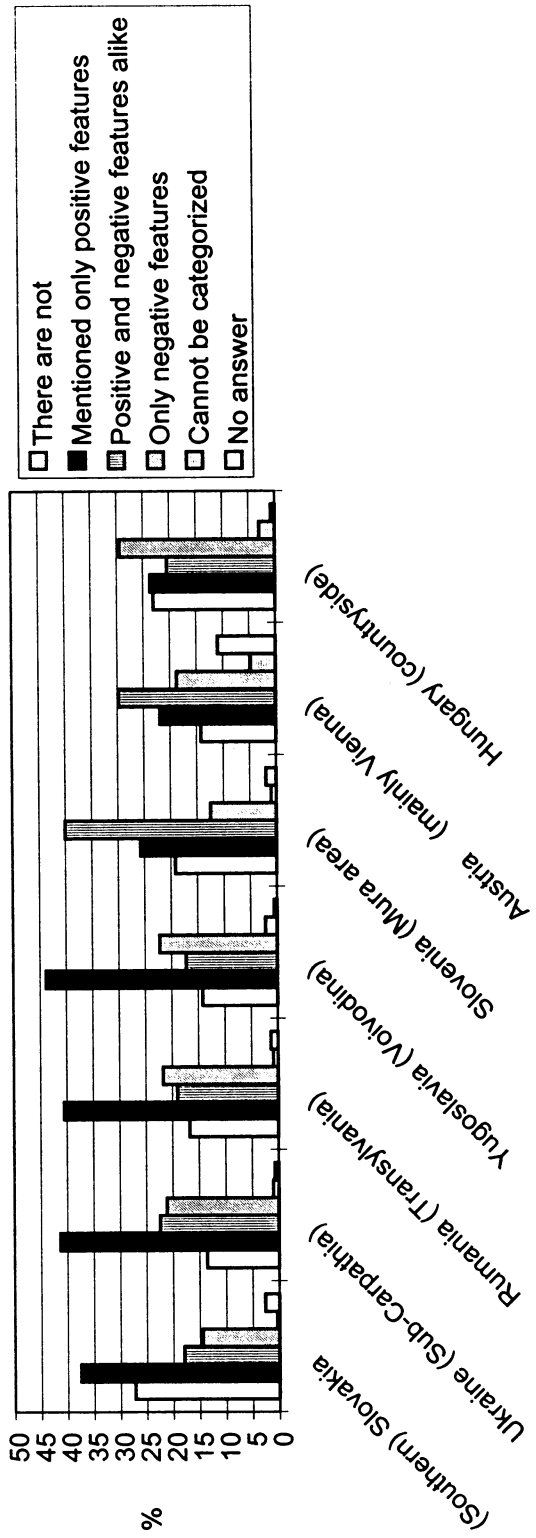
Answers from Hungary differed the most from all the others, with the dominance of the opinion that special Hungarian features – if any – are exclusively of a negative nature. (Almost 30% of them said this.) Thus, *the national self-image of Hungarian society is more negative and critical than that of the minority Hungarians living in the neighboring countries*.

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<sup>2</sup> Among the Hungarians in Croatia, this category reached a record height (50%) in 1997: The psychological situation of wishing for compensation was probably the result of the war, as well as its consequences.

<sup>3</sup> György Csepeli writes about this phenomenon in the following way: “What happens is that during the reduction of the dissonance provoked by aggression, offending prejudice, or a hostile attitude towards the group belonging, the feeling of identity is activated.” (Gy. Csepeli: Szociálpszichológia [Social Psychology] Budapest, 1997. Osiris K. p. 526.)

Figure 3  
 Are there Hungarian national features?  
 (The composition of national self-image among Hungarian nationals in seven countries' 1992-1995)



The more positive self-image (containing more favorable features) of the latter coincide with their positive identity consciousness. We can rather conclude that the negative self-image of the mother country is not so much a sign of a more objective and real self-image, but the confusion of self-value and identity consciousness; the shock to the feeling of security. There is empirical evidence that proves that this frustrated state is the product of a *process of deterioration*, which can be determined at the same time. Guy Lázár shows the deterioration of the Hungarian national self-image between 1987 and 1992, according to which Hungarians living in Hungary became mainly poorer, sadder and more factious by 1992.<sup>4</sup> György Hunyady registers the documents of a more negative self-description between 1981 and 1991, and then between 1991 and 1994.<sup>5</sup> According to this, *the self-value consciousness became unsure as a transitory phenomenon of the process of the change of regime*. (The reasons for this could be the subject of a separate analysis.)

During those times, systemic changes took place in the neighboring countries as well, but the Hungarian minorities living there reacted to this process in a different way than did the Hungarians in Hungary. As we have seen, the cold, refusing majority social environment can make minorities – for the sake of self-protection and self-strengthening – susceptible to the possession of a more lenient and more positive opinion about themselves.

The nature of national self-image was strongly influenced by more social factors and in each region this influence was similar. The excessively bright (merely consisting of positive features) image of Hungarians mainly belongs to physical workers and inactive groups, while *the national self-image of more qualified groups contain significantly more (self-) critical elements*. The criticisms, however, do not show unlimited with the increase of educational level: intellectuals are the leaders in mentioning not *only negative*, but also in mentioning the *combination of positive and negative features*. The national self-image contained more critical elements in towns and cities than in villages.

Questioning the *existence* of the so-called national features had the highest proportion among Hungarians living in Slovakia and in Hungary (around 25%). The indicative social group of this opinion was not the intellectuals, but for the most part the physical employees and the inactive groups (in Slovakia those who are not working in an intellectual occupation, but are intellectuals), as well as the inhabitants of smaller settlements.

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<sup>4</sup> G. Lázár: A kisebbségek szerepe a nemzeti identitás kialakulásában. (The Role of Minorities in Shaping National Identity.) Regio, 1995/1-2. p. 38-39.

<sup>5</sup> Gy. Hunyady: A nemzeti identitás és a sztereotípiák görbe tükré. (The Curved Mirror of National Identity and of Stereotypes.) Új Pedagógiai Szemle, 1997/10. p. 58-59.

Table 2

*What are the features that characterize the Hungarians? (Answers given to open questions with the number of references, 1992-1995.)*

Southern Slovakia	Ukraine (Sub-Carpathia)	Rumania (Transylvania)	Yugoslavia (Voivodina)	Slovenia (Mura area)	Austria (Mainly Vienna)	Hungary (countryside)
hospitable (36)	loves work, diligent (76)	diligent, loves work, hard-working (66)	diligent, hard-working (127)	friendly, jovial, charitable (24)	discordant, factious (13)	hard-working, diligent, loves work (67)
friendly, philanthropic (35)	discordant (28)	discordant (63)	discordant (61)	has a good kitchen(15)	character of ephemeral enthusiasm (12)	envious (34)
diligent, wants to act (35)	honorable (26)	honorable, firm, a man of character (50)	envious, selfish, greedy (34)	proud (13)	skillful, smart (8)	discordant (26)
temperamental (31)	proud (26)	proud, dignified (35)	educated, civilized (25)	talented (11)	talented, educated (7)	hospitable (21)

(Continued)

proud (27)	hospitable (18)	loves his country, his birthplace and freedom (33)	honorable, generous (23)	militant, temperamental (10)	tolerant, open (7)	voracious (10)
tough, steady (27)	steady (16)	steady (32)	talented, intelligent (17)	pessimistic (9)	diligent (6)	passionate, thoughtless (9)
jolly, cheerful (23)	friendly (14)	quick-tempered, turbulent (25)	unsociable (14)	longs for freedom, patriotic (7)	honorable, trustworthy (5)	
national self-consciousness, patriotism (23)	patriotism (12)	arrogant, conceited, selfish (23)	hospitable (14)	discordant (6)	tough, steady (5)	
discordant (19)	envious (11)	honest, a man of his word (22)		honorable (5)	hospitable, helpful (5)	
talented, educated (17)		shows interest, educated (20)		hard worker (5)	proud, dignified (4)	
honorable, honest (13)		obstinate, headstrong (17)				
		loyal (17)				

Table 2 enumerates the concretely mentioned “Hungarian characteristics”. At first sight, it can be stated that the Hungarian self-description has stereotypes that cross borders.

This is for example the fact that the respondents generally considered *the positive relation to work* (diligent, hard-working, loves work, etc.) as (one) of the most positive features, and it is supplemented by such leading positive characteristics as *honorable, educated* ('talented, civilized') and *friendly* ('hospitable'). We can find wandering motives among the negative features as well: In almost all of the regions, the most negative feature is being *factious*, and as a result of this *envy, selfishness* ('headstrong, obstinate'), and *quickness of temper* ('passionate, thoughtless', etc.). *Pride* is floating between the two classes of features, which is once mentioned together with 'self-esteem', and other times with 'arrogance', and thus receives its rather positive or rather negative shade of meaning.

It is possible that there are no “Hungarian features”, though they *still exist* in the self-image of a significant number of Hungarians, all the more so because *very similar anti-stereotypes appeared and are still living in different political-cultural environments*. It is again the adult society of Hungary that stands out the most from the others with its poor and mainly negative attitudes. And it is not only our research done at several places that outlines such a coherent self-image; other research recorded similar results, as well.<sup>6</sup>

## Summary<sup>7</sup>

We found that both national identity consciousness and vision of the future, as well as national self-image and religiousness – with a self-defending and self-sustaining feature – is generally stronger and more positive among the Hungarian minority groups of Central Europe than in Hungary itself. We must note that these results could have been made sharper by the fact that we measured them after the fall of the Communist system, which throughout several decades – in the interest of the Great Power – urged a false internationalism, bottled up the national feeling of subjugated nations, and hindered the practice of religion. It is also true that the picture of social consciousness in the similar

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<sup>6</sup> Valér Veres for example found *diligent, honorable and friendly* as the leading categories in the self-image of the Hungarians living in Transylvania, and in the negative list *proud* (conceited), *factious, selfish*. See: V. Veres: cited work. Regio, 1997/3-4. p. 32. What refers to an even greater constancy is that: already István Széchenyi, one of the greatest Hungarian politicians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, one and a half century ago was castigating similar "national sins", similar to the ones, we registered. See.: *Gyula Szekfü: Három nemzedék és ami utána következik*. (Three generations and what comes after them.) Budapest, without date, Hungarian Royal University Press. p. 18 and the following ones.

<sup>7</sup> In our summary we deal with the summary of those topics as well, to which we did not have the possibilities to discuss in details - because of reasons of size.

regimes of different countries became different in majority and in minority situations.

We experienced that both *the consciousness of belonging together of the culture-nation*, and the *tendency* according to which *the opinion about the relations to other nations* (which is more favorable among Hungarians living beyond the borders than in Hungary) is becoming better with the increasing level of education and with the strengthening of identity consciousness. When we compared *identity types* and the *value system*, we found that minority or majority situation caused significant differences. However, these were not the main dividing lines, but were rather the *negative-indifferent* and the *positive identity*, respectively. The former, tendentially, was characterized by an expressly tolerant value orientation, referring to conformism, and to a self-enforcement inclination without any cultural background. The latter, that is to say the positive identity, was surrounded by a stable group of traditional and modern values (religious belief, conscious work, desire for knowledge, tolerance, etc.). (The positive identity *merely* based on *feelings* – in a minority situation – was also inclined to be intolerant.) That is to say, according to the signs those who clarify and undertake their identity without emotional exaggerations, can generally maintain a more tolerant relation to other, different identities.

We found that *religious* and *national identities* as forms of consciousness, support and mutually compliment each other. This mutuality and interdependence becomes stronger in minority situations, mainly in those cases in which the minority differs in religion from the majority nation.

(This study contains the details of the book “*Identitás, kultúra, kisebbség*” [Identity, culture, minority. Survey among the Hungarians in Central Europe.] By the same author in a somewhat differently structured form. Budapest. 1999. Osiris and Minority Research Workshop of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.)



GYÖRGY ÉGER

## The Two-sided Mirror Ethnic Preferences In Some Central-European Border Regions

What role do borders play in the life of ethnic groups? Do borders separate people or, alternatively, connect them? What similarities or differences are detectable in the living conditions and life styles of ethnic groups living in the same region, yet in different countries?

The present comparative study, carried out some time ago, tries to answer these questions which pose serious challenges for today's social scientist.

The sociological survey covered four of the so-called *three-border regions* in Central Europe. These were the *Hungarian–Slovakian–Ukrainian*, the *Hungarian–Rumanian–Ukrainian*, the *Hungarian–Slovenian–Austrian* and the *Hungarian–Slovakian–Austrian border regions*. From the above mentioned regions the first two situated on the eastern, the last two on the western part of Hungary.

As the list above shows, the study involved six countries, namely Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Slovenia, Slovakia and Ukraine. For the sample a total of 120 settlements were examined. Based on 30-kilometer diameter area centered on each theoretical meeting point of three borders, 30 settlements (ten in each country) were chosen from the regions. Grouped by countries they are as follows: Austria: 20, Hungary: 40, Rumania: 10, Slovenia: 10, Slovakia: 20, Ukraine/Ruthenia: 20. On average (i.e. in relation to settlement size) data was recorded in ten families in each settlement by applying an unusually long – about three hours – questionnaire containing approximately 500 questions. Thus information was recorded from 1200 households. The above methodological introduction clearly shows that two-thirds of the studied settlements or households – 80 settlements and 800 households – were located outside Hungarian borders. Such a large empirical survey of these regions is a first for Hungarian sociology.

The goal of this study – as the questions in the introduction reveal – is to examine the ethnic preferences of populations living in the defined regions of the countries along Hungarian borders.

Leaving the methodological introduction behind, we begin with the empirical data of the survey and examine the proportion and characteristics of the sample.

The number or proportion of Hungarian speaking heads of households is 768 or 64.3 percent in the entire sample. Naturally, ethnic Hungarian households sampled are not evenly proportioned in the different countries or different regions within the countries. The following two tables contain information about their distribution according to the ethnicity. (i.e. the mother language and nationality).

Table 1

**The distribution of Hungarian-speaking heads of households in the different countries**

Country	Number of People	Percentage
Hungary:	363	47,3
Slovakia:	147	19,1
Ukraine:	179	23,3
Rumania:	45	5,9
Slovenia:	31	4,0
Austria:	3	0,4
Total	768	100,0

Table 2

**The number and proportion of Hungarian-speaking heads of households in the sample population of each country**

Country	Theoretical	Actual	Hungarian-speaking out of these	
	Size of sample		Number	Ratio (%)
Hungary	400	403	363	90,1
Slovakia	200	197	147	74,6
Ukraine	200	199	179	89,9
Rumania	100	100	45	45,0
Slovenia	100	101	31	30,7
Austria	200	195	3	1,5
Total	1200	1195	768	64,3

In order to have an understanding of ethnic Hungarians in the *total examined population* it seems sensible to include the ethnic composition of the entire population by both region and country.

Table 3

**Distribution of heads of households by their native language in each region (% , N=1195)**

Region	Hungarian-Slovakian-Ukrainian	Hungarian-Rumanian-Ukrainian	Hungarian-Slovenian-Austrian	Hungarian-Slovakian-Austrian	Total
Native Language					
Hungarian	86,4	78,8	31,3	60,2	64,3

(Continued)

Slovakian	9,9	-	-	7,7	4,4
Ukrainian	2,6	3,0	-	-	1,4
Rumanian	-	16,2	-	-	4,0
Slovenian	-	-	34,7	-	8,6
German	-	-	31,0	31,8	15,6
Other	1,1	2,0	3,0	0,3	1,7
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 4

**Distribution of heads of households by nationality in each country**

(%, N=1195)

Country Nationality	Hungary	Slovakia	Ukraine	Rumania	Slovenia	Austria	Total
Hungarian	89,6	72,6	89,9	46,0	28,7	-	63,4
Austrian	-	-	-	-	-	95,9	15,6
Slovenian	6,5	-	-	-	70,3	-	8,1
Slovakian	0,2	26,9	2,0	-	-	-	4,9
Rumanian	-	-	-	48,0	-	-	4,0
Ukrainian	0,2	-	6,0	-	-	0,5	1,0
Other	3,5	0,5	2,0	6,0	1,0	3,6	3,0
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
n	403	197	199	100	101	195	1195

The above tables show that ethnic Hungarians represent the greatest weight in the four examined regions. This weight nevertheless significantly differs by region and country: while in the two eastern regions it exceeds two-thirds of the population, it is significantly less (between 30 and 60 percent) in the two western regions.

In terms of the *non-Hungarian* population, the state-forming (or majority) nationality only comprises the majority in the Austrian and Slovenian areas.

Table 5

**Proportion of majority nationality by country in surveyed regions (%)**

Country Nation	Hungary	Slovakia	Ukraine	Rumania	Slovenia	Austria
Hungarian	89,6					
Slovakian		26,9				

(Continued)

Ukrainian			6,0			
Rumanian				48,0		
Slovenian					70,3	
Austrian						95,9

By comparing the above data with the 1990 population census, we can state that the sample satisfactorily reflects the ethnic relations of the four surveyed regions.

As mentioned, one of the goals of our survey is examining inter-ethnic relations and measuring ethnic sympathy and antipathy in border regions with mixed populations.

To describe inter-ethnic relations, the scale of ethnic homogeneity and ethnic sympathy/antipathy was used for the survey.

#### a/ Ethnic homogeneity

First we have to make it clear what we mean by ethnic homogeneity.

In the course of evaluating the data, the main component which described the ethnic status of a person centered on five variables. These questions were:

- What is your native language?
- What language do you speak with your spouse?
- What language do you speak with your children?
- What nationality are you?
- What nationality is your spouse?

On the basis of these questions, households could be stated *ethnically homogenous* when at *least three of the five variables* had the same value. According to this definition, the majority of households in the sample – 1178 households, i.e. 98.6% – are ethnically homogenous. Nearly two-thirds of the ethnically homogenous households (768 or 64.3%) are Hungarian, and 410 (or 34.3%) are ethnically homogenous non-Hungarian families.

Table 6

**The proportion of the ethnically homogeneous households by ethnic groups (N=1195)**

Ethnic group	Households	
	Number	Ratio
Hungarian	768	64,3
Austrian	194	16,2

(Continued)

Slovenian (+Vend)	96	8,0
Slovakian	55	4,6
Rumanian	48	4,0
Ukrainian	10	0,8
Other	7	0,6
Total	1178	98,6

After this let us examine the geographical, regional proportion of the ethnically homogenous groups.

Table 7

**Ethnically homogenous Hungarian households by country (N=768)**

Country	Households		
	Number	%	standardized figure
Hungary	370	48,2	92,5
Slovakia	145	18,9	72,5
Ukraine	179	23,3	89,5
Rumania	46	6,0	46,0
Slovenia	27	3,5	27,0
Austria	1	0,1	0,5
Total	768	100,0	-

Table 8

**Ethnically homogenous non-Hungarian households by country (N=410)**

Country	Households		
	Number	%	standardized figure
Hungary	22	5,4	5,5
Slovakia	53	12,9	26,5
Ukraine	15	3,7	7,5
Rumania	53	12,9	53,0
Slovenia	74	18,0	74,0
Austria	193	47,1	96,5
Total	410	100,0	-

A similar analysis can also be carried out by region and, within these, sub-region.

From the analysis by region we see that in two regions – namely, the Hungarian-Slovakian-Ukrainian and the Hungarian-Ukrainian-Rumanian regions – homogenous Hungarian households are the absolute majority. The ratio of homogenous non-Hungarian households is highest in the Hungarian-Slovenian-Austrian region.

Table 9.  
**Households by ethnic homogeneity and region**  
(N=1195)

Country	Ethnically homogenous		Non homogenous	Total
	Non Hungarian	Hungarian		
Hungarian-Slovakian-Ukrainian	39	260	-	299
Hungarian-Ukrainian-Rumanian	58	236	3	297
Hungarian-Slovenian-Austrian	178	96	12	286
Hungarian-Slovakian-Austrian	135	176	2	313
Total	410	768	17	1195
Percentage				
Hungarian-Slovakian-Ukrainian	13,0	87,0	-	100,0
Hungarian-Ukrainian-Rumanian	19,5	79,5	1,0	100,0
Hungarian-Slovenian-Austrian	62,2	33,6	4,2	100,0
Hungarian-Slovakian-Austrian	43,1	56,2	0,6	100,0
Total	34,3	64,3	1,4	100,0

We also have data about ethnic relations of sub-regions across the border. In the surveyed regions, the ratio of the homogenous Hungarian families is highest in the Ruthenia area: it is more than 90 percent in the ex-Ugocsa area (at Rumania), but it is also about 90 percent in the Ung-Zemplen area. The next in the line are two Slovakian sub-regions: Western Slovakia (the Somorja district of the ex-Bratislava county) with 75 percent and eastern Slovakia (the former county of Bodroghoz and Nagykapos) with 70 percent.

The Rumanian border region included in the survey is a typical mixed population area, the Hungarian population under 50 percent. Finally in Slovenia and Austria the non-Hungarian population is in absolute majority. (see Table 10.)

It is interesting that in only one sub-region – on the Hungarian side of the Hungarian–Slovenian–Austrian region – we can find a larger number of non-homogenous households; e.g. Slovenian–Hungarian mixed marriages. It is also the only region among the four sub-regions in Hungary where the ratio of the ethnically homogenous, non-Hungarian households is notable, and these are also homogenous Slovenian families.

Table 10

**Households by ethnic homogeneity, region and sub-region**

(N=1195)

Ethnic homogeneity  Region, subregion	Ethnically homogenous		Not homo- genous	Total	Ratio of ethnically homogenous Hungarian households out of this (%)
	Non Hungarian	Hungarian			
<i>Hungarian–Slovakian– Ukrainian</i> Hungary	-	102	-	102	39,2
Slovakia	29	70	-	99	26,9
Ukraine	10	88	-	98	33,8
Total of region	39	260	-	299	100,0
<i>Hungarian–Ukrainian –Rumanian</i>	-	99	1	100	41,9
	5	91	1	97	38,6
	53	46	1	100	19,5
Total of region	58	236	3	297	100,0
<i>Hungarian–Slovenian– Austrian</i>	22	69	12	103	71,9
	74	27	-	101	28,1
	82	-	-	82	-
Total of region	178	96	12	286	100,0

(Continued)

<i>Hungarian–Slovakian–Austrian</i>	-	100	-	100	56,8
	24	75	1	100	42,6
	111	1	1	113	0,6
Total of region	135	176	2	313	100,0
TOTAL	410	768	17	119 5	
%	34,3	64,3	1,4	100, 0	

b/ *Ethnic sympathy and antipathy*

To measure traits of ethnic sympathy and antipathy, a modified version of the Bogardus scale was used. (The modification basically means that relations are replaced with numerical values and the rate of sympathy/antipathy ranked on a scale of ranging from 1 to 5 [1=least favored, 5=most favored ethnic group]. Twenty-one nations or ethnic groups had to be ranked – among these for the sake of control there was a non-existent one: etnian). (Table B/1, see Appendix.)

The evaluation of nations and ethnic groups in the surveyed regions is of special importance within the 21 groups. Within the discussed ten ethnic groups Hungarians rank first both by country and region. (not surprising since we questioned only Hungarian heads of households in this survey.)

In the two western regions, the Austrians ranked second after the Hungarians with a value of 4. On the other hand, in the two eastern regions the second place is taken by the other neighboring ethnic groups: Slovaks and Ukrainians. These are followed by the other neighboring countries – with a neutral sympathy index of three – while at the end of the scale stand the Roma, Rumanian and Serb ethnic groups – usually with a value of 2 which is below average.

Table 11  
Sympathy index of the neighboring nations by region

Region	Hungarian–Slovakian–Ukrainian	Hungarian–Ukrainian–Rumanian	Hungarian–Slovenian–Austrian	Hungarian–Slovakian–Austrian
Above average (4)	1	1	3	2
Average (3)	7	6	6	5
Under average (2)	2	3	1	3



If we compare the sympathy indexes of ethnic Hungarians and the majority nation in regions outside Hungary, we can see an interesting connection. From the difference between the values (the 'distance'), conclusions can be drawn about the relations of ethnic groups living together.

We can also note the relation of Hungarians and Slovaks is different in eastern and western Slovakia. In western Slovakia the distance is surprisingly larger, in other words judgement by Slovaks is significantly worse. This indicates conflicts of living together. (See Tables B/5 and B/8a)

Similarly judgement by Ukrainians is neither the same in the border-area near Slovakia nor the area near Rumania along the relatively short Hungarian–Ukrainian border. In the first region the prestige of Ukrainians is considerably lower, resulting in a difference between the sympathy-indexes of the two ethnic groups that is two times more than that measured in the Ukrainian sub-region of the Hungarian–Ukrainian–Rumanian border region. (Tables B/5a and B/6a)

The sympathy-index of ethnic Hungarians is only exceeded in one sub-region: Austrians in the Austrian area of the Hungarian–Slovenian–Austrian region. (Table B/7a)

As a control of the sympathy-index we can study the least favored ethnic group. Romas were rated in three of the four regions with a considerably high percentage – at times more than 60 percent – as the least favored neighboring ethnic group. (Tables B/5b–B/8b) Indeed, anti-Roma sentiment in the Hungarian–Slovakian–Ukrainian border region is so intense that authorities need to remain constantly aware of the situation. There is hope, however, in the Austrian–Hungarian–Slovenian region where most surveyed were indifferent to ethnic origin of their neighbors. (Table B/7b).

## **Ethnic sympathy and antipathy of Hungarian and non-Hungarian respondents**

One of the important tasks of the research was to determine to what extent ethnic preference differs among Hungarian and non-Hungarian populations. This question can be answered by classifying and ranking the 21 ethnic groups (Table 12). On the basis of the figures in the table the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Among Hungarian and non-Hungarian respondents there is only one ethnic group in the judgment of which there is major difference – the Hungarian ethnic group (26.8%).
2. The majority of Hungarian respondents (17 out of 21) judge better, think more positively of other nations and ethnic groups than non-Hungarians. (for example, opinions about Jews are significantly better by Hungarians living inside and outside Hungarian borders than among neighboring populations. This finding

also corresponds with survey results made in the region by U.S. Jewish organizations.)

3. The remaining four cases can be divided into two groups:

a/ Regarding Austrians and Germans, rather than rejecting Hungarians, non-Hungarian respondents from neighboring countries more prefer their own ethnicity than Hungarians.

b/ Regarding Rumanians and Romas, the reserve of Hungarian respondents slightly exceeds that of non-Hungarians.

4. Regarding Hungarian respondents, 18 of the 21 elements on the scale exceeded the 3.0 average, thus indicating a general positive attitude. This observation supports point 2 above. (The number of elements among non-Hungarian respondents is 15)

The ethnic groups surveyed can be put into three categories according to ethnic preference of Hungarian and non-Hungarian respondents:

- small difference in judgment ( $\cong$  9.9% relative difference)
- considerable difference in judgment (10.0–19.9%)
- major difference in judgment (above 20%)

Relative difference of ethnic preference among Hungarian and non-Hungarian respondents

Group 1: 0–9.9%

a/ negative

Austrian	-9.5
German	-3.8
Rumanian	-2.0
Roma	-2.3

b/ positive

English:	6.0
Japanese:	6.3
American:	5.5
French:	4.0
Ruthenian:	9.0
Jewish:	8.5
Slovenian	0.3
Etnian:	4.5
Croatian:	6.8
Arabian:	4.3
Serbian:	9.5

Group 2: 10.0–19.9%

Ukrainian: 12.0

Czech: 12.8

Slovakian: 11.0

Polish: 10.0

Russian: 10.5

Group 3: above 20.0%

Hungarian: 26.8

Table 12

**Index of ethnic sympathy among Hungarian and non-Hungarian respondents**

N=1195

Ethnic group	Complete sample		Difference	Relative difference
	Hungarian	Non Hungarian		%
Hungarian	<b>4,77</b>	3,70	+1,07	+26,8
English	<b>3,92</b>	3,68	+0,24	6,0
Austrian	<b>3,91</b>	4,29	- 0,38	- 9,5
Japanese	<b>3,90</b>	3,65	+0,25	6,3
American	<b>3,85</b>	3,63	+0,22	5,5
German	<b>3,84</b>	3,99	- 0,15	- 3,8
French	<b>3,82</b>	3,66	+0,16	4,0
Ukrainian	<b>3,72</b>	3,24	+0,48	12,0
Czech	<b>3,68</b>	3,17	+0,51	12,8
Slovakian	<b>3,63</b>	3,19	+0,44	11,0
Polish	<b>3,60</b>	3,20	+0,40	10,0
Ruthenian	<b>3,50</b>	3,14	+0,36	9,0
Jewish	<b>3,46</b>	3,12	+0,34	8,5
Slovenian	<b>3,42</b>	3,41	+0,01	0,3
Etnian	<b>3,37</b>	3,19	+0,18	4,5
Russian	<b>3,33</b>	2,91	+0,42	10,5
Croatian	<b>3,13</b>	2,86	+0,27	6,8
Arabian	<b>3,01</b>	2,84	+0,17	4,3
Rumanian	<b>2,87</b>	2,95	- 0,08	- 2,0
Serbian	<b>2,69</b>	2,31	+0,38	9,5
Roma	<b>2,35</b>	2,44	- 0,09	- 2,3
	<b>N=768</b>	N=427		

## Ethnic self-estimation and the image of neighboring ethnicities

In the next section we examine the ethnic self-estimation of Hungarians both living within and without Hungarian borders, the image they have about their neighbors, and the image their neighbors have about them.

Table 13

### Ethnic composition of regions and sub-regions

(N=1195)

Ethnic group Region, subregion	Hungarian	Non Hungarian	Total
Hungary	102	-	102
Slovakia	70	29	99
Ukraine	86	12	98
Total	258	41	299
Hungary	100	-	100
Ukraine	89	8	97
Rumania	45	55	100
Total	234	63	297
Hungary	64	39	103
Slovenia	31	70	101
Austria	-	82	82
Total	95	191	286
Hungary	100	-	100
Slovakia	78	22	100
Austria	3	110	113
Total	181	132	313
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>1195</b>

Table 14.  
Self-estimation of Hungarians from Hungary (versus neighboring ethnic groups)

Ethnic group Subregion	Hungarians	Neighboring ethnic groups							Difference (1)	Relative difference %
		Slovakians	Ukrainians	Rumanians	Slovenians	Austrians	Romas			
Region 1	4,57	3,89	3,91	-	-	-	-	2,52	0,68	17,0
Region 2	4,41	-	3,24	2,55	-	-	-	2,35	1,86	46,5!
Region 3	4,70	-	-	-	4,20	4,12	-	2,66	0,50	12,5
Region 4	4,84	3,11	-	-	-	3,77	-	2,27	1,07	26,8

1: Difference between Hungarians and majority ethnic groups

Table 15  
Self-estimation of ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary (versus majority ethnic group)

Ethnic group Region, subregion	Hungarians	Majority nation	Difference	Relative difference (%)
Region 1 Slovakia	4,61	Slovakians: 4,29	0,32	8,0
Region 2 Ukraine	4,73	Ukrainians: 3,21	1,52	38,0
Region 3 Ukraine	4,62	Ukrainians: 3,84	0,78	19,5
Region 4 Rumania	4,02	Rumanians: 3,49	0,53	13,3
Region 5 Slovenia	4,42	Slovenians: 4,13	0,29	7,3
Region 6 Slovakia	4,22	Slovakians: 3,40	0,82	20,5

Table 16  
**Self-estimation of neighboring ethnic groups (versus Hungarian ethnic group)**

	Ethnic group Region, subregion	Non Hungarian ethnic group	Hungarians	Difference	Relative difference (%)
Region 1	(Slovakia)	4,59	4,21	0,38	9,5
	(Ukraine)	4,33	4,83	-0,50	-12,5
Region 2	(Ukraine)	5,00	4,50	0,50	12,5
	Rumania	4,40	2,84	1,56	39,0
Region 3	Slovenia	3,99	3,53	0,46	11,5
	Austria	4,51	3,15	1,36	34,0
Region 4	(Slovakia)	2,64	2,23	0,41	10,3
	Austria	4,36	3,23	1,13	28,3

Reviewing the responses from within Hungary we see that:

- regional differences are insignificant,
- self-estimation of Hungarians is regularly higher than that of their neighboring ethnicities,
- Rumanians are least favored as a neighboring ethnicity,
- Romas are the least favored and shunned within mixed ethnic areas of the border regions, to a worrying extent. (Table 14.)

Similar statements can be made about Hungarians living outside Hungarian borders. Also Hungarians estimation of their own ethnic group is higher than that of the majority ethnic group. But the greatest difference in their case shows not in relation with Rumanians but instead with Ukrainians. It is also interesting that Hungarians in western Slovakia are more reserved with the Slovaks than the Hungarians in eastern Slovakia. (Table 15.)

We also need, however, to observe the other side of the coin, namely, How do non-Hungarian ethnic groups in the border regions along Hungary regard Hungarians?

The self-esteem of the ethnic groups is also revealed in the self-estimation here with one exception regarding the Ukrainian side of the Hungarian-Slovakian-Ukrainian region: non-Hungarians rate themselves a point higher than they rate Hungarians. However it is mostly Austrians and Rumanians who rank themselves higher than Hungarians. (Table 16.)

Table 17

**Comparing ethnic judgments of Hungarians from Hungary and neighboring ethnic groups**

Ethnic group-pairs	Index of sympathy	Difference	Relative difference (%)
Hungarians about Slovaks	3,89		
(Slovaks about Hungarians)	4,21	-0,32	- 8,0
Hungarians about Ukrainians	3,91		
Ukrainians about Hungarians	4,83	-0,92	-23,0
Hungarians about Rumanians	2,55		
Rumanians about Hungarians	2,84	-0,29	- 7,3
Hungarians about Slovenians	4,20		
Slovenians about Hungarians	3,53	0,67	16,8
Hungarians about Austrians	3,77		
Austrians about Hungarians	3,23	0,54	13,5

By continuing this line of thought and using the same breakdown, the ethnic judgments by ethnic couples can be compared.

Two distinct groups can be made by comparing the opinions of Hungarians from Hungary about their neighboring ethnic groups, and the opinions of these ethnic groups about Hungarians:

1. Concerning Rumanians, Slovaks, and Ukrainians, the picture formed by these neighboring ethnic groups about Hungarians is more favorable than the picture Hungarians formed about them.
2. The opposite is the case of Austrians and Slovenes: the picture formed about them by Hungarians is more favorable than the picture they formed about Hungarians. (Table 17.)

However we can find a significant difference in the case of Hungarians living outside the borders of Hungary – their opinion about the majority ethnic group is generally more positive than the opinion of these majority ethnic groups about Hungarians. (The table shows an exception regarding Hungarian–Ukrainian relations. However in this case the number of Ukrainians sampled is too small to draw justifiable conclusions, further political events of the recent period contradict the above hypothesis. See Table 18.)

Table 18  
**Comparing ethnic judgments of ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary and majority ethnic groups**

Ethnic group-pairs	Index of sympathy	Difference	Relative difference (%)
Hungarians about Slovaks (1)	4,29		
(Slovaks about Hungarians)	4,21	0,08	2,0
Hungarians about Ukrainians	3,21		
(Ukrainians about Hungarians)	4,83	-1,62	-40,5
Hungarians about Rumanians	3,49		
Rumanians about Hungarians	2,84	0,65	16,3
Hungarians about Slovenians	4,13		
Slovenians about Hungarians	3,53	0,60	15,0
Austrians about Hungarians	3,23	-	-

Note:  
 ( ) = the sample-element number is under 30  
 (1)= Eastern Slovenia



Table 19

**Comparing ethnic judgments of Hungarians from Hungary and ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary by region**

	Indicator Region, subregion	Index of sympathy	Difference	Relative difference
Region 1	Hungary	4,57		
	Slovakia	4,61	-0,04	- 1,0
	Ukraine	4,73	-0,16	- 4,0
Region 2	Hungary	4,41		
	Ukraine	4,62	-0,21	- 5,3
	Rumania	4,02	0,39	9,8
Region 3	Hungary	4,70		
	Slovenia	4,42	0,28	7,0
	(Austria)	-		
Region 4	Hungary	4,84		
	Slovakia	4,22	0,62	15,5
	(Austria)	-		

We also find noticeable differences by comparing the ethnic self-estimation and self-esteem of Hungarians living within Hungary and those living outside the borders. They show that in the eastern regions the self-estimation of ethnic Hungarians outside Hungary (except Rumania's Szatmar region) is higher than within Hungary itself. The opposite is the case in western regions where people living in Hungary have higher self-esteem and self-confidence. (Table 19.)

This phenomena can be explained by the following:

1. This west-east 'axis', present and well-known in Hungary, appears not only in social and urban contexts but mental context as well concerning levels of self-esteem.
2. Concerning ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary, it is strange that there is such a significant difference in the ethnic consciousness of ethnic Hungarians living in the two Slovakian regions.

\* \* \*

Table 20

**Ethnic image formed about neighboring majority ethnic groups by Hungarians from Hungary and ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary by region**

Ethnic group Region, subregion	Neighboring or majority ethnic groups						Diffe- rence (1)	Relative difference (%)	Diffe- rence (2)	Relative difference (%)
	Slovaks	Ukrainians	Rumanians	Slovenes	Austrians					
Region 1										
Hungary	3,89	3,91	-	-	-	-	-0,40	0,15	3,8	
Slovakia	4,29	3,76					-0,97	0,70	17,5	
Ukraine	2,92	3,21								
Region 2										
Hungary	-	3,24	2,55	-	-	-	-0,60	0,35	8,8	
Ukraine	-	3,84	2,20	-	-	-	1,15	-0,94	-23,5	
Rumania	-	2,09	3,49	-	-	-				
Region 3										
Hungary	-	-	-	4,20	4,12					
Slovenia (Austria)	-	-	-	4,13	3,94		0,07	0,18	4,5	
Region 4										
Hungary	3,11	-	-	-	3,77					
Slovakia (Austria)	3,40	-	-	-	3,31		-0,29	0,46	11,5	

In summary, significant differences are seen in the ethnic preferences of nations and ethnic groups living in the surveyed Central European border regions. Ethnic preference strongly correlates with the status a given ethnic group holds in the country - i.e. either majority or minority. This distinction makes it possible to understand the different answers of Hungarians within the borders of Hungary and ethnic Hungarians outside the borders.

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## National and Language Identity of Hungarians in Voivodina (Yugoslavia)

The following are the first results of a sociological survey. It was carried out in the last period of the Milosević-era, in May 2000, one year after the NATO-bombardments.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the survey reports on a period which has already come to an end. Whether it is really over now and whether the political changes in the autumn of 2000 (the fall of Milosevič and the slow democratization of Yugoslavia, which is full of contradictions) has changed the situation and frame of mind of the Hungarian minority, and if so, to what extent: these are the questions to be answered. Further surveys may provide these if they compare their experiences to our results or to earlier ones.

*Five hundred-sixty two Hungarian adults* (over 18) were surveyed at their homes in *21 settlements* (towns and villages of different size in different parts of Voivodina). This sample was chosen on the basis of the quota-method. Thus, on the whole it represents the Hungarian population of Voivodina according to the size of the settlements, sex, age and educational level. (Or rather, the composition of the Hungarians that has changed in many respects since then, according to the data of the 1991 census.)<sup>2</sup> The language of the survey was Hungarian.

The analysis of the survey results was carried out with *Miklós Tomka*, an expert in the sociology of religion. In the present study, mainly the various aspects of national and cultural identity are concerned. (A similar study – also with Miklós Tomka – was done in 1998 and 1999 that surveyed the Hungarian minority of Transylvania /Romania<sup>3</sup>, Sub-Carpathia /Ukraine/ and Slovakia. During the last months of 2000, we carried out a similar survey in Hungary, as well.)

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the KÓD Ltd. (Budapest) and the public opinion research group under the leadership of Gábrityné dr. Molnár Irén of the Scientific Association for the Research of the Hungarians (MTT) in Szabadka (Subotica) for organizing and carrying out the survey.

<sup>2</sup> Those who have left Voivodina in the 1990s were mainly the younger and more qualified people. Compared to the 1991 survey, the graduates are over-represented now, but those with a secondary school-exit certificate are somewhat under-represented, together with those who had even lower qualifications. The under 30 and over 60 age groups are also slightly over-represented at the expense of the middle aged. Although these disproportions counterbalance each other to some extent, we have to admit that the proportion of qualified people in the survey is higher than that of the whole Hungarian population in Voivodina. For this reason, our results could be a bit different from the real situation.

<sup>3</sup> Gereben, Ferenc - Tomka, Miklós: *Vallásosság és nemzettudat. Vizsgálódások Erdélyben* (Religiousness and National Consciousness. The Transylvanian Situation), Bp. 2000. Kerkai Jenő Egyházzociológiai Intézet.

We also have to add that we asked 2,800 Hungarian people<sup>4</sup> in eight Central European countries the majority of those survey questions that were asked in Voivodina in the first half of the 1990s. This means that later on, we could compare these results to those of Voivodina. It has to be mentioned that there are local research groups as well that report in a very authentic way on the difficult demographic economic and cultural situation of the Hungarian minority in Voivodina, as well as on the measures aimed at the assimilation of Hungarians from the 1920s, on the effects of the Yugoslavian wars in the 1990s and of the dictatorship.<sup>5</sup> These reports give us an accurate picture of the severely limited chances of the dramatically decreasing and even threatened Hungarian minority. The number of Hungarian inhabitants in Voivodina in the decades following World War II and even according to the 1971 census data, was between 420 and 440,000. According to the 1991 census the number of Hungarians in Voivodina was only 340,000. In the 1990s, the rate of decrease was increasing partially because of the flight of about 40,000 people to foreign countries due to the war and partially because of aging the seemingly unstoppable tendency of natural population decrease. According to estimates, the 2001 census will find only 270–280,000 Hungarian inhabitants in Voivodina.<sup>6</sup>

### National identity

When they were asked *whether they consider themselves to be members of one (or more) nation(s)*, after the hardships and trials of minority existence, only 2.5% of those questioned answered “no”. Ten percent of those surveyed reported on a *double* (mainly Hungarian and Serb) identity, while 88.5% definitely identified themselves as *Hungarians*. These rates does not indicate a unique phenomenon: We find similar ones relating to Hungarians in Slovakia and Sub-Carpathia (Ukraine), whereas in the adult population of Hungary, the proportion of those who definitely considered themselves Hungarians (because of the relatively high proportion /one tenth/ of those who said that they did not belong to any nation) was somewhat lower, 85%. Hungarian national consciousness seems to be the strongest in Transylvania (Romania): According to the results of

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<sup>4</sup> A detailed presentation and analysis of the data can be found in: Gereben, Ferenc: *Identitás, kultúra, kisebbség*. Felmérés a közép-európai magyar népesség körében. (Identity, Culture, Minority. A Survey of the Situation of the Hungarians in Central Europe.) Bp. 1999. Osiris-MTA Kisebbségkutató Műhely.

<sup>5</sup> Gábrityné dr. Molnár, Irén and Mirmics, Zsuzsa (eds.). *Vajdasági útkereső (Seeking Ways in Voivodina)* Szabadka. 1998. /MTT Könyvtár 2./; Göncz, Lajos: *A magyar nyelv Jugoszláviában (Vajdaságban)*. (Hungarian Language in Yugoslavia (in Voivodina).) Bp.- Újvidék, 1999. Osiris-Fórum-MTA Kisebbségkutató Műhely; Gábrityné dr. Molnár, Irén and Mirmics, Zsuzsa (eds.). *Vajdasági marasztaló (Stay in Voivodina)* Szabadka. 2000. /MTT Könyvtár 3./

<sup>6</sup> Mirmics, Károly: *Demográfiai jellemzők, társadalmi mutatók*. (Demographic Patterns, Social Indicators) In: *Vajdasági marasztaló (Stay in Voivodina)* opcit. 31., 45. pp.

our 1998 survey, 95% of the respondents explicitly defined themselves as Hungarians (that is to say, excluding those who declared double identity).

Data from Voivodina concerning the definition of national identity are similar to those relating to Hungarians living in Central Europe, yet the proportion of those who considered the declaration of national identity as a *drawback* (at least sometimes), was the highest (two-thirds) in Voivodina. (In other Central European countries, this proportion was between 50% and 60%.)

Those who said that they were members of the Hungarian nation (whether their identity was single or double) were asked the following question: “*What does it mean to you to be a Hungarian?*” We have analyzed the spontaneous answers to this question by working out identity categories (see Table 1). According to the table, the most dominant feature of Hungarian identity in Voivodina is of *cultural* character (relating to language, history, traditions, schools with Hungarian language teaching, etc.).

Table 1  
**“What does it mean to you to be a Hungarian?” Percentage Distribution of Identity Categories in Voivodina (May 2000)**

Identity categories	%
Does not know or no answer	5.8
<i>(Only) negative experiences:</i> the drawbacks of minority existence, hardships, suffering, depressing experiences, oppression, etc.	7.4
<i>Indifferent:</i> “it is all the same to me what I am”, “it is the same as belonging to other nations, nothing special”; “it is more important to be a human”.	7.2
<i>It is a natural, self-evident thing:</i> it is a given condition which we were born into, it is a matter of origin: our ancestors were Hungarian too.	5.9
<i>To belong to somewhere</i> (a community, nation, people, homeland, local environment, family).	6.3
<i>Common language and culture,</i> tradition, history, religion, customs, schools with Hungarian language teaching, education.	28.2
<i>Pride and other positive emotions</i> (joy, happiness, honor, reassurance, it means “everything”); or positive traits (as a Hungarian, you have to live honestly, respectably).	21.9
(Despite the hardships) declaring the identity, struggle, moral courage, duty; in spite of the drawbacks of minority existence, we have to maintain and foster our identity, we have to endure, we have to protect (or fight for) freedom and minority rights and we have to bequeath identity to the next generations.	17.3
Summa	100.0

Examining the process of identity definition, we found that *positive emotions* and having the courage *to declare and preserve* national identity played a very significant role. These were the three basic elements of Hungarian national consciousness in other Central European countries, as well. Only their inner ratio changes from region to region: In Transylvania (and in Sub-Carpathia), the emphasis was on having the courage to declare your Hungarian identity and on the difficulties of minority existence. In Slovakia, the three elements were relatively balanced, whereas in Voivodina, adherence to cultural goods seems to be the crucial element. The most special “map of identity” is that of Hungary: In addition to the predominance of emotional elements, the categories of “it is a natural thing” and “to belong to somewhere” were mentioned more times than in any other regions. That is to say, in Hungary the question of national identity is not as in the case of the Hungarian minorities. In Hungary, it is considered as a natural thing; community identity, to belong to a country or a society are self-evident phenomena, which – appropriately enough – were accompanied by rather strong emotions. We can refer to it as a specific feature because recently in Voivodina (and in all the regions outside Hungary) the *emotional content of identity has decreased*. In Voivodina, the significance of less reflective (indifferent, stressing the self-evident nature of identity) and more emotional identity types has decreased since our last survey (1992–93), while the weight of the more conscious types, that is to say those who adhere to “cultural goods” (mainly to the mother tongue), declare identity and try to live according to it, has increased. In other words, in Voivodina – despite the hardships and threatening tendencies because of the war (or rather, as a result of these?) – the *feeling of belonging to a community as members of a nation in a cultural* (and not political) *sense* has become somewhat stronger.

*Religiousness* – in accordance with our earlier results – is an organic part of identity in Voivodina, too. The data from the 1991 census in Yugoslavia report on the *denominational* composition of the Hungarians in Voivodina. The vast majority of Hungarians was *Catholic* (88%) while the ratio of *Protestants* was 6%.<sup>7</sup> Considering the respondents of our survey, the ratio of Catholics was also 88%, whereas the proportion of those who did not belong to Churches or denominations was one tenth. (In Hungary, the ratio of the latter category was much higher, about 40%.) Seventy-two percent of the respondents in Voivodina (in Hungary, this rate was 50%) proved to be religious (in a generally active form), which is a very high ratio compared to those of the Hungarian minorities in other regions. As a matter of fact, only the Sub-Carpathian ratio (83%) was

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<sup>7</sup> Gábrityné dr. Molnár, Irén: *Vallási életünk* (Our Religious Life) In: *Vajdasági marasztaló* (Stay in Voivodina) opcit 164.p.

higher.<sup>8</sup> The case of the Hungarian minority in Voivodina seems to support the hypothesis that minority existence, because it increases the need for identification, usually promotes the intensity of relations with religion and Churches. *Religiousness* – as can be seen in the results of our survey – is one of the *strengthening factors of national identity*.

We have also examined the role and significance of *national symbols*. For those surveyed, the most important symbol of belonging to the Hungarian nation was the *National Anthem*: on our scale (from 1 – not important to 5 – very important), its score was 4.21 points. In second and third place, respectively, we find (with almost equal results) the *Sacred Crown* (4.08) and the *national colors* (4.06). Relatively high scores were gained by the revolutionary poem (1848) of Sándor Petőfi: the *National Poem* (3.89), the arms of Hungary (3.77) and the *noonday bell* (3.53) which has both regional and “universal” significance: It commemorates the victory over the Turks at Nándorfehérvár (today Beograd) in 1456. The respondents attributed only a moderate symbolic significance to other memorial places in Voivodina. For the Hungarian minorities abroad – no matter where they live – the National Anthem, the national colors and the Sacred Crown were the three most important national symbols; compared to these, regional symbols had no such significance. That is to say, in this respect, the above mentioned common national consciousness seems to be stronger than the regional.

However, this statement only applies to the cultural symbols. When we examined the concept of *homeland* according to *regions*, we specified certain geographical categories in advance and those surveyed had to rate from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“completely”) the strength of adherence to places reflected by our categories. The “*birth place*” and “*Voivodina*” were clearly at the top (4.64 and 4.70, respectively) and although “*Yugoslavia*” received much less points (3.41) it is still ahead of *Hungary* (2.47). Considering the adherence to geographical places, the local (regional) consciousness was so strong that it even replaced the concept of a common Hungarian homeland. The consciousness of sharing a common national culture did not mean any particular attachment to the motherland (Hungary). To the Hungarians, “*Europe*” – even after the NATO bombardments – remained rather prestigious. According to its score (3.16), they placed it between Yugoslavia and Hungary.

### **National Image, Images of the Past and future**

We raised three questions concerning the possible characteristic features of different national communities. The emphasis was on the characteristics of *Hungarians in Voivodina*. The proportion of those who did not answer this

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<sup>8</sup> Tomka, Miklós: *Vallás és nemzeti tudat* (Religion and National Consciousness) Bp. 2000. (Manuscript) 15.p.



question or answered “I don’t know”, was relatively high (15%). Twenty-two percent of those questioned said that there were no such features while two-thirds of them named (spontaneously) certain traits. Among the most often mentioned traits, *diligent* (hard-working, loves work) was in the first place (it was mentioned 139 times) then came *accomodating* (tolerant) (38 times), *tenacious* (29 times), *factionous* (26 times), *timid* (20 times) and *friendly* (18 times). Taking into consideration all the characteristic features named by those surveyed, 40% mentioned *only positive* ones, 15% *positive and negative traits together* and 8% *only negative* ones. Compared to the first half of the 1990s, this latter category seems to be decreasing, while the rate of those who did not answer or said that there were no such traits has increased significantly during the 1990s. According to the answers, in recent years, national (self-) image has become more uncertain, though at the same time, it has become *more positive* (perhaps as a kind of self-defense) in Voivodina. We can conclude from the most frequently mentioned traits that, perhaps because of the well-known circumstances, the national image became *more accomodating, modest and intimidated*.<sup>9</sup>

The image of the *Serbs*, as the majority population and the representatives of state authority and, of course, as those who started the wars in Yugoslavia, has become rather negative: concerning them, 41% of the respondents mentioned only negative traits. According to the answers, the Serbs are mainly *violent, aggressive, nationalists, are arrogant and disdainful* of other nations, they exaggerate patriotism, etc.

In addition to the image of the nation, *future image* is also an organic part of identity consciousness. After the bombardments and before the fall of the Milosević-regime, the Hungarians in Voivodina were rather *pessimistic* about their *own future*: Sixty percent of those surveyed were more or less pessimistic while the proportion of optimists was only 35%. (As a consequence of this, the Hungarians in Voivodina is the most pessimistic Hungarian population in the Carpathian basin.) The results were totally different when we asked people about the prospects of the “*entire Hungarian population*”: In this case, the rate of pessimistic answers was 27%, whereas two-thirds of those surveyed gave an optimistic answer. (In Hungary, the ratio of optimistic answers to the same question was lower by 20%.) In other words, the Hungarians in Voivodina are not pessimists “by nature”, but in May 2000 they saw their own situation and prospects pessimistically.

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<sup>9</sup> As in 1992-93, we asked people about the characteristics of Hungarians in general and not of the Hungarians in Voivodina. The comparison between the results of 1992-93 and 2000 is of limited validity. On the other hand, if we suppose that the Hungarians living outside Hungary thought of their own minority population mainly when they conceptualized the national image in the first half of the 1990s, then it can be used for the purpose of comparison after all.

