Between Minority and Majority

Hungarian and Jewish/Israeli ethnical and cultural experiences in recent centuries

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Edited by
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On the cover: Havdalah candle (used for rituals on Sabbaths) with the colours of the Hungarian flag, dating from the 1930s of Hungary. It expresses the patriotic feelings of Hungarian jews. From the collection of the Museum of Tzfat. Photo: Ritter Doron.

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Content

Preface

On May 4-6, 2011 in cooperation with historians from Hungary and Israel, the Balassi Institute organized a conference entitled "Between Minority and Majority" on the history of the Hungarian and Jewish diaspora and the shifting meanings of notions of Hungarian and Jewish identity. The conference had the support of Deputy Prime Minister Tibor Navracsis and József Pálinkás, the president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Aliza bin Noun, at the time the Israeli ambassador to Hungary, gave an opening speech. An exhibition of a selection of the pictures of photographer Doron Ritter was also held in connection with the conference. The exhibition, which was entitled *From the Old Country to the New Home – Hungarian Speaking Jews in Israel*, was held again in October the same year, in Zagreb, Croatia.

This book contains essays based on the presentations given at the conference.

From the perspective of its subject, the conference broke with an approach that in general tends to prevail in conferences held for a Hungarian speaking audience on topics related to Jewish history and culture. The presentations that were held treated Hungarian history and Jewish history (and naturally also the history of Hungarian Jewry) not simply as a kind of "Passion," i.e. a narrative of sufferings, but considered instead the question of the essence and substance of these groups themselves, their points of cross-cultural intersection, and their similarities and differences from the perspectives of sociology and historiography. The histories acquired meaning both through their historical continuity and through comparison, thereby also creating a possibility for dialogue. The examination of Hungarian and Jewish identity was extricated from the framework of the narrative of sufferings that came into being as a consequence of Trianon and the Holocaust, a narrative framework that bears unquestionable legitimacy, but which we nonetheless sought on this occasion to transcend. Instead, the conference presented, from the perspectives of general and individual history, the inextricably and sometimes almost imperceptibly intertwined realities of these communities.

Various questions arose in connection with this. When and how did the Hungarian diasporas come into being, and what teleological or pseudo-teleological meanings have been attributed to their origins (Tamás Turán)? How did the diaspora communities evolve in various countries, such as Hungary, Israel (Rafael Vago), the United States (Attila Z. Papp), and Argentina (Nóra Kovács)? The presentations provided a new perspective on a common historical space in which new insights were shed on the American Hungarian diaspora community,

the Hungarian Jewish diaspora in Buenos Aires, and the old Jewish communities of Transylvania and present-day Slovakia (Attila Gidó, Gusztáv Filep Tamás). There was also a presentation on the influences of the Hungarian and Jewish musical traditions on each other and the music of Central Europe (Judit Frigyesi). The question of diaspora and national identity also arose (Yuli Tamir), as did the issue of the role of diaspora in politics (Levente Salat). Presentations addressed old educational customs among the Hungarian Jewry (Viktor Karády), identity strategies that were adopted after 1945 (András Kovács), the future prospects for the German and Hungarian Jewry in a Europe under Nazi rule (Guy Miron), the Hebrew language as a nation building tool (Viktória Bányai), and the changes that took place in Hungarian Jewish identity as a consequence of experiences in the concentration camps (Szabolcs Szita). The presentations also included a discussion of the letters that were written by Hungarian Jews to Pál Teleki during his time as Prime Minister in the hopes of soliciting his aid (Balázs Ablonczy) and the economic rescue action of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in the 1930s (Attila Novák).

The conference provided a unique forum for a scholarly discussion of the questions raised by the participants, but also for a conversation that went beyond the limits of formal scholarship and promoted open dialogue about the everyday aspects of the issues at hand, thereby furthering a more nuanced understanding of the cultures and communities themselves. We hope the essays in this volume will prompt further inquiry into the notions of communal, historical, and individual identity on which they touch.

Budapest, 15 January, 2013

Pál Hatos, Attila Novák
Editors

The Notion of Political Community in View of Majority–Minority Relations

Levente Salat

The efforts of the Hungarian political and cultural elite of Romania to find a reasonable solution in order to consolidate the relationship between the Romanian state and the Hungarian ethnic minority in Romania, first between the two World Wars (K. Lengyel, 2007; Horváth, 2007), and later at the time of the consolidation of the communist regime after 1945 (Salat et al. 2008; Nagy, 2009) had two equally disadvantageous consequences. Firstly, it became patently apparent that the manner in which the Hungarian minority in Transylvania envisioned its integration into the Romanian state was incompatible with Romanian national interests. Secondly, the firm resolve of the Hungarian Romanian political elite, which was manifest in the tenacity with which it pursued organic paths to integration following the shift in power relations in 1920, laid the foundations of the suspicions of the Romanian state authorities with regard to the political aspirations of the Hungarian ethnic minority in Romania. In the period between the two World Wars this distrust was palpable in the ethnic minority politics of the young greater Romanian state, for instance in the manner in which the authorities responsible for the reorganization of the administration of the annexed territories considered the educational, cultural, and religious institutions of the Hungarian minority, as well as various forms and activities of social life, as a hotbed for potential upheaval, and reacted to them as such (Livezeanu, 1998). Following the Second World War, and more emphatically in the immediate aftermath of the 1956 Hungarian revolution, the communist leaders of the state gradually came to the realization that the Hungarian minority aspirations in Transylvania for autonomous institutions threatened the security of the Romanian state. This realization led to the adoption a series of measures considered necessary by the authorities (Andreescu et al., 2003; Bárdi, 2006).

Both the ultimate failures of the integrationist efforts and the institutionalized official distrust regarding the political aspirations of the Hungarian community in Transylvania proved to be a problematic and regrettable heritage in the political situation following the changes of 1989. From an ethnic minority perspective, one of the most significant fruits of the changes was unquestionably the gradual acceptance of the fact that one could not contest the right of the

Transylvanian Hungarian minority to stake its claim for political representation, nor could one justifiably hamper its functioning. This enabled the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania, a political organization representing the interests of the Hungarian minority in Romania that came into being with spectacular speed, as one of the recognized players in the new multi-party system to include again on the agenda, within the official democratic frameworks, the issue of the unsettled relationship between the Hungarians of Transylvania and the Romanian state. However, for the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania the period of more than twenty years now since the change of regimes has been characterized by a peculiar paradox: while the organization is one of the most stable agents in the Romanian political arena and has had a continuous presence in parliament since 1990, and furthermore since 1996[1] has been a participant in government or supporter of the executive powers (with the exception of a single brief period), in spite of its spectacular accomplishments many of the significant points on the political agenda of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania have proven impossible to implement – more precisely those related to the attempts of the Hungarians in Transylvania to integrate into the structure of the Romanian state.

Unquestionably, over the course of the past twenty years the state of affairs for the Hungarians in Transylvania has improved considerably. Undeniably, the legal conditions and the political status of the Hungarian ethnic minority under Romanian authority is more consolidated than it has ever been in the nine decades since the signing of the Treaty of Trianon. Furthermore, within the frameworks secured by the constitution an extensive network of educational and cultural institutions financed by the Romanian government guarantees the survival of the Transylvanian Hungarian identity. In spite of this considerable change, however, there is still a vast divergence between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority views regarding modes of integration. Even the promising developments of the past two decades have failed to create any widespread accord regarding institutional conditions of cohabitation that would be acceptable for both parties. Public opinion polls and sociological research show

[1] Although post-1989 Hungarian ethnic minority political history rarely makes much mention of this, the fact is that representatives of Hungarians in Transylvania, namely Attila Pálfalvi as deputy-minister of education and Andor Horváth as deputy-minister of culture, were already delegated to the first government headed by Petre Roman. Since May 1990, during the second term of the Petre Roman government, the two deputy-ministerial offices were terminated, in following this until October 16, 1991 assistant secretaries managed the representation of Hungarians affairs, Lajos Demény in the Ministry of Education and Andor Horváth in the Ministry of Culture.

continuous conflicting – or, at best, mutually ignorant – identity structures and ethno-political options, which prompts the question: can the Hungarian minority in Transylvania be considered part of the Romanian political community?

In this article I offer an answer to this question. I compare several of the more significant contentions found in the secondary literature regarding the notion of political community with the image that emerges from the polls and other forms of identity research of the past ten-fifteen years on the divisions (the fault lines of which are primarily ethnic difference) within the political community consisting of the aggregate of Romanian citizens. I also will briefly allude to the question of how the simplified procedure of obtaining Hungarian citizenship secured by law may have an impact on the issues under discussion.

The Notion of Political Community

The notion of political community is – quite surprisingly – left unexplained in the literature of political science. There is virtually no systematic, methodical research on this concept that offers an overview of its historical, theoretical, and empirical bearings. Various approaches equate the term either with the concept of *state* or with that of *nation*. The generally appreciated political science handbook by Goodin and Klingeman (1998) does not include any definition or explanation of its meaning, nor does one find any other widely accepted definitions in common use. This is surprising, given that over the course of time the question of communities *bounded* (by various constraints) or integrated in a certain respect has intrigued authors such as Kant, Hegel, Marx, Max Weber, Marcel Mauss, Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, Robert A. Nisbet, and others.[2] In view of this, it is some sort of improvement that Elizabeth Frazer (1999) at least offers a systematic examination of the dominant concepts of the nature of political community, based on the presuppositions of communitarian philosophy.

In spite of the fact that the term bears numerous inherent contradictions and ambiguities, authors generally attribute a self-evident meaning to the notion of political community, an interpretation that frequently surfaces in the most diverse publications. The majority of scholars identify political community with the most general designation of the political system – *polity* –, and many suggest a close interconnection between the ideas of state, society and political commu-

[2] Some of the significant works that have been recently published include: Mouffe (1992), Lichterman (1998), Linklater (1998).

nity. Based on this factor, in one of his essays Michael Saward makes the contention according to which "today the predominant conception of political community is still that of the nation state" (Saward, 2003: 1).[3] This widely spread viewpoint can be attributed to Max Weber, who believed that a community or group of people may only be regarded as relevant if it also has territorial characteristics and is actively involved in the maintenance of its own inherent order, ordinarily by "the monopoly over legitimate physical force." Weber arrived at the conclusion that if the efforts of a center of power to exert control over all of the events of a territory lead to a monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force (a monopoly sustained through its own success in the maintenance of power), then the given "political institution is called state" (1987: 77). Notwithstanding the broad measure of popularity with which this notion has been met, there are examples of groups within a state that have been considered political communities (Rubinoff, 1998); and others have advanced the contention according to which certain groups of states can form political communities (Deutsch, 1957).[4]

According to Frazer the notion of political community is used in one of the four following senses. The most widely accepted interpretation refers to a particular variant of human communities, which is one of the particular communities to be identified by numerous attributes, such as ethnic, local, economic, etc. The common characteristic in this case is of a political nature in the sense that it presupposes common institutions, values and norms. The second variant denotes communities organized in the political sense: in this case the political quality is posteriorly attached to primary common characteristics, such as culture, economy or shared territory. The third interpretation claims that a group of people can only be considered a political community if they act as a political agent with the aim of securing the survival of the community, protecting its inherent structure, institutions, and traditions, and furthering the interests of community members. The fourth variant emphasizes that political communities are brought about and operated by political processes based on the perception (allegedly attested to by historical evidence) that the reasons underlying the disintegration and disappearance of highly civilized societies were generally of a political nature (Frazer, 1999: 218–219).

[3] Emphasis in the original.

[4] It is interesting to note that between 1952 and 1954 there were attempts to include the term "European political community" in the first European constitution (Griffiths, 2000). The idea was repudiated after the plan for a collective European Defense Policy failed because the French National Assembly refused to ratify the required treaty. The term surfaced anew in relation to the cohesive policy of the EU. For more on this question see Mazey (1996).

While the first two interpretations suggest that political character is secondary and less significant than aspects the origins of which lie in the existence of the community, the third and the fourth variations imply that the formation, operation and survival of the political community require deeper forms of identification: the solidarity and mutualism that unify the members of a community into a coherent group are indispensable, as are shared culture and the tendency and ability of every member of the community to attribute the same meanings to the most significant aspects of social interaction. In Frazer's view, one of the consequences of the polysemic nature of the notion of political community is that people who use the term within a broad interpretative range assign a convenient meaning depending on their discursive goals, often using varying interpretations even within the same work. One frequent characteristic variant of this ambivalence is the fact that some authors employ the superficial "shallow" meaning of political community within certain contexts, while, however, emphasizing its importance characteristic of the deep or intense version in others, and they seem to expect members of the community to act in accordance with the corresponding forms of identification and loyalty.

In Frazer's view we can only overcome the ambivalence associated with the notion of political community if we adopt a more nuanced understanding of the concept, and in order to do this we need more explicit knowledge of the circumstances under which political communities come into being and more penetrating insight into their characteristic functionings. It is also of crucial importance to be aware of the extent to which a political community is able to withstand internal factionalism and conflicts and remain stable without disintegrating.

According to Frazer theoretically political communities may come into being in two ways: one is determined by inherent circumstances, while the other is predominantly defined by external circumstances. The internal – endogenous – version generally presupposes the existence of a social contract, which transforms the loose, structureless aggregate of individuals residing in one territory into a political society by creating the conditions of unity in the modes of centralization or distribution of administration, resource distribution, jurisdiction, and sovereignty. In contrast with the endogenous variant, the exogenous version is characterized by the annexation by one political community of another political community as a result of conquest, military occupation, or some treaty, generally to settle a war. However, from the historical perspective the differences between the two variations seem less unequivocal. As our knowledge of world history would seem to suggest, the essence of the process is much more determined by the centralization of power than the logic of a social contract. Without exception, the creation of political communities postulates some degree of violence:

violent subjugation, the gradual establishment of the legitimacy of centralized power, or the dethroning of sovereigns to confer power to the people are among the historical processes that lead to the creation of political communities. However, as Frazer claims, independent of the circumstances, the process of the emergence of a political community will only come to culmination if it reaches a point at which individuals share allegiance to a particular set of institutions and procedures, and become loyal to them (Frazer, 1999: 220).[5]

Legitimacy is one essential condition for loyalty, and generally two things are absolutely indispensable in order for a sense of legitimacy to emerge. The first of these is the narrative with which the community identifies and which contains answers to questions regarding the origins of the political community, as well as its nature, mission, and major characteristic features. The other prerequisite is a cohesive group that undertakes the formulation of the regulations of institutions and administration, and at the same time justifies the essential nature of decisions related to these regulations. Naturally, the groups that undertake this task do not act independently of their interests: both the narrative defining the political community and the structure that is established generally reflect the interests of their creators and drafters, as well as the reasons for their creation.

The fact that the concept of political community is defined by and inherently structured in compliance with the interests of a privileged group bears significant consequences: it makes it necessary to exclude those who for some reason fail to meet the definition of political community or who are unable to adapt to certain elements of the existing structure, or even consider it absolutely illegitimate – for various cultural or religious reasons. Consequently, says Frazer, for the sake of stability the discursive space of the political community must be structured so as not to allow those excluded to voice their concerns and to ensure that their grievances and demands do not become part of the public agenda.[6]

In its depth, this idea of the creation and emergence of political communities and the conditions of their maintenance cannot be compared neither to Rokkan's theory on nation-building (1999) nor to the sociology of state as coined by

[5] To put the original citation in slightly broader context: "… a political community, in the present sense, might be said to be the upshot at the point when individuals share allegiance to a particular set of institutions and procedures."

[6] "The rules of the political game and the rules of conduct that govern participation in it, have been constructed so as to benefit those who constructed the political sphere and continue to participate in it, and so as to exclude persons whose disadvantage and subordination is necessary […] At the same time, the claims of the disadvantaged cannot be pressed or heard in the normal political process which is organized so as to exclude certain kinds of voices, certain kinds of claims, and certain agenda items." (Frazer, 1999: 243)

Michael Mann (1986, 1993) or Charles Tilly (1992). However, it is quite beyond dispute that it does highlight elements of the notion of political communities that generally are overlooked by those who indiscriminately employ the term as essential to various narratives. The majority of authors who make use of the notion of political community, for the most part in ideological or euphemistic contexts, are reluctant both to consider the fact that the narratives defining political communities and their integrating features are of an exclusive nature and to undertake any genuine analysis of the conditions of stability.

The question of inherent coherence within political communities and the problematics of stability closely related to this question are of particular importance in cases in which the membership of a political community is ethnically, linguistically or denominationally divided. Under such circumstances it is the representatives of the dominant majority who monopolize the tasks of structuring order and formulating a dominant narrative, and as regards the outcomes the following question frequently arises: to what extent can structures reflecting the interests of one segment of the community integrate the community in its entirety, to what extent do members of non-dominant groups consider the existing order legitimate, to what extent are they able to incorporate the dominant narrative, or do they share any form of allegiance to the basic institutions of the system? In the course of history the premise of Frazer's notion of political community resolved this dilemma by stating that a proper political community is ethnically, linguistically and denominationally homogenous: where the conditions of homogeneity are not given from the outset, the importance of stability as the preeminent concern demands and legitimizes homogenization. (In view of the fact that, due to the lack of competent and legitimate authority, political communities are for the most self-designated formations, this logic found manifestation as a self-fulfilling prophecy: the political communities that proved the most successful were the ones that carried out the most effective attempts at homogenization.)

Although the theory of the advantages of homogeneity has long been deeply rooted in the history of political theory,[7] it has not as yet been the subject of systematic research, and remains rather rarely discussed in literature. Stein Rokkan, the scholar mostly noted for his study of Western European nation building, barely mentions this issue (1973, 1973a, 1980), even though the three major interpretative principles of his theory – economic, military-administrative, and cultural differentiation – that gradually transformed primordial local communities into political communities in most cases generated standardization and con-

[7] For more on this question see Salat (2005).

comitantly homogenization.[8] It is hardly surprising that in his theory of state (based on the notion of political coercion) Charles Tilly arrives at the conclusion that although homogenization did have undeniable disadvantages, in the course of constructing the state and nation political leaders involved in the application of the "divide and conquer" policy soon recognized the advantages of homogeneity, both in communication and state administration, not to mention identification with the ruler, as well as the task of uniting forces against external threats. In Tilly's view this explains why such great powers as Spain or France repeatedly sought to homogenize their populations, and forced the choice between conversion or emigration onto their religious minorities, mostly targeting the Muslim and Jewish populations.[9] The question is raised in an interesting manner in the work of Michael Mann, who composed a comprehensive work on the history of state. The first volume (1986) provides an overview of the history of political power from its beginnings to 1760, while the second (1993) explores the rise of classes and nation states from 1760 to 1914. The question is interestingly phrased in both inasmuch as Mann does not explicitly mention the notion, even though by utilizing examples and historical data in his study of the social roots of political power he describes several processes which unambiguously generated homogenization. In his exploration of the development of the ability to exercise control over territories and populations he emphasizes the functions of four power modes: ideological, economic, military and political. In Mann's view, through various means these four modes furthered the process by which the dominant narrative was embraced by the population of the territories under control, also helping prompt them to identify with it and share allegiances to the institutional and procedural elements of the system – this all generating "singe social totality"[10] as an ultimate conclusion. The widely anticipated third Mann

[8] Interestingly enough, it is only in one of his last writings that Rokkan recognizes the fact that his theory should be revised by taking the "geo-ethnic" variable into account – meaning by this the expression of the relationship between geographical area and ethnicity.

[9] "In one of their more self-conscious attempts to engineer state power, rulers frequently sought to homogenize their population in the course of installing direct rule. From a ruler's point of view, a linguistically, religiously, and ideologically homogeneous population presented the risk of a common front against royal demands; homogenization made a policy of divide and rule more costly. But homogeneity had many compensating advantages: within a homogeneous population, ordinary people were more likely to identify with their rulers, communication could run more efficiently, and an administrative innovation that worked in one segment was likely to work elsewhere as well. People who sensed a common origin, furhermore, were more likely to unite against external threats. Spain, France, and other large states recurrently homogenized by giving religious minorities – especially Muslims and Jews – the choice between conversion and emigration." (Tilly, 1992: 106–107)

[10] Mann himself uses this turn of phrase, "single social totality." (Mann, 1986: 2)

volume was expected to offer an investigation of the history of political power and the state from 1914 up to the present day. Instead, by an unexpected turn, Mann published a work (2005) that declares homogenization – or, in his terminology "murderous cleansing" – to be an inevitable price to be paid by states in the course of history in order to render political stability possible and sustainable. One may reckon that as a result of his substantial study of power and the history of political communities, Mann came to the realization that political power is inherently territorial, authoritative, and monopolistic. Consequently, conflicting ambitions of sovereignty to exercise control over the same territory will inevitably lead to murderous cleansing, that is homogenization.[11] Mann further claims that from the historical perspective European political culture amply illustrates the truth of this insight, as it was a history in which murderous cleansing was a prerequisite for stability and democratic consolidation. It is greatly to be feared that within the framework of the post-1989 processes countries now on their way to democratization will also follow this very same course. In order to avoid the tendency to progress towards the dominance of ethnically cleansed democracies, a complex intervention is necessary that would break the interconnection between democracy and homogeneity.[12]

In his work on "civil community" and "the politics of social bonding" (1994) Dominique Schnapper explores further significant aspects of the relationship between ethno-cultural factionalism and political communities. Schnapper's study represents the trend to identify political community with the notion of the nation. On the one hand, Schnapper admits that since Aristotle and through John Stuart Mill up to the present day homogeneity has been regarded a necessary prerequisite for the stability of political communities. She quotes Hume (among others) on his theory that shared language is an essential condition to secure the

[11] "Political power is inherently territorial, authoritative, and monopolistic […] we must submit routinely to regulations by a state, and we cannot choose which one – except by staying or leaving. Rival claims to sovereignty are the most difficult to compromise and the most likely to lead to murderous cleansing. Murderous cleansing is most likely to result where powerful groups within two ethnic groups aim at legitimate and achievable rival states 'in the name of the people' over the same territory…." (Mann, 2005: 33)

[12] "…murderous cleansing has been moving across the world as it has modernized and democratized. Its past lay mainly among Europeans, who invented the democratic nation-state. The countries inhabited by Europeans are now safely democratic, but most have also been ethnically cleansed. […]. Now the epicenter of cleansing has moved into the South of the world. Unless humanity takes evasive action, it will continue to spread until democracies – hopefully, not ethnically cleansed ones – rule the world. Then it will ease." (Mann, 2005: 4–5)

success of a political community. She also cites Marcel Mauss[13] and Raymond Aron,[14] who both believe that coextensive political and cultural borders will generate a political unity sufficiently integrated, or even ideal (Schnapper, 1994: 42). In spite of this, Schnapper declares that ethnic, linguistic, denominational, or cultural homogeneity are not sufficient conditions for the creation of a political community – or, in Schnapperian terminology, "nation," – just as ethno-cultural diversity does not automatically constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the birth of a "nation." In Schnapper's view, in order for different ethnic affiliations to be able to live in peace under the auspices of a shared political loyalty members of the given communities must come to an agreement on the justifiability of the sovereign political unity, and accept or consider its internal structure legitimate. In other words, the integrative capacity of a political community is defined by a "political project," which is able to conciliate antagonism and competition rooted in cultural and identity differences, and attribute appropriate meaning and legitimacy to the institutionalized framework of coexistence.[15] However, Schnapper cannot fail to acknowledge that any time such a project proves effective, cultural differences will lose their significance, the importance of identity politics will gradually be suppressed by the theory of equality, even if the political procedure does not expressly target the "cultural genocide" of the given communities. In most cases the relatively small number of political communities which, even in the face of cultural factionalism, have proved lasting and effective have centuries old experience in the consolidation of the political institutions of mutual respect among individual communities.[16]

[13] "Une nation complète est une société integrée suffisamment, à pouvoir central démocratique à quelque degré, ayant en tout cas la notion de souveraineté nationale et dont, en général, les frontières sont celles d'une race, d'une civilization, d'une langue, d'une morale, en un mot d'un caractère nationale […] Dans les nations achevées tout ceci coïncide." (Mauss, 1969: 604)

[14] "La nation, en tant que type-idéal d'unité politique, a une triple characteristique : la participation de tous les gouvernés à l'Etat sous la double forme de la conscription et du suffrage universel, la coincidence de ce vouloir politique et d'une communauté de culture, la totale independence de l'Etat national vers l'extérieur." (Aron, 1962: 297)

[15] "Les institutions de l'Etat, si elles portent un projet politique et forment – ou sont portés par – une société politique et non plus seulement par une ethnie particulière, sont susceptibles de surmonter les differences culturelles et éventuellment – plus difficilement – identitaires entre les groupes. L'existance des nations dépend de la capacité du projet politique à résoudre les rivalités et les conflits entre groupes sociaux, religieux, régionaux ou éthniques selon les règles reconnues comme légitimes." (Schnapper, 1994: 140)

[16] "Les nations stables, peu nombreuses, qui ont été fondées à partir de populations hétérogènes, étaient toujours le produit d'une histoire multiséculaire, au cours de laquelle les membres de chacun des groupes avaient non seulement intériorisé l'obligation de respecter les autres, mais aussi

In addition to examples drawn from the past, numerous contemporary events may illustrate what Frazer describes as the characteristic and inherent processes of the birth and consolidation of political communities. An expert's report (Lohm, 2007) on Armenians residing in the Javakheti region of Georgia explains how the government in the young Georgian state strives to create "national unity" by implementing rigid policies: the Armenian language of the minority is prohibited in the Armenian region, the government aspires to alter aggressively the ethno-demographic character of the region, and it also explicitly refuses any and every demand of autonomy voiced by Armenian minority inhabitants. According to the report, these measures are evidently counter-productive, because they undermine the Javakheti residents' trust in the Georgian state, and force them to seek alternative forms of integration.[17] In a coauthored study Ilkka Liikanen and Joni Virkkunen (s. a.) describe how the presence of the non-Estonian community in Estonia has remarkably shaped the process of democratization, which is greatly influenced by hegemonic tendencies. Estonian authorities "nationalize" the country and monopolize political procedures against non-Estonians treated as "others."[18] A study by Shahibzadeh and Selvik (2007) provides an outstandingly relevant example. This study explores the history of the Iranian political community between 1970 and 1982, analyzing how the closest adherents of Khomeini *(khudi-ha)* forced "outsiders" out of political power, virtually everyone who did not subscribe to the ideology of the leader acting in "mythic unison" with his people *(velayat-e faqih)*. According to the study, the "political com-

lentement élaboré les institutions politiques qui perpétuaient objectivement ce respect réciproque." (Schnapper, 1994: 141)

[17] The report quotes excerpts from an interview with an Armenian man of the Javakheti region: "You know, we didn't arrive here recently; we were here before independence was declared in 1918, and this is our homeland, our state. When the referendum was held in 1991 people here voted for the old constitution from 1921 that stated that we had the right to use our language in the region. And what do we get now? It would have been better if we had fought, like South Ossetia, they are now being offered extensive autonomy solutions while we get nothing." (Lohn, 2007: 35)

[18] "Contemporary Estonian legislation is based on the generally recognised principle of democracy. The Constitution secures equal human and civil rights, as well as constitutes the legal framework of the Estonian political system. […] It can, however, be argued that the democratic ideal does not fully reflect the contemporary social and political realities. Estonia has 'nationalised' (Brubaker) its territory and claimed the monopoly of power. This has 'othered' one Article of the non-Estonian population, as well as transformed the concept of democracy and political system to discussions of inter-ethnic relations, social stability and border construction ..." (Liikanen and Virkkunen, n.d.)

munity" obtained its final form in 1981, following many waves of cleansing, as a result of the fact that Bani Sadr, the last influential opponent of Khomeini, had been removed from the political arena.[19]

Thus Elizabeth Frazer's suppositions regarding the conditions of the creation and consolidation of political communities are supported with sufficient historical empirical data.[20] However, the question of whether the Frazerian explanation takes us closer to the solution of the dilemma of what eventually may be considered a political community still remains unanswered. Nor are we informed on where the scope of meaning begins and ends, not to mention how we might eventually be able to eliminate the ambiguities in the varying uses of the term.

[19] The study addresses the following details relevant to this discussion: "The process of *exclusion* also made clear what would be the criteria of *inclusion* in the political community. According to the community's perception of itself, it was the community of followers of the *velayat-e faqih*. These followers were in 1981 at war with external and internal 'enemies'. Externally, they were fighting the Iraqi invasion and, internally, opposition groups throughout Iran. To wage this battle, they used institutions like the Basij-militia, the revolutionary committies *(komiteha-ye enqelab)*, the Islamic Councils *(shuraha-ye eslami)*, and the Revolutionary Guard *(sepah-e pasdaran)*. Opponents of the *velayat-e faqih* would not be admitted to these organizations. Thus, the members of the political community could easily identify each other and tie personal bonds. For example, if a member of the Revolutionary Guard from the city of Shiraz ran into a member of the Teachers' Islamic Council of Mashhad, they could recognize each other from their behaviour, appearence and affiliation. Intuitively, they would feel like belonging to the 'same family'. The common identity and shared experiences gave the political community a strong cohesion which defended it from destabilizing effects of internal disputes." (Shahibzadeh and Selvik, 2007: 7) Emphasis in the original.

[20] It is worth noting that the presumption regarding the benefits of homogeneity, despite its deeply rooted nature in the history of political science, is rarely stated explicitly. States struggling with the consequences of cultural factionalism are reluctant to acknowledge forthrightly that they have adopted measures in the name of homogeneity. In view of this, the number of proclamations made on this topic in October 2010 is an interesting turn. In these declarations leaders of the most influential Western European countries, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, British Prime Minister David Cameron, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and Dutch Deputy-Prime Minister Maxime Verhagen, and before them Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi all announced the failure of multiculturalism, all unequivocally emphasizing that concessions on behalf of immigrants made in the given states had not been effective, and the dominance of majority culture must be restored (Salat, 2011). However, one must not forget that problems arising from the presence of immigrants comprise only a fraction of the challenges related to the global notion of cultural factionalism. To illustrate this argument it is sufficient to mention that while the total population of historically rooted, marginalized, and consequently politically mobilized cultural communities in 2004 reached approximately 1 billion (UNDP, 2004: 32), the 2010 figure for immigrants worldwide did not exceed 214 million, of which the Euro-Asian region hosted a mere 70 million. (See International Organization for Migration, 2010: 115).

While Frazer remains open to criticism targeting communitarianism, she nonetheless believes that the essence of the notion of political community can only be interpreted from the perspective of communitarian political philosophy. Albeit the "shallow" (superficial) meaning of the term stands its ground (the interpretation according to which a political community exists as soon as a group of people can be defined in the political sense, in other words as soon as they have become the subjects of a single governing authority), in Frazer's view the "deep" (intense) version is much more accurate. Members of a political community are not only united by institutions, territory, state or national symbols, but also by values, political culture, national or political identity, and the commitment to one another (Frazer, 1999: 241). In the absence of these bonds, the political community is nothing more than a *modus vivendi:* political stability is inconceivable without concord, loyalty and participation, in other words it is inconceivable merely as involuntary acceptance of the system that is not founded on any underlying belief in its legitimacy.[21] Naturally, Frazer does not ignore the obvious fact that the phenomenon of controversies and conflicts is evident in even the most authentic political communities, quite often related to the fundamental values, interests, and aspirations of the given community. Frazer declares that the difference between the "shallow" and "deep" variations of political community lie in the fact that in the latter a reasonable, sustainable balance is formulated regarding matters on which some broad degree of consensus is necessary, and matters which, in contrast, are open to debate and difference of opinion.

One might well consider this perfectly adequate as a definition of political community, but from the perspective of this study Frazer's approach has another significant implication. Frazer believes that for a society sharply divided along ethnic, linguistic, denominational, or legal traditions the formulation of a political community is only possible if the dominant narrative and political institutions are integrative enough to allow for individual cultural components of society to find their place in the unified whole, and if the people who represent these cultures believe their relations with one another to be satisfactorily coordinated.[22]

[21] "…anything less than a reasoned agreement – grudging acceptance, for instance, indifference or the absence of conviction – will mean that the polity is nothing more than a modus vivendi, and that cannot meet the needs for commitment and participation that generate genuine political stability." (Frazer, 1999: 224–225)

[22] "… political relations and state unity can only be achieved by the use of symbols, and rituals as symbols, which relate each to each and to the whole on the imaginary level […] state institutions must deploy myths and associated symbols of 'nationhood' in such a way that all citizens orient to these in such a way as to understand themselves as related to their fellow citizens and to the whole." (Frazer, 1999: 242)

However, this acknowledgment by Frazer of the relevance of the communitarian approach also makes politics inescapably congruent with the life of the community. This implies nothing less than the culture reflected in the political institutions of the state, that is, the culture inhering in political institutions of the state and the locality, must fit with the cultural life people live in their communities – their local area of residence, their schools and workplaces and churches.[23] These last two aspects can only be reconciled in the case of culturally divided societies if the authentic, "deep" version of political community presupposes that the dominant narrative will define the political community in its entirety in such a manner that it recognizes the right of cultural – ethnic, linguistic or denominational – components within it to protect and institutionalize their cultural lives as independent political entities. It is not unreasonable to expect members of communities inhabiting a sphere outlined by recognized identity borders believed to be stable to regard their relations to both the whole and to other components of the society as justly ordered, and therefore also to expect them to regard the system as legitimate and sustainable and add to the stability of its structures.

Interestingly, this conclusion is supported by Andrew Linklater' approach (1998), which analyzes the problematics of political communities from the perspective of international relations theory. Based on Hegel's philosophy of the state, Linklater emphasizes a particular component of the problem. Communities hold an essential interest in the protection of their peculiar conduct of life, which derives from the fact that for humanity it is immensely important to belong to a community "subject to constraints" and made reliable by an inherent system. Generally, communities assert this interest through the principles of self-determination or sovereignty, and any time they succeed they create the particular institutions of human rights in accordance with individual experience and distinctive tradition within the possible forms of cultural and political life (Linklater, 1998: 49–53).

However, as Linklater points out, the principle of self-determination and sovereignty often brings about various manifestations of exclusion. The exclusive nature of sovereignty primarily derives from the fact that "[sovereignty] is exclusionary because it frustrates the political aspirations of subordinate cultures" (Linklater, 1998: 61). At the same time, community self-determination

[23] "… communitarians argue that the conduct of political life must be congruent with the conduct of community life. That is, the culture inhering in political institutions of the state and the locality, must fit with the cultural life people live in their communities – their local area of residence, their schools and workplaces and churches." (Frazer, 1999: 238)

is an institutionalized variation of exclusion, which demands that for the sake of absolute control over the fate and future of the given community it must be explicitly determinded who is to be included or excluded, and conditions according to which one may join the community must be clearly defined. In order to preserve collective autonomy and sustain distinctive identity political communities are compelled to reinforce the traditional ethnic, cultural, linguistic, denominational, legal, and regional borders that separate their members from non-members, from people who can be designated as "others." The hegemonic political narratives that emphasize the origin, mission, and characteristic features of a political community are significant means of this isolationism. They are expected to "channel human loyalties away from potentially competing sites of power to centralizing and monopolizing sovereign states which endeavoured to make national boundaries as morally unproblematic as possible" (Linklater, 1998: 29). Linklater claims that as a consequence of this aspiration, which from the historical perspective is generally characteristic of political communities, "more inclusive and less expansive forms of political association failed in the struggle for survival" (Linklater, 1998: 28). The political communities that proved viable and historically enduring are characterized by a peculiar paradox: while struggling to maintain their universalistic features, they also cherish their particularism. On the one hand, they must neglect the needs of the segments of the community that fail to comply with the assertions of the dominant narrative. On the other hand, they must isolate themselves from the acknowledgment of outside – "other" – interests.[24]

In Linklater's view this paradox is an integral part of the most inherent nature of political communities. But, as is hardly difficult to recognize, he chooses another angle from which to explore the very same tension Frazer discovered between the "shallow" and the "deep" interpretations of the notion. According to Linklater, dominant interpretations of the phenomenon of political community are unable to reconcile the contradiction between two mutually exclusive options that will never stop to serve as alternatives to each other. On the one hand, the sovereign state seems to be the only viable alternative to the cosmopolitan idea according to which borders separating human communities are illegitimate and there is a need for a structure that defines the whole of humanity as

[24] "[political communities are] too puffed up, or universalistic, because the needs of those who do not exhibit the dominant cultural characteristics have frequently been disregarded; too compressed, or particularistic because the interests of the outsiders have typically been ignored." (Linklater, 1998: 193)

one unified community. On the other hand, the unquestionable disadvantage of the sovereign state is its practice of depriving constituent communities of their right to self-determination.

According to Linklater, the only way to resolve this seemingly unresolvable paradox is to acknowledge that political communities of the present day are less "finished and complete" than the operative assumptions of international relations would claim. A significant number of members in the international commonwealth fail to effectuate responsibilities rooted in sovereignty, and a considerable proportion of political communities are not integrative enough, and consequently they are rather unstable. In Linklater's view the only way to advance requires the international commonwealth to open towards new forms of political communities. It is also necessary to develop new answers to the question regarding what it really means "to be a fully qualified member of a political community." The dominant contemporary approach proves uncritical in its determination of the distinctions between sovereignty, territoriality, nationality, and dominant ethno-cultural community, and thus it significantly tones down Western political thinking. Linklater believes in the need to "deepen and widen" the notion of political community, with special regard to the needs of those who, in many regions of the world, "do not feel at home in their political communities" (Linklater, 1998: 187). The acknowledgment and institutional protection of cultural differences, the elimination of differences among members of individual political communities, and an increased commitment to universality are among the transformations deemed necessary. In addition, in Linklater's view, they may offer a solution to the dilemma between the "shallow" and "deep" variations of political community. Linklater declares that communitarianism and cosmopolitanism are by no means irreconcilable. As a matter of fact, they offer complementary perspectives from which to consider what new forms of belonging to a political community and nationality might be feasible in the post-Westphalian era. According to Linklater, they reveal that more complex associations of universality and diff erence can be developed by breaking the nexus between sovereignty, territoriality, nationality and citizenship and by promoting wider communities of discourse.[25]

[25] "Far from being antithetical, communitarianism and cosmopolitanism provide complementary insights into the possibility of new forms of community and citizenship in the post-Westphalian era. They reveal that more complex associations of universality and difference can be developed by breaking the nexus between sovereignty, territoriality, nationality and citizenship and by promoting wider communities of discourse." (Linklater, 1998: 60)

By associating the notion of political community with the principle of self-determination Linklater calls attention to specifically significant approaches for this present analysis. When at the beginning of their self-determination individual political communities take control over their own affairs in the political sense, by the same token in the majority of cases they also take control over other communities as well, the members of which may not always accept the justifiability of the formulation or the sound foundation of the political community. If conditions surrounding the formation of the political community are contested in the long run, and the dominant narrative fails to be integrative enough to enable non-dominant component communities to find their place in the structure, democratic proceduralism will be incapable of coping with this problem.[26] In this case, the alternative of *modus vivendi* occurs, in which a significant proportion of the members of a community remain outsiders, whose identity and interests are not reflected by political processes and institutions.

The approaches and theories regarding the most relevant variations of the meaning of political community are summarized in the following chart.

[26] Regarding this issue Robert Dahl states that in so far as the formation and justifiability of the "unity" of democracy is not beyond dispute, in themselves the procedural aspects of democracy are unable to supplement legitimacy: "…we cannot solve the problem of the proper scope and domain of democratic units from within democratic theory. Like the majority principle, the democratic process presupposes a proper unit. *The criteria of the democratic process presuppose the rightfulness of the unit itself.* If the unit is not proper or rightful – if its scope and domain is not justifiable – then it cannot be made rightful simply by democratic procedures." (Dahl, 1989: 207) Emphasis in the original.

Variations of the meaning of political community

The notion	The era	The variant	Its nature	Institutional manifestation	Major characteristics
Political community	Westphalian political system: "Political communities are finished and complete."	"shallow"	homogenous	STATE	• stable • appropriately integrated • liberal democracy: ethno-culturally neutral state
			divided	Quasi-STATE	• unstable • unintegrated • *Modus vivendi* or totalitarian regimes
		"deep"	homogenous	NATION	• stable • appropriately integrated • nation state
			divided	MULTI-NATIONAL STATE	• stable • appropriately integrated • systems based on division of power: federation, autonomies, con-sociative systems
	Post-Westphalian era: "Political communities are unfinished and incomplete."	• transcending the tensions between the "shallow" and the "deep" variations • abolishment of intertwining among sovereignty, territorialism, citizenship, and cultural affiliation • integration based on new forms of discursive communities • post-territorial political community			

As a sort of summary of these ideas, it is quite apparent that the interpretations of the notion of political community cover a broad spectrum, ranging from the phenomenon of the state, through the (nation) state, to the multinational state. However, the interpretative range does include marginal cases in which the political community is fallacious, and the stability of the system may only be sustained by violent and totalitarian means – generally only for a certain duration of time. An interesting component of the scope of this notion is the idea according to which the ambivalence characteristic of the use of the term may be attributed to the fact that many political communities are less "finished" and "complete" than the authorities of the given communities would believe them to be. In view of this, political communities will very clearly go through further

stages of development. In the course of these processes the interpretation of the notion will parallely deepen and broaden, gradually abolishing conflicts between the ideal forms of political community and cultural divisions.

The Political Community of Romania from the Perspective of the Relationship between Majority and Minority

With regard to Romanian majority and Hungarian minority relations, the Romanian political community can be categorized as one of the less "finished and complete" political communities. The Hungarian minority has primarily been contesting the conditions under which the given political community came into being, and, despite the fact that it has now been more than ninety years since the Treaty of Trianon was signed, disputes related to the conditions created by the treaty have not been resolved. Numerous elements of the dominant narrative – the constitutional definition of political community, the overwhelming majority of national symbols, the view of history as it is presented in general education and public life, and so on – exclude the Hungarian minority in Romania from the Romanian political community. Occasionally these elements describe the essence of the Romanian political community as the historical opposition to Hungarians. According to public polls, identity research, and other sociological investigations conducted over the course of the past fifteen to twenty years, not unsurprisingly Hungarians in Romania do not identify with the dominant narrative. Dominant Hungarian identity structures significantly differ from the identification patterns characteristic of the Romanian majority. The above mentioned analyses also reveal how radically the Romanian and Hungarian standpoints on the institutional measures targeting the integration of the Hungarian minority differ from each other. This may lead to the conclusion that political institutions serving to foster mutual respect and acceptance among Romanians and Hungarians are lacking. Consequently, Hungarians in Transylvania may rightfully feel that the Romanian state does not properly represent their interests and does not protect their particular form of life in the manner they would expect it to adopt. In addition, it is not unreasonable of the Romanian majority to view Hungarian minority political aspirations and loyalties with suspicion. Despite the shared territory and shared political institutions, cultural values and traditions which, in many respects, may be considered common, Romanian and Hungarian citizens of Romania are not united by common values, nor do they share an identity

acceptable to both parties or any form of mutual commitment — that is, the relationship between the two communities lacks several aspects essential for the more authentic forms of political community.

With regard to the conditions under which the Romanian political community was established, it is worth noting that on December 1, 1918, when the Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) national assembly announced the union of Transylvania with Romania, the standpoint of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania was not taken into consideration. (After long deliberations with representatives of the Romanian nation the Germans did eventually subscribe to the new order.) In fact, this procedure had its antecedents: on May 29, 1848, when the Cluj Diet proclaimed the union of Transylvania and Hungary, neither Romanians nor Germans agreed to the decision.[27] In addition to declaring the union of Romanians of Hungary and the territories inhabited by them to Romania, the 1918 Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) Resolutions included the fundamental principles of the organization of the new Romanian state. Among these principles emphasis was placed on the rights allocated to "cohabiting nationalities," which included the promise of "absolute freedom": the use of mother tongue in education, public administration, and jurisdiction, representation in legislature and government, and denominational equality and autonomy in religious life.[28] To this day the question as to whether or not these promises have been met remains a subject of debate among Hungarians and Romanians: the Hungarian minority in Romania demands the autonomy of the community on the basis of these promises, as well as on other grounds. In contrast, according to the frequently reiterated Romanian standpoint, the Gyulafehérvár Resolutions do not include any provisions which could be interpreted as the recognition of the right to national autonomy.

The Romanian political community is more explicitly defined by the Romanian Constitution, adopted by the Romanian Parliament on November 23, 1991. The constitution took effect after the ratifying referendum of December 8, 1991. At the November 23, 1991 legislative convention senators and representatives of

[27] Although the 22 German and 5 Romanian representatives present at the assembly all voted for the resolutions of parliament, including the union, both the Romanian and the German elite rejected the union of Transylvania with Hungary. For the background and details of the case see Egyed (2000). It is also worth noting that Transylvania entered the union from the state of a province within a kingdom, which, in comparison with the previous situation, in addition to the union with the Hungarian Crown, was more significant in the sense of a union under collective government.

[28] "1. Absolute freedom for all nationalities residing in Romania. Every nation will educate, govern, and perform duties of administration in its own mother tongue, by its own individuals. In proportion to the population of these minorities they will be secured the right of participation in legislative bodies and state government. 2. Equal rights and absolute freedom for denominational self-government, for all the denominations in the state." (*Magyar Kisebbség,* 1995/2: 79–80)

the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania representing the majority of the Hungarian minority in Romania voted against the Constitution as a means of protest against the way in which the constitution defined the Romanian political community. They also objected to the manner in which the legislative convention ignored several demands of the Hungarian minority in Romania, which would have placed the relationship between the Romanian state and the Hungarian minority on more sound foundations. On December 4, 1991, in preparation for the referendum ratifying the constitution, leaders of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania called for the Hungarians in Transylvania to "fulfill their civil duties, study the Romanian constitution, participate in the referendum, and vote according to their own belief and conscience."[29] At the referendum 77 per cent of the valid votes were cast in support of the constitution, while 20.4 percent were cast against its adoption.[30] The fact that 2,235,085 people voted against the constitution suggests that a significant proportion of the Hungarian minority in Romania was included in this group. In 2003, during the preparations for accession to the European Union, the constitution was amended. Statute 429 of 2003, which was upheld by the October 18–19, 2003 referendum, amended the 1991 constitution. Although the new constitution does include amendments essential for Hungarians in Transylvania, efforts to modify the definition of political community failed yet again.

According to Article 1 Paragraph 1 of the constitution "Romania is a sovereign, independent, unitary and indivisible National State." National sovereignty resides within the "Romanian people" (Article 2 Paragraph 1) in the ethnic and cultural meaning of nation. The foundation of the Romanian state is laid on the "unity of the Romanian people" (Article 4 Paragraph 1), which may be traced back to the allegedly common historical origins of the three principalities – Transylvania, Moldavia, and Wallachia – and the political unity accomplished in 1918.[31] In addition, Article 13 states that "the official language of the State of Romania is Romanian." Consequently, the Romanian constitution represents the "deep" version of political community: it explicitly presumes the congruence of cultural and political community and defines the Romanian state as the political body responsible for serving the Romanian nation, a body the aim of

[29] *Szabadság,* January 11, 2010.

[30] *Monitorul Oficial,* Nr. 250, December 14, 1991.

[31] This paragraph was expanded after the 2003 constitutional amendment. It presently reads: "The State foundation is laid on the unity of the Romanian people and the solidarity of its citizens."

which is to protect the interests, culture, and life of the Romanian nation.[32] The fact that the Hungarian minority may participate in this process in a very limited way becomes evident by the manner in which the constitution defines the most important national symbols, namely the national holiday (Unification Day, December 1) and the national anthem (*Deşteaptă-te, române!*[33]) (Article 12 Paragraphs 3 and 4). Both remind Romanians and Hungarians alike that they are historical enemies, and that Romanian national unification could only have been made possible by the brake-up of the Hungarian state. For our approach it is significant to note that Article 3 Paragraph 4 states: "No foreign populations may be displaced or colonized on the territory of the Romanian State," a clause which, in 21st-century Europe, represents a rather peculiar, if not stunning expression of fears evolving around the protection of national identity.