However, in addition to the future, we were also interested in the image of the past and therefore we have asked the people four questions concerning their *historical consciousness*. We wanted to find out who/which were those outstanding figures/events of the past that are highly appreciated or, on the contrary, rejected and disliked. (The figures and events did not have to belong to Hungarian history only; they were named spontaneously.) At the top of the list of *positive figures* we can find those who established and protected a strong and safe Hungary, which was a significant factor in European history (*Saint Stephen, King Matthias /Corvin/*) as well as those who were fighting for the freedom and development of the nation in the 18<sup>th</sup> and mainly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*Lajos Kossuth, István Széchenyi, Sándor Petőfi, Ferenc Rákóczi*). These figures were important for Hungarians in other countries as well (in Hungary, too) and even their order of importance was very similar. Concerning Voivodina, there is a unique phenomenon, however, which has no functional equivalent in other regions. Here the most popular figure (as in 1992–93) was *J. B. Tito*, the former president of Yugoslavia, perhaps as a result of the contrast between the uncertain present and the nostalgic attitudes towards the past. Another special feature of Voivodina was the name of *János Hunyadi* (leader of the defense of Nándorfehérvár /today Beograd/ against the Turks in 1456) on the list, which reflects the fact that historical consciousness can have regional characteristics, as well.

The lists of figures and events of the past were similar in the different regions and to those of the first half of the 1990s. *Hitler and Stalin* are still at the top of the list of *negative figures*; Hitler received twice as many “votes” as Stalin. In other words, despite all the disasters coming from the “left” in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the moral judgment of the two totalitarian systems is not really balanced.

The content of the list of “*shameful and tragic*” *historical events* (at the top of which we find the *Trianon treaty* of 1920 as the cause of the dismemberment of Hungary) has slightly changed compared to the list of 1992–93; the massacre committed by Tito’s partisans in the autumn of 1944 (at least 20,000 Hungarian civilians were killed) was not on the list in 2000. These worrying memories could be recalled again in the wars of the recent past and reflected in general statements like “*oppressing national minorities*”. As far as the figure of *Milosević* is concerned, the respondents were more resolute: They put him in third place (after Hitler and Stalin) on the list of negative historical figures, although at the time of the survey, he was still the president of Yugoslavia. It is worth mentioning that we can also find *NATO bombardments* in the upper part of the list, the purpose of which was the protection of minorities, though their effect was rather threatening.

## Language Use

According to our findings in the survey, for Hungarians living in minority the most important cultural item of identity is the adherence to their *native language*. Therefore, here we analyze the sociological phenomena of mother-tongue use. Ninety-five percent of those surveyed said definitely that their native language is Hungarian. From the entire sample, 4% claimed to be “mixed” (Hungarian-Serb) and 1% claimed to be Serbo-Croatian in their language. Fifty-five percent of the respondents had a *husband or wife* who claimed to have a Hungarian mother-tongue (this means 87% of the married persons). Thus, the amount of *mixed marriages* was 13% according to our survey. These data were similar to the results found among Hungarians living in Slovakia and Ukraine. (This ratio was a bit lower in Transylvania.)

It is an extremely important question whether the citizens living in minority have the possibility to *attend schools* with Hungarian language teaching. Sixty-two percent of our respondents in Voivodina *could learn in Hungarian at each level* of their education.<sup>10</sup> Mixed language (within the framework of certain schools or certain classes, several subjects are taught in Hungarian, others in Serb) was a feature of 35% of our sample, while only 2% attended classes in a school where the *teaching language was the majority language*. Among our respondents in Voivodina, Hungarian language use played a slightly larger role than among other Hungarian minorities in Central Europe. (We have to admit that these data reflect the state of affairs of the recent past, because our respondents were adults who were asked about their education.)

The teaching language is strongly dependent on the level of education. There is a prevailing tendency according to which the more class a person could finish, the less chance to learn in Hungarian: From the population with primary school education – only 80%; *two-thirds* of the people with vocational training; *half* of the people with secondary school degrees, and *one-third* of the people with high school education went to Hungarian schools only. Others obtained their qualification needed for their profession – partly or totally – in the majority language. Thus, according to our findings, learning in the *mother-tongue is mostly available for primary schooling, which entails lower level social status*. This tendency is not special to Voivodina; rather, it is a feature of the fate of living in minority in Central Europe. (We experienced the same phenomena with Hungarians living in Ukraine, Romania and Slovakia.)

We also analyzed five scenes of *everyday life* with respect to the language used. These scenes are quite different in regard to the chances of mother-tongue use (data in Table 2 proves this proposition). *Family* and the *circle of friends* are

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<sup>10</sup> This certainly does not mean that they never met learning in majority language. On the one hand Serb is an independent subject, besides it happens quite often - mainly in secondary schools - that because of the lack of Hungarian teachers several subjects are taught in the majority language.

dominant scenes where our respondents use their native language. Then *workplace*, places of trade (*market, shops*) and lastly – with a proportion of one-tenth – come *official* scenes. In these places, citizens living in minority – when stepping out from the private to the public sphere – can hardly get by using Hungarian in front of the officials.

Table 2

**The Amount of Hungarians in Voivodina who only or mostly Communicate in Hungarian (May 2000)**

The scenes of communication	Compared to percentage of all questionees
within the family	92.5
in the circle of friends	68.0
at the (recent or present) workplace	43.2
in shops and in the market	34.7
in offices	10.5

Regarding the data of language choices in five scenes of everyday life, a general index was formed which expresses the chances of native language use regarding the relative completeness of these situations. According to this, dominant use of mother-tongue (throughout the five scenes) is possible only for one tenth (8%) of those surveyed, and there are those who can use their native language in a closer circle (3–4 scenes, 16%). Therefore, *one-fourth of the Hungarians in Voivodina can live his/her everyday life* (or its greater part) *using his/her mother-tongue*. This ratio is below the rate experienced in other countries (around Hungary). Other Hungarians in minority live in bilingualism or under the dominance of the majority language. It seems obvious that opportunities for the use of the native language of Hungarians in Voivodina *were above average* in Central Europe in the past, but are *under the average presently*.

The language of *dreaming, counting, praying and church services* (visited often or seldom) is mostly (in nine-tenths) Hungarian. These occasions of language use – together with verbal communication in family – mean the *private sphere* of language use that remains the place of speaking in the mother-tongue, while the use of the native language is disappearing from other scenes of life.

The *majority of the books* read by our respondents (in the previous year) *in Hungarian*: Seventy-eight percent of the readers had read mainly in Hungarian (books above 90%). (We experienced quite similar ratios in Sub-Carpathia and Transylvania; in Slovakia, this rate was slightly lower.) Only 10% of the readers read more books in a foreign language than in their native language.

We encountered similar tendencies in reading periodicals: It is *weekly* newspapers that are read mostly in Hungarian (77% of weekly newspaper readers prefer to read in Hungarian); in the case of daily newspapers and *journals*, there is only a solid advantage of Hungarian-language media (60%).

The high ratio of reading in Hungarian is closely related to our overall experience that the culture of reading can be an important tool of the manifestation, and simultaneously, the maintenance and strengthening of identity.

## Summary

In the continually decreasing Hungarian population in Voivodina, Yugoslavia in May 2000, before the fall of Milosevič, there were visible signs of fear and pessimism as well as the signs of increased adherence to the cultural elements (mother-tongue, religion, the culture of reading in the native language, etc.) that can strengthen their identity. Hungarians in Voivodina – despite their special difficulties – share many common features with other Hungarians living in minority in the Central-European region. Their tendencies in the change of frames of mind have general characteristics: a decrease in emotional content of identity, an increase in its awareness; an emphasis on the concept of local-regional adherence instead of a countrywide concept of homeland; determination of the historical frame of reference according to a similar system of values, etc. On the other hand, sensitivity to discrimination, constraints of native language use, the special ability of assimilation and fear appear as unique features. Hungarians in Voivodina are quite courageous, not in regard to their own future, but with respect to the chances of Hungarians living in Central Europe. Doubt and hope, escape and regional adherence, fear and strengthened identity – all these together characterize the recent state of mind of Hungarians living in minority.

### III. RELIGIOSITY AND DENOMINATIONS



## Religiosity in Transylvania

The western part of Rumania, Transylvania might look very religious from abroad. People living in that country do not see it that way. As a matter of fact, the percentage of religious people is higher in Transylvania than in Hungary or in Europe as a whole; at least, there are more people for whom religion is the only plausible position. This study attempts to present evidence about the nature of this religiosity. Is this kind of religiosity a personal conviction or simply cultural tradition, popular piety? Do faith and religious practice firmly correlate? Has this religiosity a significant role for the individual and society?

Two fifth of the population of Transylvania, about 2 million people are ethnic Hungarians. According to many, these people are strongly committed to their Catholic, Reformed (Presbyterian), and Unitarian religions as they are to the Hungarian mother tongue. Religion and language are means for defending their identity and distinguishing themselves from non-Hungarians. Is then, Transylvanian religiosity no more than an instrument of ethnic self-preservation?

This study is an *invitation* for thinking about the future. It suggests the following steps:

- Based on sociological studies it attempts to establish a diagnosis of religiosity of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania. To obtain a meaningful diagnosis, this study will make comparisons first of all between Transylvanian Rumanians, ethnic Hungarians living in this region and the population of Hungary proper. The first findings are positive: *Transylvania is very religious and Church-oriented* – at least in comparison with other countries.
- The second group of results concerns the socio-economic development of Transylvania and its population. It could very well be the case that *widespread religiousness is an expression of stagnation nurtured by tradition*. But change is obviously getting faster.
- Nevertheless, *the living religiosity of today is an asset which, possibly, could be transformed and preserved for the future*. The realization of this possibility is a key concern for people and Churches in Transylvania.



## I. The State of Religiosity in Transylvania

Several studies have been published in recent decades on denominational statistics in Rumania and particularly Transylvania<sup>1</sup>. A minutious publication of historical and comparative religious statistics of Transylvania, including results of the 1992 census is also under way.<sup>2</sup> But few reports address the state and development of religiosity<sup>3</sup>. Even the most reputed international monographs contain grave errors about the proportion of non-believers or atheists<sup>4</sup>. We know of only one British<sup>5</sup> and one Hungarian analysis which have mentioned the high level of Rumanian religiousness. The latter identifies the most important fact: that *Rumania is, besides Poland, the second most religious country in Europe*, only slightly affected by the spread of irreligiosity<sup>6</sup>. The *European Value Study* — also known as *World Value Study*<sup>7</sup> — an international comparative study, conducted in 1991, 1995 and 1999, enables the comparison of religious data of Rumania with those of other countries based on nation-wide surveys. *Rumania's second place in Europe* is only occasionally challenged by the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland. The table below is a comparison of Polish, Rumanian, and Hungarian data (Table 1).

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<sup>1</sup> Ágoston, Ferencz: *Der Dienst der Versöhnung als Aufgabe der Pastoral in Rumänien*. Dettelbach, Verlag Röhl, 1992; András, Imre: *A romániai katolikus egyház [The Catholic Church in Rumania.] Szolgálat* p. 88, 1990, Christmas issue, pp. 105-112; *Kirche und Glaube in Rumänien*. München, *Kirche in Not / Ostpriesterhilfe*, 1990; Leb, Ioan-Vasile: *Die Rumänische Orthodoxe Kirche heute*, *Ost-West Informationsdienst* 202, 1999, pp. 58-69; L'Église en Roumanie. *Pro Mundi Vita: Dossiers*, Nov-Dec 1978; Podskalsky, Gerhard: *Kirche und Staat in Rumänien*. *Stimmen der Zeit* 3, 1970, pp. 198-207; Sturescu, Daniel: *Rumänische Barrieren*. *Wort und Wahrheit* 5, 1967, pp. 329-349. Tőkés, István: *A romániai magyar református egyház élete 1944-1989. [The Hungarian Reformed (Presbyterian) Church in Rumania 1944-1989]*, Budapest: Magyarságkutató Intézet, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Varga, E. Árpád: *Erdély etnikai és felekezeti statisztikája [The Ethnic and Denominational Statistics of Transylvania]* Vol. I-III. Budapest-Csíkszereda: Teleki László Alapítvány, Pro-Print Könyvkiadó, 1998-2000.

<sup>3</sup> Roman, Viorel - Hofbauer, Hannes: *Transsilvanien - Siebenbürgen*. Wien: Promedia, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Barrett, David B. (ed.): *World Christian Encyclopaedia*. Nairobi-Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1982, pp. 584; Clévenot, Michel (ed.): *L'état des religions dans le monde*. Paris: La Découverte - Le Cerf, 1987. Both sources estimate that non-believers and atheists constitute 16% of the population.

<sup>5</sup> Beeson, Trevor: *Discretion and Valour*. London: Fount Paperbacks - Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.

<sup>6</sup> Virt, László: *Katolikus kisebbség Erdélyben [Catholic Minority in Transylvania]*. Budapest - Luzern: Egyházforum, 1991, p. 98.

<sup>7</sup> The research gathered representative figures about 43 countries world-wide and, within that, from 29 European countries and territories (including the Eastern Provinces of Germany and Northern Ireland). On the subject of the European Value Study see also: Tomka, Miklós: *Európa változó (?) értékrendje. [Does the European Value System change?]*. *Mérleg* 3 1995, pp. 333-343; and Inglehart, Ronald: *Modernization and Postmodernization. Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Table 1

*Some indicators of religiosity in Poland, Rumania and Hungary (both as a percentage of respondents and in terms of their rating among the 43 countries surveyed in EVS-WVS in 1991)*

	In percentage of the adult population			Rating in the comparison of ten East-Central-European countries		
	PL	RO	H	PL	RO	H
Religious self identification	95%	75%	57%	1	10	27
Belief in: – God	97%	94%	65%	5	10	23
– Life after death	78%	58%	26%	5	17	33
– The soul	86%	76%	...	8	16	...
– The Devil	51%	42%	19%	5	13	25
– Hell	54%	43%	16%	4	10	27
– Heaven	80%	58%	27%	7	14	31
– Sin	91%	77%	39%	2	8	33
– Resurrection	83%	50%	27%	3	15	27
God is “very important”	87%	67%	40%	4	13	22
“Comfort and strength from religion”.	90%	76%	49%	2	12	21
Prayer at least occasionally.	89%	86%	58%	3	5	23
Strong trust in the Church (of own denomination)	84%	72%	56%	3	10	20

A recently completed study on the situation of religion and the Churches, which was carried out in ten previously communist countries comes to similar conclusions<sup>8</sup>. The research, titled *‘Aufbruch’/New Departures* focused

<sup>8</sup> The scope of the research included Central and Eastern European countries with a strong Catholic Church presence. The research did not specifically deal with aspects of Orthodoxy. For reasons of research methodology (aiming to ensure that Catholic and Protestant respondents are both well represented), the research focused on a representative sample from Transylvania only, rather than Rumania as a whole. Research was conducted co-terminously on representative national samples of the following countries: Lithuania, East-Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, Rumania, Slovenia and Croatia. Compare: Tomka, Miklós - Paul M. Zulehner: *Religion in den Reformländern Ost(Mittel)Europas.* (Religion nach dem Kommunismus I.), Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1999; Tomka, Miklós - Paul M. Zulehner: *Religion im gesellschaftlichen Kontext Ost(Mittel)Europas.* (Religion nach dem Kommunismus II.), Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 2000; Tomka, Miklós - Maslauskaitė, Ausra - Navickas, Andrius - Tos, Niko and Vinko Potocnik: *Religion und Kirchen in Ost(Mittel)Europa: Ungarn, Litauen, Slowenien.* (Religion nach dem Kommunismus III.), Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1999.

exclusively on Transylvania within Rumania, and confirmed the findings of previous studies. What is more, it concluded that the religiosity of a society, which partly appears in habits, expects and demands a presence of religion and the Churches in society – as a possible form of society’s cultural life – more explicitly in Transylvania than in Poland.

A few months after the completion of the survey, covering the entire population of Transylvania, the 'Kerkai Jenő' Institute for Church Sociology in Budapest repeated and extended the scope of the survey<sup>9</sup> by adding a sample of 949 people representing the adult population of ethnic Hungarian minority of Transylvania. The samples of the two surveys conducted almost at the same time, covering the same geographic area and asking identical questions, could be summed up easily. Integrating the samples made it possible to establish a sound comparison between the data of Hungarians in Hungary, ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania, and Rumanians in Transylvania. What follows is an attempt to summarise key data and their interdependence relative to these three groups<sup>10</sup> (without taking into consideration other countries).

### 1. Religion as Physical Reality and Everyday Life

The religiosity of the individual and living in a milieu full of religious representations are two entirely different things. Religious objects, signs, and symbols can increase the taken-for-granted character, the comfort, and plausibility of religiosity. The landscape in cultivated parts of Europe was traditionally dominated by Church-buildings. The European cultural scene has traditionally been dominated by the Church. Obvious signs of religion included cemeteries, and in Catholic regions a large number of chapels, Stations of the Cross, road-side crosses, statues and images of the Virgin Mary and the saints, vocational columns, and so on. Modernisation has transformed the religious character of the landscape almost everywhere. Today, houses are taller than church towers. Many sacred artefacts and monuments have been destroyed. Their place has been taken by technical installations. Until not so long ago,

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<sup>9</sup> Extension of the scope of the survey added primarily aspects of national and cultural identity. Compare Gereben, Ferenc – Tomka, Miklós: *Religiosity and National Consciousness. Studies on Transylvania*. Budapest: Kerkai Intézet, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Other findings were based on representative samples within the 18-65 age group, including 1,063 interviews conducted in Hungary, 1,053 with the ethnic Hungarian population of Transylvania, and 742 interviews with the Rumanian population of Transylvania. Hungarian and Rumanian speaking respondents were interrogated by survey officers speaking the same language and using a questionnaire in that language. As the 'Aufbruch' survey covered adults of 18-65 years of age, the comparative analysis of the three groups has to be limited to that age group. Both the ethnic samples, and the age groups within each sample were so large in terms of numbers that the number of respondents is not indicated separately or each category. Given that the rest of this study is based on the findings of the 'Aufbruch' research, the tables, figures and individual statistics contained in the rest of the study *do not indicate their source*.

religion had a physical and relevant presence in people's *homes* as well as in their wider environment: the Bible and prayer books, religious paintings and quotations, the cross and the rosary were part of everyday life. The elimination of traditional culture by force and anti-ecclesiastical policy are responsible for the rapid disappearance of *religious artefacts from Hungarian homes* to a great extent. In contrast, in Transylvania the number of people with childhood memories of religious objects is roughly identical with the number of people who keep religious artefacts in their homes today. This is of course not independent of one's religious affiliation<sup>11</sup>. Religious paintings and objects are an intrinsic part especially of Catholic and Orthodox culture. More Catholic (89%) and Protestant (23%) homes in Transylvania used to have or have today religious artefacts or works of art than their counterparts of the same religious affiliation in Hungary (68% and 30% respectively). On the other hand, the cross or devotional pictures (92%) and the Bible (84%) are found most frequently in the homes of Transylvanian Rumanians.

Handing on religion is a family affair from time immemorial. Faith and behaviour imprinted in childhood stay with the adult throughout his life. The predominant majority of the older generation in all three populations recollects that, when they were a child, their mother, father and of course they themselves used to go to church regularly. The older generations, whether Hungarian, ethnic Hungarian or Rumanian in Transylvania, have largely similar childhood recollections, but the differences get ever wider as we come to question the younger generation. In the youngest generation the ratio of people, who recall having grown up in a religious environment as a child is merely one third compared to the oldest generation in Hungary. The gap between childhood memories of different generations is much smaller in Transylvania. And the ratio of people who were active churchgoers in their childhood is declining with younger age less rapidly among ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania than among Rumanians.

The age factor has a significantly different role among Transylvanian Catholics compared to Protestants. Protestants and Catholics over the age of 60 had religious childhood recollections in almost equal numbers. Such recollections are far fewer among Reformed (Presbyterians) below the age of 40

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<sup>11</sup> According to religious statistics, in 1992 69.4% of the population of Transylvania were Orthodox, 11.1% Roman Catholic, 2.7% Greek Catholic (Uniates), 10.3% Reformed (Presbyterian), 2.1% Pentecostal, 1.2% Baptist, 1.0% Unitarian, 2.0% other or unclassified, and 0.2 % were disaffiliated or atheists. Compare István N. Koszta: Tallózás az 1992. január 7-i népszámlálás adataiból. [Extracts from the data of the Census of 7 January 1992]. *Hitel* 1 (1994). (It is possible that in these statistics the number of the Orthodox is overestimated especially against Greek Catholics. The denominational distribution of the sample of the ethnic Hungarian population of Transylvania is 42.7% Roman Catholics, 0.9% Greek Catholics, 44.8% Reformed (Presbyterians), 2.7% Unitarians etc.

than among Catholics of the same age group. Within the same age group, the majority of Catholics and only the minority of Protestants recall their mother, father and they themselves going to church at least once a week when they were a child. During the years of communism the number of Catholics with religious experience at home fell by one-third, whereas that of Protestants fell by half.

## **2. Faith, Religious Practice and Religious Self-Definition**

5% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and 3% of Transylvanian Rumanians declared themselves *non-believers*, while in Hungary this ratio was 27%. 4% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania over the age of 40 called themselves non-believers, and so did 6% of people who were 40 years old or younger. 2% of Rumanians over the age of 40, and 4% below the same age don't believe in God. In Hungary, 5% of people over the age of 60 reject the existence of God, while the same figure is 25% for the 40–60 age group, and 35% for the generation younger than 40 years old. 75% of the Hungarian population and 84% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania believe in a God who personally looks after every human being. The trends are the same regarding answers to questions about a belief in Jesus Christ.

*Religious practice* is a social convention and a social norm in Transylvania. Baptism, Church wedding and Church funeral continue to be general habits and rules of social game today. In Hungary, one-fifth of the population – mostly young people – rejects, and 10% of people say that they would leave it up to those concerned having a religious ceremony on such occasions.

One-fifth of the adult population in Hungary (yet 27% of the 18–40 age group) does not think that baptism is important, more than each fourth (35% of the age group between 18 and 40) does not think it necessary to have a Church wedding, and one-sixth of the population (18% of the 18–40 age group) rejects even Church funerals. In contrast, the predominant majority of society (92–94%) – regardless of age – consider these functions as essential under all circumstances in Transylvania. Regular *participation on religious services* is also general practice in Transylvania, whereas in Hungary it is typical only for a minority, and it is continuously declining among the younger generation. In Transylvania too, there is a difference between the practices of those born before and after World War II, yet the number of churchgoers is relatively stable in the age groups of 60 and under. Similar conclusions can be made based on data on private religious practice i.e. *prayer*. Yet among the Reformed (Presbyterians) both churchgoer and prayer-rates are lower than among Catholics and Orthodox. While demographic changes project *continuous decline in the number of religious people in Hungary*, there is no reason to assume the same in Transylvania, at least in the short term.

In Hungary only a minority see God as giving *meaning to their life and sufferings*. In contrast, the great majority of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (including adults under the age of 40) find the meaning of their life and perhaps of sorrow and suffering with the help of their faith in God (Table 2).

Table 2

*The distribution of Hungarians, ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and of Transylvanian Rumanians in terms of finding the meaning of life and of suffering in God (in %s)*

		Hungarians	ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania	Transylvanian Rumanians
'Life is meaningful only because God exists.'	Agree	27%	59%	70%
	Undecided	24%	22%	21%
	Disagree	49%	19%	9%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
'In my opinion, sorrow and suffering only have meaning if you believe in God'	Agree	31%	53%	37%
	Undecided	21%	25%	30%
	Disagree	48%	22%	33%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

This trend is slightly more pronounced among Catholics than Protestants, but just among older generations: no such difference has been found among young people. There is a peculiar situation among Transylvanian Rumanians. They tend to find the meaning of life in God, yet they are much less inclined to make the same connection between God and suffering. Could this mean a different concept of God in the popular version of Orthodoxy?

In Hungary, only half as many believers as among ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania, and only a quarter as many as Rumanians assert that their professional achievements are influenced by their religiosity. While responses of older generations to the question about the role of religiosity in shaping political affiliation are differentiated according to religious denomination (19% of Catholic respondents over the age of 60 said there was a connection, but only 13% of the Protestants agreed), fewer and fewer respondents among the younger generations attributed a significant role to religion in general, and demonstrated no difference at all according to religious denomination.

*The influence of religion and faith on personal life is perceived differently by Hungarians living in Hungary, in Transylvania and the Rumanian population of Transylvania.* The rate of those who say that they are religious 'in their own way' is largely similar for all three groups (between 55–59%), and is relatively uninfluenced by the respondent's age. But the meaning of this statement differs for each of these three environments.

*Firm religiosity* is most widespread among ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (29%), somewhat less prominent among Transylvanian Rumanians (24%), and even less prominent among the population of Hungary (17%). *However, it is not firm religiosity that indicates the most important difference in this respect, but rather the presence or absence of explicit non-religiosity.* Respondents could express their non-religious attitude by opting for one of the following two statements. The milder version was: 'I am not religious, I have nothing to do with religion.' The harsher version was: 'I am definitely not religious, I think that religion is self-delusion.' One-fifth of the Hungarian population between the age of 18–65 (19%) selected at least one of these two statements, while only a small part of ethnic Hungarians of the same age but living in Transylvania agreed with at least one of these statements (4%), and even fewer Rumanians living in Transylvania did so (3%).

To sum up, a significant part of the Hungarian population is characterised by non-religiosity. It is far more widespread among younger adults than among the older generations. The number of the definitely non-religious within the age group under 40 is nearly three times as many as the number of the firmly religious group. *Firm religiosity is declining in Transylvania too among younger respondents, but at the same time non-religiosity is almost completely absent.* In the final effect Transylvanian population is firmly committed to religion.

The question is, of course, what it means to be religious (or non-religious). Religiosity is not an absolute term; instead, it always entails a comparison with the attitudes of others or with implied local standards. For most Transylvanians believing in God or even feeling oneself close to God are indistinguishable parts of life, even if they label themselves as non-religious. Non-religiosity manifests itself rather in the irregularity or lack of prayers and of participation in Church-services.

There is little difference between the interpretations of (non-)religiosity by Catholics and Protestants, but in almost all categories surveyed, less Protestants than Catholics are believers and practicing Christians (Table 3).

Table 3

*Various manifestations of religiosity among Catholic and Protestant respondents who are 'non-religious', 'partly religious', 'religious to some extent', or 'definitely religious' (in%)*

	Non-religious	Undecided	Religious to some extent	Definitely religious
<b>Catholics</b>				
– believes in God	72%	69%	89%	97%
– feels close to God	52%	66%	84%	99%
– prays at least daily	37%	40%	50%	90%
– goes to Church at least once a week	17%	36%	36%	73%
<b>Reformed (Presbyterians), Unitarians and other Protestants</b>				
– believes in God	61%	59%	81%	96%
– feels close to God	49%	61%	80%	95%
– prays at least daily	40%	44%	50%	90%
– goes to Church at least once a week	19%	29%	29%	55%

### 3. Relationship with the Church

When comparing the situation in Transylvania and Hungary, there are four major issues to be tackled with. (1) What is the image of the Church? (2) What are their expectations regarding the Church? (3) What do people think of the establishments like schools, hospitals, homes for the elderly etc. of the Churches and the financing of such institutions? (4) What do people think of their own relationship with the Church?

Hungarian and Rumanian public opinion about the Church<sup>12</sup> is similar in many ways. Answers to some of the questions were equally split among representatives of different opinions. The following are examples where opposing opinions are held by roughly the same number of people, – both in Hungary, and among the ethnic Hungarian population of Transylvania, and the Rumanian population:

<sup>12</sup> These questions always related to the Church which the respondent was most familiar with. It was explained in the introduction as follows: 'Think of the Church which your mother belongs to or used to belong to, or into which you were baptised.' On the other hand, the random selection of questions ensured that the sequence in which these questions was put did not influence the respondent in any way or suggest any particular answer.



- Is the Church seeking glory after life *or* worldly power?
- What is the role of the Church: to promote holy worship *or* to assist people?
- Does the Church teach the love of God *or* the love of other people?

More Transylvanian Rumanians emphasised the other-worldly orientation of the Church and its dedication to holy worship than ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania. On the other hand, ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania placed a greater emphasis on the assistance given to people by the Church in individual and social issues.

There was another group of questions in respect of which – despite the high number of 'undecided' answers – public opinion clearly supported one rather than the other alternative, in all three respondent groups. It is commonly believed that:

- the Church is a natural supporter of the poor and the powerless;
- the Church respects genuinely held principles;
- the Church is an institution forever.

There was a third group of questions regarding which the populations of Transylvania and of Hungary held very different views. More people in Transylvania than in Hungary believe that the Church gives spiritual support and teaches the truth, and that it can tell how to attain happiness in this life; and furthermore that the Church is poor and is a community of believers rather than an institution of priests and bishops (Table 4).

Table 4

*Opinions about the Church among the population of Hungary, the ethnic Hungarian population of Transylvania and the Rumanian population of Transylvania (in%)*

The Church ...	Hungarians	Ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania	Transylvanian Rumanians
1. ... gives spiritual support to many	64%	76%	80%
... keeps many in spiritual slavery	12%	8%	6%
Undecided (both one and the other)	24%	16%	14%
2. ... tells how to attain happiness in this life	28%	39%	47%

(Continued)

... cannot tell how to attain happiness in this life	37%	33%	22%
Undecided, (both one and the other)	35%	28%	31%
3. ... is poor (in Hungary resp. in Transylvania)	29%	41%	36%
... wealthy (in Hungary resp. in Transylvania)	25%	20%	14%
Undecided, (both one and the other)	46%	39%	50%
4. ... is a community of believers	55%	62%	47%
... is an institution ruled by priests and bishops	16%	17%	14%
Undecided, (both one and the other)	29%	21%	39%
5. ... teaches people the truth	64%	81%	82%
... misleads people by its false teaching	10%	6%	4%
Undecided, (both one and the other)	26%	13%	14%

Ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania have a particularly strong belief in the Church's role as the mediator of truth, in its character as a community, and in the fact that the Church is poor. More Transylvanian Rumanians attribute to the Church an other-worldly status than either the population of Hungary or ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania.

The question is of course to what extent one gives credit to the opinions and expectations of the general public. It is also important to examine some other aspects. What do people think is the competence of the Catholic Church, and what are the issues on which they expect the Catholic Church to publicly declare its position? Half of the adult population in Hungary, and two-thirds in Transylvania believe that the Catholic Church offers an answer to the *problems of the individual and the family and to the meaning of life*.

International experience shows that more people would like the Church to openly declare its position than assume that the Church can offer them an

answer<sup>13</sup>. The same is the case both in Hungary, and in Transylvania. There is, however, a difference between the opinions of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and Rumanians. Comparing the three ethnic or national groups, the level of expectations concerning public statements of the *Catholic Church* on abortion and extramarital affairs is the lowest (44% and 41% respectively) in the population of Hungary. More people expect Church-statements among ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (53% and 51%), and the number of supporters is even higher among Transylvanian Rumanians (67% and 65%).

The situation is different as far as public affairs are concerned. Slightly more than half of the Hungarian population agree with the Catholic Church making its voice heard about unemployment, growing social tensions, and the Roma (Gypsy) population, and more than one-third of the population even supports the Church in expressing its position regarding the government's policy, and the style and contents of the media. The opinions of Transylvanian Rumanians are largely similar. *Ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania demonstrated an even stronger desire for that the Catholic Church make itself heard also in public affairs.* More than two-thirds of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (70%, 71% and 68%) want the Catholic Church to express its opinion on the three less politicised issues, and approximately half of them support the Church's intervention on the two heavily politicised issues (43% and 52%). Ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania see the Church as one of the most important social institutions of ethnic minorities. Accordingly, the Church is perceived in a different role and is valued differently by ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania than by either the population of Hungary or the Rumanian population of Transylvania.

The kindergartens, schools, and old people's homes maintained by various religious denominations are important supplements to the government's educational and welfare institutions, and are at the same time important elements of civil society. About half or two-thirds of the population of Hungary, nearly two-thirds of Transylvanian Rumanians, and more than three-quarters of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania think that there should be more denominational institutions of this kind. In Transylvania it is only exceptionally believed (no more than in 1–3% of all answers) that there are too many institutions run by the Churches. Members of all denominations unanimously agree on the wish for more denominational institutions.

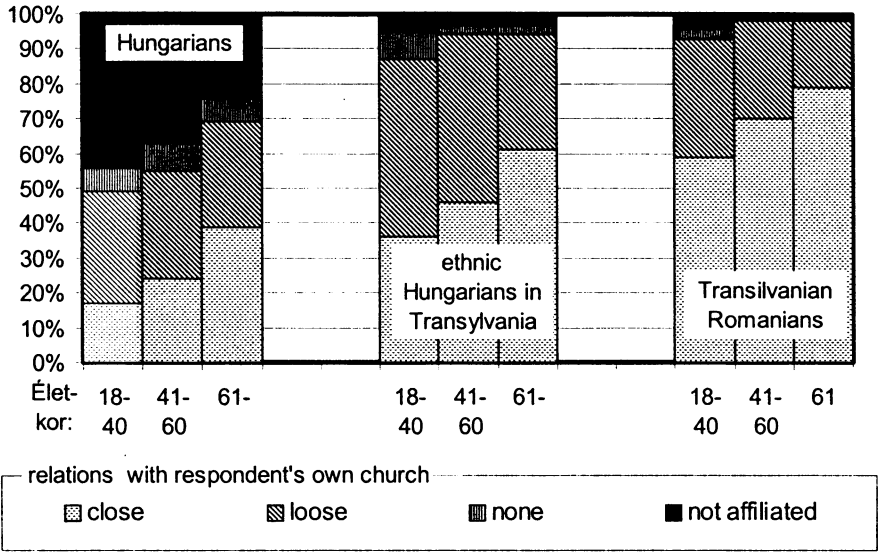
Transylvania is more Church-oriented than Hungary. One aspect of this is how closely people feel to their Church. The ratio of disaffiliated and of those who keep distance to the Church is higher among the younger part of the population than among older people in Hungary. (Figure 1).

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<sup>13</sup> Zulehner, Paul M. – Denz, Hermann: *Wie Europa lebt und glaubt I-II.* Düsseldorf-Wien: Patmos, 1993, and: Tomka - Zulehner: *Religion in den Reformländern...* ibid.

Figure 1.

*Proportion of those who feel themselves to be closely, loosely, and in no way involved with the Church, and who declare themselves not affiliated with any denomination, within the Hungarian population, ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania, and Transylvanian Rumanians –according to age groups (in%).*



A close relation to the Church is reported by 65% of Transylvanian Rumanians; 44% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and 24% of Hungarians living in Hungary. The difference becomes greater if we take into account all forms of relationship with the Church (whether close or distant). More than nine-tenths of the population of Transylvania (91% of ethnic Hungarians and 95% of Rumanians) maintain relations with their Church in one way or another. In Hungary, less than half of the population comes into contact with the Church in any way. More than one-third of the population in Hungary (38%) said that they did not belong to any Church. A small minority of the society (7%) claimed they were members of a particular Church, but said that they had no contact with that Church. Maintaining close relations with one's Church is far more characteristic of the Catholic members of the over 60 years old population (70%) than Protestants of the same age (59%). The gap between denominations is smaller in the middle aged group (52% and 39% respectively), while there is no difference at all in the age group of 18–40 years old (37% and 38% respectively).

In Hungary nearly half of the population (47%) said that last year he/she or a family member paid Church tax in addition to payments now and then or Sunday donations. The rate of parochial tax payers is nearly twice as high in

Transylvania (89% of ethnic Hungarians and 76% of Rumanians). 'Should it be required for the continuous functioning of the Church', even more people would be willing to pay a regular Church tax – that is to say 54% of Hungarians living in Hungary, 92% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and 85% of Transylvanian Rumanians.

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## **II. The Impact of Socio-Economic Change**

Our three basic assumptions are as follows:

*first*, there is a strong correlation between the level of socio-economic development and the state of religion and religiosity;

*secondly*, Europe experienced a fundamental socio-economic transformation in the last two hundred years, which has had a basic impact on the position and role of religion and the Church within society; and

*thirdly*, Transylvania has only now arrived at the threshold of this transformation. The transition leads from a traditional into a modern society.

Traditional society represents a characteristic pattern of worldly affairs, including a taken-for-granted contact with the Almighty. Traditional society looks 'very' religious, accordingly. However it needs to be pointed out that this religiousness is rooted only partly (or even only to a very small extent) in the individual, and much rather in the cultural heritage and the social order. The presence or absence of this kind of religiosity largely depends on having a traditional society and culture.

The modern and altogether profane world order is genuinely devoid of religion. Modernisation destroys the systemic, societal conditions which required and supported traditional religious culture. The social form of religion has to be re-invented and brought into relation with other spheres and institutions of society. Christianity and the Church face in the modern age two most important tasks: to create and nurture a community of believers, and to maintain a dialogue with the profane world.

### **1. About the traditional character of the social system of Rumania, and within that of Transylvania**

In an over-simplified manner 'rural' could be substituted by 'traditional' society, and 'urban' by 'modern' society. There are yet additional components. Traditional society is a self-regulating socio-cultural system based on tradition. Transylvania, which was that time, as in the ten previous centuries a part of Hungarian civilization and political system, has had at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a well developed urbanised civic society. It was characterised by – relatively – advanced production technology, education, learning and intellectual

life. But subsequently a number of things happened which arrested the development of the province and of ethnic Hungarian population of Transylvania. The post-World-War-I Trianon Treaty concluded in 1920, fundamentally reshaped political borders. Transylvania was annexed to Rumania from Hungary, to which it formerly belonged. The two million ethnic Hungarians of Transylvania became uprooted. Some had to resettle in Hungary proper, while others (professionals and public servants) simply lost their employment. Land reform had detrimental economic consequences for ethnic Hungarian peasantry which became disowned<sup>14</sup>. The closure of many Hungarian schools and the subsequent introduction and promotion of vocational training and higher education only in the Rumanian language (while corresponding Hungarian institutions were lacking) blocked the educational development of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania<sup>15</sup>. These were the reasons why Transylvania became socio-economically retarded at a time when modernisation received fresh impetus elsewhere.

The Balkan state Rumania regained its independence from Turkish Empire only in 1854, respectively in 1878. This is the moment when slavery was abolished too. The unification of Transylvania with the Old-Rumania in 1920 proved to be a big hindrance of promotion of the former. Transylvania is now economically underdeveloped, heavily provincial and rural. Rumania has always relied much more on land and agriculture than developed industrial societies. According to the findings of the '*Aufbruch/New Departures*' survey, nearly one-third of ethnic Hungarian respondents in Transylvania are arable land owners today (in contrast with only 13% in Hungary). Nearly one-third (30%) of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania, but only one-quarter (22%) of Hungarians living in Hungary, claim to be villagers. 12% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania claim to be urban dwellers (in contrast with 36% of the population of Hungary). At the same time it should be noted that 'village' and 'town' have rather different meanings in rural Transylvania than in urbanised Hungary.

60% of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania still live in the place (mostly villages) where they were born. In contrast, only 40% of the population of Hungary live there where they were born (either in villages or in cities).

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<sup>14</sup> Móricz, Miklós: Az erdélyi föld sorsa. [The destiny of real estates in Transylvania]. Budapest: Erdélyi Férfiak Egyesülete, 1932; Venczel, József: Az erdélyi román földbirtokreform. [Rumanian Land Reform in Transylvania]. Cluj: Minerva, 1942; Vincze, Gábor: Szociálpolitika vagy "nemzeti igazságtétel" [Sociopolitics or so called 'national justice'?] – Land Reforms in Rumania. *Hitel* (May-August 1994), pp. 3-4, 154-193.

<sup>15</sup> Illyés, Elemér: Erdély változása [Changing Transylvania]. München: Auróra, 1975, pp. 149-164; Illyés, Elemér: Nationale Minderheiten in Rumänien. Siebenbürgen im Wandel. Wien: Braumüller, 1981, pp. 175-228.

Another indicator is the intellectual development. One hint for this is the use of telecommunications. The development of telecommunications is again far more advanced in Hungary than in Transylvania (Table 5).

Table 5

*Proportion of adult population of Hungary, the ethnic Hungarian population of Transylvania, and the Rumanian population of Transylvania who watch TV news and listen to radio news at least once a day and read newspapers daily (in%).*

At least daily...	Hungarians living in Hungary	ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania	Transylvanian Rumanians
... watches TV news programmes	72%	54%	54%
... listens to radio news	62%	42%	43%
... reads newspapers	48%	40%	26%

To establish the level of cultural development, it is interesting to compare the cultural and demographic statistics of Transylvania and other former socialist countries. International comparative statistics will of course refer to the whole of Rumania rather than Transylvania.

Table 6.

*Indices of cultural development of nine Central European countries (1997)*

As compared to the average of the nine countries (i.e. in % of that average)	Nine former socialist countries in the rank order of their socio-economic development								
	CZ	SLO	H	SK	HR	PL	LT	RO	UA
per capita expenditure on general education	140	156	156	92	88	98	76	44	49
per capita expenditure on higher education	131	138	147	107	78	102	67	47	83
number of households with a TV set	119	94	163	88	72	94	106	63	72

(Continued)

number of books published per 1,000 people	137	227	150	98	89	42	116	27	15
ratio of households with Internet access	270	219	201	64	60	72	8	6	0
workforce reproduction rate	92	88	89	113	94	115	108	102	101
Population growth rate for the period between 1950–1995	69	99	82	116	88	117	110	105	106

## 2. Transition to modern society and Christianity

De-Christianization in Central and Eastern Europe is explained by two main reasons which are particular to this region: the forced nature of socio-economic changes and the persecution of religion. The political elite remodelled society and economy against the will of the majority of the population. The consequences included the disintegration of self-regulatory social mechanisms, as well as of social networks and values, and the decline of religiosity as a direct consequence of the former<sup>16</sup>.

Socio-economic changes happened yet much less in Transylvania than in Hungary. The message of Transylvania for Hungary is that it is possible to have, and that there exists even today, a traditional but living religiosity, which promotes social welfare and is open to the challenges of the 21st century. Transylvania preserved a Christian cultural heritage, which has either sunk into oblivion or has declined in Hungary.

The relationship is equally fruitful from the other direction. The religious renaissance in Hungary – and in Central and Eastern Europe in general – is a sign that small religious communities and the Churches themselves are waking up to realise that they still have a role to play and that they have scope for development amidst modernity. In Hungary too, more and more people are moving away from habitual religiosity to a religious commitment based on personal choice. They are also showing themselves capable of interpreting that choice. Hungarian religiosity is increasingly apt to stand its ground and acquire its own relevance amidst competition dictated by pluralism. Hungary has had to

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<sup>16</sup> Tomka, Miklós: Secularization or anomie? *Social Compass* 1 (1991), pp. 93-102; also Tomka, Miklós – Zulehner, Paul M.: Religion im gesellschaftlichen Kontext (see note 8), pp. 49-62.



pay a very high price for his advantage, yet its social development is now far ahead of Transylvania.

Finally: the serious decline of religiosity in Hungary over recent decades is not simply a consequence of modernisation and Communism, but was caused to a certain extent by the non-responsiveness of the Churches. It is partly the conservatism of denominations which is to be blamed. But it is also possible, that not the Churches should be criticised, but rather the previous regime, which stripped Churches of independence of action. The most important thing for the future of Transylvania is that the key processes of modernisation will unfold when the totalitarian regime is already a thing of the past. This being the case, religion too has better prospects.

In Hungary, the most important aspects of religious transition are already over, and the country is now experiencing a more tranquil phase of consolidation. However, Transylvania is only just coming to face a large number of problems which Hungary had to face decades ago. In Transylvania, the disintegration of local society in the villages and of the networks of relationships with family and neighbours, and the end of the decisive role of tradition and of the handing down of a particular outlook from parent to child recently started to accelerate. Ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania will now have to create the social structures which will allow them to retain their independence and promote their interests. It is an urgent task to eliminate the educational disadvantages of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania as compared to the Rumanian population; disadvantages accumulated over recent decades. The Catholic, Reformed (Presbyterian), Unitarian, and Evangelical Churches also have a lot to do. But Christianity is challenged to become first and foremost a way of life which is solid enough to promote the values in its care, and able to enter into an ongoing dialogue with the profane world, the non-Hungarian part of Rumanian society, and Hungarian society alike.

(A more complete version of this study is available in Hungarian: Tomka, Miklós: 'Jelentés a vallásosságról – Erdély az Úr 2000. esztendejében' [Announcement on Religiosity: Transylvania in AD 2000], in Gereben, Ferenc and Tomka, Miklós, *Vallásosság és nemzettudat. Vizsgálódások Erdélyben* [Religiosity and National Consciousness: Studies on Transylvania], Budapest: Kerkai Jenő Egyházzociológiai Intézet, 2000)

## Changes in the Denominational Composition of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia, 1921–1991

The aim of this study is to analyze the data concerning the denominational distribution of the Hungarian population based on the Czechoslovakian censuses relating to denominational distribution. Changes in any social characteristics of ethnic minorities can only be explained in a wider social context. In the case of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia, the situation is more complex, because in addition to social factors in Slovakia, we must also consider the characteristic features of the entire Czechoslovakian society.

In the Czechoslovakian Republic, established after World War I, there were significant differences concerning denominational composition between the two parts of the country, also. The economically underdeveloped Slovakia had a traditionally religious population while in the more developed Czech areas, secularization drew away significant strata of both the intelligentsia and workers from the Churches.

In Slovakia, apart from a couple of thousand people, the whole population declared itself to be a member of a denomination (Table 1). The proportion of those who declared themselves to be non-denominational was 0.23%, while 0.02% was unknown. In the Czech parts of the country (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) the number of the non-denominationals exceeded 700 000, or 7.2% of the population. In both the Czech and Slovakian parts of the country, the vast majority of the population declared itself to be Roman Catholic, in the Czech areas, this meant 82% of the whole population, or 8.2 million people. In Slovakia, the rate of Roman and Greek Catholics was 77.4%, or 2.1 million people.

Regarding denominational composition in Slovakia, behind the Catholic religion the most significant denominations were: Lutheran (382 000 people), Calvinist (145 000 people) and Jewish (136 000 people) (12.8%; 4.8%; 4.5%, respectively). In the Czech section, the second most significant Church was the „Czechoslovak Church”, a national Church based on Hussite traditions and established together with the Republic. The number of its members exceeded 520 000; it represented 5.2% of the Czech region's population. The number and ratio of the two more significant “Evangelical” churches – as recorded by the census, but actually Protestant – the “Czech Brothers” and the German Lutherans, was far less (231 000 and 151 000 people; 2.3% and 1.5%, respectively). The number and ratio of the Jewish population in the Czech part of the country was 125 000 and 1.25%. The denominational composition of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia was in certain respects very similar to that of the

whole Slovakian population. According to the 1921 census, the number of Hungarians was 637 183 and comprised 21.2% of Slovakia's population.<sup>1</sup> The number of Hungarian Roman Catholics was almost 450 000. Within the Hungarian population, this meant 70.3%, which was almost identical to the proportion of the Roman Catholics in Slovakia (70.9%). The proportion of Hungarians belonging to the Greek Catholic Church (2%) was only a portion compared to all Greek Catholics in the country (6.5%). There are significant differences concerning the proportion of what are called “Evangelicals” and the distribution of the Protestant Churches between the whole population in Slovakia and the Hungarian population. Twenty-four point two percent of the Hungarians and 17.7% of the population of the Slovakian part were “Evangelical”. The majority of the more than 530 000 Slovakian “Evangelicals” were Lutherans (382 000 people), the number of the Calvinists was 145 000.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, data from 1921 broken down according to nationalities only contain the summarized row of numbers of the “Evangelicals”, so we can only infer the inner composition of the Hungarian “Evangelicals” from the 1930 census. However, an essential difference can be shown: The majority of the Hungarian “Evangelicals” was Calvinist; the proportion of the Hungarian Lutherans hardly amounted to one sixth of the Hungarian Calvinists. The dominance and characteristics of the Hungarian Calvinist Church is also clear. Within the Slovak population, the two “Evangelical” denominations are inversely proportional to that in the Hungarian population: In addition to the vast majority of Slovak Lutherans, there was only a small portion of Slovak Calvinists.

The Jewish Community had 136 000 members (4.5% of the whole population) and the majority (51.9%) declared itself to be Jewish. The proportion of the Jewish religion was 3.4%, or 22 000 people within the Hungarian population. It is interesting to see the proportion of the Jewish religion within the Slovak and German population as well. The rate of the

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<sup>1</sup> Data of the census of 1921 relating to the composition of denominations and nationalities were published in: *Sčítání lidu v republice Československé ze dne 15. února 1921 III. díl Praha 1927.*, p. 3. Data of the same census concerning the number of inhabitants of Slovakia and of the national minorities are not identical in the different publications. The reason for this is that the census data of 1921 are usually given on the basis of the present-day Slovakia. The territory of Slovakia in 1921 was not the same as it is now. Even in the first half of the 1920s the borders has been changed, and the territory of the country had also been modified as a result of the peace-treaty after World War II. Three villages south of Pozsony (Bratislava) were annexed to Slovakia after 1945. In addition, the administrative boundaries of Sub-Carpathia and Slovakia were also different from that of today. In addition to the differences depending on territory size, the data concerning nationality were influenced even by the number of those who had regular, irregular or foreign citizenship.

<sup>2</sup> The data of the Lutherans contains Silesian and German Lutherans, as well. However, their number could scarcely exceed 1000.

German Jews was higher than that of the Hungarian Jews: It was 6.5% (9000 people). The number of the “Czechoslovakian” Jews was almost 30 000, but this meant only 1.5%.

Different traditions, customs, social and economic circumstances influenced in various ways the changes in the numbers of different denominations in the following period until 1930. In the Czech regions of the country, the ratio of Roman Catholics diminished (from 82% to 78.5%) despite some growth in number. The number and proportion of those who belonged to the so-termed “National Churches” showed a more significant growth (the number of the “Czech Brothers” increased by 60 000, the membership of the “Czechoslovak Church” by more than 250 000 and the number of the German Lutherans by more than 30 000). The growth of the Orthodox congregation was the result of both the immigration of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenians and the positive discrimination toward the Eastern Church.

In the Czech areas, the number of the non-denominationals increased by more than 100 000, so their proportion was above 7.8%. The number of the non-denominationals in Slovakia increased from 6800 to 17,000. However, it amounted to barely 0.5% of the Slovakian population. It was brought on partly by the growth of the number of Czech officials and intellectuals moving into Slovakia, partly by the gradual inner restructuring of the Slovakian society. Although to different extents, the religious population had increased. As far as proportions are concerned, besides the Roman Catholic Church this growth mainly applied to the Orthodox Church, the “Czech Brothers” and the “Czechoslovak Church”. There was a perceptible decrease in the ratio of the Calvinist and Jewish religions (from 4.8% to 4.4%, and from 4.5% to 4.1%, respectively). The number and the proportion of the Hungarian population decreased significantly in the period between the two censuses (from 637 000 to 592,000 and from 21.2% to 17.8%) while the population of Slovakia had increased by nearly 330 000. Thus, the shift in proportion of the Hungarian population's denominational composition was mainly brought on by processes of changing national identity which took place in different ways in the different regions; and not by real changes in the number of those who belonged to different Churches. For this reason, when comparing changes in the denominational composition of the Hungarian population to changes in the denominational composition of Slovakia, we also have to take into consideration subsequent shifts in the ratio of national identities, because the subsequent changes can be traced back to different causes. Except for the Israelites and non-denominationals, the number of Hungarians belonging to Churches and denominations rose.

Within the Hungarian population, the rate of Roman Catholics increased slightly (from 70.3% to 71.3%); the summarized rate of the so-termed “Evangelical” denominations rose, also (from 24.2% to 24.8%). The previous

census (1921) did not contain full particulars broken down by nationality of the different “Evangelical” congregations. According to census data from 1930, the number of those who belonged to the Calvinist Church exceeded 126 000. Twenty-one point four percent of the Hungarians in Slovakia declared themselves Calvinists; the number of Lutherans was 20 000, their proportion was 3.4% within the Hungarian population. The number of the Hungarian Jews fell by one half and their ratio also decreased from 3.4% to 1.6%.

The following census covering the whole Republic was held in 1950. The break up of the republic, the events of the World War, the Holocaust and the deportation of mainly the Hungarian and German population after the war, population exchanges, “reslovakization” resulted in the strengthening of Slavic national character and, among other things, in a large-scale decrease of the Hungarian population. The ethnic character of the once so heterogeneous Czechoslovakia started to adjust to the ideas of its founders. All these processes – apart from the “reslovakization” – had an effect on the denominational composition of the different regions. The 1950 census took place after the communist takeover of power which brought about the limitation of Churches as well. In spite of this, the number and ratio of those who declared themselves non-denominationals decreased significantly. (In the Czechoslovakia of 1930, from 850 000 to 530 000 in 1950; from 6.1% to 4.3%). This decrease of non-denominationals showed significantly in both the Czech and Slovak parts of the country. The most salient change in the denominational composition of Czechoslovakia was the decrease of the Israelites in ratio and number (from 254 000 to 15 500; from 4.1% to 0.2%). In the Czech part, the ratio and number of Roman Catholics greatly decreased, which was mainly the result of the resettlement of 3 million Germans (a decrease of 1.58 million, from 78.5% to 76.4%).

The ratio and number of the followers of the National Churches grew further (the number of “Czech Brothers” has increased by 110 000; from 2.3% to 2.7%; the number and proportion of the members of the “Czechoslovak Church” grew by 167 000, from 7.3% to 10.6%), the number of the members of the small Greek Orthodox denomination nearly doubled.

The decrease of Jewish population in Slovakia was even greater than in the Czech parts: from 137 000 to 7,500, from 4.1% to 0.2%. There was a significant growth in the summarized ratio of the Roman and Greek Catholics: from 78% to 82.2%; and the proportion of Lutherans also increased (from 12% to 12.9%). At the same time, the ratio and number of Calvinists fell (from 4.4% to 3.2% and from 146 000 to 116 000). The evaluation of the denominational composition of the Hungarian population according to the data of the 1950 census is a very problematic task. The census which was held after the deprivation of Hungarians of their civil rights in the period following the war, cannot give reliable data on the number of Hungarians. It rather gave

information on those who were brave enough to declare themselves Hungarians shortly after the measures afflicting the whole of the Hungarian population.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the evaluation of changes in the denominational status of the Hungarians is only an estimate. Demonstrable changes in the different denominations were similar to the changes relating to the whole country. The number of non-Catholics decreased, the ratio of Roman Catholics grew significantly (from 71.3% to 75%). The number of the Hungarian Calvinist fell by nearly one half (from 126 000 to 73 000) and their proportion also decreased within the Hungarian population (from 21.4% to 20.5%). The unreliability of nationality data taken from the census of 1950 is proven from the point of view of denominational composition by data of the national composition of Calvinists: in 1930, 86.7%; in 1950, 65% and in 1991, 78.2% declared themselves Hungarians. It also supports the idea that in 1950, about 10 000 Hungarian Calvinists changed their nationality.

In 1950, it was the first, as well as the only census under the Communist regime when denomination was asked. Only 40 years later, in 1991, after the events of the November of 1989, was it asked again. Concerning denominations, it reflected a reality totally different from that of the previous censuses until 1950. Thus, comparing the data of 1991 with the data from previous censuses can only produce approximate results. Despite the fact that questions concerning denominational status in 1991 and 1950 were similar, there are at least two basic differences: in 1950 (as had been true for the previous censuses), denominational status meant the legally-regulated membership to a Church. Those who did not belong to a Church should declare themselves “non-denominationals” – as it is written in the instructions of the data sheets – and belonging to a Church cannot be changed later by notes on the data sheet.<sup>4</sup> In 1991, the category of denominational status was of a declarative character: Belonging to a denomination meant participation in Church life or the relationship with a Church. Everybody was free to make a decision on the denominational status, to declare herself/himself non-denominational or to give no answer at all. Children under 15 were to be represented by their parents.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps it helps to understand the debate among demographers about how to interpret the data, the composition of those who did not answer (“unknown”)

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<sup>3</sup> The census of 1961 has already disproved the data of the previous census concerning the Hungarians. According to the census of 1961, the number of the Hungarian inhabitants was 534 000, that is by 166 000 higher than in 1950. If we disregard the increase of population that could have been expected according to vital statistics, then the number of the Hungarians is still higher by 110 000. (In: Gyurgyík L.: Magyar mérleg, p.72.)

<sup>4</sup> Sčítání lidu a soupis domu a bytu v republice Československé ze dne 1. března 1950 Díl I. Praha 1957 p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Sčítanie ľudu, domov a bytov 1991. Podrobné údaje za obyvateľstvo Slovenská republika 1992 p. II.

or about the extent to which the data of the denominational status reflects reality.<sup>6</sup> The other basic difference concerning the comparability of the data is the result of the changes taking place in the Czechoslovakian society after 1950 and the consequences of the atheist propaganda in the last 40 years, or changes in the attitude to religion and Church.

The 1991 census has revealed very significant changes in the denominational composition of the population. The rate of the “religious people” within the whole population – those who belonged to different Churches and denominations – decreased as there were considerable changes in the number of the population belonging to different Churches. Changes in the ratio of the religious population of the Czech parts were very dissimilar to that of Slovakia. In Bohemia, a smaller part of the population (43.9%) belonged to Churches, the ratio of those who declared themselves non-denominational was similar (39.9%) to this, while 16.7% remain unknown. In Slovakia, 72.8% of the population belonged to denominations, 9.8% was non-denominational and 17.4% did not give an answer. The roots of the different development of the two parts of the Republic can be shown in the results of earlier censuses. (In 1950, 5.8% of Bohemia's and 0.1% of Slovakia's population was non-denominational.) The comparison of the data from 1950 and 1991 is only of informatory character. It gives us information on the changes in the ratios of the very heterogeneous groups of non-denominational and on those who belonged to different Churches and denominations. Nevertheless, in 1991 the definition of belonging to Churches was rather obscure. *For this reason, if we try to analyze the changes in rate and number concerning the different denominations during the last 40 years, then we have to compare changes in the inner ratio of all denominations in both periods.*

Further on, we would like to narrow our examination excluding both the “non-denominational” and the “unknown” categories. Consequently, we shall see that in the Czech parts and in Slovakia, the ratio of Roman Catholics increased (from 81.3% to 88.9% and from 76.5% to 83%, respectively) and of the “others”, meaning mainly sects, grew further (3.2 times and 2.9 times). Generally, the ratio of the so-termed “Evangelical” denominations decreased. In the Czech parts, there was a moderate decrease in the ratio of the “Czech brothers” (from 4.8% to 4.5%). In Slovakia, the ratio of Lutherans and Calvinists fell by one third (from 12.9% to 8.5% and from 3.3% to 2.2%, respectively).

One of the most apparent changes in the Czech parts was the decrease by one third of the ratio of those who belonged to the Czech National Church, the “Czechoslovakian (Hussite) Church” (from 11.3% to 3.9%). Growth in number

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<sup>6</sup> Here we mention only two studies: Pastor K.: Výpovedná hodnota statistických údajov o religiozite. Demografie 94/3 pp. 173-179.; Kučera M.: K interpretaci výsledku sčítání 1991 o náboženském vyznání. Demografie 1991/4 pp. 189-191.

could be experienced within the different sects in the Czech parts and in Slovakia besides the sects the number of Roman Catholic and Orthodox people had also increased.

Changes in the ratio of those who belonged to denominations were sometimes accompanied by reverse changes in number. In the Czech parts of the country, an increase in the ratio of Catholics was accompanied by a considerable decrease in number (from 6.8 million to 4 million), whereas in Slovakia, the number of Catholics increased significantly (from 2.6 million to 3.2 million).

The modification of denominational composition of the Hungarian population in Slovakia can only be considered with reservations. As we have already noted, the data from 1950 relating to the Hungarian population (but to other nationalities, as well) are not perfectly reliable. So, if we have to consider these data without other, more reliable sources, than we must be aware of their limited reliability.

Since in 1950, a considerable part of the Hungarian population did not declare itself as Hungarian, we could not rely completely on the census data. According to census data from 1950 the number of the Hungarians was far lower (by at least 110 000 people) than it could be expected on the basis of vital statistics. For this reason, we only deal with denominational rates first. The starting point of this approach is the following assumption: The declaration of Hungarian nationality in 1950 was not considerably influenced by the denominational composition of the Hungarians. The comparison of the denominational composition in 1930 and in 1950 does not signify any tendencies divergent from countrywide changes (except for the decrease by two-thirds of the number of Hungarian Greek Catholics). On the other hand, there could be factors in the Calvinist's declaration of identity that are somewhat different from those of the Catholics.

At first sight, it seems that 40 years of autocracy of the communist ideology before 1989, that is to say, the secularization, had not influenced so much the Hungarian population in Slovakia, as compared to its influence on the entire population of the country. While 72.8% of the population of Slovakia belonged to denominations (9.8% was non-denominational and 17.4% was unknown), within the Hungarian population, the proportion of those who belonged to denominations was above 80.5% (6.6% was non-denominational and 12.9% was unknown). The difference can probably be explained by the growing needs for identity as a result of minority status.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> While in 1991, 56% of the Slovakian population lived in settlements of more than 5000 inhabitants, the same proportion concerning the Hungarians was 41%. According to educational qualifications, 2.9% of the Hungarians and 5.8% of the whole population had a university degree. Thirty-nine point five percent of the Hungarians and only 28.7% of the whole population had a primary school qualification.



In considering the whole population, we have already outlined the main tendencies relating to denominational status. According to a detailed analysis of denominational status, there were two main tendencies as well as a couple of sub-tendencies: On the whole, the rate of Roman Catholics gradually increased while there was a significant decrease in the proportion of those who belonged to the so-termed "Evangelical Churches". The decrease of Greek Catholics and the increase of the Orthodox population seem to be quite similar, although the causes were completely different.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the number of sect-members (the category of "others") grew considerably. The decline of the Czech National Church did not stop and the proportion of the Jewish denomination decreased to a small portion.

Concerning the whole population of the country and the Hungarians in Slovakia, changes in the ratio of larger Churches and denominations were not so divergent. The rate of Catholics grew from 76.5% to 83%, within the Hungarian population from 75% to 80.6%. The ratio of the Lutherans had decreased from 13% to 8.5%, and that of the Calvinists from 3.3% to 2.2%. Considering Hungarian Lutherans and Calvinists: from 3.1% to 2.7% and from 20.5% to 14.1%, respectively. The divergent changes of the ratio of Greek Catholics and of the Orthodox population was influenced to a great extent by the ethnic character of the religious people.

Unlike Hungarian Greek Catholics, the eastern Slovakian Greek Catholic Ukrainians, Ruthenians as well as the Slovaks, themselves, could accept easier the enforcement of conversion to Orthodoxy. While there was a significant decrease in the ratio of Greek Catholics in Slovakia (from 6.6% to 4.7%), the ratio of Hungarian Greek Catholics increased slightly (from 1.2% to 1.5%). The expansion of sects (the category of "others") was very dynamic in recent decades. It seems that their growth is more considerable within the Hungarian population (from 0.1% to 1%) than within the whole population of the country (from 0.3% to 0.8%). On the whole, changes in the number of Hungarians belonging to different denominations are not very divergent from countrywide changes.

## Prospects

Regarding the future, we would like to know the direction of changes of the denominational composition of the Hungarians in Slovakia and that of the whole country. After the establishment of the Slovakian national state, earlier contradictions became more salient and these apply to the Churches, as well.

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<sup>8</sup> The increase of the proportion of the Orthodox population to such an extent and the decrease of the number of Greek Catholics was a result of the ecclesiastical policy of the state. In the early 1950s, the state officially dissolved the Greek Catholic Church and its followers were forced to join the Orthodox Church until 1968.

With the gradual dying out of the traditionally religious older generations, the Churches had to cope with a new situation: They had to face the religious needs of a population of a completely different demographic and social structure and view of life. The masses are less open to the traditional religious life of the past generations.

On the “market of ideologies”, different world views are becoming more and more effective and powerful within and in addition to religious ideas. They produce compositions which seem to be quite paradoxical at first sight. The most important challenges to the traditional Churches are secularization and the appearance of different sects, but we also have to take into consideration an ideology in the social practice of the 1990s, which is present to different extents in the different levels of Slovakian society. Supported by political and Church groups, this ideology is trying to combine Christianity and nationalism.

(This paper is a modified version of the article „*A csehszlovákiai magyarság felekezeti megoszlásának alakulása*” [The Denominational Composition of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia] appeared in *Új Forrás*, 1996/6, pp 15–24.)

## Appendix

Table 1.  
*The Denominational Composition of the Hungarians in Slovakia, 1921–1991*

The denominational composition of Hungarians In Slovakia 1921–1991 (by person)									
	1921	1921	1930	1930	1951	1951	1951	1991	1991
Denominational composition	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia
Roman Catholic	2 128 205	448 117	2 384 355	422 282	2 623 198	265 729	3 187 383	368 416	
Greek and Armenian Catholic	193 778	12 969	213 725	12 398	225 495	4 209	178 733	6 764	
“Evangelicals” together	530 512	154 030	555 900	147 095	561 392	83 822	408 942	76 843	
– Lutheran	382 428	-	400 258	20 260	443 251	10 929	326 397	12 310	
– Calvinist	144 549	-	145 829	126 484	111 696	72 584	82 545	64 533	
Israelite	135 918	21 744	136 737	9728	7476	80	912	122	
Non-denominational	6 818	109	17 148	708	2 277	492	515 551	37 247	
Others	5 144	152	21 928	126	12 800	71	64 979	4 710	
Unknown	495	62	-	-	9679	129	917 835	73 194	
Sum.	3 000 870	637 183	3 329 793	592 337	3 442 317	354 532	5 274 335	567 296	

The denominational composition of Hungarians In Slovakia 1921–1991 (by percentage)										
	1921	1921	1930	1930	1930	1951	1951	1951	1991	1991
Denominational composition	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	The whole population of Slovakia	Hungarians in Slovakia
Roman Catholic	70.92	70.33	71.61	71.29	71.29	76.20	74.95	60.43	60.43	64.94
Greek and Armenian Catholic	6.46	2.04	6.42	2.09	2.09	6.55	1.19	3.39	3.39	1.19
“Evangelicals” together	17.68	24.17	16.69	24.83	24.83	16.31	23.64	7.75	7.75	13.55
-Lutheran	12.74	-	12.02	3.42	3.42	12.88	3.08	6.19	6.19	2.17
-Calvinist	4.82	-	4.38	21.35	21.35	3.24	20.47	1.57	1.57	11.38
Israelite	4.53	3.41	4.11	1.64	1.64	0.22	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Non-denominational	0.23	0.02	0.51	0.12	0.12	0.07	0.14	9.77	9.77	6.57
Others	0.17	0.02	0.66	0.02	0.02	0.37	0.02	1.23	1.23	0.83
Unknown	0.02	0.01	0	0	0	0.28	0.04	17.40	17.40	12.90
Sum.	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

-: no data

## Protestantism in Hungarian Culture

As an introduction, let me make some comments in connection with the topic. After that there will be two sections composed in chronological order. The first, shorter section presents how culture gained a hold in the Hungarian Protestant identity; the second section goes through the most important stages of the relation between Protestantism and culture, at times drawing attention to the imperfection of research.

1. The Reformation – unlike its contemporary, Humanism – did not appear with cultural, but with basically faith-deepening-devotional objectives. However, its cultural, social and political effects were manifested from its beginning. The sudden and radical appearance of Anabaptism calls attention to the fact that these effects could be not only culture building, but also opposed to culture. Religious fundamentalism, as in other denominations, has also appeared and still appears in Protestant branches from time to time. It does not refuse works of art and other goods of civilization on esthetic or scientific grounds, but it does so rather because they do not coincide with its religious beliefs. Cultural impoverishment is evident in this respect; at most, negative incentives can be expected from it.
2. From the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the solidarity and political interdependence formed during the fight for free exercise of religion established a strong relationship between the two larger Protestant Churches, the Evangelical and the Reformed Churches, which primarily appears in the identity or similarity of Church structure and historical identity, though they have never taken such a shape as was realized through the Prussian union in 1817 of the form that is uniformly called today the Evangelical Church. This is one of the reasons why I am going to deal primarily with the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches, which constitute the main part of the relationship between Protestantism and Hungarian culture. At the same time, I will not forget about Hungarian Unitarianism which occupies a localized position in comparison to the previous two: It is of Transylvanian origin and it forms a large Church only there. Although from a theological point of view, the Unitarian Church does not belong to Protestantism, it does from a cultural point of view. It is the only anti-Trinitarian congregation in the world that has existed continuously since the Reformation. Another special Hungarian part of the Protestant family tree is the Nazarene sect of Swiss origin, which transformed into a peasant religion. Nevertheless, its cultural heritage, as in the case of other New Protestant Churches that appeared in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>

century is not significant; on the one hand because of the lack of past, on the other hand because of the frequent presence of religious fundamentalism.

3. As far as an international comparison is concerned, unique historical and geographic features characterize Hungarian Protestantism. It is of isolated and peripheral position compared to the Protestantism block of Western and Northern Europe and is divided by a broad Roman Catholic zone from it. At the same time, the only place where we can find a significant Protestant population in East-Central Europe after the Counter-Reformation and prior to 1918 is in Hungary. The Hungarian Kingdom before 1918 was the most complex country of contemporary Europe from a religious point of view, in which there was a particular correspondence between ethnic groups and religions. Thus, almost 100% of the Reformed and the Unitarians were Hungarian, while the quadrilingual character of the Evangelicals (Hungarian, German, Slovakian, and Slovenian) is a unique phenomenon and was different from the ethnically homogeneous German and Scandinavian Churches.
4. The relation between Protestantism and Hungarian culture presents itself in philosophy, every-day thinking, worldview, ethics, and life style. So I consider culture in a broad sense, and I take into consideration not only high or official culture, but popular and folk culture as well; that is to say, every-day life, mentality, behavior and traditions. Here belong such things as the choice of first names, the peculiarities of the language of the Bible, a version of spelling, wearing the wedding ring on the left hand after a wedding or not placing the cross among the tomb signs. In the peasant tradition before the industrial revolution – varying from age to age and from region to region – dress, festive menus, celebrations, and even dialects can be the expression of religious identity consciousness. These examples demonstrate that we can not only refer to direct religious or mere theological aspects.
5. The fact that more than 500 years passed from the establishment of the state until the beginning of Hungarian Protestantism brings up the question of the continuity and discontinuity of Hungarian culture from a uniquely particular aspect. Although originally it was not the objective, in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century it was clear that this schism was inevitable. It was the time when the cultural consequences of reformation could be seen, though the cultural continuity did not cease to exist. Perhaps the most striking historical example is that if the state-founding Hungarian elite had not oriented itself towards Rome, but towards Byzantium a thousand years ago, there would probably not have been a Reformation in Hungary. With the end of religious quarrels, now no one doubts that the effects of Protestantism originally belong to Hungarian culture, just like those of Catholicism and Byzantine

Christianity. Only with this mutual completion can it be really understood. Without their cross reference and the decisive Catholic-Protestant duality, the picture of Hungarian national culture is incomplete; both its characteristic feature and a part of its international relations remain in the background.

We can, of course, measure the cultural performance of Hungarian Protestantism by its own possibilities, but this is not sufficient. On the other hand, the space restrictions of this text do not allow for the separate analysis of the mixed traditions of Protestant branches. In some cases, we can achieve more subtle results by the aforementioned Protestant-Catholic comparison. An even broader, international comparison comes to us as something natural. However, we must treat carefully any of the “deficiency lists”; they cannot direct our orientation exclusively, because it would inevitably suggest a general model of development that does not exist in European Protestantism. The measure above all can be the prevailing originality and standard, which does not necessarily mean the imitation of different international examples – though we should not lose sight of them, either.

From what was just mentioned, it follows that the relation of culture and Protestantism is a historical phenomenon, which was taking shape in a long process; we can and we have to take into account the variants of this relationship in time and in space. From the beginning until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the feeling of belonging together in certain Protestant branches was almost of religious character. Denominations are changing and crystallizing, Church laws and tradition are solidified. How could contemporary Protestant cultural activity, whose first performances were born at this time, already have its own tradition? Nevertheless, it had important cultural aspects, its school and printing press founding program, whose results became ripe later or the sorting out the Ancient and Middle Ages heritage (mainly the rejection of the traditional cult of the saints), which is of mainly religious tradition, but which considerably changes the ratio of holidays and working days and increases working time. The process lasts for a long time. The anti-Pietist Lutheran council of Rózsashegy (Rózsashegy, 1707) ordered the observance of more celebrations and honor of the Virgin Mary. A book about celebrations written by Péter Bod, a reformed preacher (Szent Heortokrates, 1761; [Saint Heortokrates, 1761]) definitely separates the circle of Protestant holidays.

The segregation of Protestants in Hungary lasted from the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As a result of this, a legal-constitutional structure rose to the top of the religious base. Their identity consciousness was formed on the one hand by agreements and peace settlements (Vienna 1606, Linz 1645), on the other hand by Parliament decisions, laws (1681, 1705, 1791, etc.) and by the Edict of Tolerance issued by Joseph II

(1781), as well as by persecutions, offenses, and complaints. Religious freedom and the freedom of the estates are connected; later, the political independence of the country joined them, as well. This is the time when the constitutional opposition was formed, which divided the political public until the end of World War I: Should Hungary remain a part of the Habsburg empire, or not? (This has many times been inaccurately, though not completely unreasonably, identified with the Protestant-Catholic opposition). The Protestant cultural institutional system was seriously hurt but it had its own cultural tradition, even though its content was narrow, and it did not have a central role in the identity consciousness. János Nadányi in his book, *Florus Hungaricus*, wrote about the expansion of the Reformation (1663) as a part of the history of Hungary. The literary encyclopaedia of Péter Bod (*Magyar Athenas*, 1766; [*Hungarian Athenas*, 1766]) distinguishes writers according to their religion.

In the Protestant world, it can be considered a feature when and how they keep a record of the memories of the Reformation. In Geneva, already in 1635, they celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the abolition of mass; this took place completely within a religious framework in the spirit of Calvinist orthodoxy. At the bicentennial of 1735, the Reformation first received a historical perspective, the academic celebration was about patience and ethics from the influence of Cartesianism. By 1835, remembering became laicized and historical, the city was celebrating the ancient source of human rights and its own great past. The interpretation of the jubilee was again transformed by 1936. This time, they remembered the acceptance of the Reformation, the change of date comes from here; but the celebration divides, the city carries further the liberal traditions, while the Church celebrated the occasion in a Protestant ecumenical style. The Protestant state formations of German speaking areas revived the deeds of Luther without coordination and incidentally in 1717, the first general celebration took place at the three-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation (1817). Political conditions were not ready for similar celebrations in Hungary: A hundred years had to pass for this to happen. However, a short time later, they organized a countrywide celebration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the publication of the first Hungarian language Bible (1890), which can be considered the first complete celebration of Hungarian Protestant culture and at the same time it emphasized the outstanding Protestant tradition of fostering the Hungarian language.

In the meantime, the end of the estate society brought with itself the equal rights of religions (1848). It was not necessary to regulate separately the legal status of certain religions and Churches, that is why legal consciousness was losing its significance in the Protestants' sense of belonging. The spread of liberal theology superseded beliefs, while historical and cultural identification gained strength.



The Enlightenment saw the Reformation as a predecessor of the fight for general human rights, and the historical atmosphere of Romanticism also contributed to this from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was also assisted by the fact that after 1820, the memory of the anti-Habsburg estate-independence-religion struggle of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries was revived in the Hungarian national consciousness. Thus, it is not surprising that both those Hungarians who were loyal to the dynasty and the government circles in Vienna wanted to label the Hungarian war of independence in 1848–49 as a Protestant matter. In the end, the religious patent issued by Francis Joseph I in 1859, which in spite of its intention forged together the national agreement against neo-absolutism, especially contributed to the fact that a great part of the society (also a big part of the Catholics) looked at the Protestants as the prominent figures of all freedom fights and the national war of independence. This also contributed to the fact that the national identity consciousness of the three Protestant branches that had continuously existed since the Reformation developed mainly in the middle of the last century.

The latest events do not have any counterparts in Western Europe, because in the absolutistic states of the world they were successful in the creation of a more complete religious homogeneity either with Counter-Reformation or with anti-Catholicism, which could not be carried out in our country, and thus a multi-religious society remained legal. The heroic cult of the age of Reformation and religious wars in Hungary partly reminds us of the Protestant German countries, because they did not know the interconnection of national independence and Protestantism. We can find a similar parallel in the case of the Czechs, where the Hussite tradition and the “Czech brothers” (Cesky bratky, Bömische Brüder) played a leading role in raising the religious past, while at the same time it became a predecessor of the fight for national independence (from the works of František Palacký, Thomas Masaryk).

It is known that the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and then the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the era when modern East-Central European national cultures were born, in which the arts, especially literature, played a decisive role. The first overall and evaluating histories of literature and national histories were written during these times, and these were accompanied by “discoveries” and “rediscoveries” as well as the creation of new literary canons. In the case of the Hungarians from the 16<sup>th</sup> century – together with the appearance of the Reformation – the religious and secular vernacular literature is continuous; that is why it was not necessary to create and integrate an independent Protestant culture. However, in the case of other nations, the Reformation left behind only the more or less significant memories of the beginning (mainly Bible translations and religious documents). The cultivation of literature and language for centuries was interruptible. In the case of those Protestant nations (Finns, Estonians, Latvians) or partly Protestant nations (Slavs) where written literature in the mother tongue reached its peak in

the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these early memories were highly esteemed. On the other hand, where Protestantism disappeared as a result of the Counter-Reformation (among the Slovenians, Croatians, Romanians), they considered these memories from behind the religious dividing wall as something rare or ambiguous, or even had reservations towards them. The Polish situation is unique: There was a continuity of language and literature, but there was not a religious one. Thus, of course, the works of outstanding Protestant authors could not shape the relation of the denomination and culture (for example, the poetry of M. Rej and J. Kochanowski). The Czech refugee literature had a different destiny, including the works of Comenius. The works of this high-level cultivator of the Czech language were in manuscripts for years and they were published abroad. They were integrated into the Czech culture only long after this death.

The first stage in the history of Protestantism and Hungarian culture was between the beginning of the Reformation and the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Hungarian manuscript literature of the end of the Middle Ages flowed into the mother tongue program of the Erasmists and the Reformation, and it triumphed with them. The Reformation itself in Hungary was the product of Lutheran direction: Its propagators, Mátyás Bíró Dévai (around 1500–1545), András Horvát Szkárosi (?–?, middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century) and Péter Bornemissza (1535–1585), as well as others were Lutherans in the productive years of their life. On the other hand, supporters of the result of Reformation were outstanding reformed people. I cite here István Kis Szegedi (1505–1572), who was a famous theologian of his age. I can mention here Péter Juhász Melius (1536–1572), the organizer of the reformed Church, Gáspár Károli (around 1530–1591), the translator and editor of the first full Hungarian version of the Bible, and Albert Molnár Szenci (1574–1634), the translator of the *Institutio* of Calvin and the Geneva psalms, which have been popular up to the present. The main factors of stabilization were printing presses, book publication and the foundation of schools. The predecessors of almost all of the later famous Protestant Colleges are known from this period, which ended with the generous foundation by Gábor Bethlen of a Calvinist college, in Gyulafehérvár. We should deal in a separate chapter with the performance of the first generation of the anti-Trinitarian line, at least with Ferenc Dávid (around 1520–1579), who founded a Church, Gáspár Heltai (1490 or 1510–1574), writer, Bible translator, printer, and Miklós Fazekas Bogáti (?–1592), song writer.

The spiritual panorama is very colorful. It is a worthy continuation of the cultural performances of the late Middle Ages, the regular visits paid to Western European universities, the foundation of universities in Hungary, the Italian Renaissance relations, and the early beginnings of book printing. Religion was a public matter, religious disputes generally took place in front of the widest audience, sometimes at the market places of market towns. The Catholic King did not found a Protestant university, therefore a significant part of the

Protestant students – thousands and thousands till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century – finished their studies in Western Europe (the German Principalities, Netherlands, England, Switzerland). This explains the fact that the theological questions and initiatives that appeared in the centers of the Reformation, became known in Hungary almost immediately, as well. We can meet the followers of a number of trends among the actors, the followers of Matthias Flacius, Melancthon, Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin and the followers of Irenaeus (mediators). Several ideas that had influenced the national consciousness for a long time appeared as the intellectual products of the Reformation. One example is to consider the devastation of the country, especially the view that the Turkish military expeditions came as punishments from God; the awareness of being selected, the Jewish-Hungarian parallel based on the Old Testament; the prophetic attitude of the creative intellectuals; the strengthening of the idea of opposing the autocratic ruler.

European Protestantism in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century was possessed by Puritanism and Pietism. Both of them had important cultural and social aspects. No less decisive was the fact that this was the period of the Counter-Reformation, which was a reason for the difference between Hungary and Western Europe as far as the situation of Puritanism and Pietism is concerned. Both of them appeared in Hungary with the intention to improve reformation, and just as in other countries, Puritanism appeared here some decades earlier. Their reception was almost parallel as their rise ended soon, their success was partial and it did not follow the Western European examples – especially not the radical versions. The reasons can be found in the poor differentiation of the Hungarian cultural and social life, in the poverty of the ecclesiastical institutional system and in the suppression of the counter-reformation, which made Protestant Churches more dependent of one another. Protestantism has given a number of outstanding personalities to culture, but it lagged behind the level of formation of community identity of the previous period and it could not present something similar to the influential idea of the state (*Regnum Marianum*) of the Catholic Hungarian Baroque period.

Puritanism primarily formed life style and individual piety in Hungary. A great number of Puritan religious writings were translated from foreign languages. Soon after their first edition, significant revisions and original Hungarian pieces were also born. For example Pál Medgyesi (1605–?), a Calvinist preacher who studied in Cambridge translated the popular work (*Praxis pietatis*, 1615) of L. Bayle already in 1636, and published it in Hungarian several times. Puritan idealism can be felt in the works of the authors of Transylvanian literature for more than a hundred years. Even today, we consider the following authors to be outstanding: János Csere Apáczai (1625–1659), philosopher and teacher; Miklós Bethlen (1643–1716), writer and princely chancellor; Ferenc Páriz Pápai (1649–1716) physician and writer;

Mihály Cserei (1668–1756), writer; Miklós Kis Misztótfalusi (1650–1702), printer and writer; Kata Bethlen (1700–1759), writer; Péter Bod (1712–1769), writer and historian; József Dienes Hermányi (1699–1763), writer. If we consciously polarize the choice of examples from world literature, we did not have a Milton or a John Bunyan. There is no Hungarian parallel with the first Czech language (religious) novel written by Comenius (*A világ útvesztője és a szív paradicsoma, Labirint svéta a ráj srdce, Labyrinth of the Worlds and Paradise of the Heart*). However, its author found a shelter in the Reformed College of Sárospatak (in North-Eastern Hungary) as a professor for four years (1650–1654). The religious poems of the Lutheran Bálint Balassi (1554–1594), an outstanding poet of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was not followed by a high level of Protestant religious poetry. Even if we consider the ecclesiastical song poetry of Pál Ráday (1677–1733), who grew up under an orthodox Lutheran education, as the most outstanding in Hungary, it does not reach the level of art of the lyrical poetry of Paul Gerhardt, which can serve as a German parallel.

The process of schism generated by Puritanism at its birth places – the Netherlands and England – did not take place in Hungary. There was no Anglican base, Presbyterianism and the Independents did not appear and Baptism and Methodism appeared only in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and not as the result of an internal development, but as an external initiative. It influenced Church structure but its social effects did not even reach those in England and in the Netherlands. The institution of presbytery became rooted and spread in wide circles, and though this did not fulfill the original Calvinist faith and ethic protecting function, it rather fulfilled the secular representation of Churches. Later, it became the pioneering institution of democratic self-government.

We can say a lot of similar things about the cultural effects of Pietism, although it emerged in much calmer social-political circumstances. Compared to its German birthplace, the extreme features and the obsession embodied in exodus were missing in Hungary, but it had both common and practical sense in the fields of religious life and education. The flourishing period is marked by the Evangelical Mátyás Bél (1684–1749), polymath historian and geographical writer and his circle; and by the Evangelical András Torkos (?–1737) and György Bárány (1682–1757), both ecclesiastical writers. The cultural incentives of Pietism lasted longer than did those of Puritanism, as they were more more tightly bound. We must also mention Sámuel Tessedik (1743–1820), the evangelical teacher and polymath, and the reformed ecclesiastical writer György Szikszai (1738–1803). The famous book of the later (*Keresztyéni tanítások és imádságok*, 1786 [Christian Instructions and Prayers]) is a good example of the aforementioned connection and thus a reason for its popularity of almost 150 years among Evangelical and Reformed believers. The Hungarian heritage of the Pietism of Spener and Francke was connected – with the help of romantic

incentives – to Neo-Pietism in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its two outstanding figures: August Gottlieb Wimmer (1793–1863) and Maria Dorothea (1800–1855), Princess of Württemberg (Wife of the Habsburg Archduke Joseph, who was the deputy of the emperor in Hungary) were both Germans who arrived in Hungary.

The 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries were a flourishing period of Protestant peregrination. Most of the people cited so far studied at Western European universities and colleges. Protestant history refers to them often with reasonable pride and with pleasure; though we hear much less about what the masses – those whose names do not appear on the pages of the history of culture – took with themselves to their homeland and what kind of culture they spread in their remaining years, which they often spent in remote, isolated settlements. This is the time when “Áron families” (The male descendants who occupy the priestly office from generation to generation), which are so characteristic of the Protestant world, were also formed.

From the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Enlightenment and Romanticism were the two main international spiritual trends, which we have to consider in our overview first. The Protestant peregrination to Western Europe continued to fulfill an important role: Among other things, through the mediation of these trends we can continue the previous list of names with such outstanding scientists like István Hatvani (1718–1786), physicist, who was known as the Hungarian Faust due to the folklore connected with his figure; Farkas Bolyai (1775–1836), a famous mathematician of his age, a friend of Gauss; István Márton Mándi (1760–1831), priest, teacher, first Hungarian interpreter of Immanuel Kant, and many other writers, poets and scientists, who are considered to be the famous creators of Hungarian culture.

Before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was no linguistic nationalism. The independent Slovakian culture came to light after this period in the Evangelical Church and with it a national conflict causing serious tensions in the Church for more than a hundred years. Among German Evangelicals, a process in the opposite direction could be observed, that is to say, Magyarization (Hungarianization) and the orientation towards Hungarian culture. The Enlightenment is, of course, as much a Catholic matter as a Protestant matter in Hungary, but there are denominational differences among its branches. A more important factor is the general change in the religiousness of the society and in the gradually strengthening process of laicization, the connection between religion and culture was not so evident as before. After one reads a couple of lines from the Hungarian Encyclopedia (*Magyar Enciklopédia*, 1653) of János Csere Apáczai, the religious and Church linkage of the author is striking, but we cannot say the same things about the poetry of the outstanding Evangelical poet, Dániel Berzsenyi (1776–1836). Together with the decline of Church religiousness,

“private” and/or “civil” religion appear, first of all among the culture-creating intellectuals.

In spite of the wide reception of German Romanticism in Hungary, there are relatively few long-lasting traces of religious romanticism in Hungarian culture. The Protestant side is especially poor, or is not explored suitably, although the official Hungarian National Anthem does not only show undeniable signs of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Protestant, but also of the contemporary (it was written in 1823) Calvinist lyrical poetry. Even though Ferenc Kölcsey, the author of the Anthem, made some partly appreciative comments about Catholicism in his literary studies, they did not figure much as religious Romanticism. Compared to the international results, Hungarian Catholicism also did not have too much to show, but its relative importance was greater in Hungary, since we find the elderly count Ferenc Széchenyi (1754–1820), the founder of the Hungarian National Museum and Library; his son István Széchenyi (1791–1860) an outstanding politician of his age, and Ferenc Liszt (1811–1886) among its followers. Considering the strongly Protestant base of German philosophy, the complete lack of the independent cultivation of Hungarian philosophy and theology is very striking and its effects can be felt in poetry and in other fields of belles-lettres. As in many other European cultures, it is probably not a denominational feature.

Among the political-social ideas of the Modern age, it was liberalism with which Hungarian Protestantism concluded an alliance in the political fight for equality before the law and for the freedom of religion in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The relationship proved to be long lasting. In the next one and a half centuries – although both Protestantism and liberalism went through a significant change – the majority of the intellectuals who considered themselves as conscious Protestants regarded the basic elements of classical liberalism as a part of their thinking.

This period is the age of theological rationalism, and later of liberal theology. It has a connection with the fact that in the history of the relationship between Hungarian culture and Protestantism, we encounter striking examples of discontinuity, while the Protestant cultural tradition became stronger and more manifold than before. Very different and moreover opposite interests were living next to each other for a long time. During the times of the fight against the already-mentioned religious patent of the emperor (1859) the most respected Calvinist pastor of the period was asked to write a prayer for the hard-pressed Church. A pastor friend of his gave him the following advice: *“Do not make a prayer. Let us leave this weapon for the Pope and the Lutherans... Let us choose as a slogan the sentence of the old archdeacon Terhes: let us be stubborn and let us sit down. Everybody should pray according to his or her spiritual needs. It is to be feared that besides prayer we should be ordered to fast. This will be the sentence issued by the court of justice for those it captures.”* This citation

delimits Catholics and Lutherans from the Reformed by refusing two daily, basically identical elements of the Reformed culture before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that is to say private prayer and fast. The writer of the letter obviously did not notice his own tradition, the fact that a great number of prayers of belles-lettres value remained not only after the clergy, but also after the laity, from the Princes of Transylvania, politicians and writers of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, for example. After this, the ignorance of the most influential poet of the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, Endre Ady (1877–1919), is not surprising. When he heard that a Reformed person can also get down on his knees, he wrote a passionate opposing article under the title “*The Followers of Calvin Get Down on Their Knees*” (1911), because it was already forgotten in the rational-liberal tradition. He did not know that Calvin was also praying on his knees, and many others like the chancellor of the principality of Transylvania, the aforementioned famous writer, Miklós Bethlen did in the decisive hours of his life.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the conflicts between respected protestant colleges and their students, who later became famous, increased significantly. Mihály Vitéz Csokonai (1773–1805), the most talented lyrical poet of his age was expelled from the College of Debrecen for infringing the regulations. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century several high-level authors criticized the spirit of their schools for being old-fashioned, and many of them interrupted their studies. Endre Ady also changed his schools. It would only be proper to refer to the general inclination of outstanding personalities to refuse to follow norms, but at the same time to draw the attention to a number of positive examples. However, this is not enough.

While there was general theology education in secondary schools and colleges (in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), it was unquestionable that it was centrally decisive as far as its content was concerned. After the Enlightenment, both contemporary Protestantism and the schools were characterized by liberalism, unlike a great number of Catholic schools (mainly led by monastic orders). In Protestant education, according to what we have said about the history of identity, the respect of basic freedoms had an eminent place, as well as the idea of Hungarian independence and the “national religion”; they often paid very little attention to Bible classes. On the other hand, traditions were strong. It is true without generalization that we are correct to condemn the Protestant colleges in some cases at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in the main part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for being old-fashioned (in curriculum, method, organization), yet this environment had a serious educating power and dynamism. It is perhaps the tensions created in this way that became the source of conflicts.

Considering the ideology of the age of bourgeois Hungary (1848–1948), the aspects of the history of ideas that have been applied so far cannot be used because the intellectual trends and cultural intentions were changing far faster than earlier and they crossed paths; partly because of the further spread and deepening of laicization partly because the culture producing behavior of the

Churches changed: To follow the relation between Protestantism and culture requires information in a broader circle and also requires more effort. In this field, scientific research has serious faults.

We know what writers, scientists and politicians were brought up in Protestant families and we know about their education, but when we classify them among the figures of Protestant culture, we cannot always ascertain exactly in what aspects their Protestantism is embodied. What do the sentences mean, those written by the most excellent poet of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the deep thinking Calvinist, János Arany (1817–1882), who could be interpreted in his religious world as pietist, which he puts into the mouth of a ballad hero, the martyr of the fight against the Turks: “Tell him, Márton, here is the message,/Szondi will never expect mercy from your master./ Mercy will be in the hand of his Jesus,/he will directly appeal to there.”? The Reformed Arany corrected the text of the monumental philosophical piece (*Az ember tragédiája* [The Tragedy of Man], 1861) dealing with questions of existence and written by the Catholic Imre Madách (1823–1864). In spite of its Catholic plot, the most important moment of the salvation story, the salvation of Jesus is missing from the drama. We do not know the details of the process through which the concept of nation occupied the place of the transcendent in religion in the worldviews of one of the most influential politicians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894) or in those of Sándor Petőfi (1823–1849), the internationally acknowledged poet of the Hungarian war of independence, or in those of many others. The Reformed feature of the master of psychological novel and the famous politician, Baron Zsigmond Kemény (1814–1875) is not characterized by being clerical according to the research of literary history, but by his own comprehension of existence and ethics, which also refers to the fact that he was one of the deepest thinking authors among his contemporaries. The same question can be raised in connection with the influential tragedy theory of Pál Gyulai (1826–1909), who was a leading literary historian and critic, or the Calvinist connections of Mór Jókai (1825–1904), the most widely read Hungarian novel writer up to now. These connections are the proof of the most devoted attractions to the traditions of the paternal home; otherwise, they are quite superficial. Another type is presumed when we think of a younger contemporary, Kálmán Mikszáth (1847–1910), who is still a very popular writer. It seems as if the consequence of Protestant culture for him would be the complete lack of religious aspects, and slight anti-clericalism – thus mainly negative (or indifferent) aspects. We see the group of excellent liberal Transylvanian Unitarians (Sándor Farkas Bölöni, writer; Sámuel Brassai, linguist, mathematician; János Kríza, bishop, ethnographer) of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the same way. The fact that in this age the striking relationship between religion and culture is rare among Catholics, as in the works of the very influential cultural politician and writer József Eötvös



(1813–1871) warns us that its causes can be found in the “spirit of the age” rather than in the denomination.

From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Protestant theological interest did gain momentum in Hungary. It is worth mentioning that Friedrich Schleiermacher and to a lesser extent, Hans Baur, is often cited and appreciated. The cult of the former lasted until the end of the 1920s, but significant original Hungarian theological pieces were not prepared during this time for long. In the end, at the turn of the century, the Neo-Kantian Károly Böhm (1846–1915) appeared as a unique figure, who was writing theological studies as well. Many consider him as the most original author of Hungarian philosophy. The Lutheran Böhm was working for one and a half decades in Transylvania at the University of Kolozsvár. We find among his significant students and followers a group of excellent Protestant theologians, philosophers, writers and historians of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, names like László Ravasz, György Bartók, Jr. as well as Imre Révész, Sándor Makkai, Béla Varga, Sándor Tavaszy.

In the most significant literary groupings of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, though according to social history, this era was less religious than the previous one, on both Protestant and Catholic sides, we can find religious questions brought up in more outstanding or remarkable *ouevres* than was the case of the 19<sup>th</sup> century authors. Dezső Szabó (1879–1945), the influential writer, Endre Ady and Zsigmond Móricz (1879–1942), outstanding authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who made statements and quarreled in periodicals about the situation and vocation of Protestantism (1913–1916), with not too much patience accorded to it by their own liberal ideas. The questions and answers refer to explicitly secular, cultural, social and political roles, so there is a “cultural Protestantism” (or quite often a “cultural Calvinism”) in its full reality as a civil religion, which was already formed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but whose theses were still being articulated during this period. The Catholicism of Mihály Babits (1883–1941) is often mentioned as an opposite pole of the religious lyrical poetry of Endre Ady. The opinions about their religious aspects are very different. Significant contemporaries gave opposing evaluations concerning many important details about Ady – though they accepted his talent unconditionally. Within cultural Protestantism, there are often very important differences: For example, the difference between the philosophical private religion of László Németh (1901–1975), perhaps the most influential Hungarian essay writer and novelist; and the superficial, traditional opinion that was devoid of meaningful content (though this was sometimes indicative of the era), presented by the autodidactic peasant writer, Péter Veres (1897–1970). These examples draw attention to the fact that analysis is not made simpler by the changed conditions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We can mention the Calvinist Baron Miklós Bánffy (1874–1950) among the Hungarian writers living in Romania who became a minority after 1918. His best novel concerns the decline of the

Transylvanian aristocracy “*Megszámláltattál...*” (“*You Got Counted...*”), which refers to its Biblical background not only by its title, but by its ethical comprehension as well.

Most of the life works of the students of Károly Böhm were partly or totally created in a minority situation. As a result of the state border changes in 1918, Transylvanian Protestantism, which was up until then a religious minority, became an ethnic-linguistic minority. Its cultural and social roles thus multiplied, Church institutions had to assume the role of guarding language and culture, a role that belonged to the state in the motherland. However, scientific research is lacking in details. For example, the exploration of the Protestant roots of the “transilvan” thinking, which propagated special ideas of the peaceful coexistence of Transylvanian nations, ethnic groups, languages and religions (this has received nothing but left-wing criticism). The situation is the same with the history of the ecclesiastical guarding of ethnic-religious fragments, which is naturally accompanied by the protection of culture.

In spite of its liberal birth, Hungarian cultural Protestantism often showed itself to be impatient and intended to have an exclusive leading role. On the opposite pole, we can find the international revival movements of German, English–Scottish, Scandinavian and Dutch origins, and sarcastically criticized by Dezső Szabó many times, which – because they were in touch with the broad circles of the society – cannot be ignored, and affected the relationship of Protestantism and culture as well. In order to realize their ideas, they utilized the communication possibilities of modern civil society from the very beginning, those that did not characterize the Church organizations. It is worth mentioning that besides the denominational intentions of these movements, and their concentration on religious life, their orientation to the present and the future, they refused neither the Protestant protection of the past, which was powerful in the time of their appearance, nor cultural tasks. On the one hand, an anti-cultural and anti-civilization fundamentalism emerged from their circles. On the other hand, it gave place for Hungarian political events that were not at all connected with the deepening of faith at certain times.

There is much to be clarified in the relationship of Protestantism and socialism. In the debate (in 1913) already mentioned above, Dezső Szabó offered socialism as a life belt to Hungarian Protestantism, which seemed to be sinking. The idea was absurd, unclear and only Christian Socialism could have been realized from it, but this did not happen, which means a gap in the political ideological history of Hungarian Protestantism, as well as in its culture. Turning the pages of the volumes before World War I of their main periodical, the Protestant Survey (1890), it seems clear how much the shapers of Protestant public opinion were interested in the idea of socialism and how much they were aware of its social effects. However, unlike in the German situation, actions did not follow these initiatives. They considered Christian Socialism together with

its antecedents as a Catholic matter. They considered the social or political organizations connected to it, and later to Christian Democracy, as denominational initiatives, which were refused by the still very strong liberal tradition. The latter contributed to the fact that the quickly growing social and ethnic tension in the Protestant circles of Hungary were not taken seriously until World War I and their solution was not among the urgent tasks of Hungarian Protestantism at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This standpoint was only changed by the German and Dutch examples between the two world wars.

In the dictatorial regimes, Hungarian Protestantism could protect its intellectual independence from the influence of right-wing radicalism. We must note, however, that this topic is less explored. The Hungarian historiography under Communist party control made a temporary "alliance" with the Protestant tradition by overemphasizing the anti-German, anti-Habsburg, and independence traditions in the 1950s. There were many among the students of Protestant schools who echoed this intention. In the meantime, the first measurements of the dictatorship settled down permanently, putting an end to the intellectual influence of the Churches with the nationalization of schools and with the dissolution of associations. The larger part of the Protestant intellectuals dispersed in fear. The Protestant color within the Hungarian culture began to fade and weaken. The reason why it did not disappear completely was the personal and intellectual reserves of the previous decades. When at the end of the 1970s, the Church was allowed to publish cultural quarterlies (*Confessio*, *Diakona*), the number of contributors was only a small fraction of those between the two world wars, and among the new generation, this number was almost negligible. One example of the culture building activity of a periodical is the Catholic *Vigilia*, which survived the hardest anti-clerical years, because even if in a narrow circle, it created a Catholic intellectual group, which included among its members a poet such as János Pilinszky, who rose above the denominational divisions. Perhaps the time that has past is insufficient to ascertain the identities and motives of some of the outstanding contemporary authors (Ágnes Nagy Nemes, Sándor Weöres, Zoltán Jékely) of the second half of our century even before the public revealed their Protestant relations or cultural roots; and why the relation of others only became known in the near past (like Géza Ottlik).

As an overview, we can say that in modern Hungarian history, the cultural enrichment as a result of denominational polarization was realized, just as in other multi-religious societies. Religious diversity became a source of values. The thesis is true even if its opposite is not valid: the culture of societies with one religion is not poorer, it is merely structured according to other dividing factors. A lack and loss of values appears only when belonging to religious traditions that no longer contribute to the development of culture.

That is why, in the end, we do not want to evade the question: will there be a significant relation between Protestantism and Hungarian culture after the

fall of the Communist regime and after the end of the official atheist propaganda? The past – albeit with some question marks and without a visible continuation, can only be a precious museum collection, which is maintained by the researchers of history. From the mere fact that rich traditions can have an incentive power, it does not follow that the answer is yes. The future cannot be imagined without its new, high-level and original values. For now, we can only say that during the changes of the past decade, there have been several calls to develop the Protestant cultural institutional system again, but it is too early to talk about its successes or failures.

## Interdenominational Elements in Hungarian History

The Hungarian people arrived in the Carpathian Basin from the east and brought along the principles of state organization developed by the eastern equestrian nomadic peoples. The most important element of this principle was that if a family, a clan or an entire nation – voluntarily or otherwise – joined the “empire” of the momentarily strongest, therefore ruling community, it was through *political loyalty* to the usually sacred ruling family that one could preserve its language, religion and culture. Hence, it followed that according to the “Eastern political doctrine”, no unconditional linguistic, religious and cultural assimilation was required. Instead: Unequivocal proof of loyalty, resulting in unified political and military action, was required and considered to be sufficient (József Dér, Tibor Joó).

The Hungarian state emerging in the new homeland was characterized by a great diversity of peoples, religions and cultures. The same applied to contemporary European states – with the exception of the religious domain. The political elites of contemporary Europe believed in religious unity and did not tolerate religious dissidence. The only significant group to break this rule were the Jews, who could exist only within the framework of clear-cut segregation and restrictions.

Contrary to this pattern, during the formation of the Hungarian Kingdom, Muslims (called *böszörmények, kálizok* in Hungarian), Jews and subsequently members of the “heretic” Orthodox Church were able to co-exist without the fear of persecution. Their opposition usually came from the representatives of the Catholic Church, who were intransigent and strove for their expulsion. At the state-level, it was King Louis (Anjou) the Great (1342–1382), who, wishing to follow the pattern of Western knights, stipulated the dispossession of non-Catholics and was the first to impose severe measures on the Jews. For the kings from the House of Árpád (1000–1301), the pragmatic reinforcement of political power of the state was always more important than minimizing religious-dogmatic differences. The Hungarian political elite, living on the religious and cultural frontiers of Europe, preserved this tradition pertinaciously in later times, and this historical trend gained visibility especially after the Reformation, when the Hungarian nation lived in an unprecedented multi-religious environment.

The rights of the Hungarian nobility guaranteed a wide range of individual freedoms (as in Poland), and after the fall of the sovereign nation state, the “survival strategy” of the diverse and multi-faceted Hungarian communal autonomies depended exactly on these rights. This was the time of the formation and the deepening of Hungarian “political Ecumenism”, which was able to

overcome the aggravation of denominational clashes in the course of national struggles for survival.

In case of victory, the mainly Protestant participants of independence movements against the Habsburgs did not intend to annihilate the Catholic Church nor to discriminate towards their Catholic peers. Only the Jesuits did not fit into the well-known denominational pattern of tolerance in Transylvania when they fought relentlessly against the Protestants. Nevertheless, Péter Pázmány, Archbishop of Esztergom, proved an exception to the rule in exhibiting Hungarian “political Ecumenism” when he understood the national aspirations of Gábor Bethlen, prince of Transylvania (1613–1629), and did not wish the victorious Habsburg (German) Catholicism, (without counter-balance), to “spit under the collars” i.e., to jeopardize them. The perception of national interest and the vision of national tragedy caught up between two evils, two “pagan powers”, had inspired Miklós Zrínyi, the seventeenth century Catholic statesman and general, to turn to Protestants. In a similar fashion, Ferenc Rákóczi II, the leader of the anti-Habsburg uprising (1703–1711), had no reservations about his mainly Protestant soldiers, either.

The Hungarian (noble) “political Ecumenism” was also reflected in the fact that the number of mixed marriages was always high and that Hungarian noble families – conforming to the ruling denomination of the region – had often been of mixed religion. The religious tolerance of the Hungarian nobility was expressed by the phenomenon that many Catholic aristocrats employed Protestant secretaries thanks to their excellent Western educations, although later perhaps this was linked to the unfolding secularization in the eighteenth century. With the phasing out of the “cold Counter Reformation” (at the end of the eighteenth century) “educational Ecumenism” spread rapidly: In other words, many pupils – if they paid the fees – could attend secondary grammar schools belonging to the other denomination without any kind of discrimination and constraints of conversion.

The mentality of the Habsburg Court changed with the slowest speed of all. Although taking into consideration the most important overall objectives, the Court also accepted the fact that unlike the hereditary provinces of the Habsburg Empire, in Hungary the rebellious Protestants and the members of the Orthodoxy were considerable political factors. It was also revealing throughout the Reform Age (*Reformkor*, 1825–49) that unlike the Hungarian (Liberal) Catholics, the Habsburgs defended the “rights” of the Catholic state-religion to the extreme. The leaders of the Catholic nobility, Ferenc Deák, József Eötvös, etc., strongly advocated the equal rights of their Protestant peers. The politically masterminded Ecumenism grew stronger and stronger throughout the years based on the awareness of the jeopardy to Hungary posed by great power politics and because of the ethnic composition of the country. These factors convinced all responsible political forces that quarrels among Hungarians must

be minimized. This did not mean, of course, that there were no militant factions on any sides, especially on the Catholic side, where intransigent political talks were channeled into a political party after the reforms of Church politics (1896). It was even more telling, however, that not all Catholic bishops supported the Catholic People's Party. Moreover, there were some personalities (among them Lőrinc Schlauch, bishop of Nagyvárad) who regarded radical Catholic political discussions as useless and harmful in their dioceses. Yet, even János Csernoch, who, as a radical Catholic priest rose to the rank of the Archbishop of Esztergom, appreciated more the devout Protestant prime minister István Tisza than the religiously indifferent Gyula Andrassy, Jr.