This definition of political community has considerable practical consequences regarding the possibility of settling the relationship between the Hungarian minority in Transylvania and the Romanian state. In the Romanian understanding, the provision concerning the unitary, indivisible nation state provides sound legal justification for the rejection of any and all possible forms of autonomy. In addition, the directive addressing the exclusivity of the official Romanian language suggests that the Romanian state does not consider it its duty to protect institutionally forms of cultural life other than Romanian. The issue is further complicated by the fact that although 500,000 enfranchised citizens may initiate the amendment of the constitution (Article 150 Paragraph 1), Article 152 Paragraph 1 of the constitution declares: "The provisions of this Constitution with regard to the national, independent, unitary and indivisible character of the Romanian State, the republican form of government, territorial

[32] It is interesting to note that in addition to the dominant nation state argument, the superficial, "shallow" variation of political community also appears in the constitution. According to Article 4 Paragraph 2 "Romania is the common and indivisible homeland of all its citizens, without any discrimination on account of race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, sex, opinion, political adherence, property or social origin." In spite of its phrasing, in addition to presupposed ethnocultural neutrality of the Romanian state, this clearly contradicts Article 2 Paragraph 1, and Article 4 Paragraph 1. Beginning with the 1990s the literature in political science provides numerous arguments regarding the inability of public policy solutions, independent of nationality, ethnic origins, language and religion, to provide sufficient protection for members of non-dominant communities, suggesting that generally such policies result in assimilation. For more on this question see Salat (2001).

[33] "Awaken Romanian!" – A rallying song composed during the revolution of 1848. The lyrics were written by Andrei Mureşanu, the identity of the composer is still debated. The lyrics voice the ideas of national unity and independence, calling upon the community to act against enemies of the Romanian nation.

integrity, independence of justice, political pluralism and official language shall not be subject to revision."[34] All the above essentially mean that the official discursive space automatically rejects the inclusion of the demands of the Hungarian minority, which has pressed for a more inclusive reinterpretation of political community.[35]

Based on the above it is not surprising that Hungarians in Romania do not identify with the narrative defining the Romanian political community, laying down its origin, nature, and purposes, because it represents the will of the majority exclusively and continuously relays the foundations of the prejudicial distrust of Hungarians as historical enemies and the perception that they must be regarded with suspicion. Public polls and other research and investigation that were undertaken over the course of the past fifteen to twenty years indicate that the relationship between Romanians and the Hungarian minority is characterized by different configurations of identification and conflicting ethno-political options.[36] Based on data gathered from representative samples between 2000 and 2002, through three investigations[37] Raluca Soreanu arrives at the conclusion according to which cultural identification is very strong for both Romanians and Hungarians, which entails the implicit conclusion that the citizenship-based "shallow" version of the Romanian political community is a vacant category. Soreanu attributes this to the fact that the Romanian majority considers Hungarians born in Romania to be Romanians, while the latter see themselves as members of the Hungarian cultural nation. The Hungarian community in Transylvania belongs to the Romanian nation by law and to the Hungarian nation by culture. Thus in a peculiar way it is simultaneously part of both, yet, at the same time, not entirely of either (Soreanu, 2005). Based on research undertaken in 2000, Irina Culic also

[34] I quoted relevant passages of the Romanian Constitution from *România Hivatalos Közlönye* (The Official Bulletin of Romania), nr. 188, November 3, 2003.

[35] The essence of the statements summarized above is not by all means contradicted by the fact that the Romanian Constitution does include significant clauses to protect minorities. For example Article 6 Paragraph 1 states: "The State recognizes and guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to the preservation, development and expression of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity." Neither is it contradicted by the peculiar paradox that despite the provision in the constitution regarding the official language, the 2001. 215 executive law implicitly recognizes minority languages in administrative units in which the proportion of the minority population exceeds 20% of the total population.

[36] For more on this question see Salat (2007).

[37] *Ethnobarometer – Interethnic Relations in Romania,* Research Center for Interethnic Relations, Cluj, May–June 2000; *Barometer of Ethnic Relations,* Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, Cluj, November 2001; *Barometer of Ethnic Relations,* Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, Cluj, October 2002.

points out that the manner in which Romanians define themselves is, on the one hand, exclusive of Hungarians, but on the other hand, it creates a situation in which Hungarians are prompted to capitalize on the advantages of belonging to the Hungarian nation.[38] According to the conclusion of the Kárpát (Carpathian) project, undertaken between 1997 and 1999, only 7 percent of the Romanians in Transylvania are properly socialized to accept Hungarians as inherent members of the Romanian political community. Among Hungarians the rate of those who have an extensive network with Romanians and do not perceive significant social distance between themselves and their Romanian fellow citizens is 10 percent (Csepeli et al., 2002). In her analysis of the identity structures as revealed by the Kárpát (Carpathian) project Culic states that an individual belonging to the minority finds him- or herself facing a difficult dilemma any time he or she has to decide between the civic and the ethno-cultural identity. This is often a "null sum game" in view of the actions, attitudes, and options it generates, and it occasionally results in a negative balance due to the fact that in situations when the ethnic identity matters the two alternatives are mutually exclusive. At the same time the identification dilemma of the minority generates tensions in its relationship with the majority, because the ambivalence arouses suspicions and distrust among members of the majority: members of the dominant community expect expressions of the loyalty of the minority, which would amount to a kind of renunciation by the latter of its identity. Culic believes that the situation could presumably change if the Romanian state guaranteed extensive autonomy and far-reaching educational rights for the Hungarian minority. This in all likelihood would alter the identity constructions of the Hungarians in Romania. However, a change in such a direction would entail unforeseeable consequences for majority reactions (Culic, 1999).[39] Compared to the situation described above, it is a

[38] "The Romanians 'enjoy' their nation, while the Hungarians are excluded from it. Or, to concieve the situation from an other point of view, the Hungarians exclude themselves from it, by entering the 'club' of the Hungarian nation, and enjoying its goods and services." (Culic, 2001: 241)

[39] "The *identity dilemma of the minority persons represents a considerable source of tension*. On the one hand, the individual is often confronted with situations in which the two loyalties, the civic loyalty and the national, conflict. In many cases, irrespective of which of the two faces of identity prevails in his actions, attitudes and options, the result seems to be that of a null sum game, or even a negative sum game. In most situations where his ethnicity (identity) is relevant, these two dimensions cannot be reconciled. On the other hand, this dual identity also represents a source of tension for the individual belonging to the majority population, that is the nation that constitutes his national state. The duality of the minority person gives rise to distrust, uncertainty, and suspicion. The majority person demands a kind of loyalty that the minority person cannot offer. However, it is possible that a new kind of political and civic formalization of the minority person's status (maximal educational rights in the minority language, cultural and territorial self-government or other forms of civil and

significant shift that according to the flash report on the conclusions of the 2007 Kárpát Panel (Carpathian Panel), "Hungarians in Romania have embarked on their course of Romanian civic integration without renouncing any aspect of their Hungarian cultural identity" (Csata et al., 2007: 8).[40]

As the sources quoted above and a range of other investigations make unambiguously plaine, the Romanian and Hungarian views on the institutional integration of the Hungarian minority differ radically. While the significant majority of Hungarians are all in agreement on the issues of autonomy, a state university in which the language of education and administration is Hungarian, the use of the Hungarian language in public institutions, and the question of dual citizenship, the majority of Romanians reject them. A report on a 2006 study also reveals that compared to 2002 the proportion of those Romanian respondents who considered the relationship between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority conflict-laden rose from 18% to 26%. And the proportion of those who believe the relationship between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority is characterized by consensus dropped from 39% to 30%. According to the report this negative change of opinion may be attributed to the fact that – in accordance with the public administration law of 2001 – Hungarian place names appeared at the time and the Hungarian demand for ethnicity-based autonomy received more public attention in Romania. In the 2004 election campaign the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania employed the latter notion as the major device of mobilization. It is of interest to add that according to the report the 30% of Romanian respondents who consider majority–minority relations to be consensus-based believe one major benefit of Romania's accession to the European Union to be that as soon as Romania becomes a member state of the European Union the question of ethnic autonomy will be taken off the agenda.

political organization) might change the content of the process during which the minority person builds his identity. Still, issues pertaining to this change are subject of further debate. Similarly, the way the majority population would relate to the minority in these conditions." (Culic, 1999: 23–24) Emphasis in the original.

[40] The conclusion is based in part on the following data: "With regard to national affiliation 82% of the Hungarian respondents in Transylvania believe that the Hungarian minority of Transylvania constitutes part of the Hungarian nation, but, at the same time 65% also consider it part of the Romanian nation. This is yet another reinforcement of the fact that there is a twofold integration process. However, the one targeting integration in the Romanian nation is rather new." (Csata et al., 2007: 8)

The same group of respondents views autonomy as the instrument of subversion, and rejects it as a political structure capable of throwing into question the existing ethno-political *status quo*.[41]

One can therefore conclude with considerable confidence that with regard to the Romanian political community no "political project" has been launched that would have been able to compromise the antagonism rooted in the differences between Romanian and Hungarian identities. Nor did any of the projects consolidate rivalries related to the proposed manners of integration that might in turn have consolidated the political institutions of mutual respect between the two communities. On the one hand, Hungarians in Romania believe the safeguards of their survival to be institutional structures that acknowledge Hungarians as an autonomous political community within the Romanian state. On the other hand, the Romanian majority absolutely refuses to acknowledge any manifestation of autonomy.[42]

The Path of the Hungarian Minority in Romania from an Autonomous Political Community to the State of Institutionalized Diaspora

If one views the above analysis as a starting point, a very interesting question arises: what variations of change await us in the future? When considering the prospective alternatives, one has to take into consideration that the "shortcomings" of the Romanian political community reviewed above only come to the surface in the relationship between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority. From all other perspectives the Romanian political community is "finished and complete": consolidated and so successful that in view of power relations and the current characteristics of international standing no scenario is imaginable whereby the unsettled questions of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania – and one must note that they are unsettled only from the Hungarian perspective – would destabilize the present situation. Which, in another way, also

[41] *Climat interetnic în România în pragul integrării europene,* Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, Bucharest, December 4, 2006.

[42] It is important to note here that the Romanian political class sees the fact that Hungarians have their own party as a manifestation of the acknowledgment of the Hungarian community in Transylvania. Further signs of this acknowledgment include the fact that representatives of the Hungarian communities are present in the Romanian Parliament and the government, their participation in local administration, and their presence in the leadership of non-centralized state institutions. I am grateful to Andor Horváth for this and for other observations.

means that the responsibility of capitalizing on the chances implicit in a change falls on the Hungarian party. In view of the fact that the Romanian party has naturally no interest in a "political project" radically different from the current one, it is those acting in the name and interests of the Hungarians of Transylvania who will in fact influence how and in what direction forthcoming events will develop. One also must bear it in mind that the Hungarian community in Transylvania displays more and more symptoms of internal factionalism, both in political representation and with regard to institutions serving the representation and the reproduction of identity. This considerably reduces the chances of actually furthering any realization of the demands for an autonomous political community.

There are in principle three possible alternative paths that might lead to some resolution of the situation described above. The first of these would be an immediate shift towards a nation state that is not only a nation state by proclamation but is also supported by sociological facts. The second would be a shift towards the multinational state following the creation of a form of institutionalized power relations. The third would be the maintenance of the current situation, which, from the perspective of a long term settlement, is theoretically an alternative that presents a variety of possible outcomes, but on the basis of the prevailing trends today would in itself virtually bring about the gradual realization of a nation state. The question remains, in view of the possibility created by legislation to obtain Hungarian citizenship more easily: which alternative is the most likely to become a reality?[43]

[43] Before offering an assessment of the possible consequences, one should take a moment to note that there are numerous relevant arguments in support of the political decision that made the extension of Hungarian citizenship available to Hungarians residing beyond the present borders of Hungary. The gesture of historical redress is mostly symbolic, but with regard to its significance it should not be underestimated. In addition, referring to precedents set by other European states, the decision may also be seen as justified by the fact that while Hungary is suffering severe demographic decline (an aging and shrinking population), it must also passively watch how reluctantly Hungarian minorities are tolerated in the successor states, hindered in their attempts to establish institutions to secure community sustenance and therefore often chosing either to assimilate or to travel to emigrate to other parts of the world. This argument may also be valid in its less straightforward form, resonant of a message with double meaning. In this interpretation obtaining Hungarian citizenship principally strengthens the Hungarian identity of Hungarians beyond Hungarian borders, who due to this fact may be more likely to remain Hungarian in their native lands. But if the outcome happens to be that Hungarian minority members holding Hungarian citizenship eventually transmigrate to the mother country, it is seen as less of a loss in comparison with the loss of their identity as Hungarians.

The political decision enabling the extension of Hungarian citizenship to Hungarians outside Hungary carries multiple possible interpretations for the sake of this analysis. On the one hand, one may view it as a typical post-Westphalian initiative, which aims to disband the interconnections between sovereignty, territorialism, citizenship and cultural affiliations in the Carpathian basin. At the same time, however, it attempts to reformulate the boundaries of the Hungarian political community by utilizing legal means in addition to employing deterritorialization and integration based on new variations of discursive communities.[44] The decision may also be interpreted as an effort on behalf of the Hungarian state – which is following an example set by many other states – to attempt to win the loyalty of Hungarians outside Hungary from rival established forms of power and secure the cultural borders of the Hungarian nation. Finally, one may also suppose that creators of the legal bases for dual citizenship drew the astute conclusion on the basis of the fact that Hungarian minority communities have not yet reasonably succeeded in asserting the interests of their community over the will of the majority nations of successor states, nor are they likely to be able to do so in the near future.

From the point of view of the Hungarian minority in Romania the third alternative seems the most problematic, because the gesture of historical amends, which is welcomed by many, may entail significant consequences as to what chances the Hungarian community in Transylvania may have finally to settle their relationship with the Romanian state, and thereby consolidate its standing in its native land. If one attempts to project the prospective consequences of the political decision to extend citizenship rights, the first and foremost obvious notion will be the explicit rejection of the third alternative as one that so far has failed to produce any kind of palpable result. Although this categorical decision, which was passed without the consent but allegedly in the interests of Hungarians in Transylvania, is open to debate or at least some possible modulation, on the basis of the accomplishments of minority politics over the course of the past ninety years, that the decision itself is justified is beyond question. However, the question still arises as whether this political decision to reject and radically turn against the current situation will smooth the path towards the first of the other two solutions, listed above, or the second.

[44] It would be worth examining and drawing a parallel between the efforts of the Hungarian state and some newer elements of the the Romanian state strategy to build a nation, which assert the logic of extra-territorialism. However, this would require a new analysis beyond the scope of the present paper.

Naturally the answer to this question depends on the number of Hungarians in Transylvania who apply for Hungarian citizenship. If this number comes too close to the threshold of the tolerance of the Romanian authorities, the reactions of the Romanian state are likely to generate mass migration to Hungary, and thus the institution of dual citizenship may facilitate the realization of the first alternative. However, even if the number of Hungarians applying for Hungarian citizenship does not exceed the tolerance level of Romanian authorities, the chances that the first alternative would be realized are still higher. Any genuine realization of the second alternative has become extremely improbable in the wake of the decision by the Hungarian state to ease the process by which Hungarian citizenship can be acquired, from many perspectives.

Although Romanian state authorities consistently and assiduously reject institutionalization of autonomy as a territorial division of power, and in the near future it seems hardly likely that their position on this question will change in any way, one of the benefits of the long term government participation of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania is that the institutionalization of non-territorial power division[45] is not considered inconceivable in the declarations made by representatives of major Romanian political parties. The realization of this alternative primarily requires a great deal of political wisdom and sedulous resolve, but a lot depends on the circumstances as well. Any issue that heightens the traditional distrust of Romanian political culture against Hungarians will hinder the chances of realizing any genuine solution.

One must also take into consideration the fact that the climate of opinion following the political decision modifying the citizenship act implicitly suggests that only those who resolve to take advantage of the right to reclaim Hungarian citizenship (which was stripped from them or from their ancestors by a historical injustice beyond their control) will be considered true Hungarians, which from the perspective of the Hungarian nation state is hardly a debatable standpoint. However, it is not entirely clear what consequences this public sentiment will have for Hungarian speakers (to use for a moment a term that at least attempts to sidestep notions of belonging) living in Transylvania who wish to remain "true Hungarians" in the land of their birth, and for this reason are interested in the

[45] I do not mean division of power in the consolidative sense in which Arend Lijphart uses it, as, according to most scholars, the prerequisite conditions are not given in Romania. Lijphart pointed out and popularized as the normative model a variation that presupposed the realization of four criteria: government coalition, segmental autonomy, proportionate representation, and mutual right of veto. In contrast, I employ the term as suggested by Pippa Norris, who believes political cooperation between rival communities to be implementable within less rigid and more variable institutional frameworks. See Norris (2008).

swiftest consolidation of the Hungarian community in Transylvania with the Romanian state. If they conform to the implicit expectations of public sentiment and apply for Hungarian citizenship, sooner or later in all likelihood they may well deprive themselves of any genuine opportunity to participate in the efforts to establish relations between Transylvanian Hungarians and the Romanian state on more sound legal and political grounds, since the Romanian authorities will not passively sit by and watch as large numbers of Hungarian citizens assume positions in the Romanian state offices. If they do not utilize the institution of dual citizenship, their legitimacy may be jeopardized with regard to the Hungarian community, since their loyalty to the Hungarian nation will be questioned on a sound basis.

And lastly, the possibility of obtaining Hungarian citizenship more easily through a simplified procedure also undermines the chances of an independent Hungarian political community in Transylvania by aggravating the internal factionalism that has become increasingly characteristic of the Hungarians in Romania: it further breaks down the minority community by individual legal relations, and – again, and this time irreversibly – forces members of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania to accept the status of an institutionalized diaspora.

Conclusions

This reasoning leads one to an interesting conclusion. The question (to which no adequate answer has been given over the course of the past nine decades) as to whether or not the Hungarians in Transylvania can be considered members of the Romanian political community has essentially been removed from the agenda by the political decision enabling Hungarians beyond the borders of Hungary to apply for Hungarian citizenship. This has again placed the question of the fate of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania in the hands of the Hungarian people living in Transylvania, or rather Romania. They will have to assess the significance and meaning of the opportunity to obtain Hungarian citizenship and decide which is a more important consideration when the question of the survival and the borders of the Hungarian identity is at stake (an identity they will bequeath to their descendants): their loyalties to their native land or their attachments to the cultural nation. The former in all likelihood will entail uncertain prospects and continuous struggles with the Romanian state authorities, as well as the gradual loss of moral and financial support from the Hungarian state. The latter will lead to the ever more emphatic congruence of the boundaries of the Hungarian nation in the cultural sense and the borders of the Hungarian politi-

cal community. Although in the current situation no middle road between the two alternatives seems likely to emerge, one nonetheless cannot absolutely rule out the possibility of a post-Westphalian change based on the various systems of shared sovereignty, a change that would reshape the interconnection of territorialism, citizenship and cultural affiliations in the mid and long term.

Translated by Judit Szathmári

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Two Peoples, Seventy Nations: Parallels of National Destiny in Hungarian Intellectual History and Ancient Jewish Thought

Tamás Turán

Introduction: Comparison and Competition

Comparisons of the fates of Hungarians and Jews have a long history: in a rudimentary form one finds them in medieval Hungarian historiography. For emerging empires and nations embracing Christianity, Old Testament historiography served as a sort of mirror in the construction of their national and historical identities. From the early Middle Ages until about the 18th century, chroniclers, historians, preachers and poets found it natural and appropriate to adopt some central notions and episodes of Biblical Israelite history in framing their own history and present. In Hungary these comparisons persisted, despite growing secularization as of the 19th century, in literature and politics. In some forms and to a limited extent they are still part of public discourse.[1] There may well be something unique in the long and continuous presence of this 'drive', sometimes well beyond mere intellectual exercises, among ethnic Hungarians – take, for instance, the dramatic history of Sabbatarianism in 16th–20th century Transylvania. In any case, the continued – sometimes obsessive – interest in Jewish history and 'fate' is predicated on some objective homologies and similarities.

Comparisons of oneself with someone else, or one's group with another, are often emotionally charged and ambivalent. Comparisons between nations – as among individuals – are two-faced: the 'other' can be a 'role model' or a rival; usually both. 'Racism' may be involved insofar as comparisons of this sort tend to conceive of the 'self' and the 'other' in terms of economic, cultural, etc. 'race', i.e., competition. This 'racism' of course is a major component of modern

* This essay constitutes an enlarged version of my paper presented at the conference entitled *Between Minority and Majority,* organized by the Balassi Institute in Budapest, Hungary on May 4-6, 2011.

[1] For a relatively recent (and approving) historical survey of these comparisons in Hungary, see Nemeskürty (1991). In recent decades phrases like "Hungarian Holocaust" were routinely used in, but never confined to, anti-Semitic discourse in Hungary.

nationalism;[2] and collective paranoia, when small nations or groups often view themselves as 'endangered species' (and often, conceivably, they indeed are), is one of its more extreme manifestations. In any case, group solidarity is often apprehended by other – 'rival' – groups and perceived as misanthropy, conspiracy, exclusiveness, and the like. Comparisons of all sorts – of fate, resources, individual or national characteristics – are staple foods in identity discourse.

The emotional potential of the comparisons, analogies, and metaphors with which we are dealing makes them vulnerable to obscurantism, abuse and manipulation in political discourse. One important way of controlling this sinister potential is to pay as much attention to differences as one does to similarities. Let me be a bit more specific. In the sphere of public and political life, for example, the following points should be kept in mind by those who are still enchanted by comparisons today between Hungary or Hungarians on the one hand, and Jews, Israelis and Israel on the other:

Polity / Political entity. Similarities: a population of 13–15 million, having a nation state, with a considerable part living outside of the nation state, in 'diaspora'. Differences: The formation of the Hungarian 'nation' and its ethnic cohesion (like most European nations) is inseparable from the foundation of a state and the acceptance of a new, dominant religion (Christianity); statehood had, and has, primacy over diaspora. In the case of Judaism the opposite is (or was) the case (at least as far as old historical memories were concerned, if actual historical processes are perhaps debatable and obscure): 'religion' and 'ethnicity', in a unique blend of the two, characteristic of Judaism, preceded statehood and survived it for a very long time in different forms.[3] After initial extraterritoriality, diaspora-existence was partly transformed into, partly augmented by a state – at different stages, under different circumstances.[4]

[2] Sports and other forms of international and intra-national competitions are important surrogates of this 'racism' in modern industrialized societies. (The Maccabi international sports movement, since the early 20th century, is an interesting adaptation and simulation of this idea within Judaism.) Nevertheless, 'soft' expressions of nationalist or 'racist' sentiments in these social activities only partially substitute and neutralize 'hard' forms of nationalism and racism.

[3] Well before the establishment of the state of Israel, representative Jewish thinkers in the West (in Germany, in particular), such as Leopold Zunz (1794–1886) and Hermann Cohen (1842–1918), defined Judaism as a 'culture' or 'civilization' – something less (or more) than a state but more (or less) than a religion. Ultimately the impact of Rousseau and Herder (and their views of Judaism) is also reflected in these ideas. Compare similar views on 'Germanness' *(Deutschtum)* in German political thought since the early 19th century (below, at notes 27-28.).

[4] In recent decades demographic and other trends have brought about changes in the sociological-political reality of the relations between Israel and the Jewish 'diaspora'. According to Biblical and rabbinic historiography, however, the formation and the 'sacred history' of the Jewish people began

The state in international politics. Similarity: a state with a relatively small population, territory and economic weight, and with very limited *de facto* freedom of action in the economic-political sphere. Difference: in terms of international law, Hungary has internationally recognized borders (imposed on it almost 100 years ago), and is under no external military occupation or threat (since 1990-91). Israel only partially has internationally recognized borders, ultimately because since its establishment some of the neighboring states – as well as the majority of the states in its broader geographic region – have never accepted its right to exist and therefore refuse to establish diplomatic relations.

Mentality in public life. Addressing this issue of course involves the danger of slipping into vague social psychology or national characterology. Taking this risk, I make only one cursory remark. As a consequence of a borderline situation in terms of historical geography, 'Western' values and patterns in individual and communal behavior and public life, such as individualism, cooperativeness and compromise, are combined in both countries and cultures with partly opposing 'Eastern/Mediterranean' values and patterns such as 'honor', combativeness and obduracy (to put it in Biblical terms: 'valor' and 'stiff-neckedness'). These conflicting values coalesce in different ways among 'Hungarians' and 'Jews' and manifest and perpetuate themselves in different attitudes and patterns of behavior in social and public life.

The comparisons between Hungarians and Jews discussed below could hardly have been made by a Hungarian Jew before the mid-19th century. It would have been meaningless and useless under those historical circumstances. In the hundred years from the beginning of the struggle for Jewish emancipation in Hungary, however, one finds comparisons of various sorts by Hungarian Jews: essays, homilies and scattered ideas about being 'Magyar', the common history and fate of Magyars/Hungarians and Jews and the like. These comparisons must be read against the backdrop of assimilationist optimism or – especially from the late 19th century – growing external pressures on Jews to assimilate. They were

with Egyptian servitude. (Medieval and later Biblicizing historiography of European Christian nations, in contrast, start their 'providential' history with their 'Exodus' or 'conquest' of their homeland.) According to a well-known rabbinic midrash from cca. 2nd century C.E. (Mekilta [1933]: I: 34–36), in Egypt 'Israel' was clearly distinguishable from the rest of the local population by their chastity, refraining from gossiping, their language and personal names. Even if one does not attribute much historical credibility to this tradition, it obviously reflects – at least generally and vaguely – rabbinic notions about the 'national identity' of the Israelites and its external and moral 'markers'. For the later relevance of this midrash (in its different variations) in 19th century Hungarian Jewish religious 'nationalism' and identity politics, see Silber (1992): 68–72.

side-effects of the process of assimilation, which was a popular 'solution' to the dilemma that all Jewry in Western and Central Europe had to face over the course of this century-long historical juncture: how to re-define their ethno-religious identity in order to fit into the modern nation-state, which from a religious and cultural perspective was increasingly neutral? Despite its appeal to Jews and 'host nations' alike, this solution proved increasingly problematic. (Two alternative responses to the aforementioned dilemma – and to assimilation – emerged in Central Europe in the second half of the 19th century: ultraorthodoxy and modern Jewish nationalism [Zionism], both of which proved to be viable under different circumstances.) One of the problems and paradoxes of assimilation is well captured by the joke about the Jew being the 'Belgian' among the Flamand and Vallon.[5] Historical and fate-comparisons by Hungarian Jews compare Hungarians usually not with Jews in general, but with *Hungarian* Jews. To analyse these comparisons would be interesting in certain respects, but in the present context we confine ourselves to comparisons by non-Jewish Hungarians.

Ancient Judaism, for its part, of course had no opportunity to reflect on historical parallels or analogies between Jews and Hungarians specifically. It did reflect, however, on parallels between Israel and the 'nations' in general in the eschatological dimension. The relation between Jews and the 'nations' – to be more precise, the relation between the history of the Jews and the history of the 'nations' – are conceived, to put it in simple geometric terms, as parallel lines which are to meet in infinity. Before I present this idea, I survey the key chapters of later comparisons of Hungarian and Jewish history, their main motifs and background. I will discuss in greater detail only the interesting contributions of László Németh to the long tradition of Hungarian–Jewish 'comparisons of destiny' in the 1930s and their international context, which has been given little attention so far.

Parallels and Comparisons – Further Preliminary Remarks with Question Marks

I will proceed backwards in time, skipping examples from recent decades. I start with some points related to Dezső Szabó, a talented and influential writer and essayist of the interwar period in Hungary. The following remarks are not about

[5] Flamands and Vallons start a fight on the main square of a Belgian town. Policemen separate them: "Vallons to the right, Flamands to the left!" – they order the crowd. "Where should Belgians stand?" – asks Kohn.

comparisons of fate (between Hungarians and Jews) from the past, but about parallels of fate and ideas as they appear to us now, which shed some light on the historical comparisons of which we are speaking.

Anyone who takes the trouble to visit Dezső Szabó's memorial plaque one block away from the Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest,[6] or the memorial to him – a sculptured portrait on the promenade named after Szabó on Gellért Hill, on the west side of the Danube – finds the following legend, a quotation from him: "Every Hungarian bears responsibility for every Hungarian" (Szabó, 1940: 31).[7] This saying, by the way, has been invoked quite often since the regime change of 1989/90 in certain political circles in Hungary, and it was also the slogan of the demonstration in Budapest in 1988 against the plans of the Romanian communist regime at that time to destroy villages inhabited by ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (and to resettle the inhabitants elsewhere). The saying itself is a close parallel, a quasi mirror-translation of a Talmudic principle: "all Israel is responsible for one another".[8] We may never know whether Szabó was aware of this parallel source in some form. In any case, anyone who utters such a sentence (either the Szabó-version, or the Talmudic one) as a member of a nation or group is speaking about the same simple thing: the notion and importance of solidarity and a sense of sharing fate, risk, and responsibility: 'we are in the same boat'.[9]

[6] The memorial plaque is found above the entrance of the apartment house on József krt. 31/A.

[7] Cf. a similar formulation of the most famous Hungarian essay on national characterology (Prohászka, 1936: 73) on the – assumed – Russian "collective sense of guilt".

[8] *Sifra,* Behuqqotai, pereq 7,5 (to Lev. 26:37); in a literalist translation: "Every Israelite is a guarantor for every other one" (cf. Sifra [1988]: III: 371; Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 27b, and parallels). For medieval and later legal and other interpretations and ramifications, see Rabinovitch (1992). Significantly, according to the context of the biblical phrase ("they shall stumble over one another", Lev. 26:37) which this rabbinic principle of 'collective responsibility' or 'national solidarity' is associated with here, the phrase is part, or a consequence, of the punishment of dispersion and what it entails: inner division and paranoia. The same is true therefore, to some extent, of the principle of 'collective responsibility' associated with the phrase. This contextual meaning of the biblical text is retained or rediscovered by the medieval interpretation which finds in the rabbinic principle an expression of a 'community of fate' in the regular, wider, non-legal sense of the term (see note 10 below).

[9] Cf. Leviticus rabbah 4.6 (Leviticus rabbah, 1939: 55). According to rabbinic lore not only did living creatures find themselves literally 'in the same boat' (Noah's) at some point in history, but in a way 'nations' did too. In the crew of Jonah's ship all the seventy languages-nations were represented: Tanhuma, *Vayikra* 8 (5a-b) and Pirke de-R. Eliezer, ch. 10 (cf. Jonah 1:5 and Micha 4:5) (Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer [1916]: 67–68). It would be worthwhile examining in greater detail the complex theological implications of the Jonah-story for the 'nations', but such a study would exceed the framework of this inquiry. For the rich ancient political-cosmological symbolism of the ship, see Mach (1957): 223–241.

Moreover, both statements convey the meaning that the 'community' is not in full control (and has no hopes ever to regain control) of its 'fate'. One cannot trace, especially in the modern saying, any acute sense of 'chosenness'. The two sayings have much in common not only in their formulation, but also in their content, despite the fact that the rabbinic saying speaks (originally) about liability (or even punitive responsibility),[10] while the gist of 'responsibility' as Szabó understands it here seems to be pro-active. The latter saying is directed towards future 'destiny' more than to a sort of 'fate' or past. Who or what it is to which Hungarians are accountable or responsible collectively, and why, according to Szabó – remains obscure. In any case, a quasi-prophetic voice of self-scrutiny echoes in both statements, despite the almost two-thousand years that separate them.

Dezső Szabó died in destitution and physical debilitation (according to some sources, also in starvation) in January 1945 in the basement of the apartment house in which he lived at the time (on which the memorial plaque mentioned above was put after the war). Another Hungarian writer, the Jewish Dezső Szomory, died several weeks earlier some two kilometers away under similar circumstances: suffering from starvation, loneliness, and depression.[11]

Analogous insights, parallel lives, similar fates – how far can we stretch comparisons and analogies of this sort? Szabó and Szomory: two Hungarian writers of stature, with many differences and many similarities with regard to their personality, talent and career. Can historical memory throw them into the same mass grave set aside for the 'last days' or the 'civilian victims' of the Second World War?

Two Peoples

The 1930s and the early years of the Second World War witnessed heated debates on the role of assimilation (of Jews, Germans and other ethnic minorities) in modern Hungarian social history. Prominent participants (historians, social scientists, literary figures) of this protracted public discussion, which in fact started

[10] The people of 'Israel' is collectively responsible and legally liable for transgressions of its members, but only those who are 'relevant' in a concrete situation, in other words who could have prevented the transgression in some way or another. Szabó's principle seems to speak, on the other hand, more broadly about every Hungarian's responsibility for every other. A wider, non-legal meaning of 'community of fate/destiny' was attached to the saying in the Middle Ages (Israel Isserlein, *Terumat ha-deshen,* no. 58 [ed. S. Avitan; Jerusalem, 1990: 58].

[11] Szomory spent his last weeks in an apartment house under Swedish "protection" in Budapest (Pozsonyi út 22). On his last months, see Tabéry (1945).

in the wake of the First World War and intensified after the national 'trauma' of Trianon,[12] questioned the hundred-year-long historical process of assimilation, and Jewish assimilation in particular. Some Jewish intellectuals, such as Károly Pap – a writer and son of a Neolog rabbi – also considered this process a dead end. The writer, polymath and brilliant essayist László Németh, himself a staunch critic of assimilation[13] and an influential literary figure of interwar Hungary, wrote a review entitled "Two Peoples" (Németh, 1935d) of Pap's book-length essay (1935). The title (evoking, probably inadvertently, Gen. 25:23) refers to Jews – presumably Hungarian Jews, above all – and Hungarians. Towards the end the author calls these two peoples "two types of Jewry/Jewishness" *(kétféle zsidóság)*. "Jewishness", a historical metaphor, here stands for a nation with a diaspora-existence (Németh, 1935d: 594–597).[14]

> I finished the six grades of secondary education in a school that was only attended by a few Christians, from Angyalföld. Until the age of sixteen, I do not remember anyone who was not Jewish among my friends. I had no choice but to realize that the rest of our circle of friends was bound by a community of destiny that did not include me. One day of the week my friends went to "Talmud", where they read the letters of an ancient national alphabet that I did not know. And these unknown letters were part of their behavior, too. The circuit of Talmud ran through their bodies even in our most intimate play, and also made a connection among them, but excluded me, the pampered. Apart from the village, Jewishness was the first community of destiny that I got to know, and I have never met a stronger one since then.

"Fate" or "destiny", and "community of destiny" or "bond of fate" *(sorsközösség)* are the keywords of this essay. Fate/destiny – in various word-compounds such as "fateful questions" *(sorskérdések* – meaning, more or less, 'existential questions') – feature prominently in Németh's essays in the interwar period (1935c: 177,

[12] Trianon (near Paris) was the place where a post-World War One peace treaty was signed in 1920. As a consequence of this treaty, defeated Hungary lost roughly 2/3 of its former territory and 1/2 of its population. About 1/3 of all ethnic Hungarians – large parts of which lived in ethnically homogenous neighboring regions – were turned into ethnic minorities living outside of Hungary.

[13] Both Dezső Szomory and Dezső Szabó played an important role in this criticism: the former as a typical target (Lackó, 1981: 186–187), the latter as the one who set the tone (Lackó, 1981: 157–188).

[14] Cf. Németh (1935c): 174.

1935e: 246-248).[15] "Community of destiny/fate" is a loan-translation of German *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* – a term which became increasingly prominent from the Weimar-period, in *völkisch* and Nazi, as well as German-Jewish literary and political identity-discourse,[16] and was still in vogue in similar Hungarian/Jewish contexts until recently.[17]

Németh admires Pap's courage in facing the situation of Jews in Hungary, his unequivocal articulation of its future prospects and the manner in which he urges his fellow Jews to choose between alternatives (see below). Németh took upon himself the same heavy mantle of the prophet or *praeceptor Hungariae,* confronting his people with its 'fateful' questions. Their writings document a unique friendship which produced some of the finest, most interesting, and (from hindsight) most tragic dialogues and soliloquies on the failure of assimilation – all these on the sidelines of the extended debate of the so-called 'populist' *(völkisch)* and 'urbanist' 'camps' (two quite distinct, still discernible literary elites) in Hungary. In the same book review Németh (1935d: 594–595) writes:

> For a few months I myself started thinking about my people in Károly Pap's ways; to think about Hungarians as he does about Jews. When he describes Judaism in Jesus' times as thrown to the hell of mankind, it is as if I had found a felici-

[15] Németh (1935a): 6, and especially (1935b) amply documents the impact that Frobenius' book (1932) and particularly his notion of nations and cultures having an immanent 'form' or 'destiny' made on him. I am not aware of any study on the meaning and sources of the concept of destiny in Németh's works in the interwar period; Prohászka (1936) (especially 5–26) (an earlier version of which was published in 1932–35) is also likely to have had an impact on him, cf. Németh (1935a): 6. On Prohászka's essay, see Lackó (1988): 168–180. For 'community of fate'/'sorsközösség' in the Hungarian context, see also Joó (1939): 15–17.

[16] See for example Buber (1963a): 311–312 (address delivered in 1921; the term "Schicksalseinheit" is used and circumscribed). See also Miron (2003): 486, n. 44; Miron (2011): index, s.v. "fate, Jewish fate". An offshoot of 'destiny/fate' – a concept with a long history in 19th century German, especially Romantic, political thought, cf. below – the term *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* was coined apparently in the late 19th century. In Germany and Hungary, 'community of fate' was used not only as a main component or criterion of being a nation, but also to denote strong historical bonds and interdependences between different nations or states.

[17] Pap (1935): 56, 76; Székely (1936): 22–23, 368, 371; Körmendi (1990): 57, 161, 192, 204, 209–210 (the work was originally written in 1942–43); Hahn ([1946]): 14; compare Béla Tábor's definition of the 'race' *(faj)* as 'community of the past' *(múltközösség)*, 'community of values' *(értékközösség)*, and 'community of language' *(nyelvközösség)* (Tábor, 1990: 24–39) (originally published in 1939). The combination of the first two components of this scheme is more or less synonymous with 'community of fate/destiny'. For more recent examples, see Márton (1989), Tábor (1990): 168–169.

> tous expression of my summary impressions of my Romanian journey. When he spoke about Judaism "having died out to become an idea", my final greatest Hungarian hope gave a leap.

Németh had already noted the affinity between Pap's thinking and his own, and their mutual influences, in his earlier writings (Dávidházi, 2003: 167). A lone voice in Hungarian Jewry of his age, Pap thought about Hungarian Jewry (and Judaism in general) in terms compatible with 'populist' *(völkisch)* notions. Instead of assimilation, Zionism or leftist revolutionary movements, he advocated the fulfillment of Judaism's universal and local 'destiny' (or 'mission') as an ethnic minority.[18] Németh's search for Hungarian 'destiny' was part of – or preparation for – his enthusiastic reform-plans in the mid-1930s for his country. In justifying this endeavor he again resorts to an analogy with Judaism (Németh, 1935d: 596):

> In the first part of my career I was a reformer. With criticism, orientation, European ideas, and Hungarian suggestions, I made efforts to refurbish the small Hungarian state in order to make it a Central European base for my people. Maimed Hungary would have been Zion, and cut-off Hungarians the limbs bearing the idea of our mission.

The quasi-prophetic voice and posture of literary figures such as Endre Ady, Dezső Szabó and Pap certainly influenced the Hungarian–Jewish comparisons of Németh. However one assesses the issue of influences, these comparisons were more than a fleeting idea for him. Earlier that year Németh wrote a programmatic essay on a would-be 'Hungarology' *(magyarságtudomány)*. This 'existential' – as opposed to antiquarian – science[19] would serve as a basis for orienting social action and political planning by virtue of the self-knowledge of the 'nation': research on its 'make-up' *(alkat)* and reflection on its 'destiny'.[20] No Biblical event, situation or idea appears in this article as a point of reference; the Bible itself, in its entirety, is presented as the ultimate ideal of, or model for, this science (Németh, 1935a: 13):

[18] Many of Pap's contemporaries rejected his excessive and incisive criticism (bordering on self-hatred) of Jewish history and society.

[19] Similar ideas and ideals were propounded at about the same time by Károly (Karl) Kerényi, a classical scholar and a friend of Németh in his own field, and these ideas were cornerstones of their friendship. On their relationship in general, see Lackó (1981): 265–279.

[20] For an early critique of the concept of 'Hungarology' (without relating to Németh specifically), see Bibó (1948a).

> Genesis, laws (that is, the book of special features creating nations), the history of kings, chronicles, the struggle with contemporary conditions, vision, prediction: these constituted the science of destiny and behavior of the Jews: the Bible. And all science of destiny must consist of these, whether written a thousand years before Christ, or two thousand years after.

Beyond pressing social problems, centuries-old Hungarian 'existentialist' – predominantly Protestant – prophetic Biblicism echoes in Németh's interest in Jewish destiny. At the same time, his 'science of destiny' is meant to transcend Biblical religions – above all what he considered to be waning Christianity.[21]

Németh and Pap, authors of the above-mentioned essays and manifestos, may be seen as obsessed with their feverish speculations. Self-proclaimed seers as they were, their clairvoyance enabled them to identify symptoms and causes of national crisis more than to suggest practical ways of dealing with it.[22]

A word should be said about the wider international context and background of these essays and the polemics surrounding them (a topic that has yet to be dealt with in detail by experts). I focus here neither on the long (predominantly German) prehistory of the key terms fate/destiny and *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* in social-political thought[23] nor on nationalism as a quasi-religion, but on the century-long German and German–Jewish discourse on the 'Jewish question', which reverberates in local Hungarian disputes on the same issues. Documenting direct and indirect German, Russian, etc. literary and other influences on the young Németh may prove to be a difficult task. In any case, his views on 'race' *(faj)* and common 'make-up' *(alkat)* expressed in 1927 (Németh, 1928: 35-36) as resultants of forces of common language and common 'fate' *(sors)* reflect ideas about the 'nation' typical of Central and Eastern Europe, ultimately originating in German political thought (Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Fichte) of the late 18th–early 19th century.[24]

[21] Németh (1934): 133-134. The idea of 'nationalism' – conceived in scientific, aesthetic or other terms – revitalizing, substituting, or transcending Christianity has, of course, a continuous history in 19th century German thought; see Stern (1961): 87–88, and below.

[22] For a brief and balanced appraisal of Németh's political thought and activities, see Bibó (1947): 450–454 (= Monostori [2003a]: 316–319), Bibó (1948b): 571—572, 603–607, 612–619, Bibó (1978): 344–345, Bibó (1979).

[23] Cf. above, at notes 15-16. I am not aware of any good survey on the history of these terms in German (or general) political thought.

[24] Meinecke (1936): 425–427, 469.

The twin criteria of common language and 'fate' as major dynamic forces shaping a 'nation's' historical identity were derived by these German thinkers partly from observations on Jewish history. Traditional Jewish views on the common language and fate/destiny indeed played an important role in the formation of Jewish identity and historical consciousness from the earliest times, even if peculiarities of Jewish history necessitate many caveats about possible conclusions or lessons which can be drawn from this fact. Jewish identity as a 'community of fate/destiny' finds expression in ancient times – in the context of conversion, for example (Ruth 1:16-17; Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 47a). Jewish history in fact yields examples and counterexamples for all sorts of speculations about the historical role of common language and 'fate'. The paradigmatic, borderline-situation of the Jews – a 'nation' without a state – is one of the main reasons why Jewish history (often called simply the 'Jewish question' in modern European intellectual history) played such an important role in 19th–20th century national identity-discourse and identity-politics, especially in Central and Eastern Europe.

Németh had acutely critical views about the social roles and impact of contemporary Hungarian Jewry.[25] It is difficult to understand and assess his views, as well as all the heated public discourse around the 'Jewish question' in interwar Hungary (colored, not infrequently, by characteristic ambivalence and *Haßliebe*), without taking into account the extended earlier discourse on the same issues in Germanic lands – which, in turn, were informed deeply by Protestant theology and comparisons of destiny between Germans and Jews, from as early as the turn of the 18th–19th centuries, as noted. These comparisons were based on a strong sense of historical and religious affinities, in some elites of German Jews and non-Jews,[26] on some of the following points: (1) being a 'virtual' nation, bound by

[25] Representatives of a younger generation of Jewish intellectuals – Pap among them – while criticizing him on various accounts, came to defend Németh against accusations of 'anti-Semitism' at that time: see, for example, Kardos (1934) and Keszi (1937); these essays are also made conveniently accessible by Monostori (2003a). For a succinct and balanced judgment on the attitudes of the 'populist' camp (and its various representatives) to the 'Jewish question', see Bibó (1978): 304–307, and 306–307 on Németh in particular. For a useful survey of the literature about the 'Jewish question' in interwar Hungary, see Monostori (2003b); for Németh's statements on the 'Jewish question' and their reception, see Monostori (2005): 65–138. On his attitude toward assimilation and the impact of his views on Bibó (also after the Second World War), see Gyáni (2011).

[26] German intellectual life helped many German-Jewish and Hungarian-Jewish intellectuals, alienated from their Jewish roots, to rediscover their 'own' Biblical heritage – a phenomenon not without parallels in Jewish religious and intellectual history.

cultural-historical ties rather than by political ones;[27] (2) being entrusted with a cultural-historical heritage, having a destiny transcending history[28] and a 'mission' for mankind, despite (and because of) the lack of a sovereign nation-state; (3) having an ideal of becoming a 'nation' capable of fulfilling this universal (therefore *religious*) calling.[29] These 'heavy' ideas impose a radical choice between the two 'sides' (Germans and Jews) on those who subscribe to these ideas – the space is too small for the two of them. Németh's ambivalent attitudes towards Jewish 'solidarity' – and Jewish 'national religion' in general – were also articulated in the 19th century German political tradition.[30]

By the time Németh (and his friend Kerényi) criticized 'antiquarian' – i.e., irrelevant – scholarship and put forth his vision of existential Hungarology, some German scholars in the humanities who had grown sick of the historical-philological method had grappled with similar questions for decades,[31] and similar ideas had been adopted in historiography, scholarship on antiquity and other fields. I mention only two examples, which are not terribly familiar yet relevant to our topic. Pioneering historical research of the mid-1930s on the evolution of Hungarian national consciousness from the Middle Ages (Deér, 1934, 1936, 1938: 219–262; Benda, 1937) followed the path of German scholarship on, and was inspired by, the *völkisch* idea (cf. Szűcs, 1984: 283–297). By then many scholars of the Bible, for example, pursued their studies as a veritable 'science of destiny' (to use Németh's term) for Germans, expecting a religious (Christian) renewal from the *völkisch* and Nazi movements and joining the 'Deutsche Christen'. The Biblical notion of Israel as a 'people', a 'chosen people' gained much

[27] Rousseau points to Judaism's own national cult and culture as the assurance for the Jewish people's survival; and Herder refers to (Biblical) Jews as a 'prototype' of a people *(Volk)* lacking linguistic and ethnic unity yet having a "genuine national character" and strong cultural bonds such as literature, religion and law. For the history of the distinction between *'Kulturnation'* and *'Staatsnation'*, see Meinecke (1928): 3.

[28] Fichte; see Meinecke (1928): 123–124.

[29] Ernst Moritz Arndt: "Ein Volk zu sein, ein Gefühl zu haben für eine Sache, mit dem blutigen Schwert der Rache zusammenlaufen, das ist die Religion unserer Zeit […]." ("To become one nation, to have one feeling for one cause, to come together with the bloody sword of revenge: this is the religion of our times.") Cf. Kluckhohn (1934): 136, 151. For Fichte, see Meinecke (1928): 125; for Lagarde, see Löwinger (1947): 122–134, Stern (1961): 87–88. Of course German thinkers were not the only ones to relate to Jews/Judaism as a point of reference in developing their ideas of national mission or chosenness – see Concluding Remarks, 2.

[30] Löwinger (1947): 55–56, 115–117.

[31] See the famous book of Lajos Hatvany (1908). Hatvany [1880–1961], of Jewish descent and a classical philologist by education, was a major patron of Hungarian literature and one of the ardent critics of Németh and Szilágyi (1984).

relevance in Old Testament scholarship of the interwar period. Johannes Hempel (1891–1964), a prominent Biblical scholar, for instance, published a book (in the year in which Németh's above-mentioned essays appeared, i.e. 1935) in which considerable emphasis is given to the 'fateful' existential questions that Germany was facing at the time. Important lessons (the superiority of religion over nationalism, signs of special divine providence over German history, etc.) are drawn from the Old Testament and from the 'rejection' and punishment of the Jews in particular. This quasi-oracular reading of the Hebrew Bible, presented as the "most *völkisch*-oriented book of Ancient Near Eastern literature" and the "most strongly antisemitic book of world literature", created at least a façade of 'relevance' for the Old Testament – and more importantly, the 'relevance' of research on the Old Testament (Hempel, 1935: 1–11).