For the Protestants, partly due to their minority position, the *Realpolitik* – the tradition of finding compromises – was stronger. Generally, they were satisfied with being considered as “progressive”, and it was only in the case of defense due to individual grievances that they gave voice to radical views. This attitude applied especially to the case of the multinational (Slovakian, German, Hungarian, Slovene) Evangelicals, who were preoccupied with internal fights as a result of national awakening movements. Secularization had emerged earlier and more intensively for the Protestants and it diminished the inclinations towards religious quarrels. The severe attacks from the radical anti-Church and anti-religious Socialist and the Modernist middle-class movements, however, extended and reinforced the Hungarian tradition of “political Ecumenism” fostered by those leading members of the society, who could see things in prospect. The religious tolerance of the ministers of education, and of many politicians of the Dualism was partly due to their indifference. Nonetheless, as they were all convinced that the people needed the teachings of “positive religions”, they supported all historical Churches on the basis of parity, and unambiguously resented the spread of new religious initiatives (sects), which, for example the Nazarenes, involved an increase in social tensions.

The diversity and “spaciousness” of historical Churches and of religious life, which was easily reconciled with modern culture, was “liberal” enough for mainstream endeavors. This was not sufficient for the advocates of radical and revolutionary thoughts, who fell into the trap of their own humanitarian (revolutionary) world-saving fallacy. They declared religious beliefs and churches to be public enemy number one and as well as the strongest pillars of the “superstructure of exploitation.” Their main target was the Catholic Church, since due to its centralized organization, international network and its political, it proved to be an equal rival of the (extreme) left-wing political movements exhibiting similar features.

At the turn of the century, it was István Tisza, the Protestant prime minister, who drew the lesson from these processes and constantly warned his Catholic countrymen that Hungarian Christianity had a common platform as the new anti-Christian forces attacked the fundamentals of common belief. Under

these circumstances, it was thought to be suicidal if Christian denominations and even the devout Jews wasted their energies fighting against one another. The dissemination of this attitude was rather slow, and did not become widespread, especially among the populist circles. In their ranks, in accordance with the traditional spirit of popular Churches, the principle of peaceful separation and co-existence was the moral norm.

Although there were marked differences between churchgoing Catholics and Protestants, since the latter, especially the Calvinists, were more “rebellious”, and Catholics were less rational in this respect etc. on the whole, however, on the level of the people, the moral contents of Christian thought “converged”: without faith, religion and divine rules, man could easily become bestial.

At any rate, even the “awakening” of Churches at the turn of the century did not question the multi-denominational composition of the country, although the Catholic renewal exhibited strongly anti-Liberal, and in their understanding anti-Protestant features, as well. In this respect, the reinforcement of the cult of Mary and its political dimension, the *Regnum Marianum*, was of primary importance. The “internal mission” movements that were forming, however, were pointedly apolitical, which represented universal Christianity by placing individual conversions in focus. Nonetheless, these tendencies converged in the common dismissal of Modernism that preached faith in science only. This was rejected by the Catholic renewal movement because of its political consequences, whereas the Protestants rendered it insignificant and heretical in relation to their faith.

The “political Ecumenism” of István Tisza found its way to the non-secularized intellectuals. It was reflected in the Liberal-Conservative press, and in the idea that in Hungary the majority of the (classical) Liberals were never against the Churches or against religion. This was clearly not possible since the Hungarian national culture – and its still incomplete statehood and set of institutions – was preserved and enriched by the clerical secondary schools. In Transylvania, for example, the Roman Catholic Status acted as the mutual autonomous organization of the clergy and the laymen concerning education and finance; thus adapting, in the absence of a bishop, a Protestant formula. The Protestant model of autonomy emerged even in the more hierarchical Orthodox Church after 1867, in the autonomous Serbian and Romanian (national) Church congresses that functioned as the substitute for a state.

Thus, Hungarian Liberalism, in acknowledging the nation-sustaining role of Hungarian Churches, did not aim at the nationalization of either Church schools or even the anti-state ethnic schools. Most often, in the “natural alliance” against the rising Socialist and other radical movements, the main force was political pragmatism and not religious faith. In Hungarian society, religious affiliation was the usual attribute of middle-class existence even after the



weakening and disappearance of traditional religious beliefs. Especially the Protestants, who relied on the non-pastoral members of their church, worked with great effort and undertook difficult tasks – following the binding example of their predecessors – even when they had not been motivated by faith but rather by their identification with the cultural aspects of Protestantism. In today’s scarcity of Catholic priests, the laymen’s undertaking of tasks in large numbers continues the line of a shared Hungarian tradition.

The majority of Hungarian Christianity was tolerant in terms of the people’s Church despite the aggressive attack of “modern” atheism and materialism. We should keep in mind that in Hungary since 1895, it was legal for any citizen to be non-denominational. In reality, 90% of those who had left the historical Churches quit in order to join sects that regulated life according to more rigorous religious norms. Religious identity was strongly intertwined with national identity especially in the case of Protestants, and increasingly in the case of Catholics. It is rather unfortunate that because of radical right-wing parties (“race-protectors”) this European unity of Christianity and nation became politically discredited. As a counteraction to the (extreme) left-wing views advocating a humanitarian world-saving fallacy and considering the working class as their Savior, many worshipped the nation (the race) as a pagan god – and not a few of them with anti-Semitic claims.

The historical and religious wisdom and maturity of the majority of Hungarian Christians was reflected in the fact that they rejected the racist dogma at an early stage when it emerged in individual forms and as a “modern” science: eugenics. It was quite revealing that this thought gathered its advocates mainly on the left wing, while Conservative traditionalists and devout Christians regarded the order of creation the only plausible explanation. In any case, the common civilization-image of Hungarian Christian denominations was determined by incorporating only the classic and mature thoughts, works and methods, and was reluctant to follow novelties, hypotheses and utopias. Yet, they pictured such a sophisticated and diverse world in their schools that they had been acknowledged even by their adversaries.

These schools were tempted, however, to over-intellectualize and to convey lexical knowledge, to overvalue knowledge at the mediocre level, and appreciate education only at elementary level. It was widely believed that better erudition also meant ethical protection against inclinations toward anarchism, rooted in superficiality. Nevertheless, the competition between denominational schools resulting in high quality education had more advantages than drawbacks as the content of education comprised mainly of those texts and structures – especially in the humanities – that were consciously aiming at an ethical message (patriotism, service, honor). The Harbartian principle of pragmatism and moral education through teaching led to the building and fostering of character in all denominational and state schools.

It was this classic example of character-forming and serving patriotism that set the grounds for the mode of thinking of the majority of educated Hungarians and protected them from the temptations of the extremes and the radicalism of Modernism. This kind of Conservatism (of value) had an unfavorable impact on the social side as it impeded change. We can also interpret it, however, as the manifestation of *Realpolitik*, which unconsciously detected the constraints and limitations of universal human life and the specific Hungarian world. No wonder that the idea of the (educational) state investments into human capital emerged so early in Hungary. Therefore, the stabilizing and efficiency results were not expected from the structural, institutional and legal dimensions of social life, but rather from the quality features of the individual, the human, and the communal dimensions. It was not by accident that although the Churches in Hungary discovered simultaneously the significance of nurturing talent, which had been practiced before, its systematic practice gained special importance only in modern, mass societies. Its goals and content constituted the framework of “national Ecumenism” that preserved denominational identities as well. The same applied to the achievements of the lively extramural cultural education activities, which aimed at an expanded community. Against the disintegrating fallacy of class struggle, there was a Hungarian society that did not wish to eradicate differences and was eager to cooperate and to live side by side. This was not merely the “political Ecumenism” of statesmen, but a “national Ecumenism” that prepared the groundwork to follow Jesus Christ in a diverse yet united manner.

This process was not entirely as straightforward and consciously intended as this paper has suggested. In an unexceptionally multi-religious nation, however, despite all counter-movements and reservations, self-defense and endurance designated only one way out. Thanks to the insights of our grand historical personalities and their individual co-operations, by the twentieth century, it was a mature routine in a manner that did not result in a blurred mingling, but rather asserted solidarity on the basis of the communal (national) interests of self-respecting individuals.

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**IV. ON THE HISTORY OF HUNGARIAN  
AND NON-HUNGARIAN MINORITIES  
IN CENTRAL EUROPE**



## Jenő Rákosi and the Hungarian Empire of 30 Million People

Jenő Rákosi was a well-known figure over a long period, which lasted from the Hungarian Compromise to his death in 1929. He was a writer, publicist, chief editor and newspaper owner, as well as being a prolific stage director. Today, he is barely remembered, however, or only in a rather lopsided manner. If he had not lived to the age of 40, like many of his contemporaries, we would now remember him as an important cultural figure in post-Compromise Hungary and in many ways as a pioneer. As the editor of *Reform*, he made an important contribution to the creation of entertainment theatre for a general audience, and as a consequence he promoted the Magyarization of Budapest. But Rákosi was destined to live until the ripe old age of 87, and posterity has judged him mostly on the basis of what he did in later life. From the turn of the century, Rákosi was a leading voice in the extreme nationalist press, and he played a major role in organising and heading the revisionist movement after the Trianon Treaty.

It would be well worth trying to judge Rákosi's contradictory personality and life objectively, by looking at what led him to his choices: how did Rákosi, coming from a family of German origins and assimilating extremely quickly, and putting his versatile talents at the service of the creation of a new bourgeois Hungary with the zeal of a neophyte, become a leading figure and mouthpiece of extreme Hungarian nationalism? However, the scope of this study does not permit me to do that. Instead, I shall focus on a single aspect of Rákosi's life, namely, his infamous remark concerning the dream of a Hungarian empire with a population of 30 million. I shall attempt to interpret this slogan, to analyse its context, and to show how it became the cornerstone of Rákosi's nationalist rhetoric and indeed his entire life as a public figure.

Jenő Rákosi (born Kremsner) pursued his grammar school studies at a Benedictine grammar school in Kőszeg and later in Sopron. It was then, under the Bach regime, that he was engulfed by nationalist enthusiasm. However, when his father could no longer afford to pay for his tuition, Rákosi started work as a junior clerk. In 1863, he decided to move to Budapest, where he resumed his grammar-school studies, then enrolled at the legal faculty of Budapest university, supporting himself by giving lessons.

His future life was influenced to a great extent by the fact that, soon after his arrival in Budapest, Rákosi met up with a group of young intellectuals who regularly gathered at the 'Kávéforrás' café in Fűrdő (today József Attila) Street. His drinking companions had much in common: a non-Hungarian background (German, Slav, or Jewish), intellectual status, bourgeois-liberal views, and literary or journalistic ambitions. Furthermore, these youths supported Deák and

like-minded people seeking to make a compromise with Austria, and thought that they – as the youngest generation of bourgeois intellectuals – were destined to play an important role in the new Hungary emerging at the time. Jenő Rákosi soon assumed a leading role among the ‘Kávéforrás’ Circle, whose members included Adolf Ágai, Gusztáv Beksics, Lajos Dóczy, Ivor Kaas, and István Toldy, to mention only the most well-known names. Rákosi was the first among them to make a literary splash – in 1866, when his drama *Aesopus* was accepted by the Drama Evaluation Committee of the National Theatre and staged soon afterwards. The play was commended by Baron Zsigmond Kemény, chief editor of *Pesti Napló*, and Rákosi was recruited by the newspaper in 1867 “not to make him into a journalist, but to pay him 100 forints a month so that he could have time to write plays”.<sup>1</sup> Although he wrote many plays later on, this offer marked the beginning of a journalistic commitment which lasted to the end of Rákosi’s life.

In *Pesti Napló*, Rákosi published articles in support of Deák and engaged in fierce debates with *A Hon* (a newspaper closely affiliated to the political left-of-centre), which soon made him a successful journalist. So, when it was suggested in 1870 that a new newspaper be published affiliated to Deák’s political party and meant for a bourgeois readership, the 26 year old Rákosi was asked to be the editor. The editorial board of *Reform* consisted mostly of members of the ‘Kávéforrás’ Circle, but several journalists of the older generation also worked for the newspaper, such as Dezső Szilágyi, Ferenc Salamon, Móric Szentkirályi, and Béla Grünwald. *Reform*— especially its technical innovations and fresh approach – opened up a new chapter in the history of the Budapest press: it “put the emphasis on writing commentaries based on principle on a sound intellectual basis. The focus was on interpretation and evaluation rather than on [mere] reporting. The style was that of [everyday] discourse, in contrast to the usual pathetic one. Issues of public concern were approached not so much in terms of day-to-day politics, but from a higher perspective, and presented and explained in the context of society, culture, and thought.”<sup>2</sup> *Reform* was one of the first really urban-bourgeois newspapers, yet it demonstrated nationalist tendencies from the very start, which later became all-pervasive in *Budapesti Hírlap*. *Reform* made a deliberate effort to avoid the use of foreign expressions, creating new Hungarian expressions instead, and it also created its own spelling, phonetically transcribing any proper names of foreign origin.<sup>3</sup> One of its most important missions was to promote assimilation in Hungary. Rákosi personally played a crucial role in shaping *Reform*’s image: it

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<sup>1</sup> Jenő Rákosi, *Emlékezések* [Memoirs] vol. 1 (Budapest, 1926), p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> I. Sötér (ed.), *A magyar irodalom története* (The History of Hungarian Literature) vol. 4, 1849–1905 (Budapest, 1965), p. 442.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

assumed a strongly marked 'Rákosi-style', distinguished by a unique responsiveness to the needs and hopes of its readers, a feature which made Rákosi himself such a brilliant and influential publicist.

After the fall of the Lónyai government and with the advance of Kálmán Tisza and his supporters, who were frequently criticised by *Reform*, interest in the newspaper declined, and it even lost its previous financial support base when Deák's party merged with the centre-left. The decline of *Reform* meant the end of the 'Kávéforrás' Circle as well, and its members dispersed. But Rákosi soon found a new way of utilising his talents. He was still the head of *Reform* when he started to raise money for a new entertainment-oriented, Hungarian-language theatre designed for the general public. He realised that the theatre, and lighter genres in general, were particularly suited to promoting ethnic, social, and intellectual cohesion in Hungary's rather heterogeneous capital city. "I believe it was here that the people of Pest learnt to laugh and to cry in Hungarian",<sup>4</sup> he wrote in his *Memoirs* of the Népszínház (National Theatre). From 1875, Rákosi was its lessor and director for 6 years. At the beginning, the bulk of the National Theatre's repertoire was made up of so-called national or folk plays, considered to be a pure Hungarian genre, but the latest fashionable pieces of the new bourgeois musical genre, the operetta, were played increasingly often.

In 1881, Rákosi assigned the leasehold right of this extremely popular and reasonably profitable theatre to a brother-in-law, Lajos Evva, in order to return to his real passion, journalism. In the same year, and on the invitation of an old friend, József Csukássi, Rákosi became one of the founders of a new newspaper, *Budapesti Hírlap*, an offspring of *Pesti Hírlap*. Rákosi's life as a journalist remained centred around *Budapesti Hírlap* for more than 43 years, first as an associate editor, then, after Csukássi's death in 1891, as its sole owner and chief editor. In volume two of his *Memoirs*, Rákosi defines his principles as an editor as follows: "My idea was to make *Budapesti Hírlap* a newspaper for the entire Hungarian public, a newspaper with an independent national orientation, one whose slogan is 'Pro Hungary'. And that applied to everything: science, literature, politics, society, art, grammar, and language in general."<sup>5</sup> The independence of *Budapesti Hírlap* was as doubtful as that of *Reform*: it was clearly affiliated to Albert Apponyi and the moderate opposition. During its first years, *Budapesti Hírlap* was a well-edited, high-quality newspaper, like *Reform*. Its literary content was particularly modern and followed the latest trends. At the beginning, Rákosi was apt to publish new French writers: in the first year he published a short story by Zola, *Bouvard and Pécuchet* by Flaubert, and acclaimed Ibsen and Schopenhauer. But from the 1890s, Rákosi lost interest in

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<sup>4</sup> Jenő Rákosi, *Emlékezések* [Memoirs] vol. 2 (Budapest, 1926), p. 86.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.



modern philosophical trends.<sup>6</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* betrayed the virtues of *Reform*, insofar as its style was dominated by diction and pathos, seeking to influence the readers' emotions. Articles interpreted all political issues, art and other topics exclusively from a nationalist standpoint. *Budapesti Hírlap* had a large readership, mostly civil servants from the middle classes and the petit bourgeoisie. Alongside *Pesti Hírlap*, it became the highest circulation publication in Hungary by the year of the Hungarian Millennium, with average daily sales of 35,000 copies.

With the success of *Budapesti Hírlap*, Jenő Rákosi's career rapidly moved ahead. In 1892, he was elected a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 1896 he was ennobled, and in 1903 Francis Joseph made him a member of the Upper House. Of these three honours, Rákosi was most proud of the last two. "I have spent my entire life in admiration of the Hungarian people. Therefore, no one could have valued more the honour bestowed on me by the King when he made me a member of the Hungarian upper class. I believe that was the crowning moment of my life, because I cannot imagine a greater honour than to be accepted into the historic Hungarian nation."<sup>7</sup> For Rákosi, receiving the title of nobility meant absolute integration into Hungarian society.

The basic principles of *Budapesti Hírlap* included "supporting everything that serves the Hungarian cause in any area of life or in any respect".<sup>8</sup> In practical terms it meant that, alongside reports on current political, business, or cultural issues, *Budapesti Hírlap* always sought issues of national concern to cover, whether of smaller or greater importance, and campaigned for them. For instance, it had a standing column entitled 'On the Road to Hungarian Assimilation'. In every issue this column reported in detail on who had changed his foreign sounding name to what Hungarian name. In 1882, Rákosi campaigned and tried to raise money for the resettlement of the Bukovina Csángó people in Hungary; while several issues of *Budapesti Hírlap* demanded that the parish churches in Josephstadt and Teresienstadt in Pest "should stop giving sermons in Slovak", finally, in 1891 the paper campaigned against the reconstruction of the German Theatre which had perished in a fire.<sup>9</sup>

These were the antecedents, after which it was not surprising when, in the spring of 1901, Rákosi decided to use *Budapesti Hírlap* to promote Hungarian imperialism. As is generally known, under the influence of the unprecedented economic growth which took place in the quarter-century after 1867, from the 1890s particular Hungarian political groups became increasingly supportive of the idea that Hungary should acquire greater weight within the Austro-

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<sup>6</sup> *A magyar irodalom története IV.* [The History of Hungarian Literature IV.] 1849-től 1905-ig (Budapest, 1965), p. 573.

<sup>7</sup> Jenő Rákosi, *Emlékezések* [Memoirs] vol. III (Budapest, 1926), p. 136.

<sup>8</sup> Rákosi, *Emlékezések* [Memoirs] vol. II, p. 109.

<sup>9</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (3 June 1906).

Hungarian Monarchy; in fact, their ultimate aim was to achieve Hungarian hegemony. Some supporters of this idea believed that their objectives could be attained by securing key positions in government institutions under the joint control of Austria and Hungary (the so-called 'dual' institutions) and in the army, and by garnering support from Austrian court circles. This objective was at the heart of the political course pursued by the two Andrassy brothers and the two Tisza brothers, among others. This ideology is expressed in 'Az 1867. évi kiegyezésről' [On the compromise of 1867], an essay by Gyula Andrassy (the younger) – written for a millennium competition – in which the author identifies gaining control of the so-called 'dual' ministries as one of the main objectives. Perhaps the most determined advocate of this ideology was Béni Kállay, a diplomat in the Balkans, who was later the appointed minister of finance, one of the dual ministries. He was at the centre of the so-called 'Viennese Circle', which also consisted of his *famulus* (private secretary), Lajos Thallóczy, and a group of young historians whom they had taken under their wing. Some members of the Hungarian political elite – Dezső Bánffy, for instance – argued that the Hungarian people were strong enough to fully assimilate the country's ethnic groups, to create a single Hungarian state, to break the hegemony of the Austrian Germans, and to assume the role of stabilizer and peace-maker between the Slavic and the German peoples. After the turn of the twentieth century, Bosnia Herzegovina and the Balkans were becoming increasingly important in this respect, as potential targets for the expansion of Hungarian civilisation.<sup>10</sup>

In the area of political journalism, the same ideology was advocated by Béla Grünwald, Gusztáv Beksics, and Pál Hoitsy, all of whom maintained contacts with Rákosi. Grünwald published his infamous 'Felvidék Letters' in *Reform*, calling for Hungarian assimilation and arguing that the state should resolve the Slovak question by administrative means. Gusztáv Beksics was introduced to Rákosi by Zsigmond Kemény, and their lives crossed both in the 'Kávéforrás' circle and at *Reform*. In addition to Grünwald, Beksics, and Hoitsy, Rákosi played a leading role in disseminating the ideas of Hungarian imperialism to the general public.

In contrast with other newspapers, *Budapesti Hírlap* published its leading articles on crucial matters of principle mostly without the author's signature. Rákosi explained this in terms of the following theory: "The power of the daily press lies precisely in its anonymity. If it were to lose it, then its status as anonymous interpreter for the public would change entirely. What is more, public opinion, in the real sense of the word, can exist only when people do not judge a piece of writing by the name of the author, but want to find out about the world for themselves, so that they can think independently and rely on their own

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<sup>10</sup> Péter Hanák (chief editor), *Magyarország története: 1890–1918* (The History of Hungary: 1890–1910)(Budapest, 1988), pp. 160–165.

judgement.”<sup>11</sup> The editorial office of *Budapesti Hírlap* selected the topics of leading articles after consultation between the chief editor and political journalists. It was decided at the same meetings who should be the author of the next leading article. Quite often it was the Senior Referent of *Budapesti Hírlap*, Ivor Kaas, or the chief editor himself.<sup>12</sup>

In the period of January 1901–July 1902, the vast majority of leading articles presented arguments in favour of Hungarian imperialism and described the methodology for bringing it about, “soon after Chamberlain in England and MacKinley (!) in the United States made imperialism the cornerstone of their politics”,<sup>13</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* claimed. Rákosi explains in his *Memoirs* the circumstances of how Hungarian imperialism came to the top of the agenda: “I learnt from Lajos Thallóczy that Béni Kállay – Finance Minister of the dual ministry – would like to meet me. I hastened to do so, of course, and we spent a whole morning in a long discussion at his office. This meeting resulted in the political concept of Hungarian imperialism, which was to become one of the main agendas of *Budapesti Hírlap*.”<sup>14</sup> In response, the chief editor started a new column entitled ‘Political Waves’, which was dedicated exclusively to domestic politics, and primarily the crisis-government headed by Bánffy. The concept of Hungarian imperialism was first mentioned at this time, but public opinion was not yet responsive. The majority believed that “Imperialist politics was for large nations only”.<sup>15</sup> But in early 1901 the same question became the centre of attention once again.

An article entitled ‘*A magyar impérium*’ [The Hungarian empire], an introduction to *Budapesti Hírlap*’s campaign, was a general critique of the ethnic policy of the Hungarian government. The article accused leading Hungarian political figures of having unfairly taken sides and of having made enemies rather than friends with various ethnic groups living both in Hungary and the Balkans, and of having failed to capitalise on the attractive national character of the Hungarian nation “whose history is gilded with such glory, whose soul is filled with such love, and whose character is distinguished by such attractive kindness”.<sup>16</sup> The severest criticism was directed at the government’s Croatian policy. According to the author of the leading article, after 33 unsuccessful years a new generation had grown up in Croatia who were more removed from the Hungarian nation than their fathers had been. It was a fundamental mistake not

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<sup>11</sup> Cited by Aladár Sajó, ‘Rákosi Jenő életpályája’, in *Rákosi Jenő élete és művei* (Life and Works of Jenő Rákosi)(Budapest, 1930), p. 52.

<sup>12</sup> Domokos Kosáry and Béla G. Németh (eds): *A magyar sajtó története*, (The History of the Hungarian Press) vol. II/2 1867–1892 (Budapest, 1985), p. 352.

<sup>13</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (3 June 1906), p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Rákosi, *Emlékezések*, vol. 2, p. 102.

<sup>15</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (3 June 1906), p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (24 February 1901), p. 1.

to have set up a special Croatian–Slavonian department at each of the Hungarian ministries, as by doing so the Hungarian government could have won the support of the Croatian–Slavonian intelligentsia at relatively little cost. Had this intelligentsia been allowed to work for such ministries in Budapest and to live in the palaces occupied by the Hungarian government, and to become integrated into Hungarian society, their children would have soaked up the Hungarian language with their mother’s milk.

According to the author of the article, the Hungarian government was not paying enough attention to internal migration either; in other words, the outflow of pure Hungarians from the Transdanubian region to Slavonia, or the migration affecting the Hungarian Plain (the Alföld) and Transylvania, or the outflow of thousands to Serbia and Transylvania. The government’s policy on Bosnia and Herzegovina was also highly problematic: the government did nothing to prepare Bosnians and Herzegovinans for annexation, and to make them inclined to voluntarily apply for Hungarian citizenship and the benefits associated with it.<sup>17</sup>

It is worth quoting the conclusion in full:

Let us raise the flag of Hungarian imperialist policy! Let us give the Hungarian nation an ideal worthy of high spiritual standards. The coughs of asthmatic Austria are increasingly bad. Economic separation is now near at hand, and it will be followed by the separation of the defence forces, to be sealed with a declaration of mutual defence obligations. Decadent Austria has become weak, and Hungary alone can give it strength. A decayed Austria without the Balkans is too small to expect to be treated as an equal by the Great Powers, but it is large enough to threaten them, unlike the Balkan states; it is too poor to fight them, but it is wealthy enough to shake off the hand . . . reaching out to carve it up. But given that the Monarchy stops at the Balkans, it is vital to ensure its ‘normal blood circulation’ around those parts, and given that the body of Hungary reclining on Austria is the waist and spinal cord of the Monarchy, with its head reaching all the way to Vienna, a renewed Monarchy, grounded in the might of Hungarian imperialist policy, would be a powerful entity, with a great future ahead of it.<sup>18</sup>

*Budapesti Hírlap* kept the issue on the agenda constantly until the summer of 1902, as it continued to be one of the main topics of its leading articles. It is interesting to analyse the instruments and methods which the newspaper – and so Rákosi, who as its head determined its profile – used to shape public opinion. The arguments of the article ‘Hungarian Imperialism’ were later analysed by

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<sup>17</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (24 February 1901), p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (24 February 1901), p. 2.

*Budapesti Hírlap* one by one, and new arguments were raised to reinforce the same thesis. These arguments were both rational and irrational. On the first count, there were Rákosi's ideas manically repeated over the two decades of *Budapesti Hírlap's* existence, and certain liberal illusions which originated in the Reform Period, coupled with the views of representatives of Hungarian imperialist nationalism (primarily Gusztáv Beksics). Purely irrational arguments included the assertion about the extraordinary assimilation capacity of the Hungarian nation, resulting partly from the unique integrating force of the Hungarian language and partly from the attractiveness of the Hungarian national character. Consequently, the ideology overemphasised the role of schools and Hungarian language-teaching to the largest possible number of people.<sup>19</sup> Rákosi believed that "an individual who is intrinsically part of a nation from his early childhood by virtue of his language will, through that language, also acquire the character of that nation".<sup>20</sup> On another occasion, *Budapesti Hírlap* combined irrational and historical arguments, claiming that the Hungarian people had proven their vitality and excellence, and predestination to rule, well before they came to Europe. According to this concept, the Hungarian nation is predestined to a leading role both by its glorious history and by three centuries of warfare waged across the region.<sup>21</sup> Leading articles which analysed the foreign political situation and within that Hungary's role in the world merit particular attention. At that time, the European press talked about the disintegration of the Monarchy more often than ever before. With the creation of Germany, Austria was no longer needed to promote the 'German genius'. Austria was declining, the Slav nations were getting stronger, and Germany was successful and glorious, as the newspaper wrote in March 1901.<sup>22</sup> The conclusion followed: "Therefore, the Habsburgs will sooner or later have to choose whether they want to play a role in Europe as a great power under a Hungarian or under a Slav flag. History provides proof that two great Slav powers cannot live side by side in Europe. Therefore, Austria will have no choice but to stand at the head of the policy of Hungarian imperialism, in line with the traditions of the Árpád Dynasty and in accordance with the instructions of Gyula Andrassy, and to stake their own future and glory on that policy, and to commit their entire strength and souls to its success."<sup>23</sup> Some major political figures in Austria realised that "Hungary is the natural centre and bastion of the Monarchy".<sup>24</sup>

In the field of domestic politics, *Budapesti Hírlap* emphasised above all the need for a united nation-state. The only leading article of the period which

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<sup>19</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (19 June 1902), p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Lajos Hatvany, 'Elmúlt nagyságok' [Past greatnesses], *Esztenő* (9 March 1918), p. 8.

<sup>21</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (28 April 1901), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* (27 March 1901), p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (20 April 1901), p. 1.

was actually signed by its author was concerned with the same topic. It was 'Quo modo?' by Gusztáv Beksics, and it was basically a summary of the author's views crystallised over three decades as a political journalist. At the centre of these views was the desire to promote the birth of a modern civil society in Hungary, one that would be free from ethnic conflicts. The author urged greater centralisation of political power and the strengthening of the role of the state administration. He raised his voice in favour of a land settlement for the Hungarian peasantry – which was growing in size but struggling to make a living – by way of land distribution in particular regions of the Hungarian Plain (Alföld) and Transdanubia. He also stressed the need to concentrate new industrial plants in ethnic regions and the importance of urban development.<sup>25</sup>

*Budapesti Hírlap* dedicated many leading articles to the ethnic question. Rákosi himself expressed his views on the subject on several occasions, most notably as follows: "as far as the state is concerned, there should not be an ethnic question at all . . . The ethnic question can be resolved; all it requires is culture, power, wisdom, and prudent government. The Hungarian state can – and does – give freedom to all its citizens in equal measure; but nationality it can give to only one, to Hungarians, as its mission is to constitute and to make *Hungary* flourish rather than Serbia, Romania, or Slovakia."<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, *Budapesti Hírlap* urged the government to take measures fostering the assimilation of Hungary's nationalities.

On the face of it, some of the arguments used by *Budapesti Hírlap* and Rákosi are very rational. For instance, the newspaper regularly published the latest findings of demographic surveys conducted by the Hungarian Royal Statistical Bureau on Budapest, Hungary, and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as a whole. Then it proceeded to comment on and analyse these statistics, being careful however to be selective and deal only with those statistics which happened to support the newspaper's own view. This is why *Budapesti Hírlap* concentrated mainly on comparative birth statistics: starting from the mid-nineteenth century, the Hungarian-speaking population was growing very dynamically as compared to the country's national minorities or even the growth rate of other peoples of the Monarchy. Between 1850 and 1910 particularly, the size of the Hungarian population within the Monarchy increased from 4.9 to 10.1 million, representing an increase from 16 percent to 21 percent within the total population of the Monarchy, from 37 percent to 48 percent within the countries of the Hungarian crown, from 42 percent to 55 percent strictly within Hungary (exclusive of Croatia and Fiume), and from 28 percent to 34 percent in

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* (4 June 1902), pp. 1–2.

<sup>26</sup> Jenő Rákosi, *A magyarságért* [For the Hungarian People] (Budapest, 1914), pp. 34–35

Transylvania.<sup>27</sup> These statistics created the illusion in Rákosi and his circle that, given its unique reproductive capabilities, the Hungarian people would soon become one of the largest in Europe, reaching 20–30 million people in size. On the other hand, some scientists pointed out that demographic processes were changing, and that in certain regions of Hungary births were declining at an alarming rate. So much so that in 1902 Gyula Vargha, writing in *Közgazdasági Szemle*, urged government measures to reverse these tendencies.<sup>28</sup>

Today, we have an absolutely clear understanding of the demographic trends of the period in this region thanks to the research of László Katus, and we can see where Rákosi and his followers went wrong and why. It seemed to them that the Hungarian-speaking population of the region was growing faster than other ethnic groups of the same region or other peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but they neglected the fact that a so-called demographic transition was taking place in different regions at a different pace.<sup>29</sup>

In Hungary, the transition from the traditional demographic model to one characteristic of modern industrial countries started after 1867. To begin with, this process affected only the country's western and central areas (counties), which had a predominantly Hungarian population. By the early 1880s, however, the transition was in progress across the country. During the first phase of the transition, a significant increase was registered in the natural birth rate, rising from 0.005 percent on average – the rate typical of the traditional demographic model – to more than 0.010 percent. At the same time, rapid economic growth following the Hungarian Compromise, and the radical improvement of public health standards, put an end to the kind of demographic catastrophe which had formerly caused major reductions in the population (for example, famines and epidemics). The death rate started to decline over the long term. The intermediate – and most important – phase of demographic transition (marked by a further reduction in the mortality rate and a continuously high number of new births) took place in Hungary nearly a century later than in northern and western Europe, but in a very short space of time – less than a decade. The so-called 'demographic scissors' suddenly widened in the early 1880s, but its movement was arrested quickly, which explains why it did not lead to sustained and significant demographic growth. By the turn of the twentieth century, the demographic scissors started to close, but the tendency was not obvious until the First World War.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> László Katus, 'Magyarok, nemzetiségek a népszaporulat tükrében (1850–1918)', [Hungarians, National Minorities and Demographic Changes (1850–1918)] *História*, nos. 4–5 (1982), p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

<sup>30</sup> László Katus, 'A demográfiai átmenet kérdései Magyarországon a 19. században', [The Problems of Demographic Transition in Hungary in the 19th Century] *Történelmi Szemle*, no. 2 (1980), pp. 273–274.

In Austria, the demographic transition started around the same time as in Hungary, but there it took place more slowly and gradually. The process came to affect most ethnic groups after a shorter or longer delay.<sup>31</sup> While in the 1860s the natural birth rate of the Hungarian population exceeded that of the country's other ethnic groups – in addition to which relatively few Hungarians left the country in this early phase and the Hungarian population increased in size also due to assimilation – by the turn of the twentieth century demographic transition was well advanced in most regions of the Monarchy, and the Hungarian population's lead was gradually melting away.<sup>32</sup>

Convinced by the notion of dynamic and seemingly uninterrupted demographic growth, Rákosi and his circle ignored other demographic statistics, such as the death rate and the fertility rate. Hungary had one of the highest death rates in Europe. Apart from deaths caused by a variety of contagious child diseases and tuberculosis, there was an extremely high number of suicides. Marriage fertility was also declining at an alarming rate, and this was the time when the single-child-family model was born.<sup>33</sup>

The *Budapesti Hírlap* too identified a number of crisis phenomena, such as the reduction of the demographic growth rate of particular regions. Regions with a growth rate below the national average were habitually referred to as the 'sick counties', and included Árva, Turóc, Tolna, Baranya, Veszprém, Győr, Moson, Fejér, Sáros, Abaúj-Torna, Szepes, Gömör, and Fogaras, and Háromszék in Transylvania.<sup>34</sup> It was also noted that, starting from the 1890s, the proportion of Hungarians among emigrants was increasing. The newspaper was concerned about the "advance of Slovaks and Olahs across language boundaries".<sup>35</sup>

At the same time, *Budapesti Hírlap* claimed that there was also a number of positive developments. Based on a comparative analysis of the demographic statistics of Austria and Hungary it concluded that the populations of the two countries were expanding at an identical rate, and what is more, that Hungary's rate of demographic growth even exceeded that of Austria.<sup>36</sup> Another positive development was the growth of the Hungarian population in the cities "because the economic and social importance of cities reinforces the supremacy of the Hungarian race, attracts national minorities, and calms any attempt to incite the national minorities. The Hungarian population in the cities has increased by 850 000 in less than 20 years, whereas the number of non-Hungarian speakers has increased by only 13 000."<sup>37</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* had great hopes in

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 274.

<sup>32</sup> Katus, 'Magyarok', p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Katus, 'A demográfiai átmenet', pp. 274–275.

<sup>34</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (1 March 1901), p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. (29 June 1902), p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., (18 March 1901), p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. (29 June 1902), p. 1.



assimilation in general, apart from the increase in the Hungarian population of the cities. The available statistics seemed to support such hopes. The number of Hungarian-speakers living under the Hungarian Crown rose to 6.4 million in the period between 1850 and 1880, representing a 34 percent increase in the space of 30 years, while the rate of increase was only 10 percent among non-Hungarian speakers. The situation improved even further in the period between 1880 and 1910, when the size of the Hungarian population increased by 55 percent, while that of other nationalities increased by only 17 percent.<sup>38</sup> According to Katus's calculations, in this period (between 1850 and 1910), natural population growth was more than 3 million, and assimilation added at least 2 million to the size of the Hungarian population.<sup>39</sup> Rákosi and his circle were overjoyed by statistics which seemed to indicate that the number of those who declared themselves Hungarian in the census was on the increase (respondents were specifically asked about their nationality starting from 1880). They failed to take into account that assimilation was a very long and complex process, and that the change of language and nationality by those who declared themselves Hungarian was far from final or irreversible.<sup>40</sup> It should be added, however, that even some of the demographic experts of the period – József Ajtay, for instance – shared the views of Rákosi and like-minded people. In his study entitled *The Development of the Hungarian People over the Last Two-Hundred Years*, Ajtay argued that the emergence of a unified Hungary of one nation was a natural process which nothing could hold back.<sup>41</sup>

The celebration held in Budapest on 6 July 1902, organised by the Hungarian National Association, was the pinnacle of the press campaign orchestrated to promote the ideal of the Hungarian empire. The Association was founded in the year of the [Hungarian] Millennium and consisted of many similar associations, which mushroomed during this period, and which defined as their main objective the promotion of patriotism, both as a way of thinking and as a feeling. The Hungarian National Association was also among the most active, alongside FEMKE (Hungarian Association for General Education in the Felvidék), EMKE (Association for General Education in Transylvania), and the Association for General Education in Transdanubia (whose chairman was Rákosi himself). Its Charter defined the Association's objectives as promoting public welfare and monitoring any news coverage about Hungary in the foreign press,<sup>42</sup> alongside making an effort to "hold country-wide national and historical commemorations and recitals, to distribute leaflets, and to take other measures

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<sup>38</sup> Katus, 'Magyarok', p. 18.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> József Ajtay: *A magyarság fejlődése az utolsó kétszáz évben* (Budapest, 1905), p. 54.

<sup>42</sup> *Az Országos Nemzeti Szövetség alapszabályai* [The Basic Rules of the National Alliance] (Budapest, 1896), p. 1.

serving to create, cultivate, and develop feelings of national cohesion, patriotism, and a willingness to make sacrifices for patriotic ends.”<sup>43</sup>

In July 1902, the Association organised a celebratory inauguration of a ceremonial flag made for Hungarians who had emigrated to the United States of America. *Budapesti Hírlap* covered the event in every detail, and most national newspapers also mentioned it. The celebration took place in the courtyard of the Budapest County Court, which was adorned for the occasion with an array of national flags and coats-of-arms. The main speaker was Jenő Rákosi himself. Participants mostly included delegates of associations based in Budapest. *Budapesti Hírlap* listed them as follows: “the Association of Buda Archers, the Budapest Charitable Table Societies Centre, the Association of Pensioners and Disabled Hungarian Workers, the ‘Steel Voice’ choir, the Association of Young Traders, the New Workers’ Hostel of Rákoskeresztúr, the ‘Zion’ Association, the ‘Saint George’ Association of Civil Servants, the ‘Ozmán’ Charitable Association, the Mutual Aid Association of Railway Stewards of the Hungarian Royal State Railways, the Hungarian Association of Mechanics and Boilermen, the Budapest ‘Artis’ Association, the ‘Saint Elisabeth’ Sick Persons’ Association, the ‘Saint Anthony of Padua’ Association, the War Veterans Association, the ‘Wahrmann Mór’ Charitable Association, and the Ganz Factory Choir.”<sup>44</sup> As is clear from the list, these were in no sense ‘representative’ organisations. Judging by the invitations, the list of guests included no prominent public figures, apart from Count József Mailáth, the delegate of Archbishop Vaszary, and a few pro-independence MPs. After hearing the Hungarian national anthem, a Hungarian national poem was read by Vörösmarty, and an introductory speech was given by Sándor Bujanovics, a member of the Board of the Hungarian National Association, before Rákosi – the main speaker – took the floor.

He started his speech by referring to Hungary’s glorious past, when “our national kings played a leading role in the councils of European princes, and our heroes were admired and celebrated by Western Christianity”.<sup>45</sup> But then the Hungarian nation fell out with history, so to speak, and “in a struggle lasting for four hundred years” lost its statehood and national identity. All nations, including the smallest, have a saying which best symbolises their desires or illusions. For the Hungarian people this should be: “‘All we need is 30 million Hungarians, and we can play a leading role in shaping the history of Europe in this place and in this land, and the East of Europe shall be ours!’ This should be written on the flag of every Hungarian, whether a politician or a civilian: ‘30 million Hungarians!’”<sup>46</sup> Then Rákosi pointed out that, rather than being in the

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2

<sup>44</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (7 July 1902), p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

process of making this motto reality, the country was in a state of moral and political crisis, the 'emigration epidemic' being one of the most dangerous crisis phenomena. This is what the Hungarian National Association set out to fight against, and the flag was being sent to the New World to symbolise the fact that those who left Hungary still belonged to the Hungarian nation and that the Homeland would still like to have them back.<sup>47</sup> After playing the Rákóczi march, it was time for the closing act of the celebration: the driving of the nails into the handle of the flag (imitating the Bocskay-flag). The handle of the flag ended in a copper ball filled with Hungarian soil, on which a *turul* bird [mythical eagle of the ancient Hungarians] was sitting with wings spread. On one side, the flag bore the image of *Hungária*, sitting on the sea coast and waiting for the ships of returning emigrants to come in, while on the other side it had the Hungarian imperial coat-of-arms, held by two angels. Some members of the audience cried out when they saw that no nails were driven in on the Hungarian government's behalf, but Rákosi responded as follows: "The Hungarian Government has no part in this celebration. From the very beginning we intended to invite the nation, citizens, and the Hungarian people . . . This is strictly a national and civil event."<sup>48</sup> The celebration closed to the sound of the Hungarian national anthem.

Reports on the celebration described it as an uplifting and solemn event, and a fine gesture to those who, regrettably, were leaving the country in ever greater numbers. The question about the composition of the 30-million-strong Hungarian population was raised by Kornél Ábrányi (of *Budapesti Napló*) alone. Ábrányi called Rákosi's speech, which sounded like "thunder" or "God's judgement", thought-provoking, and the criticism which it contained of the country's moral and political crisis justified, at least to some extent. But he reminded Rákosi, dreaming of 30 million Hungarians, that changing the mentality of the existing 10 million should come first. "Therefore, instead of dreaming about 30 million, we should start with the 10 million whom we already have."<sup>49</sup> Another journalist, Miklós Bartha, writing in *Magyarország*, asked what represented a greater danger to Hungarian society: emigration or the return of its emigrants? Because living in America was changing these Hungarians: "those who stay will become Americans, and those who return will return as Pan-Slav agitators."<sup>50</sup> Hungarian society has to prevent this "spiritual change" and this was why sending the flag was so important.<sup>51</sup>

The celebration was the closing act of the campaign promoting Hungarian imperialism. *Budapesti Hírlap* did of course continue to make reference to it, even after the end of the campaign, but its chief editor largely turned to other hot issues of the day. The question of Hungarian imperialism did not resurface until

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> *Budapesti Napló* (8 July 1902), p. 1.

<sup>50</sup> *Magyarország* (8 July 1902), p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

1906, when it once again became a major issue in the 25th jubilee issue of *Budapesti Hírlap*. The newspaper's summary of the past 25 years reveals that *Budapesti Hírlap* held the campaign for Hungarian imperialism to have been the most successful one, because it managed to prove the *raison d'être* and the reality of Hungarian imperialistic aspirations, and to support them by statistical evidence.<sup>52</sup> "Was not ours a great nation in the past, when we were still fewer in number; and why could there not be three times as many of us in the future? . . . There should be three times as many of us."<sup>53</sup>

Works of historiography and literary history published between the two world wars refer to the launch of Hungarian imperialist politics, and the slogan of the "30-million-strong Hungarian empire" which was specifically invented for it, as one of the largest press campaigns of the period and the one which best characterises Rákosi's activities. The Foreword to the 12-volume edition of Rákosi's *oeuvre*, published in 1926, also described this slogan as the most influential product of Rákosi's work. Kunó Klebelsberg, Minister of Religion and Public Education, wrote: "Many petty-minded people thought that this objective [a 30-million-strong Hungarian nation] was a mere utopia. Whereas if the country could have achieved the population density of Belgium today, then we could have had 80 million people living on the territory of Greater Hungary, and 22,800,000 souls living in Rump Hungary [Maradék-Magyarország], that is, more than the population of Greater Hungary, including Croatia and Slavonia."<sup>54</sup>

In 1934, Gusztáv Gratz wrote poignantly about Rákosi as a representative of Hungarian nationalism in his book *The Age of Dualism*: "Rákosi, Beksics, and Hoitsy did not create but simply reflected the mentality of that period. They did not break new ground, they merely systematised existing ideas."<sup>55</sup> Aladár Schöpflin took the same view, and said that Rákosi's political writings were the most faithful reflection of Hungarian feelings at the time of the Millennium.<sup>56</sup> Rákosi the journalist "was full of the greatness of the Hungarian people, and – like his readers – believed that the power balance which existed in the world at the time could be taken for granted forever, similarly to the entitlement of the Hungarian nation to a leading role in the Monarchy and unconditional hegemony in Hungary. At that time, Hungarian public opinion felt that nothing could disturb the status quo and – bedazzled by the progress made in hardly less than a single generation – looked into the future with the self-confidence of absolute security."<sup>57</sup> The dream of a 30-million-strong Hungarian *imperium* was an expression of that feeling.

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<sup>52</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (3 June 1906), pp. 12–14.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13

<sup>54</sup> Jenő Rákosi, *Emlékezések* [Memoirs] vol. 1 (Budapest, 1926).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13

<sup>56</sup> Gusztáv Gratz, *A dualizmus kora*. [The Age of Dualism] *Magyarország története*, vol. 1 (Budapest, 1934), p. 374.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* p. 51

Gyula Szekfű was the first to criticise the idea – in his book *Three Generations* – as one with a particularly harmful effect on Hungarian foreign policy.<sup>58</sup> In *Hungarian History*, a representative synthesis of the Horthy period written jointly by Szekfű and Bálint Hóman, Szekfű makes his position even clearer. His thesis was that at the turn of the twentieth century the sense of judgement of the Hungarian nation was covered by a rosy cloud, “which was nourished – apart from politicians – mostly by newspapers, and primarily by *Budapesti Hírlap*, which became fully owned by Jenő Rákosi [Kremsner] in 1891. *Budapesti Hírlap* was an excellently written and enthusiastic mouthpiece of Hungarian imperialism, although one lacking both objectivity and a sense of responsibility. In *Budapesti Hírlap* Rákosi demonstrated the national optimism of the assimilated in the highest degree, and in doing so pursued momentary and visible success, motivated by passionate patriotism, and was even willing to put aside the nation’s future for that success. The idea of thirty-million Hungarians was part of an imperialist dream, and was the product of a particular way of thinking, which Széchenyi had criticised in a speech delivered to the Hungarian Academy of Science.”<sup>59</sup>

Marxist handbooks published in the 1950s and 1960s borrowed some ideas from *Hungarian History*, after refurbishing them and enveloping them in the mandatory ideological clichés of the period. The *Hungarian Literary Encyclopaedia*, for instance, writes of Rákosi: “Leading representative of the so-called ‘middle class’ and gentry political outlook for a generation. The creator of the ideology of independent Hungarian imperialism; orchestrated an intense campaign for the Hungarian assimilation of the country’s nationalities, and devised plans for a Hungarian empire of 30 million during a period when the peasantry was leaving the country in droves. . . . The great achievements of his generation and of his own career, and the false glitter of the Millennium which did not penetrate the surface, made him optimistic, and his reactionary bias made him the antagonist of progress.”<sup>60</sup> But in the handbooks of the period, Szekfű’s objective and refined analysis became both one-sided and schematic. The authors of such handbooks failed to take into account that Rákosi used the word “imperialism” not in accordance with Lenin’s definition or as it was used by Marxist historiography. Rákosi repeatedly defined the term in *Budapesti Hírlap*. In the summer of 1902, for instance, he summarised what he meant by Hungarian imperialism as follows: “the rebirth of our historical greatness on the basis of historical rights, in keeping with modern developments”.<sup>61</sup> In 1906, in

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<sup>58</sup> Gyula Szekfű, *Három nemzedék*. [Three Generations] *Egy hanyatló kor története* (Budapest, 1922), pp. 430–431.

<sup>59</sup> Gyula Szekfű, ‘A 19. és 20. Század’, in *Magyar történet*, [Hungarian History] ed. Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szekfű, vol. 7 (Budapest, 1936), pp. 397.

<sup>60</sup> Marcell Benedek (editor-in-chief), *Magyar irdalmi lexikon* [The Encyclopedia of Hungarian Literature] (Budapest, 1965), pp. 536–564.

<sup>61</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (7 July 1902).

the jubilee issue of *Budapesti Hírlap*, Rákosi wrote of the Hungarian empire: “[It is] a monumental and unified, national Hungary, which is Hungarian in terms of its spiritual values, institutions, mentality, feelings, intellectual development, culture, identity, and self-confidence. [It is] uncompromisingly Hungarian within its frontiers, and not by force but rather by necessity, by its very nature, both instinctively and deliberately: by virtue of its authority, moral and material wealth, by which it is destined to attract, impress and conquer. At the same time, it is the token of welfare and freedom for its allies and neighbours.”<sup>62</sup> For Rákosi, the Hungarian empire meant the fulfilment of the ideal of a unified national Hungary, an ideal which was at the centre of his entire life, the ideal of Hungary as the leading power of the Monarchy and of the East European region as a whole. This was obviously an illusion, the product of an age which had every right to be proud of its economic and cultural achievements, and therefore it should be interpreted in the context of that age.

### **Jenő Rákosi and the Thirty-Million-Strong Hungarian Empire**

Jenő Rákosi was a dominant figure in the intellectual life of the long historical period from the Compromise to his death in 1929. Nevertheless, his name is almost unknown today. His important role in a number of fields, including the Magyarization of Budapest, the formation of the modern press, and popular theatre, is virtually forgotten. He is remembered mainly as the ‘ringleader’ of an extreme nationalist press at the turn of the century and, later, in post-Trianon Hungary.

The paper examines the background of his infamous – it later became a slogan – demand for a thirty-million-strong Hungarian empire. The study follows the press campaigns conducted by Rákosi’s newspaper, *Budapesti Hírlap*, to popularise the idea of a Hungarian empire. The newspaper kept up a sustained campaign, demanding that Hungary should take over the peace-keeping role of weakened Austria, and that, with a population of thirty million, it could soon become the most significant power in the region. The author analyses contemporary foreign policy and home affairs as well as the demographic factors which served as the basis of Rákosi’s argument. She also points out why the idea, which was utterly utopian in the light of the facts, seemed realistic at the time.

(The Hungarian version of the study appeared in: Nagy, Marianna, Hanák, Péter eds: *Híd a századok felett* [Bridge over the centuries] Pécs, 1997, 295–307pp.)

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<sup>62</sup> *Budapesti Hírlap* (3 June 1902).

## History and National Image Reflected in the Slovak Book Press in Budapest at the Turn of the Century

The aim of this paper is to present (without the intention to be exhaustive) the Slovak books that were published in Budapest in between the 1880s and the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1918. Slovak people without any kind of territorial or religious separation lived in the same country with Hungarians for thousand years. They lived primarily in the northern, mountainous part of Hungary, but after the successful attempt to chase out the Turks invading the middle part of Hungary, Slovaks were settled also to this part of the country. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the national movement initiated by a small circle of intellectuals demanded at least the basic conditions of vernacular education together with some kind of territorial administration. This was clearly denied by the Hungarian political elite; their aim was to provide Hungarian language the leading role in the fields of education and public life. Moreover, based on the view they represented, there was only one political nation in the country, the Hungarian, and all the inhabitants were equal citizens of the country without considering which language they use.

At the turn of the century the books published in Slovak language in Budapest reflected the official view towards the readers. These books had the double purpose of strengthening the historical sense rooting in the common Slovak-Hungarian past and discouraging people from any type of Slovak national movements or independent Slovak political lines. Dozens of publishing houses produced such material and although they were supported financially by the state only in some of the cases, when the term 'magyarisation' was in the air these materials were highly demanded. Although Slovak scholars have not been expressing interest towards these publications, since they do not form essential part of the nation conscious literature, it is inevitable that they enrich the historical knowledge of the readers. In spite of the questionable and offending premises from Slovak point of view, yet they provide connecting points for the two nations. At least they reveal for us the motifs and the different ways how the slogans were cited in order to achieve their propagandist, agitating or simply educational goals.

The term 'magyarisation' needs a little bit of clarification. It does not denote linguistic assimilation in any of the publications; the main goal is the cultural and political integrity. Although the texts admit the beauty of Slovak language and folklore, encourage their maintenance and cultivation, but from a political aspect the readers are treated as Slovak tongued Hungarians.

In order to put the following publications into wider context, the paper begins with an introductory part dealing with both Slovak and Hungarian writings that provide general evaluation on the Slovak nation and their national aims. The topic and role of Slovak intellectuals in the process of ‘magyarising’ literature will be discussed together with the question of patriotic Slovak press.

### **The image of the Slovaks and the general evaluation of their national aspirations reflected in the publications during the period of the Dualism**

At the very beginning we have to clarify that for Hungarian thinkers dealing with the minority question, the nationalities meant both danger and power reserve. On the one hand all the political and cultural-national questions were treated as anti-Hungarian attempts that fight against the territorial integrity of the country, but on the other hand there was the hope of assimilating the minorities and turning the relatively small amount of Hungarians into a strong nation. (“The empire of thirty-million Hungarians” as it was stated by a contemporary national ideologist.) As a result of the common life for several hundred years not even the linguistic assimilation was thought to be obligatory. Béla Grünwald, the well-known historian and the “alispán” (the deputy of the head of the county administration) of Zólyom county (now in Slovakia) could imagine the perfect form of assimilation even without the shift in every day language. “The example of the German inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine shows us that a unity which as a result of its geographical position is in every day contact with another one that has higher level of culture, and live together for a relatively long time within one country, following their economic demands and acknowledging their educational advantages prefer the alien ruling society to their own nation and although they keep their own language, the extent of their loyalty towards the ruling society can end up even in hostile reactions to their own nations”<sup>1</sup>

The quoted work is part of the most well known pamphlet on “slovakology” at the time of Dualism. The Slovak nation is dealt with as a little bit looked down but not with anger. They are characterised as good-natured and hard-working people who lack self-reliance, totally unsuited for aristocratic role, and whoever is prominent among them is going to change their nationality to Hungarian voluntarily. They are said to be loyal to the country, have never fought against it. Those few who fought at the side of Vienna during the revolution of 1848–49 are despised, but they proudly talk about their feats in the Hungarian revolutionary army. According to Grünwald Slovaks do not have their own history or national traditions, their heroes are Hungarian heroes.<sup>2</sup> The Slovaks – together with the Germans – are treated as a nation that is very easy to

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<sup>1</sup> Grünwald Béla: A Felvidék. [*The Upperland*] Politikai tanulmány. Budapest, 1878, 21.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* 29-33.



assimilate. They have to be connected to Hungarians as tight as the French could do it with the Alsace Germans.<sup>3</sup>

In the field of Slovak-Hungarian relations these pieces draw our attention to serious dangers as well. The Slovak national movements (that were called pan-Slav agitation) are described in these publications as possible danger not only for the Hungarian hegemony of the Uplands but for the unity of the State as well. The above mentioned pamphlet of Grünwald was written to unfold and slow up the negative streams. The effect of the pamphlet was tangible only a few years later, when dozens of associations were established with the aim of extending the use of Hungarian language.

After the Hungarian writers, let us examine the role of Slovak intellectuals in the formation of Slovak literacy within the political or cultural assimilation.

First we have to mention the Cultural Association of Slovaks in Hungary [Magyarországi Tót Közművelődési Egyesület] that was established in 1885. It was initiated by the government and the 'patriotic society of the Upper-Land and as opposed to its predecessors it did not aim to extend the use of Hungarian language but to raise the intellectual and moral level of Slovak inhabitants. The two institutions, the one that co-ordinated the linguistic assimilation, the Hungarian Cultural Association of Upper-Hungary (Felvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület = FEMKE) and the above mentioned divided their work among themselves. While FEMKE wished to extend the Hungarian language knowledge in the cities, the Slovak institution aimed at strengthening the national feeling and enthusiasm and clarifying the common historical roots among people living in the countryside. Some of their representative publications will be examined later. The products of patriotic Slovak press published in Budapest during the Dualism wished wider effect and more frequent appearance than the publications of the Slovak association. Finally the association itself launched its biweekly *Vlast' a Svet* [Country and the World] that went on publishing till the end of the common country. According to its ideology, although all the nations are beloved children of the country, the leading role is owned by Hungarian brothers, therefore the official language is theirs.<sup>4</sup>

Parallel with the newspaper of the association, the *Slovenské noviny* [Slovakian newspaper] was launched too. *Slovenské noviny* defined itself as independent political paper and enjoyed the financial support of the government. Its program contained among others that Slovak intellectuals had to be led out of the labyrinth of political impossibilities and had to be infused with patriotism.<sup>5</sup> It

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* 18-19,22.

<sup>4</sup> *Slovo k ctenému obecnstvu. Vlast' a Svet* r. I., č. 24., 15 Dec. 1886

<sup>5</sup> *Naše stanovisko. Slovenské noviny*, 24 Dec. 1885

announced fight against the so-called disagreement wishing press (i.e. the organs of the Slovak National Party) that stirred up discontentment among Slovaks.<sup>6</sup>

Around the two pro governmental newspapers a Slovak circle appeared in Budapest constructed by newspaper writers and officers. I would like to mention two leading figures of this group. Samo Czambel represented the type of Slovak intellectuals that wished to develop Slovak language and literature, but objected all independent political movements and imagined the future happiness of his nation within the frame of Austrian–Hungarian dualism. He imagined the future within the boundaries of the country, therefore fought against the movements pointing outside the contemporary boundaries such as russofilia or Czechoslovak orientation. Based on Czech pamphlets he proves that Czech nation moved by their national egoism and their territorial loss against Germany treat Slovaks as their ethnic reserves. However, Czambel urges independent Slovak literary language based on the vernacular. Meanwhile, he assures public opinion and political leaders that the care of the language of the Slovak minority is not a seditious act at all.<sup>7</sup>

The views of Adolf Pechány are reflected in his conviction of national characterology. His tour guide publication on the valley of river Vág contains a little bit schematic but unified and summarised chapter about the nation where there is an approximate balance of virtues and shortcomings. Although Slovaks are said to be hard working, monotonous work suit them rather, or learning by heart at school. They are good at house-work but they like idling and their love of brandy extirpate all the moral and aesthetic sense from them. Generally they are subservient to their lords, but become pushy whenever they expect something from them. Usually they try to avoid conflicts; the only exceptional case is when they are drunk. Once somebody has inspired their confidence, they are convinced that all the deeds of ‘their man’ must be perfect. They are said to be steadfast to their country, they hasten home as soon as they can even from very far away. The part of the characterology that fits our topic more is the following: Pechány emphasises the impact of Hungarian folklore. “Nowadays he composes his songs following the Hungarian motives, ... although with a little bit of difficulty, he dances the czardas with pleasure.”<sup>8</sup>

Although the national image of Slovaks is milder in his characterisation than in the works of his tutor, Béla Grünwald, in connection with the history of Slovak national movements we face-hostile tone. He also defined the double-sided nature of the problem; it is visible in his Hungarian pamphlet dedicated to Béla Grünwald in 1886: “Tót [Slovak] and pan-Slav are two different categories. Tót people like their Hungarian country, respect Hungarian institutions as

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<sup>6</sup> Anton Zatopek: Čo že chceme? Slovenské noviny, r.I., č. 1., 2 Jan. 1886

<sup>7</sup> Slováci a ich reč. Budapešť, 1903. 221, 237

<sup>8</sup> Pechány Adolf: Kalauz a Vág völgyében [Guide in the valley of Vág] Budapest, 1888, 7-10.

opposed to pan-Slavs, who treat Hungary as their step-mother, disparage disapprove and riot against their institutions.”<sup>9</sup> According to him – just like other minorities within Hungary – Slovak common people do not have independent nationalistic aims either. “One thousand years of common life soldered the nations of the country into one national body despite all the differences. The pan-Slav agitation is very dangerous because the continuous emphasising of social difficulties of the Upper-land will drive people into socialism as it could be felt during the seditious speeches of Hurban and Štúr in 1848. The whole society of the Upper-land must help Slovak people who are unable to survive on their own. Tót nation is weak and underdeveloped. We must not rely on their strength, they need leadership, enlightenment and benevolent advice.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Comprehensive evaluation of the common Hungarian–Slovak past based on one of Ján Nepomuk Bobula’s and Karol Csecsoťka’s publications**

Before turning our attention to especially historical publications I would like to introduce two literary anthologies that contain in a concise form the evaluation of our thousand-year-long common past. Soon after the establishment of the publishing house called *Minerva* by the famous architect and editor, Ján Bobula, a literary almanac was published under the same title that contained the opening speech of a Hungarian Member of the Parliament. The speaker underlined that all the nations of the country had been living there for thousands of years. Thousand years before, the first king of Hungary, St. Stephen connected the nations with official tie to each other and ordered his son “to respect and love the foreign nations of the country. Instead of complaining about the multitude of nationalities within the boundaries he saw this quality as the guarantee for the strength and freedom of Hungary. The previous thousand years proved that the deep thoughts of the saint king were right. Through these years none of the nations of Hungary have been deprived of their basic human rights: the right for their language and for their nationality. All the nations defended the territory and their rights together and set up such a constitution that based on freedom provided future development and prosperity.” In case of danger they defended the country together: “Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Croatian and Rusyn bones are buried under the soil of the holy battlefield. [...] In our religious wars Slovak nation fought in the first lines.” After America and Switzerland it is the mission of Hungary to prove that it is nobody’s interest to oppress the other nation.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Pechány Adolf: A pánszlávizmus múltja és jelene [The Past and Present of Pan-slavism] Felsőmagyarországi Nemzetőr, 1886. 36.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, 36, 38.

<sup>11</sup> *Minerva*. Národní zábavník. Vydala Minerva, prvá uhorsko-slovenská účastinná knihtačiareň a vydavateľstvo. Sostavil Ján N.J. Bobula. V Pešti, 1869. 9-14

The compromise-seeking wing led by Ján Bobula, the New Slovak School died out because of the rigidity of Hungarian parties. The Cultural Association of Slovaks in Hungary, which was established to be the legal heir of the banned *Matica slovenská*, from some points of view can be seen as the continuation of New Slovak School. Now we would like to introduce a publication that was published after the dissolution of the common country, but the material was compiled in the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, both the editor himself and the whole atmosphere of the publication reflect the spirit of dualism. We are talking about the poetic anthology edited by Karol Csecsootka. In its introduction that was written by the head of the association there is a summary of the views held by the ruling circles about the Slovak national existence and its culture. "There are plenty of connecting links to Slovak songs from the age of Rákóczi and also from the time of the 1848–49 revolution. The revolution was supported by Slovak people who proved their limitless loyalty and love towards the common Hungarian country." The idealised past is free of problems in connection with linguistic questions too. "The works of poets who created their work of art together in a good relationship in their past time are the living proofs of the fact that Slovak people could use their ancestors' melodious language freely, they could educate themselves in it throughout long centuries."<sup>12</sup> The artificial expansion of Hungarian language as an impediment is never mentioned. The anthology consists of short biographies of the national classics and some of their poems. There is not a single sign of the so-called anti-Hungarian deeds of the given poet. One chapter is made up of poems of unknown origin that are prominent because of their high loyalty towards the country, the crown and the nation". This quotation indicates that the collection has a preconception. The material is quite mixed, originating from different sources. The poem *Vlast' Uhorská* [Hungarian Fatherland] is copied from an unspecified anthology. It describes with enthusiasm the natural beauties of the 'Upper-Land': "Of all the countries of the world / I like Hungary the most. / The hills and valleys are wonderful there. / People cannot consume all crops there. / Mines are bound in silver and gold hey, / they are sleeping in the Tatras untouched; / There are flowery fields, meadows and paths, / cattle around the hut in the highland meadows, / mountains of treasures and woods of fruit-trees, / glass and metal furnace, timber-yards, / marble quarries and full purses, / meeting points of curing rivers and healthy spas / in the Highland [present day Slovakia]." This idealised picture is not really above the level and the aim of a manipulative school story. In reality the territory of Slovak Highland due to its adverse circumstances were

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<sup>12</sup> Anthologia zo slovenských básnikov r. 1847-1900 s pripojením piesní z doby Rákócziho a rokov 1848-49 ako aj niekoľkých prostonárodných spevov. Sostavil Karol Csecsootka. Uhorsko-krajinský vzdelávací spolok slovenský, Budapešť, 1934. 3-4

overpopulated and people from these counties emigrated most frequently to the overseas. The description of the Hungarian Plain is schematic likewise: The plain land is full of magnificent ears, / farms abound with milk and honey, / gardens with melon and joy, / incomparable vineyards, / in the fields there are cattle herds, / young cowmen around them. / Clear rivers with boats, / connecting the seas / and the plains.” The third stanza includes the moral of the poem: The most important aspect for me / that I am a son of this land, / that my mother gave me life here / and thought me how to love first, / when she held me on her lap, / and provided me with the milk of mother love, / assured me that this is the mother land of Slovak people, / the inherited land of these country men. / Of all the countries of the World / I like Hungary the most. / The connections with her are natural and tight / Do not mock her claiming to be ridiculous.”<sup>13</sup>

There is no concrete historical connection but the poem *Sem sa, sem, Slováci!* [Here, come here Slovaks] was probably written on the events of 1848–49: “In Bystrica in the market place / the invitation sounds, / here, come here Slovaks, / our fate is bad, / our country is in danger / together with our saint crown / and national language. The answer of the loyal youth to the patriotic invitation: Oh, our dear country! / Although you are in danger, / God helps you, / and Slovaks protect you!”<sup>14</sup>

A separate group of chapters consists of songs about the Rákóczi war of independence. The editor praises the Slovak rebel (kuruc) poetic tradition in the introduction with the following words: these fights took place at the northern part of Hungary. The songs came to being in a so-called independent way on the mouth of people and were developed among Slovak people who took responsible part in the fights. The pure Slovak origin of these songs is visible not only in its melody but also in its topic that tells us the history of the given county. These reflect steadfastness of Slovak people to headwords such as freedom, equality and friendship that was written onto the flag of Rákóczi.”<sup>15</sup> The objective of the editor is clear: to strengthen the integration of Slovaks to Hungarian past with the creation of a conscious Slovak revolutionary tradition.

The revolution and war for freedom in 1848–49 are even more fruitful territory of patriotic education. What is the first armed action in national colours in the eyes of Slovak national writers, politicians and historians, is a voluntary common fight for the emancipation of peasants and for the defence of a new civil order in the eyes of Slovaks with hungarus consciousness and of Hungarian historians. In the examined anthology there is a separate chapter dealing with this topic. The short summary claims: these songs just as at the time of Rákóczi were created mainly in the minds of Slovak soldiers... Their topic is the patriotic

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<sup>13</sup> *ibid.* p.139

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* 140-141

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* 143

thoughts of Slovak people and their readiness to defend the decreasing country. Many of these songs are still sung by Slovaks during their various activities.”<sup>16</sup> The piece beginning with *Sing, sing nightingale in springtime* is full of ethnic and patriotic elements. “Catholic and Lutheran are brothers. / Hungarian, Slovak and German also. / All of them are good patriots.// Tell me swallow / and tell me cuckoo, / how many times do you fly there / to visit our brothers.// While Pannonia and Kriváň exist, / there will not be other lord / but who loves freedom / and does not fight against it.”<sup>17</sup> The author of the didactic song uses folklore motives like stressed rhythm or talking to birds, but the Slovak national mythology appears also through the image of Kriváň’s peak that represents freedom.

The anthology is closed with a few folk songs. No doubt that at the end of the book these songs have symbolic meaning; this is the vote for national conscience uttered by Czambel and Pechány, and mentioned in the introduction of this paper. Although the songs of the singing Slovak people are beautiful, but it does not and cannot have any other possibilities for expressing itself (like national culture or autonomous politics).

### **Booklets dealing with historical events and personalities**

Saint Stephen has always been and will be a central figure and starting point of patriotic historical literature. The figure of the first Hungarian king – depending on the age and public thinking – appeared once as a realisation of political strength of the Hungarians, (or in the eyes of Latin or German state creating nations, as the ruler of Slaves who were not supposed to be capable of state creation). In other times he appeared as a tolerant integrative state person, who talked in his *Admonitions* about the importance of foreign languages, nations and habits.

The short biography of Saint Stephen that was edited and put into Slovak context by Karol Csecsoťka, introduces both interpretation of his life. Csecsoťka kept the sentences that emphasise the Hungarian hegemony, but he did not want to hurt Slovak people’s feeling, moreover he aimed to paint a desirable picture about the beginning of common state. According to its introduction “the conquering Hungarians defeated and subjugated people living here and occupied the land that we call Hungary today”.<sup>18</sup> We do not know whether the Hungarian version provided the names of subjugated nations or not; they are not itemised here. On the other hand Csecsoťka attributed key role to the Slovaks in the defeat of Koppány, main enemy of the young Christian state:

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<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* 146

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Svätý Štefan prvý kráľ uhorský a jeho panovanie. Pre Slovenský ľud spracoval Karol Csecsoťka [Saint Stephen, the first king of Hungarians and his reign] Viliam Měhner, Budapešť, 1903. 3

“This fight is recorded in the well-known Slovak song: The fight went on and on / under King Stephen. / There will not be any more like this / under the sun never. / The fight went on and on / on that Hungarian battlefield, / young ones were fighting / and Slovak soldiers were supporting.”<sup>19</sup>

The next historically important person who is to be dealt with is Miklós Zrínyi, an important general from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A Hungarian book about his life was adapted for Slovak readers by Csecsotka's editorial predecessor, the prolific Ján Adolf Ferienčík. Ferienčík was a conscious Slovak with national thoughts. That's why it is no wonder that he underlines the hero's Slav – Croatian – origin. Although the story takes place at the southern part of Hungary, the Slovak glory is present bringing back the memory of the famous soldiers of Mátyás Korvin. “There, where the soldiers of the Black Army with full of excellent and brave young men were fighting and where the enemy was beaten off as a result of the king's defence, there must collapse the Turkish crescent. The Turk who was afraid of Slovak arms and king Mátyás' Black Army like devil is afraid of holy water, is now expanding without any resistance.”<sup>20</sup> Zrínyi's Croatian origin is also underlined. Came from a poor Croatian family. He was a true born Croatian.<sup>21</sup> This frequent or ‘maniac’ repeating wants to be a response to the senseless Hungarian historiography that does not underline the ethnically colourful nature of common past.

One of the least reputable figures of Hungarian and Slovak historiography is Erzsébet Báthory, the sadist lady of Csejte castle who had her usual blood bath by killing young girls. Ján Adolf Ferienčík devoted a brochure for her too. As we already saw in the case of Zrínyi the Slav origin was too much emphasised. With this work the author would like to make Slovak ethnic environment and every day people memorable. The setting is introduced with the following words: In our dear Upland, in that beautiful and romantic region there is a castle nearly in every settlement. For many of them Slovak blood was sacrificed and now the castles are proudly decorate the region where Slovaks have been living since the ancient times. Slovak hands might have built not only one, but all of them.<sup>22</sup>

From the above quoted lines we can recognise the Slovak national image that was known among Hungarians: Slovaks suffered history, they have built all the castles and the lords meant them too much trouble.

In connection with Csecsotka's literary anthology we could examine the importance of the Rákóczi War of Independence in the Slovak culture. It is not

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<sup>19</sup> *ibid.* 14

<sup>20</sup> Mikuláš Zriňský hrdina... Pre slovenský ľud spracoval Ján A(dolf) Ferienčík. Viliam Méhner, Budapešť, b.r.,2-3, 5

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.* 10

<sup>22</sup> Krvožižnivá žena alebo Alžbeta Báthory. Skutočná udalosť zo XVII stoletia. Spracoval Ján A. Ferienčík. Viliam Méhner, Budapešť., b.r. 4.

surprising that Csecsoťka has turned a Hungarian Rákóćzi biography into Slovak. The over emphasis of Slovak and Ruthen active presence in the war might be due to him. The participation of Ruthens is acknowledged by Hungarian historians also (the prince himself mentions them in his memoirs) but Slovaks are not mentioned separately. This might be the reason why Csecsoťka (who is not very innovative in comparison with Ferienčik) does not name them, though 'they are there' in the text. In the northern part of Hungary everybody till the very last one joined the kuruc army; lower nobility, peasantry, serves and aristocrats together met under the flags of Rákóćzi. ”<sup>23</sup>

The literary anthology of Csecsoťka reveals the importance of 1848–49 in the patriotic Slovak publications. Together with the anthology another important representative publication of the Cultural Association of Slovaks in Hungary is the history of War of Independence. It is written by Adolf Pechány who on the basis of the results of Hungarian researchers wrote in the atmosphere of Hungarian historiography.<sup>24</sup> He underlines the generosity and fairness of Hungarian leadership and he deeply condemns and simplifies the function of Slovak National Council and the Legion.

The introduction is written by Pavel Ruffy, the secretary of the Association. He recommends the book with the following words: “The history written in this book is the history of *our* country and people who have been fighting for *our* nation, the Hungarian nation. That is why you should not look for fortune, happiness and glory abroad but only here in your country.”

The author himself summarised the inheritance of common past. With it he would like to express emotional effect on the readers: “There are still some respectful older people under the sky reaching Tatras, who took part in that glorious war as younger ones. Their eyes were blazing, their heart is filled with hotness when they talk about the great events of 1848–49 to their nephews.”<sup>25</sup>

Examining the events of the Revolution and the War of Independence it is impossible to deny that the reaction of Vienna could find their people here as well, but the writer makes it clear that nearly nobody followed it. “National propaganda did not bypass our part of the country either but the agitators could not have been very proud of the result. Peasantry full of patriotic thoughts did not join them; they were not very much followed.”<sup>26</sup> The organisation of Slovak Legion fighting at the side of Vienna and the Slovak military conflict is deeply condemned and evaluated in the book as an unprecedented event of our history: “During these thousand years we have lived through plenty of difficulties. One

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<sup>23</sup> František Rákóćzi II. Pre slovenský ľud spracoval Karol Csecsoťka. Viliam Měhner, Budapešť 1904. 37

<sup>24</sup> Adolf Pechány: Dejiny uhorského boja za slobodu r. 1848-49. Uhorsko-krajinský vzdelávací spolok slovenský, Budapešť, 1903

<sup>25</sup> ibid. p. 1-2

<sup>26</sup> ibid. 30-31



of the most difficult and most sorrowful periods was that one. While up to that time whenever danger came close to Hungary all the inhabitants of the country defended together their land; with the appearance of national agitation hostility spread among them and opposing groups divide the sons of one country and one nation."<sup>27</sup>

For the proof of patriotic feelings of Slovaks the writer highlights the fact that in the county of Turóc, Gömör, Liptó and Zólyom even the group of Hurban was not able to shake people's conviction, moreover the sentenced criminals claimed themselves to be guilty of treason. The Slovak national guards and soldiers fought for Hungarian independence bravely. The writer describes the battle of Branyiszkó in the following way: "The fight was for the reputation and glory of the whole Hungarian army where brave Slovak young soldiers took part as well."<sup>28</sup>

After the suppression of the War of Independence that was followed by a six-decade-long period of piece the breaking out of the World War I was the historic event that made the question of Slovak patriotism of vital importance. The second representative volume of Cultural Association of Slovaks in Hungary was published due to the autumn success of Russian troops in the Carpathian mountains.<sup>29</sup>

In the introduction the head of the Association, the bishop of Besztercebánya tries to console readers and infuse them with the following enthusiastic words: "We have prepared this book for the members of our Association and for Slovak inhabitants of our country, our beloved common Hungary that should be praised with joyful and encouraging words. Even during the peaceful period we tried not to be emotionally involved to the partial political debates and national conflicts." The aim of the association has always been "the rise of moral and spiritual level of Slovak people living in Hungary". Its basic value is said to be "the love of our unified and not dividable country." Now, at wartime "with the sacrifice of fallen heroes we have to reach the merit for contributing to the rise of our dear country apart from what we do not have other places to live. [...] This should be engraved into your heart and the three witnesses God, the King and Hungary should be always in your mind!"<sup>30</sup>

The anthology contains plenty of historical, geographical, strategic, national economic and literary historical writings, and also gives place to short stories with patriotic ideas. From now on we would like to present the most relevant pieces from our point of view.

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.* 92, 102, 153

<sup>29</sup> *Z veľkej doby.* Sostavil Ludvik Janovecz. Uhorsko-krajinský vzdelávací spolok slovenský, Budapešť, 1915

<sup>30</sup> K cteným členom uhorsko-krajinského vzdelávacieho spolku slovenského., *ibid.* V-VIII

Adolf Pechány introduces the geography and history of the north-eastern part of the upper part of Hungary in connection with the battles fought against Russians in the Carpathian mountains. He appreciates the noble families living in the territory and their role in the past, they took significant part in Hungarian public life. As a consequence of it this part of the country participated in all the prominent periods of history. Not only landlords but peasantry was involved in case of important events because they followed their masters in every aspects.”<sup>31</sup>

The toughness and pure spotless feeling – like love and patriotism is portrayed in the novel of the famous writer Géza Gárdonyi entitled *A piece of Wire* (Kúsok drôtu). The middle class hero is going to break with his love because he does not feel he will be able to provide the required financial level for his bride. Meanwhile he meets a young Slovak wire-man who tells him that he has been wandering in the country for ages to buy a small piece of land. He would like to marry his beloved one, who is beautiful and rich with the wealth of two hundred crowns. So, much richer than him, but much poorer than our hero. The aim and frame of their life seem too tight for him: “Suddenly came to my mind those Upper-land Slovak villages that I visited. Those small houses made of carved wood, roof is covered with black moss and there is no chimney. The yard is paved, garden is paved and the field as well. Poor potatoes and bad quality fruits. There are plenty of women, plenty of children but not enough men. Among proud evergreen pine-trees there are calm and diligent people living. But in all of the houses there are two or three swallow’s nests.”<sup>32</sup>

Fraňo returns home and prepares for the marriage. The war breaks out and this simple-minded man knows immediately what his task is. He joined the army voluntarily. From now on he does not call out: “Wire-man is here!” Far away on the battlefield within the bustle of fight Fraňo is among the first ones who runs to the enemy. His shout is audible as he calls: “Friends, come over here, we have to defeat the enemy!” I believe that our Fraňo fights for his own country with as much enthusiasm and heroism as he fought for his own private happiness. After it but only after it his Magduša embrace him, embrace him with love.”<sup>33</sup>

Andor Kozma’s novel *In the Camp* (V tábore) takes place in the Russian-Polish battlefield in a forward pushed post. The soldiers are Slovaks of course. Around the fireplace the spirit is high, the centre of company is Janko Červenák the constant fun maker. When he is gathering kindling in the forest he captures ten Russian soldiers. They start talking to each other. The Slovaks do

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<sup>31</sup> Adolf Pechány: Severovýchodné Karpáty, *ibid.* 172

<sup>32</sup> Géza Gárdonyi: Kúsok drôtu, *ibid.* 181-184

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.* 185-187

not understand Russian, they understand Polish. (This is a way of expressing political conviction against russofilism.)<sup>34</sup>

Janko praises the supply, the ideal conditions of Austrian–Hungarian army at which Russian soldiers are very surprised. “Our officers told us – says one of the Russians in Polish – that in Hungary whoever was not Hungarian had to suffer a lot. That is why you Slovaks preferred us to Hungarians and you were eagerly waiting for us to set you free.” Janko laughed a lot at this opinion. Later it turned out that only one of the prisoners was real Russian, the others were either Ukrainians, or Polish who’d rather stay in Austrian–Hungarian prison than go back to that hated army of the Czar. Janko is promoted and praised.<sup>35</sup>

Karol Csescotka published here an essay on Slovak military poetry. We hardly have to underline the importance of marching songs during military training, mainly in the creation and strengthening of patriotic conscience and military spirit of soldiers. According to the writer the marching songs are present throughout the whole thousand-year-long history of the country. One of the quoted marching songs is said to be the first Slovak one of this kind from the time of Saint Stephen. This is the song beginning with “The fight went on and on”. According to him there are Slovak songs about the Tatar invasion, Turkish and Kuruc (Anti-Habsburg) period. This is proved with an artificially created Kuruc poem: “When I go to that Kuruc battle/ I gird on my sword.” Then he turns to the poetic inheritance of 1848–49: “From the time of War of Independence in 1848–49 there are plenty of songs that praises with enthusiasm the leaders and heroes of the battle.” The soul of soldiers is filled with God and the country. When they are leaving, / they call God / : Help us God and Virgin Mary / Help Hungary in its fight. Sincere, self-sacrificing love for nation and humble loyalty for the throne is tangible in the enthusiastic expressions of these Slovak songs. These make hearts hard as steel in the fight. I shed my blood with pleasure / for the country and for the king, / let it contribute to their victory.”<sup>36</sup> The primary aim of the article is of course the presentation of contemporary military songs. We quote only one of the most characteristic ones. *The Marching Song* [Pochodná pieseň do boja] is said to be originated in Pišťany: “My dear friends and everybody / let’s take our weapons, / let’s fulfil the wish of God / and defend our country. / We should not be afraid of death / let’s participate in that war./ We will fight for our country / as did our ancestors. // Our forefathers defended / the country for thousand years./ Against the savage Tatar / they defended their beautiful fields / and green parks. / Their coat of arm was / the high Carpathian mountains. // Their country flourished / they had hope in God. / All of them took their weapons / when the time of war arrived. / Let’s also

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<sup>34</sup> Andrej Kozma: V tábore, ibid. 86-90

<sup>35</sup> ibid. 93-95

<sup>36</sup> Karol Csescotka: Básnictvo vo vojne, ibid. 96

defend our country / and shed our own blood / and if it is necessary / let's die for the dearest country. // If we win the fight / we will start singing / that will be audible everywhere: / Long live our country! / From the Tatra Mountain till the Danube / everybody should listen to that voice: / We ask you God, / Long live our country!" The song is rich in conventional elements of patriotic poetry: to envision the whole country from the mountains till the plain. More particularly The Carpathians and the Tatra itself recalls the image of homeland most in the soul of Slovak soldiers. A good example to the actualisation of previous songs is the one beginning with *Sing, Sing* [Spievaj, spievaj] published in the literary anthology. There Csecsotka treats it as a song from 1848, while here introduces the enemies under the title *Resounding Heights* [Zahučali hory]: "In the West and in the East / only one heart is visible / Serbs and Russians, you are wrong thinking that you can divide the Hungarians [i.e. the ethnic groups of Hungary] B. Á.]" *The song Under Krasnika* (Pieseň zpod Krasnika) has similar content: "In Petersburg people do not want to admit the truth, / that our brave army do not wish to capitulate to the Russians. / Hungarians and Slovaks / are all good soldiers / much smarter than Kozaks." The message of these songs is identical with the message of the short story entitled *In the Camp*. The enemy is mistaken if it supposes that peoples of Hungary are fighting against each other.

The patriotic Slovak literature in Hungary did not vanish entirely even after the split in 1918, since the Cultural Association went on functioning in Budapest. The examined literary anthology shows that the leaders thought the designation of a new state boundaries, the isolation of Slovaks living in the North from the ones living in the Plain and of course the dissolution of thousand-year-old Hungarian Slovak common life as a tragic historical event. They believed that this relationship which was close to brotherhood is going to revive sooner or later.

**The Cultural Activity of the Hungarians Living in Slovakia,  
1920–1945**

The main obstacle to the realization of the situation of the Hungarian minority of one million people, who found themselves within the state borders of the Czechoslovakian Republic after World War I, was the territorial separation based on the place of residence. The Hungarian regions of Southern Slovakia could not be in any connection as a result of an organic development, as all the regions showed a southward, organic, regional relation system. This new, artificial state border did not only divide these regions in two, but also isolated the separated parts. This dramatic intervention created enclosures and regions of peripheral features both culturally and economically, on both sides of the border.

The southern Slovakian region, which existed in the intellectual sphere of Budapest and Vienna before, became an intellectual colony as a result of the above-mentioned isolation. Cultural consciousness was lacking, reading culture was strongly defective, and the group who could have passed on their education was also missing in this region. These features were mainly valid for those villagers who made up the majority of the Hungarian population. On the other hand, the Hungarian-speaking townsmen were characterized by the frequenting of local casinos and clubs that were “looking back to the past” and were “living in the past”, as well as an intensive social life, which rarely reached the level of high culture.

The first Czechoslovakian elections, which were carried out in a forced haste, had long-term effects on the divided and unprepared Hungarians living in Slovakia.

The primary consequence was the political division; the second – though not least negative – consequence was the over-politicization of the public life of the Hungarians living in Slovakia. As a result of the latter, a permanent feature of the Hungarian education in Slovakia was the fact that in the process of the organization of community life, cultural organization was always preceded by political organization and by political separation according to party membership.

In the creation and development of Hungarian culture and in the cultural-educational activity in the early period of Czechoslovakia, those political and public personalities who had also been the decisive actors in the political and cultural public life in Hungary before 1920 had the most significant roles. According to their original concepts, the minority cultural policy would have been an organic part of the political representation and they did not wish to separate the political and cultural public life by strict borders. This question,

however, became a characteristic problem of Hungarian public life in Czechoslovakia throughout the history of the country. This was strengthened by the contradictory (tolerant/prohibitive) relation to Hungarian national culture by the government in power at the time and by other official state institutions.

On the other hand, the responsible leaders of the Hungarians living in Slovakia realized from the outset the preserving and public opinion forming role of culture. According to Tódor Schubert from Léva (Levice): “The most secure pledge of the physical survival of Hungarians is the strong enforcement of the cultural possibilities. Culture is a common denominator, in which the religious and political, ideological programs can be united.” Opinions coincided in the respect that one of the most important cultural policy devices of the Hungarian communities – that is to say, Hungarian village and town communities – was the “cultural association”. This was meant to “unite the forces, to get to know the souls and to start their transformation.” This was how – after a number of unsuccessful attempts and thanks to the persistent efforts of Gyula Alapy and Ferenc Sziklay –the Slovakian Hungarian Cultural Association (SHCA) on July 22, 1925, and its Sub-Carpathian twin organization, the Podkarpatszká Ruzs (Sub-Carpathian) Hungarian Cultural Association, were founded.

It meant many disadvantages in the development of the organizational life that in the register, Komárom (Komárno) appeared as the center of the organization. On the other hand, it is also true that in the more than one hundred kilometer long territory zone where Hungarians lived in Southern Slovakia, neither Komárom (Komárno) nor any other cities could become a kind of symbolic cultural “capital”. All those attempts aimed at creating such a central-type top organ and through which, the coordination of all cultural activities could have ensured the coordination of the country, resulted in failure, as well.

From the first years, the leaders of the Hungarian parties, the National Christian Democratic Party and the Hungarian National Party – making people aware of the importance of cultural work – created a country-wide Cultural Center in Kassa (Košice) in 1922. The head of this center was Ferenc Sziklay, a professor and newspaper editor. On his initiative, a number of basic institutions of the Hungarian culture were successfully created in Slovakia. Thus, besides the already mentioned SHCA, the most important ones in Kassa (Košice) were the Kazinczy Bibliophile Association, launched on his initiation, and later rising to countrywide importance; The Kazinczy Book and Newspaper Editing Cooperative; the Hungarian Theater Support Society of Slovakia, the Literary Association, the Artist Association, the Association of Singers, etc. They served as an example for those societies and organizations aimed at amateur culture and education that were founded from the middle of the 1920s in almost all towns of southern Slovakia in a gradually improving social, democratic atmosphere. Thanks to this, and also on the initiation of Ferenc Sziklay, in 1928 in Rimaszombat (Rimavská Sobota) at the congress of the Hungarian social

associations in Czechoslovakia, the Association of the Czechoslovakian Hungarian Social and Cultural Societies was established. József Törköly, a lawyer and Member of Parliament, became its President; and László Márkus, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Gömör" became the Secretary General. The most important activity of the Association was that with its meetings it ensured the regular connection between the political parties and cultural life, as well as the coordination of the cultural public life and politics.

The Hungarian Newspaper of Prague, which was established and maintained by the parties of the opposition, served the growth of Hungarian cultural life in Slovakia altruistically from the beginning: In addition to reporting in detail about the events of the Hungarian cultural life in Slovakia, it tried to make them more popular with the help of reports illustrated with photographs.

Among the forgotten "common soldiers" of culture, first of all we have to mention the teachers of the Hungarian schools in Slovakia. They were the leading missionaries of Hungarian culture in Slovakia, who in addition to their everyday activity, helped the development of the Hungarian cultural consciousness in Slovakia by enormous energies and personal sacrifices. Their language and cultural protection activity became one of the most important devices in helping the Hungarian villages in Slovakia to become conscious of their own values.

In addition to the Hungarian opposition parties that were important nationally, it was especially the left-wing parties – the Communists and the Social Democrats – who were doing significant cultural organizing work. The most representative territory of their activities was the area inhabited by the Hungarian workers and agrarian proletariat.

The anniversary celebrations, which created a stir throughout the country and which were connected to prominent figures of Hungarian literature or history, were also important in the Hungarian cultural life in Slovakia. High-level cultural life was formed in those centers rich with the traditions of Hungarian cultural life in Slovakia like Pozsony (Bratislava), Komárom (Komárno), and Kassa (Košice). In the Toldy Circle in Pozsony (Bratislava), in the Kazinczy Association in Kassa (Košice) and in the Jókai Association in Komárom (Komárno), which were formed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was possible to safeguard the pre-war, middle-class traditions. This protection manifested itself in numerous tradition preserving, culture creating and publishing activities. Newly initiated city associations were established thanks to their examples. Among them were, for example, the Madách Circle in Losonc (Lučenec), the Literary Association in Rimaszombat (Rimavská Sobota), the Széchenyi Society in Eperjes (Prešov), the Gyöngyösi Society in Ungvár (Užhorod), and the Reviczky Society in Léva (Levice). The name and activity of a number of old and newly formed cultural and sport associations became

known, which aroused the suspicions of the authorities and led to their dissolution.

The Reviczky Society in Léva (Levice) was also suppressed, but its cultural and educational safeguarding traditions were taken over and carried on in an exemplary way by the Léva (Levice) Casino – led by Tódor Schubert, one of the most excellent figures of the Hungarian culture in Slovakia. In the casinos of Léva (Levice) and in other Hungarian towns, several lecture series and educational courses took place, organized by the District Public Education Body and sometimes even supported by the state. Considering the sport associations with official permission, we must mention the Hungarian Association of Physical Education in Czechoslovakia, which under the leadership of István Révay became the overall organizer of Hungarian sport life in Czechoslovakia from 1922.

In addition to the encouragement of the town-level Hungarian cultural activity, it was especially the larger villages inhabited by the strengthening Hungarian middle-class in Southern Slovakia that showed significant results in the spread of culture. Here, next to the activity of different circles belonging to Catholic and Protestant denominations, the activity of reading circles, craftsmen's circles, and later, the worker circles and farmer circles became decisive. These circles, in addition to safeguarding public life, in almost every situation carried out some kind of intellectual-social activity. (We cannot omit from the list the well-functioning local firemen associations, the majority of which started their operation by uniting the members of the former Front Fighter Association and preserving their activities.

The middle classes of the majority of the Hungarian towns in Southern Slovakia were able to organize their “open university” series, which increased their educational level and broadened their horizons, usually inviting outstanding Hungarian public figures and men of letters as lecturers. It was significant that this kind of cultural activity could overcome the literature-centered view, so characteristic of its beginning.

The whole decade of the 1920s was characterized by enthusiastic local and national organizations and establishments, but unfortunately, by frequent dissolution as well. The Hungarian intellectuals who remained in Czechoslovakia, looking for a way out of their involuntary minority situation, intended to find the possibilities of survival within the framework of the new Czechoslovakian state. Besides the initiative role of the intellectuals, we have to emphasize the patronage of the wealthier upper-middle class, and the well-to-do farmers of the villages. Without their support, Hungarian cultural life in Czechoslovakia, which had a thorny path anyway, could only have been launched with difficulty, for its organizational frameworks completely lacked the official financial support of the state at the beginning. As opposed to them, the remaining landowners refrained, and the aristocrats who remained in



Slovakia – except for a few – refused to support Hungarian culture. Among the exceptions were the Révays, the Szent-Iványis, the Csákys, as well as a descendent of one of the most outstanding aristocratic families, Count János Eszterházy, who rightly complained that “The former Hungarian aristocracy, who lives here, is showing such indifference towards the Hungarian minority living here, the like of which we could never have expected. (...) while rich Hungarian people live in Slovakia and yet sacrifice nothing for the Hungarian culture, they have no right to criticize. They can only receive respect if they work in the interest of the Hungarians.” That segment that itself belonged to the needy, due to the difficult economic circumstances entailed by the new situation, sacrificed the most for the maintenance of the Hungarian culture.

However, other obstacles to the accomplishment of the process are known, too. It is a well-known fact that after the changes of 1918–1919, the hundred thousand Hungarians who lost their jobs and livelihood (those who escaped to Hungary), the significant part of the Hungarian civil servants and clerks were the maintainers as well as the consumers of the urban culture. If we add to this number the rapid dissimilation of the Jews, who had a Hungarian education and mainly lived in towns, it is easy to see that the culture of the Hungarian middle-class in Slovakia came into such a situation that it could only be viewed as a shadow of its former self. If we also consider the fact that on the basis of the census data of Czechoslovakia between the two wars, 75–80% of the population living in Hungarian-speaking territories was engaged in agricultural production, that is to say lived in villages, we can easily understand why the village-peasant population became the primary, the most important basis as well as the target of Hungarian cultural life between the two wars. The same explanation is valid concerning the fact that in the given period, the culture of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia can be defined as having an ethnic character, and thus by the features of the folk or popular culture. That is why in the internal debates and at the meetings within the SCHA and other Hungarian minority forums dealing with culture, a constantly recurring question was: How can the “cultural interest” of the Hungarian village be characterized? With what kind of cultural policy and to which direction can this world view based on ancient peasant culture be developed further? How must we, or how can we influence the open (the spread of middle class customs) and closed feature (preservation of traditions), which both characterize the society and culture of the Hungarian village? The devoted enthusiasm towards Hungarian culture and towards the cultural movements, by a then-used word, the “cultural hunger”, did not only belong to the town-dwelling, middle-class intellectuals, but to a great extent it belonged to particular peasant communities, which is proven by the fact that they quite often created houses of culture and an active cultural life from their own efforts.

The strengthening of the position of Hungarian culture between the two wars was assisted by the persistently spreading library movement and amateur acting. About 400 amateur theater performances were held only under the aegis of the SCHA. We can put the movements and events of country-wide importance into this category, which spread in Southern Slovakia thanks to the Hungarian example, such as the so-called Gyöngyösbokréta meetings (folk song and folk dance circles) organized by southern Slovakian villages. This kind of program series could transform any southern Slovakian Hungarian town into a real cultural center. The town and mainly its open-air stage became the meeting point of folklore groups dressed in traditional costume, who arrived from the nearby villages. Thousands of people saw the colorful programs of the singers, pipe-players and dancers (who were usually selected systematically by experts). It became a practice that some outstanding children's performance groups comprised of village students could perform in the capital, together with the organization of village performance days in larger southern Slovakian towns. These events were not only meeting places, they were also the places of cultural competition. At those national events, which emerged from these local meetings, it became a regular occurrence to present national traditions, performed on stage.

It was an outstanding success and was hotly discussed throughout the country, when the János vitéz (John the Hero) musical (based on the epic poem of Sándor Petőfi) was performed in the Open Air Theater in Léva (Levice) in August, 1938. About 40,000 people "went on a pilgrimage" to the three performances from every part of Southern Slovakia (from Pozsony [Bratislava] and from Munkács [Munkačevo] with special trains). The event was the popular celebration of the symbolic and real survival and presence of the Hungarians in Southern Slovakia. Although the expenses were huge, the income was enough to cover the annual maintenance costs of the SHCA. János vitéz (John the Hero) was performed that same year on Margaret Island in Budapest.

In addition to cultural life, through the female branches of the SCHA, a very important family and child welfare, as well as culture and social youth supporting activity was established.

It was this efficiency, which was outstanding in an ethical sense as well, that marked the activity of the SHCA up to 1938. The decision made in Vienna the same year (which re-annexed the southern part of Slovakia inhabited by Hungarians to Hungary) basically interrupted the program of the SHCA, which was established on a democratic basis and started the cultural education of the Hungarians. This situation was not changed by the fact that the association, through some kind of organizational changes, continued its activity in the territories re-annexed to Hungary. Compared to the results achieved by the SHCA in the field of public education, the public education program in Hungary was still in its infancy. The basis for comparison is constituted by the above-described results, as well as the "amateur" cultural-educational programs and

connected to it, a widespread and efficient social activity, as well as the democratic structure of the Hungarian cultural life in Slovakia.

The youth movements, which were created and organized by the members of the new generation and which were launched and spread through the country from the circles of Hungarian-speaking students in Pozsony (Bratislava), Brno, and Prague played an important role in the development of Hungarian cultural affairs. Their activity was self-organized and was primarily based on Christian ideas and the protection of student interests (e.g. the Christian Circle of Hungarian Academics, or the *Menza Academica* Society), as well as newspaper publication, the organization of camps, the search for the different forms of self-education, the preservation of the Hungarian literary, cultural, religious and ethnic traditions, etc. How high level this work was is demonstrated by the fact that university students who returned in summer holidays, or after their studies, soon became popular lecturers at the local (village or rather, town) cultural (casinos, reading circles, boxes) events.

In addition to the university circles, another field of organization, not lacking a romantic approach, and providing many possibilities was the scout movement uniting the teenage youth. However, scouting was different from other youth movements in one respect: namely, its free development and spread was largely determined by a constant self-limiting constraint, which the movement had to take upon itself in order to be officially acknowledged as an association. After the state change, which occurred due to the establishment of Czechoslovakia, the activity of the first scout troops did not only revive in those towns where there was a Hungarian high school, they also produced significant results in the organization of the youth in those Slovakian towns where the Hungarian high schools that had functioned before the change were closed, or where the teaching language had changed into Slovakian. Among these were, for example, the scout troop in Besztercebánya (Banská Bystrica), the Evangelical scout troop in Eperjes (Prešov), and the Reformed troop of boy scouts in Zólyom (Zvolen). The troops asked for the registration of their own organization under the name: Hungarian Scout Association of Slovakia. However, after the change of state, no Hungarian scout association was ever founded as a result of the resistance of the authorities in Czechoslovakia.

Following the example of the high school student groups, in several southern Slovakian Hungarian towns the first “craftsmen sections” were formed, which led the working youth to join the scout movement. As the ban on the importation of books from Hungary to the Czechoslovak Republic in the first period of its existence was extended by the state to scout and youth literature as well, the Hungarian scout literature, along with other Hungarian publications were published by the *Voggenreiter Verlag* in Berlin and were imported into the country without any difficulty. The situation in the 1930s changed to the extent that the Hungarian scout movement in Slovakia was able to publish its own

Scout Manual whose material was put together by those scout leaders who gathered round the editorial staff of the famous youth newspaper “Tábortűz” (Campfire).

The scout movement was spreading rapidly in southern Slovakia and the groups which were dissolved due to the previous prohibitions and persecutions revived their activities. It is not by chance that in the spring of 1925, it was the scout movement within which the Saint George Circle was formed in Prague, which united the reform group of revolutionary Hungarian old scouts, and which later became the starting point of the Sickle movement. The concepts within the scout movement mainly were comprised of the knowledge and acceptance of folk culture, and the deepening of “knowledge about the peasants” and “knowledge of reality” at the level of self-education: In the beginning, they wanted to comply with the requirements of a cultural mission. The scout troops undertook the cultural mission in the form of theater, choir and other cultural groups. The cultural activity was normally followed by the manifestations of sensitivity toward social questions. This process developed mainly in the activity of the Sickle movement in the first half of the 1930s.

Another important form of the activities of the scout movement was the organization of summer scout camps, which taught the participants self-action and responsibility. The sites of the camps were usually the hilly or forest lands of Hungarian aristocrats or landowners. From 1926, there were common camps of the troops. These camps – which were organized in a chain-like form connecting the whole southern Slovakian area (“chain camps”) – were usually visited by the illustrious representatives of Hungarian cultural and political life.

The world of the youth movement was essentially influenced by those reform ideas that arrived in Southern Slovakia from the West through Czech mediation, as well as from Hungary. We have to place special emphasis on the effect rooted in the ideas of the “popular movement” of Endre Ady, Zsigmond Móricz, Dezső Szabó – the significant representatives of Hungarian literature in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the heroic intention to turn ideas into reality, behind which – according to an analysis by Sándor Makkai, the Transylvanian bishop and writer – we can find an internal aim to establish the concept of “spiritual Hungarian status”, for in the new countries, the Hungarians who lost their statehood and majority position had no other possibilities. This program meant the emphasis and connection of both personal (self-educating) and communal (consciousness of belonging together) dimensions for the participants of the process. It was an attempt to create such a moral basis that could substitute or at least compensate for the spiritual-intellectual degradation and minority consciousness – so typical of minority existence – with a messianic mission consciousness. The youth organizations, which remained under the influence of the Church and which received their information there – on the basis of the instructions of the *Rerum Novarum*, a papal encyclical dealing with

social questions and on the basis of the theses of the Western neo-Catholic movements – tried to articulate and realize their answers by emphasizing charitable aspects. Their most influential organization was the movement of the Prohászka Circles, which organized famous congresses, camps, and pursued significant publishing activity.

Departing from the Sickle movement, a number of social organizations of lesser and greater importance were established. Among them, it is important to mention the Hungarian Working Community influenced by social democratic ideas, the liberal Eötvös Circle, the left-wing “urban” Hungarian Intellectual Society and the Hungarian Minority Society.

The above-mentioned organizations were mainly characterized by permanent ideological debates. This was one of the reasons why other, professional types of organizations were also launched. The Hungarian teachers had an independent society. This was the General Society of Hungarian Teachers in Slovakia, which had its own interest-protecting and methodological newspaper, *Hungarian Teacher*, between 1921 and 1937. Its center, the Hungarian Teachers’ House in Pozsony (Bratislava), was built from their self-effort. (The society in Sub-Carpathia operated under the name General Society of Teachers in Podkarpatszká Rusz.) Hungarian journalists, landowners and sportsmen also united in organizations. The numerous fields of Hungarian intellectual life in Czechoslovakia were interspersed with the activity of societies that worked on the preservation and transmission of the values of Hungarian culture.

However, we must add that this society activity, which was like a colorful mosaic, did not always unanimously serve the development of the Hungarian cultural life of the different settlements. The picture becomes more complicated if we consider the data of the time, which shows that in almost all towns and larger villages with a Hungarian majority in Slovakia, an average of 8 to 10 registered societies existed. Contemporary critics mentioned as a warning that there was a Hungarian town in Csallóköz, where there were 20 societies operating at the same time at the beginning of the 1930s. The real disadvantage of the great number of societies was that these organizations (with some exceptions) did not intend to coordinate their activities. Moreover, their activity was characterized by an unhealthy competition: outbidding each other, or rather, doing nothing instead of rational coordination. A general feature of social life was the fact that there were few society members who would undertake the difficulties of organization and who really wanted to do something, but – citing Sándor Vájlók – the number of those who were ready to appear as the owners of different posts instead of actually working, was high. It was difficult for people to find their way among the excessive amount of topics and events, not to mention that this forced variety often led to a deterioration in quality.

After the establishment of the independent Slovakian State (1939), in those areas that were not re-annexed to Hungary and where Hungarians were living, important cultural organizations, Hungarian minority social associations and cultural activities were wiped out with the single stroke of a pen.

The Slovakian State (with a ministry department) supported the cultural activity of the German minority in Slovakia. Hungarian cultural life, due to the laws that hindered its activities, did not have any state-level institutions or support. The SHCA could only re-launch its activity after this was permitted in 1942, but it could only exercise its profession in a severely limited form.

On the other hand, in many towns inhabited by Hungarians, the choir movement operated and became stronger during the period of the independent Slovakian State (1939–1945). From this, the Béla Bartók Singing Society in Pozsony (Bratislava) was struck out with its high quality activity; so, too, did the Ecclesiastical Choir in Nyitra (Nitra), which revived the historical traditions of the Hungarian singing culture. In Pozsony (Bratislava) and in some villages in the Nyitra (Nitra) region workers' singing groups were operating. Next to the Hungarian high school in Pozsony (Bratislava) under the leadership of László Schleicher, music teacher, the choir activity of the youth started under the name of Singing Youth. With the leadership and organization of Professor Schleicher the Zoltán Kodály children choir of 140 members and the student mixed choir of 100 members were formed in the Hungarian high school. Following the example of Pozsony (Bratislava), children choirs were formed in a number of Hungarian schools, which colored the cultural life of Hungarian towns with the performance of folk plays, besides singing.

Besides the very limited cultural activity, the Hungarian minority in Slovakia needed the cultural support from Hungary to an ever increasing extent. Official Slovakian politics, which tried to create a real cultural border towards Hungary, made this support impossible. The importation of Hungarian newspapers was totally prohibited; books published in Hungary were confiscated at the border or were allowed into the country in very censored form.