It would be an understatement to say that the public atmosphere in the decades prior to the Second World War in Hungary was less than conducive to public discussions on the 'Jewish question' in a matter-of-fact policy-planning mode. Dramatic external and internal historical developments (world war, revolutions, the Treaty of Trianon) threw a thick sense of urgency and sometimes panic and hysteria, on participants in these discussions. It can be said – resorting again to the distinction between 'fate' and 'destiny', mentioned above in relation to Dezső Szabó – that some hundred years of German discussion on German, Jewish and German-Jewish destiny was telescoped into some twenty years of heated debates on Hungarian, Jewish and Hungarian-Jewish fate. Németh, for his part, made an effort to put this discourse into a wider – and, according to him, smoother – framework of a national, historical and behavioral scientific discipline capable of orienting political action in Hungary. His vision (which did not materialize and can be safely declared, especially from hindsight, to be an irrational, dangerous or at least utopian illusion) was deeply rooted in some 19th century German trends and ideas of humanistic scholarship. In the context of Hungarian-Jewish comparisons, it is worth noting that similar visions and currents of thought contributed, perhaps with greater success, to the emerging 'Science of Judaism' *(Wissenschaft des Judentums)* some hundred years earlier.

Biblicizing Poetry in the Early Modern Period

The "Hymn" by Ferenc Kölcsey (1823) – which became the Hungarian national anthem and to which I will return below – has strong Biblical overtones, without alluding to any specific Biblical motive, story or idea. Yet the author, as scholarship demonstrated a long time ago (in the second half of the 1930s – not a mere

incidence), drew freely from 16th century Hungarian Protestant 'jeremiads' in content and style. These jeremiads were the outgrowth of a deep self-identification with, and sympathy for, the Biblical history of the Jews (Gönczi, 1943; Zsoldos, 1943: 6–7; Lovas, 2012; Komoróczy, 2012: I: 53–54). Their central motif was the Turks as God's rod and the battle of Mohács (1526) as punishment meted out by God (Benda, 1937: 57–62). A book by Gáspár Károli (*Two Books on the Reasons for the Good and Bad Fortunes of All Countries and Kings,* 1563) – author of the first complete Hungarian translation of the Old and New Testaments from the original languages – goes beyond this motive, as does a lengthy poem by the Lutheran pastor András Farkas ("On the Jewish and Hungarian Nation", 1538), who elaborates on various historical parallels between the two peoples, strophe after strophe. The latter refers to the two nations as two "chosen peoples" (Zsoldos, 1943: 94–95, 112). Later on Zrínyi – a Catholic – finds and echoes many such historical parallels (Farkas, 1895; Heller, 1925, especially 4–9), such as the following one in his long epic poem "The Siege of Sziget" (1651) (Zrínyi, 2011: 9):

> From Scythia, I say, I brought them out / As from Egypt, the Jewish peoples / With my mighty arm, I crush nations / Everywhere I destroy, defeat their enemies.
> In Pannonia, flowing with milk and honey / I established them in Hungary / […].

Medieval Chronicles

Biblicizing 'destiny analysis' did not start with Mohács and the Reformation. Medieval Hungarian chronicles already followed the lead of Biblical historiography in some ways. Christianized peoples had to secure themselves a place in the Biblical 'Table of Nations' (Gen. 10).[32] For Anonymus (the anonymous author of the Gesta Hungarorum) and Simon of Kéza, the first Hungarian historiographer in the 13th century, the genealogy of the Árpád-dynasty reaches back to Nimrod, Magog and Japhet, through Atilla and the Huns (Anonymus, 2010: 6–9; Simon of Kéza, 1999: 10–11). An important implication of the Hun historical 'connec-

[32] This Biblical 'genealogy' of the 'Table of Nations' is not a genealogical predicament proper and does not express strictly biological filiations, but – as metaphoric kinship and blood terminology itself – often expresses one or more of a variety of relationships: political affiliation, geographical proximity, linguistic or religious affinity.

tion' was that Magyars/Hungarians have an ancient title to their land.[33] Conquering the homeland was perceived simply as the reconquering of the ancient land of Huns – our 'patrimony'. Even if a mythical construction, this ancestry was a stable component of Magyar/Hungarian historical consciousness for many centuries. The so-called *Illuminated Chronicle,* written in the mid-14th century, and in line with the recasting of mythical-'national' prehistory in the molds of ancient Israelite history, strengthened the historical-national-dynastic legitimacy with another element from the Old Testament: "The Lord restored Pannonia to the Hungarians, just as in the time of Moses He restored to the children of Israel the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and all the kingdoms of Canaan" (*Illuminated Chronicle,* 1969: 99).

Seventy Nations

Ancient Jewish polity existed either as a small state (often a 'vassal'-state) controlled or threatened by neighboring empires or as a province of an empire, with some measure of autonomy. Ancient Jewish historico-political eschatology knows the idea of the succession of empires according to a divine plan *(translatio imperii)*; an older and more persistent scheme, however, operates with nations-peoples – understood as ethnic-linguistic-cultural entities – of smaller territorial units.[34]

A word should be said about the complex ancient Jewish notion of 'chosenness'. According to an important Biblical doctrine and a widespread rabbinic interpretation, Israel's election is conditional upon its loyalty to the 'covenant'. Israel *is* chosen because it *has* chosen (chosen God or returned to Him to accept his covenant); and it remains chosen as long as it remains faithful to the covenant.[35] It was the prophet Amos who gave the sharpest expression to some implications

[33] See the remarks of Cassel (1848): 22–24. It is not known whether the theory of Hun-Magyar kinship and continuity and their integration into the Biblical genealogy of nations existed already before the conquest of Hungary. In any case, in the wake of the invasions of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, some Christian authors identified Gog and Magog with certain Eastern, Asian peoples. The identification of Gog and Magog with the Huns (which we find in Anonymus' chronicle) by Christian authors from the Holy Land and Syria (in the wake of the incursions of the Huns at the end of the 4th century) is well attested from the 5–7th centuries; see Czeglédy (1957): 237–249; van Donzel and Schmidt (2010): 13–31.

[34] For the Ancient Near Eastern context, see Grosby (2002).

[35] Mekilta (1933): III:320 (to Ex. 22:30); Sifre (1986): 144 (to Deut. 14:1); Urbach (1975): 529–539.

of this Biblical idea of conditional-covenantal election: "To Me, O Israelites, you are just like the Ethiopians – declares the Lord. True, I brought Israel up from the land of Egypt, but also the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir" (Am. 9:7). Israel's chosenness is expressed by him in the following terms: "Hear this word, O people of Israel, that the Lord has spoken concerning you, concerning the entire family that I brought up from the land of Egypt: / You alone did I know from among all the families of the earth; that is why I will call you to account for all your iniquities" (Am. 3:1-2). 'Family' (or 'clan') here is a synonym of 'nation'/'people' – a remarkable metaphor evoking strong bonds of solidarity.[36] The 'covenant' is not something that can be taken for granted: it is subject to review – perhaps permanent review. Chosenness is neither final nor unconditional; it entails heavy obligations.[37] Accordingly, there is no contradiction between chosenness and the 'relativism' of the first citation:[38] God took the first 'step' towards every nation and offered them the same initial providential assistance. He offered them – from the prophet's vantage point, offers, or may offer again – a similar covenant under similar terms.

The amazing, radical declaration of Amos (9:7) on the virtual universality of a latent Exodus-'experience' is the first comparison between national destinies we know of. Rabbinic lore developed a similar concept inspired by the 'Table of Nations' (Gen. 10) listing 70 nations.[39] Given the tumultuous history of Jews

[36] Cf. the divine promise given to Abraham and Jacob: "all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you" (Gen. 12:3, 28:14).

[37] The idea of *becoming* a nation as a religious objective and mission was mentioned above; cf. Renan's famous definition of the nation as a 'daily plebiscite' (Meinecke, 1928: 5).

[38] Weiss (1992), I: 282–284 (and notes: II: 522–527). Not only is there no contradiction between Am. 3:1–2 and 9:7, but the former verses can be actually read as an anticipation of the latter. 'The entire family' *(kol ha-mishpahah)* (Am. 3:1) grammatically can be understood also as 'all the families' (like 'of all the families of the earth'*[mi-kol mishpehot ha-adamah]*, in Am. 3:2; for syntactic parallels, see Gen. 1:21, Ex. 1:22, Ps. 150:6, etc.) – that is, an allusion to the fact that Jacob's family migrating to Egypt represented symbolically all the peoples of the earth (see below). According to this interpretation, God addresses, first and foremost, the 'family' (the people) of Israel, but in fact 'all the families/peoples' are addressed – all of them were, and are, 'inherent' in Israel (see the sources mentioned in n. 36). Every people was 'chosen' and every people "was brought up from the land of Egypt"! It is noteworthy that in the Ashkenazi liturgy a portion of Amos (9:7-15) that includes the verse mentioned above serves as the prophetic lection *(haftarah)*, apparently as a counterpoint to the weekly Torah reading containing one of the most emphatic formulations of Israel's chosenness (Lev. 20:26).

[39] According to other traditions, there were 72 (or 71) nations; Christian sources usually speak of 72 or 75 nations (Krausz, 1898a; 1898b: 5–10; Krauss, 1899: 3–14; Krauss, 1900). For 'seventy' as a typological number and its symbolism, see e.g. Ex. 24:9, Num. 11:16, 24–26, Ez. 8:11. Similarly to the number of nations, different traditions put the number of translators of the Septuagint

in antiquity and their experience with the rise, decline and reconfiguration of nations and empires, it is reasonable to say that the symbolic number 70 (for the number of nations in the world) presupposes and suggests 'flux', change, and at the same time, a certain continuity, stability or balance on the global historical scene.[40]

Toward the end of the Torah, in the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:8–9) we read: "When the Most High gave peoples *(goyim)* their homes and set the divisions of man, He fixed the boundaries of nations *(ammim)* according to the number of Israel's sons *(bnei Israel)*. For the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob His own allotment." "Israel" is originally Jacob's name given by God; his family counted 70 members when they went down to Egypt.[41]

Interestingly, the classic Greek translation of the Bible (the Septuagint), as well as a fragment from the Dead Sea Scrolls, read "God's sons" *(bnei Elohim/Elim)* instead of "Israel's sons"[42] – meaning angels, a certain type of angels. Ancient Jewish literature elaborates on the notion of nation-angels implied in this latter version.[43] After the confusion of tongues every nation was given over to the custody of a guardian-angel or tutelary spirit. From then on, the history-destiny of each of these nations was guided by their own national spirit or genius of sorts[44] – except Israel, which became (or remained) God's 'portion' or 'allotment': it is

between 70–72: see Jos. Ant. XII.11.86 and XII.8.56; Wasserstein and Wasserstein (2006): 52–53. The number of the members of the Sanhedrin (which corresponds to the number of nations according to some rabbinic sources such as Targum Ps-Jonathan, Gen. 28:3) and of the disciples sent by Jesus (Lk. 10:1, 17) also varies between 70–72 in the sources. For the Luke-source, see Metzger (1959), and for further references on the issue of these numerical variants, see Scott (1995): 5–6, n. 2.

[40] The interesting midrashic phrase: "seventy *authentic* (real, sovereign) nations" (see for example Leviticus rabbah, 1939: 23; to Lev. 1:2) may have been coined to ease the tension between the 'closed number' (numerus clausus) of seventy and historical-political change. For 'non-authentic nations' or 'non-nations', cf. Deut. 32:21, 1Peter 2:10. On the other hand, there was an influential tannaitic opinion according to which 'all the nations' (at least those inhabiting the Holy Land and its proximity, except the Jews) were already mingled, 'confused' in the Biblical period (by Sanherib): Mishnah, Yadayim 4.4.

[41] Gen. 46:27, Ex. 1:5, Deut. 10:22. At the same time, 'Israel' was a watchword for Israelite-Jewish nationalism already in antiquity (Goodblatt, 2006: 114–139).

[42] See, e.g., Tigay (1996): 514–515.

[43] See, for example, Dan. 10:20; for a useful collection of rabbinic sources, see Billerbeck (1926): 48–51. For a survey of apocryphal and early Christian sources, see Mach (1992): 257–262.

[44] The association of Jacob's family (counting seventy members) with the peoples-nations of the world gets further support from God's blessing of Jacob when the name 'Israel' was given to him (Gen. 35:11): "Be fertile and increase; a nation *(goy)*, yea an assembly of nations *(u-kehal goyim)* shall descend from you." For the idea of 'national genius', cf. Herder's, Hegel's etc. concept of *Volksgeist* and Ranke's notion of the states or peoples being 'thoughts of God' *(Gedanken Gottes)*.

kept under direct divine guidance or providence.[45] This idea of Israel being God's 'portion' of course reflects a (meta-)historical consciousness transcending notions of political sovereignty and, in fact, of mundane history. A major theological implication of this idea is that while 'nations' have fate-and-history (controlled by their angelic patrons or guiding spirits), Israel has destiny-and-freedom (a series of revealed 'covenants', as reported in the Old Testament, being its terms of reference).[46] Earthly relationships between the 'nations', according to these sources, correspond to heavenly relationships between their patron-angels – "the Holy One […] will punish the kingdoms only after He has first punished their guardian angels […]" (Mekilta [1933]: I: 181–182) – and to make peace between them above is in no way easier than to make peace between the nations below.[47]

The idea behind the Masoretic version – according to which the boundaries of peoples were fixed according to the number of Israel's sons – is less clear. It posits Israel as a sort of microcosm in the global historical cosmos – a notion best understood against the backdrop of the divine blessing given to Abraham and Jacob and the Amos-verses quoted above.[48] Be that as it may, basic prophetic teachings lend themselves to a 'synoptic' reading in light of which this Biblical and rabbinic notion of the '70 nations' projects itself to the eschatological plane: peace will be reached by the convergence or the meeting of parallel 'histories' of the nations in a messianic future.[49] More precisely, these 'histories' once will be revised, recharged and reunited around the Israelite paradigm: they will be recognized as refractions of the same 'eternal'-'sacred' history. We may add: the seeds of this 'revision' were planted in monotheistic religions (and were brought to fruition and acted out in exceptional cases such as in Sabbatarianism in Tran-

[45] It is to be noted that Apocryphal and rabbinic sources on this theme have significant variations, and I hope to deal with them more in detail elsewhere. According to a number of rabbinic texts, for example, Israel is also allotted to a 'Great Prince': Michael. The question of whether Israel has a divine patron is related to the question of whether Israel is counted among the 70 nations or not; cf. Krauss (1900): 40–42.

[46] This idea of 'freedom' is implied in the covenantal destiny according to R. Johanan in the Talmud: "there is no *mazzal* for Israel" (bSabb. 156a and parallels) – that is, Israel (as opposed to all other nations) is immune to astrological influences. This idea of difference between Israel and the 'nations' with regard to history-destiny survived in medieval Judaism mostly in this latter astrological version: cf., e.g., Genesis rabbah 44.12 (Genesis rabbah, 1939: 367–368), Ibn Ezra to Deut. 4:19, Urbach (1975): 275–278, 809, n. 66.

[47] Cf. Matth. 6:10, Betz (1995): 390–396, bBer. 16b–17a (and Rashi ad loc.).

[48] See notes 36 and 38 above.

[49] Cf. Zech. 14:9,16–19; Zeph. 3:9; bSuk. 55b. Cf. Buber (1964).

sylvania – a unique story barely known outside historical Hungary). This rabbinic notion of the geniuses of national history is a radical yet realistic political-eschatological extension of the Exodus-quasi-relativism of Amos.

Concluding remarks

1. The expressions 'two peoples' and 'seventy nations' in the title of this article have some historical purport beyond what has been said thus far. Ancient Rabbinic Judaism – in the absence of political sovereignty, relatively depoliticized – applied two basic politico-religious divisions of mankind. One is the horizontal division of 'seventy nations'. The other is the division of mankind into 'two peoples' according to their relationship with God: the people of the faithful, and others. Historically, the latter hierarchy, a vertical dichotomy, had a radical and aggressive potential in religious politics concerning other nations, while the horizontal multiplicity of the 'seventy nations' seems to have had more pragmatic and tolerant implications. Christianity and Islam also know, *mutatis mutandis,* this bifurcation, which resembles the tension between eschatology and politics. The ways in which these hierarchical and horizontal notions are understood and the tension between them are dealt with – often dissolving one in the other – are useful in characterizing the prevailing political ideas of the 'monotheistic religions' in a given period and region.

2. As the example of medieval and early modern Hungarian historiography and literature has shown, the prophetic scenario mentioned above was partially fulfilled: core elements of ancient Jewish historiography played a role in the formation of Hungarian national consciousness.[50] The same is true concerning major nation-states under the aegis of Christianity. Key moments and elements of Old Testament historiography – Biblical genealogy in the Table of Nations, Exodus, chosenness, conquering the homeland, 'just wars' against pagans – resonated powerfully with European and American readers of the Jewish Bible. As for chosenness, as early as 1890 Heymann Steinthal (1823–1899; linguist, one of the founders of cultural anthropology or ethnopsychology, a liberal Jewish thinker), for example, could witticize in a newspaper article (entitled "The chosen people, or Jews and Germans"): "There is no people, however small, which does not regard itself as the chosen people of its deity. Every page of the Eng-

[50] See the references given after n. 31, and Szűcs (1984): 557–668; on the idea of 'chosenness' in Hungarian national consciousness, see ibid., especially 130–131, 133, 569-570, 579, 581, 592, 595, 619–620.

lish 'Times' is a loud thanksgiving prayer for the fact 'that you did not create us like them'. And the Hungarians? And the Czechs?" (Steinthal, 1925: 12). Wherever a national messianism or the idea of the universal redemptive mission of a given nation is proclaimed by 19th century thinkers (not only Germans, but also Russians, Poles, Italians), emphasis is given by them to historical analogies with Judaism. (Essentially the given nation is posited as "verus Israel", instead of the Church. It is difficult to reconstruct whether national messianism leads a given thinker to these historical analogies or the other way around, or whether there is perhaps some other relationship between the two.) It is a matter of theological or other standpoint whether one sees in this odd realization of certain Biblical ideas (note Steinthal's formulation, in which he speaks of the 'deity' of the nations) progress or regression *(corruptio optimi pessima)* or something else. In any case, the emergence of vernacular translations of the Bible since the late Middle Ages provided a robust vehicle for the spread of this biblicized historiography.[51] As for political action, especially in times of crisis, the New Testament could offer little advice for political actors in late medieval and early modern Christian Europe. A rich repository of the social and historical experiences of a nation (in domestic as well as in international relations), the Old Testament, on the other hand, proved to be an important source of inspiration for political thought and action. The instructions derived from it depended of course on the biblical periods and books consulted. For a long time the Jewish Bible and Jewish history provided strong impulses not only for the development of ideas of peoplehood, nationhood, and nationalist doctrines, but also for constitutional theory and various political 'isms' (such as royalism, republicanism, egalitarianism, etc).[52]

3. The Jewish Bible became – through Christian readers – a 'mirror' for political actors on the historical stage of nations. Judaism itself disappeared from this stage for almost two millennia. After apocalyptic upheavals and revolts fueled also by messianic hopes, Jewish national politics was essentially over by the mid-2nd century C.E. Eschatology had to part ways from it – maybe once and for all, despite the fact that apocalyptic and messianic-pseudo-messianic movements blurred the boundaries between them from time to time. Biblical memories and hopes of national politics were preserved for posterity by eschatology. Modern 'Western' politics in conflict *management* – and in international relations in particular – seeks to find common ground in the greatest common denominator, as

[51] Hastings (1997), Smith (2003) (the latter summarizing much previous scholarship).

[52] For the latter doctrines, see Nelson (2010). An analysis of the remarkable inclination of nationalist ideologies to turn against Jews and Judaism is of course a subject outside the scope of this paper. See our remarks above in the section "Two Peoples".

it were: in common values and interests. Ancient universalist Jewish eschatology, on the other hand, looks for common ground and waits for *solutions* to problems and conflicts in what it perceives as the least common multiple: revealed imperatives and divine promises. This is the case also with regard to 'international relations'. What are the divine plans for the nations, what does God want from them? Does Israelite/Jewish history prefigure or anticipate the histories of the nations? And if so, to what extent and how? Judaism tried to cope with such questions in this eschatological plane. However difficult it is to trace the developments, ups and downs of nations, languages, and cultures, and to delineate their boundaries and identities, ancient and later rabbinic lore does not view 'nationhood' as a passing, time-bound fancy (or a 'construction'), but as 'real' and enduring forms and vehicles of the history of divided post-Babel humanity, which will survive until the 'end of times'.

4. 'Historical consciousness' and the 'self-image' of a nation are elusive concepts. In any case, the special and limited pool of sources surveyed above – Jews and Judaism in Hungarian eyes: historical comparisons of various sorts between Hungarians and Jews/Judaism – seem to be in line with the observation that there is a discernible historical trend, moving from a sense of 'destiny' and 'calling' to a sense of 'fate': from motivation to passivity and self-pity.[53] This sense of destiny or mission evolved as a Christian-religious response to historical situations Hungary had to face in the 15th–17th centuries and is summarized by the popular formula of Hungary being a bulwark of the West or Christianity. This 'mission statement', in its more active as well as in its more quietistic forms, was profoundly shaped by the Old Testament. With the advancement of 'secularization' this historical self-understanding in Biblical-religious terms gradually gives way to 'horizontal', empirical perspectives using categories of the social sciences. No surprise that public discourse at the end of the period under discussion – post-Trianon Hungary with its manifold social and economic maladies – addressed the 'Jewish question' predominantly in its empirical-political-sociological aspect. Biblical-historical dimensions of the 'Jewish question' had only a very limited place in this discourse and were addressed only by select men of letters (with a questionable role in public matters) such as Károly Pap and László Németh.

5. Finally, two illustrations of the problem mentioned at the beginning of this article of the inherent, strong ambivalence of the historical homologies and fate-comparisons. The opening petition of the Hungarian anthem by Kölcsey,

[53] Cf. especially Benda (1937): 102–122. The distinction between 'destiny' and 'fate' (far from being clear-cut in common English, and somewhat similar to the distinction between *végzet* and *sors* in Hungarian) is outlined above after nn. 10 and 19.

"God bless the Magyar…", is a 'soft' claim of chosenness for Magyars/Hungarians. In his poem "To the God of the Magyars" (1927) Mihály Babits addresses similar claims with a geometric exactness, when he says (turning to God): "Can you be who you are, if you cannot be *only-ours?* Can your world be infinite, if we are not in the center too, our fate being the axis?" The 'Magyar', like any other nation-individuum, is a microcosm, necessarily in the center of its universe. The peaceful, fragile coexistence of multiple self-centered nations, however, is shaken, even collapses, in times of external or civil war. It is only natural that the Hymn invokes God to help Magyars, a Christian nation, against infidels, 'pagan' enemies: "Reach out to it your protective arm if it is at war with an enemy". But is He supposed to take our side even when we are at war with bona fide Christian enemies? Our concern here is not the problem of war itself (with which early Christian theology and ecclesiastic law already had to deal with), but the role that national fate-comparisons play in making wars. When war or crisis breaks down the idyllic symmetry (in which every nation is a center and 'axis'), fate/destiny comparisons are inevitably instrumentalized and exploited by the rhetoric of crisis: propaganda and hate-speech. Under such circumstances, the center of gravitation of a nation's sense of identity, if there was one, shifts – sometimes beyond itself. When a 'nation' is obsessed with enemies (external or internal), it becomes 'eccentric'.[54] In the interwar period (in a given situation of international politics) public life in Hungary became dominated by such an eccentricity.

The problem of emotional ambivalence is inherently present in various forms of Holocaust-commemoration and education. Holocaust discourse (in Hungary as in other countries) often induces comparisons of fate between nations and other social groups. These comparisons, even if they are intended to sensitize people to genocide and the sufferings of others in general, sometimes lead to relativization, banalization, and abuse. The Holocaust rapidly becomes an appellation, a universal metaphor of victimization, a promiscuous center of gravitation for a growing number of collective identities. (Today people speak not only of the Armenian, Darfurian or Tutsi holocaust or genocide [for the definition of these terms see

[54] One recalls the joke about the drunk man groping his way around an advertising column, finally crying out deliriously: "My God, I am walled in!" For a theological critique of the Hymn and its liturgical use in Hungary, see Geréby (2008), especially 35–36, 51–55. In a time of growing social tensions and anti-Semitism of the late 1930s in Hungary, when many Jews and Neolog rabbis identified with sentiments expressed in the Hymn, its spirit and characteristic lines were not infrequently invoked in synagogue homiletics. See for example the sermon of Immanuel Löw in 1938 (Löw, 1939: I:398–399), in which Jewish prayers (of ancient origin) for the welfare of the ruler were effectively transformed, using phrases of the Hymn, into a prayer for the 'Magyar' – and (as if by implication) for Hungarian Jews in their midst. Expressions of 'community of fate' are reciprocated here; Hungarian and Jewish historical homologies have been brought to full circle.

Bauer, 1986], but also the Palestinian holocaust, and even chicken and elephant holocausts.) The proportions of this dilemma are indicated by the famous address of Pope John Paul II on the occasion of his visit to Auschwitz in 1979, in which the site was called "the Golgota of our age". This historical (or 'meta-historical') comparison or analogy – an important historical metaphor of the contemporary Western world[55] – as well as the papal visit itself was bound up with another, less manifest historical comparison. The Pope's gesture to Jewish suffering and destiny – 'ecce populus' – was meant to evoke Polish 'destiny' as well.[56] In any case, the statement cited, one of the Pope's dramatic, positive gestures to Judaism, is also a perplexing one – not only for Jews and 'Greeks' (cf. 1 Kor. 1:23), but possibly for Christians as well.

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[55] One should keep in mind of course that well beyond the Middle Ages, Judaism could reasonably be perceived as a religion and a group in a seemingly unending process of 'dying out to be an idea' – to use Károly Pap's phrase – whether it be the idea of *Verus Israel,* or some form of 'Judaizing' (a generic term for a certain type of 'heresies'; Christianity itself was nothing but 'judaizing' for some Romans, as was Arianism for Orthodox Christianity, Protestantism for Catholics, Puritanism for Protestants, etc.; see Dán [1982], Cohen [1999]: 175–197) or certain more modern ideas. The Auschwitz–Golgota analogy resonates (maybe contrary to the intention of its originators) with the old Christian perception – apparently still not extinct in the Western world and not even among Jews – that the best Jew is the martyr Jew.

[56] Huener (2003): 185–225. On the idea, associated with Mickiewicz and others, of the national-messianic mission of the Poles (and their historical-morphological similarity with Jews), see Buber, 1963b. The Auschwitz-Golgota comparison is attributed to unnamed Christian circles and politely questioned by Maybaum (1965): 78.

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The Hebrew Language as a Means of Forging National Unity: Ideologies Related to the Hebrew Language at the Beginning of the 19th and the 20th Centuries

Viktória Bányai

As 19th century Hungarian statesman István Széchenyi wrote, "the nation lives in its language," or less literally, the essence of a nation is its language. As this notion still plays a significant role in the Hungarian mentality, it also influences people's opinions regarding the Hungarian diaspora and the Jews living in the historical territory of Hungary. This is why I chose language as the focal point of my study. I do not intend, however, to discuss the question of Jewish assimilation, but rather to focus on Hebrew, the language of the Jewish communities, or more precisely, one of these languages (since it would not be right to fail to consider Yiddish as another distinctive language peculiar to some of the Jewish communities of Hungary and Central Europe in general).

I wish to make it clear from the outset that I consider language only one of the many possible components of group identity. One could cite many historical examples to demonstrate that not only is the language of an individual subject to change, but so is the language of a cultural, religious, or ethnic group. Moreover, ethnic identity can survive even without a distinctive language or if the language associated with the group is different from the one spoken by the majority. The case of the Irish comes to mind, an example that was significant to Hungarian Zionists in their debates with proponents of assimilation at the beginning of the 20th century. While in many of its functions Irish Gaelic had been supplanted by English, the Irish nonetheless never lost their identities as Irish. On the contrary, this loss of language may well have made them be even more attached to this identity. National consciousness does not depend exclusively on knowledge of a language or on the distinctiveness of a particular national language.[1]

The Jewry itself offers another good example in support of this thesis. Although the language, Hebrew, was never lost, the fact that it was repressed in ancient times and especially during the Diaspora is of great significance. In vari-

[1] H-r S., "Nemzet és nyelv" [Nation and Language]. *Zsidó Szemle*, January 1, 1914, pp. 4–6.

ous manners and contexts, depending on the moment of history and the region in question, Hebrew was always among the languages used in Jewish communities, entering into a diglossic or polyglossic relationship with other languages, but it was never the primary language or mother tongue. In spite of this, until the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries the cohesive identity of the Jewry was never brought into question. Jews always considered themselves a unified people, as did the other peoples among or adjacent to whom they lived.

Beginning with the second half or last third of the 18th century, however, social institutions and centers of power began with increasing insistence to expect the Jewry to renounce its independence as a distinctive folk or people (in the case of the Habsburg Empire this was tied to the rule of Joseph II). One need merely think of the acts passed by Joseph II that forbade people to grow beards, wear distinctive clothes, or use Yiddish or Hebrew anywhere outside of the religious sphere, narrowly defined. These measures were intended, to "convert" the Jews to useful subjects of the empire. This expectation became an unambiguous message over the course of subsequent decades, throughout the first half of the 19th century, as some degree of assimilation became a precondition of the extension of legal rights. This was partly internalized among Jews, and partly harmonized with the ambitions and strivings of some part of the Jewry, who sought to present themselves in the burgeoning world of the middle class, which itself offered an array of new opportunities, not as a distinctive people, but as part of the society around them, individuals eager to pursue professional careers.[2]

Thus this shift in judgment, the gradual repression of national identity, was not a consequence of a change in the use of language. The causality is inverted, or rather if one examines the subject at hand more closely – the Hebrew language itself – one can hardly fail to perceive that the situation is even more complex.

At the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th, a significant and ideologically designed change was brought to the use of the Hebrew language by the Haskalah movement, also known as the Jewish Enlightenment.[3] The main goal of the endeavor and the change was to produce Hebrew translations of works of modern European culture of the era, or rather the written culture of the day. Thanks to the numerous Hebrew periodicals and scientific and belletristic

[2] Komoróczy Géza, "A zsidók: nép és ethnikum fogalmáról" [The Jews: On the Conception of Folk and Ethnicity]. In: idem, *Meddig él egy nemzet. A nemzet történeti látószöge* [How Long does a Nation Live. The Historical Perspective on the Nation]. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2011, p. 143.

[3] The distinctive features of the Hebrew language used by the Hasids and its influence on Eastern-European authors is also an important and not sufficiently studied area. In connection with that variant of the language, however, one cannot speak about the conceptual background of language use.

adaptations, Jewish readers had the opportunity to gather information regarding the affairs of the world and the cultural values of Europe in Hebrew. With the translation and adaptation into Hebrew of scientific and belletristic works written in other languages, new ideas, expressions, formal elements, and literary genres gained ground.

Formal elements included such apparently trivial matters as punctuation and the use in a Hebrew text of interpunctuation common in European languages.[4] The role of Hebrew periodicals in the organization of events of literary life and the creation of publicity was of decisive significance, as was its function in shaping linguistic and aesthetic norms, establishing new genres, and establishing a literary canon.

Drama was among the new genres that took root, and it developed in two main directions over the course of the 18th century. On the one hand, it tended towards allegorical plays that were similar to medieval Christian morality dramas, while on the other, there were also Hebrew adaptations of European plays that had Biblical themes, such as works by Racine and Metastasio. Relatively few original works were written, so it is particularly worth mentioning the three such plays that were composed in Hungary in the first decade of the 19th century. Mose Smuel Neumann, a teacher from Köpcsény (today Kopčany in Slovakia), wrote a play about the story of a Biblical character, the daughter of Jefte. Mose Kunitzer, a rabbi from Buda, composed a play about the life of Yehudah haNasi, the compiler of the Mishnah. And Mordekhaj Popper of Neszmély created a drama out of the story of the fate of Rabbi Akiba. [5] If we look at the topics that the authors chose from the Rabbinic legacy, it is obvious that the goal was not simply to incorporate European culture and patterns into Hebrew traditions. They also strove to represent their own intellectual heritage in modern forms, and to prove both to themselves and to those around them that this heritage was of the same rank as the heritage of any other nation or religion.[6]

In order to fully appreciate the real influence of the Haskalah, one needs to have some understanding of the potential reading public. While in principle in traditional Jewish society all boys had to learn Hebrew, in reality there were many boys and men who could do little more than read and more or less under-

[4] The first serious attempt was *Kohelet Muszar*, a periodical edited by Moses Mendelssohn in the middle of the 18th century. It was published only twice. For further information see Joszef Jichaki, "Deotéhem sel szofré ha-haszkala al ha-leson ha-ivrit…, I." *Lesonenu*, 34, 1970, p. 296.

[5] Mose Smuel Neumann, *Bat Jiftah*. Vienna, 1805; Mose Kunitzer, *Beit Rabbi*. Vienna, 1805; Mordekhaj Popper, *Pirkei Rabbi Akiba*. Vienna, 1808.

[6] This goal is clearly formulated in the preface to Mose Kunitzer's *Bet Rabbi*.

stand the prayers. They were referred to as "unlettered men," for whom books were written in Yiddish, much as they were written for the women and children around them. The translation of texts into Hebrew required a considerable intellectual and financial investment on the part of the community, but it did not open the world of texts for everyone, and essentially merely helped maintain the authority and leading role of the intelligentsia.[7] The fact that few people actually had sufficient knowledge of Hebrew to read scholarly and literary texts was only one aspect of the problem. A further obstacle to the spread of a canon of texts in Hebrew was the fact that many people simply did not show much interest in reading them, and others completely disapproved of the secular use of what in their view was a sacred language. This problem was very effectively portrayed in one of the poems written by Jehuda Leib Gordon (1831–1892). In his poem entitled "For Whom am I Writing?" the different social groups are symbolized by his family members: the parents, who can speak Hebrew but refuse to read modern literature; his brothers, who also understand the language but have very little interest in it and flirt instead with the idea of assimilation; the sister, who never had the opportunity to learn Hebrew but whose heart is open to poetry; and in the end his children, to whom the language is completely unknown, and who do not even care.[8] Instead of appealing to everyone, modern Hebrew literature seemed to alarm and repel people, either because it was in Hebrew or because it was modern.

In summary one notes that contemporary Hebrew literature did not have a wide audience in the first half of the 19th century, neither in Hungary nor in other countries. The authors and the readers were both from the world of the Yeshiva, a narrow, specially educated group of people. One can therefore hardly help but wonder why Hebrew was chosen by the representatives of the Jewish Enlightenment as a tool with which to achieve greater intellectual openness and further modernization, and why they hoped and sought to make it a language of modern culture and communication.

In order to offer a possible answer to this question one must consider it from several perspectives. On the one hand, one should concede that there was no consensus regarding the choice of Hebrew as the language of the Enlightenment. There was a tendency, first in Germany and then everywhere in Central Europe,

[7] See Shaul Stampfer, "Heder Study, Knowledge of Torah, and the Maintenance of Social Stratification in Traditional East European *Jewish* Society." *Studies in Jewish Education*, vol. 3. Jerusalem, 1988, pp. 271–289; idem, "What did Knowing Hebrew Mean in Eastern Europe?" In: Lewis Glinert, ed., *Hebrew in Ashkenaz*. Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 129–140.

[8] In Hungarian translation: Jehuda Leib Gordon, "Kinek írok?" [For Whom am I Writing?]. In: József Patai, *Hebrew Poets*, vol. 2. Budapest: IMIT, 1912, pp. 153–154.

to make High German the tool of Jewish modernization. Literary German was not terribly distant from Yiddish, or "jüdish-Deutsch," the language that was spoken by the majority of the people in the Jewish communities of the region. The bridge between the two languages was to have been works written in literary German, but using Hebrew letters. This was seen as necessary in light of the fact that the teaching of the Gothic or Latin alphabet was secondary in comparison with instruction of Hebrew letters. It was only in the 1830s and 1840s that members of the Jewish communities in Hungary, for instance, caught up, with respect to their ability to use the Latin alphabet, with people belonging to other religions.[9]

The condition of the language reflected the condition of the society in the eyes of the representatives of the Haskalah movement. In this respect, an "eclectic" language like Yiddish was a reflection of a flawed community that was unable to achieve any inner perfection and equally unable to integrate into the society around it. This is one of the reasons why Yiddish was not considered as a standard language of literature, even though there were more people in the region who spoke it than Hebrew. A further reason was simply that Yiddish lacked the value and prestige attributed to Hebrew.

The support for Hebrew as the language of the movement, and in particular the Biblical variant of Hebrew, emphasized continuity and implied a return to classical values and ancient roots. The use of Biblical Hebrew also created a common cultural platform for the representatives of the Haskalah Movement and protestant society. Hebrew had considerable prestige in the eyes of the Protestants. They considered it one of the source languages of civilization. Thus the use of Hebrew gave the Maskils (Jewish intellectuals) an opportunity to gain appreciation amongst the leading intellectuals of the day. There was an additional reason to prefer Biblical Hebrew. Leaders of the movement had a desire to prove that the language was perfectly adequate to express every shade of human emotion, describe all the phenomena of the natural world, and formulate philosophical conceptions.

Partly under the influence of German Enlightenment and German Romanticism, the Maskils began to look at language as a fundamental element of an individual's national identity. Thus they came to see Hebrew both as an expression of the constitution or character of the Jewish people (or nation, to borrow the term that was to come to prevail in the cultures of the region) and as a tool with which to retrieve ancient Jewish culture. In their mentality and their use of

[9] Viktória Bányai, *Zsidó oktatásügy Magyarországon, 1780–1850* [Jewish Education in Hungary, 1780–1850]. Budapest: Gondolat, 2005, pp. 101–102.

language the Maskils never questioned the notion that the Jewry represented a unified people, but at the same time they did not consider Hebrew an exclusive "national" language. They continued to view it as a language that would have a role alongside the other languages in use, but a role larger than the one it had previously played. However, they also emphasized the importance of learning the languages of other nations in order to foster and maintain contacts with the communities around them and to be able to emerge from social and intellectual exclusion.

This principle, or rather a distorted interpretation of it, is one of the objections most commonly marshaled against the ideology of the Haskalah by its opponents.[10] According to these critics, since the Maskils did not believe it possible to revive the Hebrew language, they did not even attempt to use it in spoken interactions, and considered it little more than a stepping stone in order to promote acquisition of European languages. Later, "they buried this violated language, stating that it was just as foreign as Latin, Greek, or Arabic."[11] This claim is unfair and exaggerated. While it is indeed truly remarkable how quickly Hebrew, after a relatively brief period of flowering, was forgotten in the first half of the 19th century within the space of a single generation among German speaking Jews (and a few generations later and in a slightly milder form in Hungary as well), nonetheless in my opinion this change was a sign not of the triumph of the ideas of the Maskils, but rather of their failure. It was the failure of an ideal that was based on an inaccurate assessment of the linguistic and social realities and sought simply to unite the supporters of a linguistic and cultural tradition that had its roots in Biblical times, as well as the supporters of the Enlightenment and the growth of civic society founded on a middle class. The essence of the problem regarding the question of language use and literary language is in essence the same as the fundamental question with which historians are always confronted, namely are sociological processes stronger than ideologies, should a sociological shift be regarded as the cause or the effect of an ideological shift.

[10] Joszef Jichaki, "Deotéhem sel szofré ha-haszkala al ha-leson ha-ivrit…, II." *Lesonenu*, 35, 1971, p. 144.

[11] Yaacov Shavit, "A Duty too Heavy to Bear: Hebrew in the Berlin Haskalah, 1783–1819. " In: Lewis Glinert, ed., *Hebrew in Ashkenaz*. Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 112.

By the last third of the 19th century the gradual eastward movement of the ideology represented by the Haskalah and its intellectual center had gone beyond Hungary.[12] The literature of the Jewish Enlightenment, which had chosen Biblical Hebrew as the ideal language, was only able to be published in Hebrew language journals that were brought out in territories to the east of Hungary, such as Poland and Russia, and later in the Holy Land itself. Some late adherents to the Haskalah remained in Hungary, but they had little to no audience.[13] The first two decades of the 20th century brought the revival of interest in Hebrew, but the motives and intentions behind this resurgence were very different from the underlying motives of the linguistic and literary renaissance that had taken place a century earlier. Any analysis of the fundamental causes and goals should begin with the most obvious among them, the Zionist Movement.

It is a well-known fact that the majority of Hungarian Jews, whether Neolog or Orthodox, disapproved of Zionist ideology at the turn of century. It is also true that the movement was not legalized by the state for decades.[14] There were very few proponents of Zionism, and most of them either were university students or lived in territories in which Hungarian was not the language spoken by the majority. The university students founded the "Makkabea Egyesület," or Maccabee Society, in Budapest in 1903. Hungarian leaders of the movement recognized that instead of attempting to spread Zionist ideology they should concentrate on cultural activities such as language instruction, supporting Hebrew culture, and promoting knowledge of the language of the envisioned homeland.[15] The associations presented below, each of which had as one of its functions the cultivation

[12] We can look at the discontinuation of the *Kokhvé Jichak* (published in Vienna) in 1873 as a symbolic turning point. The periodical died with its editor, Max Emanuel Stern (1811–1873). In the same year József Bergel (1802–1885) published his collection of poems, entitled *Pirhé lason ever*. It is considered to be a late Haskalah volume.

[13] Following the discontinuation of *Kokhvé Jichak* in 1873, Simon Bacher (1823–1892), for instance, published his writings in the *Havacelet* of Jerusalem. One of the examples of late Mashlik works is Ávrahám Munk's *Életem történetei* [The Stories of My Life]. Budapest–Jerusalem: Múlt és Jövő, 2002.

[14] See: Alexander Emed, *A magyarországi cionista mozgalom története, 1902–1948* [The History of the Zionist Movement in Hungary, 1902–1948]. Budapest, 2002; Ágnes Erdős, *Advocates of Exile. A History of Orthodox Jewish Anti-Zionism in Hungary*. Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2008.

[15] The foundation of this policy is the so-called Program of Bratislava in 1903. See: Emed 2002, p. 50

of the Hebrew language, were all founded by Zionists, to some extent as parts of an international initiative.[16] Financial backing was ensured by the Zionist movement, but the real content was determined by the Neologs.

But what could have motivated the intellectual leaders of Neology to renew their interest in Hebrew at the beginning of the 20th century, if they explicitly rejected the characterization of the Jewish people as a nation and dismissed the idea of founding the unity of the Jewry on a common language? Miksa Szabolcsi's words offer a pithy answer to this question: "There is no such a thing as a Jewish national language, because there is no Jewish nation."[17] As many historians have noted (I am going to cite the admirably thorough work of Miklós Konrád[18]), at the beginning of the 20th century Neolog Jews were going through a period of searching. In the background of this process lay an external political factor on the one hand (the channels of assimilation had narrowed in the conservative political atmosphere of the era), and an internal crisis on the other. The latter resulted from the obviously weakening identity of the Neolog Jews and their withdrawal from their communities and traditions, and even their identities as Jews. The perplexity and disappointment of the Neolog leaders led to the emergence of new voices at the beginning of the century. The fidelity and religious zeal for tradition shown by Orthodox and even Hasidic Jews (who were objects of profound scorn among Neologs) was no longer considered something to be disdained. On the contrary, their fervor seemed to constitute a value, even an example to be followed. The assessment of Yiddish also changed. Works of modern literature that had been written in this language, which previously had been regarded as a symbol of cultural backwardness, were met with praise by such journals as *Egyenlőség* [Equality] and the publications of the Izraelita Magyar Irodalmi Társulat [Jewish-Hungarian Literary Society], which welcomed them as a tool with which to further the "invaluable culture-mission" by helping to maintain a sense of Jewish identity.[19]

Another characteristic feature of the Movement was the revival of the use of Hebrew as a possible tool with which to strengthen the Jewish identity of groups that had assimilated and to create a larger sense of unity. The values that had been

[16] The *Hisztadrut le-szafa ha-ivrit* of Berlin sent a circular to all Zionist Organizations in order to encourage them to found Hebrew philological societies. This was why Hungarians started working on establishing the Ha-Szafa. See*: Zsidó Szemle,* January 1, 1914, p. 2.

[17] Miksa Szabolcsi, *Egyenlőség,* June 7, 1908, p. 6.

[18] Miklós Konrád, "A neológ zsidóság útkeresése a századfordulón" [The Search for a Path among Neolog Jewry at the Turn of the Century]. *Századok*, 2005/6, pp. 1335–1369.

[19] Konrád quotes Arnold Kiss, 2005, p. 1349.

attached to Hebrew a century earlier seemed outdated. Neology did not need the language as a catalyst of modernization or an intermediary of European culture. The development of Hebrew literature had also gone beyond the central ideology of the Haskalah (the enchantment of the "pure" nature of Biblical Hebrew), and they also abandoned the idea of winning the respect of Christian intellectuals by emphasizing the prestige of the language.

If these were the difficulties the leaders of the movement had to face, it is worth considering some of the reasons behind their choice of language. On the one hand, as Hebrew was the language of the Jewish tradition, they thought of it as an opportunity to return to the historical heritage. As Bernát Munkácsi, the well-known linguist and school inspector of the Israelite Religious Community of Budapest, wrote in his memoirs, "It is a pleasant surprise when the majority of students can simply read Hebrew passages syllabified."[20] His anxiety regarding the importance of Hebrew seems to have been legitimate: "The experiences of history have shown that the vitality of the Jewish community grows where knowledge of Hebrew grows, but where Hebrew dies, the Jewish community dies soon afterwards."[21] It is understandable that the leaders of Neology warmly welcomed and actively supported any initiative that was intended to save and spread Hebrew among assimilated Jews, even if it originated among Zionists, such as Szafa-Haja (the Hebrew Language Cultivation Society, founded in 1907) and Ha-Szafa (the National Society for the Cultivation of the Hebrew Language and the Spread of Hebrew Literature, founded in 1914).

The leaders of Ha-Szafa included many of the most prominent scholars and members of the Neolog community, such as Neolog rabbis (Simon Hevesi, Mózes Feldman, and Arnold Kiss, among others) and presidents of religious communities (Sándor Lederer, Izidor Szabolcsi, and Bernát Munkácsi).[22] They had been selected and asked to assume leading positions in part to ensure that the Society was not overly conspicuous as a Zionist organization. However, as *Zsidó Szemle* [Jewish Review], a journal of the Zionist organization, noted with some irony in one of its articles, this effort was only partially successful: "For practical purposes, they are trying to hide the Zionist features of the Society, and for months

[20] Bernát Munkácsi, *Az izr. vallásoktatás újabb országos rendezésének előmunkálatai* [The Preparatory Works for the Organization of Israelite Religious Education]. Budapest, 1930, p. 7. He wrote something very similar in *Magyar-Zsidó Szemle*: "Knowledge of the Hebrew language has seriously declined in the past few decades, to such an extent that it exists now only among specialists." 1907, p. 208.

[21] Noémi Munkácsi, *Egy nagy magyar nyelvész. Munkácsi Bernát élete* [A Great Hungarian Linguist. The Life of Bernát Munkácsi]. Budapest: IMIT, 1943, p. 165.

[22] For the whole list, see: *Egyenlőség*, March 15, 1915, p. 10.

the members of the organizing committee have been occupying themselves with the question of which notable Jewish figures to send a delegation to, and which not to. In spite of this caution, so far the majority of the members are nonetheless Zionists."[23]

One of the achievements of the Society that was often mentioned in the press at the time was that it launched a Hebrew language course at the Rumbach synagogue in Budapest. In all likelihood it was Illés Adler (1868–1924) who made the decision to hold the classes in the synagogue, since he was both the Rabbi of the Rumbach synagogue and a co-president of the Society. It is a bit surprising that the leaders of the Neolog community, who disapproved of and firmly distanced themselves from Zionism, gave their consent to teach the language with a Sephardic accent, one that was related to the Yishuv and almost unheard in Budapest. According to the plan, they would teach the students with a method that was used to educate the Aliyah (immigrants to Israel), referred to as "ivrit be-ivrit," or "Hebrew in Hebrew." In addition to language classes, they organized readings, set up a reading room and distributed publications in Hebrew. Among their goals for the future they also planned the translation of some works in Hungarian into Hebrew.[24]

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider the Neolog audience of these programs. Most of the members of the community could do little more than read the simplest prayers, syllabified, and they did not know the most basic Biblical passages either. As had been the case a century earlier, most of the Jews who had a thorough knowledge of Hebrew had been educated in Yeshivas. Among the Neologs only Rabbis, teachers and scholars could speak the language. This is why the evening readings of the Ha-Szafa became a regular event only after the refugees from Galicia and Bukovina, many of whom spoke good Hebrew, resettled in Hungary after the First World War.[25] It is also important to note that most of the people who could read and write Hebrew literature at the beginning of the 20th century were from Sub-Carpathia, and they too had been brought up in Yeshivas. Some of the names are worth mentioning, including for instance

[23] *Zsidó Szemle*. Vol. VIII, 1. January 1, 1914, p. 2.