On the basis of the above-mentioned facts, it can be well observed that the real development of the Hungarian cultural life in Slovakia stopped after 1938. Thereafter, it divided into two branches and continued in Hungary and in the independent Slovakia. In spite of the numerous constraints and obstacles, this period of development until 1945 can be considered and viewed as an unbroken process. It can be of symbolic significance that after 1945, almost all the documents and the legacy of the Slovakian Hungarian Cultural Association preserved in Komárom (Komárno) became the victim of anti-Hungarian chauvinistic devastation. Along with this, all the results of the heroic fight, which were achieved by the Hungarians in Slovakia from 1918 until 1945 for the development of their own cultural and educational life, seemed to be destroyed. This Hungarian minority group, citing the idea of Jenő Krammer,

spent the historical era imposed on it in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century “with great cultural tradition and desire to be educated, and with the fight for the most essential cultural devices and institutions.” In the course of the heroic fight for their own culture and thus for their own survival, the Hungarians did not only have to fight against the de-nationalizing intentions, which were not ceased by the state authorities at all, but also against the danger that their own culture could regress. And even though its spirit was connected to the European culture by many bonds, the creation and maintenance of its own intellectual life took up almost all of its remaining forces and energy. It is no wonder that in such a difficult situation, it turned to the possibilities offered by “messianic ideas”, which often went beyond its control, or with the desire to escape to the future it created such ideas for itself. That is why the history of the civil society movements and their institutions, which determined the cultural history in the period between 1918 and 1945, basically reflects this process of seeking a way out. This aspect, too, must be considered: The fact that the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century began in such a tragic way – by barbarously destroying almost all the values of the process of survival that had been created mainly by their own efforts in the first half of the century – that it seemed to be fatal for the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia who survived the devastation of World War II.

Instead of a final conclusion, this study poses a question: After the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so full of tragedies, will the new millenium and the new century justify retrospectively whether the Hungarians in (Czecho)slovakia – who became embroiled in the historical storm of European nations – chose the right path eight decades ago when they opted for minority self-organization of civil society as a peaceful method of self-preservation? If so, the value preservation as well as the value creation, which was the intellectual mission of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia, does not cease to be a mission for the future. However, this nation, in overcoming its state of jeopardy and loneliness, will only be able to fulfill its calling as an acknowledged, equal partner of the European nations.

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## The Ideological Basis of the Southern Slav Agrarian Reform, 1919–1941

The Hungarian historiography sees one of the most important causes of the social-economical fracture among Hungarians after the Treaty of Trianon (1920), in the expropriation of land executed in the spirit of the new agrarian reform ideas on the former Hungarian territories attached to the surrounding countries.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Hungarians by the loss of their estates, both large- and medium-sized, found themselves in an immensely exposed situation: the Czech, Romanian, and Serb authorities hindered the organic development of the Hungarians' social life. Further, these governments obstructed the creation of the financial resources necessary for the function and development of Hungarian national institutions, they created a feudal dependency, the oppressive weight of which the Hungarian speaking minority has not been able to cast off until the present.

In the course of a more detailed approach and a more thorough analysis, it appears simply that in the Southern Slav state, the agrarian reform itself was not an end, but only a means – an extremely violent and illegal means – of Southern Slavic national expansionism. Moreover, because the Hungarian (and German) large estates and subsequently, the medium-sized estates were expropriated, they established both the financial and social-political basis of modern colonization. In accordance with the national policies announced officially by the “successor states”, the Slav and Romanian settlers came as new estate owners in tens- and hundreds- of thousands on the annexed territories, since only by this means was it possible to liquidate the “Hungarian dominance” within a conceivable timeframe. The agrarian reform in Czechoslovakia, Romania, and in the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom as well, meant a great burden for their national economies: The expropriation of estates and the creation of the new ownership structure did not bring as much profit as damage caused by the destruction of the estate system's traditional basis. The real “profit” meant the national integration of the annexed territories through colonization. The only way to break the social, political and economic strength of the enclaved Hungarians was to change the

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<sup>1</sup> See: *A felvidéki magyarság húsz éve* [The Northern Hungarians' Twenty Years 1918-1938] – Budapest, 1938.; Nyíri Imre: *A visszatért Délvidék nemzetiségi képe* [The National View of the Returned Southern Countries] In: *A visszatért Délvidék* [The Returned Southern Countries] – Halász Irodalmi és Könyvkiadóvállalat, Budapest 1941.; Móricz Miklós: *Az erdélyi föld sorsa* [The Fate of the Transylvanian Land] – Az Erdélyi Férfiak Egyesülete, Budapest, 1932.; Venczel József: *Erdélyi föld – erdélyi társadalom* [Transylvanian Land – Transylvanian Society] – Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1988.

ethnic ratio to the advantage of the “successor states” in the given territories in the least amount of time, to reduce the ratio of Hungarians in the framework of stepped-up settlement procedures. The nationalization of Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat) from a Slavic point of view is *only* possible by changing the ethnic ratios and this belongs to one of the goals of the Serb national policies as written by Vladan Jojkić in his notorious work, the “ethnopolitical study” entitled “Nacionalizacija Bačke i Banata”.<sup>2</sup>

There were only a few works published that were more resolute, frankly based on a fascist-like national program in the Southern Slavic kingdom than the Jojkić study. This is a work seemingly based on accurate statistical data and economic indices – and that makes it truly misleading – behind whose deceptive rationality hides the genocide’s (today we would call it ethnic cleansing) various methods, and is turning into a political weapon, in effect until the present day in the hands of the Serb authorities. Vladan Jojkić thinks it is important to be familiar with historical Hungary’s perhaps richest counties – Bács-Bodrog and Torontál counties – before and until 1919, the history of its ethnic synthesis, its demographic indices and economic resources, including all its active forces, both visible and invisible, which made the south as it was in the time of the Serb “liberation”. “But it is even more important to be familiar with those political, economic, cultural, biological, geographical and transportational factors which somewhere below the surface influenced strongly the formation and function of the region’s demographic reality, social life, and functioning state legal system.”<sup>3</sup> Only by possessing this knowledge is it possible to face these centuries old processes with effective means of state power. Only by becoming familiar with the existing social apparatus’ structure and its smallest components, noticing the details and connections can lead them to act with enough efficiency to prevent the organic development of community life and so that choosing the necessary means for liquidation would prove efficient.

Vladan Jojkić, in common with the Romanian, Czech and Slovak ideologists and historians does not accept the existence of a historical Hungary. (He never mentions the Hungarian kingdom in a constitutional, territorial, state political or cultural sense.) For him, the only way in which Hungary existed was in an “Ugarska” sense, in which the Hungarian community, and later, the Hungarian nation, strove for dominance. To achieve its supremacy, and by expropriating the right and status of the nation capable of forming a state, it oppressed politically, exploited economically, and, in a cultural sense, by demonstrating its superiority, it humiliated the nations living in the same state, including the Serbs. Historically, whenever allowable, by means of assimilation, and to achieve its goals beyond the opportunities lying within legislation, it did

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Vladan Jojkić: *Nacionalizacija Bačka i Banata*. Novi Sad, 1931. Pg. 5

<sup>3</sup> Ibid: Pg. 6

not refrain from the use of violence. According to Vladan Jojkić, during the Turkish occupation of Hungary, in return for their military service to the Viennese court, the Serbs received and populated the Southern territories of the Austrian empire called Hungary (Ugarska). After the successful Southern military campaign against the Turks, the treaty of Karlóca opened a new chapter in the history of the region. First Maria Theresa, between 1749 and 1779, then Joseph II, between 1780 and 1787 let loose a great flood of settlers onto the Serb regions located along the middle and lower Danube and Tisza. Due to vigorous resettlement, the population of Hungary (Ugarska) increased in sixty-two years from 2 580 000 (1720) to 8 million. According to Jojkić, between 1720 and 1787, the population of Bánát (Banat), 1783 and the population of Bácska (Bačka) increased by 635%, certainly to the disadvantage of the Serbian population.<sup>4</sup> The Viennese court first of all settled Germans, later on Hungarians and Slovaks into the Southern territories, but, sporadically, Romanians, Czechs, Ruthenians and, later, French and Italians arrived in the area. The Hungarians exploited most skillfully the Pan-European agricultural boom necessitated by the Napoleonic wars, confirming “their economic, social and biological” situation beyond their numeric superiority in Hungary (Ugarska). This allowed for a blossoming age of awakening of a national identity – in Hungarian history, this was the age of the reform period – which lifted the Hungarians onto the list of modern nations in a European sense, as well. In the first half of the XIX. century, the Hungarian nation’s respect grew considerably and this meant a great challenge as well as an attraction for Serbs, Croats, Germans and Romanians.

A spontaneous assimilation process began whose result was that between 1787 and 1850, the natural increase of Hungarians, or those who called themselves Hungarians, grew from 29% to 44% beyond expectation in the territory of Hungary (Ugarska). After the lost war of independence, during a decade of the Bach period, this process ground to a halt and being Hungarian was no longer equated with glory and respect. The Hungarian–Austrian Compromise of 1867 resulted in catastrophic consequences, considering the Serb population of Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat). The Hungarian population, similarly to the agricultural boom experienced during the Napoleonic wars, started a great industrial development in 1870 for half a century. Strengthened by a national identity once more, and consequently playing a determining role in Hungary (Ugarska) – unlike in the reform age – it pursued a violent assimilative policy. “The Hungarian expansion policy appeared in an imperialistic form again” – as Vladan Jojkić stated his opinion, and the conquest started from the Hungarian territories located in the middle and western part of the country towards the borders. As a response, the Serbs and Romanians living in Hungary (Ugarska) were searching for increasingly strong

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid: Pg. 13.

connections with their home countries and the institutions there. This was by no means a peaceful period of Hungary's (Ugarska) history, as it was during the rise of the reform age. According to the statistical data used by the author, the population of the country between 1869 and 1910 rose from 13 579 000 to 18 264 000, which means a 34.5%, almost unprecedented, increase. Within this considerable growth of 4 685 000 inhabitants, 3 917 000 (83.5%) were Hungarians, and only 768 000 was the total for all other nationalities. This meant at the same time that the Hungarians' ethnic ratio within the country grew from 44.4% to 54.5%. And while in the reform age, the Serb, Slovak, Romanian and Croat intellectuals began to drift from the outlying communities to the capital, Pest–Buda, after the Austrian–Hungarian Compromise in 1867, there was a reversal in this trend. From the “central Hungarian territories” a large number of professionals left for and “occupied” ethnic cities, and so the eight “Southern Serb cities” – Szabadka (Subotica), Zombor (Sombor), Újvidék (Novi Sad), Nagybecskerek (Zrenjanin), Nagyikinda (Kikinda), Pancsova (Pančevo), Versec (Vršac) and Fehértemplom (Bela Crkva), where as a consequence, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Southern Slavs lost their two centuries' long majority situation.<sup>5</sup>

When detailing the ethnic components of the eight “ancient Serb cities”, Jojkić carefully avoids mentioning the cities along the Tisza also inhabited by a Hungarian majority in 1910: Zenta (Senta), Magyarkanizsa, (Kanjiža) Óbecse, (Bečej) and Bácsstopolya (Bačka Topola). Only on a later occasion, when summarizing the national census in 1921 in the area of the Serb–Croat–Slovenia kingdom, does Jojkić indicate that while out of 18 060 inhabitants of Magyarkanizsa, 17 123 (91.81%) were Hungarians and 763 (4.12%) were Southern Slavs, and out of 30 697 inhabitants of Zenta, 26 626 (86.73%) were Hungarians and 3 149 (10.25%) were Southern Slavs. He admits that it is true that along the Tisza, and in the territories between it and the Ferenc canal, the Hungarians are the majority population, but in the case of the border drawn by the peace treaty of Trianon, this was not considered to be a factor because the Southern Slav state's border would have been “too irregular” and difficult to defend.<sup>6</sup> From this, it can be concluded that in regard to the future: The Southern Slav population of Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat) “will be unable by its own means to nationalize this territory for the Serb people, that is why within the framework of a nationwide collaboration the help of populations outside this region will be needed.”<sup>7</sup>

But for Jojkić and others working on the practical realization of the Southern Slav national ideology, after 1918–1920, the ethnic disproportion of the mixed-populated Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat) caused a real problem. It

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid: Pg. 30.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid: Pg. 46.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid: Pg. 40.

would be quite simple to calculate mathematically how many Southern Slav inhabitants' settling would be required to counterbalance their disadvantaged ethnic ratio up to that point. Based on the data of the 1921 census, out of the 1 360 863 inhabitants, the population of the Southern Slavs was 521 901, which meant an ongoing "shortage" of 317 061 compared with the population of other ethnic groups. This many "Southern Slav elements" would be needed to comprise half of the total inhabitants, 922 800 persons.<sup>8</sup> But this is only possible according to "political algebra": It is impossible to carry out in reality, since withdrawing this amount of people from other areas of the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom would cause a serious economic commotion. (Of course, the commotion this would have caused for the Hungarians and Germans living in Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Baranja) was not considered.)

The situation was made more complicated by the fact that Southern Slavs comprised a majority only in the northwestern and southern part of Bácska (Bačka) and the middle and southwestern part of Bánát (Banat), which made the national expansion "by population" more difficult. That is why it was more promising, in conjunction with continuous settlement, to apply political and economic means to attempt to relegate the Hungarians and Germans into minority positions. Vladan Jojkić judged that the "violent assimilation" can even be solved within a legal framework, but he thought that it would be more expedient if the Serb authority "carries out the ethnic change's psychological processes by using invisible, sophisticated means on the basic cells of society, in the cultural institutions, within the Church and in the field of education".<sup>9</sup> As if at the same time with the vigorous settling of the Southern Slav population – which comes with the weakening of the economic strength of the minorities living here – they destroy its society, liquidate its institutions and make it impossible to retain its national traditions, to practice its faith and nurture its vernacular culture, then they will attain their goal more certainly and can realize the Southern Slav people's full dominance within a shorter period. This is a more urgent task in regard to the Hungarians, since the German national community by losing its direct connection with the mother nation no longer represents a considerable social and political power. On the other hand, behind the Hungarians, albeit in an immensely weakened form, there is still Hungary, with the increasingly less veiled revisory pursuits of the Hungarian nation and its politics. *That is why the Southern Slav authority faces no smaller a task than to destroy the Hungarian society of Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Baranja) in its basic cells, on a family level.*

So it is not enough to expropriate the large and medium sized estates owned by Hungarians. It is not enough to colonize economically and culturally

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid: Pg. 77.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid: Pg. 84.



the Southern Hungarians. The Hungarian community has to be broken in spirit, in identity; it has to be destroyed. Within a national community, “the members of the school aged, younger generation are the most susceptible to that which is new, the most vigorous struggle is waged in their souls for the embracing of new phenomena in addition to maintaining the traditional values” – writes Vladan Jojkić, and because they are the weakest part of the community, this is why Serbian national concepts have to be made attractive to them. Consequently, “the dominant nation’s numeric superiority” has to be attained both with an active and a determined image, and with passive but no less resolute political pressure “to destroy the resisting minority’s national identity”. This destruction must be accomplished in the fields of ideas and concepts, and to this end, the most apparent means is the eradication of the values of religious life and the church community; education, culture, media, literature and the arts only come after this, that is to say, the starvation and liquidation of those institutions which convey nationalistic and intellectual values. And how seriously this was meant is proven by a psychological analysis which showed that the assimilation ran into much less resistance in urban environments, where family and community bonds are somewhat more loose than in rural areas, where traditional ties still vigorously survive. Moreover, it is the women who must be oriented by firm propaganda because they, due to their meager education, are more susceptible than men, and secondarily, their task lies in raising children. And who can carry out the devastation and destruction of the basic components of a society constituted by “foreigners” in addition to the whole structure of the society? *Besides the governmental power, the offices, the institutions, the civil service corps, the police, and internal revenue department, every true patriot who, being Slav, acknowledges the interests of the new Southern Slav state, and in doing his or her everyday work, does something of merit towards fulfilling the Slavic mission.* No one was interested besides the Southern Hungarians in this quiet genocide in 1930. And they could do nothing to resist it.

The central government – as Vladan Jojkić refers to it – has to put a great emphasis on making voluntary immigration attractive for areas detached from Hungary among the Southern Slav inhabitants of the new state. If the government – using its financial resources – promotes the fact that agrarian production being at its worst level due to the economic crisis unleashed in 1926 (preceding the Depression in 1929), if it subsidizes the decline in wheat production and domestic animal husbandry due to low market prices, if it assures the capacity of internal markets, if it assists the Southern Slav settlers and new land owners in obtaining credit, and moreover it grants them special tax benefits, then, according to the ideologist, up to half a million Southern Slav “elements” can be convinced of the advantages and benefits of the new conquest. As the most vociferous spokesperson of the Southern Slavic imperialistic ideology, he warns: “We either manage to create a new America out of this region, whose

attraction lies within its favorable economic conditions and its promise of a more beautiful life for the population of our country's underdeveloped territories, resulting in the Southern Slavic nationalization of the territory, or for decades – in the worse case scenario, for centuries, populating the region with Slav elements can be prolonged".<sup>10</sup> Újvidék (Novi Sad), the Serbian Athens as the author refers to it, is the example used, that with a thoughtful economic policy and within a relatively short timespan – and with little effort, which is also essential – a region's ethnic composition can be changed.

For a successful assimilation to occur – which means that the assumption of a new national identity is permanent and irreversible, and moreover, is able to resist a potential emotional backlash – even in the midst of ideal circumstances, a span of at least two generations is required. The first gives up only its mother tongue, and perhaps changes its name, but the second shares a community with its new environment in thought, perspective and even acceptance of the chosen nation's traditional values. Towards this end, it is essential in every hour of the day, in every minute of its life, to have a direct and living contact with members of the dominant nation, since this is the only way to grasp the values of assimilation. "Since the attraction of national prestige cannot be attained, cannot display the power of assimilation without everyday social contact", it is indispensable that the assimilating population increase quantitatively. And, on this point, the national program created for the Slavic population's mass settlement is again made feasible. And, if this would not result as expected, a greater amount of resettlement of Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát's (Banat) Hungarians could present a solution. That is to say, if the government could provide those Hungarian families considered superfluous with one or two hectare's of land, of Southern Serbia's, Macedonia's, Kosovo-Metohija's marshland or karst areas, they would prevent accusations of the exclusion of minorities from the agrarian reform of the Southern Slavic country. (Incidentally, this was the period when masses of Hungarian teachers were removed to schools in Southern Serbia, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, meanwhile, in the Hungarian classes in Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Baranja) – citing the lack of teachers – they employed thousands of Serbian teachers who did not speak Hungarian.)

The former Hungarians of Bács-Bodrog, Torontál and Baranya (Baranja) counties, after 1918, on their own native land were relegated to living in a ghetto, a "re-education camp". The use of their mother tongue was restricted, and by name analysis, they were forbidden from learning in their mother tongue at elementary school. Their newspapers and magazines could only be published at the cost of great financial sacrifices, in a strictly censored format. They did not have professional theatres or book publishers. In regard to the functioning of

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid: Pg. 96.

the traditionalist cultural associations, Serbian authorities forbade more than they allowed. Hungarian teachers' training was nonexistent and they withdrew pensions from tens of thousands of those entitled to it. A citizen belonging to a minority could receive a passport only in an exceptional case. With the expropriation of estates, they liquidated the economic basis of belonging to the community, and the activities of churches were severely restricted. This could all be attributed to the Southern Slav state's zealous and violent assimilative policy.

Slavko Šećerov, who from December in 1919 as a commissioned minister was responsible for initiating the agrarian reform and arranging its first phase, and for the temporary leasing of the expropriated estate parcels in the area of Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat), judges the significance of the agrarian reform in another way. In his article, published on July 2, 1919, preceding his reform program, he wrote that: "Our age cannot endure social parasites. During the past war, so many economic, social and intellectual values were destroyed that the society's rapid reconstruction on the old economic bases simply cannot be imagined. Our world today has a moral duty to restrict or perhaps deny every privilege or title obtained in former ages, which are an obstacle to this renewal and the development of a new balance of power. The defects of the former social system led to the world war, and consequently, those who enjoyed the advantages derived from privileges cannot maintain their privileged situations intact."<sup>12</sup> The war is an abnormal situation – he wrote in the same place – and in accordance with this, the means of peacemaking are abnormal, as well. That is to say, if it would seem unjustifiable to expropriate the larger estates in private ownership, those primarily held by Hungarians, then forcing them into leasing and later surrendering their land to new ownership while the treasury received a lavish profit, could only be considered a natural aspect of the transition to peace. Slavko Šećerov perceived that before the world war in Hungary, within this region, the possessions were the most unbalanced and this distortion within the society contributed to the outbreak of the worldwide catastrophe. According to the information Šećerov consistently used as a reference base, after 1918, it meant a heavy burden that on the territories detached from historical Hungary, the large sized estates outnumbered the smaller and medium-sized estates: 44.4% or 10 851 041 hectares of agricultural land was in the possession of 24 774 large estate owners who each owned more than 100 hectares.

Slavko Šećerov justified that it is demonstrated clearly that economically the disproportionate presence of large sized estates in the area of Bács-Bodrog, Baranya and Torontál counties is unacceptable and untenable in the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom, specifically within the area of Serbia. It is untenable

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<sup>12</sup> Slavko Šećerov: *Iz Naše Agrarne Politike 1919-1929*, Beograd 1930. *Privatna svojina i agrarna reforma*. qv. Pg. 8

primarily because it creates disproportion within the national economy, and more importantly: It could be a source of social tension.

Namely, in 1918, Serbia entered the federal state of the Southern Slavic people, which had a completely different estate structure:

Size of Estate (in hectares (ha))	Number of Estates	Percentage of Total Land Area
≤ 3	98,253	33.5%
3–5	62,622	21.2%
5–10	80,822	27.5%
10–20	40,782	13.9%
20–60	10,962	3.2%
60–100	397	0.1%
100–300	83	0.01%
≥ 300	3	0.001% <sup>13</sup>

In Serbia, small estates (up to five hectares) constituted 54.6% of the total land area, which created a base, an originally well functioning “peasant democracy”. The unhealthy estate relations of the occupied territories undoubtedly would have attacked the very basis of this worthwhile democracy, and eventually, this would have led to a deepening of social tensions. The leading political forces of the Southern Slav state believed that no country could function under the load of an agricultural system built on so great a disparity in land ownership. Moreover, neither is it just, thought the Serbian economist, that those large estates which were purchased for 20 000 crowns during the reign of Maria Theresa, today (in 1919) are worth 2 million crowns, and this lends its owner privileges to which he is not truly entitled. The expropriation of the larger estates whose land areas exceeded the maximum size is the most emphasized precondition of the new Southern Slav state’s economic and political consolidation. Such preservation of the remainders of feudalism – stated Slavko Šećerov – would cause immeasurable damage for the country. By distributing the expropriated tracts among the Southern Slav state’s land claimants harrowed by the seven year war, it elevates the “national morale”. Moreover, it strongly influences psychologically the population which is “disaccustomed to work”. And though it is a great defect of the governmental regulation in regard to the agrarian reform that while the maximum sized land area is defined and the distributed parcels’ minimum size is not, the agrarian favored in Serbia, as defined by the law accepted in 1873, cannot receive less than three hectares.

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<sup>13</sup> Slavko Šećerov: *Veliki posed i agrarna reforma*. qv. Pg. 15-16.

Slavko Šećerov had a particular opinion about compensation, as well. And while he was the government commissioner of the agrarian reform in Vajdaság (Voivodina), he strove to obtain validity for his own concept. Namely, the governmental regulation carefully avoids the questions: Who is to receive indemnity for the expropriated tracts? Can the state take it upon itself, and if so, to what extent? And, how much should the agrarian favored pay for the parcels received? According to his proposal, in Serbia, the average between 1910 and 1915 of the parcel prices per acre should be taken as a base measurement. The 75% of the market price so established should be paid by the new owner to the account of the State Agrarian Bank, which was created for this purpose – specifically, to the treasury – the state would keep for itself 50% of this amount in order to maintain budgetary stability, and it would pay a 25% indemnity to the original owner. The payment would come in the form of government bonds with a 30-year liquidity.<sup>14</sup>

Slavko Šećerov in his article published on April 18, 1928, summarizing the results so far – or rather, the lack thereof – states disappointedly: if during the past ten years they had placed the agrarian reform on legal bases, “the state could have removed long ago that serious question of agriculture from the agenda, which still gapes as an open scar on the body of our agriculture because of professional incompetence.<sup>15</sup> It is an open and living scar because though they placed “the foreign medium- and large-estate owners’ land areas exceeding the maximum size” on the market and under mortgage foreclosure, but the available land base acquired in this way, not permanently, only through confusing lease-contracts – in 1919, it is temporarily one year; from 1920 four years, but within this is contained a temporary one year contract again; then after 1924 with the excuse of a “continuously organized” forced lease with an unforeseeable ending date – found itself in the possession of Southern Slav owners almost without exception. “The incompetence and the lack of principles in the ministers” responsible for the implementation of the agrarian reform “and their irresponsibility towards the national ideology caused losses in the billions for our national economy, and the government similarly closed its eyes helplessly, unscrupulously and irresponsibly on our losses.”<sup>16</sup> In 1928, the tenth year of the reform, about 900 owners of expropriated estates and more than 200,000 new but far-from-permanent estate owners due to having a forced lease agreement, were waiting for the agrarian reform law to arrange their situation – in vain, and more unhelpfully while the state budget is almost unbearably loaded with expenses.

The Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom in 1919–1920 spent 1 470 507 dinars “to cover the expenses” of the agrarian reform, in 1920–1921, the multiple of

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid: Pg. 22.

<sup>15</sup> Slavko Šećerov: *Likvidacija agrarne reforme u severnim krajevima*. qv. Pg. 89

<sup>16</sup> Ibid: Pg. 85.

this amount: 43.3 million; in 1922–1923, 54.6 million; in 1924–1925, an astronomical 92.5 million; in 1926–1927, an additional 70 million; 1927–1928, 50 million; in 1928–1929, 41.6 million and in 1929–1930, only 30 million.<sup>17</sup> But since the old estate owner – knowing that he cannot keep his estate – and the “favored estate owner” who, because there was no law, could not change his forced lease acreage into permanent property both judged his own situation to be unhopeful, avoiding the official government agencies and institutions, resorted to the means of direct buying and selling of fields. From 1925, the officially named “facultative” estate purchases increased remarkably. The only result was that the old and new owners agreed on selling or purchasing the estate in question and in so doing, they avoided long lines of state institutions established formerly as intermediaries. Due to this, on one hand, implementing the agrarian reform became uncontrollable – since opposite the original intention, the old owner even at a deflated price, gained money for those of his holdings which fell under expropriation – on the other hand, by losing its intermediary role, the state was deprived of significant profits, which – considering the expenses mentioned above – portended newer problems. The Batthyányi’s had more than 8000 catastral acres around the area of Oroszlámos in northern Bánát (Banat), and those parts exceeding the maximum amount were offered for sale by avoiding the agrarian reform committee.

Šećerov who sometimes bore witness to “moving” social sensitivity, in most cases still insisted upon the current ratification of the agrarian reform’s national character, in this case – moreover, that he considers the agreements for sale originating this way illegal – he objects that from the “national available land base” created from expropriated estates but existing only on paper – not primarily the landless Southern Slav poor have a share in, who applied originally for 10 catastral acres or were promised to receive a supplementary 10 catastral acres for their existing estates, but those wealthier – likewise Southern Slav but mainly Serb smallholders – who in most cases already owned a larger amount of land and who enlarged their properties by 30–50, or in some cases, by 100–200 catastral acres. The excellent economist reckons as well that the new Serbian owners from the fields purchased from the Batthyányi’s in this manner chased away hundreds of Serb and Croat who were opted from the territory of the Monarchy – those without land – whose forced lease was not arranged by the Agrarian Reform Ministry even after six years. There was no one to raise an objection against this illegal procedure – more precisely, an infringement of the law – at any official forums, and for that – according to Šećerov, there is only one explanation: The state owed 12 million dinars to the Batthyányi’s for their expropriated lands, which it simply could not pay. So, it allowed the former owners to obtain indemnity via other, indirect sales of land.

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<sup>17</sup> Slavko Šećerov: *Pregled agrarnih odnosa u Jugoslaviji*. qv. Pg. 82.

However, it is not exactly clear why the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom would have been equitable and circumspect in the case of the Batthyányi's, a Hungarian aristocratic family. The state, of course, would not be imposed with the amount equivalent to 12 million dinars, even if it would recompense the former owner with government bonds, whose securities derived from the mortgage credit levied on the new owners' estates. It is certain that from 1925 in the area of Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat), the selling of lands – which was not previously forbidden, only restricted, “regulated” – was allowed, and this created new circumstances in the area of the never truly completed agrarian reform. But, since the sale terms were approved by the Agrarian Reform Ministry (and after 1929, the Agricultural Ministry), a new opportunity for corruption and deception of orders came into existence. They did not guarantee low interest credit for the landless settlers, but implicitly they assisted the development of the Southern Slav (Serb and Croat) large estate in place of the Hungarian large estate.

As a consequence of this, in spite of frequent attempts in the territory of the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom, it did not succeed in the creation of an agrarian reform law and acceptance by the parliament, and that because the redistribution of the land base belonging to the expropriation of large estates and the expropriating procedure were always carried out by ministerial orders (or perhaps by decisions approved by the council of ministers), the question of land property was never satisfactorily resolved. The former owner – in addition to his tax payment duties – was not free to dispose of his former property, since he had been deprived of this right by the order forbidding the free sale of land, the new owner, the Serb, the Bosnian or the Montenegrin *dobrovoljac*<sup>18</sup> or simply the settled colonists, due to the absence of a law concerning the execution of the agrarian reform, provisionally could only rent the 5–10 catastral acre field assigned to him. The situation gave rise to a legal insecurity whose catastrophic consequences were difficult to foresee. Due to the lack of the landowners' professionalism and responsibility, the entire agriculture industry began a rapid decline. Since by 1924, they had not managed to change the forced lease into proprietary rights, an agricultural crisis appeared in 1925, and by 1926, the situation deepened. (But because in the Southern Slav state, agriculture provided 80% of the revenue, the decline of industrial production and the financial crisis appeared simultaneously with the decline in agriculture.)

“Year by year, more and more complaints can be heard from the agrarian population's lips against the difficult and miserable times” – wrote the publication called *Magyarok Naptára (Hungarians' Calendar For the Year*

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<sup>18</sup> *Dobrovoljac* was the name used for those Serb soldiers in the First World War who volunteered in the Serbian army from the areas belonging to the Monarchy. Following the formation of the Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom, they received a privileged situation in every aspect of society.

1927) published in (Szabadka) Subotica – “Year by year, more proprietors ask the question: how do we make a living? The price of wheat is getting lower day by day, the taxes and other loads are growing, as are the demands and necessities of the landowners. Hence, it is very clear that the expenses being bigger than the incomes, this situation cannot continue like this, the conditions must change or the agrarian population will go bankrupt. It is very appropriate and very righteous to ask the question how we make a living. (...) Our economic system is based almost exclusively on grain production. (...) Hence, if there is a bad harvest, or the grain brings a low price, then there is no income, either. From doing this kind of farming – not being able to foresee that the price of wheat would increase appreciably – we cannot bear this for long.”<sup>19</sup> And although to the question: How can a small estate holder make a living? – regarding the calendar – professional answers were given, the sources of matters should not be sought in the one-sided production of grain: the disregard of crop rotation, the neglect of the fallow grounds or the reluctance to breed animals, which is also clear for the agricultural professional who provides the response. The impoverishment of the Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Baranja) small estate holders who owned the 15 catastral acres considered optimal can be traced back to national issues because there was no outlet for their products within the country. In the so-called “passive territories” – Southern Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro (Crna Gora), in the karst areas of Dalmatia and in Herzegovina – the famine was great but the problem of internal transportation went unsolved. Seven years proved to be too few for the new state to do anything to improve the transportation network. Though the ministers of the departments concerned were officially denying the crisis all along, the agricultural indices proved the opposition to the policy: Suddenly, the price of agricultural products fell dramatically, the productivity of agricultural branches reduced, exportation almost ceased and these combined to make agricultural production expensive to such an extent that large parcels remained uncultivated. The price of agricultural products, expressed in dinars during 1925–1926 were expressed the following way:

	January 1925	November 1925	June 1926
Wheat	435	330	290
Corn	200	120	130
Hemp	205	100	100
Sugar-beets	100	40	22

In the same period, the price per kilogram of swine fell from 16 dinars to 9, and the price per kilogram of cattle, from 14 dinars to 11. The price of agricultural

<sup>19</sup> *Magyarok Naptára az 1927. közönséges évre* [Hungarians' Calendar For the Year 1927]. Subotica (1926). Pg. 99-100.



products fell by 30–35% during a year and a half.<sup>20</sup> In direct proportion to this, agricultural production reduced as well. The meat export of the Southern Slav state was 3 061 000 000 dinars in 1923. In 1925, it was scarcely 1/3 of this amount, or 1 220 000 000 dinars. But the real depth of the agricultural crisis is not shown by the official statistics. The farmer experienced that while in 1913 in the southern counties of historical Hungary, a horse drawn wagon cost 200 crowns (200 dinars), which was equivalent to the price of 909 kilograms of wheat, until in 1925 that same wagon in the midst of the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom's economic circumstances cost 4.7 dinars, equivalent to the price of 150 kilograms of wheat. (A pair of boots in 1913 was equal to the price of 50 kilograms of wheat; in 1925, it was 145 kilograms of wheat.)

The Belgrade government did nothing to relieve the agricultural crisis. The most obvious form of intervention would have been to support the internal market and exportation simultaneously and to provide low-interest credit for producers. Instead, the National Bank in 1925 supported the industrial sector by subsidizing production with 400 million dinars, as well as with an additional 600 million dinars for exportation, while it did not invest one dinar in agriculture. Credit interest rates remained at 30–35% during this entire period. It is understandable, given these circumstances, that the price per hectare of the best agricultural land in Bácska (Bačka) between 1925–1926 fell from 30 000 dinars to 10 000 dinars, and there were times when it was possible to purchase a parcel for as little as 8000 dinars. The land owners strove to sell their estates because in addition to the devaluation of agricultural productivity and the state and local taxes, the various incidental fees did not decrease. However, the embargo on the open sale and encumbrance of land was still valid, and consequently, this put a great burden on the large estate owners. The central government did nothing to overcome the agricultural crisis appearing in 1925 and deepening in 1926, though it meant a huge burden for the entire national economy.

The question arises spontaneously: if indeed they liquidated or at least broke the well functioning estate structure and agriculture of areas obtained from historical Hungary, then how could the policy which was responsible for the national economy allow the crisis to spread to so great an extent during more than half a decade, and why wasn't the priority instead to rectify the social situation of the now Serb, Bosnian and Montenegrin landowners? And how could Bácska (Bačka) and Bánát (Banat), while struggling with an agricultural crisis and sinking into unspeakable poverty, have been an attraction for settlers, which was still the primary national strategic goal in the Southern Slav state? The neglect of agricultural production to such an extent provides the clearest evidence that the expropriation of estates in the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom was not accomplished in regard to economic and social interests, but *the lands in*

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<sup>20</sup> Slavko Šećerov: *O poljoprivrednoj krizi*. qv. Pg. 129.

*German and Hungarian ownership were expropriated exclusively for the Slavic strengthening character of the region.* Hundreds of thousands were settled with the promise of prosperity from their miserable conditions in Bosnia and old Serbia to the agricultural areas which indeed used to bloom, but the colonization brought with it a never before experienced decline and devastation. The central government was not interested at what price but rather within how short a period the extremely unfavorable ethnic ratios could be changed in the areas of Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Bačka).

The Belgrade authority did not choose its means in the interest of a violent change of ethnic ratios. The expropriation of the large and medium sized estates not in Southern Slav ownership, the postponement of rightful compensation for the former owners with bureaucratic means, the continuous delay of the requalification of the forced lease agreements into proprietary rights, can be summarized in the following way: Besides the hindering of undisturbed agricultural productivity, which was even detrimental to the national economic interests and the political utilization of the agrarian tension deriving from intended disorder, the central government's tax policy also took a position entirely the opposite of its own economic interests. Vladan Jojkić, mentioned above, in his "ethnopolitical analysis", indicates what an advantage it would mean if Belgrade – certainly with less expense than the costs of the officially arranged settlement of several hundred thousand people – would create welfare in the territories of the former counties detached from historical Hungary, and the security offered by prosperity would spontaneously attract the poverty-stricken population, those just liberated from serfdom from the former Southern Slav territories. On the other hand, Daka Popović, Serb publicist from Újvidék (Novi Sad) and a representative in the Serb skupština for many years, in 1935, 17 years after the creation of the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom, is forced to conclude: "The state implemented the least amount of investment in the area of Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Baranja). During the first ten years, not one kilometer of road was built and the cultural institutions (theatres, museums, professional and arts schools) did not receive any state support for 15 years. (...) They just removed the goods produced within these regions, but they did not bring anything here. (...) It is understandable that this large scale exploitation brings despair among the local population. There is a limit to everything! And now that we have reached this limit, other territories of the Southern Slav kingdom are also compelled to perceive the indefensibility of such agriculture ." <sup>21</sup>

Daka Popović, senator with the vehemence of a local patriot lashed out against the unrighteous tax policy of the government which placed the greatest

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<sup>21</sup> Daka Popović: *Banat, Bačka i Baranja – Savremeni nacionalni, politički i društveni profili*. Novi Sad, 1935. Pg. 21-23.

burdens on the populations of Bácska, Bánát and Baranya. In 1933, they paid about 5 million dinars in the form of property tax into the treasury, out of which, 49.81% that is, 2 298 000 000 dinars, had to be paid exclusively by the landowners in the area of the Danube banate, and this was topped with 113 746 682 dinars in surcharges. Moreover, 90% of the total tax of 343 527 624 dinars had to be paid by the extremely impoverished landowners of Bácska (Bačka), Bánát (Banat) and Baranya (Baranja) within the Danube banate. The property tax per hectare was by far the highest in the Danube banate out of the nine banates of the Serb–Croat–Slovene Kingdom.<sup>22</sup>

The landowners of the Danube banate were obliged to suffer from tax burdens 16 times larger than the estate holders of the Zeta banate which was considered undeveloped (passive). (Such disproportions occurred also in terms of tax properties.) Đaka Popović, who believed in no less than the history shaping role of the Southern Slav people and their empire forming mission than Vladan Jojkić or Slavko Šećerov, seeing the depredating and defrauding of “Northern areas” by governmental means, stated with enough resignation: “If we could only see that the favored territories of the country would use the benefits obtained and financial possessions for their own good, maybe we could accept this form of protectionism. But we don’t see anything like that. The Šumadija, Zagorje and Bosnian peasants will remain poor. The money obtained serves only the interests of certain individuals.”<sup>23</sup>

## Summary

Today, the Serbian historiography dealing with the questions of the agrarian reform<sup>24</sup>, by acknowledging the facts, is bound to accept as reality that estate expropriation and redistribution was implemented in the regions of Bács-Bodrog and Torontál counties, and in the southern part of Baranya county – as well as in Muraköz and Muravidék – which were occupied in 1918 and then obtained in 1920 according to international mandate, primarily to the detriment of the Hungarian medium and large estateowners, while those Hungarian already landless were completely excluded from a redistribution of the land base. And because behind the national theft called agrarian reform, beside Serb national political interests there were no economic, no social, no agrarian-political considerations, there was not even a modest hope that the lands obtained in the form of well functioning estates up to that point could create the basis of the new state’s somewhat overthought agriculture and, moreover, the consolidation of a

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid: Pg. 19-20

<sup>23</sup> Ibid: Pg. 24.

<sup>24</sup> It is compelled to receive this primarily in Nikola Graćeša’s *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija u Bačkoj 1918-1941* – Novi Sad, 1968 and *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija u Banatu 1918-1941*. Novi Sad, 1972 and in his other works, as well.

national economy or, for that matter, its establishment. More specifically: the Serb expropriation of a half century long process of continuously forming and developing agrarian productivity, and from the 1870s – though still within the estate system – a vigorous industrial infrastructure: small workshops for seed improvement, fodder production, distillation, processing and conserving vegetables, and laboratories assuring the rise in quality of veterinary hygiene; the deficiency of the agrarian reform due to the incompetency of the new owners and not least, the deficient agrarian policy, did not bring as much profit for the new country as much as the Hungarian (and Svab) land and property owners lost with it. In the agrarian reform of the Southern Slav state (similarly to the Romanian and Czechoslovakian agrarian reform), in addition to the Hungarian estate owners, the landless Hungarians are the real injured parties, since earlier they could still find some ways for making a living, if only on a subsistence level, as tenants, cotters, farm workers. These opportunities ceased with the change of owners.

The reasons of the agrarian reforms implemented by the “successor states” in each case had a social origin, but in reality, it was primarily the raw national interests succeeded. The Czech, Slovak, Rumanian and Serb national interests were to liquidate a territory’s estate system and to expropriate the land owned by Hungarians (and Germans), since with this they deprived the community of the most essential condition of its existence. Simultaneously, they made the formation and development of a Hungarian political community impossible in the long term. The land base acquired in this way served the interest of expansionism in this “stateforming nation”. Finally, Slavko Šećerov himself, in his work which summarized the results of the first phase of the agrarian reform, judged that: “The liquidation of the large estates primarily has a national significance, because it increases the number of the Serb, Croat and Slovene estate holders, and only secondarily has a social and economic significance.”<sup>25</sup>

Excerpted from a book under preparation.

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<sup>25</sup> Slavko Šećerov: *Iz naše agrarne politike 1919-1929*. Beograd, 1930. Pg. 68.

## 1. The Term “Csángó”

*Csángó* is the official designation as well as the popular name for Hungarians living in Moldavia. (Ethnic Hungarians living in the Ghimeş/Gyimes Pass and in Săcele/Hétfalu near Braşov are also called *Csángós*, and the term is sometimes used even for those Szeklers who, having migrated eastwards to Bukovina in the late 18th century, were later resettled in the Carpathian Basin.) The etymology of the name of this ethnic group reveals an interesting detail in the history of the *Csángós*: according to a widespread, yet never fully verified hypothesis, the word *Csángó* derives from the verb *csang/csáng* (i. e. to wander, stroll, ramble, rove etc.) and thus the name of this ethnic group clearly refers to the migratory, colonising character of the *Csángós*. (BENKŐ 1990 p. 6., GUNDA 1988 p. 12–13., SZABÓ T. 1981 p. 520.)

The Moldavian Hungarians themselves do not constitute a homogeneous group, either historically or linguistic–ethnographically. The majority of researchers disagree with the use of the term *Csángó* as a general designation for them, preferring to differentiate between the earlier Moldavian Hungarians who were settled there in the Middle Ages, and the fleeing Szeklers who arrived in the 17th–19th centuries (most of whom arrived at the end of the 18th century). Some researchers speak about *Moldavian Hungarians* and *Moldavian Szeklers* (LŰKŐ 1936, MIKECS 1941), while others use the terms *Csángó Hungarians* and *Szekler Hungarians* to distinguish between the two groups (BENKŐ 1990). The use of the name *Csángó* in its broadest sense is quite common, however, even among historians, linguists, and ethnographers. Due to the processes of assimilation and acculturation, differences between the traditional folk culture, language, historical consciousness etc. of the two groups are disappearing to such an extent that the Szekler population whose ancestors never considered themselves *Csángós* now seem to accept this designation. Today, both groups use the term to describe someone who belongs to neither side, someone who is no longer either Romanian or Hungarian, while at the same time it has come to have the pejorative connotations of imperfection and degeneracy.

## 2. The Problem of Origins

References to Moldavian Hungarians appear in historical sources from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. So far, however, there is no scientifically convincing explanation of their origins. One rather romantic view, according to which the *Csángós* are the successors of the Cumans (JERNEY 1851, MUNKÁCSI 1902,

VERESS 1934), has long been refuted, while a small minority believe that the Moldavian Hungarians descend from a group of Hungarians who did not take part in the Conquest (RUBINYI 1901, DOMOKOS 1931, GUNDA 1988). Currently, it is generally accepted that Moldavian Hungarians arrived at their present settlements some time in the Middle Ages, and came from the West rather than the East (AUNER 1908, LÜKŐ 1936, NĂSTASE 1934, MIKECS 1941, MIKECS 1943, BENDA 1989, BENKŐ 1990). Ideas differ, however, as to when, and with what objective, the first settlements were established, and from which parts of the Hungarian-populated lands the migration towards Moldavia began. Most researchers see a relationship between this group and the Hungarian population of the Somes/Szamos Valley and the Upper Tisa/Tisza Region (LÜKŐ 1936, NĂSTASE 1934, MIKECS 1941, MIKECS 1943, BENDA 1989). According to a theory based on linguistic geography, the majority of the Csángós broke away from the Hungarian population of Cămpia Transilvaniei/Mezőség in Inner Transylvania (BENKŐ 1990). It is possible that, in addition to the non-Szekler Hungarian population, there were also some Szeklers who settled in Moldavia as early as the Middle Ages. Presumably, they populated mainly the southern parts, i. e. the lower regions of the Siret/Szeret and Trotuş/Tatros rivers (LÜKŐ 1936, MIKECS 1941).

It is generally accepted that the original Csángós settled in Moldavia as part of a systematic Hungarian imperial policy. Their task was to control and defend the eastern frontier of Hungary. This border ran along the River Siret/Szeret, an indication that in medieval times, the eastward movement of the Hungarian ethnic collective did not stop at the Carpathians. The kings of Hungary wanted to exercise military control over the lands outside their borders and their watchtowers, outposts and border forts were pushed forward as far as the Dniester and Danube Rivers (Kilia, Cetatea Albă/Dnyeszterfehérvár/Akkerman, Brăila, Orhei/Órhely etc.). The systematic settlement, which was intended to safeguard the border region, could not have been carried out before the very end of the 13th century. The earliest possible timing for the establishment of the first Moldavian border guard settlements is after the 1241–1242 Mongol Invasion, and later in the early 14th century. In the course of the 15th century, the number of Moldavian Hungarians increased due to the arrival of Hussite heretics who had left Southern Hungary to escape from the Inquisition.

There is no scientific backing for the Romanian view that Moldavian Csángós are Romanians who were Magyarised by the Catholic Church. Today, this ideologically-based theory aims at the “re-Romanianisation” of the Csángós (MĂRTINAŞ 1985). Historical documents (see DOMOKOS 1987, BENDA 1989, HORVÁTH 1994), place names and proper names (ROSETTI 1905, VERESS 1934, LÜKŐ 1936, MIKECS 1943, BENKŐ 1990) and ethnographic evidence (KÓS–NAGY–SZENTIMREI 1981) attest to the fact that in certain areas of Moldavia – especially in the river valleys at the approach to the

Carpathian passes, i. e. the most important locations from a military and strategic point of view – the Hungarian presence preceded the Romanian influx.

### 3. History, Internal Classification, Historical Demography

Prior to the Mohács catastrophe in 1526, Moldavian Hungarians, an ethnic group vital to imperial policy, had enjoyed the security provided by a powerful, centralised Hungarian Kingdom. Historical documentation proves that at the turn of the 16th century, the 20 to 25 thousand-strong Hungarian population was the largest non-Romanian people within the ethnically mixed Moldavia (DOMOKOS 1938, MIKECS 1941, BENDA 1989).

The Hungarian settlers occupied the wide and fertile river flats of the Siret/Szeret and, in particular, the territories around the deltas of its western tributaries (Moldova/Moldva, Bistrița/Beszterce, Troțuș/Tatros). At this time, the territories populated by Hungarians were composed of enclosed settlements, interconnected by unbroken lines of dwellings (e. g. between Suceava/Szucsava and Roman/Románvásár, around Bacău/Bákó, right of the Siret/Szeret river, in the Lower Troțuș/Tatros region etc.). Even towns were established in places of strategic economic, commercial and military importance, with majority Hungarian and partly German population (Roman = Román[vásár]i, Bacău = Bákó, Adjud = Egyed[halma], Troțuș = Tat[á]ros, Târgu Ocna = Aknavásár, Baia = [Moldva]bánya, Iași = Jász[vásár], Huși = Husz, Bârlad = Barlád etc.). Urban life and trade developed in Moldavia in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries due to the activities of the Hungarians and Germans. (A very telling piece of evidence is that the Romanian word *oraș*, i. e. town or city, is borrowed from the Hungarian *város*.) Urban development, however, was halted as early as the late 16th century because of the unfavourable politico–military situation, and was entirely destroyed as a result of the 17th-century Tartar and Cossack military campaigns. The artisan and merchant population of the market towns, mostly ethnic Hungarians, were subsequently assimilated into the Romanian majority (MIKECS 1941 p. 168–178., BENDA 1989 p. 35–37.).

Ethnically and religiously homogeneous, and making their living mainly from cultivation, the population of the Csángó villages in the flat lands were free tenants which meant that the communities paid corporate taxes directly to the Hungarian authorities in Transylvania, the Voivodes, without the intervention of the Moldavian nobility (boyars). Presumably, free Romanian villages in Moldavia adopted certain Csángó farming techniques and legal customs (e. g. certain forms of self-government, “arrow-lot” in the periodical distribution of village lands, the role of clan groups in land-ownership, etc.) (MIKECS 1941 p. 158–165.). In the Middle Ages, the inhabitants of the free villages in Moldavia were called *răzeși*, which derives from the Hungarian *részes* (share-farmer). The settlement system marked by plot-groups and blind alleys, which illustrate clan

relations, has survived in certain villages (KÓS–NAGY–SZENTIMREI 1981 p. 17–22.).

Certain Moldavian place names, as well as the existing documentation and the location of villages which were later Romanianised, clearly suggest that the territory inhabited by the medieval Moldavian Hungarian settlers was considerably larger than that which their successors occupy today. Over the years, the Hungarian ethnic population disappeared from certain regions, both as a result of war, and of linguistic and religious assimilation. In other areas, villages were divided and the territories occupied by Hungarians shrank. There are only two language enclaves where the descendants of the medieval non-Szekler Moldavian Hungarians have survived: the “northern Csángós” north of Roman and the “southern Csángós” in some villages south of Bacău. The central geographical location of these villages and their favourable economic conditions suggest that they were among the first settlements to be established in this province. Both northern and southern Csángós are characterised by archaisms in their language (e. g. the sibilant pronunciation of the consonant “sz” – between “sh” and “s” –, the archaic pronunciation of the diphthong “lj” – today spelled “ly” etc.), as well as by their folklore which has retained many ancient elements.

The largest and most central villages of the northern Csángós are Săbăoani/Szabófalva and Pildești/Kelgyest. In a few of the Catholic villages around them (Iugani/Jugán, Traian/Újfalu, Bărgăoani/Bargován etc.) there are still some elderly people who speak Hungarian, while in other villages, the Hungarians have been completely Romanianised. The heart of the northern enclave, Săbăoani/Szabófalva, was the mother community of Bălușești/Balusest and Ploscuțeni/Ploszkucény in the lower Siret/Szeret region which were established later.

The most important villages of the southern Csángós (living south of Bacău/Bákó) are Valea Seacă/Bogdánfalva, Galbeni/Trunk, Valea Mare/Nagypatak, and Gioseni/Gyoszány, the last of which shows strong Szekler influence. Valea Seacă/Bogdánfalva is the mother community of Nicolae Bălcescu/Újfalu, founded after World War I. In Pădureni/Szeketura, only the older generation speaks Hungarian.

The number of Hungarians in Moldavia was reduced significantly in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries by wars, epidemics and, importantly, by linguistic and religious assimilation to the Romanians. Numbers began to rise again only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the increasing rate of emigration among Szeklers. In particular, many eastern Szeklers moved to Moldavia after the Siculeni/Madéfalva Massacre in 1764. Most of the existing “Szeklerised” Csángó villages date back to this time. Since there was little in the way of arable land in the economically backward Szekler regions, over-population in these areas meant that the flow of Szeklers into Moldavia continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Emigration was given new impetus at the turn of the century, although now it



was the larger towns in the Romanian Kingdom (Regat) which were the targets of the Szeklers' trans-Carpathian exodus.

A minority of the emigrants were Calvinists who were soon assimilated into the Catholic majority. Even in those villages where Calvinists formed the majority (e. g. Sascut/Szászkút, Pralea/Prálea, Vizantea/Vizánta), their original religion did not survive. It is clear that present-day Calvinists living in the region do not descend from the Moldavian Csángós; the 518 Hungarian Calvinists recorded in Moldavia in the 1992 census are more recent immigrants.