[24] *Egyenlőség,* February 1914. Appendix no. 15, 7.

[25] For more on the effects the arrival of refugees had on the revival of Hebrew and the formation of the Klub Ahdut see *Zsidó Szemle,* August 18, 1915, p. 6. and October 5, 1915, p. 2

Feuerstein Avigdor (Avigdor Ha-meiri 1890–1970, born in Ódávidháza, Bereg County), Mózes Braun-Bolgár (1882–1944, Csoma, Ugocsa-County), and József Holder (1893–1945, Nagybocskó, Máramaros County).[26]

The periodical, *Ha-cofe*, first published in 1911, represents another tendency in the attempts of the Neolog community to revive Hebrew. This journal, which was of enduring value, was edited by Lajos Blau, who was the rector of the College of Rabbinical Studies. In the beginning it was published as a supplement of *Magyar-Zsidó Szemle* [Hungarian-Jewish Review], a periodical of Neolog scholarship. Most of the articles were written by members of the College of Rabbinical Studies. Why was it published in Hebrew? There are three possible answers to the question of the choice of language: 1. they wanted to address the entire Jewish community, including members of the Orthodox community; 2. they sought to reach Jews from other countries and from the Holy Land; and 3. the main message of the periodical was that the natural language of the Jews is Hebrew.[27] As far as the first two goals are concerned, the list of writers is a clear indication that they were met; by using Hebrew they managed to transcend borders within the Jewry and create a higher level of unity.

If one wishes to give an accurate description of the use of Hebrew, or more precisely the new features of its usage at the beginning of the century, it is important to add a short note regarding the Orthodox community. The link between the Orthodox Church and the Hebrew language remained stable with regards to works published in the second half of the 19th century. It is a well-known fact that they took precedence over the Neologs in publishing internationally acknowledged scholarly journals, such as *Tel Talpiot* (edited by Dávid Katzburg in the city of Vác between 1892 and 1938) or *Vajelaket Mose* (edited by Mose Schwartz in Bonyhád between 1899 and 1917). The remarkable change, which represented a new phenomenon, was that the language politics of the moderate Orthodoxy in western parts of Hungary prevailed among the leaders of the National Orthodox Church.

Yiddish, which in the eyes of the eastern and northeastern Orthodoxy was the natural and indeed only acceptable language, was for Jews living in the western parts of the country by no means a clear choice, since for the most part they spoke either German or Hungarian. In official meetings, however, or in the com-

[26] Holder and Braun-Bolgár were pillars of the *Tehija*, the Association for Hungarian Hebrew Writers, founded in 1919 in Budapest. See: *Egyenlőség*, March 29, 1919, p. 11.

[27] For more information on the periodical see: József Schweitzer, '*Uram nyisd meg ajkamat.' Válogatott tanulmányok és esszék* ['My Lord, help me talk.' Selected Writings and Essays]. Budapest: Universitas Kiadó, 2007, pp. 371–377.

munications of the National Orthodox Offices (for example in its circulars) they strove to avoid these "Neolog" or "Goyish" languages out of consideration for the sensitivity of members of the ultra-Orthodox community (which was threatening to separate itself institutionally), using Hebrew instead, including even spoken Hebrew. It is worth mentioning chief Rabbi Koppel Reich's speech at the national assembly of the Orthodox religious communities in 1905, an assembly that represented a renewal of the organization and its representatives. Reich held his speech in Hebrew, and the news traveled far. His choice of language was an expression of his faith in the possibility of finally uniting the Jewish people of the world.

Translated by Georgina Sima

Education and the Modern Jewish Experience in Central Europe

Victor Karády

In response to the initial question raised by the present program of the Balassi Institute about possible parallelism between the development of the Hungarian and the Jewish diasporas, it is highly problematic to offer a direct answer. Apparently, there is no comparison between the Hungarian and the Jewish experience of diaspora in modern times for a number of reasons, let alone those linked to the fact that Hungary developed into a nation state since the late 18th and the early 19th centuries, while Jews of the region had no historical experience of independent statehood whatsoever. Hungarians had thus hardly known diaspora existence before the outgoing decades of the 19th century, while for Jews minority status was the fundamental experience of their collective existence since times immemorial.

Hungarian diasporas, as it is well known, were indeed the historical products of two trends or events, first the emigration movement overseas, starting during the Dual Monarchy (1867) up to World War I and – most decisively - the break-up of the multi-ethnic Hungarian Kingdom in 1919, placing large ethnic Magyar populations under the authority of neighboring new or old nation states (Austria, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia). Pre-1919 Hungary was one of the earliest feudal state formations in Europe, dating from the year 1000, to survive up to modern times with a large (but of course far from complete) measure of territorial continuity. It was lacking though a comparable continuity in terms of the ethnic nature of its population. On the contrary, by the period of modern nation building in the 19th century, Hungary became a unique case of a would-be national society in Europe to host no ethnic majority at all, the nation building titular elite representing an ethnic minority of some 40% of Magyar speakers in the population during the Reform Era (1825–1848), the foundation period of Hungarian nationalism. Thanks to a politically motivated and masterminded campaign of linguistic assimilation the proportion of Magyar speakers attained by the end of the 19th century some 50% in the population, due not lastly to the 'linguistic loyalty' of increasing Jewish clusters in the country. By 1910 the number of self-declared Magyar speakers reached only 53% among

Christians, while exceeding 55% in the whole population including Jews. Lacking hardly any diasporas beyond the frontiers, Hungary hosted a number of alien minorities, mostly settled there since centuries, either having kin populations in neighboring nation states or national communities beyond the borders, like Romanians, Serbians, Croats, Slovakians and Ukrainians, or ethnic minorities without actual connections to potentially competitive political nationalisms – like Germans, Armenians or Jews.

Another quite exceptional peculiarity of the nation building process was the absence of a clear religious majority in the country. Roman Catholicism, the erstwhile state religion of the period of Counter-Reformation, could not achieve a majority in the historic kingdom, contrary to what happened in actually every other European state following the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which sealed the final division of Europe dominated by Western Christianism into Protestant and Catholic sectors. Ethnic divisions were for several big ethnic clusters in Eastern and Southern territories of the Kingdom doubled by differences of confessional obedience since Romanians, Serbians or Ruthenians belonged to Eastern (Greco-Bysantine) Christianism, while Magyars, Germans, Slovakians and Croats were of Western Christian obedience. The break-up in 1918–19 of the 'Kingdom of Hungary' proper (as it was officially named under the post-1867 Dual Monarchy) was precisely due to the failure of the multi-cultural society with a Magyar elite enforcing assimilationist policies upon the ethnic minorities to deal with the contradictions and conflict situations linked to this dual lack of cultural homogeneity. The Magyar diasporas emerging in the successor states after 1919 represented only demographic minorities in each of the regions detached from the historic Kingdom, though in several sub-regions like the Szekler counties or in some cities in Transylvania and the Partium (Eastern territories of Hungary's Central Plain) as well as in Southern Slovakia Magyar speakers formed qualified majorities.

This deeply unbalanced cultural multiplicity of the would-be nation state was further complicated by the arrival of waves of ethnic immigrants, among them Jews from the Habsburg lands, first from Bohemia-Moravia throughout the 18th century (but starting already with those expelled from Vienna in the 1670s) and from Galicia later on till the mid 19th century - after the successive divisions of Poland (1772–1795). The policy of accepting and integrating ethnically alien immigrants was part of the political and socio-economic heritage of the medieval kingdom aimed at the compensation of population losses – first due to Mongolian invasions in the 13th century, later as a consequence of the Ottoman occupation in the 16th–17th centuries. Besides the coming of Jews from Galicia, culminating in the 1830s and 1840s, the 'common market' of the Habsburg lands allowed for

the settlement of a number of ethnic newcomers in the country, notably either as agents of the imperial administration during the post-revolutionary absolutist era (1849–1867) or as employees or experts of public industries (like railways) or private firms established in the wake of the industrial *Gründerzeit* of the 1860s.

A country of immigration, essentially, till beyond the mid-19th century, Hungary since the 1880s also started to send out masses of emigrants to the Americas and later to Western Europe under the pressure of insufficiencies and 'contradictions' of the initial phase of industrialization leading – among other things – to the proletarianization, but also to the enhanced pauperization and economic redundancy of large sectors of the peasantry. It is true though that the exodus to America concerned mostly the economically backward North-Eastern territories of the country and its populations of mainly non-Magyar ethnic stock.

The breaking up of the Dual Monarchy via a dual revolutionary turnover since October 1918 sent new clusters of mostly political emigrants abroad, to Vienna, Germany, the West, as well as to Soviet Russia. To this was soon added the forced emigration of thousands of young middle class Jews escaping the anti-Semitic legislation, notably the 1920 *Numerus Clausus* law which immediately generated a temporary or definitive exodus of the Hungarian Jewish intelligentsia and students to the West. All this became important as the foundation of a new middle class tradition of emigration. It concerned marginally the rather weak Zionist sector of Hungarian Jewry. From the birthplace of Theodor Herzl, a country of strong 'host nationalism' for Jews, very few *allyah* were registered to Palestine, some 5,000 altogether till 1945 throughout the whole pre-socialist period. The next wave of West-oriented emigration took place in the post-1945 transition years affecting both Jews surviving the *Shoah* (who, at that time, chose more often the departure to Erez Israel) and officials of the old regime. There was a replica of this wave after the 1956 October Revolution, involving close to 2% of the national population and an even larger proportion of the urban layers, exceeded only by that of surviving Jews. But even then, the majority of Jews appears to have stayed in the country, contrary to what happened in other Sovietized regimes.

Hence the present dual situation of Hungarian diasporas, consisting on the one hand of Magyars as ethnic minorities in the successor states of the Dual Monarchy (Austria, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and the Ukraine) and, on the other hand, dispersed groups of Magyar stock of emigrants and descendents of emigrants in Israel and the developed West.

There is nothing comparable in the situation of Central European Jews, an 'essentially' diasporic population with local networks of communities established since ancient times. As it is well known they were marked by their funda-

mentally segregated status in Christian societies, as both religious and social outcasts. In terms of religion they represented the only large non-Christian cluster in Christian Europe, regarded as dangerous outsiders and stigmatized as such in due course. This entailed historically recurrent movements to eliminate them via aggressive measures, including mass murders, pogroms, pillage of their goods, various acts of blackmail by the menace of expulsion. In social and political terms they remained outside the feudal framework, with a limited scope of economic activities allowed and subject to special rules of behavior, severe residential and professional restrictions and generally precarious conditions of living (being merely 'tolerated' to settle without most of the civil rights granted to others).

But Jews were also marked by a strong sense of self-segregation, need for autonomy and collective independence. This was combined paradoxically with an utter – but often negotiated – submission and submissiveness to the state power and to their representatives (the nobility in feudal times). Thus the ghetto walls were built from both sides (even if there were hardly any ghettoes in East Central Europe unlike in Italy or the West). The *kahal* was, for that matter, a political body as well as a religious community, with proper political institutions, tribunals, recognized authorities and a traditional legal system (*halakha*). Compared to other ethnic-national or even confessional minorities (like, for example, the *Universitas Saxorum* of the Transylvanian German Lutherans) Jews never claimed any form of regional, territorial or other type of separatist power position in the polis. "The law of the state is the law (for us too !)" – this has always been the guiding principle of Jewish collective behaviour. Moreover, Jews represented in East Central Europe the best policed minority community in feudal and post-feudal times. They had never been instigators of rebellions, revolts, public disturbances or other collective actions menacing law and order, including the fact – paradoxically enough – that they were hardly inclined to put up resistance against the aggressions to which they were regularly exposed. This was probably the most pacified and conciliatory sort of minority in its public conduct among all those present in the Kingdom of Hungary since medieval times.

All these collective characteristics – here rather summarily evoked – can be connected either to the precarious (dominated) status of Jews in pre-modern Christian societies, or (and not independently from the former) to the proto-middle class (*vorbürgerlich – proto-bourgeois*) social stratification of Jews even before the 19th century. This is a complex issue of which the main elements can be once again just summed up only as follows. A proto-middle class pattern of behavior included among other things a consensual respect for community rules and laws, economic individualism and entrepreneurial spirit (risk-taking, capacity to calculate costs and benefits, readiness to invest for rewards), the sense of relative

under-consumption (as against sumptuary over-consumption), solidarity with community members and beyond, strong family structure (with emotionally over-invested relationship between generations and kins).

Obviously enough, pre-modern Jewish diaspora identity was exposed to challenges due to the prevalence of aggressions and the stigmatization from outside. Hence the sense of suffering, pain and danger and all the behavioral patterns of self-control, self-reflection, discipline and in-built mechanism of caution linked to Jewish self-perception and self-consciousness. This identity pattern remained for long unproblematic within Jewish communities thanks to their very separateness from the Christian environment, providing an all but perfect unity of the three common sources of identity formation - *birth and heritage* (on family line), *assignment* from outside (being defined or taxed as Jewish) and *commitment* to Jewish issues, an inescapable attitude in a closed community under virtually constant external menace. But such a unity started to break up in the wake of the Enlightenment ideology advocating and promoting social and political equality as a basic human right. The offer of civic emancipation of Jews entailed a call for their social integration, which meant the end of an over two-thousand-year-long diaspora existence of Jews in this part of the world. Admittedly, Jews engaged in the process of modernization responded to the call via the *Haskalah*, the ideology of the Jewish Enlightenment, emanating first (but not exclusively) from the Berlin circle around Moses Mendelssohn. This was an agenda destined to keep Jews within the bonds of the Israelite religion made compatible with both modernity and the process of social integration as equal citizens of modern nation states. Hence systematic efforts at religious reform on the one hand, and the 'confessionalisation' of Jewish communities, their reduction into purely confessional agencies, on the other hand. The termination of the pre-modern diaspora situation was implemented, as it is well known, via a development varying in length and in conflicts of different intensity in the countries concerned. However it happened, this development opened up new prospects for Jewish economic, professional and otherwise social self-assertion conducive to and carried out across investments in secular education unprecedented in scope among ethnic, confessional or cultural clusters of modern societies.

The centrality of secular education in the agenda of modernization of Jews concerned, obviously enough, only those Jewish circles which showed readiness to modernization. But its very possibility or feasibility cannot be interpreted and understood without reference to traditional patterns of Jewish schooling, which implied exceptionally heavy stress on the development of intellectual capacities via a prolonged formal learning process (especially for young males). Indeed, an elaborate institutional provision for traditional schooling was part of the major

social services systematically supported by Jewish communities. As a practical consequence, pre-modern Jewish male society proved to be the most educated social cluster in feudal and early post-feudal societies in terms of individual time budgets dedicated to learning, though only to religious learning. This meant, in practical terms, the early spread of basic literacy – at least in Hebrew – in the male population and the generalization of bi- and multilingualism. Hebrew literacy must be accompanied by fluency in a spoken Jewish language – Yiddish in Eastern and Central Europe –, and oftentimes by the practice of the local common language, together with that of inter-regional trade (German in Central Europe and/or Russian in the Tsarist Empire). The habit of religious learning, indeed a form of religious intellectualism proper, acted as a fundamental means to confirm and strengthen group cohesion. It also prepared a set of in-built (or in-bred) dispositions for any kind of learning, which could, ultimately, be converted into highly distinguished chances to achieve intellectual excellence in secular education.

The modernist transformation of the attitude to schooling was an essential piece in the program of modernization because it represented in each family concerned a radical break with the traditional process of socialization, a cultural revolution of sorts which, in practice, was realized in two ways. The replacement of traditional religious education by a secular one as proposed by Christian societies could be done either by the foundation of Jewish secular schools up to the level of higher education or by the entry of Jews into common Chistian or public schooling tracks - or else by a combination of the two. In the Habsburg Empire and the West the second option prevailed, while elsewhere (in Germany too for quite a long time) the first one was more often the rule. In every case Jews had to accept attendance of common universities and vocational academies after graduation from secondary schools since there was no historical example of Jewish higher education in this part of the world (before the creation of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1925). Of course one can find with some investigation cases of Jews entering into public medical faculties (in Padova notably) since late medieval times. Such cases started to multiply in the 18th century and the admission of Jews became more and more often the rule in the 19th century, in many countries even before formal legal emancipation – as in the Habsburg Empire since as early as 1783 (following the 'tolerance decree' of Joseph II).

Option for modern education introduced a major split into the Jewish world between modernists and traditionalists. But its success and far fetched consequences cannot be explained without reference to the multiplicity of specific social functions public education performed for Jews.

On the surface level – but not without heavy consequences – it imposed a language change from the Jewish language to the common idiom or – initially (up to the early 19th century) to Latin (the tuition language of elite training before the generalization of national languages in higher education). This was instrumental in the significant strengthening of the linguistic capital of educated Jews, a distinctly positive disposition among them to learning foreign tongues included. More importantly it meant the obligation to accept the cognitive elements of high culture developed mostly by Christians as of universal value. This could be alien from and sometimes hostile to Jewish traditions, requiring thus various forms of self-denial, that is a change of self-perception and identity and leading to the rejection of or at least to a proclivity to keep distance from Jewish ways and values. But, sitting in benches together with Christian schoolmates constituted a pragmatic form of integration in Christian dominated peer groups (youth society), both a chance and a challenge for further efforts of adaptation or 'assimilation' proper. This could hardly be achieved without a degree of secularization breaking up the earlier unity of the sources of Jewish self-definition by heritage, assignment and commitment, as evoked above. If the Jewish heritage was a given, at least for the first generations of Jews with certified public schooling, assigned Jewish identity could be weakened by mixing with Gentiles and lose its load of stigmatization. This could on its turn dilute the force of commitment for Jewish issues. Public education was thus directly conducive to the adoption of new patterns of Jewish identity with a number of hitherto unknown options. They included the oscillation between degrees of traditionalism and modernity (in terms of way of life, customs, language use, demographic choices, etc.), that is, between agendas of assimilation, separateness or self-segregation in a new key accompanied by various, earlier unknown political choices. The assimilationist agenda lead first to 'host nationalism' (Anglo-Jewry, Magyar Jew, *franco-judaïsme*, etc.), a most common option in Central and Western Europe during the 19th century, but also – especially later – to enhanced interest for and engagement in movements of universalistic social salvation (like esperantism, feminism, humanist free-masonry, social-democracy, communism). But dissimilationist modernism could also foster in publicly educated Jewish circles in form of Jewish nationalism (of which Zionism became just the most successful historical movement, with the benefit of hindsight). Beside this, advanced secular learning fulfilled common functions of professional training and promotion for Jews and non-Jews alike, but for Jews with a vengeance. It helped Jews to compensate by

scholarly excellence for their social handicap of belonging to an erstwhile underprivileged and discriminated cluster. In more concrete terms it contributed to the contestation and neutralization of anti-Jewish prejudices and to the promotion of Jews in elite positions earlier reserved for Gentiles only (in the professions, the cultural market, science, education and even politics – however marginally this occurred in Central Europe).

For all these convergent reasons the educational modernization of growing sectors of diaspora Jewry was producing spectacular results in public elite schooling since anti-Jewish prohibitions in this respect were lifted, as it happened mostly already at the beginning of the process leading to legal emancipation. Since the early 19th century the increasing trend of relative Jewish over-schooling became a permanent feature of European elite educational markets. This could be perceived everywhere, where, on the one hand, Jews could be technically identified in the sources of religion-specific information related to students, that is mostly in Central and Eastern Europe (while such sources tended to disappear in the West due to advanced secularism), and where, on the other hand, a free-market situation prevailed in matters educational, that is, there was no exclusion or limitation of admission for Jews. Such relative excess of Jewish educational participation can be taken as a measure of the secularization and the modernization of Jewish clusters under scrutiny. Hereafter this connection between modernity and investment in advanced public schooling can be demonstrated quite clearly in Austrian data during the Dual Monarchy, since our tables to this effect are presented in regional figures, ranging from underdeveloped, mostly traditionalist and later modernizing Eastern provinces (Galicia, Bukovina) to the Western centers of Jewish settlement in the Dual Monarchy (Vienna, the Czech lands), which were both the gathering places of Jews involved early enough in the *Haskalah,* as well as the imperial territories with the fastest processes of economic and cultural modernization.

Table 1 displays the regional details of the participation of Jews in all the main agencies of elite training in a rather early period of the modernization process (around 1865), considered as the *Gründerzeit* of the so-called 'primitive accumulation of capital' in the Austrian lands. *Tables 2* and *3* summarize the relative involvement of Jews in secondary schooling and universities in two periods, 1865–82 and 1897–1914. The data in percent should be read in each line compared to the percent of Jews in the region concerned as indicated in the last column of the table.

Table 1. The share of Jews in the population and in the student body of various elite training agencies in Cisleithanian Austria (1865)

Cisleithanian regions	Gymnasia 1865 Jews/all, %	Realgymnasia 1865 Jews/all %	Realschulen 1865 Jews/all %	All secondary schools 1865 Jews/all %	Universities 1865 Jews/all %	Polytechnics 1865 Jews/all %	Population 1857 Jews/all %
Lower Austria (Vienna)	308/2901 10.6	45/257 17.5	133/2198 6.1	486/5356 9.1	462/2123 21.7	117/899 13.0	0.5
Rest, Danubian Austria	4/5944 0.07	–	20/1609 1.2	24/7553 0.3	3/774 3.8	–/179	0.02
Triest, Istria, Coastland	92/1044 8.8	–	38/414 9.2	130/1458 8.9	–	11/112 9.8	0.7
Bohemia	654/7602 8.6	59/631 9.4	318/3752 8.5	1030/11985 8.6	112/1166 9.6	32/756 4.2	1.8
Moravia	338/3117 10.8	58/167 34.7	293/1801 16.3	689/5085 13.5	–	17/241 7.1	2.2
Silesia	60/1139 5.3	–	37/511 7.2	97/1650 5.9	–		0.7
Galicia	485/6339 7.7	–	113/651 17.6	598/6990 8.6	75/868 8.6	44/397 11.1	9.7
Bukovina	133/727 16.1	–	38/223 17.0	171/1050 16.3	–	–	3.2
Dalmatia	6/556 1.1	–	23/557 5.7	174/3286 2.0	–	–	0.8
Italy	151/2729 5.5	–	23/557 4.1	174/3286 5.3	25/1406 1.8	–	0.1
Altogether	2231/32198 6.9	162/1055 15.4	1021/11856 8.6	3414/45108 7.6	677/6337 10.7	221/2584 8.6	3.9

Source: *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Monarchie für das Jahr 1865*, Wien, 1866, 343–365.

The East–West contrasts here are quite spectacular. In Galicia, the economic and social backwater of the Monarchy with both the largest in numbers and the most traditionalist Jewish masses, strongly influenced by the impact of Hassidism, Jews appear to be still under-represented in the 1860s even in absolute terms (and much more, compared to Jews elsewhere in the Monarchy) both in secondary schools and universities, except for 'polytechnics' (with reference to the Polytechnical University in Lemberg/Lviv). This is clearly displayed in *Table 1*. In the last but second column of *Table 2* it is evident that the presence of Jews in Galician elite training did not reach at that time their proportion in the population. This situation would evolve in time, but not dramatically. In 1885 Galician Jews were still under-represented in local secondary schools even if their representation in universities already exceeded their demographic proportions. Later on Galician Jews will increase their share in the student body up to a significant degree of over-representation, but this makes even on the eve of World War I a pale contrast with the rather extraordinarily strong show of Jews in the elite educational institutions of all the other – Western – regions of the Monarchy (with, to be sure, much smaller Jewish clusters in the population). The indices for Bukovina, the other easternmost region under Austrian administration, appear to be comparable to those of Galicia, but on a somewhat higher level. From the outstart Bukovinian Jews were demonstrably over-represented in elite education, but not so drastically as in the West. While in Galicia the maximal indice of Jewish educational presence was around 2 to 1 by 1914 (and in Bukovina 3.1 to 1), the Austrian *average* exceeded by that time 3 to 1 and in the Western provinces it moved between 4 (in Vienna) and 28 (! in the rest of Danubian Austria) to 1.

The case of Vienna is obviously rather singular in this context. The imperial capital city gathered students – Jews and non-Jews alike – from the whole Monarchy (including Hungary) especially in its universities and other post-secondary educational institutions. The Viennese indices here reflect thus only in part the educational demand of local Jewry and, as such, cannot be compared to the truly regional indices listed in our tables. Moreover, the large student body gathering in Vienna throughout the Dualist period distorted somewhat the indices calculated for the provinces, because of the (inestimably varying) proportion of students, especially in higher education, hailing from the different regional constituencies of candidates to advanced learning. This is by the way what may explain the fact that the obviously strong over-representation of Jews in Viennese advanced education stopped growing by the outgoing years of the 19th century and indeed seemed stagnating on a fairly high level (indices over 4 to 1) in the last decades of the Dual Monarchy. Following the development of regional institutions of elite training in every Austrian province, local Jews would apparently more often

attend their regional schools and universities instead of going to Vienna, while student peregrinations may have continued more frequently among non-Jews. This can be empirically demonstrated for students born in Hungary and studying in Vienna, according to prosopographical survey results. While Jews represented some 34% among them in the years 1867–1889, they were only 24% in 1890–99 and 20.3% in 1900–1909.

Another interesting result of our tables consists in the all but permanent contrast between the average presence of Jews in secondary and higher education, the latter regularly exceeding in the whole Monarchy the relevant proportions in the former, with a few regional exceptions (those of the Eastern provinces and Bohemia). Some of the exceptions may be explained by the very attraction of the Viennese universities and academies (*Hochschulen*), which exerted a siphoning off effect on the regional demand for advanced schooling. The same could be observed in 1865 in the Italian provinces where many students could prefer 'truly Italian' universities as against those of the Austrian dominated provinces. In Vienna and Danubian Austria, where the local institutions of higher education received many outsiders, the relevant indices clearly show this excess of Jewish over-schooling on the level of higher education. This meant a differential proclivity of Jews to accomplish professional studies even as compared to secondary schooling. Gentiles would, consequently, more often than Jews, suspend their education after graduating from a gymnasium or (less frequently) from a *Realschule,* which sufficed for the acquisition of the status of gentleman, accompanied with the usual entitlements to a shorter military service (*Volontariat*), the title of reserve officer, the use of a sword in duels (*Satisfaktionsfähigkeit*) or the admission into salons (*Salonsfähigkeit*). For Jews though higher education was also more important, apparently, for further career in an intellectual profession which proved to be the most legitimate vehicle of integration in one of the bastions of the 'national middle class'.

Another observation, worth to be commented in *Tables 2* and *3*, concerns the oscillations in the course of time of the measured degree of Jewish over-schooling. However fast the expansion of Jewish public schooling was implemented, over the long period of half a century scrutinized in our data there is no clear trend of constant relative growth. Indices to this effect have ups and downs, even if such movements occurred always on a high level of over-representation of Jews in the educational market. These movements cannot be interpreted by the action of one particular variable but rather remind us of the complexities of the issue of educational participation, involving a number of inter-related factors, which cannot be controlled without further investigations. Some of these are of demographic nature, having to do, for example, with migration trends among young

people, notably abroad or even overseas (as was typical from poverty stricken Galicia in the Dual Monarchy). But migrations of both traditionalist lower class and educated middle class Jews inside the Monarchy, to Vienna for instance, also affected local educational demand in the places of departure and arrival as well. In big cities, like Vienna or Prague, the sharp decline of birthrates in the relatively large Jewish middle classes, starting in the outgoing years of the 19th century, must also be taken into account. This must be completed from 1895 onwards by the religious group specific entry of girls into some university faculties, liable to enhance the proportion of Jews in higher education. On the same educational level student peregrinations, as mentioned already, played sometimes an important role in the increase or the decrease of the Jewish presence in certain universities. The availability of *Realschulen* could, in the secondary school market, have a positive impact on Jewish inscriptions, since this training track appeared to be more attractive to rank and file Jews than the gymnasium track with Latin, the latter being easily associated in Jewish eyes with Christian Church culture. In *Table 1* one can see that generally *Realgymnasia* (with less Latin) and *Realschulen* (with no Latin) were more often invested by Jews than the classical gymnasia with Latin.

Educational inequalities, like Jewish over-schooling, together with its changing intensity in time, are among the most intriguing aspects of the development of modern schooling provisions, designed to endow with intellectual capital the ever growing sectors of the population, but in reality affecting very differently its various constituencies. The supply of elite schooling met with a demand of various scope in different periods and in different clusters of its potential clientele. During the two decades of the early modernization of the university system in Hungary after the 1867 political Compromise (marked, among other things, by the upgrading of the Pest Polytechnics into a Polytechnical University and the foundation of the University of Kolozsvár in 1872), age specific enrollments of Christian youth into higher education decreased (!) in the Hungarian part of the Monarchy, while those of Jews multiplied by at least 2. Lutherans displayed in both parts of the Dual Monarchy a measure of over-investment in education similar to Jews (even if not on the same level). Protestants (mostly Lutherans) in the Austrian part of the Monarchy, with a share in the population of merely 1.6% in 1854 and 1.9% in 1897, sent between 2.7% and 3.2% of students to Cisleithanian Universities during the decades before 1914. Further research is still badly needed to explore the various – economic, social and cultural – dimensions of such manifest educational inequalities which, hitherto, have far too rarely been targeted by in-depth investigations.

Table 2. Jews and non-Jews in the population and among students of secondary and higher education of Cisleithanian Austria in selected years (1865–1882)*

Cisleithanian regions	Secondary school pupils 1865 **Jews/all %**	Students in higher education 1865 **Jews/all %**	***Population in 1880*** ***% of Jews***	Secondary school pupils 1882 **Jews/all %**	Students of higher education 1882 **Jews/all %**	**Degree of the representation of Jews 1865****	**Degreeof the representation of Jews 1882****
Lower Austria (Vienna)	486/5356 **9.1**	579/3022 **19.2**	***4.1***	2351/10532 **22.3**	1576/6021 **26.2**	**2.2x 4.7x**	**5.4x 6.5x**
Danubian Austria	24/7553 **0.3**	3/953 **0.3**	***0.2***	112/8909 **1.3**	23/1665 **1.4**	**1.5x 1.5x**	**6.5x 7x**
Triest, Coastland	130/1458 **8.9**	11/112 **9.8**	***0.8***	146/2161 **6.8**	–	**11.1 12.3**	**8.5**
Bohemia	1030/11985 **8.6**	144/1922 **7.5**	***1.7***	2331/20603 **11.3**	317/2915 **10.8**	**5.1x 4.4x**	**6.6x 6,4x**
Moravia	689/5085 **13.5**	17/241 **7.1**	***2.05***	1392/8830 **15.8**	47/143 **32.9**	**6.6x 3.5x**	**7.7x 16x**
Silesia	97/1650 **5.9**	–	***1.5***	442/2187 **20.1**	–	**3.9x**	**13.4x**
Galicia	598/6990 **8.6**	119/1265 **9.4**	***11.5***	2128/11381 **18.7**	176/1923 **9.15**	**0.7x 0.8x**	**1.6x 0.8x**
Bukovina	171/1050 **16.3**	–	***11.8***	534/1466 **36.4**	56/251 **22.3**	**1.4x**	**3.1x 1.9x**
Dalmatia	174/3286 **2.0**	–	***0.06***	4/721 **0.6**	–	**3.3x**	**10x**
Italian provinces	174/3286 **5.3**	25/1406 **1.8**	**0.8*****	–	–	**6.6x 2.2x**	**– –**
Altogether	3414/45108 **7.6**	898/8921 **10.0**	**1005/22.144** ***4.54***	9440/66790 **14.1**	2195/12918 **17.0**	**1.7x 2.2x**	**3.1x 3.7x**

* Source : *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Monarchie*, relevant years.

** Estimations: Each figure represents the *multiple* of the proportion of Jews among students compared to their proportion in the population of the region concerned. The figure above 1 is the approximate measure of the over-representation of Jews among students, the figure below 1 (as for Galicia only) is the measure of their under-representation. The first figure in each cell (above) is an index for secondary schooling, the second one (below) is for universities.

*** For 1857, the last census involving the Italian provinces of the Habsburg Empire.

Table 3. Jews and non-Jews in the population and among students of secondary and higher education of Cisleithanian Austria in selected years (1897–1914)★

Cisleithanian regions	Secondary school pupils 1897 **Jews/all %**	Students in higher education 1897 **Jews/all %**	***Population in 1900*** ***% of Jews***	Secondary school pupils 1914 **Jews/all %**	Students of higher education 1914 **Jews/all %**	**Degree of the representation of Jews 1897****	**Degree of the representation of Jews 1914****
Lower Austria (Vienna)	2898/13818 **21.0**	1818/7556 **24.1**	***5.1***	5605/6447 **21.2**	3391/14781 **22.9**	**4.1x 4.7x**	**4.2x 4.5x**
Danubian Austria	128/12419 **1.0**	42/2918 **1.4**	***0.1***	269/20941 **1.3**	129/4573 **2.8**	**10x 14x**	**13x 28x**
Triest, Coastland	159/2831 **5.6**	–	***0.7***	273/7428 **3.7**	–	**8x –**	**5.3x –**
Bohemia	2551/22375 **11.4**	561/5194 **10.8**	***1.5***	3765/41735 **9.0**	856/10184 **8.4**	**7.6x 7.2x**	**6x 5.6x**
Moravia	1607/12126 **13.3**	71/336 **21.1**	***1.8***	1846/18328 **10.1**	278/1518 **18.3**	**7.4x 11.7x**	**5.6x 10.2x**
Silesia	440/2936 **15.0**	–	***1.8***	571/4215 **13.55**	–	**8.3x –**	**7.5x –**
Galicia	2994/16372 **18.3**	598/3483 **17.2**	***11.1***	12522/52689 **23.8**	2076/10189 **20.4**	**1.6x 1.5x**	**2.1x 1.8x**
Bukovina	1053/2485 **42.4**	147/376 **39.1**	***13.2***	3426/8302 **41.3**	413/1129 **36.6**	**3.2x 3x**	**3.1x 2.8x**
Dalmatia	76/1509 **0.46**	–	***0.06***	12/2074 **0.6**	–	**7.6x –**	**10x**
Altogether	11837/86871 **13.6**	3237/19863 **16.3**	***4.7***	24378/162533 **15.0**	7063/42374 **16.7**	**2.8x 3.4x**	**3.2x 3.6x**

★ Source : *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Monarchie,* relevant years.
★★ Estimations: see *Table 2*.

Israel-Diaspora Relations: Mutual Images, Expectation, Frustrations

Raphael Vago

"No less than the Diaspora serves as an important strategic asset of Israel, Israel has to behave as a main strategic asset of the Diaspora."
Prof. Yehezkel Dror, Haaretz, 2 March 2 2011

For almost two thousand years Diaspora, or exile – "galut" – existence was the abnormal form of existence for the Jews, which through the centuries became a normal fate, for lack of any other option. As a unique case among nations, Jews led a double life – yearning in their prayers to the hills of Jerusalem, pledging never to forget it, yet living in exile, scattered in the four corners of the world. In 1948, with the establishment of the State of Israel, Jewish history changed its course, as continuing living in the Diaspora became a matter of choice, at least in the free countries, just as ending the existence in exile became a matter of choice, by emigrating to Israel, again subject to the local possibilities to do so. Aside from the small stream of those reaching Palestine through the centuries – under the various rules it was the Zionist movement since the late 19th century which raised the banner of ending the Diaspora, and securing the formation of an independent Jewish state. Zionism not only sought to forge a "new Jew" living in its ancient homeland, but also entailed the negation of the Diaspora in order to transform the Jews into a "normal" people. Thus, from a purely Zionist perception the construction of a Jewish entity meant the mental and physical deconstruction of the fate of living in exile. The equation seemed to be logical – the less the Diaspora, the more a normal Jewish nation living in its own territory.

This brief overview intends to focus on the changing patterns of the relationship between the State of Israel and the Diaspora, and to present some of the basic issues and dilemmas that preoccupy a complex and evolving relationship. Since 1948 there is an on-going dialogue between the Jews of the Diaspora and the State of Israel, which is a multifaceted dialogue and discourse not only between the two sides, as there are not really two sides – Israel looking at the Diaspora and vice versa –, but also a reality shaped by developments among world Jewry and within the Jewish community in Israel. It is a dynamic field reflecting genera-

tional, demographic, social, political changes among the factors involved. During the more than six decades, mutual perceptions, expectations, even relations of power have emerged, as often reflected by such popular and simplistic expressions as "who needs the other more, Israel the Diaspora or vice versa?"

In 1948, the young State of Israel had a Jewish population of some 650,000, while there were some 11,000,000 Jews left in a post-Holocaust Jewish world. In 2012 there were almost 6,000,000 Jews living in Israel, out of an estimated number of 13,500,000 in the world – and it is essential to keep in mind that part of the complex issues involved in these relationships are "who is a Jew?", who decides, where and how, who can be considered as having a Jewish identity in the Diaspora, and would the same person be considered as a Jew by the laws of the Jewish State.

In 1948 a traumatized Jewish nation cherished the young State of Israel as a newborn baby, yet facing grave dangers, its survival not yet assured. For the Diaspora it was the rebirth after death. Israel had to be supported, unconditionally as it was the lifeline and bloodline of an almost mortally wounded nation. "In 1948, Israel represented a poor relative in mortal danger, which you must help. In the case of Western Jewry, also because of the feeling of guilt of not having been able to do more during the Holocaust."[1]

Today, Israel's Jewish population approaches half of the total number of Jews in the world, a very important aspect, not only for its numerical significance but also for its psychological impact – soon, depending on various demographic projections, the majority of World Jewry will live in Israel, and the balance will tilt from the Diaspora to the Jewish State.[2]

From the perception of the "poor relative in mortal danger" or from an interesting observation by Thomas Friedman, that in his childhood memoires, "Israel was a nation of 'nebechs' (Yiddish slang for clumsy, ineffectual), the place where we sent our old clothes,"[3] the Israel of today, with all its complex problems confronting it from inside and outside, is a strong economic, military, high-tech power, with an advanced society. In contrast to the support needed in 1948 and later, even to the old clothes of the Friedman family, today it is Israel that helps

[1] Jonathan Reynolds, "Israel's Foreign and Defence Policy and Diaspora Identity," in Danny Ben–Moshe and Zohar Segev (eds.): *Israel, the Diaspora and Jewish Identity*. Brighton: Sussex, 2007, p. 145.

[2] See Sergio DellaPergola, "Jews in Europe: Demographic Trends, Contexts and Outlooks," in Julius H. Schoeps and Olaf Glockner (eds.): *A Road to Nowhere? Jewish Experiences in Unifying Europe*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011, p. 34.

[3] Quoted in Reynolds, *op.cit*., p. 145

the Diaspora Jews, especially the younger generation, to foster and strengthen their Jewish identity and ties with Israel, in face of the rising trends of assimilation, and lack of Jewish identity.

This dramatic change of roles and patterns of relationship has another very significant aspect. In the early years of the existence of Israel the support of Israel by the Diaspora Jews – in this case of those living in the West – was unconditional, same as that of those behind the Iron Curtain who could not express their feelings openly. This support was not so much a matter of debates on what political stance of Israel or which political line to support, although internal political debates did take place within the Jewish communities, rather Israel played the role of a unifying factor, an expression of the continuity and revival of the Jewish nation. To be automatically pro-Israeli was perhaps the most outspoken evidence of being a Jew and of Jewish identity. In the late '40s and '50s, till after the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel was in the eyes of the Diaspora a living myth. Supporting Israel in general, contributing to various Israeli projects, localities, schools, hospitals, became a part of Jewish way of life in the more affluent Western communities, especially in the largest Jewish community, the USA.

However, with the changes within Israel, especially after the Six-Day War, the growing Israeli political polarization between the left and the right towards the Arab–Israeli conflict, between the secular and the various forms of religious viewpoints, especially focusing on the issue of conversion and "who is a Jew?", in the eyes of the Diaspora Israel has been transformed from a unifying factor to a divisive issue, often gravely splitting Jewish attitudes, organizations and intensifying very vocal internal debates.

In the words of Jeremy Ben-Ami, the President of J Street, the left-wing US Jewish lobby, confronting the pro-Israel government mainstream lobby, "My greatest fear is that discussion around Israel will become so difficult that American Jews will find it easier to walk away from Israel and the Jewish community."[4]

Thus, the partnership that was forged in 1948 and was very evident in the first two decades afterwards developed into a more distant and problematic relationship, often at the focus of internal debates within the Israeli political and academic establishment and within the various Jewish organizations and forums in the Diaspora. There is a sense of drifting apart, unless urgent measures are taken for a rapprochement between Israel and the Diaspora Jewry. But the very nature and extent of this trend of drifting apart and the measures to be taken to bring closer the Diaspora to the Israelis and Israel to the Diaspora are themselves being

[4] *Haaretz Magazine,* 1 April 2011.

perceived and evaluated in different forms by the factors involved. In the word of Gabriel Sheffer, "Loyalty to the hostland or homeland (in the Jewish case, Israel, is not automatic and not universally accepted by the entire Diaspora."[5]

Ben-Gurion's expressions that the Zionists, and in fact the "good Jews" are only those who will come to Israel, and thus make "aliyah" – the Hebrew word for emigrating to Israel which means "going up" – in contrast to leaving Israel, "yeridah" – which means "going down" – had to be refined or redefined. While in general, many Israelis will express some reservation over leaving the country to live abroad, most of them realize that one can be a good Jew, a good Zionist in the sense of supporting Israel while living abroad, in the Diaspora. Thus, Israel recognized and realized that the "negation of the exile" – a favorite expression of the pre-1948 Zionist discourse – may not, and maybe it should not even eventuate. Not only for the practical reason that Israel cannot absorb further millions – with all the difficulties and achievements of the massive one million wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union –, but because Israel needs the Diaspora Jews as a factor in supporting Israel, not any more necessarily through material support, but as a Jewish lobby acting within the democratic societies in which they live. Israelis and Diaspora Jews know that there are two parallel Jewish worlds, interacting but with time more often clashing, diverging from one another, and even drifting apart.

The two parallel Jewish worlds reflect basic realities of which both sides are aware, but it seems that there are no easy solutions to the problems that are also debated within each of the component parts – in the Diaspora and Israel.

"Is the State of Israel the center of world Jewry"?, asked Yosef Gorny, answering, "I doubt it, because of the universal nature of global society that tends to be more and more universal and multi-cultural than self-sufficient Diasporas."[6]

Both sides have different agendas, life-styles and different ways to express their Jewish identity. By using some gross generalizations, the following example can be useful. If four Jewish youths from Buenos Aires, Budapest, Jerusalem and Beer-Sheba are brought together for a discussion, very soon two groups would emerge, the Diaspora "team" and the Israeli. The two, living abroad – from the Israeli point of view – will find common themes on how they perceive their Jew-

[5] Gabriel Sheffer, "The European Jewish Diaspora: The Third Pillar of World Jewry?" in Julius H. Schoeps, op.cit., p. 41; for an extensive analysis of Diaspora politics see Yossi Shain and Barry Bristman, "Diaspora, Kinship and Loyalty: The Renewal of Jewish National Security," *International Affairs,* vol. 78, no. 1 (2002): 69–95.

[6] Yosef Gorny, "Does European Jewry Need a New Ethnic Spiritual Umbrella? Reflections," in Julius H. Schoeps, *op. cit.*, p. 155. Gorny's programmatic and reflective thoughts were given on the concept of the search for old–new collective identities based on the concept of "Klal Yisrael."

ish identity, whether they attend a synagogue, and what forms of religious life, if at all, they participate in local community centers or club activities. They would discuss the chances of intermarriage and eventual assimilation, which is a major issue. They would mention anti-Semitic attitudes and incidents, and their impact on their identity as being identified as Jews by such elements. Perhaps last, and even least, they may raise the issue of their attitude towards Israel, mentioning past or planned visits there.

In contrast, the items shared by the two young Israelis would be completely different. Keeping Jewish identity is not an issue, as probably according to their view living in Israel is already an expression of identity, even if one of them is completely secular, intermarriage – very little chances, assimilation – nil. But a favorite subject would be completely strange to the two colleagues from the Diaspora: their military service and comparing their yearly tours of duty as reservists, a heavy burden on those young civilians after years of service (three for men, two for women). They would also probably differ on their views on the Palestinian issue, and the future of the territories. The issue of relating to Jewish life in the Diaspora would not even come up between the two. Thus we may have the two groups with little common ground, except their shared Jewish identity, the nature of which could be different between the two groups. In a younger group the impact of the Holocaust on their identity may perhaps come up in the illustrated case by the member of the group from Budapest.

Various projects as "Taglit-Birthright" brought almost three hundred thousands Diaspora Jews between the ages of 18 and 26 to visit Israel, in order to bring the two sides closer, and for the visitors to experience Israel, even for a short period, out of hope for further visits and eventual "aliyah." Other forms of activities, taking Israelis to Jewish communities abroad are also aimed to further the dialogue between them. While such projects indicate awareness to the growing gap between Israelis and Diaspora Jewry, their long range impact is difficult to assess. The fact is that among the younger generation of Jews in the Diaspora, especially in the West, there is less interest in Israel, and Israel-oriented activities play a less essential part of their identity than perhaps among the same generation in Eastern Europe. On the other hand, Israelis, in general, do not seem to perceive Diaspora Jewry as a "Jewish hinterland", and one popular Israeli satirical TV show, "Wonderful Country" portrayed in several short episodes in a very sarcastic way the young Jewish visitors to Israel through the "Taglit-Birthright" program. They came across as empty headed, ignorant of Israeli realities, yet "borderline fanatic Israeli lovers" and using the trip to Israel to find relationships, fun and booze. In one segment of the first clip out of several shows of the program, the tour guide announces a trip to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum:

> "The Yad Vashem Museum is based on the Holocaust (plays somber music). We will give you time to be sad, and at the same time you should all send text messages to your parents, urging them to continue donating money to the State of Israel…"
>
> Participants: (Collective bleak nod)
>
> Tour guide : "… so there won't be a second Holocaust, since the sequel is always worse than the original."[7]

As the Haaretz wrote, the "tour guide takes the group on a quick emotional rollercoaster ride." Problematic elements in Israeli–Diaspora relationship are portrayed in a very mocking way – mutual stereotypes, fun seeking, mostly ignorant Diaspora Jews, Israel playing on their guilt feelings.

Aside from such satirical representations, perhaps not surprisingly recent findings show that the "diversity of Jewish life in the Diaspora is often a revelation to Israelis introduced to it for the first time. Thus, for Israelis meeting with Diaspora Jews has the benefit "of strengthening Israelis' commitment to Jewish peoplehood."[8] These findings discussed at an academic conference at Brandeis University also presented that "a lower percentage of its graduates tend to intermarry than do their counterparts who do not go on Taglit trips." In other words, such visits if they do not lead to the visiting youth to move to Israel, at least they lower the rate of assimilation in the Diaspora. While one may argue with the relevant data and their interpretation, and even may treat it in ironical ways, there is no doubt on the very impact of such Diaspora–Israeli encounters.

Israel's role in monopolizing the decision on "who is a Jew," the problem of Orthodox conversion, and the various attitudes by Diaspora Jewry towards Israeli politics and policies, and Israeli reactions to such debates, represent perhaps the most essential issues confronting Diaspora–Israeli relations.

According to some bleak assessments, that "Israel is tearing apart the Jewish people" Carlo Strenger wrote that,

> there has never been a government so oblivious of its relation to World Jewry. Israeli laws that increase the Orthodox establishment's stranglehold on religious affairs and personal life are completely disregarding that 85 per cent of world

[7] *Haaretz,* 24 January 2012

[8] *Haaretz,* 28 May 2012.

> Jewry are not Orthodox – and simply dismissing their Jewish identities and institutions. As a result, this majority of world Jewry feels Israel could not care less about its values and identity.[9]

Claims by Israel's Orthodox establishment that by monopolizing conversion to Judaism and the laws of marriage they are preventing a rift in the Jewish people, are being rejected as exactly the opposite. And he went on, that "it is the unholy coalition between nationalism and Orthodoxy that is tearing the Jewish people apart."

Israel is not only a "Jewish and democratic state" – whose character and definition is a major bone of contention within the Israeli public and political discourse, a debate that gradually moved also to the Diaspora –, but Israel's very raison d'etre is seen as

> the core state of the Jewish people. Its principal mission is to assure the Jewish people's long term thriving […] For this reason, the Jewish leaders of Israel should regard themselves to a significant extent as leaders of the Jewish people as a whole, and as such acquire the required understanding of the dynamics of Jewish communities worldwide, which at present most of them lack.[10]

If indeed, as according to this view, Israel's principal mission is to assure the long term thriving of the Jewish nation, then one of the major paradoxes of the Jewish people since 1948 becomes evident – Israel is not necessarily the symbol of the negation of the Diaspora, but rather by its very existence and activities it is in charge of assuring the "long term thriving" of the Jewish people in the Diaspora, and thus the survival of the Diaspora becomes an Israeli project.

While the Jewish leaders of Israel may regard themselves as "leaders of the Jewish people as a whole" – and for some of them this could be a fruitful political playground –, it is another matter whether Diaspora Jews and their leaders tend to perceive or would be willing to perceive Israeli leaders as such.

At the core of the raging arguments that have intensified in the past years within the Diaspora and with Israel is the basic question of Diaspora attitudes – if one can speak at all of "Diaspora attitudes" – towards the changing Israeli social and political landscapes. Does the "Diaspora" has to lend uncritical support towards Israel, as it did in general terms in the early years after 1948? How much Diaspora leaders have the right, and perhaps the duty to question Israeli policies

[9] *Haaretz,* 24 June 2011

[10] Yehezkel Dror, *Haaretz,* 4 March 2011.

in 2012? Can one distinguish cracks in the Jewish establishments and within the communities as "who really can express towards Israel the views of the community members?" Do the Jewish establishments, and their respective lobby frameworks, especially in the large communities in the West, not only in the US, but also Canada, Australia, Great Britain, France, represent the "grassroots" Diaspora populations?[11]

A brief overview of the debates of the past few years may illustrate the growing schism and what Jeremy Ben-Ami warned of that in face of the divisive issues, "American Jews will find it easier to walk away from Israel and the Jewish community." On the background of intensified internal debates in the various large communities, similar warning signs have appeared not only in the USA.

In June 2010, Peter Beinart, a former editor of the New Republic, published in the New York Review of Books an essay whose main thesis was that the Jewish establishment in the USA alienates the Jewish communities, it causes damages and divisions by its automatic support of Israel.[12]

The article generated heated debates, and a new round of polemics have opened up in the spring of 2012, when Beinart published his *The Crisis of Zionism,* a very critical appraisal of Israeli policies and their unconditional support by the Jewish establishment, which, in the words of one reviewer of the book, "have hijacked American liberalism."[13]

Beinart accused the US Jewish establishment of becoming a tool in the hands of the illiberal Israeli government, blindly following Netanyahu's policies, mainly in the activities of the major pro-Israeli lobby, AIPAC (The American Israel Public Affairs Committee). This automatic following polarized debates within the communities, and the result was as the title of his essay "The failure of the American Jewish establishment", which through its policies caused that many, especially of the younger generation have drifted apart from their communities and pro-Israeli (and one may ask what "pro-Israeli" means) attitudes. Beinart portrayed a very bleak picture of the young, secular liberals not only not being attracted to pro-Israeli activities but in fact running away from such activities when they see the policies of the establishment, blindly following Israeli policies.

[11] See, for example, David Taras and Morton Weinfeld, "Continuity and Criticism: North American Jews and Israel," *International Journal,* vol. 45, no. 3 (Summer 1990), pp. 661–684.

[12] Peter Beinart, "The Failure of American Jewish Establishment," *New York Review of Books,* 10 June 2010; *Haaretz Magazine,* 1 April 2011.

[13] Peter Beinart, *The Crisis of Zionism*. New York: Times Books, Henry Holt, 2012; the review by Jonathan Rosen, "A Missionary Impulse," *The New York Times,* 13 April 2012.

The polarization of Israeli political life and the internal arguments on Israeli policies have more than ever before been reflected in Diaspora attitudes towards Israel, taking up the "right" and "left" divide. The moderate J Street lobby – incorrectly branded by its critics as "far-left", and by Morris J Amitay , a former executive director of AIPAC, as "these are people who cannot be considered as friendly to Israel" – has raised its voice in the US, gaining more support, being critical of Israeli policies, and promoting the peace process with the Palestinians and a "two state solution."[14] Amitay's remarks clearly reflect not only the mutual intolerance between the various sides, but also the monopolization of the notion of "love of Israel." After all, who can decide and define who the people who can be considered as "friendly to Israel" are. Certainly, in the eyes of a respected former director of AIPAC, the people from J Street are not to be considered as belonging in this category, while activists of J Street probably see themselves as the best friends of Israel, by criticizing its present right-wing, nationalist policies.

Similar divisions in attitudes towards Israeli policies are clearly evident in Europe, with the establishment of JCall, the "European J Street", in April 2010. Under the banner of "European Jewish call for reason," and presented as a "new voice for peace," the organizers said that "whatever our personal paths, our connection to the State of Israel is part of our identity. We are concerned about the future of the State of Israel, to which we are unfailingly committed."[15]

The growing voices of European Jewry whether they represent the "establishment" if one can speak in North American terms in a European context, or "dissenting" voices from a "leftist" perception *vis-à-vis* the present Israeli government, they certainly indicate several interesting processes. One is the emergence of European Jewry as the third pillar of the Jewish world, after Israel and the US, second is the impact of the unification of Europe on the eventual emergence of a "European Jewry" as a unified group, reflecting the integration of the continent.[16] These processes are also shaped by the several important factors, such as the demographic trends and patterns of Jewish revival especially in the post-communist space, outside the scope of this study.

In Europe, umbrella organizations as the European Jewish Congress are not only reflecting joint all-European Jewish activities, and numerous projects of cooperation but also a more unified stand in supporting Israel, and fighting against

[14] See Eric Lichtblau, "Israel Lobby Group, not Hawkish, still Rises," *International Herald Tribune,* 1 June 2012.

[15] *The Jerusalem Post,* 30 April 2010.

[16] Gabriel Sheffer, in Julius H. Schoeps, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

anti-Semitism. While the EJC is engaged, among others, in combating anti-Semitism, it also has on its agenda the "advocacy of Israel," and it often reacts to the link between anti-Zionism, anti-Israelism and anti-Semitism in Europe.[17]

The complexities of Israeli–Diaspora relations are also evident from a variety of issues that preoccupy these relations, aside from the political aspects.

Israel is very much engaged in the activities commemorating the memory of the Holocaust and promoting education and research. It seems that there are no significant differences on this topic between Diaspora communities and Israel. The Holocaust is a strong connecting element between the sides, although with the fading away of the generation of survivors, in many cases when survivor families live both in Israel and abroad, this linkage among the new generations may be loosened. Sharing personal and collective memory in the past generation, the two sides will evoke less its memory as a binding element as it was evident in the first decades after the Holocaust.[18]

Yet, both sides may appraise differently the usage of Holocaust memory for current political usage. Liberal Jews in the Diaspora, while recognizing sharing with the rest of the Jewish world the memory of the Holocaust, oppose the usage of the Holocaust for political reasons, as used by Netanyahu in warning of the dangers posed by a nuclear Iran.

The question of Israel's responsibility for the security of the Diaspora Jews is also an element often discussed, many times in a discreet manner. As terrorism and anti-Semitic attacks target local Jews, identifying them as Israeli targets, the common fate between Israel and Diaspora can be brought up. Yet, the question may arise whether Diaspora Jews or any portion of them, are willing to serve as targets, as hostages to the Middle East conflict. Does an attack on a Jewish target, such as a community center, or synagogue, in whatever part of the world, can be seen as an anti-Semitic and/or anti-Israeli action? The terrorist who committed the massacre in Toulouse in March 2012 when four people, including children, were killed at the Jewish school, claimed that it was a revenge for the killing of Palestinian children. Do such tragic events which show the identification between Jews and Israel by their enemies, reinforce the feeling of their common fate?

More than six and a half decades after the end of the Holocaust and in the sixty-fifth year of Israel's independence, forms of Jewish identity in the relations between Israel and the Diaspora are undergoing rapid changes which may reshape and alter these relations. The issues, some of them briefly presented in this paper,

[17] *Haaretz,* 16 October 2009.

[18] Gabriel Shaffer, "Israel in Diaspora Jewish Identity," in Jonathan Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

are posing new challenges to the new generations, as each side is trying, through intensifying debates, to formulate its own identity and its attitude towards the "other." But the "other" is in fact part of the collective "us."

And as a final note, the joint Hungarian–Israeli conference on Diasporas organized by the Balassi Balint Institute was a very interesting encounter on a topic that seemingly was so different between the Hungarian and the Israeli/Jewish experience. Yet, the attempt to contextualize and compare was very successful and fruitful, without forcing similarities, and even through stressing dissimilarities.

The issues facing the Hungarian Diaspora – including those living in the neighboring countries and not only in the communities farther away – are somewhat similar to the ones facing the Jewish Diaspora, including the dozens of thousands of former Israelis and their children who live outside Israel. Hungary and its Diaspora is also divided on the support or opposition to the elected Hungarian governments, and the left–right political differences have embroiled the Hungarian communities abroad. Fostering Hungarian identity, language, culture, the question of assimilation, language, attachment to Hungary, are basically common issues between Jews and Hungarians.

A Few Questions Regarding the Return of Hungarian Deportees: the Example of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp

Szabolcs Szita

The prisoners of the Mauthausen concentration camp fell into an almost indescribable state of mind on May 5th, 1945, when the American soldiers arrived and SS rule came to an end. The site of the daily calls for attendance, the *Appell*, surged with relief and joy. Most of the former prisoners believed that everything would change in a single stroke and they would soon be able to begin new lives. The sobering reality of the following weeks and months, however, dispelled these illusions, suggesting the former prisoners would do well to expect much less. For the Hungarian Jews who had been deported to the camp, the one-year fight for survival became a struggle to return home.

The American military command took over the direction of the concentration camp and the neighboring labor camps. Hungarian Jews and prisoners in the labor camps who had survived the terrible conditions in the other parts of the main camp were able, with the permission of the military command, to join the Hungarian political prisoners. Physical exhaustion and weakness, contagious bouts of diarrhea and the fever that accompanied it caused the most problems. Often the ill and ailing, who longed to return to their homeland, hardly had the strength to walk. The forces in command overseeing the camp only allowed the healthy to travel. Meanwhile, the psychological torments and haunting images of the recent past continued to torment the surviving Hungarian Jews. When and how would they be able to return to their homeland? What awaited them in Hungary, now that the war had come to an end? What had become of their relatives in the meantime? And the question of their immediate futures was also alarming. Plans were already in the making for the repatriation of people who had been deported from one of the larger countries, but regarding the fates of the Hungarians silence reigned.

The medical teams of the American Army organized medical care for more than 20,000 patients. Jewish doctors and nurses who had survived the camps also played a part in treating their fellow former prisoners. Their efforts notwithstanding, there were hundreds for whom help simply arrived too late. There were about 16,000 inmates in the Mauthausen concentration camp at the time,

and approximately 800 of them were Hungarian Jews.[1] Most of them were preoccupied with the future, and some were preoccupied with the question of how to create new lives for themselves. Most struggled with the question and apparent contradictions of religious and national identity and belonging. And many lost the last traces of their faith in God.

Others decided never to return to Hungary, the place from which they had been brutally deported, often with their families. Or if they chose to return, sometimes it was only in order to look for friends and relatives from whom they had been so suddenly separated and persuade them to emigrate. Hungarian Jews were compelled to remain in the camps because of infectious diseases and other physical and mental problems, while people from other countries were preparing to leave and return home as the beneficiaries of organized programs to repatriate the victims of the deportations, in part the work of national committees within the camps and their efforts to establish and maintain relationships with the governments and military authorities of the home country. The Americans strove to help by supplying trucks and issuing the necessary identity papers and permissions to leave. The first group of prisoners able to leave the camp was Soviet. Their departure on May 16th was organized and celebrated with a huge feast. 478 liberated Austrian prisoners were able to return to their homes on the 18th. Two days later, Yugoslav and Slovak captives set off for home on boats on the Danube.

The first group of Hungarians to be transported from the camp, a mere 16 people, consisted of political prisoners.[2] They arrived in Budapest on May 21st. It was roughly at this time that reports were beginning to be published in the Hungarian press about the prisoners of Mauthausen. On May 23rd, for instance, *Magyar Nemzet* [Hungarian Nation] dedicated an article to professor Frigyes Fellner and industrialist Leó Buday Goldberger, both of whom had perished in the camp. In *Világ* [World], journalist György Parragi wrote of the sufferings and endurance of Hungarian Jews, as well as the gas chambers of Mauthausen and the ways in which they had been used.

A hospital-train was to be sent to Austria from Budapest on the 21st of April, but it only left on the 26th. Poorly equipped and with only six wagons, it arrived in Wiener Neustadt, on the periphery of the Austrian capital, only on May 4th.

[1] The Archives of the Museum of Mauthausen, Vienna (hereafter AMM). 5, 11, 12, 13, 24.

[2] The operation was kept a secret from the other Hungarian deportees, and it was organized by Gábor Péter and Zoltán Bíró (the latter was Mátyás Rákosi's nephew), who also asked for some help from Soviet soldiers. Essentially, they were searching for László Rajk, but he was not in the Mauthausen camp.

The crew attempted to assist the Hungarian victims of the deportations in Wiener Neustadt, Vienna, and then Linz. Károly Peyer, who had suffered as a prisoner of the SS for a year, sought to use the Hungarian boats held up in Linz to help other former prisoners return to Hungary, but he was unable to prevail. One notes in the statements he made to the press a statement that seems to give evidence of an attitude that was rare among prisoners who had returned: "This is all in the past, let's not talk about it anymore." Yet they should have spoken about the torments they had endured, for in some parts of Hungary (according to the information published in the periodical *Világ* [World], in the areas east of the city of Szolnok) the authorities cared little about the destitute, sick, hungry, spiritually broken deportees, who had to struggle to make their way back to the country.[3]

Meanwhile, more and more groups of deportees were arriving in Hungary. At first, they were taken to a kind of reception station that had been opened at Szentkirályi Street in district V of Budapest. The Jewish Community of Budapest sent petitions to Prime Minister Béla Miklós urging the repatriation and medical treatment of the deportees. In the interval, messengers of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee provided more information on the liberated Hungarian captives. According to reports in the press there was a Jewish committee led by Jenő Zeitinger that left for Austria to find Hungarian Jews who had been deported. He made it as far as Wiener Neustadt. He requested assistance for Hungarian women who had been imprisoned in Lichtenwörth, noting that "there are hundreds of feverish people staggering on the roads in Austria, their legs are frostbitten, and they only have rags for clothes."[4]

There were more and more announcements and messages about the arrival of trains for the deportees towards the end of June. Hungarian Jews recognized that they had little chance of getting on one of the trains, so they pretended to be Slovak, Romanian or Yugoslav. The promises that were made to repatriate the captives were delayed. By April 30th some 9,000 deportees had returned to Hungary, in May another 12,758 made the journey, followed by another 25,678 in June. Thus by the end of June a total of 47,436 liberated internees had returned home.[5]

One June 5th, the *Deportáltakat Gondozó Bizottság* (DEGOB) [Committee for the Care of Deportees], which was located on Bethlen Square (near the Eastern Railway Station, where most of the trains from the west arrived), began publish-

[3] *Világ,* May 29th, 1945.

[4] *Szabadság,* April 19th, 1945.

[5] Statistics of the Deportáltakat Gondozó Bizottság [Committee for the Care of Deportees]. December 31st, 1945. Hungarian Jewish Archives.

ing a list with the names of the former prisoners entitled *Hírek az elhurcoltakról* [News Regarding the Deportees]. The Committee provided care for deportees and former prisoners of labor camps who had returned to Hungary. It is a little known fact that in January 1945 a weekly paper was launched in Debrecen entitled *Menekültek Értesítője* [The Refugee Gazette].

The first publication of DEGOB included the names of 4,500 survivors from 14 different camps. Zoltán Berger, who had been deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, gave an account of how some of the deportees who had been liberated by the Soviet Army had then fallen into Soviet captivity. According to Berger the Russian authorities transported about 850 people (more than half of whom were women) to Slutsk, Belarus on May 26th. There were five issues of the *Hírek az elhurcoltakról* [News Regarding the Deportees], the last of which was published on October 20th.

The process of repatriation of the prisoners by the Hungarian authorities and social associations took shape very slowly, and often was the subject of vehement disputes. The biggest problem by far was simply poverty and the lack of necessary equipment, both of which were the consequences of defeat in the war. The wagons of the aforementioned hospital-train could only be moved with the permission of the Soviet Railway Commandership, and depended also on the availability of a locomotive and a crew. People paid with alcohol, tobacco and other sought-after goods to be able to board trains carrying prisoners back to Hungary. There was a group of Hungarian Jews in Mauthausen, for instance, that managed to obtain six train cars by bribing the local station leader with American detergent.

In addition to the recurring difficulties regarding the transportation and treatment of the deportees, they also suffered from the indifference of the society to which they returned. The emphasis that was placed on collective responsibility and the harmonization of efforts to offer assistance brought some relief with regards to this. Accommodations, open kitchens for the poor, and disinfecting stations were established on the western and northern borders of Hungary. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and members of the International Red Cross helped maintain them, and by June 22nd there were 12 people working for the Joint Committee. The *Országos Zsidó Segítő Bizottság* [National Jewish Aid Committee] was founded with Dr Frigyes Görög as the chairman. Its members were representatives of the major religious communities of Hungary, the Zionist organizations, and the Council of Rabbis.

The *Országos Zsidó Segítő Bizottság* took part in the transportation of the survivors and worked hard to ease the sufferings of the destitute survivors, who often struggled with grief and depression. They looked after nearly 5,000 Jewish

orphans. DEGOB was able to accomplish the most as far as social work and the distribution of information were concerned. They worked with the financial support of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The task required a great deal of time. They were able to provide medical attention for only 4.5 percent of the deportees who arrived in Budapest before April 1945. They managed to increase these numbers to 26.9 percent between May and July and later to 40 percent. The system of receiving and treating deportees became well organized and firmly established by summertime.

Deportees who registered themselves at DEGOB were examined by a medical committee. When necessary, they were disinfected and then sent to emergency hospitals, out-patient clinics, and places where they received follow-up care. (300–350 patients were treated a day in the hospital in Vas Street until the summer of 1946.) Those who needed psychiatric care and those who had suffered complete psychological breakdowns were sent to sanatoriums. They also received subsidies and financial assistance.

DEGOB gave a kind of certificate to the deportees as well. Those who had them were entitled to receive food, clothes, and some money. In 1945 the government gave financial assistance to 96,273 people and clothes to 18,354 people. Thousands of people were given breakfast, lunch and dinner on Bethlen Square by DEGOB and 457,360 bread rations were dispensed (we do not know the quantities).[6] Many survivors were first informed of their lost relatives by the lists displayed on Bethlen Square, *Hírek az elhurcoltakról* [News Regarding the Deportees], or information that had been obtained by DEGOB.[7]

[6] Horváth, Rita: *A Magyarországi Zsidó Deportáltakat Gondozó Bizottság (DEGOB) története* [The History of the Committee for the Care of Hungarian Jewish Deportees]. Booklets of the Hungarian Jewish Archives. 1997, 1, 29–37.

[7] Sándor Márai painted the picture with shocking vividness and profound compassion in his publication of June 15th, 1945 entitled *Beszéljünk Másról?* [Shall we Speak of Something Else]: "I spoke with those who returned from the camps of Auschwitz and Mauthausen, and to doctors who examined them. The doctors said there are sixteen-year-old girls who look as if they were sixty. I spoke to people who were standing in front of the noticeboards of the Red Cross searching for a name. The name of a parent, a child, a loved one, who, if he or she is still alive, is perhaps dying on a sack somewhere in some distant camp. They were searching for a name which to them was the meaning of life…"

According to the documents stored in Haifa, at the end of 1945 there were 985 people working for the Hungarian department of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, including 595 who worked in the countryside. They dispensed food, drugs and money in 210 Jewish communities, and they maintained 32 orphanages in Budapest and six in other towns and villages.[8]

The indisputable results of the many efforts to improve the lot of Hungarian Jews returning to Hungary notwithstanding, circumstances nonetheless remained dire. Demands on the part of Jews for the return of homes, apartments, furnishings and equipment created many conflicts with the people who had come into possession of their homes and belongings. Accusations were met with vehement defensiveness all over the country.

Missing from the individual and social mentality in Hungary at the time (and this absence became even more pronounced later) was an ability to accept individual or collective responsibility for the persecutions. Hungarian society did not accept collective guilt.

The physically and mentally broken deportees returned in waves, and their arrival was often jarring. 1,921 survivors arrived at the western railway station in Budapest at the end of July. They had traveled from Thuringia, and had suffered hunger throughout the two-week journey. According to news in the press, six children had died during the trip. In *Magyar Nemzet* [Hungarian Nation] László Palásti reminded the authorities of their responsibilities: "starving refugees and deportees are arriving from Bratislava every day, this problem should be dealt with by the government."[9]

Mihály Farkas, the Undersecretary of State for Internal Affairs, also gathered information regarding the question of repatriation. In the September 1st issue of *Hírek az elhurcoltakról* [News Regarding the Deportees] he gave a self-confident report: "since their assessment (by the border police, verifying their papers) will be the easiest, we will repatriate the deportees first. Repatriations will begin on September 15th, and will be completed within a few weeks." The communist leader was never true to his promises, though. The Jews who were somehow able to return in the meantime needed medical care. Many struggled with apathy; others had frostbitten limbs, or gangrenous and festering wounds. Some were infected with tuberculosis.

[8] Braham, Randolph L.: *A magyar holocaust* [The Holocaust in Hungary]. Gondolat, Budapest, 458, 479.

[9] *Magyar Nemzet,* July 30th, 1945.

The question of whether people should forget or remember the horrors of the Holocaust surfaced again. Béla Bodó, a journalist who had endured brutal forced labor in the city of Kőszeg and then the death marches of Mauthausen and Gunskirchen in April, 1945, recalled advise that had been given to him by acquaintences and friends in a Sunday edition of *Világ* [World]. "Please, Mr. editor, it's time to forget all of it." Bodó's reply was categorical: "I cannot forget even the tiniest detail. I cannot forget those who were murdered, or my own sufferings." [10]

In early autumn many people were still waiting for their relatives to come home. Their hopes were kept alive partly by the unverified news published in the press. The newspapers claimed that 70,000 Hungarian children had been found in Sweden, the vast majority of them allegedly between the ages of one and five. At this groundless report the Hungarian Red Cross sent Péter Matuska to find the children and create a photo album of them. A man by the name of Pál Pogány was sent to Austria, also to find surviving victims of the deportations.

György Parragi and Miksa Fenyő, who was an excellent debater, put themselves at the head of the fight against the shameful signs of renascent Hungarian anti-Semitism. In September 1945 many people referred to him as the "hireling of the Jews." He thought of the attempts that were being made to belittle or dismiss the sufferings of the victims and underestimate the number of victims as alarming and decidedly anti-national: "In my mind I am asking forgiveness in my own name and in the name of every decent Christian Hungarian of all those who lost their lives in Mauthausen, those who were singing psalms while jumping off the cliffs of the stone-pits, those who staggered into the gas chambers. Those who miserably starved to death in the Russian camps, and I also ask forgiveness of those who are mourning here at home, do not listen to or read the insolent and bloodthirsty messages and dreams of the Arrow Cross Party. These are not the messages of the Hungarian heart."[11]

The *Magyar Zsidók Országos Szövetsége* [National League of Hungarian Jews], the social organization of Hungarian Jews, was compelled to protest against the new signs of anti-Semitism. At one of the meetings of its executive committee its members expressed their disapproval of some of the declarations that had been made by Hungarian politicians and political groups. They asked the government to intervene. They also discussed the measures that should be taken on behalf of the deportees and pressed for prompt action. To little effect, however, for news of survivors returning to Hungary became increasingly rare.

[10] *Világ,* August 5th, 1945.

[11] *Magyar Nemzet,* September 6th, 1945.

On June 8th, 8,000 Jewish people were registered in Hörsching, Austria, the vast majority of whom were Hungarian. In Wels and its immediate surroundings there were 23 camps for the sick with 15,500 former prisoners. There were another 6,800 people who were treated in one of four different hospitals.[12]

There are many written records of the struggle of the Hungarian survivors of the deportations who were being cared for in or around Linz to return home. 5,360 former prisoners of the camps gathered in the barracks of Wels in the first week of June. The Hungarians produced and distributed copies of a daily paper.[13] Its pages offer evidence of the desire to return home and begin anew, but also of internal conflicts and tensions. Appeals made in capital letters at the bottom of the pages are telling: "Beware of those who spread alarming rumors! We must not agitate one another! Comrades, the leadership wishes to go home as well!" One finds a similar call for patience and cooperation in the June 20th issue: "Be patient with your comrades! We are all nervous! Do not think of our sad memories, but rather of a better future!"

The Upper-Austrian committee of deported Jews was founded in Linz on June 19th with the goal of assisting and accelerating the work of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Ignác Auspitz was in charge of organizing provisions and clothing. The task of providing healthcare fell upon Rudolf Brecher, central organization was the responsibility of Simon Wiesenthal, who later became famous as someone who helped bring many Nazis to justice. Other people were in charge of legal affairs, emigration, education and re-training, and child care.

Based on the reports of DEGOB,[14] between July and December 1945 34,708 survivors of the camps returned to Hungary, and according to an unofficial registry, 82,144 returned in total. 63,000 people had been deported from the territory of Trianon Hungary (in other words the territory of the country before it began to become larger as the borders in Central Europe began to be redrawn in 1938), of whom 51,000 had been Jewish.

[12] The Geneva Archives of the International Red Cross. G. 3/26 f. Note de Monsieur Briquet, Delegue du C.I.C.R. a Linz.

[13] Edited by György Láng and István Ádám.

[14] Horváth, Rita: 25.

One finds another indication of the scale and nature of National Socialist genocide in the fact that of those who returned to Hungary, 60 percent were women, 35 percent were men, and children were a mere 5 percent.[15] According to the Government Repatriation Committee, as of November 1945 some 90,000 survivors had returned.[16]

One can perhaps arrive at estimates regarding these figures, but in all likelihood the precise number will never be known, since the survivors who had been deported from Transylvania or Sub-Carpathia (now part of the Ukraine) and who sought to return to their homes did not travel through Budapest. And one should also take into account the fact that there must have been many among the survivors returning to Budapest who were simply fed up with being counted, listed, and registered.

The situation of those who were somehow able to return to the country was summarized by a transcript addressed to the Tildy government by the *Magyar Izraeliták Országos Irodája (MIOI)* [National Office of Hungarian Jews] at the end of 1945, a document more strongly worded than anything the *MIOI* had sent before: the 100,000 survivors who had returned home, "if they want to stay alive, are dependent on the communal kitchen or illegal trading. In the best case scenario they can beg at the doors of the Jewish communal kitchen. […] They do not have a moment's peace of mind, they cannot find their relatives at home […], and they have no place to lay down their heads, neither in their homes nor their native homelands! […] These crowds must be saved for the sake of Hungarian society, or they should be helped to emigrate from the country that was so cruel to them."[17]

According to the *MIOI*, with the exception of minimal financial support and decrees that were issued but never carried out, the Hungarian state did nothing to help compensate Jews who had been deprived of their properties and belongings and driven to ruin. The authors of the petition were writing about bitter truths.

[15] Stark, Tamás: *Zsidóság a vészkorszakban és a felszabadulás után 1939–1955* [Jewish People in the Era of Danger and Following Liberation, 1939–1955]. MTA Történettudományi Intézet, Budapest, 1995, 52–53.

[16] *Képek az elhurcoltakról* [Images of the Deportees]. Publication of the Committee for the Aid of those Deported by the Fascists. Budapest, 16. The November 13th edition of the weekly Új Élet offered the first summary of the personal losses suffered during the deportations, entitled *A magyarországi zsidóság tragédiája számokban* [The Tragedy of the Hungarian Jewry in Numbers].

[17] The National Archives Division for the Peace Preparations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. XIX j.-1-a II/21, 555–556.

Considering the circumstances that prevailed in Hungary at the end of a war in which the country again found itself on the losing side, what they expected from the Hungarian government was impossible, for Hungarian society, which had come to many compromises with the occupying German forces, was simply unwilling to accept responsibility for the consequences of the persecution and genocide of the Jews. In public thinking, the tragedy of the Jewry began to seem one of many consequences of the war. It blended with the fates of prisoners of war, the anxiety for those who had been forced into labor behind the fronts, and concern for those who had been or were being displaced, for instance members of the Hungarian speaking communities in Czechoslovakia, who were forced to resettle in Hungary.

The tragedy, sorrows, losses, and immeasurable pain of the Jews of Hungary were only a part in the sea of sufferings caused by the war. The expression "everyone suffered in the war" covered everything, and became something of a commonplace.

The spring of 1945 brought freedom from persecution for the Jews of Central Europe, and it was a kind of rebirth for many others as well. Officially it was referred to as a time of liberation. The extensive military occupation, however, soon proved the opposite; it brought severe instances of violence, further deportations, forced labor for throngs of prisoners, and further sufferings. Many people began to grasp what the Jews of Hungary had had to endure in Hungary in the forced labor camps and at the time of the deportations.

The report of *MIOI* spoke bitter truths, but all in vain. Instead of trying to reveal the causes, people preferred to fall silent in order to escape blame themselves. One often heard people contend that there is no point in dragging up the past, and attempts to call people to account should be abandoned. We should speak of something else, people argued. On this lack of morality and urge to conceal truths a comment by Sándor Márai is strikingly insightful and instructive to this day: "we cannot speak of anything else until we understand what took place and how."

In a country that had been plundered, a country suffering under the burden of reparations, the nation seemed unmoved, much as the Jews waited in vain for some sign of compassion,[18] social response, and the adoption of increasingly urgent measures in the interests of the survivors. The tragic recent past and its tragic consequences were soon forgotten or ignored by the leading politicians.

[18] In one of his essays, István Kulcsár offered a kind of cross-section of the remaining Jewry. He wrote of the disturbing illnesses and lasting psychological traumas suffered by the survivors of the Holocaust: "A fog forms in the mind, twists and turns and fills with haunting visions. A Jewish man

The terrible events of the Second World War were soon followed by a series of acts in the political sphere that severely violated the true interests of the nation. Again the search for a scapegoat was on. The new wave of exclusion and "lawful" pillaging, the so-called Swabian question, was the next item on the agenda.

Translated by Georgina Sima

generally smells smoke, even when not consciously thinking of the crematoria where young children were incinerated. Another, a civil servant, trusted and conscientious, one day fills his pockets with rocks and throws himself into the Danube. The third, a young man, seeks forgetfulness in the senses, but his body and soul fails him: he cannot love. A young widow day and night chastises her husband, who has not returned, for having left her alone. An unfamiliar anxiety chokes the throat of a singer thought to have a great future ahead of her, and her voice comes out in a stammer. An enthusiastic young man cannot bear the circle of friends he has chosen, he destroys and demolishes in a stupor or state of ecstasy." *Maradék-zsidóság. A Budai Izraelita Aggok és Árvák Menházegyesületének évkönyve* [The Remaining Jewry. Yearbook of the Refugee Home Society of the Elderly and Orphaned Jews of Buda]. Ed. Benoschofsky Imre. Officina Nyomda és Kiadóvállalat, Budapest, 1946, 35.

Is there Such a Thing as Hungarian-Jewish Music?

Judit Frigyesi

I. Introduction

1. The national-ethnic identity of a musical culture

In order to offer an adequate answer to the question of whether there is anything that can plausibly and meaningfully be referred to as Hungarian-Jewish music, first and foremost we must define what we mean when we speak of the national-ethnic identity of a given musical culture. In the case of a traditionally grounded musical repertoire, the ethnic definition may be less problematic. Even in such cases essential aspects of music (types of tunes, modes, rhythmic formulas, etc.), which characterize the given repertoire, are shared by the music of other communities. The difference could be found less in individual features than in the totality of the musical style, that is, in the manner the various musical elements are combined and used.

We find such ethnically distinguishable music cultures especially among groups whose culture, and within it, music evolved in relative isolation from other cultures, such as the traditional music culture of the Kaluli tribe in Papua New Guinea or the music of African Pygmies. Even today one comes across idiosyncratic ethnic musical cultures in Africa, Australia, and the Oceanic archipelago, but they can be found also in Siberia, in several countries of Asia, and to a certain extent virtually on every continent, including in countries in Europe.[1] At the same time, there are music traditions that, although lost their ritual and mystic functions, survive in some manner or another, in many cases precisely because they are supported, often by the state authority, in order to emphasize the identity of the community. This strategy is characteristic of the cultural policy various minority communities all over the world.

However, in the case of a national-ethnic minority with a population of several hundreds of thousands or millions, spread over a large geographical area, and especially if it lived in a diaspora, the national-ethnic definition of music is more problematic. The definition of a unified ethnic culture is even more complicated

in societies with complex social stratification, overlapping and/or contradictory historical and cultural traditions that develop under constant interchange with the culture of the surrounding ethnic groups. Furthermore, they are continually exposed to the economic and cultural influences of surrounding nations. First and foremost, one must determine which social stratum one wishes to take into consideration. In many geographical regions, the concept of national music differs depending upon whether it is thought of belonging to the sphere of the so-called classical (or with an ethno-musicological term: traditional) music or of folk music (village music, peasant music) – the two streams of music cultures had often developed independently, even though they interacted with one another. The distinction of "folk music" versus "art music/classical music" is characteristic not only of Europe but of most cultures in the territories of Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East. Like in Europe, in most of these regions, classical/art music represents a more "international" language (within a given territory) while folk music is more characteristic of the specific region. Thus, for example, whereas there is a more or less homogenous tradition of classical music in the entire territory of North Africa, there are dozens of ethnic groups, each with its distinctive folk music culture, in this same territory.

Ethnomusicology is still struggling with basic questions of defining the meaning of interchanges and national/ethnic "authenticity." Music is both a closed and an open system: it is an infinite combination of a finite number of fundamental options (melodies, rhythms, etc.). A perennial problem of comparative musicology is the question of which aspects of the music should be in the focus of comparison. On what level of musical structure should one seek analogies? If scholars choose to focus on a micro-element of the music (a melodic motive, a scale, a rhythmic pattern), they are likely to find similarities since several fundamental aspects of music appear to be universal. However, the potential for the combinations and variations is infinite, which means that the totality of one musical culture will never be fully identical with the totality of another musical culture. Despite the scientific nature of this comparative method, the result to a certain extent will always be subjective, as it is the researcher who decides which parameters are compared and at what level of decomposition. Although it may sound unprofessional, oftentimes sense and intuition yield more useful and thought-provoking results than exact analysis. (And as a logical conclusion, while I strive to remain objective in my attempt to arrive at answers to the question posed above by adopting scientific methods, the answer inevitably will be somewhat personal and subjective.)

2. The problematic nature of the concept of "Hungarian-Jewish" music

When one poses the question as to whether or not there is any musical style or repertory that can be considered Hungarian-Jewish music, one must of course begin by specifying which Jewish community one is referring to, and whether the music under scrutiny is folk or classical music. The Ashkenazi Jews can be divided according to two geographical regions: western Ashkenazi (referring to Jews residing in German speaking areas) and eastern Jews (communities in the Baltic States, Russia, Belorussia, the Ukraine, Moldavia, eastern Poland, and eastern Romania). The cultures of these two groups are rather different, although their roots are presumably common. Hungary falls between the western and the eastern Ashkenazi worlds, thus characteristics of both can be found here. However, the communities I researched and discuss in this paper belong more to the eastern Ashkenazi region.

The anthropological basis of the following analysis is the research I have been pursuing in Hungarian-Jewish communities since the 1970s. It has primarily focused on the liturgical music of the communities, and other musical styles closely related to it. By "traditional" communities I am referring to those in which every male member of the congregation is able to conduct a service (serve as prayer leader) and where the position of prayer leader is not a paid occupation. The prayer leader is normally chosen from among community members, and a professional prayer leader (hazzan) is invited, if at all, only for the High holidays.

Before the Holocaust so few music recordings were done within this Jewish territory that it is difficult to establish with certainty to what degree the material I collected might differ from the mainstream musical tradition of the Hungarian communities before WWII.[2] Since before the Holocaust no ethno-musicological research had been conducted in Eastern Europe with the goal of collecting Jewish liturgical music,[3] and because this musical culture was impossible to reconstruct after the Holocaust, most likely we will never know how and to what extent the Hungarian Jewish music differed from the Jewish liturgical music of other communities within the East-Ashkenazi territory. However, the few written and recorded sources that survived do suggest that Hungarian Jewish culture was an integral part of the traditions of Eastern European Jewish liturgical music. In the following I use the term "Jewish music" to refer to the music of the traditional Hungarian Jewish communities and by extension to the mainstream East-Ashkenazi tradition.

Eastern Ashkenazi music is both folk and art music. It functions as folk music in the sense that its repertoire, musical principles, and styles are spontaneously acquired through experience by members of the community. However, certain aspects of this music would be more typical for an art-music tradition. For our discussion the most significant art-music characteristic of this culture is the fact that composition in the sense of Western music had existed. In many cases we have some information regarding the composer of a given piece, but even if the identity of the composer is unknown, the structure of the piece suggests that it was composed. A composed piece always contains some original idea, some musical innovation, which, although draws on familiar elements, recasts and employs these in an original manner. Ethnic identification is always more difficult in the case of original compositions. An original composition does not necessarily display the features of an ethnically identifiable style; it is a unique and personal – and perhaps even ironic – development of and response to commonly accepted styles and types.

Underlying the question of the national, ethnic affiliation of a musical culture are a number of philosophical, ideological, and political considerations (and interests), which in this context I can only outline briefly. What are we looking for when we ask whether there is such a thing as Hungarian-Jewish music? Hungarian-Jewish music can be interpreted as a dialect within the Eastern European Jewish musical tradition. This dialect could be considered Hungarian-Jewish inasmuch as it is found typically among Jewish communities residing in Hungary. However, Hungarian-Jewish music may also indicate a genre, a category, a style or a repertoire of Jewish music that includes elements of "Hungarian" music. One may also ask who considers these musics and/or styles Hungarian? Does the Jewish community view this music as "Hungarian," is it the opinion of the non-Jewish musicians, or a feature of the music that could be analytically demonstrated?

In my view the answer to the question posed in the title is negative: there is no substantial Jewish repertoire the entirety of which can in any sense be considered "Hungarian-Jewish." However, certain layers of Jewish music do include elements and characteristic features that appear to be Hungarian. However, in the following I will not only discuss these Hungarian features. It is also important to address the question of why there were not more substantial interchanges between Hungarian and Jewish music.

II. The Problematic Nature of "Influence" in Jewish Music

1. The "sacred" and the "secular" – musical manifestations of the "sacred"

In order to be able to answer the question posed in the title it is essential to understand the basic conceptual structure of traditional Jewish religious life. Only with some knowledge of this structure can one begin to offer answers to the question of what influences Jewish culture internalized from the cultures of the surrounding nations, as well as how and when these influences were incorporated.

Scholarly literature differentiates three categories of Jewish music. The first is liturgical music, which refers to the music of rituals. The second includes music used in para-liturgical situations. Para-liturgical means those events that are not integral parts of the synagogue services, yet bear religious significance, for example reading the Haggadah on the evening of Seder or singing Sabbath songs (*zmires*). The third category comprises secular music: traditionally Yiddish and non-Hebrew songs, or songs without a religious function, as well as instrumental music.

Rather than rely simply on this categorization, however, one must consider life-situations in their dynamic state of change. Since the Renaissance the sacred and the secular have been conceptualized as potentially separate spheres of life in European society and culture, but this conceptualization is alien to Jewish culture. In the Jewish tradition there is no absolutely secular situation, and secular culture does not exist either. In spite of this fact, the notion of the "secular" is of crucial importance. Every situation in life, including the service in the synagogue, falls between a conceptual "sacred" and "secular" pole.

The point of reference is that of the absolute "sacred," in Hebrew קדוש (Kadosh). The notion of קדוש, however, is fundamentally different from what Christianity considers "sacred." קדוש is a notion that surpasses life and every phenomenon perceptible to humans. It is the idea (or ideal) of the mystic, all-incorporating absolute and complete unity. In the Jewish tradition even after death an object or individual cannot be קדוש, because קדוש is outside everything perceptible or even imaginable in the real world. קדוש cannot be imagined, because it is the source of all life and knowledge, and as such, it is beyond or outside both of these.[4]

Since in traditional Jewish life every situation is somehow evaluated in its relation to קדוש, certain conditions are viewed as of a more sacred nature, so to say, while others are considered more secular. We can imagine this as a kind of tape-measure, one end of which represents the secular, while the other stands

for the sacred. Various life situations are positioned on this tape-measure, falling closer to one end or the other. A much better analogy than that of a tape-measure is a spatial conception of these notions: קדוש is positioned in the center, yet it is withdrawn from the surface to an inaccessible abyss or altitude. Life operates around this invisible and inaccessible reference point on the surface, maintaining a continuous relation to it, constantly approaching but never reaching it. In Jewish life every situation, be it liturgical, para-liturgical, or secular, gravitates gravitates toward this focal point without ever reaching it, consequently every situation incorporates numerous sacred and secular components.[5] This system is always in dynamic motion: from a certain standpoint the same situation can be viewed as more sacred, while in another approach it may be seen as more secular.

The wedding ritual offers an illustration of the above notion. The traditional Eastern European Jewish wedding was a complex series of rituals. Every ritual and often even their individual elements and episodes occupied a different position on the sacred-secular scale. Dozens of instrumental pieces were performed at weddings; and many of them accompanied dances. The majority of these dances, as well as the instrumental pieces not related to dances, had a ritual function, yet the community considered these compositions and dances more secular than, for instance, a prayer recited at the synagogue. On the one hand, they were viewed as more secular because they were performed with musical instruments, and instrumental music was *a priori* less sacred than a prayer recited by the human voice in Hebrew. The other reason for considering these pieces more secular was that they were performed outside the synagogue, thus not in the sphere primarily reserved for the sacred, and most of the rituals did not fall into the category of prayer (Tefillah תפילה). However, from another perspective the wedding was closer to קדוש than a prayer in synagogue. The wedding was a unique, special moment in the life of an individual. The wedding marked the transition from one phase of life into another: it was the beginning of a new life, the death of the former life, and one step closer to death.

Although the liturgical, para-liturgical, and secular social-ritual functions on the one hand, and the dynamic relation of given situations with regard to קדוש on the other are significant, there is another, just as relevant categorization based entirely on musical characteristics. East-Ashkenazi music can be divided into two stylistic categories, and these categories inherently carry meaning with regards to the secular– קדוש relation, entirely independent of their functions.

This musical-conceptual categorization is characteristic of Ashkenazi Jewish culture; it cannot be found or does not exist at all in this form in Jewish communities outside Ashkenazi culture. In essence, Ashkenazi Jewish communities automatically considered certain musical styles closer either to the secular or the

קדוש, independent of their functions, *exclusively on the basis of their musical characteristics*. Thus, at issue here there are two systems projected onto each other: a ritual-functional and a musical system.

2. The absence of external influence on the recitative (on the "sacred" musical layer)

One can differentiate two categories in the vocal styles of liturgical and para-liturgical situations: the recitative style (*davenen, leinen, nusah, hazzanut,* etc.)[6] and metrical songs. The bulk of the music at synagogue services (approximately 80–90%) is read aloud by every member of the community, as well as by the prayer leader. This melodic reading essentially follows the declamation and the beat of the text. Prayer recitation has a variety of styles, and each style has its system, religious functions, and meanings, but they are all characterized by the same rhythmic style that could be called free or flowing rhythm. In a traditional community every member present recites the prayers in his own style, which results in a heterophonic performance.[7]

It would be interesting to digress and offer a detailed discussion of the various styles within the recitative, and also to elaborate on their differences and religious significance, but this would exceed the framework of this essay. In general, Eastern Ashkenazi Jewish communities considered the recitative performance, and within it specifically its most traditional and simple style, the so-called *davenen,* and the *nusah,* that is, the musical system of prayer recitation the most immediate expression of the קדוש. This also implies that this musical style was viewed as the "most Jewish," the most authentic layer of Jewish musical culture. For traditional communities, this recitative is *par excellence* Jewish music.

When this style appeared in para-liturgical or quasi-secular situations, it created an atmosphere within the given situation close to קדוש. For example, the recitation of the Haggadah on the evening of Seder represented a more religious, more mystical atmosphere than the songs within the Seder. The case is similar with the klezmer compositions played at weddings: the majority of the pieces that were performed with an explicitly ritual function is in "flowing rhythm", or at least performed with considerable rubato.

I do not want to discuss at this point whether and to what degree these recitative styles could be considered to be "Jewish" on the basis of comparative ethnomusicological analysis. Suffice it to state that a traditional community immediately recognized and identified the various styles of synagogue recitative

(*davenen, nusah leinen,* etc.) as characteristically Jewish. The community did not accept a prayer leader who was unfamiliar with the melodies used in the recitative or failed to employ them according to the recognized liturgical-musical system of the *nusah* or perform them in the traditional way. On many occasions I have been witness to the spectacle when, despite his willingness, perfect knowledge of the text, and fine reciting skills, a young prayer leader "failed" because he did not perform the otherwise appropriate melodies in the traditional vocal quality, with spontaneity, rhythm and articulation – that is, he did not comply with the musical style that was considered "Jewish" and "traditional."

For a traditional community the liturgical recitative was a clearly defined style, which was – in spite of the obligatory individual expression and variations – subject to structural rules. The congregation held explicit and precise views with regards to the recitative, and when it did not give its consent to a melody or its style of performance, the explanation was usually that it was simply "non-traditional" or "non-Jewish."

If one takes this into consideration, it is hardly surprising that the totality of the liturgical recitative as style or repertoire cannot be considered a dialect of any other musical culture. Even if originally this music evolved as the result of interaction with other cultures, even if it was affected by external influences, over the course of centuries these influences have been entirely incorporated into the style of the Jewish recitative. The recitative culture of the synagogue, which at the beginning of the 20th century was still present in Eastern European communities, was idiosyncratic and greatly differed from surrounding musical cultures. Again, one comes across similarities between Jewish liturgical music and other liturgical melodies of Christian origin, or various folk melodies, but these similarities are generally universal musical phenomena (for example the pentatonic descending melody, which could be found also among Australian aborigines, in numerous regions of Africa, in China, in Irish, Turkish, Hungarian, and medieval German folk music, and in virtually every monophonic culture).

In the course of my research I continuously noticed that traditional communities rejected any innovative change that did not spring from the "inside," i.e. from traditionally accepted components of recitative melodies, and their rhythmic and performance styles. In other words: it was considered acceptable and even desirable to introduce innovations within the limits of the recitative, but these innovations could not overstep the confines of a relatively homogenous melodic and stylistic world, and they were not supposed to suggest the atmosphere of the outer, foreign world.

3. Hungarian motifs in the recitative?

Generally speaking, the recitative layer contains no borrowings from the surrounding musical cultures. It was not unimaginable for a foreign motive to appear in the recitative as long as it could fit in the framework of the *nusah*.[8] However, if the borrowing was identifiable as a "foreign element," the community only accepted it if its use did not bear any significant meaning, or possibly only a particular meaning that not only did not intrude on, but rather enhanced the meaning of the recitative.

An example from my collection illustrates such an insertion of a foreign element for the cadential motive in the Hallel prayer. The prayer leader uses a cadential motive typical in *verbunkos* (an 18th-19th-century genre of Hungarian popular dance and music).[9] So far I have not been able to define when or how it was incorporated into the melody, and neither is it clear whether it was a borrowing from Hungarian musical culture or simply an allusion to a general closing formula of Western music.

The meaning of the motif, however, is more important than its origins. It appears exclusively at the end of a melody as a cadence. Cadence bears a peculiar, paradoxical significance in traditional Jewish music. A basic requirement for the traditional prayer-recitative performance is continuity: the prayer leader does not pause after having finished the recitative of a given passage from a text, but instead he immediately begins the next one. In the fast recitative style the cadential formulae are mostly fixed, (that is, the same motif returns at the end of each line); however, the fast tempo and the continuity of the recitative undermine the sense of closure. In a slower and more elaborate recitative, such as the *Hallel*, where the structure of the melody and the cadence within it are more explicit, one discovers precisely the opposite: at the end of each part one finds an ever changing motif, and often these are performed hastily and perfunctorily.