Moldavian settlements with Szeklerised Csángó inhabitants are markedly different from one another:

a. When emigration was at its height (i. e. at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century), large homogeneous groups set out towards the east and, once in Moldavia, generally stayed together. This is probably the period when regions which were sparsely populated, or uninhabited, witnessed the emergence of the biggest ethnically and religiously homogeneous villages belonging to the Moldavian Szeklers (Pustiana/Pusztina, Frumoasa/Frumósza, Lespezi/Lésped, Pârgărești/Szölőhegy and its vicinity, Arini/Magyarfalva, Vladnic/Lábnik, Călugăreni/Kalugarén etc.). Given that the best agricultural land was already “taken”, the newcomers had to confine themselves to the narrow valleys of small rivers and streams. Even relatively large Szekler villages in these areas thus have a kind of “mountain” atmosphere.

b. There are several villages in which it seems that a previously existing Hungarian population, sometimes dating back to the Middle Ages, was later joined by Szeklers who had a significant effect on the language and culture of the village. This is clearly what happened in the villages of Gioseni/Gyoszény, Luizi-Călugăra/Lujzikalagor, Cleja/Klézse and Faraoani/Forrófalva in the region of the river Siret/Szeret, and possibly also in Fundu-Răcăciuni/Külsőrekecsin and Sascut-Sat/Szászkút (SZABÓ T. 1981 p. 518.). The Hungarian population of Grozești/Gorzafalva, Târgu Trotuș/Tatros and Onești/Onyest along the Trotuș/Tatros and its tributaries may also have been established earlier. However, because the strong Szekler influence tended to submerge the original dialects, categorisation of such villages proved problematic for researchers using the methods of linguistic geography (LÜKKŐ 1936, SZABÓ T. 1981). It is interesting to note that the northern Csángós never mixed with the Szeklers, perhaps due to the higher population density in the northern Csángó territories and to the high number of villages.

c. New settlements were founded in and around existing Romanian villages by Szeklers who arrived in small, isolated groups, as well as by those who arrived later (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) or those who moved away from the Moldavian villages. It is possible that certain villages had a mixed Szekler and Romanian population. The small, ethnically mixed villages (Gârleni/Gerlény, Liliéci/Lilijecs, Tărăța/Szoloncka, Florești/Szerbek, Verșești/Gyidráska, Enăchești/Jenekest, Tur-

Iuianu/Turluján, Bogata/Bogáta, Dărmănești/Dormánfalva, Valea Câmpului/Szárazpatak etc.) situated in the valleys of small rivers (Troțuș/Tatros, Tazlău/-Tázló, Bistrița/Beszterce and other minor rivers), and several of the villages near the river Siret/Szeret (Chetriș/Ketris, Furnicari/Furnikár, Gheorghe Doja/Újfalu/-Dózsa etc.) belong to this third multi-ethnic category of Szeklerised Csángó villages. Villages in the Carpathian highlands also witnessed a similar ethnic mixture (Ciugheș/-Csügés, Brusturoasa/Bruszturósza, Gutinaș/Gutináz, Ferestrău-Oituz/Fürészfalva, Vizantea Mănăstirească/Vizánta etc.). Small Hungarian villages can be found at the heads of mountain streams or above the Romanian villages situated along the lower reaches of the streams (Cucuieti/Kukujéc, Bogdănești/-Ripa Jepi, Lărguța/-Lárguca, Neszujest (Strugari/Esztrugár), Valea Rea/Váliri (Livezi), Butucari/-Butukár (Berzunți/Berzunc), Seacă/Száka, Cireșoiaia/Szalánc, Cerdac/-Cserdák, Capăta/Kápota, Pralea/Prálea etc.).

Generally speaking, Szeklers who arrived in Moldavia in the 18th and 19th centuries occupied relatively large territories in the mainly mountainous, unpopulated regions which offered only a limited scope for cultivation and viticulture, as well as for animal husbandry or forestry. The population of Szekler villages was generally smaller than that of the medieval Moldavian Hungarian ones. In many cases, this population was made up of sporadic groups within a multi-ethnic and multi-religious environment, another factor which helped to further their linguistic assimilation to the Romanians.

Table 1  
Number of Catholics in Moldavia <sup>1</sup>

Time	Number of Catholics	Source
Early 16 <sup>th</sup> century	ca. 25–30 000 (20–25 000 Hungarians)	MIKECS 1941 pp. 245–246 (estimation)
1591	15 000	BENDA 1989 p. 31. (Church census: B. Bruti)
1646	5577	MIKECS 1941 p. 245. and BENDA 1989 p. 31. (Church census: B. Bruti)
1696	2799	BENDA 1989 p. 31. (Church census: unknown)

<sup>1</sup> The majority of Catholics in Moldavia are of Hungarian origin, therefore the total number is a good indication of the approximate number of Csángós over the centuries. Even today, the population of Polish, German, Ukrainian, and Gypsy nationality totals only a few thousand out of the quarter of a million Catholics living in Moldavia. We lack historical data on the number of Romanians who left their Greek Orthodox faith and the number of Hungarians who converted from Catholicism to Greek Orthodoxy.

(Continued)

1744	5500	AUNER 1908 p. 48. (R. Jezierski, Bishop of Bacău)
1807	21 307	AUNER 1908 p. 48. (Consul Hammer)
1851	45 752	DOMOKOS 1987 Pp. 116–119. (Church directory)
1859	52 881	Official census return. (Quoted by SZABADOS M. 1989)
1875	58 809	DOMOKOS 1987 Pp. 116–119. (Church directory)
1902	64 601	AUNER 1908 p. 79.
1930	109 953	Official census return. <sup>2</sup>
1992	240 038	Official census return. <sup>3</sup>

The huge increase in the Catholic population over the last two centuries cannot be considered to result exclusively from the immigration of Catholic Szeklers to Moldavia. The number of Catholics living in Moldavia more than doubled between 1930 and 1992, and this 118% increase significantly exceeds the similarly remarkable 67% growth in the population of Moldavia. However, it is important to bear in mind that during “socialist industrialisation”, overpopulated Moldavia was the greatest supplier of human resources in Romania, and in this period there were many Moldavian Csángós, as well as Romanians, who moved to towns in Transylvania and to the southern industrial regions of the country. An estimated 50 000 people moved to Transylvania while some 15 000 people moved to Wallachia and Dobruja.<sup>4</sup> We do not have figures for the huge number

<sup>2</sup> Excluding Bukovina and, of course, Bessarabia. Results of the 1930 census concerning Moldavian Catholics are given by village, by DOMOKOS Pál Péter 1987 pp. 521–535.). The figures are based on the official Romanian edition of the returns (*Recensământul general al populației României din 29 Decembrie 1930*. Vol. II. Neam, limbă maternă, religie. București, 1938.).

<sup>3</sup> Within the present borders of the Moldavian counties there are 243,033 Catholics altogether (125,805 in Bacău, 62,374 in Neamț, 39,627 in Iași, 6,924 in Vaslui, 5,075 in Vrancea, 2,463 in Galați and 865 in Botoșani.) This number, however, does not include data from Ghimeș-Făget/Gyimesbükk which formerly belonged to Ciuc/Csik county and is now part of Bacău. The 3,095 Catholics recorded as living there in 1992 (2,933 Hungarians) cannot be counted among the Moldavian Csángós because of the reasons indicated in the preface. Nor does the total number include the 9,542 Catholics living in Suceava county, since almost the entire territory covered by this county used to belong to the former Bukovina, of which the figures were not incorporated in the Moldavian chapter of the 1930 returns. Today, more than half (4,882) of the Catholics of Suceava are of Polish, German and Ukrainian nationality, and therefore have no connection with the Csángós.

<sup>4</sup> The 1992 census recorded 79,337 ethnic Romanian Catholics in Transylvania. The majority live in the towns of the industrial regions of Southern Transylvania – in Timiș/Temes (14 436),

of Csángó guest-workers labouring in foreign countries – particularly Israel, Hungary and Russia – at the time the census was made (January 1992). However, if we take into account the high numbers of Csángós living outside Moldavia at the time of the census, it is our contention that the increase in population since 1930 is closer to 180% than 118%, which would mean that the population of Csángó origin has almost trebled during the last sixty years.

#### **4. The use of the Hungarian Language – Linguistic Assimilation**

Missionary reports from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries already speak about the linguistic, and often religious, assimilation of Moldavian Catholics to the Romanians. Later accounts by Hungarian travellers in Moldavia confirm that the process of assimilation had resulted in the increasing loss of the population's mother tongue. The lack of detailed historical sources, however, means that we can only estimate on the varying degrees of assimilation in the different regions and villages. Given that official Romanian policy has never acknowledged the presence of ethnic Hungarians in Moldavia, the results of censuses taken this century concerning national identity among the Csángós and the use of the Hungarian language, cannot be regarded as a sound basis for reference. Only those census returns relating to religious distribution can be considered as generally correct. Results regarding mother tongue, nationality and ethnic origins are not reliable. The published figures are full of inconsistencies. The 1859 census records 37 823 Hungarians in Moldavia (71.6% of the Roman Catholic population) while the 1930 census found only 23 886 (21.7%). The 1992 census – discounting those Hungarians living in the Ghimeş/Gyimes Pass who belong administratively to Bacău from the total of 4759 Hungarians within the present borders of the county – records only 1800 Csángó Hungarians (0.7%) in the Moldavian counties. This figure is, quite obviously, only a fraction of the real number of Hungarian-speaking Catholics in Moldavia.

We will now introduce some so far unpublished data regarding the Csángós' use of the Hungarian language, based in part on on-site research<sup>5</sup>. Then, comparing

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Braşov/Brassó (9835), Hunedoara (9119), Caraş-Severin (6,269), Arad/Arad (5743) and Sibiu (2000) counties – and of the Szekler Land – in Harghita/Hargita (3357), Covasna/Kovácszna (2829) and Mureş/Maros (2091) counties. Since these territories have been the target of the Romanian influx from Moldavia into Transylvania in the last decades, we have good reason to suppose that the majority of the almost 80 000 Transylvanian Catholics who consider themselves Romanians are of Csángó origin, and that the remainder is made up of assimilated Transylvanian Hungarians, Germans and Slovaks. Ecclesiastical reports also attest to the presence of Csángós in Transylvania. Csángó migration towards the area south of the Carpathians was aimed at the petrol producing region of Ploieşti, the seaport of Constanţa and, in particular, the capital Bucharest.

<sup>5</sup> I have been conducting research – primarily of an ethnographical nature – in Moldavia among the Catholic Csángós since 1980. In addition to this, I studied Csángó identity in 110 Moldavian

the present situation with the supposed conditions in 1930, we will aim to underline some of the characteristics of the process of linguistic assimilation.

Table 2

*Situation of Hungarian Language in Moldavian Csángó Villages*

**I. Northern Csángós**

Settlement <sup>6</sup>	Population in 1992 <sup>7</sup>	Catholics in 1992 <sup>8</sup>	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930 <sup>9</sup>
			Number <sup>10</sup>	Ratio <sup>11</sup>	
Săbăoani/Szabófalva	9,879	9,806	3,000	30%	4,374
Pildești/Kelgyest	3,779	3,760	3,100	82%	1,506
Traian/Újfalu	1,045	972	300	31%	339
Iugani/Jugán	2,061	2,034	50	3%	701
Bălușești/Balusest	2,262	1,268	600	47%	567
Bărgăoani/Bargován	1,357	1,055	30	3%	984
Ploscuțeni/Ploszkucény	2,557	2,199	1,100 + 30	50% <sup>12</sup>	1,220
<b>Total</b>			<b>21,094</b>	<b>8,180</b>	<b>9,691</b>

towns and villages between 1992–1996. In 83 of these, I have found a Hungarian-speaking population (V. T.).

<sup>6</sup> Table 2 contains those villages in which Hungarian is still spoken. In the identification of the variations of village names we made use of *Magyar helységnév-azonosító szótár* [Dictionary for the Identification of Hungarian Place-names], Lelkes, György (ed.), Budapest 1992, however, we give the present-day Romanian names as well. The figures for those village districts which the censuses (and sometimes the related Hungarian literature) treat rather arbitrarily as separate villages, have been added to the data for the villages to which these districts really belong (e. g. districts of Valea Seacă/Bogdánfalva, Luizi-Călugăra/Lujzikalagor, Vladnic/Lábnik etc.). Where, on the contrary, the censuses have united separate villages, we have tried to give the corresponding figures separately (e. g. Faraoani/Forrófalva and Valea Mare/Nagypatak, the villages attached to Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár and Slănic Moldova/Szlánikfürdő etc.).

<sup>7</sup> Census return.

<sup>8</sup> Census return.

<sup>9</sup> Census return.

<sup>10</sup> On-site estimation. In those villages where linguistic assimilation started only in the last decades, I have not included the number of children and young people who do not speak Hungarian at all in the number of Catholics. In those villages where Hungarian language is taught besides Romanian, I took the knowledge of Hungarian language as 100%. In the case of certain villages I have used a + sign to indicate the Hungarian-speaking Greek Orthodox population.

<sup>11</sup> Figure based on the estimated number of Hungarian-speakers. This figure also indicates the degree of assimilation in the village.

<sup>12</sup> Excluding the Hungarian-speaking Greek Orthodox population. (The same hereafter in similar cases.)

## II. Southern Csángós (sibilant “sz”)

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Pădureni/Szeketura	355	345	20	6%	244 <sup>13</sup>
Valea Seacă/Bogdánfalva	3,125	2,837	2,400 + 30	85%	2,257 <sup>14</sup>
Nicolae Bălcescu/Újfalu	3,698	3,385	2,200	65%	961 <sup>15</sup>
Galbeni/Trunk	1,309	1,299	900	70%	565
Gioseni/Gyoszény	3,243	2,288	2,000+400 <sup>16</sup>	87%	833
Valea Mare/Nagypatak	? <sup>17</sup>	2,825 <sup>18</sup>	2,000	70%	1,773 <sup>19</sup>
<b>Total</b>			<b>12,979</b>	<b>9,520</b>	<b>6,633</b>

## III. Szeklerised Csángós

### A. Along the River Siret/Szeret

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Călugăreni/Kalugarén	833	791	250	31%	409
Lespezi/Lészped	2,108	1,917	1,917+191	100%	1,058
Gârlenii de Sus/Rácsila	1,581	1,398	1,398+183	100%	235 <sup>20</sup>
Lilieci/Lilijecs	1,627	608	200	33%	91
Gârleni/Gerlény	1,605	252	200	79%	82
Berdila/Bergyila	697	57	40	70%	68 <sup>21</sup>
Trebiş/Terebes	778	666	10	1% <sup>22</sup>	330
Luizi-Călugăra/Lujzikalagor	5,227	5,198	4,700	90%	2,848 <sup>23</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Under the name Secătura.

<sup>14</sup> The 1930 census gives separate figures for the following districts of Valea Seacă/Bogdánfalva: Albeni, Buchila, Dămuc, Valea de Sus, Floreşti, Frăsinoia and Rujinca. In 1992 only Buchila was listed separately.

<sup>15</sup> Under the name Ferdinand.

<sup>16</sup> Hungarian-speaking Gypsies. They follow the Greek Orthodox and Pentecostal faith.

<sup>17</sup> The 1992 census gives common figures for Faraoani/Forrófalva and Valea Mare/Nagypatak: 5400 Catholic and 51 Greek Orthodox people.

<sup>18</sup> Church figure. (*Almanahul "Presa Bună"*. Iaşi 1995. p. 135.)

<sup>19</sup> With the population of the following districts: Costiţa, Valea Dragă, Valea de Jos (Mare), and Valea de Sus.

<sup>20</sup> Racila/Rácsila is actually (e. g. ecclesiastically) a part of the mother community Lespezi/Lészped.

<sup>21</sup> Berdila/Bergyila is one of the districts of the village Gura Văii which belongs to Racova village centre. Its census returns were not given either in 1930 or in 1992, however, it is definitely true that the majority of the Catholics of Gura Văii live in Berdila/Bergyila.

<sup>22</sup> Only those who married into the village from the neighbouring Catholic villages can speak Hungarian.

(Continued)

Faraoani/Forrófalva	? <sup>24</sup>	3,472 <sup>25</sup>	2,600	75%	1,757
Cleja/Klézse	4,331	4,235	3,800	90%	2,249 <sup>26</sup>
Șomușca /Somoska	1,666	1,659	1,650	100%	898
Valea Mică/Pokolpatak	705	676	600	88%	283 <sup>27</sup>
Gheorghe Doja/ Újfalu/Dózsa	1,057	674	550	81%	261 <sup>28</sup>
Ciucani/Csík	493	492	400	81%	179
Fundu-Răcăciuni/ Külsőrekecsin	1,913	1,903	1,903	100%	842
Capăta/Kápota	304	94	42	40%	129
Berindești/Berendfalva	1,137 <sup>29</sup>	371	200	53%	114
Răcăciuni/Rekecsin	2,781	387	100	25%	244
Arini/Magyarfalu	1,337	1,325	1,325	100%	843 <sup>30</sup>
Vladnic/Lábnik	941	904	904	100%	615 <sup>31</sup>
Sascut-Sat/Szászkút	2,178	615	400	65%	399 <sup>32</sup>
Tămași/Tamás	1,190	94	10	10%	80
Chetriș/Ketris	750	505	100	20%	341
Furnicari/Furnikár	518	104	10	10%	69
<b>Total</b>			<b>28,397</b>	<b>23,309</b>	<b>14,424</b>

<sup>23</sup> With the population of Corhana and Osebiți districts which the censuses treated separately.

<sup>24</sup> See note 17 on Valea Mare/Nagypatak.

<sup>25</sup> Church figure. (*Almanahul "Presă Bună"*. Iași 1995. p. 121.) The 1992 census gives common figures for Faraoani/Forrófalva and Valea Mare/Nagypatak: 5,400 Catholic and 51 Greek Orthodox people.

<sup>26</sup> With the population of Alexandrina district treated separately.

<sup>27</sup> Under the name Valea Rea.

<sup>28</sup> Under the name Gheorghe Buzdugan.

<sup>29</sup> Almost all the figures for the mainly Catholic Berindești were incorporated with those of the almost entire Orthodox Gâșteni. In consequence, these numbers are relevant to both villages together.

<sup>30</sup> Under the name Unguri.

<sup>31</sup> Podu Roșu/Podoros which is treated separately by the census (and sometimes in the Hungarian scientific literature) is a district of Vladnic/Lábnik.

<sup>32</sup> The census identified the Catholic district as Fântânele.

## B. Along the River Tazlău/Tázló

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Frumoasa/Frumósza	3,550	2,116	1,900 + 200 <sup>33</sup>	90%	903
Pustiana/Pusztina	2,070	2,055	2,055	100%	1,153
Bogdănești/Ripa Jepi	71	45	30	66%	56 <sup>34</sup>
Tarâta/Szoloncka	979	380	80	20%	278 <sup>35</sup>
Cucuieti/Kukujéc	1,363	110	30	27%	109
Florești/Szerbek	613	540	300	55%	370 <sup>36</sup>
Strugari/Esztrugár	1,211	216	40	18%	296 <sup>37</sup>
Lărguța/Máriafalva/Lárguça	299	296	250	85%	144
Coman/Gajdár	931	927	850	91%	411 <sup>38</sup>
Stufu/Esztufuj	394	364	250	70%	289
Livezi/Váliri	905	215	100	56%	138 <sup>39</sup>
Bălăneasa/Balanyásza	912	138	20	14%	171
Enăchești/Jenekest	810	97	20	20%	79
Turluianu/Turluján	1,145	160	10	6%	61
Verșești/Gyidráska	1,029	215	20	10%	143
Berzunți/Berzunc	2,711	774	100	13%	371 <sup>40</sup>
Bârzulești/Berzujok	212	122	20	16%	36
Petricica/Kövesalja	480	126	20	16%	235
Ardeoani/Ardeván	1,578	48	5	10%	44
<b>Total</b>			<b>8,944</b>	<b>6,100</b>	<b>5,287</b>

<sup>33</sup> Ca. 200 Greek Orthodox Gypsies and Romanians speak Hungarian as well.

<sup>34</sup> Under the name Râpa-Epei.

<sup>35</sup> Under the name Gura Solonți.

<sup>36</sup> Under the name Sârbi.

<sup>37</sup> The Catholics live in Năsuiești/Neszujest district of Strugari/Esztrugár, and in Cetățuia and Răchitișu villages.

<sup>38</sup> In 1930, Găidar (369 inhabitants) and Coman (42 inhabitants) are listed separately.

<sup>39</sup> The village Váliri is a district of the newly built Livezi. Under the name Valea Rea in the 1930 census.

<sup>40</sup> In the villages Butucari, Dragomir, Martin-Berzunți and Moreni together. Hungarian-speakers live mainly in Butucari/Butukár district.



### C. Along the River Trotuș/Tatros

Settlement	Population in 1992	Catholics in 1992	Hungarian speakers among Catholics		Catholics in 1930
			Number	Ratio	
Palanca/Palánka	849	122	20	16%	69
Ciugheș/Csügés	2,178 <sup>41</sup>	1,396	1,200 + 800 <sup>42</sup>	85%	771
Brusturoasa/Bruszturósza	3,608	746	100	14%	426 <sup>43</sup>
Comănești/Kománfalva	25,020	1,577	200	12%	549 <sup>44</sup>
Moinești/Mojnest	25,560	1,365	50	3%	462 <sup>45</sup>
Dărmănești/Dormánfalva	13,883	1,623	550 <sup>46</sup>	34%	745
Dofteana/Doftána	2,920	190	0	0%	463 <sup>47</sup>
Seacă/Szálka	455	374	200	55%	
Valea Cîmpului/ Válé Kimpuluj	1,096 <sup>48</sup>	224	20	9%	
Bogata/Bogáta	816	326	30	9%	
Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár	13,939	1,220	0	0%	2,539 <sup>49</sup>
Păcurele/Degettes	860 <sup>50</sup>	235	170	72%	170
Gura Slănicului/ Szalánctorka		110	20 <sup>51</sup>	18%	

<sup>41</sup> Together with the small Cădărești district listed separately. Ciugheș/Csügés is actually composed of two small settlements – Ciugheșul Român/Româncsügés and Ciugheșul Maghiar/Magyarcsügés – but this division is not reflected in the censuses. Cădărești district is a district of Ciugheșul Maghiar/Magyarcsügés.

<sup>42</sup> All the Greek Orthodox inhabitants of Ciugheșul Maghiar/Magyarcsügés and the majority of the Greek Orthodox population of Ciugheșul Român/Româncsügés can speak Hungarian.

<sup>43</sup> The censuses give detailed figures for the districts. The figures given here refer to the whole village. The majority of the Hungarian speakers live in Cuchiniș and Buruieniș districts.

<sup>44</sup> Total figures are given here in case of both censuses. Those Catholics who still speak Hungarian live mainly in Vermești village in the outskirts.

<sup>45</sup> Total Catholic population of Moinești, Lunca Moinești and Lucăcești.

<sup>46</sup> Catholics live mainly in the district Brătulești/Magyardormán.

<sup>47</sup> Total Catholic population of Dofteana, Bogata, Valea Cîmpului and Seacă which were not listed separately in 1930.

<sup>48</sup> Today Valea Cîmpului is a district of the village Ștefan Vodă. The figures of the 1992 census refer to the whole village.

<sup>49</sup> The 1930 census found 2,539 Catholics in Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár and 998 Catholics in Slănic: the latter cannot be precisely identified today. Both settlements are composed of several villages and here it is impossible to give an adequate division of the figures by villages. It is true, however, that the 3,537 Catholics recorded by the 1992 census live in Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár, Gura Slănic/Szalánctorka, Păcurele/Degettes, Slănic Băi/Szlánikfürdő, Cireșoia/Szalánc and Cerdac/Cserdák.

<sup>50</sup> The Catholic Păcurele/Degettes is a district of the Greek Orthodox village Poieni, a village on the outskirts of Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár. The census returns refer to Poieni but all 235 Catholics live in Păcurele/Degettes.

(Continued)

Slănic Moldova/ Szlánikfürdő	1,929	494	30	6%	998 <sup>52</sup>
Cerdac/Cserdák	1,571	559	250+50	42%	
Cireșoia/Szalánc	1,811	1,783	1,100	62%	
Târgu Trotuș/Tatros	1,946	1,241	600	50%	1,796 <sup>53</sup>
Tuta/Diószeg	1,949	1,935	1,700	88%	
Pârgărești/Szölőhegy	1,202	1,039	800	77%	1,133 <sup>54</sup>
Satu Nou/Újfalu	1,699	1,687	1,687	100%	
Nicorești/Szítás	902	901	901	100%	
Bahna/Bahána	594	528	410 + 40	77%	
Grozești/Gorzafalva	6,938	4,018	2,400 + 100	60%	1,873 <sup>55</sup>
Ferestrău- Oituz/Fürészfalva	1,036	427	300	70%	259
Onești/Onyest	57,333	5,884	1,500 <sup>56</sup>	25%	1,236
Valea Seacă/ Szárzpataka/Válszáka	798 <sup>57</sup>	394	100	25%	231
Gutinaș/Gutinász	592	123	20	16%	148
Prlea/Prálea	803	660	100	15%	248
Vizantea Mănăstirească/ Vizánta <sup>58</sup>	1,658	1,018	700	70%	488
<b>Total</b>			<b>32 129</b>	<b>15 158</b>	<b>14 434</b>

<b>TOTAL I-II-III</b>	<b>103 543</b>	<b>62 267</b>	<b>50 469</b>
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<sup>51</sup> Today the village is situated on the outskirts of Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár. Due to a lack of data, it is impossible to estimate the total population. The number of Catholics is given by ecclesiastical sources. (*Almanahul* 1995. p 134.)

<sup>52</sup> In the 1930 census: Slănic Băi. See note 49.

<sup>53</sup> The 1930 census incorporated the data from Tuta/Diószeg and Vișoara with the figures of Târgu Trotuș/Tatros. There are no Catholics in Vișoara. The total Catholic population of Târgu Trotuș/Tatros and Tuta/Diószeg is 1,796.

<sup>54</sup> The 1930 census incorporated the data from the Csángó villages of Nicorești/Szítás, Satu Nou/Újfalu, Pârgărești/Szölőhegy and Bahna/Bahána with the figures of the Greek Orthodox village of Bogdănești.

<sup>55</sup> The village Călcâi listed in the censuses is a district of Grozești/Gorzafalva.

<sup>56</sup> The town has a traditional Hungarian district. The estimated population refers to this district while the ratio corresponds to the whole town. We do not have data on the population living in the housing estates.

<sup>57</sup> Today Valea Seacă/Szárzpataka is a district of the village Ștefan cel Mare. The figures refer to this village.

<sup>58</sup> The village belongs to Vrancea county.

An analysis of the above figures leads to the following conclusions:

1. There is sound evidence which proves the mainly Hungarian origin of Moldavian Catholics. Today, however, only 43% of them (103 543 out of 240,038) live in settlements where Hungarian is still spoken. In fact, the majority of the Catholic population has been entirely Romanianised linguistically. *Today, the number of Hungarian-speaking Catholics in Moldavia is an estimated 62,000 which is only a quarter of the whole Moldavian Catholic population.*

The tables indicate those districts and villages on the outskirts of Moldavian towns in which Csángós live in their own traditional village structure (e. g. at Onești/Onyest, Târgu Ocna/Aknavásár, Slănic Moldova/Szlánikfürdő). However, the tables do not give figures for Csángós who have moved into Moldavian towns and cities (Bacău, Roman, Iași etc.), many of whom – depending on where they were born – may well still speak Hungarian. On the other hand, it is precisely in the newly built housing estates and industrial zones of Moldavian towns that the rapid, almost immediate assimilation of Csángós<sup>59</sup> has taken place, and therefore to allow for any “Hungarian population” in these towns, would lead to a meaningless relativisation of the above figures.

For similar reasons, we cannot include in our calculations the Hungarian-speaking Csángós who moved to the Transylvanian towns and industrial zones (which we estimated above to total 50 000). Transylvanian Catholics who came from Moldavia have likewise become assimilated to the Romanians and the situation in the Szekler Land is also very similar.

Finally, it is also possible that there are some other Moldavian settlements overlooked by researchers where elderly people still speak or understand Hungarian.<sup>60</sup> But even if there are such villages the total number of their Hungarian inhabitants cannot possibly be more than a few hundred which does not change the picture as a whole.

2. In 1930, there were 50 469 Catholics living in the above settlements where Hungarian is still spoken. This figure should be taken as a basis for estimating the number and ratio of Hungarian speakers. However, part of the Catholic population in the settlements shown in the tables, definitely did not speak Hungarian in 1930, if we take into account the fact that the use of the mother tongue had already

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<sup>59</sup> Social circumstances mean that newly married couples who leave the villages for the towns speak in Romanian, even if they both speak Hungarian well and occasionally use Hungarian in their native villages. The children of such families have already lost any ability to understand Hungarian.

<sup>60</sup> For example, we lack figures for the villages Fântânele[-Noi] (249 Catholic and 1800 Greek Orthodox inhabitants in 1992) and Iazu Porcului/Jázu Porkuluj (present-day Iazu Vechi with 272 Greek Orthodox and 56 Catholic inhabitants) in Iași county which Pál Péter Domokos considers as “pure Hungarian”. (DOMOKOS 1987 p. 255.) In the latter village linguists from Cluj/Kolozsvár in the 1950's still found Hungarian speakers. (SZABÓ T. 1981 p. 518.) The 1930 census found 185 Roman Catholics and 266 (!) inhabitants who had Hungarian as their mother tongue in the mountain village of Podul Șchiopului in the former Putna (today: Vrancea) county.

started to disappear in the villages. In the south, Pădureni/Szeketura was one such village, while in the north Iugani/Jugán, Bălușești/Balusest, Bărgăoani/Bargován and Săbăoani/Szabófalva witnessed the same process. Some forty small Szeklerised villages in the region of the rivers Siret/Szeret, Troțuș/Tatros and Tazlău/Tázló had also been largely Romanianised. Studying the contemporary accounts, it is hard to imagine how, in certain settlements, the Hungarian language survived at all. Therefore, we have to decrease the figure 50 469 by at least 5–6000 in order to get the number of Hungarian speakers in 1930. But presumably, sixty to seventy years ago some members of the older generation still spoke Hungarian in villages which have since been completely Romanianised (and which are not reproduced in the tables). In the north, Gherăești/Gyerejest and Dochia/Dokia were certainly in this situation, together with Sărata/Szeráta, Horgești/Horgyest, Văleni/Valény and maybe some other small villages in the vicinity of Bacău. The number of elderly Hungarian speakers, however, could not possibly be more than 1–2000 in 1930. Taking into account all these calculations, *the number of Hungarian-speaking Csángós in Moldavia could have been around 45 000 in 1930, about 40% of the entire Catholic population of the province.*<sup>61</sup>

3. The total number of Hungarian speakers increased by 37%, from 45 000 to 62 000 between 1930 and 1992. If the number of Hungarian speakers had increased at the same rate as the Moldavian Catholic population as a whole, that is, by 118%, there would have been another 53 000, a calculation which gives some idea of the rate of assimilation. In other words, in the absence of linguistic assimilation, the number of Hungarian-speaking Moldavian Csángós would have reached the mythical 100 000 by now. Because of assimilation, however, the number of Hungarian speakers fell by 40 000, and thus, in spite of a moderate increase, the proportion of Hungarian speakers among Catholics went down from 41% in 1930 to 26% in 1992. *In the final analysis, the main features of the demographic behaviour of Moldavian Csángós are a high fertility index and rapid linguistic assimilation.*

4. There are differences among Csángó settlements in terms of the intensity of linguistic assimilation. The degree of assimilation substantially affected the ratio of Hungarian speakers: in some villages the assimilation was complete, or almost complete, while in others there was a significant increase in the number of people who (also) spoke Hungarian.

With regard to Csángós living in sporadic groups, the number of Hungarian speakers either decreased or remained the same in villages with small, mixed populations and/or surrounded by a predominantly Romanian

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<sup>61</sup> This number is 10 000 less than the estimation of Pál Péter Domokos in 1931 who at that time – still unaware of the 1930 census results – set the number of the Moldavian Hungarians at 55 000. Later, László Mikecs found this estimation “a little optimistic”. (MIKECS 1941 p. 249.)

environment – more than 50 villages altogether. (The fact that there was no increase in the number of Hungarian speakers – e. g. in Traian/Újfalú, Bălușești/Balusest, Ploscuțeni/Ploszkucény, Florești/Szerbek and Onești/Onyest – at a time when the fertility index was high, also indicates the high degree of assimilation.)

Only 25 to 30 settlements, the largest and most significant of the Csángó villages, witnessed any definite and substantial increase in the number of Hungarian speakers between 1930 and 1992. The increase occurred mainly in the ethnically homogeneous and more populous villages, where the danger of linguistic assimilation only became apparent during the last few decades. (These are generally villages in which, according to the tables, the proportion of Hungarian speakers is above 80%.) In many villages the number of Hungarian speakers is twice as high as the number of Catholics in 1930 – sometimes even higher. Of the northern Csángó villages, only Pildești/Kelgyest shows an increase in the number of Hungarian speakers, while in the other villages, the substantial drop in the number of Hungarian speakers brought this linguistic enclave to the verge of total disappearance. The situation of the southern Csángós is only slightly better: here, only the relatively rapidly assimilating Nicolae Bălcescu/Újfalú and Valea Mare/Nagypatak show any increase in the number of Hungarian speakers together with Gioseni/Gyoszány whose classification as a southern Csángó settlement, however, should be taken with reservations. The greatest increase has occurred in the ethnically homogeneous Szeklerised Csángó villages where certain favourable conditions (e. g. the proximity to and closer relations with the Szekler Land, the fact that the dialect is closer to literary Hungarian, that the settlements were established relatively recently, that there is a stronger awareness of Hungarian origins, that there is no surrounding Romanian population and that there are still people who remember the Hungarian schools of the 1950's etc.), have slowed down the process of assimilation. Twenty villages belong to this category: Lespezi/Lészped, Luizi-Călugăra/Lujzikalagor, Faraoni/Forrófalva, Cleja/Klészse, Șomușca/Somoska, Valea Mică/Pokolpatak, Ciucani/Csík, Fundu-Răcăciuni/Külsőrekecsin, Arini/Magyarfalú, Vladnic/Lábnik, Frumoasa/Frumósza, Pustiana/Pusztina, Lărguța/Lărguca, Coman/Gajdár, Ciugheș/Csügés, Tuta/Diószeg, Părgărești/Szőlőhegy, Nicorești/Szítás, Satu Nou/Újfalú, Bahna/Bahána.

It would be misleading to state that the balance has tipped in favour of Hungarian speakers without emphasising at the same time that the increase is due to the high fertility index and that it was produced within – and mostly in spite of – an omnipresent and strong tendency towards assimilation. Thus, the figures indicate an increase even in places where young people speak very little, if any, Hungarian (Nicolae Bălcescu/Újfalú, Galbeni/Trunk, Lilieci/Lilijecs, Gârleni/Gerlénny, Târgu Trotuș/Tatros, Grozești/Gorzafalva, Ferestrău/Oituz/-Fűrészfalva, Vizantea Mănăstirească/Vizánta etc.). Today, however, the figures

no longer indicate those with Hungarian as their mother tongue or even those who use Hungarian in every-day life: much of the time they refer only to those who have some degree of knowledge of the language. In many villages the figures indicate linguistically well-assimilated young people whose first language is Romanian, but who, in certain situations, can use a dialect of Hungarian as a second language without it being likely that they will pass this language on to their children. Consequently, the increase of 17,000 in the number of Hungarian speakers between 1930 and 1992 is very “fragile” compared to the growth of the population as a whole, and does not suggest potential for further increase. Sixty to seventy years ago, at a time when the traditional village lifestyle was still in place, Hungarian speakers would use Hungarian dialects as their first language or mother tongue. Since then, modernisation and the greater degree of social mobility has diminished the importance of these dialects – for young people, the dialect has been downgraded to the position of a second language, at best, which they feel ashamed to use in public. Thus when comparing the 1930 and 1992 data on Hungarian speakers, it is important to remember that the background to the two sets of figures is very different.

## 5. Csángó Identity and its constituent features

Of the 250 000-strong originally Hungarian Csángó population, a remarkable 62 000 still speak Hungarian. However in 1992, only 1800 of them considered themselves ethnic Hungarians. 1301 of these people lived in towns, which means that according to the census, only five hundred ethnic Hungarian Catholics were living in the Moldavian villages – the authentic Csángó settlements. This figure is arrived at by the manipulative, distortional methods used in the carrying out of the census – commissioners were ordered to cover up the presence of ethnic Hungarians and Hungarian speakers, the Church conducted a powerful propaganda campaign among the Csángós, those who declared themselves Hungarian were threatened with forced repatriation to Hungary, and the whole census was carried out in an atmosphere of nationalism fired by the mass media etc.<sup>62</sup> – and by the unique identity concept of the Csángós.

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<sup>62</sup> In *Romániai Magyar Szó* 11th-12th April 1992 László Vetési reports on the intimidation of the population of Lespezi/Lészped. The same newspaper publishes the protest of G. Margareta Percă, census official in Săbăoani/Szabófalva, which she sent to various political and human rights organisations. She wrote: “From January 1, 1992 onwards, the commissioner of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Office of Iași and the village priest systematically urged the population every day to declare themselves ethnic Romanian at the census. They argued that the expression Roman Catholic derives from the name «Romanian». The propaganda among the inhabitants reached its peak on 6 January when the priest menaced the parishioners saying that should they not declare themselves ethnic Romanians, the situation would be similar to that of 1940 when the transfer of the Moldavian Csángós to Hungary was on the agenda.”

Moldavian Csángós living beyond the Carpathian mountains played no part in the great historical movements of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which created the modern Hungarian nation and society (language reforms, political and cultural movements of the “Reform Age”, the 1848 War of Independence). The Moldavian Csángós were therefore the only group of Hungarian speakers who did not become part of the Hungarian nation. Consequently, the most important factors for unification are absent: 1. Beyond its practical role as a means of communication, the Moldavian Csángós do not attribute any symbolic or cohesive value to the Hungarian language. (Their relation to language use is free of ideology, thus they regard the phenomenon of language loss as an inevitable part of modernisation rather than as a tragedy.) Nor do they consider their Moldavian dialect to be identical to the one spoken in the Carpathian Basin – ignoring the fact that Hungarian dialects are all simply variations of the same language. 2. They are unaware of the national values contained within folklore and folk culture, and of the fact that traditional culture can be a powerful means of strengthening national unity. 3. They have virtually no contact with Hungarian “high culture” of which the values remain out of their reach due to the absence of a proper institutional network and the low levels of literacy in Hungarian. 4. Since their migration, the history and historical awareness of Csángós has been distinct from that of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. The consciousness of common origins is fading away even among Szeklerised Csángós.

In Europe it was the intellectuals who played the most important role in relating people to the nation's constituent features. In Moldavia, however, no ecclesiastical or secular intelligentsia emerged. The young Romanian state, which was established in 1859 and which won its independence in 1877 following the Russo–Turkish war, continues to hinder the formation of a Hungarian intelligentsia and an institutional network. It has always taken care to send to Moldavia priests, teachers and officials who were brought up in the spirit of Romanian nationalism, to act as channels of the official ideology (e. g. of the view that Csángós are Magyarised Romanians, *Roman Catholics* are, in fact, *Romanian Catholics*, Csángó “pidgin-talk” is something to be ashamed of, etc.).

The formation of the Romanian Catholic ecclesiastical intelligentsia resulted from the efforts of the seminar, and later the printing presses and cantor schools, of the Iași bishopric established in 1884. This meant that the Catholic Church, which had been for centuries the most important factor in the separation of Moldavian ethnic Hungarians from the Romanians and in the survival of the Hungarian language, became, from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a vehicle of Romanianisation. After the establishment of a network of modern state-owned schools, the language of tuition in Moldavia became exclusively the state language. The speaking of Hungarian was forbidden in schools, and numerous accounts reveal that teachers punished students who used Hungarian, urging

parents to speak Romanian, even at home. (Today, the need for such strict intervention in language use is disappearing since there are now virtually no villages in which schoolchildren still speak Hungarian to each other.) In the first years of the Communist dictatorship, between 1948 and 1953, the Hungarian People's Association ran schools in about 40–50 villages, but they did not play any significant role in the formation of national identity. The schools were poorly equipped and students from the first to fourth years were taught together in the same class by teachers who, in many cases, had been sent to Moldavia as a punishment. The religious population was not supportive of these Communist schools, while local Romanian intellectuals continuously stirred up opposition to them, and thus, in most of the villages, such schools proved short-lived.

Since the changes in 1989, between 100 and 200 Moldavian Csángó schoolchildren have been taught Hungarian each year in the elementary and secondary schools of the Szekler Land close to Moldavia. Dozens of Csángó youths pursue their university studies in Hungary. However, due to the hostile atmosphere and the lack of any institutional network, there is no chance for young people trained outside Moldavia to return as Hungarian intellectuals. The Hungarian Language Circle, founded in 1991 in Săbăoani/Szabófalva, was declared unconstitutional and was quickly banned despite the issue being raised in parliament by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania.<sup>63</sup> The leaders of two Sunday schools in Lespezi/Lészped are permanently harassed by the police while the local intelligentsia and the Church do everything in their power to make their work impossible.<sup>64</sup> Nine Transylvanian Catholic priests who were born in Moldavia wrote a petition to Ioan Robu, Archbishop of Bucharest, in which they asked to be allowed to return to their homeland and say mass in Hungarian.<sup>65</sup> Their petition was declared “chauvinistic zealotry” and was refused by the archbishop.

The association for the defence of the political interests of the Moldavian Csángós, the Association of Csángó Hungarians, is based in Sfântu Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy and is led by Csángós who have left their homeland. The bilingual monthly *Moldvai Magyarság* has been published here since 1990 (until 1992 under the title *Csángó Újság*). In the Spring of 1995, politicians of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania intended to form a Moldavian association, based on local organisations, in defence of the political interests of the Csángós. The congress was to be held at Cleja/Klészse on

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<sup>63</sup> The letter of Mihály Perka, leader of the language circle, to the leaders of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania is published in the Sfântu Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy periodical *Európai Idő* 5–6, 1993. p. 3. His interviews can be found in the Cluj/Kolozsvár journal *Művelődés* 1, 1992. p. 11 and *Hitel* 3, 1994. pp. 58–69. issued in Budapest.

<sup>64</sup> See *Orient Expressz* (Bucharest) 11th June 1993. p. 9. and *Romániai Magyar Szó* (Bucharest) 11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> April, 1992. Appendix p. a–b.

<sup>65</sup> See *Európai Idő* (Sfântu Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy) (21) 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1991. p. 8.



April 29, but was abandoned when the delegates were chased from the village by drunken local inhabitants who had been set up to it, and who later set fire to newly acquired schoolbooks and other Hungarian publications.<sup>66</sup> Earlier, in November 1991, the Csángó cultural festival had to be cancelled as a result of similar manoeuvring.

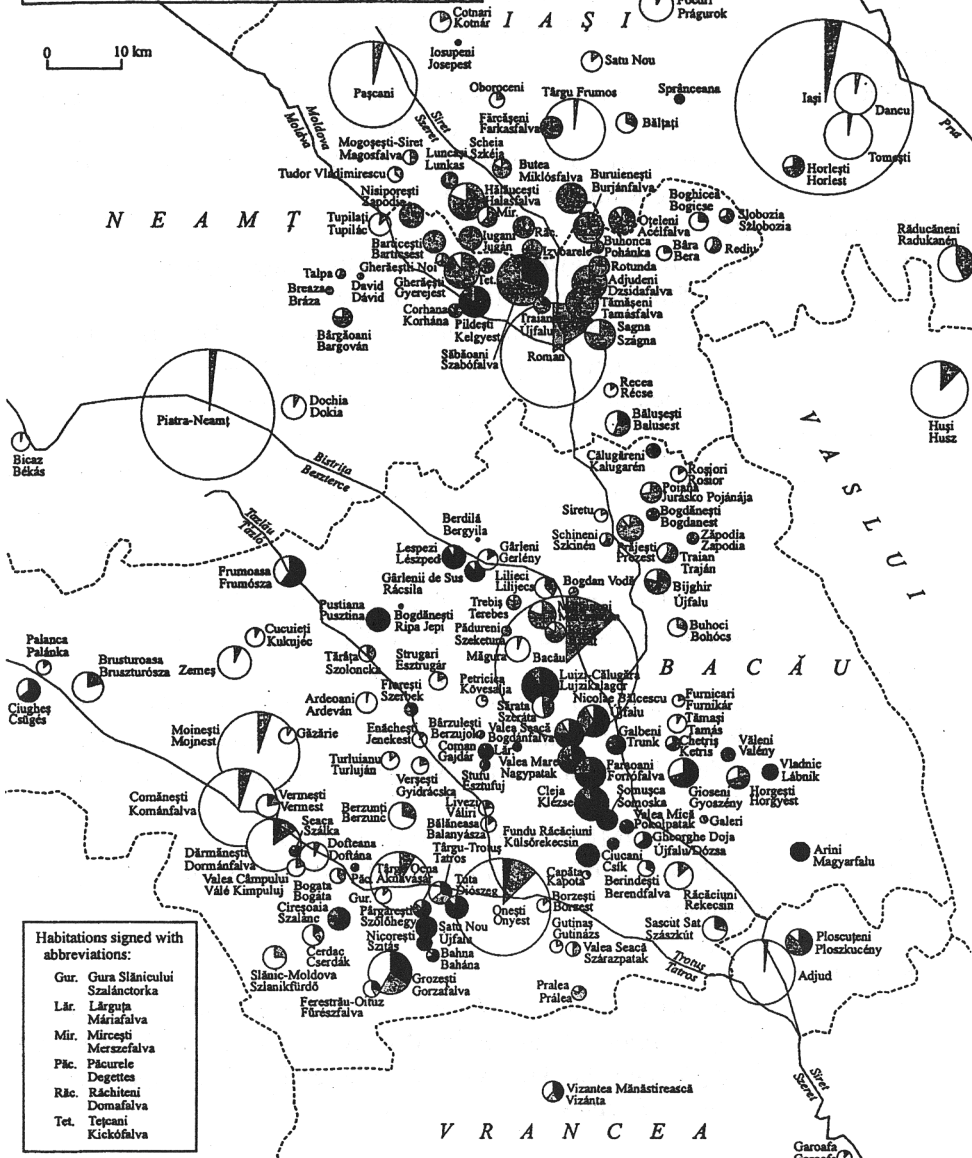
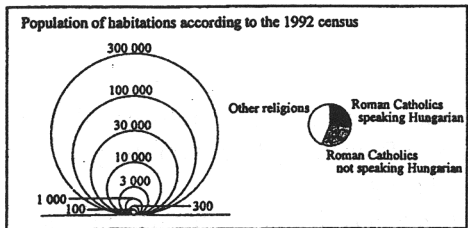
The Romanian state does not officially recognise the existence of the Moldavian Hungarian ethnic group and, as it treats Csángós as Romanians, it does not grant them the most basic minority rights, thus forcing the complete linguistic and religious assimilation of this ethnic group to the Romanians. Local initiatives are occasionally taken to form or maintain Hungarian identity, but these are suppressed with the connivance, or the silent consent, of the authorities.

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<sup>66</sup> Report of József Kötő, Vice-President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, in *Szabadság* (Cluj/Kolozsvár) 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1995.

# Habitations populated by Moldavian Csángós.

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- Habitations signed with abbreviations:
- Gur. Gura Slănicului
  - Lăr. Lărguța
  - Mir. Mîrcești
  - Păc. Păsurele
  - Răc. Răchiteni
  - Tet. Tețcani

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**V. NATIONAL IDEOLOGIES  
IN CENTRAL EUROPE**



“God Punishes the Hungarian People for their Sins.”

A topos of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the Hungarian ecclesiastical literature of the epoch  
“However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country.

Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed.

The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.

You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out.

The Lord will send on you curses, confusion and rebuke in everything you put your hand to, until you are destroyed and come to sudden ruin because of the evil you have done in forsaking him.

The Lord will plague you with diseases until he has destroyed you from the land you are entering to possess.

The Lord will strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew which will plague you until you perish.

The sky over your head will be bronze, the ground beneath you iron.

The Lord will turn the rain of your country into dust and powder; it will come down from the skies until you are destroyed.

The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies.”\*

These lines were cited from the Old Testament by András Szkhárosi Horváth, a follower of the Reformation (formerly a Franciscan monk) in 1547, comparing the curse and the blessing in the fifth book of Moses.

In June of the same year, the representatives of Charles V and Sultan Suleyman signed the peace of Drinápoly which regulated the relationship between the two empires in the following years. The Hungarian political leaders had asked the emperor in vain to continue fighting against the Turks instead of signing the peace treaty. The liberation from the Turkish occupation, the re-establishment of the integrity of Hungary had disappeared as a real political possibility, or at least had been delayed for a long while.

The clergy who were preaching to the masses were not informed so quickly of the changes in international politics. However, they were shocked by the daily tragedies close to them. After the battle of Mohács in 1526, which had ended in the defeat and death of the Hungarian King, Turkish raids that up to

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\* The course of Citation: The Holy Bible. International Version. 1986. pp. 257-258.



that time had occurred only in the southern part of Hungary became common in almost the whole country.

The Turks seemed to be unstoppable. After the first siege of Vienna in 1529, German speaking states were also threatened by the Turkish troops. They were seen more and more as the device of God's fury or even as the Antichrist.

In the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the situation was dire. Preachers drew a comparison between the history presented in the Old Testament and the history of Hungary. They applied themes from the fifth book of Moses (collective sin, punishment, chosen people, redemption) to the Hungarian people. It is in accord with the eschatological expectations of the old Hungarian monastic (mainly Franciscan) tradition in which the people of the Last Judgement are also the Muslims.

The topos emerges in difficult situations. In the Hungarian literary tradition, it turned up for the first time in 1241 when the Mongol hordes of Batu Khan destroyed a large part of the country. According to remaining literary sources, the topos reached its culmination during the period of the wars against the Turkish occupation of Hungary in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the 1660s, when the frontlines in the middle of the century were under the strongest pressure and the decrease of the population was at its highest rate.

The topos has three basic elements: Sins against God bring a collective punishment to the people, but the rage of God plays only a secondary role here. The punishment is destruction resulting from the conflicts of the Turkish and the German empire both appearing along the borders of Hungary. According to the ideas of that period, it was not a result of God's rage; God caused it to purify, to admonish people, to make them "regain consciousness." In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with the appearance of the Reformation, considering religion, the Hungarian population had become one of the most variously distributed populations in Europe. Nevertheless, all the denominations (Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, Unitarian) echoed the aspects of the topos.

In the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the biblical analogy was still full of current political expectations. If the people repent, God will free them from the Turks and restore the glory of the country. As a result of a series of defeats, liberation lost its political sense in the final 30 years of the century. Political considerations were soon replaced by an eschatological mentality. It is the end of thinking on the immanent level.

All alternatives aimed at finding the way out of this grave situation were attempted – a "national" kingdom, eastern and western alliances, peace with the Turks, the idea of Christian solidarity – but none of them proved to be effective. In the midst of this harrowing situation, arguments moved to a transcendent level, emphasizing moral viewpoints. The failure of a political solution and the subsequent dour atmosphere could easily make the people think that their land was a battlefield of transcendental powers.

The “end of the world” was often associated with particular events. For example, Péter Méliusz Juhász, the Calvinist bishop of Debrecen, considered the great military expedition to Hungary in 1566 of the Sultan, with two emperors participating in the battles, as punishment to the Hungarian people for their sins, as a manifestation of God's will and as a foreshadowing of the Last Judgement. Here, I remark in passing that the leader of the expedition, Sultan Suleyman, had a very similar opinion. The old Sultan wanted to finish his life in the sacred war and this indeed happened at the siege of the fortress of Szigetvár, which was defended by Miklós Zrínyi. The clergy considered the invincible Turks as the people of Gog and the German emperor was regarded as a soldier of the Antichrist. They believed that the Last Judgement was imminent and the people of the country were at the center of world history. Belonging to the empire of the “light” or to that of the “shadow” depended on both their personal and collective moral decisions.

“We are sinners” – said the preachers – but the reason why we are suffering alone among the Christian people is God: He has designs on us. It is the proof of “chosen-ness”, because the faithful must suffer: It brings one back to God, imposes penance, gives direction and tries one’s charity. The idea of the chosen people had not yet been well-defined and clarified. The expressions “chosen people” and Hungarian people were probably interpreted in various ways by contemporaries. The behavior that was inspired by the topos and propagated in the sermons reflected the only (politically) expectable comportment. The evil prince is God's punishment to the people and must be tolerated – as Luther's concept was represented the preachers.

“If the prince seizes our animals and children, too, in addition to the taxes, we should not stand against him, for his power over the community was given to him because of our sins” as was written by the aforementioned Méliusz. The preachers taught passive behavior to the oppressed people; that is, the toleration of the tyrant who was placed above them because of their sins, the toleration of the inexorability of the Antichrist: “As the end of the world is close, the fact that they have to suffer is the sign of their chosen and sacred character.” To those who had this duty, he prescribed a fight to the last breath; based on the example of Luther, only after a rigorous penitence. It is reflected in one of the letters of Miklós Zrínyi who defended Szigetvár until his death in 1566 against the troops of Sultan Suleyman: “We shall die not only for our own sins but also for the whole country.” According to common sense, this view is inexplicable. Fighting a hopeless battle can only be explained from a moral point of view. We cannot say that it was either a question of personal “reputation” which was required by the humanist milieu and the military morality, or an exemplary behavior which might inspire others to do what they themselves could not, due to impossible circumstances. The emphasis is on the redemption by Christ: “For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 16,25).

Defeat is inevitable here. This two-sided behavior reflects the viewpoints of the preachers. Politically, it is the only way to survive. Instead of accepting the difficult situation, he chooses the impossible and takes the decision from a moral point of view, forgetting reality and the politically possible alternatives.

All this does not bring remorse but purification, self-esteem, moral support and persistent fanaticism. The aim of God's punishment is to make people return to him. As a consequence of suffering, the tormented community became the chosen people. It is the only real choice for a country that faces superior forces between two great powers. Translated into practical life this parallel instructed people not to turn against each other by reason of any political conception. They have to follow a strictly regulated behavior and they have to form a community, which joins its members on the basis of religion, facing the "beasts" of the end of the world. All intemperance that might provoke external intervention was to be avoided.