Both solutions highlight the same ideal: the avoidance of the sense of completion or arrival. The recitation of the prayer is intended to evoke the feeling of infinity: it should never suggest complete conclusion, just as, conceptually at least, prayer is infinite. The multiplicity of the cadential motives in the *Hallel* disturb the sense of calm arrival – these motives are too varied, too interesting and somehow not integral to the melody. Motivic variety is combined with a strangely rushed performance, which gives the impression as if saying: "ok, if I must, I'll arrive at the conclusion, but let's get it over with as soon as possible…"

The use of the Hungarian-style cadence motif under discussion is not obligatory and it is not integral to the tonal scheme of the prayer, and I have always had the impression that it came out of the blue, so to say. It did not seem to relate to the rest of the melody, although it served as its conclusion. I have interviewed a prayer leader, who in response to my inquires confirmed my belief that it is a "Hungarian-like" motive, which "well, we sometimes just add to the melody at the end."[10]

Whether we regard this motif as an element of Western European music or an element of the Hungarian *verbunkos*, it carries a similar "message." It is as if at this point the prayer leader would turn to the audience with a tinge of irony, as if he were making fun of the ending by employing a stereotypical cadence familiar to everyone as a typical ending in Hungarian music but not quite suitable for the prayer melody.

It is worth noting that in traditional Hungarian instrumental folk performance this cadence is often hastily performed, and this was also a characteristic feature of the classical performances at the beginning of the 20th century.[11] It seems to me that with this rushed-over Hungarian closing motive, the prayer leader secretly acknowledged a point of affinity between Jewish prayer and the contemporary performance of Hungarian *verbunkos:* in both there is an aversion of grandiose ending.

III. The Absence of Mutual Hungarian-Jewish Influence, and Possible Explanations for this Absence: The Secular Song and Instrumental Music

1. The non-Jewish character of secular Jewish music

As discussed above, the traditional Jewish community defined itself in relationship to the concept of קדוש, and as a result, external influences hardly ever became part of the recitative style (which was seen as the layer of music that stood in closest proximity to קדוש). However, in a manner that may seem somewhat paradoxical, as a consequence of this consciousness of identity, which was centered around קדוש, and the opposition of the extreme poles of קדוש and the secular, in secular situations it was not really significant if the manner of expression was "Jewish" or not.

Up to the Modern era, and indeed with only a single exception even in the Modern era, there was no Jewish culture that developed a *specifically Jewish secular* music. This may seem all the more surprising at first glance, since as of the Middle Ages there has been abundant data on Jewish musicians, and in fact the musical profession (in addition to medicine) was considered one of the oldest, typically Jewish occupations. There is also data available concerning various ages and areas indicating that members of Jewish communities listened to instrumental music, sang songs, and danced.[12]

However, there is no information concerning the kinds of music they performed, sang, or listened to. Available sources suggest that in secular situations Jewish communities borrowed from the musical compositions of surrounding cultures, and adopted them with very little or no variation at all. One of the best known examples of this practice is the medieval Spanish "romancero," preserved in the Sephardic tradition primarily as part of the culture of the women. The songs recounting love stories, which are set in a Spanish, often explicitly Christian setting, were adopted by Jewish communities, and have been preserved without any significant changes up to the present day.[13]

Presumably an idiosyncratic style similar to the recitative did not exist in music performed in secular situations. Naturally, the absence of a style or a stylistic tendency is impossible to prove. However, it is striking that although there are written documents on Jewish musicians and Jewish secular musical events, these do not mention Jewish genres either in music or dance.

As I have noted, Jewish communities made extreme decisions regarding music: while they did not accept any significant external influence on the recitative, in secular situations they used an entirely non-Jewish musical repertoire. The question of which musical compositions might be performed at a dance, or which songs a woman might sing to amuse herself while cooking, was not, apparently, an issue, at least with regard to the expression of ethnic-religious identity. In such situations the choice of musical style was exclusively determined by aesthetic and emotional considerations.

With this historical background in mind, one must pause to assess the significance of the fact that in Eastern Europe, and apparently exclusively in Eastern Europe, there seems to have been a need to develop specifically Jewish secular musical genres. It is not entirely clear why the Jewish community of Eastern Europe, which was deeply religious, tended to turn inwards and isolate itself from the cultures around it and had an inclination toward the mystic, felt the need to express its identity even in the more secular spheres, and not only in a few scattered compositions but by creating two enormous repertoires, includ-

ing several thousands of pieces: the Yiddish folk song and instrumental Jewish wedding music (mostly known as Klezmer today). Both repertoires had specific musical characteristics, genres, and styles. In the cases of the instrumental and the dance compositions the forms had a name familiar to Jewish communities, names that referred to the musical genre, style and function the given piece was to serve in the wedding ritual.

Any member of a traditional Eastern European Jewish community was immediately able to identify the form of a given instrumental wedding piece, and also knew which ritual function it served. The musical characteristics and the style of performance were both familiar and identifiable. In addition, non-Jewish communities also considered this repertoire Jewish. The Jewish character of the compositions and their performing styles were so unambiguous that decades after Roma musicians in Romania heard a Jewish ensemble, once they came across on a phonographic record an authentic klezmer recording, they were instantly able to identify it as a Jewish piece and noted that the performers must have been Jewish musicians.[14]

Sources suggest that Eastern European instrumental (Klezmer) music developed at the latest in the second half of the 18th century, but more probably in the first half of it. During the 19th century musical forms and styles became more or less fixed, and this era witnessed the spread of this rich musical culture all over Eastern Europe. The Yiddish song developed approximately parallel to this process, or possibly a little bit later. In spite of the fact that they belong to a rather large geographical area, both repertoires were more or less homogenous in the eastern Ashkenazi regions. Of course, this does not imply the absence of distinctive local features, and since both categories are primarily composed music, one finds numerous unique compositions. However, the basic stylistic and formal elements were generally known, as was the manner of performance.[15]

2. A Hungarian "Yiddish" song?

The Yiddish repertoire of songs is rather heterogenous. One can distinguish roughly three different styles: (1) songs that musically are almost or entirely identical with the folk music or other songs of surrounding communities (Ukrainian, Romanian, Russian, etc. folk songs, or folk-song-like art songs, popular and cabaret songs); (2) songs that are varied adaptations of the liturgical Jewish recitative or metric songs;[16] and (3) songs that fall somewhere between these two possibilities, combining elements and styles of these musics.

However, the notions of "influence," "interaction," and "borrowing" can be somewhat misleading in the case of the Yiddish song. The majority of Yiddish songs, both their melodies and lyrics, were the work of a composer (or poet), and typically woman composer-poet. These songs can be regarded as folk songs only in the sense some of them became commonly known throughout the Yiddish speaking Jewish world.

Because these songs were unique compositions, we cannot regard the mixture of Jewish and non-Jewish musical elements to be "borrowings" or "influences." The adaptation of a foreign element was a compositional innovation, and a deliberate, sometimes playful or even ironic gesture. Were one to approach these songs with the intention of evaluating them according to aesthetic measures of the "classic" Eastern European peasant song, one would fail to recognize their artistic value (as indeed has been the practice of scholars of Jewish music for decades). The perfectly polished, simple, and stylistically homogenous "ancient" peasant song is an inadequate aesthetic reference point. It is more appropriate to approach the eclecticism of these songs from the point of view, for instance, of the aesthetics of Alban Berg. As is the case in Berg's songs, in Yiddish songs one is hard pressed to draw any meaningful distinction between elements that could be considered "adopted" or "foreign" and elements that could be viewed as originating internally, within the tradition. A Yiddish song is the product of an almost absurdly eclectic cultural agglomeration, and it reflects precisely this eclecticism.

The knowledge I have gathered, in the course of my research of the various written sources has led me to the conclusion that the Yiddish song, or the modern song repertoire fashioned after the aesthetics of the Yiddish song, is not present in the Hungarian-Jewish tradition. Prior to the signing of the Treaty of Trianon a significant proportion of the Jewish community of Hungary spoke Yiddish and was part of Eastern European Yiddish Jewish culture. Naturally, this Yiddish-oriented Jewish community knew and sang Yiddish songs. In spite of this, to my knowledge, Yiddish songs show virtually no evidence of Hungarian musical influence whatsoever. Although Jews residing in Hungarian speaking regions whose mother tongue was Yiddish did sing Yiddish songs, Yiddish song culture does not seem to have a center in this region: the majority of the songs were not created or composed here.

The only known song which, although not Yiddish, may fall into this category is the well-known, "Szól a kakas már..." [The rooster is crowing]. This song is in fact a real "Hungarian-Jewish" composition, and unfortunately as such is the only one. Its structure and tone are similar to Yiddish songs. The composer must have been thoroughly familiar with Hungarian folk music, since he chose (and presumably not by accident) a melodic nucleus for an opening line that could be

adopted in the Jewish melodic world without any alterations: this motif not only occurs in both the Hungarian and Jewish liturgical melodies, but is also of crucial significance and carries distinct meaning. Like numerous other Yiddish songs, this composition also consists of several layers, including superposed textual and musical references, various possible interpretations, and the humor and (self-) irony that permeate the essentially melancholic tone.

Naturally we are not speaking merely of an example of "influence" or "borrowing," but rather of an original composition that engages in a dialogue between two cultures, with full knowledge of both. The song does not belong to either culture, and neither is it a symbiosis of the two. Rather it is a dynamic, almost theatrical dialogue between them. The song "Szól a kakas már..." is a miniature masterpiece and it is hardly surprising that it has become an emblematic piece among Hungarian Jews. In order to illustrate its significance it is worth noting that its melody has often been inserted in the "Unetaneh tokef " prayer, which is one of the most significant prayers of Jewish High Holiday ceremonies.[17]

It is surprising that no other compositions of this kind were created in Hungary. The lack of Hungarian Jewish secular songs is even more perplexing if we consider that Hungarian Jews knew Hungarian folk songs, while at the same time, they were also familiar with the Yiddish song repertoire.[18] What stopped them from creating something new out of their special Jewish liturgical tradition by using their knowledge of Yiddish and Hungarian songs?

3. Why was there no Hungarian-Klezmer music?

Hungarian-Klezmer music, or more precisely the absence of it, is no less problematic. Iconographic and written sources attest that Jewish musicians had been prominent in Hungary for several centuries.[19] It is hard to believe that these musicians would have been unfamiliar with the traditions of Jewish communities residing further to the east, and would not have known the significance of Jewish instrumental forms and dances at weddings. Yet Hungary is a border case also in this matter: this repertoire was only known to and performed in primarily Yiddish speaking communities further to the East. The Hungarian region was on the periphery of Klezmer music. No famous Klezmer musician emerged from this region, and celebrated Klezmer pieces were not composed here either.

A possible explanation of this absence may be the fact that the worldview of Jewish cultures in the regions farther to the East was not acceptable to the more western (or "Western") Jewish communities in Hungary. The Eastern European Jewish wedding, which served as the primary occasion for Jewish instrumental music and dance, is a serious and introvert ritual. The wedding was by no

means a time only for "merriment." The ritual was dominated by the repentance of sins committed earlier in life, confrontation with the transience of life, ever approaching death, and the memories of the dead (oftentimes deceased parents). The wedding, or at least a considerable part of it, became almost a kind of death centered ritual.[20] The Hungarian-Jewish community might well have found this wedding symbolism rather strange. Whatever the reason was, the written sources suggest that Hungarian musicians performed mostly contemporary Hungarian and international instrumental music at the wedding. It is not by coincidence that Márk Rózsavölgyi, one of the first "Hungarian" composers, emerged from their ranks.

IV. Liturgical and Paraliturgical Songs – Hungarian–Jewish Interaction

1. The significance of songs in Jewish music

In traditional Eastern Ashkenazi music songs represent the link between the secular and sacred spheres, and for this reason the process of influence is the most interesting in the case of the songs.

The majority of songs appear in paraliturgical function (for example Sabbath songs, the so-called *zmires*), but they also play an important role in services. Within the liturgy songs are perceptibly differentiated from the recitative layer. While the recitative is continuous and in flowing rhythm, songs are metric (that is they have explicit beats and bars with an identifiable beat). They are also mostly strophic, in other words they have a closed structure. The song practically interrupts the flow of the recitative in the liturgy. One might say it relates to the recitative as the stability of an island relates to the perpetual flow of a brook.

In the service the song generally signifies the advance towards the secular pole. It is not by accident that – in contrast with the heterophonic performance of the recitative – songs are frequently performed by the entire congregation: this performance strengthens community awareness and the sense of being united, "we, here and now." Thus the song functions as a means of expressing identity, but in this case this identity is the identity of a concrete community. Typically the communities consider the songs performed with the liturgy as their own distinctive ritual customs. "In our prayer house, we would sing this melody to this text," members of communities often say.

The relationship to the recitative layer is completely different. The recitative does not express local community identity, but denotes rather identification with the entire Jewish religious community. Recitative melodies are not considered traditions of a given community, but are regarded rather as belonging to the entire Jewish world as a whole. When a song is designated as "our song," the possessive adjective "our" indicates the given community, or maybe the town, the region, perhaps the religious trend. When the recitative is referred to as "our ancient melodies," "our" indicates Jewishness, the totality of the Jewish community, and what may be even more significant: abstract spiritual-religious identification.

As we have seen, in the recitative, a particular melody and performing style is correlated with each textual portion. But it is considered appropriate to dispense with the recitative at certain points of the liturgy and perform certain texts as songs. This demand, however, means only that these texts are sung as songs and there is no constraint as to what kind of song the prayer leader should use. In contrast with the recitative, in which a given melody is attached to every passage, texts presented as songs do not have such constraints. Frequently a prayer leader would know five or six different melodies to the same text, and he would alternate between them. Other communities could use other melodies for the same text, and the same melody would be sung for different texts by different congregations. Naturally, there are customs with regard to the choice of songs as well. Every community develops its repertoire of songs and this repertoire becomes a bounding communal tradition. But such a tradition does not have the same power and significance as the *nusah* has for the recitative.

Since the song represents the more secular aspect within the ritual, it serves as an indispensable component of it. The service of course aims to evoke the sense of קדוש in believers, but the totality of the ritual carries a more complex meaning. The service is also intended to express that – like everything human – it too is far from קדוש. For this reason, songs that give the impression of being secular are customarily inserted at certain points of the service. One of these is the tradition that has become virtually obligatory in the Eastern European practice according to which the closing prayer at the final ritual of Yom Kippur (the closing *Kaddish* of the *Ne'ila service*) is to be sung by the prayer leader to a joyful melody – thus marking the end of the fasting day.

Although songs represent the more secular aspect of the liturgy, they may come to express the opposing pole as well. Songs often include fragments from the recitative. Some songs are composed entirely in the flowing rhythm recitative

style with melodies that would fit perfectly the *nusah*. The prayer leader might create the feel of a song by imposing some metric feel on the recitative melodies, performing them not with flowing rhythm, but with a more or less constant pulsation and/or by creating symmetrical phrases and stanzas.

Sometimes a song uses a typical basic formula of the recitative layer, a simple motive which in itself, in such an explicit manner, would not appear in the recitative. Not only does such a song not count as secular, but it might represent the most mystical layer within Jewish musical culture. Sometimes, in the course of reciting a prayer, the prayer leader suddenly interrupts his recitation and continues as if with a song. This is a common technique of cantorial compositions where this recitative-turned-into-quasi-song marks the climax of the prayer.[21]

2. Borrowing, mutual influence, or citation?

The prayer leader is allowed to insert virtually any melody where the liturgical text is traditionally performed as song; he could even use the tune of a television commercial. Such insertions were not only tolerated, but were almost obligatory in the service. In the Hungarian tradition there are numerous examples to illustrate this practice: fragments from czardas, tango, Hungarian folk song might appear in the prayer. However, the appearance of a Hungarian melodic fragment does not indicate the presence of Jewish-Hungarian *musical style*. Such moments strike rather as citations. Occasionally the insertion works so well that the prayer leader decides to hold onto it, and uses the idea with the given text at other times, and the song may even become popular in this form. However, even in this case one can only consider it an occasional invention, which has no impact whatsoever on the totality of the service music.

Researchers often make the mistake of referring to such songs as evidence of the existence of mutual influence, or in order to demonstrate that Jewish liturgical music is not "ancient" and not coherent, since even the most religious Jewish communities readily acculturate to the majority culture.[22] Eastern European Jewish liturgical music is indeed heterogenous; however, this heterogeneity does have a solid system. The freedom that is allowed in certain parts of the liturgy with certain passages (for example the abovementioned tradition of the closing *Kaddish* of the *Nei'la service*) is not permissible in the case of other liturgical texts and in other functions, and is absolutely unacceptable in the recitative, which should always follow the rules of the *nusah*. A prayer leader must know the liturgical functions in which he is permitted to insert a foreign musical motive, the prayer texts at which he is allowed to do this, and the forms the insertion can take. He must also be aware of how the given community in the given liturgi-

cal situation will respond to such ideas. It is also important to maintain a sense of proportion. A humorous citation of the Coca Cola commercial theme of the previous day may be acceptable for a particular text in a particular situation, but to recite the entire service in such a manner would be unimaginable. Nor would it be acceptable if this citation were to supplant songs considered traditional, and under no circumstances could such a melody or even an element of such a melody become part of the recitative.

3. The meeting of Jewish and Hungarian music: a distinctive conceptual, rhythmic and artistic phenomenon

In Eastern European Jewish music the recitative and metric performance appear in unity and in constant interplay of one with the other. This musical approach may be understood as a kind of conceptual polyphony: as if on the one hand during the recitative the prayer leader were always thinking a bit of the metrical performance, while on the other hand always hearing the recitative in his head when singing a metrical song. This attitude is perceptible in the performance, which is never absolutely free in rhythm, but is never entirely metric – it constantly fluctuates between the two. Naturally we are not speaking of two styles here, since both the recitative and the metric performance have innumerable subtle rhythmic variations. The prayer leader "composes" the form of the service from the infinite store of stylistic-performing possibilities.

Two characteristic techniques of this process of composition deserve particular attention. One of them is the incredible quickness with which the prayer leader shifts performing styles. Every performing-rhythmic style is always "ready at hand," as it were. Shifts between slow and fast tempi, recitative and metric performing styles, between the rendering of serious, mystical and joyful characters take place almost without transitions. Another basic characteristic of the Eastern Ashkenazi prayer music is that the same melody or melodic type (and virtually every melody and melodic type) can be performed both in the metric and recitative style. Every recitative melody can be made "metric".

If one were to look for stylistic similarities between Jewish musical culture and Hungarian music, first and foremost these two techniques can be noted as points of intersection. Although it is true that the performance of a Hungarian folk song is not as free rhythmically as the Jewish liturgical recitative, the Hungarian folk song does employ numerous variations of rubato. Similar to the Jewish practice, the shift between rubato and metric (giusto) performance is common in the Hungarian tradition: the same song may occur in both rhythmic styles.

Did Hungarian Jews realize this similarity? Did they use it as a starting point to create a Jewish-Hungarian repertoire? Based on the Jewish sources the answer to this question is no. There is no repertoire in Hungarian-Jewish music that developed this musical principle as a compositional idea by employing Hungarian elements.

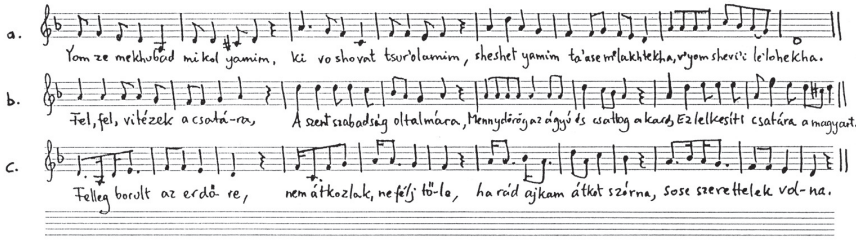
However, my impression is that Jews who were familiar with Hungarian music did recognize this similarity. When I asked prayer leaders about the folk music they liked best or considered closest to their heart, they generally mentioned Hungarian and Romanian folk music. Even non-Hungarian Jews living far from Hungary often referred to Hungarian and Romanian folk music as music closest to the Jewish mode of expression. The transition between rubato and metric styles is also found in Romanian folk music, but it is less characteristic of the other folk musics of the Carpathian Basin and surrounding areas. The people I interviewed found no correspondence between Jewish and Polish or Czech folk music, for instance. They were unable to give a precise answer to the question regarding what they considered their "own" in Hungarian folk music. Many of the interviewees noted that Hungarian folk music is sad and joyful at the same time, and they found this duality similar to the world of Jewish sentiment.

Indeed, the practice in Hungarian instrumental music of combining "slow/sad" movements with "fast/brisk" movements bears affinities with the similar practice in Jewish music. As noted above, the manner in which contrasting moods suddenly alternate in liturgical, para-liturgical, and secular Jewish music can be quite striking. The switch from "sad" to "joyful," with virtually no transition, is characteristic of the music of both peoples, and has the power to define identity in both cases.

It is possible that this correspondence between the two musical cultures did in fact hinder the development of a Hungarian-Jewish repertoire. For Hungarian Jews, it was enough simply to accept Hungarian music, Hungarian folk songs and instrumental folk music. According to available sources, if there were dances and instrumental music at all at a Hungarian-Jewish wedding, they were either Hungarian or widely known popular international compositions or dances. It is possible that Hungarian Jews attending the wedding (which they regarded as a rather secular ritual, in accordance with the traditional Jewish worldview) did not feel any need for a specifically Jewish repertoire. The balance represented by Hungarian music's sad and joyous moods is likely to have harmonized with their view of life better than the death-centered and more serious Eastern European Klezmer wedding music. (However, this does not suffice to explain the absence of Hungarian-Yiddish or Hungarian-Hebrew secular women's songs.)

4. Hungarian-Jewish songs

Among the para-liturgical songs, however, one does find a repertoire that can be considered Hungarian-Jewish music. I have so far come across a dozen melodies that belong to this group. In general the lyrics of the songs are part of the Sabbath *zmires* repertoire, but the melodies are also used with liturgical texts. The prayer leader who sang these songs often referred to them as "Hungarian-like melodies." A dozen or so melodies may not seem much, and perhaps hardy enough to speak of a distinct Hungarian-Jewish music, but in contrast with the example of "Szól a kakas már…," here we are speaking of a song type that includes songs that were widely known, and that, interestingly, were known as "Hungarian tunes" in non-Hungarian regions as well. The musical example illustrates one of the popular melodies in Eastern European communities performed to the Sabbath *zmires* texts: "Jom ze mehubbod." The top line of the example marked (a) illustrates the zmires, while the lower lines contain two popular Hungarian songs. Both were composed in the 19th century: "Fel, fel vitézek a csatára" [Rise, rise, heroes, to the battle] (line b) is possibly the most popular song of the 1848 Revolution, and "Felleg borult az erdőre" [A cloud covered the forest] (line c) is a 19th-century folk-style art song.[23]



All three melodies are in four-beat measures, and their symmetrically arranged melodic couplets are organized in four-line strophes. This form is characteristic of the majority of both 19th-century Hungarian and Eastern European Jewish songs.

However, the tonal composition of these songs is unusual. The opening of the song emphasizes the minor mode through the tonic, the minor third and the fourth under the tonic note (A, D, F). The next line, however, seems to be modulating, it reinforces the major third (F-(G)-A). This melodic core is almost beyond modality. Its tones can be interpreted both as minor (d minor) and as major (F major). The composers of the songs extend this tonal core, interpret-

ing it as if it were minor: following a line that rises to a higher octave, the song concludes with a conventional minor cadence without recapitulating the lower fourth opening motive.

This special melodic narrative, which includes a tonal shift in virtually every line, suits perfectly the style of the Jewish recitative; in fact, these motives and quasi-tonal shifts occur in a basic melodic type of the Jewish liturgy. These characteristics are somewhat unusual in Hungarian folk song but common in soldier's songs and folk-song-like art songs of the 19th century.

When I first encountered this Jewish-Hungarian song-type, I thought it was an example of the Jews borrowing from the 19th-century Hungarian song repertoire. The Jews might have instantly felt something "Jewish" in these Hungarian melodies. At a time when the Jewish community in Hungary was looking for a way to assert itself as a distinct culture, and at the same time reinforce its alliance with the Hungarians, it was only natural for Hungarian Jews to use these songs for the basis of developing a Hungarian-Jewish repertory.

However, this hypothesis is problematic for two reasons. First, while the global tonal idea and the rhythmic elements are similar, the totality of the Jewish and the Hungarian songs sound rather different. There is not a single complete Jewish song the model of which could be found among Hungarian songs. In contrast with what we have seen in the case of "Szól a kakas már…" and Yiddish songs, this category does not include a phrase or motif that could be seen as an exact borrowing from a song or even from a type. If this type was indeed inspired by 19th-century Hungarian folk-like art songs, how does one explain the fact that the totality of the Jewish songs differ so fundamentally from their supposed model?

The second problem is that the majority of these songs are well-known in the entire Eastern European Jewish world. For example the piece that was taken down by Zoltán Simon as a Hungarian-Jewish instrumental composition in Transylvania and that was sung and recorded by him as one of the songs of the *Hallel* prayer can be found in the Vinaver collection as the melody for the Sabbath *zmires* "Cur miselau ochalnu." Vinaver's comment on this song is intriguing: "Typical Polish Hassidic, brilliant, the most Ashkenazi among the Ashkenazi."[24] This melody can be found in several other anthologies. It was first published by Meir Shimon Geshuri as a composition by the late 18th-century Rabbi Kaliski Abraham.[25] It is hard to believe that the melodic type that developed under the influence of 19th-century Hungarian national songs among the Hungarian Jews – thus presumably not earlier than the second half of the 19th century – would have

been so well-known throughout the entire Eastern Ashkenazi world that, already by the end 19th-century, it would have been considered an ancient song associated even with famous rabbis.

We can do little more than offer hypotheses regarding the emergence of this Hungarian song type. I believe that it developed much earlier and on the basis of a different kind of borrowing: most likely from an earlier stratum of international and Hungarian instrumental music. In contrast with Hungarian folk songs, in Hungarian instrumental music it is not uncommon for a composition in the minor mode to begin with the lower fourth. Nor is it unusual to find the use of the major third as a melodic core that evokes a feel between major and minor – almost beyond modality, or that this major core-motive is reached after what strikes almost as a tonal shift. One of these components (the tonally quasi undefined major third motive) already emerges in the Renaissance Hungarian "ungaresca."[26] It is also possible that this melodic type was developed by Jewish musicians playing Hungarian music, that they were the first to come up with such a combination of these melodic elements (since this harmonic procession may have been familiar to them from liturgy). But even if they did not invent this melodic type, it is likely that, given the reasons above, it was among their favorite melodies and perhaps it were they who popularized this version of ungaresca in Hungary. In any case, it seems probable that this melody took hold first in the instrumental repertoire, perhaps first as a type of cosmopolitan and/or Hungarian dance music. It might have become a favorite of Jewish musicians and was taken from their repertoire as the basis for melodies of *nigun* and *zemires*. Jewish musicology has yet to discover when and how this song type developed.

Translated by Judit Szathmári

[1] In Europe several unique forms of popular and folk music have been preserved to the present day, for example the polyphony of Sardinian, Portuguese, Russian and Bulgarian music, the ritual music of Turkish Sufi communities (Alevi, Halveti, Mevlevi, Bektasi, etc.), folk music from the Baltic countries, the Swiss alpine yodel, etc.

[2] Cantorial manuscripts in Hungary focus on the codified repertory of the reform movement (in Hungary: "Neolog" and "Status quo ante"). To my knowledge Bence Szabolcsi was the only musicologist to do fieldwork among the Hungarian Jewish communities before WWII (and he might have continued this work into the 1950s). Attempts to recover his transcriptions and field notes, however, had been unsuccessful; only a dozen of songs (those which he published or cited in his studies) are known. His most significant articles based on his collection are: "About Five-tone Scales in the Early Hebrew Melodies." In: Samuel Lőwinger and Alexander Scheiber, *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume I*. Budapest, 1948, 309–313; and "The 'Proclamation Style' in Hebrew Music." *Yuval. Studies of the Jewish Music Research Centre*. Jerusalem, 1968, 38–39. The collection of Szabolcsi's writings on

Jewish music in Hungarian: Bence Szabolcsi: Zsidó kultúra és zenetörténet. Tanulmányok [Jewish Culture and Music History. Essays]. Ed. György Kroó, with an introduction by Miklós Szabolcsi. Budapest: Osiris – MTA Judaisztikai Kutatócsoport, 1999. On Szabolcsi's work see Frigyesi: "Bence Szabolcsi's Unfinished Work: Jewish Identity and Cultural Ideology in Communist Hungary." *The Musical Quarterly 2007* (2005), vol. 88, 496–522; electronic version: doi: 10.1093/musqtl/gdk002, full text: http://mq.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/gdk002.

[3] In Eastern Europe substantial research in Jewish music was done only in the Soviet Union (primarily in the Ukrainian and western Russian region) and to some extent in Poland and it focused on Jewish folk music. The ethnological expeditions of Ans-ki, Engel, and Beregovski produced an invaluable collection of Klezmer music, Hassidic nigun, Yiddish and other secular songs. It seems, nevertheless, that they had no systematic project for the documentation of Jewish liturgical music.

[4] This by no means implies that in everyday usage a thing or even a person would not be referred to as Kadosh.

[5] I have discussed this problem and its musical bearings in a previous article: "The Variety of Musical Styles in the Ashkenazi Service." In: *Jewish Studies Yearbook*. Budapest: Central European University, 2002, 31–50.

[6] The terms in parentheses indicate the various types of readings/recitations and the system related to them in Eastern Ashkenazi terminology: *davenen* = simple, fast, almost speech-like recitation of prayer, *leinen* = Torah cantillation, *nusah* = the musical structure of prayer melodies, *hazzanut* = improvisatory art of the prayer leader based on the *nusah*. In the present study the term "recitative" is used to mean any or all of these styles, however, most of the discussion relates to *davenen* and *nusah* (and not to Torah cantillation and *hazzanut*).

[7] I have discussed the reading tradition of sacred texts in detail in the lexicon entry "Music for Sacred Text." In: *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. Ed.-in-chief, Gershon D. Hundert. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2008, vol. II, 1222–1225; see also: "The Sound of the Synagogue: Magic and Transcendence." *Paragana – Internationale Zeitschrift für Historische Anthropologie*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, Freie Universität, 16/2 (2007), 151–163. On the relation of the concept of the sacred and the recitative presentation in Jewish philosophy see Moshe Idel, "Conceptualizations of Music in Jewish Mysticism." In: *Enchanting Powers: Music in the World's Religions*. Ed. L. E. Sullivan. Cambridge, MA, 1997, 159–188; Jacob Neusner, *Judaism's Theological Voice: The Melody of the Talmud*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995.

[8] In an interview with Emil Goitein at the end of the 1990s he demonstrated how he incorporated a motive from a Wagner opera into a traditional prayer melody: "I realized that incidentally this melody is identical with the *nuszach*. But I am the only person who knows the origin of this insertion, no one else hears it."

[9] I have heard this motive from several prayer leaders, Zoltán Simon and László Herczog among others. (The recording with Simon was made together with Peter Laki, the one with Herczog by David Polnauer. CD ROM copy of the of the Simon recording is in the Sound Archive of the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and in the Sound Archive (Phonoteka) of the Israel National Library of the Hebrew University, the Herczog recording is in private collection. The transcriptions for both *Hallel* melodies can be found in the article I co-authored with Peter Laki: "Free-Form Recitative and Strophic Structure in the Hallel Psalms." In: *Orbis Musicae,* 1979–80, vol. VII, 43–80.) I must note here that with the exception of this motive I have not discovered any element in the recitative melodies collected among the Hungarian-Jewish community that could be considered a Hungarian influence.

[10] Interview with Dezső Gärtner in the fall of 1977.

[11] A good example of this phenomenon is Bartók's piano-playing, see *Bartók at the Piano 1920–1945* and *Bartók Recordings from Private Collections 1910–1944* (originally: LPX 12326-33 and LPX 12334-38, CD edition: HCD 12326–31, Budapest: Hungaroton, 1991 and 1995).

[12] Walter Zev Feldman: "Traditional and Instrumental Folk Music." *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. Ed.-in-chief, Gershon D. Hundert. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2008, vol. II, 1225–1228.

[13] Judith Cohen: "Ladino Romance." In *World Music, Vol. 1: Africa, Europe and the Middle East*. Ed. Broughton, Simon, Ellingham, et al. Rough Guides Ltd, Penguin Books, 2000, 370–379; Judith Etzion and Susanna Weich-Shahak: "The Spanish and the Sephardic Romances: Musical Links." *Ethnomusicology* 32/2 (Spring/Summer 1988), 1–38.

[14] I heard this on a recording made by Mihály Sipos and the Muzsikás Ensemble during their field-trip in Romania. On Klezmer music in Hungary, see my article accompanying the record by the Muzsikás Ensemble based on this research: "Máramaros: The Lost Jewish Music of Transylvania." London: Rycodisc, 1992.

[15] Walter Zev Feldman: "Traditional and Instrumental Folk Music" and "Klezmer." In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. New York, 2000, 88–90; Moshe Beregovski: "Jewish Instrumental Folk Music." *Old Jewish Folk Music. The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*. Ed. and transl. by Mark Slobin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982, 530–548.

[16] Max Wohlberg: "The Music of the Synagogue as a Source of the Yiddish Folksong." *Musica Judaica* 2/1 (1977/78), 21–49.

[17] Zehava Fudem, "Tradition and Invention in the Melodies of Selected High Holiday Prayers." MA Thesis, Bar Ilan University, 2003.

[18] I recorded only one woman, Éva Rosenberg, Mrs. Oberländer. She told me that when she was young she knew many Yiddish songs, but when I met her at the beginning of the 1990s (and she was past 80 by that time) she could not recall any of them, but did remember the Sabbath blessing in Yiddish. However, she was still able to sing Hungarian folk songs.

[19] András Borgó, "Zsidó vándorzenészek (klezmerek) Magyarországon" [Wandering Jewish Musicians (Klezmers) in Hungary]. In: *Múlt és Jövő* 2 (1991/1), 46–48; "'Pharao barna ivadékai' és a klezmorim: A cigány és jiddis zenekultúra magyarországi kapcsolatai" ['Brown-Skinned Descendants of the Pharaoh' and the Klezmorim: The Relationship between Gypsy and Yiddish Musical Culture in Hungary]. *Muzsika* 36/9 (Sept 1993), 32–39.

[20] Unpublished lecture by Walter Zev Feldman: "The Historical Klezmer." Presented at *Jüdische Musik als Dialog der Kulturen und ihre Vermittlungsdimensionen Wege zur interreligiösen und interkulturellen Verständigung – Internationale Wissenschaftliche Tagung*. Universität Potsdam és Abraham Geiger Kolleg, Potsdam, July 2010.

[21] This is what happens in the *Kedusha* of the Amida of Shabbath Shaharit in the rendition of Jenő Roth. At the central part of the *Kedusha* Roth suddenly abandons the cantorial style he employed so far, and inserts a remarkably simple song – this is the spiritual climax of the prayer. Roth's multi-part *Kedusha* is likely a composition – either his own or of one of his masters. I recorded the full liturgy of the Shabbath Shaharit with Roth in October 1977, CD ROM copies of the of the tape are both in the Sound Archive of the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and in the Sound Archive (Phonoteka) of the Israel National Library of the Hebrew University.

[22] I believe that Ellen Koskoff made this mistake in her article "Contemporary Nigun Composition in an American Hasidic Community." *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology*. Ed. James Porter, vol. 3, no. 1, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978, 153–174.

[23] The transcriptions and the chart are the work of Peter Laki.

[24] Chemjo Vinaver: *Anthology of Hassidic Music*. Ed. Eliyahu Schleifer. Jerusalem: The Jewish Music Research Centre, 1985, No. 33, 122.

[25] See Schleifer's remark, *ibid*.

[26] I discuss the findings of the research on the development of this melody type, together with the notation of songs and a list of musical sources in a forthcoming work. I summarized my findings in "Hungarian Revolutionary and Jewish Religious Songs: An Unusual Musical Encounter Leading to a New Hypothesis for the History of East-European Jewish Song." *Hungarian Jews and 1948 – International Conference*, Jerusalem, 1998.

Exile, Diaspora and the Promised Land – Jewish Future Images in Nazi Dominated Europe

Guy Miron

> When the Jewish fate will attend to the Jews in France, England and the United States; when its mighty fist – which has shaken the Jews of Eastern Europe already for several generations and begins now to shake the German Jews – will shake them as well; when the shadows, the gigantic frightful shadows of the eternal Jew will be thrown on them in the midst of sunny days; then their arrogance will come to its end.[1]

These sentences, cited from the book *Wir Juden*, which was published by the young Rabbi Joachim Prinz in 1934 Nazi Germany, demonstrate the challenge that he raised on the fundamental ideas of the emancipation era, among them the diasporic principle. Facing the German Jewish experience during the first year of the Nazi regime Prinz rejected the idea that the integration of the Jews in the countries of emancipation is a long term historical development. Sooner or later, he implied, the eternal fate of the Jews will prevail and prevent them from integrating in their countries of residence as "new homelands". Jewish life in the Diaspora will therefore never be normal. Prinz devoted the major part of his discussion to his historical analysis but alluded that on the long run only the development of the Jewish settlement in Palestine, the ancient Jewish homeland, will bring a better future to the Jews.

The article will present a variety of views concerning the future of the Jews – between Diaspora on the one hand, and the Promised Land on the other, as they were presented in the Jewish political discourse in Nazi dominated Europe. After giving a historical introduction I will concentrate on two case studies – the Jewish discourse in Germany in 1933–1938 and the Jewish discourse in Hungary in 1938–1944.[2] As we will see in both cases, facing the collapse of Jewish emancipation Zionist and non-Zionist spokesmen raised different ideas and images concerning the Jewish future. Their positions were not always as radical and dichoto-

[1] Joachim Prinz, *Wir Juden*, Berlin, 1934, pp. 53–54.

[2] For a more comprehensive discussion see my book: Guy Miron, *The Waning of Emancipation. Jewish History, Memory, and the Rise of Fascism in Germany, France, and Hungary,* Detroit, 2011.

mous as those expressed by Prinz the Zionist, which totally negated the diasporic option or of those expressed by some of his liberal opponents, who strove to rehabilitate their attachment to the German homeland and totally rejected the Zionist vision of a new Jewish homeland.

A

One of the outcomes of the emancipation era in Europe since its beginning in the 19th century was a major transformation in the way that Jews related to the concept of homeland. Traditional Jews, who lived in Europe in the pre-emancipation era, viewed themselves as living in Exile. They grasped their countries of residence as a temporal home believing that eventually they, or at least their offspring, will return to their original and the only real homeland – the Land of Israel. This does not mean, of course, that pre-19th-century European Jews were not attached to their place of residence. The Talmudic rule of *Dina DeMalchuta Dina* obliged the Jews to honor the laws of the land in which they resided. Some of them lived for many years, even for generations, in certain countries or cities, and developed a deep attachment and gratitude to these places and sometimes also a common solidarity with their non-Jewish fellow residents. Still, on the deeper level of their consciousness, on the level of collective identity and memory, they viewed themselves first and foremost as a part of a wider pan-Jewish collective.

In the view of the pre-emancipation era this Jewish collective was grasped as living, against its will, outside of its real homeland, fundamentally sharing the *fate of exile*. This view is very different from the modern and contemporary view of the Jews as sharing a diasporic existence – *a voluntary dispersing* of a religious, ethnic or even national collective. Whereas exile was conceptualized in the pre-emancipation era as originated by a tragic fate, the modern concept of Jewish diaspora sees the dispersion of the Jews as based on communal or personal choice and even recognizes the fact that lands of the diaspora can develop into new Jewish homelands.

The self-consciousness of Jews in various European countries, among them Germany and Hungary, which will be discussed in the present study, fundamentally changed during the era of emancipation and they developed a new attitude to their countries of residence. It is important to emphasize that this transformation did not develop in a vacuum. The "emancipation era", as it is called in Jewish historiography of Western and Central Europe, is in fact the era of nationalism in modern European history. This is the era in which, according to current historiography, the modern national consciousness gradually developed in the majority

of the European local populations. Thus, only during the late 19th century did the peasants living in France begin to see themselves as Frenchmen and come to civil and patriotic awareness.[3] Other modern European national identities and cultures of memory, including the German and the Hungarian, also developed during this era.[4] Research literature has shown in the last decades how pre-modern ethnic and local identities developed during the long nineteenth century, predominantly in the last decades before the First World War, into modern national identities. A major component of this process was the conceptualization of the new nation-state as the "homeland". Thus, scholars describe the "invention", "imagination" or the reinterpretation of the national history and the development of a usable past which presents the long-run historical roots of the national collective in its homeland.[5] The transformation in the form emancipated Jews related to their homeland, which had of course certain unique characters, was therefore a variation of a much wider process.

A major part of the Jews living in various German states, and later on in the united German Reich, developed during the 19th century an intimate relation to the German language, history and culture, making Germany into their homeland, predominantly after the 1871 unification and the granting of full emancipation. They did not view themselves any more as living in "exile" and waiting to return to the original Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel but rather as members of the German nation. This process included the creation of a German Jewish usable past, or homemaking myth – a culture of memory which emphasized the deep roots of the Jews in the German homeland and their long centuries' attachment

[3] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914,* Stanford, 1976.

[4] For a few examples regarding Germany and Hungary see: Etienne Francois & Hagen Schulze (eds.), *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte,* 2001; Stefan Berger, *The Search for Normality, National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany since 1800,* Providence & Oxford, 1997; Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871–1918,* Chapel Hill, N.C., 1997; Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848–1914,* Washington D.C., Baltimore & London, 2000; Árpád von Klimó, *Nation, Konfession, Geschichte. Zur nationalen Geschichtskultur Ungarns im europäischen Kontext (1860–1948),* München, 2003.

[5] Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson have characterized the development of modern national cultures of memory as "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm) or as part of the construction of "imagined communities" (Anderson). Anthony D. Smith asserts, on the other hand, that even if nationalism itself is a modern phenomena, one cannot deny the ethnic pre-modern sources of modern national culture and memory. See: Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition,* Cambridge, 1983. For Anderson's position see: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities, Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London, 1993. Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism,* Hanover, NH, 2000.

to its nature, culture and collective memory.[6] "Palestine is not a homeland for us, it is not the country of our childhood", wrote in September 1917 Eugen Fuchs, a prominant German Jewish spokesman and the leader of the Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens [Central Union of the German Citizens of the Jewish Faith (CV)]. "Our parents are not buried there. I do not know Palestine, it is neither the country that I long for nor my homeland […] When I am abroad I miss that German soil, the German nature and the German people."[7] A similar process took place in Hungary, predominantly among the modern urban sectors of the Jewish population – mostly, but not only, among the Neologs. In Hungary this process peaked during the pre-World War I dualistic era, as Hungary functioned in many aspects as a nation state.[8]

The view of a European country – Germany or Hungary for our discussion – as the homeland of its Jews during the past hundreds of years as well as in the long-term future brought to a redefinition the international Jewish situation. It was not grasped any longer as based on the collective experience of "exile" from the one and only Jewish homeland. In the new circumstances it became more suitable to view the Jews around the world as a scattered diasporic community whose members share religious or ethnic characteristics as well as common memory but certainly not a common homeland it the present or the future.

[6] See, for example: Ismar Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism*, Hanover, NH, 1994; Michael A. Meyer, "The emergence of Jewish historiography: motives and motifs," in: idem, *Judaism within Modernity, Essays on Modern Jewish History and Religion*, Detroit, 2001, pp. 44–63; Shulamit Volkov, "Inventing tradition: On the formation of modern Jewish culture," *Jewish Studies at the Central European University* 3 (2002–2003), pp. 211–227; Christhard Hoffmann, "Die Verbürglichung der jüdischen Vergangenheit: Formen, Inhalte, Kritik," in: Ulrich Wyrwa, ed., *Judentum und Historismus; zur Entstehung der jüdischen Geschichtswissenschaft in Europa*, Frankfurt a.M., 2003, pp. 149–171; Nils Roemer, *Jewish Scholarship and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Germany. Between History and Faith*, Madison, 2005, pp. 66–78; Jacques Ehrenfreund, *Memoire juive et nationalite allemanje : Les juifs berlinois a la belle époque*, Paris, 2000.

[7] Eugen Fuchs, "Glaube und Heimat," *Im deutschem Reich*, September 1917, pp. 338–351.

[8] For a discussion in the process of emancipation of Hungarian Jewry with a comparative perspective with German Jewry see: Guy Miron, "Between 'Center' and 'East' – The Special Way of Jewish Emancipation in Hungary," *Jewish Studies at the CEU,* vol 4, 2004–2005, pp. 111–138. For the development of Jewish historiography and memory in Hungary in this context see: Nathaniel Katzburg, "Jewish Historiography in Hungary" (Hebrew), *Sinai*, 40 (1956/57), pp. 113–126, 164–176. See, also, in this context about the modern Hungarian rabbis who were also historians, Kinga Frojimovics, "A 'doktor-rabbik' nagy nemzedéke Magyarországon: A neológ identitás kialakítása a történetíráson keresztül", in: József Zsengellér (ed.), *Széfer Józséf,* Budapest, 2002, pp. 221–239.

Furthermore, for certain Jewish spokesmen the very dispersal of the Jews among the other nations was grasped as a positive value, a contribution to the universal values of the human spirit.

The Jewish self-perception which was typical of the central liberal camp in German Jewry, as well as of a major sector of modern Hungarian Jewry, was fundamentally challenged from the late 19th century by two movements: modern anti-Semitism on the one hand, and Zionism on the other hand. The anti-Semites called to abolish Jewish emancipation and denied the authenticity of the connection of the Jews to their European homelands.[9] The Zionist movement, which developed, at least partly, as a reaction to modern anti-Semitism, criticized the modern Jewish path of emancipation and called for an establishment of a new Jewish national home in the Land of Israel. Zionists spoke for a new Jewish homeland (in fact a new-old homeland as it was expressed in Theodor Herzl's book as Alt-Neuland) and a new vision of the Jewish future.

Should we therefore grasp the legacy of emancipation Jewry and the diasporic idea on the one hand, and the Zionist future vision on the other hand, as fundamentally contradicting? Not necessarily. These are two different views concerning the Jewish future, but certain integration between them is not impossible. The idea of a Jewish national home, as it was proposed by Zionists, was in the case of many – first and foremost of Herzl – accompanied by a pessimistic view regarding the future of emancipation Jewry, but it must not be viewed as calling to a total abolishment of the Jewish diasporic existence. Until the 1930s, in fact until the Holocaust, the very idea of putting to an end the Jewish diasporic life and concentrating the lion part of the world Jewry in the Land of Israel did not really seem realistic. Thus, besides their activities for the development of the Jewish national home most of the Zionists accepted the future existence of Jewish diasporic life implicitly, and sometimes also explicitly. Certain Zionist traditions even elaborated on how the future nation will bring political, spiritual and cultural strength to the diaspora Jews.

[9] The literature on Anti-Semitism is vast and cannot be discussed here in detail. For an overview of the history of modern European anti-semitism see: Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction, Anti-Semitism, 1700–1933*, Cambridge, Mass, 1980. For German anti-semitism see: Shulamit Volkov, "Antisemitism as a Cultural Code," *Leo Beack Institute Year Book*, vol. 23 (1978), pp. 25–46; Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria*, Cambridge MA, 1988. For Hungarian anti-semitism see Rolf Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen des Antisemitismus in Ungarn 1867–1939, Die Zerstörung der magyarisch-jüdischen Symbiose*, München, 1988; Nathaniel Katzburg, *Hungary and the Jews, Policy and Legislation 1920–1943*, Ramat Gan, 1981; Nathaniel Katzburg, *Antisemitism in Hungary 1867–1944,* Jerusalem, 1992 (Hebrew).

What about the non-Zionists? World War I and its outcome brought vast changes regarding the development of the Zionist project in the Land of Israel. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 helped Zionism to become a major political movement in the Jewish world politics (though not *the* major). In the 1920s the interest of a variety of non-Zionist Jewish groups in the development of the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel grew extensively. Many of them also recognized it as an integral part of the development of future world Jewry, even without accepting the basic political principles of Zionism let alone without giving up their fundamental belief in the future of Jewish diasporic life. The inner Jewish cooperation between Zionists and non-Zionists acting for the development of the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel was especially prominent in Germany and in the United States.

The rise of the Nazis to power in Germany in 1933, which started the process of the waning of Jewish emancipation in Germany, and later on in other European countries such as Hungary, naturally brought a major transformation in the Jewish self-perception and political discourse in these countries. The Jewish diasporic existence, the very view of the Jews of their country of residence as their homeland, were fundamentally challenged whereas, on the other hand, the option of a Jewish national home in the Land of Israel was discussed much more intensively as an outright alternative to the future of the Jewish people. I will now turn to discuss the ways in which Jewish spokespersons, Zionists and non-Zionists alike, related to the question of the Jewish future – in the diaspora and in the promised land – as they were living under these regimes on the eve of the Holocaust: In Germany from 1933 to 1938 (until the Jewish organizations and relatively free journals were closed) and in Hungary from 1938 (the First Jewish Act) to 1944 (the Nazi occupation and the Holocaust).

B

Joachim Prinz's 1934 book *Wir Juden* was a prominent German Jewish critique on the view of Germany as a Jewish homeland, but certainly not the only one. A variety of Jewish spokespeople in the post-January 1933 Germany challenged the way in which German Jews viewed Germany as their homeland. What made Prinz's view quite unique was the fact that his critique of modern emancipation Jewry included a revaluation of the Ghetto era in Jewish history. Prinz rehabilitated the image of the ghetto life, claiming that, in spite of the oppression and agony that Jews had experienced there, life in the ghetto should be associated with Jewish cultural wealth.

The ghetto should not necessarily be associated with humiliation, he asserted; rather it had brought dignity to the Jews and enabled them to find value and meaning in their Judaism – from this perspective it was like a Jewish homeland. [10]

Prinz's critique of the emancipated Jewry reverberates with the language of the contemporary *völkisch* critique of modernity and liberalism. The alienation of emancipated Jewry to their history and people was, he claimed, only an extreme expression of the general process in which liberal freedom had brought about the disintegration of traditional bonds of alienation. The principle, encapsulated in Count Clermont-Tonnerre's saying in the French revolutionary National Assembly, "the Jews should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals," had led Western Jews, according to Prinz, to disintegration and deadlock.[11]

In an argument that invoked the mythic glorification of agriculture and country life in the general German discourse of the time, Prinz asserted that while many non-Jews continued to live in the country as farmers, the vast majority of Jews had migrated to the big cities to work in bourgeois professions. They became a people working and living on city asphalt and among libraries, offices, and department stores. They were completely cut off from the power of the soil, from the original, primeval process of production *(Urproduktion)* and therefore also from the real touch of homeland. The liberal Emancipation had defined the modern Jews as a displaced group with no peasant class and had installed them in an anonymous ghetto – *a new exile* far more oppressive than the old one. [12]

The historical narrative presented in Prinz's works, its cyclical regularity, as well as the future anticipations that arise from it, are linked to his Zionist message. Not surprisingly, he identified with the teachings of Herzl and mentions the development of the Jewish settlement in Palestine as a foundation for a better Jewish future.

Prinz's lectures and book, widely spread, naturally aroused responses from liberal spokesmen. These comments, published primarily in the *CV Zeitung* – the journal of the Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens, or the CV [Central Union of the German Citizens of the Jewish Faith] – defended the

[10] Joachim Prinz, *Wir Juden*, pp. 108–112.

[11] Joachim Prinz, *Wir Juden*, p. 36. For Count Clermont-Tonnerre's speech concerning the eligibility of the Jews for citizenship, which was given in the French revolutionary National Assembly on December 23, 1789, see: Paul Mendes-Flohr & Jehuda Reinharz (eds.), *The Jew in the Modern World*, New York & Oxford, 1995, pp. 114–115, citation here from p. 115.

[12] Ibid., pp. 147, 162.

liberal Jewish legacy, including its opinion of Jewish history. The most interesting response, for open discussion, came in an article of another young Berlin liberal Rabbi – Manfred Swarsensky. The Jewish question, Swarsensky asserted, is not, as the Zionists say, an inevitable outcome of the basic living conditions of the Jews in exile – i.e., since the destruction of the Jerusalem temple. Rather, the roots of Jewish abnormality are even deeper and originate from the very nature of Jewish history:

> Our history is characterized by eternal ups and downs. Ages of external success, which were almost always times of "assimilation," are followed by ages of distress. Both are crucial and eventually also fruitful. The ages of assimilation provide the Jews new and valuable momentum, even if they must pay for it in a certain loss. Then, after action of the centrifugal forces, come the ages of "dissimilation" and the centripetal forces rise again.[13]

Unlike the other critiques, which rejected Prinz based on the traditional liberal views – first and foremost, the idea of progress – Swarsensky accepted the cyclical historical view. He refers to the tension between the powers of concentration in Jewish history (centripetal forces) and the powers of dispersion (centrifugal forces). For him, as a liberal Jew, this tension is not a curse but rather the essential element of Jewish life. The Prinz–Swarsensky dispute, which was joined by others, was only one of several debates, in which German Jewish spokespeople tried to come to terms with their post-1933 situation. These debates dealt with questions like the essence of the Jewish fate as well as the validity of the idea of progress of Jewish history *vis-à-vis* a more cyclical view of it.

The tension between the ideas of homeland and diaspora in Jewish history and more specifically its implications to the future of German Jews were discussed more explicitly as the question of Jewish emigration from Germany became more and more urgent. At first it was mainly Zionists who called on the Jews to leave Germany, while most liberals continued to identify Germany as their motherland. However, the growing agony that had already led tens of thousands of Jews to leave Germany, and the somber future of German Jewry made emigration the central subject of discussion for all the Jewish parties.

Preference for Palestine as the favored destination for German Jewish emigrants during the first three years of the Nazi regime was a result of the rise in Zionist influence and the 1933 transfer *(Haavara)* agreement between the Nazi

[13] "Joachim Prinz: Wir Juden, Angezeigt von Rabbiner Dr. Manfred Swarsensky," CVZ (Central Verein Zeitung) 16/11/1933.

regime and the Jewish agency to Palestine. As a result, various Jewish liberal spokesmen were motivated to defend their legacy, partly through a growing interest in the concept of diaspora.[14]

Der Morgen, the Jewish monthly magazine of the CV, opened its June 1934 volume with a comprehensive discussion of this concept. The harsh shock felt in Germany, the very country where the integration of the Jews seemed to be most successful, stated editor Eva Reichmann-Jungmann, evoked fundamental questions that were of concern to the entire Jewish world: "If German Jewry could be thrown away by the forces of history, one may get the feeling that this generally concerns the diaspora as a Jewish option." This issue, Reichmann continued, also raises questions regarding Jewish fate during generations of dispersion and regarding the concept of the diaspora as a mission in Jewish history: „The diaspora, first and foremost the German one, is in danger. It is not only threatened materially, but also in the sense of denial of its value as a Jewish mission." [15]

The next two articles in the magazine attempted to legitimize and rehabilitate the Diaspora in Jewish history in contrast to the Zionist vision. Rabbi Ignaz Maybaum described the Diaspora element in Jewish life as religiously valuable and employed the term exile in this context:

> The exile is sociological space for Jewish chosenness. Exile is not a mere geographic term that means "abroad" (outside of Palestine). Exile means powerless existence. In this context the Jews in contemporary Palestine are also in a similar situation like ours. *The exile is our fate*.[16]

In a more intricate historical discussion, Grigori Landau defined the diaspora as part of a cyclical process in which dark times always follow more enlightened ages. The Jewish uniqueness of the diaspora, he asserted, relates to political powerlessness. This fact, which has a universal meaning that concerns the fragility of human existence, was forgotten and repressed in the last century because of the rise of the idea of progress:

[14] On the centrality of Palestine as an immigration destination in the years 1933–1935, see: Daniel Fraenkel, *On the Edge of the Abyss, Zionist Policy and the Plight of the German Jews, 1933–1938*, Jerusalem, 1994, pp. 97–100 (Hebrew). For a previous discussion on the concept of Diaspora in the German-Jewish discourse of this period, see: Jacob Boas, "Germany or Diaspora?, German Jewry's Shifting Perceptions in the Nazi Era (1933–1938)," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. 27 (1982), pp. 123–125.

[15] Eva Reichmann-Jungmann, "Diaspora als Aufgabe," *Der Morgen*, June 1934, pp. 97–98.

[16] Ignaz Maybaum, "Raum und Grenze der Diaspora," *Der Morgen*, June 1934, p. 100. Emphasis is in the original.

> During the last century we (not only the Jews but all modern humanity) have forgotten the fundamental truth of human life, the eternal ups and downs and the instability of the soil on which we walk in our earthly life [...] The formative power of a few decades made us accustomed to stability and relative quiet [...] We became used to the exceptional and temporary affluence, to the unprecedented rise in the standard of living and to the stabilization of human society – to the overall progress of the recent era. This brief and exceptional era seemed to us to be the norm and we started to assess history at large accordingly [...] The Jews, too, evaluated the diaspora according to the norms of a few decades in the nineteenth century.[17]

The truth is, Landau added, the Diaspora is far from the ideal; it is a difficult and dangerous path, which genuinely represents the fragility of human life. While in the diaspora, the Jews have been confronted by many hardships, but without them the Jews would have declined and disappeared as many other peoples did. Landau attributed most of the Jewish creativity to the diaspora and attacked the Zionist worldview, claiming that even in the Biblical period the formative ideas of Judaism originated outside the Land of Israel. Citing the exile of Egypt and the exile of Babylon, he viewed the Land of Israel as the only place for the realization of the formative ideas of Judaism. [18]

A few months later, on the subject of the diaspora, liberal spokesmen went several steps further in a discussion conducted in the youth supplement of the *CV Zeitung*. For example, the young Rabbi Franz Rosenthal criticized the Zionists stating that, in spite of what he called the pseudo-messianic movements, including Karaites, Kabbalists, Hasidim and also Zionists, and in spite of the ideas raised by figures like the medieval Spanish Jewish poet and philosopher Rabbi Judah Halevi, Rabbi Moses ben Nahman (Nahmanides), the 16th-century Portuguese Kabbalist Solomon Molcho, and also Herzl, Jewish life continued and would continue in the diaspora due to "the law of Jewish existence". Rosenthal dated this historical principle to the destruction of the Second Temple and affiliated it with the legacy of the first century Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai, who successfully converted the Temple ritual into spiritual worship. As a result, the Jewish bond with the Land of Israel became less territorial and more spiritual. Thus, the Jews could become more attached to their new homelands.[19]

[17] Grigori Landau, "Die Gewalt der Geschichte," *Der Morgen*, June 1934, pp. 106–107.

[18] Ibid., pp. 110–113.

[19] Franz Rosenthal, "Die Frage der Diaspora, Weg das Gesetzes," *CVZ*, *Seite der Jugend*, 21/2/1935.

The importance of emigration as well as the use of the concept of Diaspora in the German-Jewish discourse arose after the Nuremberg laws officially brought the Emancipation to a close.[20] A few weeks after the laws were enacted, Fritz Friedländer expressed the view that emigration is the only way to secure the future of the 19th-century legacy:

> This century of assimilation, which has now come to its end, has not been, as certain people state today, in vain, since our youth, which is today pushed to leave Germany because of its agony, is carrying the fruit of these times to new homelands.[21]

This quote reflects the beginning of a change in the position of non-Zionist spokesmen *vis-à-vis* the issue of emigration. In early 1936, Alfred Hirschberg claimed that the Jews had kept the pure Jewish spirit all through the generations by living among the nations as a minority lacking any political power. The fate of such a minority has forced it, and may still force it in the future, to wander among the nations, but this should not be viewed in a negative sense:

> The image of Ahasuerus [the Christian medieval mythological figure of the "wandering Jew"] who is compelled to wander as a curse and a symbol for the Jews, is not the desired model of our community, it was coined by others. Whoever is destined to wander fulfills the mysterious blessing on which Judaism is founded and carries with him the mission of his community to be a blessing.[22]

In his 1936 book, Hungarian born Orthodox Rabbi and spokesman Adolf Altmann (b. 1879), who served the Trier community, articulated a fundamentally similar position regarding the place of emigration in Jewish history. He asserted that the basic law of Jewish existence is the law of "movement and rest". This is embodied in two well-known verses from the Book of Numbers: "And it came to pass, when the ark set forward…"; "And when it rested" (Numbers, 10:35–36). Throughout thousands of years of history, Jewish existence was thus characterized by a tension between the poles of movement and rest, a tension that shaped

[20] About the change in the German-Jewish public discourse after the laws, see: Abraham Margaliot, "The reaction of the Jewish public in Germany to the Nuremberg Laws," *Yad Vashem Studies*, Vol. 12 (1977), pp. 75–107.

[21] Fritz Friedländer, "Eine Charakterbild in der Geschichte, Zu Wilhelm Grau: 'Wilhelm v. Humboldt'," *CVZ*, 7/11/1935.

[22] A. H. [Hirschberg], "Mikrokosmos der Weltgeschichte," *Der Morgen*, January 1936, p. 427. Hirschberg relates to Ahasuerus the wandering Jew and not to the the ancient Persian king.

the achievements of the Jewish people as well as its failures.[23] Altmann emphasized the blessing and fruitfulness in the process of movement and wandering, a process that liberated the Jews from the dangers of remaining at a standstill and of falling victim to assimilation. Altmann did not endorse any of the positions that emerged during the liberal-Zionist debate regarding the meaning of diaspora *vis-à-vis* the Land of Israel in Jewish history; rather, he stressed the need for a synthesis of the two directions.[24]

The German-Jewish liberal leadership's increasing recognition of the inevitability of emigration in the second half of the 1930s had transformed the discussion about the diaspora. *Liberal writers now dealt with the diaspora in their work not in order to legitimate the continuation of Jewish life in Germany but to express their position regarding the historical meaning of the emigration and the preferred destinations*. A clear expression of this position was articulated by lawyer Ernst Herzfeld. Herzfeld, the president of the CV from 1936, acknowledged emigration as an essential solution for the German Jews, but he did not accept the idea that Palestine should have a unique status in the debate: "It is not right that only in Palestine Jews will be able to escape from superficiality, lack of creativity, assimilation and eventually also excommunication. If this had been even partially true then, after seventy years of life in the diaspora, there would have been no Jews and no Judaism."[25]

Zionist writers criticized Herzfeld's perspective on the diaspora. By 1936, as it had become clear that Palestine would not be able to accommodate mass Jewish immigration, the Zionists could no longer rule out Jewish emigration to other countries. Their disagreement with Herzfeld, therefore, was primarily about his interpretation of the past and his evaluation of the term diaspora. "We, the Zionists," one of them argued, "oppose the transformation of German citizens of the Mosaic faith, or their children, into Brazilians and South Africans of the Mosaic faith, since we understand that what has failed in Germany will eventually fail in Brazil or South Africa as well." *Unlike Herzfeld, the writer added, Zionism did not accord with any positive value in the diaspora. The persistence of the diaspora could be justified only insofar as it retained a Jewish national consciousness*.[26]

[23] Adolf Altmann, *Volk im Aufbruch, Diaspora in Bewegung*, Reflexionen zur jüdischen Zeitgeschichte, Frankfurt a. M, pp. 7–9.

[24] Ibid., p. 36.

[25] Dr. Herzfeld, "Jüdischer Central Verein," CVZ 13/8/1936.

[26] H. F, "Assimilation, Dissimilation und neue Assimilation, Eine Erwiderung," *JR* 12/3/1937. See, also, in this context: Anon. "Assimilierbarkeit," *JR* 12/2/1937; Hans Pomeranz, "Erneuerung der jüdischen Begriffsbildung, Mut zur Entwicklung," *JR* 13/5/1938.

The rapid deterioration in the situation of German Jews in 1938 had a clear effect on how the Jewish spokesmen referenced emigration and diaspora. Nobody wishes to emigrate, to leave his homeland and his parents' graves, wrote Manfred Swarsensky in an article for Passover in 1938, but the Jews today are facing a divine decree of *Lech Lecha* [go forth], which commands them to find a new space to preserve and develop their Judaism.[27] Rabbi Ignaz Maybaum, who expressed, in 1934, his concern about the future of Judaism in Germany, now framed overseas emigration and the development of new Jewish diasporas as a Jewish liberal religious mission:

> The promotion of the emigration overseas must be understood as a mission, a mission that should be seen as Jewish and holy in the same way that Zionists experience their activity in favor of the immigration to Palestine as a holy Jewish vocation […] The fate of Judaism depends on the question of how many Jews we will be able to bring to North and South America, to Australia and South Africa. […] The fate of Judaism depends on the turning of these new Jewish centers into halls of Torah. This is the mission of contemporary Jewry.[28]

Jewish history was entering a post-Zionist era, Maybaum added, an era in which the major challenge will be the formation of "global diaspora Judaism" *(Weltdiaspora des Judentums)*. It will carry the Western Jewish legacy, including the pluralistic modern German-Jewish heritage, to the new homelands.

Others who discussed emigration in 1938 referred to the establishment of the "House of Learning" *(Beth Midrash)* in Yavneh by Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai as the beginning of the change in Judaism to a scholarly culture based on centers that could be transferred from place to place – Babylon, Spain, Germany. Germany was the pioneer in advancing the scientific approach to the study of Judaism in the 19th century, one writer asserted, but it should be recognized that historical circumstances would no longer permit this activity to continue in Germany. Therefore, new centers of Jewish research should be established in other countries, primarily in Palestine and in the United States.[29]

[27] Manfred Swarsensky, "Pessach, Das Fest der Erinnerung," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin*, 17/4/1938.

[28] Ignaz Maybaum, "Ruf an Juden im Aufbruch," *CVZ*, 7/4/1938.

[29] Günter Looser "Die jüdische Wissenschaft, von der historischen Entwicklung und Zukunft," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin*, 31/7/1938.

Following November 1938 *(Kristallnacht)* the relatively free German-Jewish press, which had served as the framework for the discourse discussed here, was utterly silenced and the public debate has reached its end.

C

I will turn now to the Hungarian Jewish case. In April 1938, after the lower house of the Hungarian Parliament passed the First Jewish Act, Lajos Szabolcsi, editor of *Egyenlőség*, considered to be the most important periodical associated with the liberal Neolog stream, published an article entitled "We Grieve".[30] The new statute, Szabolcsi asserted, had brought seventy years of Emancipation to an end, and the Jews of Hungary should therefore mourn the end of the era of equality. *Egyenlőség* was founded by Szabolcsi's father, Miksa, was taken to be a symbol of Emancipation. In the spirit that was typical of the most important personalities in the liberal Neolog camp – although not of all of them, as we shall see – Szabolcsi stated that the Jews had no regrets about what had happened during the period that had now come to an end. Indeed, he added, from now on the Jews would have to turn more inward and become more of a "Jewish fate community" *(zsidó sorsközösség)*. This, however, should not in any way be construed as a return to the ghetto, which the Jews had resolutely chosen to leave seventy years earlier.

After the bill was passed into an act, Samu Stern (b. 1874), head of the Neolog community in Pest and president of the Neolog Communities of Hungary, published a pamphlet titled "The Jewish Question in Hungary," which may be considered the official response of the liberal Neolog Jewish leadership to the new act.[31] The pamphlet's importance with respect to this article is due to its systematic presentation of the Neolog conception of Hungarian-Jewish history. Stern's historical outlook was based on the premise that Jews were not recently-arrived migrants from abroad but were long-time residents of the homeland who had lived in Hungary before its conquest by the Magyar tribes in the 9th century. His essay stressed the Jews' loyalty and contribution to Hungary, expressed no criticism of their behavior, and even portrayed the Dual Monarchy period as a golden age, an almost unblemished era of harmony and tranquility. Even the Hungarian Anti-Semitism could not undermine his deep conviction in Hungary as the his-

[30] Lajos Szabolcsi, "Gyászolunk…," *Egyenlőség,* 14/4/1938.

[31] Samu Stern, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* [The Jewish Question in Hungary], Budapest, 1938. For a brief discussion of Stern's pamphlet, see: Nathaniel Katzburg, "Zionist Reactions to Hungarian Anti-Jewish Legislation, 1939–1942," *Yad Vashem Studies*, 16 (1984), p. 162.

torical Homeland of its Jews. Reflecting his reading of the situation in the spring of 1938, Stern portrayed medieval antisemitism as a movement of foreign ideas that had been imported to Hungary chiefly from Germany, where the rulers had repressed the Jews.[32]

A more critical attempt to explain the misfortune of Hungarian Jewry from a liberal Neolog viewpoint was made by Endre Sós, one of Budapest's outstanding Jewish essayists and journalists.[33] Sós based his assessment of the Hungarian Jewry's situation on the broader perspective of Central and East European Jewry. He described the time of his writing (1938) as a "storm zone" *(viharzóna)* and attributed the suffering of the Jews of Germany, Austria, Romania, Hungary, and other countries to the pagan menace that was threatening to take over all of Europe.

Sós depicted the crisis of Hungarian Jewry not only as the outcome of external pressure but also as an internal, primarily cultural, Jewish crisis. He therefore advised Hungarian Jews to build cultural lives of their own before even harder times came upon them, by bringing together the finest Hungarian-Jewish art and by working to promote it.[34] Sós's call for change was rooted in criticism of the course of Hungarian-Jewish history in the Emancipation period. He still viewed Hungary as the homeland of its Jews, but felt the Hungarian Jews should redefine their cultural orientation and lay the foundations for a cultural autonomy.

The similarity between Sós's vision of cultural revival and the Zionists' idea of cultural autonomy is apparent in an article by the Zionist essayist Lajos Fodor. Interestingly, Fodor stressed that the Zionist call for the rebirth of a Jewish national entity *(népiség)* in Hungary *should not* be interpreted as opposition to "Hungarian life".[35] Fodor expressed general criticism of the way Jews integrated into modern Western countries. He also questioned the assumption that the Jewish question could be resolved by relinquishing the national *(népi)* component of the Jews' identity. Nevertheless, *he did not call for uprooting the Jews from Europe, but rather demanded the creation of a new basis for Jewish life within the European surroundings*. In other words, he supported a redefintion of the Jewish diaspora, and not its abolishment.

[32] Similarly, Endre Sós maintained in 1937, in reference to the Nuremberg laws, that the disseminators of antisemitic propaganda in Hungary, from Istóczy in the nineteenth century to the Hungarian Fascists, were merely "peddlers of imported ideas"; Endre Sós, "A nürnbergi tölcsér", *Egyenlőség*, 1/9/1937.

[33] Endre Sós, *Becsapott ajtók előtt,* Budapest, 1938.

[34] Ibid., pp. 21–29.

[35] Lajos Fodor, "A zsidótörvény és a cionisták", *Múlt és Jövő* (June-July 1938), pp. 163–164.

The similarity – and difference – between the worldview and historical interpretations of the critical Neolog spokesmen and the Zionists was more clearly expressed in the writing of Endre Sós in the early 1940s. Sós identified with the fundamental values of the Neolog political culture and believed that the Jews were an integral part of the Hungarian nation. In 1940, he published a book on Jewish history in six Hungarian towns, emphasizing the contribution and deep involvement of the Jews in the history of these Hungarian towns. His complicated critical position was articulated in a lecture that he presented in 1941, in front of the members of the Magyar Cionista Szövetség [Hungarian Zionist Bond].[36]

Emancipation, which certain Zionists had come to underestimate, Sós continued, was fundamentally a positive historical development. Even the Zionists, he added, must recognize their debt to the political culture that originated in the 19th century: This era also laid the foundation for the rise of modern Zionist leadership, which consisted of many physicians and engineers, i.e., educated and modern persons.

Still, this historical path was also bound up with an error:

> The error was that European Emancipation, more accurately, the Emancipation in Eastern and Central Europe, liberated only the individual Jew but not Judaism. The American emancipation process made it possible, because in the New World the liberated Jew never strove to be liberated from his Jewish character. The European Emancipation was founded on an erroneous interpretation of the term assimilation and expected the Jews to alienate themselves, at least in part, from their Jewishness.[37]

As did certain German-Jewish liberal spokesmen in the 1930s, Sós distinguished between the positive aspects of assimilation – a natural and respected integration accompanied by a preservation of the basis of Judaism, which could continue to maintain Jewish life in the diasporic form – and its negative qualities, namely, the exaggerated and sometimes even distorted expressions of the "overassimilated" *(túlasszimilálódott)* Jewish life. This discussion about assimilation helped him to clarify this point to his Zionist listeners:

[36] Endre Sós, "Asszimiláció vagy cionizmus", *Múlt és jövő,* June 1941, pp. 85–86.

[37] Ibid., p. 86.

> Ninety percent of Hungarian Jews will be lying if they do not admit their attachment to the Hungarian nation […] but it is an error that these Jews, who are one hundred percent Hungarian in their spirit and nationality, should suppress their Jewish self-awareness and their historical consciousness […] the right, honest and respected position of assimilation is vital.[38]

Sós implied that the common denominator uniting his liberal non-Zionist views and Zionism was much broader-based than the disagreements. This was an exceptional position at the time, but foreshadowed post-Holocaust Jewish political discourse concerning the tension between the Land of Israel and the Jewish diaspora:

> The Hungarian Zionist Bond entitled [Sós's lecture] as "Assimilation or Zionism?" We should drop the question mark and the word "or". Assimilation and Zionism! Both are crucial. In our motherland – Zionism means that Jews here are more Jewish. In Palestine – the wandering Jews can declare themselves as a nation [*nemzet*] […] If this will be the case, Hungarian Jewry will weather the storm. [39]

The most systematic and comprehensive discussion by a Hungarian Zionist spokesman regarding the crisis of Hungarian and other European Jews in the early 1940s can be found in the publications of Ernő Marton, who was active in Kolozsvár (Cluj) in Transylvania.

In the essay *A magyar Zsidóság családfája* [The Origin of Hungarian Jewry], which appeared in Kolozsvár in 1941, Marton challenged the fundamental assumptions of the "homemaking myth" that Hungarian Jews had developed during the Emancipation. The crisis facing Hungarian Jewry, he argued in his introduction, was spiritual as well as physical. Among other things, it stemmed from the failure on the part of Hungarian Jews to realize what was taking place around them:

> There are only a few groups in the entire world whose self-consciousness is in such a bad state as ours, Hungarian Jews. We know so little about ourselves, and what we do know is, mostly, wretched and distorted. [40]

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ernő Marton, *A magyar Zsidóság családfája* [The Origin of Hungarian Jewry], Kolozsvár, 1941, pp. 3–4.

In his discussion of the origin of Hungarian Jews, Marton sharply disproved the myth that they were the offspring of the Khazars and that they had taken part in the conquest of the Hungarian motherland *(honfoglalás)* by the Magyar tribes in the late 9th century. Hungarian Jewry, Marton argued, originated with the massive waves of Jewish immigration, as an integral part of the Central European medieval Jewry. Later, after the liberation of Hungary from the Turks, modern Hungarian Jewry was recreated by various waves of immigration of Ashkenazi Jews from Central (Germany, Austria, and Moravia) and, primarily, Eastern Europe (Poland).[41] Here Marton challenged the tradition relating the unique origin and the fate of the Hungarian Jews, presenting them, instead, as an integral part of the "community of fate" *(sorsközösség)* of Central and Eastern European Jewry.

Marton, who called for a broader examination of the situation of the Jewish people, as we saw before, contended with this challenge in two other publications dating from 1941: *A Zsidó nép jövője* [The Future of the Jewish People]; and *A Zsidó nép világhelyzete 1941-ben* [The Worldwide Situation of the Jewish People in 1941]. Inspired by Dubnow's historical thought, Marton attempted to delineate in these essays the forms of regularity that characterize Jewish life in the Diaspora. The law of the exile in Jewish life *(gáluti lét törvényszerüsége)* shapes Jewish history in a cyclical course that periodically gets cut off by catastrophes. These catastrophes cause the end to the decline of a historical Jewish center – as the situation in 1941 clearly heralds the decline and ruin of the Jewish center in Europe. A broad look at Jewish history, from the exile by ancient Egypt and Rome, through the Crusades, the "Black Death", the expulsion from Spain (1492) and the Chmielnicki massacres (1648/9), shows, however, that, in spite of these catastrophes, it is not possible to destroy the Jewish people, as the decline of one Jewish center is always followed by the rise of a new one.[42]

Seeking to give his readers a broad picture of the situation of the Jewish people, Marton expansively related also to the problems of the Jewish communities in the United States and the Soviet Union. His conclusion, in both essays, was that only the establishment of a sovereign Jewish settlement in one country could

[41] Ibid., p. 24, and, more detailed, pp. 42–62.

[42] Ernő Marton, *A Zsidó nép jövője (a népi asszimiláció törvényszerüségei)* [The Future of the Jewish People], Kolozsvár, 1941, pp. 3–11. In the second essay, which was published in August 1941, two months after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, Marton anticipated the uprooting of millions of Jews from Europe in the wake of the war; see: Ernő Marton, *A zsidó nép világhelyzete 1941-ben* [The Worldwide Situation of the Jewish People in 1941], Kolozsvár, 1941, p. 23. In a later essay Marton proposed a summary of the life of the Jews in Europe as they neared their decline; see: Ernő Marton, "Europa és a zsidóság" [Europa and the Jewry], *Múlt és jövő*, October 1943, pp. 149–150.

put an end to the cyclical regularity of exile in Jewish life.[43] However, even during the darkest days of the Holocaust, he did not express the idea of the elimination of the diaspora, and his Zionist path still joined together the Jewish settlement in Palestine and the rehabilitation of diaspora Jewish life in the framework of a "new Emancipation":

> The new Emancipation, if it would seek to avoid the errors of the first one, should be deeply rooted in the principle of human fraternity. If there is a hope that majority and minority would be able to live peacefully side by side – and this is our belief – it would be materialized only on the foundation of mutual sincerity and openness. *The Jews would be able to live among the peoples only as a people* […] A new Emancipation can be possible only if there will be [in addition] *a political Jewish community,* in which Jews will live a fully independent national life [...] The setting up and the development of the Jewish state will grant the new Emancipation in the diaspora a new genuine foundation…[44]

It is noteworthy that Marton chose to use the term "new Emancipation," which had also been used by a variety of Jewish publicists in Germany during the first years of the Nazi period. The use of such a term proves that Marton was resistant to the idea of a "return to the ghetto" and was seeking, like Sós and other critical Neolog writers, for a new and better formula for Jewish integration in Hungary in addition to the foundation of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

Conclusion

The variety of ways in which Jewish spokespersons in Germany and Hungary came to terms with the fundamental questions of the Jewish future on the eve of the Holocaust demonstrate the tension between the diasporic legacy – the dispersal of the Jews in various countries of residence, which were viewed by many of their Jews as their homelands – on the one hand, and the vision of the Jewish national home in the promised land on the other. They also show, however, that this tension should not necessarily develop into a direct contradiction.

[43] In this period Marton devoted another essay to an analysis of the new Jewish settlement in Palestine and its significance for future world Jewry; see: Ernő Marton, *Mit nyújthat Palesztina a világ zsidóságának?* [What may Palestine Offer to the World Jewry?], Kolozsvár, 1941/1942.

[44] Ernő Marton, "Az első emancipáció a történelem mérlegén", in: Ernő Marton, Rezső Kasztner, Siegfried Róth, József Junger, *Az emancipáció multja és jövője, Négy tanulmány*, Kolozsvár, 1942, p. 46.

As we saw, even on the eve of the Holocaust, as the future horizon of Jewish life in their European countries of residence was very dark, the idea of Jewish diaspora continued to exist aside to the vision of Jewish national home. For the spokespersons discussed here the question where the Jews will live in the future – in the Land of Israel, in their European homeland or in a new diaspora – was a key issue in the determination of their Jewish self awareness. Many of them tended, as we saw, not to see it in a dichotomous way but rather realized in the midst of the Nazi era that the future of the Jews highly depends on the interaction between those of them who will live in the national home – later on the state of Israel – to the others, who will continue to live in the diaspora.

Hungarian Jews of Upper Hungary in Hungarian Public Life in Czechoslovakia (1918/19–1938)

Tamás Gusztáv Filep

It may be prudent to begin, the regrettable but unavoidable oversimplifications notwithstanding, by considering the political and ideological views and stereotypes regarding the Jews of Czechoslovakia, among them the Jews of Ruthenia (today the easternmost part of Ukraine) and the region that was known in Hungarian as "Felvidék" or Upper Hungary (practically the territory of the state of Slovakia today).

The first Republic of Czechoslovakia (1918–1938) qualified the Jewish community as an official nationality, and thus, according to certain interpretations of the term minority, its members became second-class citizens. According to the Preamble of the Constitutional Charter written by the revolutionary National Assembly, which was comprised solely of representatives of the "founding nation" (which in practical terms essentially meant Czechs and Slovaks), the people to whom the constitution referred were the "Czechoslovak nation."[1] Distinctions drawn on an ethnic basis served as part of a strategy for the survival of the Czechoslovak Republic: the decisive aim of introducing the category of Jewish nationality was to divide up the German and the Hungarian national minorities, since during national censuses the Jewish people of the occupied areas were *encouraged* or *pressured* to declare themselves members of the Jewish national minority, or were arbitrarily registered as such. Similarly, the census-takers endeavored to record Greek Catholics (Uniates) as Ruthenians, and Roma whose mother tongue was Hungarian were regarded as belonging to the Roma nationality [translator's note: the term Roma is a bit anachronistic in this context, since the term Gypsy was more prevalent at the time, but in the inter-

[1] See a detailed account of this in, for example, József Gyönyör: *Közel a jog asztalához: A csehszlovák állam kezdeti nehézségei, területi gyarapodása, ideiglenes alkotmánya, alkotmánylevele és annak sorsa* [Close to the Table of Justice: On the Initial Hardships, the Territorial Growth and the Temporary Constitution of the Czechoslovak State, Together with its Constitutional Charter and Its Fate]. Bratislava: Madách Könyv- és Lapkiadó, 1992.

ests of political correctness I use the term Roma in this article].[2] In the occupied areas the census forms were filled in by the people taking the census, not by the individuals who were being counted. In my view, in practical terms the recognition of the community represented by people of the Jewish faith as a nationality constituted a restriction for the Jewish people in all fields of life falling under the protection of the minority treaty, although given the aforementioned intentions of the state, it was undoubtedly better to be registered as Jewish than as Hungarian or German.

The pro-government Hungarian press of the period proclaimed that the Czechoslovak democracy would grant the Jewish citizens of the new Republic freedoms that "*kurzista*" (meaning: anti-Semite) Hungary refused to guarantee.

The members of the representatives of the Hungarian political opposition observed with great anxiety as the Jewish community broke away from the Hungarian ethnic minority, and their worries led some to arrive at the conclusion that they had been left in the lurch by the Jewish people. There were certainly some who were pleased with this situation, but the fundamental aim of the Hungarian opposition was to keep Hungarian speaking Jews within the Hungarian nation, rather than to exclude them. This was a logical strategy, since a greater number of ethnic inhabitants (or rather a larger proportional number) was of crucial importance when it came to the enforcement of rights regarding language use (which were based on percentages) and other related rights (such as the allotment of monies from state school budgets).

[2] These facts, which by now are common knowledge, figure in one of the earliest significant documents produced by the Hungarian Czechoslovak Branch of the League of Nations: "To diminish the numerical proportion of the Hungarians, new nationalities were invented. First and foremost, a thesis was established, according to which the people of Jewish faith constituted a separate Jewish nationality within the nation. However, the official functionaries adhered to this theorem only as far as the Jewish people acknowledged themselves as Hungarians. Those Jews who acknowledged themselves to be Slovaks were registered as such by the officials with pleasure. Some census-takers even asserted officially that they were only implementing a directive, according to which a Jewish person was to be registered either as a Slovak or as a Jew, but under no circumstances as a Hungarian. Hungarian Gypsies were treated in like manner. In their case the precept was more or less the same: those Gypsies, who were not Slovaks, could only be of a 'Roma' nationality." Excerpt from *A Csehszlovákiai Magyar Népszövetségi Liga memoranduma a Népszövetséghez* [Memorandum of the Hungarian Czechoslovak Branch of the League of Nations to the League of Nations]. Budapest: Oriens International Publishing and Distributing Stock Corporation, 1923. The same document contains a reference indicating that in Košice the people to be counted during the census were informed that under the terms of the Treaty of Trianon members of the Jewish community were not allowed to acknowledge themselves as Hungarians.

After the First Vienna Award came into force (in 1938 the Award sanctioned Hungary's annexation of a strip in the southern region of Slovakia, a territory with a Hungarian majority), the Hungarian government, or more specifically the Prime Minister Béla Imrédy considered the separation of the Jewish communities from the Hungarian nation a simple fact. He explained his views by alleging the impossibility of integration of Jews and contending that Jews were aliens to Hungarian society and the Hungarian nation alike. Andor Jaross, the leader of the Hungarian Party in the region and a politician who shared Imrédy's views, declared for the first time in a public meeting that he could count on his fingers those Jews who had remained faithful to the Hungarian people. In this context, this meant the opposition United Hungarian Party.

Naturally, prominent leaders of the Hungarian Jewish communities that again found themselves living within the borders of Hungary following the First Vienna Award, leaders who previously had taken part in Hungarian public life and to some extent had been active in politics as well, threw this assertion into question and took pains to refute Jaross's contention.

In the communist era (lasting between 1948 and 1990), the politics of the Hungarian opposition in Slovakia and the political life of Hungary in general were officially considered unified. In this period anti-Semitism was regarded as a decisive factor of the pre-communist era, and it was considered inconceivable that the Jewish people would have taken part readily and of their own free will in the public life of the Hungarian minority, not to mention its cultural life.

Recently, however, a new interpretation has gained ground according to which within the democratic political framework the Jewish people took advantage of the opportunity to choose their identity freely and thereby developed diverse and often divergent identities. Those who previously had "assimilated"[3] retained their identities as Hungarians, while others became Zionists, thus swelling the members of the "national Jewish community," and at the same time many assimilated to the nominal cultural nation of the new Republic, i.e. Czechoslovak.

The Jewry of Slovakia and Ruthenia not only played a significant role in maintaining Hungarian culture in the new political constellation, but also had a proportionately larger presence than has hitherto been acknowledged or known in Hungarian opposition politics and the social organizations tied to the Hun-

[3] I use quotation marks here because in my view the term "an assimilated person" should only refer to people for whom the process of assimilation has come to completion. Many of the participants in the early 20th-century social movements who were of Slovak, Romanian, German, Jewish, etc. origins had been born as Hungarians or lived in Hungarian culture from birth.

garian opposition parties, not to mention Hungarian public life. I do not call into question the fact that after Czechoslovakia was established, new forms of identity came into being, long-standing versions of identity which either had been latent or had not been taken seriously became more pronounced, and a large group of people were affected by a kind of renascence of Jewish cultural and ethnic identity.

In support of the interpretation of history according to which the Jewry broke away from the Hungarian community, scholars usually refer to the Czechoslovak census. These data, however, are widely recognized as unreliable. Others have examined the results concerning the support the Hungarian opposition parties enjoyed among voters.

The fact that on the occasion of the first Czechoslovak national census, in Slovakia and Ruthenia 150,000 people were registered as belonging to the Jewish nationality and fewer than 30,000 Jews declared themselves to be Hungarian should not be seen as a sign of the indisputable or for that matter final sign of the separation of the Jewry from the Hungarian community. (One has to take into consideration that numbers are subject to change depending on time and shifting circumstances: there are data which are more favorable regarding Hungarians, although only after the First Vienna Award, and the press of 1937–38 also shows an increasingly visible commitment on behalf of the Jewry to the Hungarian cause.)

First and foremost, the aim of the Czechoslovak national census of 1921 was to demonstrate that the majority of the population belonged to the nominal nation of the (nominal) nation state. Complaints submitted afterwards and official reports demonstrate fairly clearly that nationality was recorded arbitrarily, not only in the case of numerous members of the aforementioned minorities, but in Hungarian areas as well. The census takers succeeded in recording many of those Hungarians who could also speak Slovak as Slovak citizens with the help of underhanded contrivances, using the power of pressure and intimidation, filling in the census sheets in pencil, refusing to enter the nationality declared by the individual who was asked, analyzing the alleged etymology of a name as a basis for the nationality of an individual, etc. In the same manner, applications submitted later were rejected and the appellants penalized. The data was only re-examined when the results were considered unfavorable from the standpoint of the state. For example in Dubovec [Dobóca; translator's note: city names are given in Slovak first and in Hungarian in parentheses], one of the Hungarian

villages in Gömör County, the first attempt to gather census data produced only one person of Slovak nationality, whereas by the time a second attempt was made the number of Slovaks had grown to over 110.[4]

It is of crucial significance regarding the matter of censuses that Hungarian and Czechoslovak censuses applied different concepts and were based on different questions. In Hungary the questions addressed the mother tongue of the population (1910), whereas in Czechoslovakia in 1921 the question concerned nationality and only later, in 1930, mother tongue. Jews were the only people who were able to declare themselves members of a national minority without speaking the language of that national minority, Yiddish or Hebrew.

The terms "nation" and "nationality," as they were used in the Czechoslovak Republic, are essentially incomparable with the notion of the Hungarian political nation. This is why there may well be no inconsistency between an individual describing him- or herself in 1910 as Hungarian (that is, a person whose mother tongue is Hungarian) within the framework provided by the concept of the "political nation" (in principle unrelated to ethnicity), and the same person describing him- or herself as of Jewish nationality in 1920. Those people who suddenly found themselves living within the borders of the newly created Czechoslovak state as a consequence of the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 were essentially removed by the political changes from the Hungarian political nation. One could of course raise relevant questions regarding *how* mother tongue was defined at the time of the census of 1910. The real extent of dissimilation could be established only if we had data concerning the number of people who had considered themselves Hungarian before this census.

Mother tongue itself, however, is not an exclusive constituent of identity. One could refer to German speaking inhabitants of Bratislava [Pozsony] who did not know a single word of Hungarian but nonetheless insisted on being counted as Hungarians.

I do not consider the complete break of the Zionist community from the Hungarian nation as entirely unambiguous or self-evident either. There is evidence of a controversy which took place in the press of Bratislava in 1918, a year before the occupation, in which a Zionist leader characterized the adherents of Zionism as part of Hungarian society. Similarly, a Sub-Carpathian political party

[4] A detailed account of the national censuses is to be found in Gyula Popély's monograph: *Népfogyatkozás. A csehszlovákiai magyarság a népszámlálások tükrében, 1918–1945* [National Eclipse: Hungarians in Czechoslovakia according to the National Censuses, 1918–1945]. Foreword by Iván Gyurcsík. Budapest: Írók Szakszervezete Széphalom Könyvműhely–Regio. Hungaro–Bohemico–Slovaca 4, 1991. Reference to the results of Dubovec is made on page 57. The same case is mentioned on page 6 of the Memorandum of the Hungarian Czechoslovak Branch of the League of Nations.

document dating from the 1920s also summoned the Zionists *expressis verbis* to take part, as constituent members of Hungarian society, in the advancement of national consensus. These documents are in harmony with the recollections of a Jewish person who was interviewed by Éva Kovács in her book on the Jewish population of Košice [Kassa]: "[d]espite Zionism we were very much Hungarians. [...] Here in Slovakia Hungarian identity was preserved by the Jewish people, even among other members of our religious community we spoke only Hungarian."[5]

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the arguments that were made in support of the contention that the Jewry of the region betrayed the Hungarians in 1938–39 should be considered alongside other relevant data. The changes that took place in the identity of the Jewry cannot be dealt with and assessed independently of the demonstrable drop in the number of Hungarians of the Christian faith. At the time the weekly paper *Szabadság* [Freedom] referred to a semi-official record accompanied by statistical data, according to which "as opposed to the censuses taken before the occupation of Upper Hungary, *there were 90,000 Jews, 175,000 Catholics, 37,000 Lutherans and 15,000 Calvinists who did not acknowledge themselves as Hungarians*. Thus weakness, fear, and the tendency to accommodate – *were not specific to a particular faith*."[6] Each denomination suffered losses, and while it is true that according to these figures the "identity change" that the Jewish population underwent was much larger in proportion to the number of its members compared to the losses the other denominations suffered, it is nonetheless worth noting that in the case of other denominations separation from the Hungarian community meant assimilation (or re-assimilation) into the Slovak community. In contrast, assimilation into the Slovak cultural community was far less characteristic of the Jewry.

This is also significant because Hungarian–Jewish cooperation required not only an attachment on the part of the Jewry to the Hungarian cultural nation, but also the commitment on the part of Hungarians to a framework that allowed for political collaboration and unity among the "natives," in other words the Hungarian and Jewish communities that had been in the region long before the political changes of 1918–19. To the best of my knowledge, the nation-wide or regional Jewish parties either failed to organize the Jewish communities politi-

[5] Éva Kovács: *Felemás asszimiláció. A kassai zsidóság a két világháború között (1918–1938)* [Ambiguous Assimilation: The Jewry of Košice in the Interwar Period]. Somorja–Dunaszerdahely: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet–Lilium Aurum Könyvkiadó, 2004. Nostra Tempora, 9, p. 146. Excerpt from the interview with Jenő Silber.

[6] (S.): "A Felvidék Odisszeája. Húsz esztendő őszinte története" [The Odyssey of Upper Hungary: The Truthful History of Twenty Years]. *Szabadság,* 12, 1939, p. 2.

cally or were unable to achieve substantial political advancements on behalf of these communities; until 1929 they did not even have parliamentary representation. Conversely, as scholarship has shown, the local Jewish parties, which were usually set up in townships in an ad hoc manner, in some areas could cooperate and moreover even vote together with the local Hungarian parties.

The fact that for a long time there was little scholarship on the participation of the Jewry in the life of the Hungarian community has to a certain extent been due to the susceptibility of scholars to see Hungarian–"Czechoslovak" relations on the basis of the Czech interpretation of the situation at the time. According to the Czech point of view, the democratic, liberal-minded and socially sensitive nature of so-called "Czechoslovak" politics, ideology and even general sentiment was opposed to the feudal, conservative, venal and to some extent anti-Semitic attitude of Hungarian society; a fairly schematic viewpoint. Similarly, after the Second World War, the Munich Agreement of September 1938 (which transferred the Sudetenland, at that time belonging to Czechoslovakia, to Germany) and later the First Vienna Award (November 1938) were interpreted as intermediary phases in the Nazi rearrangement of Europe. According to common opinion of the minorities at the time, however, these political compromises by no means represented preparations for a potential war, but on the contrary, were attempts to avert the war that seemed increasingly imminent. In addition, they were seen as a kind of recognition of the notion of national self-determination enunciated in Wilson's fourteen points and adopted as the principle of statehood across Europe. Moreover, at the time of the First Vienna Award Czechoslovakia was no longer a democratic state, but rather one that was turning into a totalitarian state in the Czech and the Slovak areas.[7] By this time both the Slovak and the Czech governments had already taken the preliminary steps in restricting the rights of the Jewish people. Without overrating the importance of the data, I would like to call attention to the fact that at the time people considered "Slovak Jews" (we know no more specific information regarding their identities) met with Hungarian politicians to inquire as to what fate would await them were they to return to Hungary. As Mária Ormos observes, the answer they received from Miklós Kozma, commissioner of Sub-Carpathia, was that "their return could take place only 'in the spirit of autonomy,' which would also imply that

[7] "Dušan Kováč offers a detailed description of this historical situation. "Subsequent to Munich, political changes in Czechoslovakia took a direction towards strikingly Rightist and authoritative regimes. The Parliament in Prague did not meet after November [1938] , the president was vested with wide spheres of authority, Leftist parties were banned and increasingly fascist tendencies came to the forefront." Dušan Kováč: *Szlovákia története* [The History of Slovakia]. Translated into Hungarian by Judit Mayer, László G. Kovács and Ildikó H. Tóth. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2001, p. 201.

the anti-Jewish law would not automatically apply to the Jewish people of the region [i.e. of Sub-Carpathia]. The extent to which they would later be included in the category that, in the spirit of the notion of the front-line soldier, ensured the Jewry of Hungary complete rights and exempted them from the Jewish laws would depend on their subsequent conduct."[8] Alas we know what became of these communities.

How did the Jews, particularly those who considered themselves Hungarian, perceive the framework offered to them by the Czechoslovak Republic in comparison with the situation in Hungary? It is quite clear that the first phase of the course taken by the Hungarian government (and reflected also by organs of Hungarian society), which was characterized by anti-Semitic slurs and acts, undeniably had an alienating effect, but at the same time the press of the Hungarian opposition was somehow or other able to facilitate political consolidation. It is important to note that this press consisted of newspapers and periodicals some of the key journalists of which were of Jewish origin: Miksa Szepessi at *Kassai Napló* [Journal of Košice], Illés Köves at *Kassai Újság* [Košice News], Albert Gergely at *Őslakó* [Native, a publication in Munkács, today the city of Mukachevo], Dezső Sándor at *Érsekújvár és vidéke* [Nové Zámky and Its Environs], and many of the contributors to the *Prágai Magyar Hírlap* [Hungarian Herald of Prague]. Indeed the Hungarian inhabitants of Upper Hungary did not have to identify themselves with the aims of the Hungarian government in order to be able to regard themselves as members of the Hungarian community. They could also identify themselves with the liberal opposition, and thus follow the example of the members of the editorial staff at *Kassai Napló* [Journal of Košice, founded by Freemasons]. The people active in the publication of this daily were affiliated with the Party of Hungarian Justice, which (although one finds little mention of this in recent secondary literature) was to a great extent supported by Jewish citizens,[9] and they also were active in the Hungarian party block. The general editor of *Kassai Napló*, Miksa Szepessi, was personally involved in the political life of the

[8] Mária Ormos. *Egy magyar médiavezér: Kozma Miklós. – Pokoljárás a médiában és a politikában (1919–1941)* [A Hungarian Chief of Mass Media: Miklós Kozma. – His Descent into Hell in Media and Politics (1919–1941)]. Vol. II. Budapest: PolgART, 2000, pp. 547–548.