The long war against the Turks between 1593 and 1606 swept away the feeling of desperation. The myth of the invincible Turks disappeared. Both "Antichrists" – the two emperors – have become real political enemies.

István Magyari, the court preacher of the most powerful Lutheran landlord of the country propagated the political idea of self-liberation of the nation instead of waiting for the end of the world. As a final chapter in the war, the fight for freedom led by István Bocskay saw the same political ideals incorporated into its phraseology.

As reference to the topos became increasingly infrequent, so too did its importance. However, as a result of the resumption of the fight against the Turks at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it gained strength within in a different psychic and theological context.

The sentiment of solidarity formed by the suffering was very similar to the Jewish religious community-consciousness. (The national analogy with the Old Testament was not a unique phenomenon in the history of the early European national consciousness.)

Instead of considering the nation community as an immanent frame of action, both models consider it a concept bond to transcendency with intrinsic values that can emerge only in difficult situations. There are no guilty nations but there is collective punishment, which was experienced by all the generations of the region's small nations.

In an era when the atmosphere becomes predominantly dire, where there is no chance for normal life, where ideologies are needed in order to build houses, to give birth to children and to trust in tomorrow, they are offered a transcendent solution: trust in God, what else can one do? Collective punishment is the proof of the collective sin and as its consequence: the proof of being chosen.

They lived in a region where this was proven by the events to a whole city, to a whole country. This form of consciousness imprinted a defensive behavior and

due to its transcendental background, it cannot serve as a factor for modernization. However, when there is a real chance for normal life and political alternatives, the transcendental mechanisms are relegated to the background.

It seems obvious that the generation of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Hungary who formed the modern national consciousness also relied to a great extent on this form of behavior. (The Hungarian national anthem written by Ferenc Kölcsey is an appropriate example. We can find in it the view of history of the topos: Our sin against God is the reason for our miserable fate.) As a consequence of this, the modern Hungarian national consciousness did not become enemy-centered; it has not been founded on opposition.

It is not the invader but rather our own sin and negligence that was to blame for the situation. This is all the more interesting because in modern Hungarian history, constraints were more decisive than possibilities and fatalistic helplessness prevailed over political mistakes and sins.

It is to be remarked that what we have done so far is present the outline of the topic from the point of view of the history of ideas; apart from this, there could be other forms of behavior from time to time. It is not my intention to claim that the whole society lived in the spirit of the topos. Societies do not always function according to the rules of logic. I remark in parentheses that it was a Calvinist archdeacon, Gáspár Károlyi, who preached most consistently about the events of the Turkish occupation and the subsequent “apocalypse”.

In 1590, he translated the Bible into Hungarian and published it, as well. However, while he preached the end of the world, he was also very busy with his worldly wine transactions.

We cannot measure exactly the extent to which the group-consciousness presented in the topos influenced the whole society. We do not know whether this form of consciousness survived in the lower classes until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or it was used by the intellectuals only. One thing remains certain: that the Jewish-Hungarian parallel has always emerged in difficult situations when it served as a treatment for shocking effects.

(This study is the summary of the book: Sándor Öze „*Bűneiért bünteti Isten a magyar népet*” [God Punishes the Hungarian People for their Sins.] Budapest, 1991. Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum)

## Messianism in Central Europe

The word 'Messianism' comes from the Hebrew 'Mashiah' (or Meschiah' in Aramaic) which corresponds to 'Christos' in Greek, meaning 'the Anointed'. The concept and its related school of thought was created by the Jews before Jesus Christ, at a time when the Jews were becoming increasingly preoccupied with the restoration of David's kingdom. Jewish Messianism started to unfold in earnest, however, after two national catastrophes: the last year of the Jewish War in 70 AD, when Titus (Vespasian's son) finally conquered Jerusalem after a siege lasting several years, and the Bar-Kochba uprising against the Romans in 132–135 AD, which ended in suppression and the exile of the Jews from Jerusalem. This period of Messianism was centred around the concept of political liberation.<sup>1</sup>

Later, during the Middle Ages – in thirteenth-century Spain – Jewish Messianic hopes developed into esoterism. In the seventeenth century, a strong Jewish Messianic movement unfolded in Europe and Smyrna (Izmir) in Asia Minor, related to the false Messiah Shabse Tsvi (Sabbatai Zevi), who developed the Cabalist teachings of Isaac Luria. Mention should also be made of the great Messianic movement of Polish Jews in the eighteenth century: Polish Hassidism, heavily influenced by the Cabbala.<sup>2</sup>

Polish Hassidism was a spiritual Renaissance which conquered the south of Poland. Its emergence was to some extent politically motivated. Hatred between Cossacks and Jews ended in bloodshed during the Cossack Uprising headed by Khmelnytsky (1648). It marked a turning point, and awakened Jewish mysticism in the form of Luria's Cabbalism.

From the very beginning, Jewish Messianism was strongly influenced by the thought that the Jews had a special mission on Earth, bestowed on them by the Bible. The Israelites were God's chosen people from the very beginning of their history, and that status was sealed by Holy Communion. This is the fundamental thesis underlying the entire history of the Jewish people. But Jews became unfaithful to this Communion, a deed for which they had to be punished – among other things by the two great national catastrophes already mentioned.<sup>3</sup>

Jewish Messianism influenced many Polish thinkers and philosophers of the period, who in their turn disseminated these ideas to other nations of the region. Apart from the impact of Messianism of Jewish origin, the peoples of

<sup>1</sup> See David Banon, *Le messianisme* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> The Cabbala is a theosophical system which started to spread in Medieval Judaism from the tenth century. The doctrine had its origins in archaic Jewish literature. According to the Cabbala, the Messiah will create Paradise on earth for the chosen people.

<sup>3</sup> See Daniel Rops, *Histoire Sainte - le peuple de la Bible* (Paris: Fayard, 1942), p. 413.

Central Europe were also prone to adopting a sense of mission, born of their close relations and the similarities of their historical development. The sense of similarity was deepened by the common experience of suffering and having a common fate throughout their history. The wars fought against the Tatars and later the Turks gave rise to a concept throughout the region according to which each nation perceived itself as the main bastion and protector of Western Christianity, civilisation, and culture. This way of thinking was actively promoted by the Catholic Church, and was shared by outstanding Central European and Western humanists, among others. Historical Poland and Hungary, countries largely similar in their social structures, were perceived by the Catholic Church in a similar role for many centuries.

The idea of nations coming to each other's assistance to fight against Turkish invasion goes back to the Polish kings Casimir Jagiellonian (1447–1492), Sigismund I (1506–1548), and Wladyslaw IV Vasa (1632–1648). Developing a joint line of protection against the Turks was a realistic concept, as the Turkish sultan not only waged war against Hungary and Vienna, but also turned against the south of Poland. The Popes urged such an alliance and counted on Poland to assist them in their efforts.<sup>4</sup>

This shared concept of being an *antemural* (a bastion of Christianity) is clearly manifested in the speech of the representative of István Báthory, Prince of Transylvania at the time, commending his Prince to the Polish throne, in which he called Sarmatia the wall defending the whole of Europe: "Respublica christiana, cujus murus aeneus est Sarmatia".<sup>5</sup> This suggests that the ideology existed in some form before 1575, when the diet – or *Sejm* – elected the Polish sovereign.

The sermons (collected as *Kazania sejmowe* or 'Diet Sermons') of Piotr Skarga (originally Piotr Paweski, 1536–1612), the Polish Jesuit,<sup>6</sup> and the following poem by the Hungarian poet Bálint Balassi,<sup>7</sup> who was familiar with both cultures, continued the same topos:

Oh, my sweet Homeland, my good Hungary,  
You carry the shield to protect Christianity  
And carry a sharp sabre smeared in pagan blood,  
My glorious teacher, now farewell...

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<sup>4</sup> See Lajos Hopp, *A lengyel-magyar hagyományok újjászületése* [The rebirth of Polish–Hungarian traditions] (Budapest, 1972).

<sup>5</sup> Lajos Szádeczky, *Báthory István lengyel királlyá választása* [The election of István Báthory as king of Poland] (Budapest, 1887), p. 316.

<sup>6</sup> See Piotr Skarga, *Kazania Sejmowe*, ed. Janusz Tazbir (Wrocław, Ossolineum, 1972).

<sup>7</sup> See [The 66<sup>th</sup>] Valedicit patriae, amicis iisque omnibus quae habuit carissima ad notam: 'All beasts do sing your glory, Our Lord', Balassi Bálint, *Versei* (Poems) (Budapest, 1993), pp. 137–138.

Hungary's defeat at Mohács (1526) was a national tragedy and brought about the country's collapse, leading to its three-way partition in 1547. In the spirit of the religious historicism of the period, the tragedy was perceived as an obvious sign of God's will because God directly controls the fate of nations, punishing or rewarding them as they deserve. Gáspár Károlyi, the translator of the Bible into Hungarian, came to the same conclusion. He wrote: "This is the reason for our misfortunes and the misfortunes of our princes; this is why the country is looted by pagan Turks; this is why we had to suffer a defeat at our frontiers. But it is mostly the consequence of the principal sins, which I recounted before, and until we abandon these sins, the country can never be free, and only God's grace can save us from total annihilation. It is because our sins are greater than those of Sodom and Gomorra, as Ezekiel said about the people of Israel". Discerning God's punishment for these sins, he goes on: "As not even a single hair on our heads can fall out without God's will, likewise the destruction of such a glorious and great country, and of such a noble and strong people, cannot happen without God's will, as Christ said."<sup>8</sup> Studies by Kálmán Benda, Katalin Péter, and Sándor Óze have concluded that in contemporary thinking the Turkish invasion was God's punishment, the sign of his wrath against the Hungarian people for their sins. It follows that divine punishment serves a purpose: God strikes down those whom he loves best, to make them better. As formerly the Jews, now the Hungarian people were the closest to God's heart, and their punishment also marked a test of their worthiness for being chosen.<sup>9</sup>

Attempts to write a Hungarian national epic in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were remnants of the same topos. These include György Bessenyei's 'The Tragedy of Attila and Buda', a memento of the tragic conflict of two brothers. Attila murders Buda, and the Huns must retreat for his sin, but only to return with Árpád, as "the Gods meant these parts for them".<sup>10</sup>

In Poland, the continuity of the same thinking was taken even further during its wars with countries professing a different faith (mostly Sweden and Russia), by adding the 'Polish = Catholic' stereotype.

In Poland, the 'antemural' principle was part of the publicity arsenal of the chancellery of King Albert (Jan Olbracht 1492–1501). A letter written (in 1500) to Pope Alexander VI (1492–1503), gives a definition of Polish 'antemuralia' (a role formerly attributed to Venice). It meant redefining the historical mission of the Polish–Lithuanian alliance: "Poland (together with

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<sup>8</sup> Károlyi Gáspár, *a gönci prédikátor*. [(Gáspár Károli, the Preacher of Gönc)] Written and edited, conclusion and notes by András Szabó (Budapest, Magyar Hírmondó, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> See Sándor Óze, *Bűneiért bünteti Isten a magyar népet. Egy bibliai párhuzam vizsgálata a XVI. századi nyomtatott egyházi irodalom alapján* [God punishes the Hungarian people for its sins . . . ] (Budapest, 1991, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum).

<sup>10</sup> György Bessenyei, *Attila és Buda tragédiája* [The tragedy of Attila and Buda], 2nd edition (Buda, 1787), p. 150.

Lithuania) is the antemural [a strong, high wall with turrets] of the Empire, its protector against the pagans.” Polish diplomacy took up the same argument during its talks with the Papal Curia and Venice, as well as at meetings with the German Estates.<sup>11</sup>

The events of subsequent periods, mostly those of the late eighteenth century (the partition of Poland in three stages), fundamentally determined the development of Polish national consciousness. The dissipation of exaggerated hopes in Napoleon and the crushing of the uprising in November 1830–31 forced the Polish political elite to emigrate to Paris, which thus became a centre of Polish national thought.

This greatly influenced the emergence of Polish Messianism, which at the beginning mostly comprised Adam Mickiewicz’s circle. The first important manifestation of Polish Messianism was Part 3 of Mickiewicz’s *Dziady* (‘Forefather’s eve’), written in Dresden,<sup>12</sup> *Dziady* had a great impact on Polish literature, not only by creating a new dramatic genre, but also because it described national liberation in a new and highly original manner. In Part 3, Mickiewicz goes back to his impressions as a young man and compares the persecution of the young people of Vilna with the first persecutions of Christians, and the partition of Poland with the sufferings of Christ on the cross. Just as, by his resurrection, Christ conquered death, so Poland will achieve freedom. Written directly after the suppression of the November uprising, Mickiewicz’s symbolism is entirely understandable: he wanted to send a clear message to the disillusioned and those who had to flee that their sufferings and struggle would not be in vain, and that their defeat was not the end, because, like Christ, Poland would be resurrected. The message of *Dziady* is that Poland was selected by God to fight the evil manifested in Russian tsarism in recognition of its unpunished sufferings and its ancient contribution to the defence of the Christian faith and freedom. With *Dziady*, Mickiewicz created a Polish national myth.<sup>13</sup>

But Mickiewicz’s principal work on defending faith and liberty is *Books of the Polish Nation and its Pilgrimage*, the best known and most important document of Messianism.<sup>14</sup> In this book the sufferings of Christ symbolise the

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<sup>11</sup> Lajos Hopp and Jan Ślaski, *A magyar–lengyel műltszemlélet előzményei, politikai és kulturális hagyományok Báthory Istvánig [The History of the Hungarian–Polish View of the Past, Political and Cultural Traditions until the Era of István Báthory]* (Budapest, 1992), p. 64.

<sup>12</sup> Adam Mickiewicz, *Dziady* (Warsaw, 1991).

<sup>13</sup> See *Historia literatury polskiej w zarysie*, ed. M. Stepien and A. Wilkoń, pp. 238–239; Endre Kovács, *A lengyel irodalom története [The History of Polish Literature]* (Budapest, 1960), pp. 156–161.

<sup>14</sup> Adam Mickiewicz, *A lengyel nép és lengyel zarándokság könyvei magyar, lengyel és francia nyelven* [‘Books of the Polish Nation and its Pilgrimage’ in Hungarian, Polish, and French], ed. István D. Molnár (Budapest, 1998).



fate of Poland, whereas the martyrdom of Poland is interpreted as Christ's sacrifice, portraying Poland as the Christ of all nations, and the country's fall as a crucial moment in the history of Humanity. According to Mickiewicz, the role of Polish emigrants was to protect freedom, and he tried to show Poland's role in creating a new world order. He presents Polish emigrants not as mere emigrants, but as pilgrims, standing up for Polish freedom and – in a wider context – the struggle for freedom on the part of the whole of Humanity. Consequently, there must be Poles in any part of the world where an attempt is being made to end tyranny. Therefore Polish emigration has to be united and strong, which can be achieved only by the love of faith and freedom, and the self-denying renunciation of material wealth.

In this book Mickiewicz, like Christ, teaches in the form of proverbs and declares that the French, Germans, and Russians should do the same as the Poles and Lithuanians, protecting freedom rather than fighting over territory. In the first part of the book, Mickiewicz gives a historico-philosophical overview of human history, emphatically condemning the rulers of the powerful countries who partitioned Poland. The second part of the book is about the status and role of Polish emigration, and is concluded by a prayer and litany for the heroes and saints of the historical Rzeczpospolita.

Mickiewicz's book was a kind of political catechism for Polish emigrants, reinforced by the fact that when they were en-route to France, they were greeted by Germans as spokesmen for a common cause. As a result, many of them developed a false belief in international solidarity between nations.

Soon after the appearance of *Books of the Polish Nation and its Pilgrimage*, Mickiewicz published a completely different book. He worked on his greatest masterpiece, *Pan Tadeusz*, a portrayal of the Polish nobility during the age of Napoleon, from the end of 1832 to 1834. After writing *Pan Tadeusz*, Mickiewicz, apart from a few fine poems, wrote no more. From 1838 he lectured at the University of Lausanne, and from 1839 he taught Slavic literature at the Faculty of Slavonic studies at the Collège de France in Paris. He was relieved of his position in 1844, however, for becoming preoccupied with the mystical doctrines of the mesmerist Andrzej Towiański.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, his lectures were highly popular, being attended by large crowds of students, and had a great influence on students of Eastern European origins studying in Paris.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to Mickiewicz, a number of Polish Romantics shared Messianic views. Mention must be made here of another great poet of the period,

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<sup>15</sup> Andrzej Towiański (1799–1878), Polish philosopher, representative of a particular school within Messianism, and founder of a sect of religious mysticism. Compare György Spiró, *A jövevény* (Budapest, 1992).

<sup>16</sup> See Adam Mickiewicz, *Dzieła*, in vols. VIII, IX, X, and XI of *Literatura Słowińska* (Warsaw, 1955).

Juliusz Słowacki (1809–1849). Taking further the views of Mickiewicz, Słowacki argued that the sufferings experienced by the Polish nation had made the Polish spirit stronger, and so the Polish people surpass all other nations in terms of heroism and the sanctity of their lives. And if the Polish people can lead other nations, it follows that the Church of Poland should assume leadership of all other Churches. And if leadership of the Church as such is provided by the Church of Poland, then the person who fills the highest ecclesiastical position should also be Polish. The flight to Rome of Pope Pius IX in 1848 only reinforced the faith in a strong Polish–Slav pope.<sup>17</sup>

Naturally, Polish philosophical thought of the 1930s and 1940s was not restricted to Messianists or the followers of Towiański, but all thinkers shared the idea of Poland having a national mission. The sense of having a mission – that is, having to labour for Humanity – was shared by many of the countries associated with Romanticism (France and Italy, for instance), but it was best developed in Poland.

The Saint-Simonist school in France professed ideas similar to those of Mickiewicz: in their journal *Globe* they identified France with the Christ of all nations. Also, the two most influential figures of French Catholic liberalism, Lamennais and Montalambert, became directly influenced by Mickiewicz's work. Montalambert was completely carried away by the Polish uprising of 1830–31: he studied Polish, established contacts with Polish refugees in France, and published and wrote a foreword to Mickiewicz's book. (Montalambert also had Hungarian contacts: according to some, he became part of the line of Saint Elisabeth of the House of Árpád by virtue of his marriage in 1836). Mickiewicz's *Books of the Polish Nation and its Pilgrimage* influenced not only Montalambert, but also one of Lamennais' most important works, *Paroles d'un croyant* (The Words of a Believer), which was published in 1834. Mickiewicz addressed the present and future of his country in terms of the fate of Humanity with the same Biblical and prophetic pathos as Lamennais.<sup>18</sup>

The question is the following: did Mickiewicz and his book have any influence in Central Europe?

Messianic ideas reached Slovak-speaking lands with Polish assistance, although Slovak thinkers of the period of Romanticism might also have come across the French concept of Messianism via German authors. The young followers of Ľudovít Štúr were familiar primarily with Mickiewicz, but also other authors of Romanticism. Contact with Polish emigration in Paris (and with *Vzájemnost* in Vienna) raised awareness of the writings of Mickiewicz and other

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<sup>17</sup> Andrzej Walicki, "Uniwersalizm i narodowość w polskiej myśli filozoficznej i koncepcjach mesjanistycznych epoki Romantyzmu (po roku 1831)" in *Uniwersalizm i swoistość kultury polskiej*, ed. Jerzy Kłoczowski, vol. 2 (Lublin, 1990), p. 45.

<sup>18</sup> See J. Szalay, *A katolikus gondolat útja az újkori Franciaországban* [Catholic Thought in Modern France] (Budapest, 1935).

Messianic Polish philosophers, such as Cieszkowski<sup>19</sup> and Towiański, among others. Slovak Messianism can be divided into two strands: the first entailed possession of a sense of national mission and the second a belief that one's homeland was God's country on Earth. The former cropped up in the work of Slovak authors as early as the 1830s, while the latter only appeared later, during the 1850s and 1860s, particularly in Hroboň's poetry. In contrast with Poland, Messianism in Slovakia had an impact on no more than a handful of writers with a scientific or philosophical inclination, such as Štúr or Hodža, and particularly Hroboň. The most important text of this nature was Štúr's 'On the Old and the New Age of Slovakia' (1841).<sup>20</sup> (Štúr had already published a poem glorifying Sobieski and mourning Ostrołęka.)

With Slovakia the question arises: how could such a young nation, only just emerging, see itself as the saviour of all nations? But one should recall the myth of Great Moravia, which had already taken root by this time and which had successfully closed the gap presented by the lack of a political past. It should also be remembered that Panslavism was highly influential in Slovakia: Slovak Romanticism was preoccupied with the idea of a higher Slav patriotism above mere national affiliation. A Slav world still untainted by Western civilisation (also acclaimed by Herder) was thought to be destined to create the world of the future. Štúr propagated the same idea in his lectures. The belief that the Slovakian nation was the oldest of all the Slavic nations and that the Slovakian land was the cradle of Slav culture, justified the thesis that the Slovak people were predestined to serve a higher purpose. In contrast, the Poles distinguished themselves within the Slav world as the nation which had suffered the most.<sup>21</sup>

In Hungary, Gábor Kazinczy (nephew of Ferenc Kazinczy, poet and reformer of the Hungarian language) studied Mickiewicz and translated Mickiewicz's entire *oeuvre* (this is still the only available Hungarian translation). Having completed his studies in Sárospatak, Kazinczy travelled to Pozsony (now Bratislava) in early November 1835, to enter the service of Gábor Lónyay, the delegate for Zemplén County. Still not yet 18 years of age, he began to translate Lamennais' *Paroles d'un croyant* (*The Words of a Believer*) – which was already being circulated, albeit in secret – in January 1836. In all probability, he came across Mickiewicz's books at this time (as István D. Molnár points out) in French, mostly as a result of Lamennais' influence. He finished the translation in October 1836, but there was no possibility of

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<sup>19</sup> August Cieszkowski (1814–1894), Polish philosopher and economist. A founder of Messianism. A philosophical follower of Hegel, although this did not prevent him from criticizing many aspects of Hegel's work.

<sup>20</sup> See 'Starý i nový vek Slovákov', in Ludovít Štúr, *Dielo II* (Bratislava, 1986), pp. 140–161.

<sup>21</sup> See Joanna Goszczyńska, 'Mesjanizm w polskiej i słowackiej literaturze romantycznej (próba konfrontacji)', in *Materials of the Symposium Polono-Hungarica, Nyelvészet-Irodalom-Történelem-Kultúrtörténet*, ed. Janusz Banczerowski (Budapest, 1992), pp. 143–148.

publication at that time: it had to wait until 1839, the opening of the new session of Parliament, when selected extracts were finally published in *Atheneum*, together with another text on Poland, dealing with the announcement of the verdict in the Szymon Konarski trial.<sup>22</sup> This publication contained passages from six books, which Kazinczy numbered differently from Mickiewicz's original sequence. Later, more chapters from the *Books of the Polish Nation and its Pilgrimage* were published in a periodical entitled *Közlemények az Élet és a Tudományok Köréből* (Sketches from life and science), edited by Mihály Kovácsóczy.<sup>23</sup> Therefore only 15 out of the 24 chapters of the *Books of the Polish Nation and its Pilgrimage* were published in Hungarian translation in the period 1839–1841.<sup>24</sup> Mickiewicz's writings were influential not only in Hungary and Slovakia, but in Central Europe as a whole. He was first translated into Czech as early as in 1833, and was also translated into Croatian, Ukrainian, and Romanian.<sup>25</sup>

It is worth saying something about the circumstances under which the book was published. The Hungarian translation was made at a time when Austro-Hungarian relations had become particularly strained: Parliament was disbanded and leading Hungarian politicians were arrested. Mickiewicz's book was also about a nation which was – at least partly – under Austrian rule. From the Hungarian point of view, supporting the Poles amounted to striking a blow against the Habsburgs.

Mickiewicz's book strongly influenced Kazinczy's writings, but it is often difficult to say whether the ideas of Messianism were taken from Mickiewicz or Lamennais (we know that Lamennais' book was widely read by Hungarian pro-parliamentary youth).

Special attention should be paid to a book written by a young lawyer, Pál Bozzai (1829–1852), *Kelet Könyvei* (The Books of the East), published in 1845. It contains 15 chapters of proverbs, maxims, and prophecies. Bozzai had also translated the Marseillaise and had written poetry glorifying the November Uprising at the age of 15.

Apart from Lamennais' influence, we should not forget the impact on Bozzai's development of Mickiewicz's popularity among Hungarian and Slovakian students in Pozsony and Késmárk. It is sufficient in this connection to mention the writings of István Csapláros, who identified the same influence on

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<sup>22</sup> Szymon Konarski (1808–1839): politician, radical democrat, and soldier in the November Uprising. Shot in Vilna in 1839.

<sup>23</sup> István Csapláros, *Polskie walki wolnościowe w węgierskim życiu kulturalnym (1772–1918)*, część I. (Warszawa, n. d. ), pp. 202–203.

<sup>24</sup> Kazinczy's manuscript is kept at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 1998 it was published in Hungarian, Polish, and French for the Mickiewicz centenary (edited by István D. Molnár).

<sup>25</sup> For details see Csapláros, *Polskie walki wolnościowe*, pp. 197–200.

the work of Pál Sárosy, who read and attempted to translate ‘Konrad Wallenrod’ and *Pan Tadeusz*.<sup>26</sup>

At the turn of the twenty-first century the name of Pál Bozzai has passed into obscurity, and we have also forgotten Gábor Kazinczy. This is hardly surprising, since neither of them belonged to the upper echelons of early-nineteenth century Hungarian literature. Messianism had a far less direct influence on the writings of the outstanding Hungarian prose writers and poets of the period, although we can find references to Mickiewicz’s work, and even more so to Polish–Hungarian friendship and a shared past, in both political and literary writings. The turn of the eighteenth century marked the beginning of a new trend in Hungarian *belles lettres*, whereby the traditions and remnants of Hungarian ancient history began to receive attention. At the same time, and totally in contrast with the trend in Poland, the idea of the death of the nation came to dominate Hungarian literary thinking (despite the fact that the situation in which the Polish people and Poland found themselves at the time happened to be far bleaker than what Hungary had to face).

According to the definition of Andrzej Walicki, the Polish philosopher and literary scholar, the term ‘Messianism’ can be applied properly speaking only when a sense of national mission is sanctified. Accordingly, the Hungarian and Polish sense of national mission in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was only a forerunner of Messianism. In Poland, however, perhaps because the country had taken a different course of development in the late eighteenth century, and because of the closer link between Catholicism–Religion–Church and the sense of Polish national mission, Messianism was more dominant in Poland than elsewhere in the early nineteenth century.

For these reasons – rooted in the country’s historical development – the sense of being the chosen nation was strongest in Poland in the nineteenth century, although other nations in the region shared it to some extent, and it had clearly been present throughout Central Europe in the form of the ideology of the ‘*antemurale*’ or *propugnaculum christianitatis* since the end of the Middle Ages.

The ideology of Messianism did not end with the great generation of Romanticism, but survived into the twentieth century. In Poland, its importance declined in the early twentieth century, as suggested by the relative paucity of references, but it then re-emerged with particular force after the Second World War, when Polish (Catholic) society increasingly crystallised around the Catholic Church in reaction to the Communist dictatorship.

The work of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński (1901–1981) was a clear indication of this. Cardinal Wyszyński gradually emerged as a true leader of the Polish nation, a society with very strong traditions concerning the assumption by

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<sup>26</sup> Csapláros, *Polskie walki wolnościowe*, pp. 176–186.

the Cardinal of the role of interrex: that is, the cardinal was second only to the monarch and could act as the monarch's substitute if need be. Up until the end of his life, Cardinal Wyszyński continued to refer to himself as the teacher of the Polish nation.<sup>27</sup> The Cardinal's reflections, written during his three years of house arrest, convey his acute awareness of the grave responsibility of his office, and sought to guide his compatriots by means of the powerful instrument of his personal and living testimony.<sup>28</sup>

While still under house arrest in 1956 Cardinal Wyszyński wrote the *Oaths of Jasna Gora*, which the Polish nation made once again at the foot of the Monastery of the Paulist Order in Częstochowa, in commemoration of the victory of King John II Casimir Vasa over Sweden 300 years earlier, when he entrusted Poland to the care of the Blessed Virgin, and declared the Black Madonna of Czestochowa as the Queen of Poland.

The next notable event was the millennium of the conversion of Poland to Christianity (1966), when the Cardinal declared a programme for the comprehensive moral and ethical revival of the Polish nation.

The Cardinal's doctrinal views often demonstrated the influence of Messianism: he saw a parallel between the mission of Poland and the sufferings of Christ and His death on the cross. Like Mickiewicz, Cardinal Wyszyński believed that the history of Poland was full of the mystical and the supernatural. Poland was at the centre of his theology. 'Polska zawsze wierna Bogu' (Poland is faithful to God forever), he used to say, which suggests that the commitment was mutual: God counts on the Polish nation. According to the Cardinal, the Polish nation has a special mission: first it has to be spiritually reborn; then it has to become internally united, to strengthen the institution of the family; and finally, it has to develop its Christian faith to such an extent that it will be strong enough to combat evil.

Cardinal Wyszyński thought that Poland had an important role to play in the spiritual unification of Europe. Poland must never abandon the Christian legacy of its ancestors. Poland is inherently part of Western – Latin – culture, despite being located on its eastern border, so entitling Poland to pursue a mission in the eastern half of Europe.<sup>29</sup>

Cardinal Wyszyński's Messianism was devoid of exclusionism directed towards particular groups or communities, and bore no trace of national megalomania, no promise of a bright future here on Earth – in contrast with his nineteenth-century predecessors – nor did he claim that Poland was the Messiah of nations. He asserted that the Polish nation had neither more nor less virtues

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<sup>27</sup> See Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *Kościół w służbie narodu* (Rzym, 1981), p. 208.

<sup>28</sup> See Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *Zapiski Więzienne*.

<sup>29</sup> See Marian Apostol, *Le messianisme polonais selon les cours d'Adam Mickiewicz au Collège de France entre 1840 et 1844* (Strasbourg, 1986).

than other nations, but was distinguished only by its long history and characteristic Christian traditions.

The ideas of Cardinal Wyszyński greatly influenced Karol Wojtyła, Cardinal of Cracow. The election of Cardinal Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II was a major event in Poland: symbolically, his election marked the liberation of the entire nation. Słowacki's prophecy of a Slav Pope was frequently recited.

In the very first speech of his first visit to Poland as pope, John Paul II spoke about Poland's special place in the Christian world, and its consequent heightened responsibility.<sup>30</sup>

In the early 1980s, Messianic elements can be found in the work of Jerzy Popiełuszko (1947–1984), the priest from Warsaw who died under tragic circumstances, including his holy masses and the sermons which he dedicated regularly to the Homeland every month in front of a large congregation in his parish church, and for which he later died a martyr's death.<sup>31</sup>

In Hungary, similarities can be demonstrated in the life of Archbishop József Mindszenty. In one of his radio broadcasts, Mindszenty said: "We are a small nation. A small country on the globe. Yet we are the first in this: there is no other nation which has suffered more than we have over its thousand-year history. We developed into a great nation following the reign of Saint Stephen, our first king. At the time of Hungary's victory at Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade), of which we are now celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the country's population was identical to that of contemporary England. But we had to fight one freedom-fight after another, mostly to protect Western Europe. This jeopardised our national development, and we had to get back onto our feet from time to time again without help from anyone but ourselves."<sup>32</sup>

Similarly to Cardinal Wyszyński, Archbishop József Mindszenty hoped to bring about the spiritual revival of the Hungarian nation as the prerequisite of political freedom. But unlike his Polish contemporaries, Mindszenty did not have the means to do so.

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<sup>30</sup> See *Pokój tobie Polsko, Ojczyzno moja*, ed. Stefan Dusza SAC and Franciszek Mąkinia SAC (Poznań, 1979), p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> See Peter Raina, *Kościół w Polsce: 1981-1984* (London, 1985).

<sup>32</sup> József Mindszenty, *Emlékirataim* [Memoirs] (Budapest, 1989), p. 438.

## National and Religious Identity in the Central European National Anthems

The concept of the national anthem can be described in the tradition of both literary history and the history of ideas. However, the national anthem is one of the symbols of the modern nations, hence it can be approached from the standpoint of cultural anthropology and even of law. It is well known that a certain type of consensus – the law of tradition – determines the status of the national anthem. In a number of cases, the constitution specifies the author and the title of the poem (or even the stanza) of the national anthem of the country.

Since the state as the subject of international law is rather new – not so much a creation of the past, but a current development – in the history of the Central European region, it would not be expedient to restrict the investigation of the context of national and religious identity to only those texts officially recognized as national symbols. It takes a longer process before public opinion accepts certain poems as national symbols, and it is well-known that the current national anthems of Central Europe are without exception the products of the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Furthermore, it is characteristic of the formation of nations in this region that the concepts of the nation state had been formed against the existing framework of states and empires. This implies that the concept of nations had often been inasmuch a projection of hopes and dreams as reflections of political reality. The literary texts chosen to be national anthems had not been related to the political reality of existing dynastic empires. In other words they did not reflect real statehood and they could not invite those to whom the poems were addressed to identify with both the nation and the state. The emergence of the national anthems and their public acceptance are linked to the long process of the formation of modern nations and the nation states.

This paper aims to highlight the relationship between the text of those poems that became national symbols and the heritage of Christian culture. Hence, we consider the most important symbolic poems that had been canonized by tradition. As to defining the Central European region, I consider relevant those historical zones where the formation of nations had been carried out among similar political and ideological dilemmas. The term “Central Europe” refers to the macro region between the German and Russian linguistic territories, the territory occupied by several small- and medium-sized nations. Comparative literary studies and historiography often name this territory “East-Central Europe”, where one of the most important cultural demarcation lines of European civilization lies: the border-line of Eastern and Western Christianity.



Hence, it may be of special interest to see how the heritage of Christian culture features among this group of national symbols.

It is difficult to determine exactly and adequately in each and every national literary tradition of the region those poems that belong to the circle of national symbols. Obviously, these national symbols have their history; public consensus may canonize new texts and allow others to fall into oblivion. Yet, it is possible to say that in the two-hundred-year process of nation-building a general public consensus has been formed in regard to which poems public opinion considers as national symbols from the mid-nineteenth century. In certain cases, we might still witness debates concerning which texts belong to the sacred literary canon, comprised of usually 3–4 poems. I propose that in the case of native speakers of Hungarian, there is a consensus that besides the *Hymn* (1823) of Ferenc Kölcsey, of which the first stanza still stands for the national anthem to this day, the *Szózat /Summons/* (1836) of Mihály Vörösmarty and the *Nemzeti dal /National Song/* (1848) of Sándor Petöfi count as the primary national literary symbols. The fact that the process of the creation and the search for literary national symbols has not yet settled is shown in the debate on the Slovenian national anthem at the time of the formation of the new state. It was known that the Slovenes regarded Simon Jenko's march song titled *Naprej, zastava Slave /With Slavia's banner, forward/* written in 1860 as the "Slovene Marseillaise", their national anthem in the second half of the nineteenth century<sup>1</sup>. The first stanza of this poem was included (as the third stanza) in the national anthem of the newly formed Serbo-Croatian-Slovene Kingdom in 1918. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1990, however, when the Slovene Parliament passed the Republic's Declaration of Independence, the Members of Parliament sang the seventh stanza of France Prešeren's poem titled *Zdravljica* (Toast), and subsequently this was chosen to be the national anthem of Slovenia.<sup>2</sup>

We shall deal with a certain group of national literary symbols together with the emergence, features and forms of the Christian heritage. Therefore, the starting point of our examination is that the analyzed texts have a status as national symbols. The identity-related content of these symbolic poems has been shaped by literary tradition, richly rooted in Biblical forms and topics, by the Ancient Greek and Roman classics and the national cultural heritage, as well as by the various impulses of contemporary world literature.

Before having a closer look at the tradition behind the examined literary symbols and the different layers of Christian heritage, we should say a few words concerning the ways and means through which the concept and symbolism of national identity in Central Europe is related to religious identity. I would not like to engage in discussions on defining the concept of Central

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<sup>1</sup> It was first published in the newspaper Slovenski Glasnik (Klagenfurt, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1860.)

<sup>2</sup> Prešeren wrote it in 1844, though it was published only in 1848.

Europe. These debates have been going on for decades. I shall operate with the above outlined concept of “transitional” European region and its national symbolic poems.

The modern nation is, par excellence, a secularized community in the Western European historical development, which was frequently regarded as a model in Central Europe. We could say with some exaggeration that since the end of the eighteenth century religious culture, which had determined all aspects of life, was overtaken by the culture of national identity. There is certainly a temporal difference between the two types of identity perceptions. The idea of the dynastic kingdom or empire had been closely affiliated with the religious community. The newly formed community, the nation – especially in revolutionary France – clashed with the dynasty and the Church. The ideologists of the nation, the thinkers of the Enlightenment were rational humanists, representatives of the Third Estate. In Central Europe, however, in the formation of modern national identity, the clerical intellectuals had played an important role, and the creators of ideologies relied more on tradition in creating national symbols. We should also consider the time lapse between Central and Western Europe: The decisive period of articulating the nations’ set of national beliefs and symbols took place during Romanticism. To sum up, we may argue that national and religious identities in Central Europe were far more intertwined than in the Western European historical development. Of course, it does not mean that in Central Europe the dynastic order and imperial thought could have generated the national ideal as in Russia, where the interdependence of the person of the Czar and the Eastern Orthodoxy was the core idea of the imperial state.

We ought to make two distinctions here. The first distinction separates the zones of Western and Eastern Christianity. The second one distinguishes those nations where national ideas had been related to the tradition and manifestation of a single religion or denomination, from those nations where the national idea was articulated in two varieties. For example, László Hadrovics, in his seminal work makes a distinction between a Western type (Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Slovene) and an Eastern type of historical development (Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian) on the basis of the example provided by the role that the Serbian National Church had taken during the Ottoman rule: “Religion and Church, hence, were in such an organic relationship with the political endeavors of the nation that it is impossible to grasp the evolution of the Eastern type of nationalism through the conceptual framework of Western nationalism.”<sup>3</sup> Even if we agree with this kind of distinction, taking into account the Byzantine-Eastern

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<sup>3</sup> Hadrovics László: *Le peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque*. Bp., 1947. New edition: *Vallás, egyház, nemzetudat*. (Religion, Church, Nation – the National Role of the Serbian Church during the Ottoman Rule.) Bp., 1991.

Orthodox characteristics of the relationship between political power and the clerical hierarchy, we should note that the role of church and clerical organizations and traditions was also considerable in the case of those Central European nations that belonged to Western Christianity. The bond between national thought and religious identity was tight in the national movements of those nations, which belonged to the stereotypical scheme of the one-nation-one religion pattern. A well-known example is the Polish one, where this bond was strengthened by the fact that two of the great powers dividing the country – Russia and Prussia – had state religions other than Polish Catholicism.

There are less instances referring to denominational identity in the literary texts elevated to national symbols of those nations that were characterized by religious duality. This pattern applies primarily to the Slovaks and Hungarians, and, to a lesser extent, the Czechs. In these cases, the usage of distinctive symbols and the various traditions of religious identity would have prevented the creation of texts contributing to a unified national culture. Even though the various denominational traditions can be traced even in these texts, they did not acquire apparently visible forms. It is worth mentioning the decisive instance in the formation of the Czech national movement and frame of thought which centered around the Hussite tradition in interpreting the past, which was due mainly to the grand historical synthesis of František Palacký.<sup>4</sup> At that time, the number of Protestants constituted an insignificant minority in Czech society and the Catholics were associated with the Habsburgs and Germans, according to liberal national ideology. There were some Czech patriots who did not consider even Saint Venceslav to belong to the Czech national pantheon.<sup>5</sup> We could also quote Josef Kajetan Tyl, the author of the national anthem, who, in his historical play (*Krvavé křtiny čili Drahomira a její synové* - Bloody Baptism, or Drahomira and her sons) shares sympathy with Boleslav, who killed his brother Venceslav, later the patron saint of Bohemia.

Undoubtedly, the national idea had been more and more secularized in the nineteenth century in Central Europe as well as in the West, and the denominational features were less apparent in the reinvented traditions. Before we relate this process to the emergence of national anthems, we should say a few words about the commonly shared literary symbols that fulfilled a similar role before the formation of the modern nation states. A number of researchers treat them as early national anthems, although this implies a flashback that treats the concept of the nation as unhistorical. It is indisputable that these poems, often in the genre of hymn, express some kind of common identity, yet they address a very different community than the nation state.

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<sup>4</sup> Palacký, František: *Dejiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě*. I-VI. In Hungarian: *A huszitizmus története* (The History of Hussites.) Európa Könyvkiadó Bp., 1984.

<sup>5</sup> See Jiří Rak's study on national myths (*Byvalí Čechové*, H and H, Jinočany 1994.), and its chapter on the cult of Saint Wenceslaus: *Dědictví svatého Václava*.

This mainly applies to the hymns of national saints, and patron saints of the country. The oldest poems written in Polish and Czech belong to this category. The Polish *Bogurodzica* (God-parent) is a prayer to the Virgin Mary. The fifteenth century chronicler, Jan Długosz calls it *carmen patrium*, which the Polish army used to sing before battles according to tradition, similarly to the Czech soldiers singing the Saint Venceslav chorale. We may consider the cult of Mary as a common Central European tradition, in which the Baroque and the Counter-Reformation played an important part. We should also mention the Hungarian concept of *Regnum Marianum* the formula of the Czech Jesuit historian Bohuslav Balbin from the seventeenth century who named the Virgin Mary of Old Boleslav the *palladium* of Bohemia. The Black Madonna of Częstochowa, as is well-known, had become the symbol of victory of the siege against the seventeenth century Swedish “flood”, and it was after that event that King John Casimir offered Poland to the protection of the Holy Virgin. In all three cases, the mother of Jesus performed a national mission being distinctively related to these countries, as was exemplified in numerous Polish and Hungarian folk songs. In those clerical hymns where national (patron) saints are mentioned – the Czech Venceslav, the Polish Stanislas, the Hungarian Stephen, Adalbert of Czech descent – they express through their homage the content of the community’s loyalty to the country as a territorial entity. During the time of Poland’s partition, the cult of Saint Adalbert, the *Bogurodzica* sang at his grave at Gniezno, aimed to recall the old glory of the country and its unity.

In the Hungarian and Slovak tradition, there is an easily detectable Catholic and Protestant set of symbolic literary traditions. In the pantheon of historical memory heroes are different as the symbols of the Catholic and Protestant “nation” are different. Since the end of the sixteenth century the literary language of the Slovakian Protestants has been the *bibličtina*, reflecting the language of the Czech *Králice Bible*. Therefore, in this tradition *Cithara Sanctorum*, a songbook published by Jiří (Juraj) Třanovský in 1636, occupies a central position. *Tranoscius* had become a crucial source as it was the primary source of Slovakian literary and national tradition for centuries. The decisive instance in the Catholic Slovakian tradition was the cult of Cyril and Metod. After the “discovery” of the Slavonic apostles in the Baroque, the national awakening movement had regarded them as “national” saints. At that time, however, the cult did not constitute a demarcation line between Catholics and Protestants as had happened at the time of Counter-Reformation. The Romantic epic poem (*Cirillo–Metodiáda*, 1835) of Ján Hollý was also accepted by the new Evangelical generation of the national awakening.

The tradition of *Regnum Marianum* and the song that gained country-wide popularity, starting with the lines *Our Blessed Virgin Mary (Boldogasszony Anyánk)* and dating from the beginning of the eighteenth century (composed by Bonifac Lancsics, a Benedictine monk from Pannonhalma) could not be part of

the modern Hungarian national literary symbols as it could not cross over denominational differences. Psalm 90 was similarly ruled out as it figured as the communal symbol of Reformed Hungarians. Nevertheless, these traditions had a strong impact in terms of the generic roots, motifs and topics on works of art that were chosen by public opinion to be national symbols between 1830 and 1867.

The relationship between the ancient classic literary genre of hymn and national hymns/anthems is often nothing more than a terminological coincidence. The genre and the literary patterns of the poems chosen to be national symbols show a great variety. Nevertheless, the literary genre of “patriotic songs” distinguished by contemporaries and later by literary historians, exhibited many examples that were related to the classical ode tradition of the hymn. The various national literary histories use the term of “patriotic songs”, hymnic poems (in Polish: *pieśń hymniczna*, in Serbian: *pesma himnična*, in Slovakian: *hymnická pieseň*). This not easily definable literary genre had its precedents in the literature of the Baroque and the Enlightenment, and it made its comeback during the period of Romantic national awakening. The works of patriotic poetry greatly contributed to the creation of the national society and they established the images of national heroes, preserved the memory and popularized the image of crucial events in the past. Those poems, which were later elevated to the status of national anthems, derived from this pool of patriotic poetry.

If we keep in mind the Christian heritage in analyzing the relationship between symbolic poems and this literary tradition, it is worth starting by exploring this literary genre since national anthems are often addressed to the homeland, the place of birth or the nation, and they do not praise God, rulers or dynasties, but much rather the homeland and the nation. There is, however, a type of national anthems that celebrates the ruler or the dynasty. It is therefore understandable that though we find relatively few dynastic hymns in Central Europe, there are some worthy of our attention. It is an important factor that the anthems of the two countries where such hymns existed, Romania and Serbia, belonged to Eastern Christianity where the secular and clerical powers were traditionally intertwined. Both states gained their independence in the nineteenth century, during a long historical process that had lasted for decades. Jovan Đorđević, the poet of the Serbian national anthem, wrote a play in 1872 (*Markova šablja*- The sword of Prince Marko) for the National Theatre of Belgrade to inaugurate Prince Milan Obrenović's succession to the throne. One song in the play begs to God to give His blessing to the young Prince. The play *Bože pravde* (God of Justice) fits well into the line of dynastic hymns, and bears the closest link to the Russian Czarist anthem (*Bože tsaria hrany* – God save the Czar), which was written upon the order of Nicholas I by Vasily Zukovsky in 1833. Romania also had a royal anthem after 1866 and between the two World Wars. The poem of Vasile Alecsandri glorifies the king (*Trăiască Regele* – Long Live the King) and asks Almighty God to protect the Romanian crown.

The history of one of the Polish national anthems was characteristically a Central European one in that it was originally written to jubilate the ruler, but later on it went through folklorization and served to express the Polish quest for freedom for over a century. *Boże coś Polskę...* (God, who wreathed Poland...) was written by Alojzy Feliński in 1816 to celebrate the first anniversary of the coronation of Czar Alexander I as Polish king. A significant part of contemporary Polish public opinion saw a great opportunity in the Polish Kingdom founded by the Congress of Vienna to attain national goals. The prayer of Feliński's was addressed to the Lord, who would preserve the country. During the 1863 Polish uprising one version of the poem had spread even to Hungary. I quote the opening lines: "Lord, thou who cherished Poland with light and your glorious embrace for many centuries/ protected her in perilous times/and she courageously strove with siege and peril." At the end of the poem, he prays as follows: "We beg Thou on our knees at the sacred altar/ God save our King." This prayer has been modified in the various folklorized versions, and it was renowned for generations as one of the more popular patriotic-clerical songs.<sup>6</sup> The closing lines ran as follows: "We beg you on our knees at the sacred altar/give us back our free homeland." We can witness how the "ruler" is replaced by the "homeland" and the "country" in the prayer. When the nations of Central Europe were deprived of their own state, the national anthems – especially when they had been accepted as national symbols – had referred directly to independence or to the concept of nation state. It is telling that Ferenc Kölcsey's *Himnusz /Hymn/* (1823) or the Croatian poem titled *Bože živi* (God bless... 1867) of Petar Preradović begs that he homeland and the nation be blessed.

Naturally, the national symbolic poems portray the homeland as a sacred land, as a sacred landscape. We can find an example for this in Antun Mihanović's Croatian national anthem (*Lijepa naša domovina* – Our beautiful country, 1835): "Our beautiful country/ O, heroic, gentle land/ancient home of old glory." In a way, this is the Promised Land – Canaan. In certain national symbolic poems, the homeland acquires the attributes of the fertile land, beautiful landscape, where there is harmony between the people and the surrounding nature: In other words, it is a blessed land. The Czech national anthem of Josef Kajetan Tyl (*Gde domov můj* – Where are you, my Country, 1834) depicts his country as an idyllic land. The poem was originally a song inserted into a popular play and was constituted of merely fourteen lines. I quote the first half, the laudation of the homeland:

"Where is my country?  
Water burbles in the meadows,  
Forests whisper through the hills,

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<sup>6</sup> Its history and cult was discussed in detail by Bogdan Zakrzewski: *Boże coś Polskę Alojza Felińskiego*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Ossolienum, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź, 1987. 63.

Spring flowers glitter in the gardens,  
It is earthly paradise at first sight!  
And this beautiful land – the land of Czechs  
– Is my home!”  
(rough translation)

It is worth noting that there is no exact part of the country or geographical reference named in the poem. It reminds us of the *Ideallandschaft* of the Romantic landscape painting and the picture suggests totality and harmony.

In the second and third stanza of the Croatian national anthem, the Promised Land appears in the form of genre-painting, illustrating the peaceful everyday life.

“Serene sky and merry forehead  
Mild bosom and soft evening,  
Hot summer and hot deeds,  
Clean water and clear eyes:  
Great mountains and great people,  
Red cheeks and red wine,  
Heavy thunder and strong arms-  
This is our homeland!”

“Sickle is reaping, scythe is swaying,  
The old man is in hurry, counting the sheaves,  
The cart is creaking as it carries the flour,  
The young wife is suckling her baby,  
The cattle is grazing, a horn is blaring,  
Ho, ho, it sounds out in the dark,  
Old and young are approaching the fire-  
This is our homeland!”

Ferec Kölcsey in his poem, *Himnusz /Hymn/*, depicts the Hungarian landscape as the plentiful Canaan, evoking the old topi of Pannonia dating from the Middle Ages.

“For us let the golden grain  
Grow upon the fields of Kunság  
And let Nectar’s silver rain  
Ripen grapes of Tokay soon.”

(Translated by William N. Loew, 1881)

In these lines, the poet denotes the exact parts and places of the country that he is thinking of.

It is worthwhile to have a look at the concept of God in the national symbolic poems, as well. From this perspective, we shall consider only those poems that praise either the dynasty or beg the homeland or the nation to be blessed. A number of symbolic poems constituted prayers to God that later had become the national anthems of the homeland personalized by a particular dynasty or ruler. Wherever the dynasty and the ruler are replaced by the nation, we find the concept of a God, who prospers and protects his nation, reminiscent of the God of the Old Testament leading his nation out of Egypt. "You conducted our forefathers to the holy hills of the Carpathians" – wrote Ferenc Kölcsey; "God, you who cherished Poland with light and your glorious embrace for many centuries/ protected her in perilous times"-wrote the Polish Feliński, who opened his poem in the form of a prayer. The God of the Croatian Preradović is addressed with a number of requests in the poem: the poet begs for blessing and formulates his numerous wishes on behalf of the nation. Among other things, he prays for the unification of the three countries of the nation (the so-called three-in-one-kingdom: Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia); he prays for strengthening the glorious nation of Croats, for keeping alive the holy flame of love for the country.

Of the national anthems of the region, the only poem is Andrei Mureșanu's titled *Deșteaptă-te Române* (Awaken, Romanian, 1848) which identifies his nation with Christianity.<sup>7</sup> The poem refers to the tradition of Christians defending their faith against the pagan Ottomans when it calls for freedom fighting. In order to achieve this, says the Romanian poet from Transylvania, the Church is indispensable (eleventh stanza): "Priests, raise the cross; this army is Christian."

The poem *Hej, Slované* (in the Slovakian version: *Hej, Slováci*) by the Slovakian poet Samo Tomášik, was written in 1848, and it was accepted as the unofficial national anthem of the Slav nations of Central Europe at the Pan-Slav Congress in Prague<sup>8</sup>. The poem was influenced by the nation concept of Herder, which identified nation with language. The poet made reference to language as it was God's gift: "The gift of language was entrusted to us by God" then swiftly identifies God with Perun, a god of pagan Slav mythology: "our thundering god" (third stanza). Christian heritage and the ancient Slav tradition to be revived

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<sup>7</sup> The original title of Mureșanu's poem is: *The Echo*. He wanted to reflect on the poem of Vasile Alecsandri, *Deșteptarea României* (Awakening of Romania), which gained popularity as the march song of Romanian rebels in Transylvania in 1848. It became the national anthem in 1989, following the December revolution that broke out in Timișoara (Temesvár) with the congregation of Pastor László Tökés.

<sup>8</sup> Brtáň, Rudo: *Všeslovanská hymna (Hej, Slováci, Hej, Slované...)*-Literárno-historický zborník 2-3. 1947-1948/I. sz. 47-69.



coexisted in idiosyncrasy. In the fourth stanza the Lutheran Slovakian Tomášik by quoting the often cited lines from the New Testament in his argumentation, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans, 8,31.) reinforces the national goal of protecting the mother tongue.

The national symbolic poems of Central Europe reflect both the complex dilemmas of the emerging nations and the presence of the Christian heritage in the literary works creating the concept of the modern nation. This tradition enriches the national mythology, which is to intensify the specific mission in compliance with the spirit of Romanticism. At the same time, however, we may observe that the national anthems reflect the secularization of the Christian tradition, because in a number of symbolic poems the object of laudation is the secularized community itself, the nation, which is not in need of transcendental mediators.

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