[9] A concrete reference to this is found in one of György Urr's works, for example, which was published in Košice in 1939: "In 1921 the third Hungarian party of Košice came into being, the Party of Hungarian Justice, the role of which was to win the support of the Jewish citizens of the town for the Hungarians." György Urr: *Kisebbségi sorsunk húsz esztendejéből, 1918–1938* [Twenty Years of Our Lot as a Minority (1918–1938)]. Košice: Grafika Press, 1939, p. 13. According to the author, however, the Party of Hungarian Justice failed to perform its duty as an intermediary between the Jewish and the Hungarian community.

time: he was a member of the directing board of the Hungarian parties. Afterwards, the Party of Hungarian Justice and the Smallholders Party fused into the Hungarian National Party (the other large party representing Hungarian interests was the Provincial Christian-Socialist Party). The Party of Hungarian Justice was relatively small, but most of its members were part of the intelligentsia or residents of urban communities. (Presumably it had easier access to capital than the Smallholders Party.)

In the First Republic of Czechoslovakia, amidst the fairly recurrent changes of governments, there was one thing that proved to be long-lasting, namely the centralism that characterized the governments. It was accompanied by the concomitant symptoms of the colonization of Slovakia, the demolition of its industry and the asymmetrical distribution of tariffs and taxes between the Czech and the Slovak areas (these terms, colonization, demolition of industry, asymmetrical taxation, were all used by the opposition parties at the time). Following the occupation, members of Slovak society endured numerous grievances, and the Jewry was no exception: the fusillades, the treason trials, later the creation of a network of informers, the internment and expulsion of people (including Jews) from the country, the nationalistic agrarian reform, the assurance of a majority for the party in central power in local bodies of government, and the reassignment of all but four cities to the former category of large villages, these were all acts and events that had a serious impact on the lives of members of Jewish communities as well. It is also worth noting that the national censuses of 1919, 1921 and 1930 did not measure the same population, since many Jews left the country for Hungary as a result of resettlement and expulsion and Jewish immigration from the east never ceased. Furthermore, Jewish communities became targets of anti-Semitic mass demonstrations both in the Czech region and in Slovakia, and certain organs of the Slovak press frequently alleged, even in the 1920s and 1930s, that before the Treaty of Trianon, particularly in the area located north of the border between the Slovak and Hungarian languages, the presence of Jewish people had served as a factor that had furthered the attempts of the Hungarian government to pressure citizens to adopt Hungarian culture and regard themselves as Hungarian.

However, historical data have proved that the role of Jews in the "Hungarianizing effect" was largely unintentional. According to the Hungarian interpretation of the period, the government recognized the Jewish people as a nationality only in the case of the national census, but in the dispositions pertaining to the elections of representatives and senators it "expressly refused to recognize them as a group with a separate national character." Thus, the number of surplus votes given in favor of the Jewish parties only added to the number of votes cast for

the government. Taking the elections of 1925 as an example, the United Jewish Party, which at the time did not demonstrate any intent to support the government whatsoever, due to the fact that it failed to obtain any mandates, added almost 99,000 votes to the number of votes that had been cast for the government.

This argument was one of the strategies with which the Hungarians intended to integrate the Jewish people or induce them to join a coalition or cooperate. According to law, the right of the minorities to use their mother tongue could take effect only if the number of the members of a given minority exceeded a certain percentage of the total population of a certain area (i.e. of a specific judicial district). Due to this legislation, after the national census of 1930, members of the Hungarian community forfeited their right to the official use of their mother tongue in three cities out of the four that retained their status: Bratislava, Košice, and Uzhgorod [Ungvár; today the city is part of Ukraine]. Citizens of Jewish nationality whose mother tongue was Hungarian were not counted as Hungarians, although, as Ernő Flachbarth observes, this was one of the many practices that violated the treaty for the protection of minorities. In one of his studies, Flachbarth refers to the convention concluded by the Allied and Associated Powers and the Czechoslovak Republic. Paragraph 4 of Article 7 clearly states that the right to the official use of language "is the due of persons belonging to language minorities, even in those cases when – either owing to their voluntary reports, or contrary to their remonstrances – the Czechoslovak population census keeps records of them as members of other racial or national minorities. This needs to be accentuated with special emphasis, because the Czechoslovak public administration and jurisdiction consistently refuses to offer language rights to those Czechoslovak citizens who identify themselves as Jewish. [...] Consequently, under the terms of the convention, language rights are due to Jews whose mother tongue is either Hungarian or German, even if on the occasion of the population census they were recorded as people of Jewish nationality, since their tongues are distinct from the Czech language as well."[10] Thus by denying the minorities these rights, the Republic attached a legal consequence to the census that contravened the passage of the convention.

[10] Flachbarth Ernő: *A csehszlovákiai népszámlálások és a felvidéki kisebbségek nyelvi jogai* [National Censuses in Czechoslovakia and Minority Language Rights in Upper Hungary]. Pécs: Dunántúl Pécsi Egyetemi Könyvkiadó és Nyomda R.-T., 1935. Felvidéki Tudományos Társaság kiadványai [Publications of the Upper Hungarian Scientific Society]. Series 1, 1, pp. 9–10.

The only city where the right to use Hungarian was retained was Mukachevo. What is more, this was specifically the consequence of campaigning by Jewish citizens. The situation, however, is more complex than this might suggest. Had more Jews declared themselves to be Hungarian, the percentage of Hungarians would have been far greater than the census indicates (a number just over 20 percent). After the census had been taken, the authorities wanted to use threats to make the Jews see reason, that is, not to declare themselves members of the Hungarian national minority. Jewish people were summoned to take language examinations and were penalized. The authorities were still unable, however, to reduce the percentage of people registered as Hungarian to less than the "magic" twenty percent (official minority language use was granted only if the percentage of the members of a certain minority exceeded twenty percent of the total population).

After the re-annexation of Upper Hungary (November 1938) and the proclamation of the Second Anti-Jewish Law (May 1939), anonymous representatives of the Hungarian Jews formerly living in Slovakia sought to remind the general public of Hungary in a pamphlet of those instances when the Jewish people had demonstrated their identification and solidarity with the Hungarian ethnic minority. The publication, entitled *Igazságot a felvidéki zsidóságnak!* [Justice for the Jews of Upper Hungary!], is hardly ever mentioned in secondary literature. Certainly the fact that it is little known and only a few copies survive has played a role in this, but it may also be due to the assumptions of historians dealing with the subject, who take for granted that for understandable reasons the compilers of the work exaggerated the role of the Jewish community. In my view, they would only have been able to do so in one manner: the text is comprised of examples instead of systematic analyses, and the examples in question may be suitable for generalizations favorable for the Jewish people. The end of the introductory part of the pamphlet makes this quite evident: "[t]he Jewish inhabitants of Upper Hungary did not have an inventory at hand concerning their deeds and worthiness; they did not expect that for them the joyous liberation would result in incriminations and reckonings of accounts. They did not prepare to give evidence in support of alibis, for they never thought of themselves as guilty. Nevertheless, for the sake of historical truth, we feel prompted to relate the following."[11] It also follows from the prevailing circumstances that the editors had to collect data in haste in support of their arguments.

[11] *Igazságot a felvidéki zsidóságnak!* [Justice for the Jews of Upper Hungary!]. Budapest, 1939, p. 6.

I am convinced that the authors of the pamphlet were not in a position to declare anything that their contemporaries would have been able to confute. Consequently, they had to consider seriously what should be included in the text. Furthermore, when for instance they included the numbers or proportions of Jews in Hungarian political parties in several settlements, they had to rely on party records and lists of names, or possibly were able to obtain information from the (Jewish or non-Jewish) members and leaders of local party organs.

The authors also make mention of the fact that it was reserve officers of Jewish ancestry who during the Czech occupation of Upper Hungary, which began in December 1918, organized the resistance and the liberation of previously occupied cities, townships and villages of northern Hungary. The pamphlet also commemorates the war dead of Jewish origin who lost their lives during the Hungarian counteroffensive, which took place in the spring of 1919. There is one related subject of which no mention is made in the book, but the press at the time did not let it escape attention. During the first period the occupying forces and authorities interned many people, including many Jews, in Czech lands, including for instance the leaders of the Neolog community in Bratislava.[12] Similarly, as one can read in organs of the media from the time of the Károlyi government in Hungary (a short-lived government that was in power immediately following the end of the First World War), pogroms took place in areas inhabited by Slovaks as early as the Aster Revolution of 1918.

If I myself have understood the pamphlet correctly, its authors intended their audience to consider, with regards to the "fidelity" of the Jewry to the Hungarian nation, the conduct evidenced south of the border between the Hungarian and Slovak languages, in other words in areas in which Hungarian was predominant. Nonetheless, in the chapter in which they allude to the viewpoint regarded as widespread in the Slovak press, according to which Jewish Hungarians were the most intransigent adherents to the national cause, they refer to articles that suggest that the cities north of the border between the two languages retained some Hungarian quality specifically because of the presence of Jews. For instance on the streets one heard only Hungarian.

It is worth offering some of the citations from the pamphlet. For instance, in a 1921 issue of *Trenčianské noviny* an author complained, "Where the deuce did this great number of Hungarians spring from, this is what we ask, since according

[12] Concerning the internments see Tamás Gusztáv Filep's *Főhatalomváltás Pozsonyban 1918–1920. Események, történések egy hírlap közleményeinek tükrében* [Shift of Supremacy in Bratislava (1918–1920): Events and Occurrences as Seen through the Announcements of a Newspaper]. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010, pp. 91–109. Mention is made of the leaders of the religious community of Bratislava on p. 105.

to the statistical data the entire number of the Hungarian population of Trenčín [Trencsén] does not exceed 375." (They find the answer to this rhetorical question in the 1,500 Jews living in the city.)

A 1938 issue of *Novosti*, a semi-official pro-government paper, offers another example, in this case at the prompting of the proclamation of Group Number 188 of the Slovak National League in Košice: "It is the fault of the Jews that they use the Hungarian language in the public sphere: in the street, in shops and in trains, by which they give our lives and our towns a Hungarian or in some instances German quality."

Finally, the pamphlet cites a leaflet of the Slovak National Party from 1938: "[i]t is primarily the Jews who agitate the most assertively in support of the reannexation of Upper-Hungary."[13]

"Justice for the Jews of Upper Hungary!" also deals with the role the Jewish people played in Hungarian political party life. It is perhaps not widely known that a number of Jewish people filled important leading positions in various parties. Let me mention the names of some of these individuals, not necessarily taken from the pamphlet itself. Sándor Grósz was one of the chief organizers of the Party of Hungarian Justice; it was he who read out the proclamation written on behalf of the citizens during the founding meeting. The president of the religious community of Košice, Dr. Ignác Hercz, became the national solicitor and one of the vice-presidents of the Hungarian National Party, and in October 1938 he was appointed as member of the presidential council of the Hungarian

[13] *Igazságot a felvidéki zsidóságnak!* [Justice for the Jews of Upper Hungary!]. Budapest, 1939, pp. 26, 28, 33. Another citation about the town of Mihalovce (Nagymihály) from a few years later offers evidence of similar anti-Semitism in the Republic of Slovakia (1939–1944): "[i]f the Jews did not speak Hungarian in this city, one would barely hear a single word of Hungarian. They are again forbidding the Jews to speak Hungarian, but in vain. If the Hungarians judged the Jewish people living in Upper Hungary according to the number of the Hungarian books found in our houses, they would presumably have gotten a very different picture than the one they arrived at on the basis of the statements made by people like Jaross. – Books mean more than flags, flags become frayed, but the letters of a book endure even when the pages have ripped. One can no more trace the paths of words and letters in the human heart than one can follow the path of the eagle in the skies, but both touch on the infinite." The author attached a footnote to Jaross's name: "Andor Jaross played an important role in the public life of Slovakia, and following the disintegration of the CSR [Czechoslovak Republic] he became a minister in Hungary; as a ranting fascist, he was sentenced to death by the People's Tribunal in Budapest after the city's liberation [by the Soviet Army]." Erzsi Szenes: *A lélek ellenáll. Napló és versek* [The Soul Resists: Diary and Poems]. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1966, p. 178. Historians have suggested that the fact that Andor Jaross, Minister of Interior in the Government of Döme Sztójay (22nd March 1944–29th August 1944), was drawn to the far Right is explained in part by his relationship with Béla Imrédy, which grew increasingly strong after the fall of 1938.

National Council, consisting of five people. The Party intended to send another vice-president, Dr. Béla Halmi, who was also a citizen of Košice, to parliament as well. The leader of the Hungarian party in Prešov [Eperjes] was Mór Rosenberg. Dr. Albert Gergely was considered the leader of the Hungarians of Mukachevo. Sándor Fried was the Hungarian deputy mayor of Mukachevo. Ödön Tarján was the general manager of *Prágai Magyar Hírlap* [Hungarian Herald of Prague], a newspaper of central importance. He also served as a leading economic expert of the whole Hungarian National Party until he had to leave for Hungary because of a matter concerning a government statute. There were permanently five or six Jewish members in the presidium and in the leading committee of the Hungarian National Party. Let me add that perhaps it is not only these names that bear importance in their own right, but also the fact that the persons referred to were usually supported by large numbers of people from the Hungarian Jewish communities in their cities.

According to the pamphlet, in numerous cities the Jewish people took a more active and prominent part in Hungarian party politics than their numbers as a proportion of the total population would suggest. As evidence of this, the authors refer to the nomination papers and registers of the candidates in the case of the Czechoslovak national assembly elections of 1925, 1929 and 1935 and the municipal elections of 1932. Let me mention two examples to illustrate this: in 1923, of the 204 members of the United Civic Parties of Košice, 162 were Jewish. In the municipal elections of 1932, of the 144 nominator members of the Hungarian National Party, 46 were of Jewish origin and 22 of the 77 candidates were Jewish as well.

The United Hungarian Parties of Košice obtained far more votes than they would have merely on the basis of the number of Hungarian inhabitants counted at the time of the census. The Jewish parties, in contrast, did not get even half of the votes one would have expected had one merely considered the number of Jewish inhabitants according to the census results. As the data of 1937 also demonstrate, the support the Hungarian parties enjoyed did not diminish after 1933.

The authors of the pamphlet also list some large towns and cities where the number of the Jewish members of certain Hungarian parties either reflected the proportional number of the Jewish people within society or exceeded the number of non-Jews. There were also instances in which the Jews and non-Jews formed a well-functioning party block, or the Jewish and the Hungarian parties cooperated in city committees. Such was the case in several towns now belonging to Slovakia, including Rožňava [Rozsnyó], Jelšava [Jolsva], Levice [Léva], Hurbanovo [Ógyalla] and Nové Zámky [Érsekújvár]. In Nové Zámky it was because

of Jewish members of the body of representatives that the official language used in the town hall remained Hungarian, as was also the case in Galanta [Galánta]. As for the city of Komárno [Komárom], Jenő Fried, one of the vice-presidents of the Jókai Society (which was named after the 19th-century Hungarian author Mór Jókai), managed to achieve widespread cooperation between the Hungarian parties (the Christian Socialist, the Hungarian National and the Hungarian Agricultural Party) and the Jewish Party of the city in matters concerning the Hungarian language and Hungarian culture. In Tornaľa [Tornalja], the president of the Jewish religious community and a few of its members were among the founders of the local branch of the Hungarian National Party. In Uzhhorod, according to the minutes of the October 10th, 1933 meeting, one of the leading members of the Hungarian party, himself Jewish, made the suggestion that Hungarian should be retained as the official language of the city regardless of the census returns, and he also insisted that the laws offered the means to do this.

In various towns and cities, such as Košice and Levice, members of the Jewish communities served as leaders and supporters of Hungarian sports organizations, where 50 percent (or more) of the members were Jewish as well. Although the pamphlet does not make mention of Mukachevo in this regard, on the basis of the notices announced in *Őslakó* [Native], a city journal, it seems probable that the circumstances there were much the same.

Jews were particularly prominent in many of the Hungarian cultural organizations, such as the Hungarian Cultural Association of Slovakia. The National Hungarian Society for the Dramatic Arts was founded by Jews living in Košice, and the vice-president was also Jewish, and it was usually members of the Jewish communities who provided the theatrical groups with financial support. The Kazinczy Society of Košice (named after Ferenc Kazinczy, a 19th-century Hungarian poet, author and translator and also a prominent figure of the language reform), the third largest organization dedicated to the promotion of cultural education (after the Toldy Circle of Bratislava and the Jókai Association of Košice) had numerous members of the Jewish communities among its leaders and in the directorship of its publishing house – alongside Andor Jaross and József Szent-Iványi (the organizer and the first leader of the Hungarian National Party).

Of the leading daily papers, *Kassai Napló* [Journal of Košice] and *Kassai Újság* [Košice News] were published in large part thanks to the contributions and generosity of members of the Jewish communities, and according to the pamphlet the majority of the shareholders and even (allegedly) subscribers of the central Hungarian daily paper of the opposition, *Prágai Magyar Hírlap* [Hungarian Herald of Prague], were also Jewish. It is not immediately apparent how the authors

actually arrived at their conclusions regarding the proportion of the subscribers, but the proportion of the founding shareholders can be determined on the basis of the relevant documents.

As the language of education, Hungarian was usually retained in the case of the Jewish denominational schools, at the very most with the occasional establishment of a Slovak school class due to the pressure of the authorities. Hungarian continued to be used in the religious communities, both as a written and spoken language. The pamphlet mentions examples in various towns and cities, including Dunajská Streda [Dunaszerdahely], Komárno, Érsekújvár, Galánta, Léva, Šahy [Ipolyság], Lučenec [Losonc] and Košice.

Members of the Jewish community who worked in autonomous public bodies also continued to serve Hungarian interests, whether as representives of the Hungarian party or the local Jewish agricultural party. Regarding this matter, the pamphlet quotes as evidence examples from Galanta, Nové Zámky, Štúrovo [Párkány], Léva, Šahy, Rožňava, Košice, Uzhgorod and Mukachevo. The authors put particular emphasis on the case of Rimavská Sobota [Rimaszombat], where the majority of the Jewish members of the body of representatives functioned as members of the Hungarian National Party under the leadership of senator József Törköly, and the local Jewish party, which was set up in an ad hoc manner, cooperated with them. The authors also touch on the fact that the Slovak newspapers responded with invectives when the chief rabbi voted for the Hungarian National Party.

Thus, the considerable support the Hungarian parties enjoyed during the last municipal elections (in some cases the number of votes greatly exceeded the official number of the Hungarian inhabitants living in the given town or city) is presumably in part (or for the most part) attributable to the support of members of the Jewish communities.

Finally, let me allude to an anecdote: when in 1938 it seemed for a moment that Bratislava might be re-annexed by Hungary, Jenő Stern, a soldier from Dunajská Streda on duty in the city, hoisted a red, white, and green flag, the colors of the Hungarian flag, to the roof of his barracks. Allegedly he was sentenced to death, and it was only thanks to the assistance of János Esterházy (a member of the Parliament) that he was spared.

The pamphlet does not attach great importance to the large number of Jews who, as authors, took part in the cultural and literary life of the era. This might not be remarkable in itself, since it was a generally accepted phenomenon. It is worth mentioning, however, that literary historians have come to consensus

regarding the prominent importance of poets such as Imre Forbáth, Dezső Vozári and Erzsi Szenes and prose writers Pál Neubauer, Piroska Szenes and Viktor Egri, who are considered among the ten or fifteen most significant authors of the era. One of the most important scholarly oeuvres of the period is that of historian Andor Sas, who was officially acknowledged as Jewish by nationality. Sas may well have been compelled to declare himself Jewish by nationality, because as an emigrant from Hungary he faced the possibility of expulsion from the country, and he sought to avoid any unnecessary confrontations with the authorities.

As I hope is clear, there is a great deal of scholarly and historical work to be done on these aspects of political, national, and religious identity and allegiance in Czechoslovakia in the interwar period, and there are, moreover, many sources, at least many written sources. Some documents have come to light that offer a different picture of the situation than the one I have sketched here. These should be subjects of careful study as well. At the moment no repertory of the leading Hungarian daily and weekly papers of the first Republic of Czechoslovakia has been compiled, or at least no such compilation has been published. This makes any investigation concerning the history of the Hungarian ethnic minority of Czechoslovakia somewhat limited in its perspective. It is high time to consider the hundreds of articles found in the press of the time touching on this important subject.

Translated by Eszter Krakkó

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From Hungarian to Jew: Debates Concerning the Future of the Jewry of Transylvania in the 1920s

Attila Gidó

This essay offers a discussion of the context of the dispute regarding what was referred to as the "Jewish Path" in Transylvania following the First World War. The debate was held in the columns of the major Jewish and Hungarian newspapers and journals of Transylvania in 1927. The controversy originated in a report issued by the *Népies Irodalmi Társaság* [Folkish Literary Society] located in Budapest, which was entrusted with organizing financial support for the Hungarian institutions of Transylvania. The Society informed István Bethlen, the Hungarian Prime Minister at the time, of its worries concerning the future of the Transylvanian Jewish community after the 1924 general assembly of the National Hungarian Party in Romania, which took place in Brassó (Brasov). Its principal concern was that in time the members of the Hungarian-speaking Jewish communities of Transylvania would lose contact with their cultural ties to the Hungarian nation. On the basis of the contributions to the debate of the general assembly, taking the events that occurred after 1918 in Romania and specifically in Transylvania into consideration, the Society saw two possible prospects for the future. The Transylvanian Jewish community either would begin to assimilate and adopt the culture of the Romanian majority or it would become an independent national minority.[1] The same questions were raised three years later, in 1927, but this time they were raised by members of Jewish circles. The debate was ignited by a newspaper article written by Frigyes Hajdú, a Jewish lawyer from Temesvár (Timişoara), who – as someone who considered himself Hungarian – raised the question in the columns of the German language *Temesvarer Zeitung*. Hajdú came to the conclusion that the Hungarian Jews of Transylvania would gradually break away and assimilate, adopting a Romanian national identity.

[1] Az erdélyi zsidóság és a Magyar Párt [The Jewry of Transylvania and the Hungarian Political Party]. *Magyar Országos Levéltár* [Hungarian National Archives], K28, 153, 258, 223.

The aim of this study is to offer an account of the main elements of the 1927 controversy and also to analyze from this perspective the evolution and transformation of the relationship between Hungarian and Jewish inhabitants of Transylvania after 1918.

The Historical and Social Context of the Controversy

In 1917, a year before the disintegration or dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the periodical *Huszadik Század* [Twentieth Century] published a series of articles consisting of the responses to the question it had raised regarding the present and the future of the Jewish communities of Hungary (Hanák 1984: 13–115). This question was also raised by Péter Ágoston, a Roman Catholic of German descent, who wrote a book on the possible solutions to the anxieties and challenges of assimilation, anti-Semitism, and the Jewish question itself (Ágoston 1917). Soon after the publication of the two, the Jewish communities of Transylvania (by which I mean the historical province of Transylvania, the majority of the region known as Bánság or Banat, and Partium, all of which were made part of Romania following the First World War) had to deal with a new political situation, in which the issue of the relationship between the Jewry and the Hungarian minority was no less of a matter of immediate concern than the issue of assimilation into the Romanian minority and the creation or maintenance of bonds with the Jewish communities of the rest of Romania.

According to the census data of 1910, there were 182,489 people of Jewish faith living in the territories of Hungary that became part of Romania following the First World War. According to the census of 1930, this number rose slightly to 192,833. Thus between the two World Wars, 3.4 percent of the inhabitants of the region were of Jewish descent, the preponderant majority of whom (72–73%) in 1910 had declared their mother tongue to be Hungarian and who had found themselves, when the borders were changed in 1918, in the final phase of a powerful process of gradual Magyarization.

The everyday life of the Jewish inhabitants of Transylvania during the period after 1918 can be reconstructed on the basis of an examination of several interrelated issues.

If one attempts to understand the transformation that the Jewish inhabitants of Transylvania underwent as a community and the alterations in concepts of identity that took place on the individual level, one cannot restrict the scope of investigation to discourse analysis. Other factors must be taken into consideration as well, such as the diversification of the institutional world, Romanian

legal practices regarding the Jewry (which differed from the legal practices in Hungary), the various forms in which Romanian, Hungarian and German anti-Semitism found manifestation, the economic and social positions of the Jewry and the ideological divisions within the Transylvanian Jewish community (I have discussed these problems in greater detail in Gidó 2009: 18–101).

The most significant change on the institutional level was the appearance of secular organizations based on Jewish identity or "nationality." This resulted in a broadening of the spheres of the everyday life of the communities, which traditionally had been structured around religion and the infrastructure of the religious communities. This gave rise to the establishment of a host of secular institutions. Some represented political and economic interests, others the development of Jewish education and culture, and there were also institutions serving the betterment of social welfare, technical training, and sports. The essential institutions representing Jewish interests were the Jewish National Association of Transylvania established in November 1918 in Kolozsvár (Cluj) and the Jewish Party, which was launched in 1930. Fundamentally, it was the Jewish National Association and its prominent leaders who initiated the process of secular institutionalization in Transylvania, and most of the Jewish organizations established after 1918 were founded due to their initiative and under their control.

This is little doubt concerning the significance of the role played by various institutions in the formation of a coherent communal identity, the most important of which were the National Association, the Jewish Party, Jewish schools, Jewish small credit private banks formed on an ethnic (religious) basis, newspapers ensuring national press publicity (such as *Új Kelet* [New East] in Kolozsvár, *Neue Zeit-Új Kor* [Neue Zeit-Modern Age] in Temesvár, and *Népünk* [Our People] in Nagyvárad, or Oradea by its Romanian name), and last but not least sports clubs. Due in part to these organizations, an ever increasing number of Transylvanian Jews underwent a shift in identity away from a concept of self as Hungarian or Jewish-Hungarian and towards a greater consciousness of self as Jewish (see Gidó 2009: 70–85). The institutional changes, however, did not come out of the clear blue sky. One finds precedents to the emergence of these organizations in the Zionist movements, which were the most active in the last years of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th (Carmilly-Weinberger 1995: 266). The Balfour Declaration of November 2nd, 1917 (which asserted the legitimacy of the call for the establishment of a national homeland for the Jewish people in the territory of Palestine), Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points of 1918 (which proclaimed the right of the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to self-determination), and the occupation of territories of eastern Hungary by the Romanian Army all gave rise to an international and domestic situation that

facilitated the rapid evolution of the previously isolated Jewish national movement. Statements and pronouncements made by leaders in Hungary and the successor states also contributed to this, as did the international treaties and accords that brought an end to the First World War. On November 6th, 1918 the Minister of Agriculture, Barna Búza, cheered the Jewish people in a national general Assembly. Oszkár Jászi, minister without portfolio entrusted with nationality affairs, acknowledged the legitimacy of Jewish national organizations in a telegram on the occasion of the establishment of the Máramaros Group of the Jewish National Association (Máramaros County is today Maramureş in Romania).[2] The Minority Convention signed by Romania on December 9th, 1919 secured the personal rights of the Jewish inhabitants living in the territory of the country in a separate article (paragraph 7), and this later became a significant basis of reference by those (Zionists and Romanian national organizations) who were arguing for the acknowledgement of the Jewish community as a separate nationality (the text of the Minority Convention can be found in Nagy 1944: 217–219). Albeit in Romania the actual codification of the Convention took place only later and even then solely on racial grounds (namely, in the Jewish Law of 1940), the concept of the Jewish *nationality* functioned as a legal category from 1919 onwards. Consequently, it had a significant influence on the Transylvanian results of the population registrations of 1920 and 1927 and the national census of 1930, to cite only a few examples (in connection with the national censuses, see Seres 2011).

From a legal perspective, for the Jewish community of Transylvania the new borders constituted a setback. The civic and religious equality that had been secured under the Austro-Hungarian Empire was replaced with the uncertain and unpredictable jurisdiction of the Romanian state. Although the 1923 Romanian constitution did guarantee equal rights to Jews formerly assigned the status of alien, one year later they were deprived *en masse* of citizenship (Gyémánt 2004: 105). Among other stipulations, Romanian state regulations addressed the organization of religious communities and the language of instruction. In comparison with the state of affairs under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the replacement of Hungarian with Romanian as the language of instruction in Jewish schools and the changes made to the curriculum (for example in the first third of the 1920s Hungarian disappeared from the curriculum of Jewish schools and was replaced by Romanian and Hebrew language and literature) opened new paths for integration, but at the same time these measures also altered the attitude of young generations to Hungarian culture and Hungarian nationality as a cultural identity.

[2] The text of Jászi's telegram is in *Új Kelet,* Cluj, December 19th, 1919. Vol. 1. 1. 5–6.

Due to the ever increasing Romanian, Hungarian and German anti-Semitism, in the second half of the 1930s the Jewish community of Transylvania adopted a kind of community isolationism, which became apparent in everyday affairs, for instance in the growing number of supporters of the Jewish National Union of Transylvania. For example, by 1939 the proportion of Jewish mixed marriages significantly decreased. In Cluj, figures indicate that while in 1934 10.5 percent of Jewish individuals married a Christian person, by 1939 this percentage had dropped to 5.9. More detailed data offer insights into the nature of the relationship of the Jewish communities with other minorities. There was a drop in mixed marriages (i.e. between a member of a Jewish community and one of the other national groups), though this was less true of Hungarian-Jewish marriages. In contrast, by 1939 the number of marriages between members of the Jewish communities and members of the German speaking communities dropped to zero.[3]

Thus, the 1927 article "The Jewish Path" aroused debate among Jews who were by no means homogenous and did not function as an independent community. Jews with a Hungarian identity or a dual affiliation to both the Hungarian and Jewish tradition constituted one of the largest groups. They integrated into the Hungarian minority institutional structure and were members of the Hungarian community, becoming part of its subsystems. They represented Hungarian political, cultural, and economic interests, and their social network included primarily Hungarian and Hungarian-Jewish people. The other group with an ever increasing membership was that of the adherents to the Zionist movement, who by the beginning of the Second World War constituted about 25 percent of Transylvanian Jews. They were working on creating a Jewish minority community that would be able to operate subsystems (participation in public administration and organizing an autonomous network of educational, scholarly, political, religious, cultural, and economic institutions). But they were exceeded in number by those who, although they did not join the Jewish national movement, still shifted towards Jewish ethnic self-identification, and they considered their Hungarian ties merely cultural. This stratum alternately took advantage of institutions grounded in Jewish ethnicity and the Hungarian institutional and representational structures. However, in terms of cultural consumption and use of language, it was still strongly related to the Hungarian minority community and its cultural products. In comparison with the above-mentioned two groups, there were numerous others smaller in size: for example those advocating Romanian and Romanian-Jewish integration, the leftists, supporters of supranational move-

[3] Vlad 1936: 11–12., *Buletinul Oficial al Municipiului Cluj* [Official Bulletin of the City of Cluj]. Cluj, 1939. Vol. 14, 3. 8. and 1940. Vol. 15, 1. 3.

ments, and the Hassidic Jews, who had not assimilated into Hungarian society and resided primarily in the Máramaros and Beszterce (Bistrița) regions. The majority of this last group did not consider either Zionism or assimilation a course to follow, believing that both threatened their religion and Jewish traditions.

Religious and Ethnic Dimensions of the Jewish Community

In 1922 the journalist Ernő Ligeti, one of the most well-known public figures of the Hungarian-Jewish community in Transylvania, warned that a significant proportion of Hungarian Jews in Transylvania would shed their cultural identities as Hungarians. In his view, because of anti-Semitism in Hungary and the divisive politics of the Romanian state, a few years after the change of borders the majority of Transylvanian Jews no longer considered themselves Hungarian. In Ligeti's view, the blame for this fell both on the Hungarian Union, which represented Hungarian interests in Romania between 1921–1922, and also Hungarian public opinion, because "both intended to refuse the incorporation of Jews, no matter how strong their Hungarian identity was, and did not welcome them to serve as officers in their intellectual army. At most, they were allowed as commissariat officers." (Ligeti 1922: 75–87)

By the time of the publication of Frigyes Hajdú's "Der Weg der Juden" in *Temesvarer Zeitung*[4] on September 18th, 1927, several Transylvanian newspapers had carried articles by both Jewish and non-Jewish authors addressing the question of the fate of Transylvanian Jews. Ligeti's 1922 article was not the only place in which the question had been raised. On the contrary, other Hungarian Party politicians and public figures of Jewish descent, such as Benő Gombos, Nándor Hegedűs, Sándor Weiss, and Mihály Leitner, joined him in this conversation (some of their writings are also published in Gidó 2009: 285–357). However, Hajdú went further in his argumentation, and he predicted not simply separation from the Hungarian national community, but also assimilation into the Romanian nation. His pessimism evoked severe criticism from both Hungarian-Jewish and Zionist Jewish groups, giving rise to debates in the press that lasted several weeks. This debate is especially interesting in view of the fact that it did not take place between Hungarians and Jews, but rather within the Jewish community. And unlike the debate that was created by Károly Papp's book in Hungary a few

[4] Frigyes Hajdú: "Der Weg der Juden." *Temesvarer Zeitung,* Timişoara, September 18th, 1927. 43. 210.

years later (Pap 2000: 7–172), given the new status of Transylvania in the case of this discussion the Romanian element also came up, alongside the possible Hungarian and Jewish alternatives.

Hajdú, who himself was a Hungarian Jew and who took active part in public life in Timişoara, outlined a very pessimistic view of the future.[5] Although he did not believe that his claims were applicable to himself or the older generation, he presumed that the Jews residing in the territories of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia (all or most of which had become part of Romania following the end of the First World War) would retain their faith, but within a short time they would lose their Hungarian, German, or Russian mother tongues and assimilate into Romanian society. He must have arrived at these conclusions due to various domestic political events following the political changes and he may well have formed his view years earlier.

Frigyes Hajdú first voiced his concerns in 1925 when *Magyar Kisebbség* [Hungarian Minority], a biweekly paper, published a letter with an anti-Semitic tone by Lajos Kovács, a Catholic priest from Oláhlápos (Lapus) (Jakabffy 1925: 285–286). The letter threw into question the commitment of the Transylvanian Jewish community to Hungarian culture and the Hungarian nationality, and demanded the absolute exclusion of Jews from Hungarian public life. Hajdú responded in the Cluj based *Újság* [News]: "for the Hungarian nation the Jewish population of the successor states may well be declared extinct. The Leitners and Gomboses will vanish.[6] Their sons will be Hungarian, but their grandchildren will not. And what is the reason? It is because there will be no Hungarian schools and school masters, and their Hungarian land and Hungarian air exist no more. […] Where should a Jewish boy, whose one brother is nearly beaten to death in Iasi and the other in Budapest, look for ideals?"[7] At the time his arguments were still centered around separation and not the issue of assimilation into Romanian society. How-

[5] In addition to being an attorney, Frigyes Hajdú was also active in public affairs and journalism. Under the Monarchy he had been affiliated with the Independence Party, and following the First World War he was one of the local leaders of the Hungarian Union and the National Hungarian Party. At the end of the 1920s he also served as vice mayor of Timişoara. He actively contributed to the foundation of the Civil Organization (1920) and the Hungarian House (1929/1930). For further information see Jakabffy and Páll 1939: 121–127 and Szekernyés 2002: 124–125.

[6] Mihály Leitner, a lawyer, served as president of the Deva branch of the National Hungarian Party. At the 1924 Brasov convention of the National Hungarian Party he made the following declaration: "the Hungarian Jew wants to retain his Hungarian identity." At the 1921 founding meeting of the Hungarian League in Cluj, Benő Gombos, a publicist and private office clerk, pledged on behalf of Hungarian Jews allegiance to the Hungarian nation. In 1924 he was elected chief superintendent of the National Hungarian Party (Balázs 1991: 973).

[7] Frigyes Hajdú: "A zsidók útja" [The Jewish Path]. *Újság,* Cluj, May 3rd, 1925. 27. 100. nr. 1–2.

ever, in October 1925 the Union of Romanian Jews (Uniunea Evreilor Români), which represented the old Romanian Jewish community and pursued a policy of integration with the Romanian majority, opened its Transylvanian office in Cluj. At the end of the same year the Bucharest parliament passed a law on denominational and private schools, and its 36th provision made it mandatory for Jewish educational institutions that the language of instruction be either Romanian or Hebrew. The following year the National Hungarian Party signed an electoral agreement with a Romanian National-Liberal Party that pursued consistent anti-Jewish and anti-minority politics. The skepticism of the Timişoara lawyer may have been strengthened by the debate between the Transylvanians and the Old Kingdom on the issue of unifying Romanian religious communities (Ursuțiu 2006: 193–195). The events between 1925 and 1927 may have led Hajdú to the conclusion that Romanian state jurisdiction and the occasionally aggressive expansion of the Bucharest Jewish community were all accelerating the Romanian assimilation of Transylvanian Jews.

Responses to the 1927 Hajdú article published in Hungarian and bilingual Hungarian-German Jewish papers in Timişoara and Cluj reflected three different standpoints. The most radical of these were the Zionist and the Hungarian assimilationist opinions, while the middle ground was represented by one response published in *Déli Hírlap* [Noonday Herald], the Timişoara publication of the National Hungarian Party. Reasoning included the stereotypical phrases used in earlier years in similar journalistic debates and speeches delivered at public forums. The statement was signed by several Jews. The article does not reveal the standpoint on the future of the Jewish community, because the primary concerns of the authors were Hajdú's rhetorical fallacies (the contradiction between Hajdú's Hungarian assimilationist views and his predictions of Romanian assimilation).[8]

The lawyer Adolf Ungár, and merchant and political writer Ármin Kabos (the former was the president of the inner city branch of the National Hungarian Party, the latter served as vice president), who first published their Hungarian assimilationist views in *Temesvári Hírlap* [Timişoara Herald], a paper closely affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, knew Frigyes Hajdú well, since they worked in the same Hungarian community and were local leading members of the same party. Ungár utterly rejected the idea that within a few years the changes envisioned by Hajdú would take place within the Transylvanian Jewish community: "It is quite certain that people who over the course of centuries have developed an English, French, Italian, or Hungarian identity – and thus the Hun-

[8] Several authors: "A zsidók útja" [The Jewish Path]. *Déli Hírlap,* Timişoara, September 21st, 1927. 3. 217. 1.

garian Jews of Transylvania and Banat – cannot simply cast off their nationality, language, and culture from one day to the next as if they were discarding their clothes. And in this context one day to the next means several decades."[9] Kabos partly shared Ungár's opinion, but he also acknowledged that if the Romanian state pursued an inclusive policy towards Transylvanian Jews sooner or later particular integrationist strategies would appear that would target assimilation into the Romanian nation, rather than the Hungarian.[10]

In a later edition of the same paper Mór Kell also argued from the perspective of Hungarian assimilationist position. He believed that Hajdú's article could do harm to the Jewish community because "[it] helped discredit [this community] to the Hungarian public." It also did harm to the Hungarian community, "whose strength and hopes it diminished."[11] The author called attention to the fact that Hajdú disregarded particularities of settlement structure, in particular to the fact that the majority of Jewish people lived among Hungarians or Germans, a fact that hindered their assimilation into the Romanian national majority.[12]

The Cluj daily paper of the National Hungarian Party, *Keleti Újság* [Eastern Herald], published an article on the subject on October 9th in which the author differentiated three different tendencies among Jews: the Zionists, advocates for assimilation into the Romanian majority, and the group with a Hungarian identity. Declaring the last group numerically the largest, the author explicitly took his stand in support of the viability of the assimilationist path, and he considered the politics of prevailing Romanian governments not so much as efforts to press the adoption of Romanian culture and a Romanian national identity as rather part of a larger attempt to separate the Jewish communities from the Hungarian community.[13]

Articles expressing the Zionist standpoint were published in *Temesvári Hírlap* [Timişoara Herald], *Neue Zeit – Új Kor* [Neue Zeit – New Age)] and *Új Kelet* [New East]. In addition to Ármin Kabos and Adolf Ungár, the third vocal spokesman of the Timişoara Catholic paper was Sándor Nobel, who served as local president of the Jewish National Union of Transylvania and later took an active

[9] "Három nyilatkozat a 'zsidók útjáról'" [Three Declarations on "the Jewish Path"]. *Temesvári Hírlap,* Timişoara, September 21st, 1927. 25. 213. 3.

[10] *Ibid*.

[11] Mór Kell: "Hozzászólás a 'zsidók útjához'" [Comment on the "Jewish Path"]. *Temesvári Hírlap,* September 28th, 1927. 25. 218. 1.

[12] *Ibid*.

[13] "Az erdélyi magyar zsidóság útja" [The Path of Transylvanian Jews]. *Keleti Újság,* October 9th, 1927. 10. 233. 4.

part in the foundation of the Transylvanian Jewish Party. In response to Hajdú's argument, according to which several great statesmen of Jewish descent served various nations (British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, French Minister of Justice Adolphe Crémieux, etc.), Nobel stated that this was not a satisfactory principle in support of the abandonment of Jewish national identity. In fact, in accordance with the basic principles of Jewish national discourse, Nobel emphasized the failure of the assimilationist path, citing the example of the Sephardic Jews assimilated into the Turkish nation. The Sephardic Jews were designated by the derogatory Turkish term *dönme* (apostates).[14] The Timişoara Zionist leader saw the future of the Jewish community in the awakening Jewish identity, and he excluded the alternative of Romanian assimilation. "I am of the opinion that Jews will be good citizens here just as everywhere else, but they will display an ever-developing sense of identity and will demand minority rights as an increasingly unified community. Disregarding dissidents, the great Jewish mass does not intend to assimilate, and what is even more important, the Romanian nation does not wish to assimilate them."[15]

Five days after the publication of Hajdú's article, *Új Kelet*, the paper published in Cluj, in which Zionist tendencies found voice, carried an article on the Jewish path. The anonymous article detected an alleged connection between Hajdú's argument and the step taken by the Bucharest Jewish leadership targeting the unification of Romanian Jewish religious communities. The article saw Hajdú as a puppet of Romanian Jewish circles, and declared his argument regarding the Transylvanian Jewish path false. It claimed the existence of one single Jewish path, shared all over the world, and put forward the contention that this path was Jewish national existence.[16]

The comment published in the bilingual Hungarian–German Zionist weekly *Neue Zeit–Új Kor* also listed the instruments of the Jewish national principle. Following an introduction that included examples from the Greek, Roman, Arabic, Spanish failures of integration, the argument continued with the problems of Transylvanian Jews. The author did not see the question of assimilation into the Romanian or Hungarian nation as the real challenge, but rather asked how Jew-

[14] "Három nyilatkozat a 'zsidók útjáról'" [Three declarations on "the Jewish Path"]. *Temesvári Hírlap,* September 21st, 1927. 25. 213. 3.

[15] *Ibid*.

[16] "A zsidók útja" [The Jewish Path]. *Új Kelet,* Cluj, September 22nd, 1927. 10. 215. 1.

ish youth could maintain its Jewish identity under various cultural influences. He believed the most effective means to preserve Jewish identity to be Jewish schools operating on secular bases in which modern Hebrew was taught.[17]

Frigyes Hajdú published his second article in the issue on September 23rd, 1927. In support of his argument, he described the 1918 example of the Timişoara Jewish upheaval. In his view the November 1st, 1918 founding of the Jewish National Committee indicated that the Jewish community of Banat would not choose the path of assimilation. However, Hajdú did not believe Zionism to be a viable alternative. Just as Zionist adherents saw education as a means of maintaining Jewish national identity, Hajdú – who in all likelihood considered the Timişoara Jewish secondary school, in which the language of education was Romanian, as a clear example – saw it as the most significant instrument of Romanization: as soon as Jewish youth were deprived of the opportunity to study in Hungarian, "[they] use the Romanian language to multiply and dream in Romanian, and they will be lost to Hungarian culture and the Hungarian nation."[18] Hajdú emphasized the importance of his identity as a Hungarian, and also warned that the number of Jewish people like him was continually decreasing: "[…] the Hungarian nation, to which I will belong until I die, must take into consideration that it will lose its members belonging to the Jewish faith within a few decades. This does not necessarily mean that the Hungarian identity of the Ungárs and Kaboses does not measure up to the identity of the 'pure Hungarian,' but it does indicate that the Ungárs and Kaboses will die out. Romania would be the only country in the world where things would not lead in this direction […] It is clearly merely a question of official Romanian policy whether complete assimilation takes place sooner or later […]."[19]

The discussion regarding the question of the Jewish path brought several questions to light that were topics of no small concern for the Jewish communities of the time. And the responses went well beyond simply declaring Frigyes Hajdú's argument right or wrong. Explanations and suggestions were given regarding possible courses to take, reflecting the ideological standpoints of the authors. Comments made in contributions that included the names of the authors, in other words that were not anonymous, such as those by Adolf Ungár and Ármin Kabos, or Sándor Nobel of the opposition, were as a matter of fact manifestations

[17] No author given: "A zsidó Jövő" [The Jewish Future]. *Neue Zeit–Új Kor,* Timişoara, October 10th, 1927. 8. 3. 5.

[18] Frigyes Hajdú: "Hová vezet a zsidók útja?" [Where does the Jewish Path Lead?]. *Temesvári Hírlap,* September 23rd, 1927. 25. 214. 2.

[19] *Ibid*.

of discursive strategies through which these individuals attempted to position themselves in the foreground of the Transylvanian Hungarian and Jewish political sphere.

On the one hand, the assimilationist narrative considered the possibility of the continued existence of the Jewry within the framework of Hungarian national identity as dependent on the willingness of the Hungarian nation to accept the Jewish communities. On the other hand, however, supporters of this path considered the bonds of the Jewish communities to Hungarian culture and the Hungarian language, as well as the social habits, circumstances, and networks of the Jewry (the majority of which resided in Hungarian speaking cities) as a force that could sustain the Hungarian-Jewish cultural identity. In contrast, the Zionist standpoint criticized Hajdú's article from an ethnic minority position. It cited historical experiences, international issues affecting Jews (the Balfour declaration, Wilson's fourteen points), Romanian and Hungarian anti-Semitism, as well as exclusive jurisdiction. Adherents to the concept of Jewish national identity saw the promise of their ethnic future in an autonomous institutional system and the education of the younger generation in the Jewish intellectual mentality and tradition.

The two sides agreed that in the course of time Frigyes Hajdú's vision would prove false. Their argument was based on the fact that neither Romanian society nor the Romanian state showed any sign of wishing to incorporate Jews, and Transylvanian Jews would not incline to assimilate into Romanian culture *en masse*.

Who was Right? Eighty-Six Years Later

The 1927 debate regarding the question of the Jewish path offered an occasion for the articulation of the standpoints and arguments of the two most influential opposing sides of Transylvanian Jews between the two World Wars. The Hungarian assimilationist–Zionist polemic lasted throughout the decade, and continued into the 1930s. Parallel to this, however, the discourse urging integration into the dominant Romanian culture intensified, and one of its most ardent spokesmen was Miksa Klein, a lawyer from Cluj. For example, he proposed the policy of "building bridges" between the various Jewish communities of the Romanian state. The idea was intended to promote cooperation between Jewish communities residing in various regions of Greater Romania (Gidó 2009: 26).

Participants in the debate could not foresee what the events of the 1930s and 1940s would eventually lead to. Increasing Romanian anti-Semitism in the second half of the 1930s, jurisdiction limiting Jewish and minority rights, and the Second Vienna Award, which divided Transylvania between Hungary and Romania, brought new challenges to the Jewish communities. The majority of the 40,000 Jews remaining in southern Transylvania survived the Holocaust, and one notes intensive linguistic Romanian assimilation, which, however, generally did not entail the absolute abandonment of the Hungarian language and Hungarian culture. In northern Transylvania the Jewish community was decimated in the Holocaust. Of the 151,000–164,000 Jews living in the region before the War only 35,000–40,000 thousand survived, and they reevaluated their ties to Hungarian national culture. Yet this did not necessarily entail general assimilation into Romanian culture. A strengthening Jewish identity, continuing Hungarian cultural affiliation, and an opening towards Romanian culture were characteristic of the majority of the community.[20] Separation from the Hungarian nation, parallel to the reconciliation following the Holocaust, also took place at the declarative level, namely by the Democratic Jewish Committee, which served as the exclusive representative of the post-1944 Jewish community. At the 1946 Cluj Jewish convention and the Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc) congress of the Hungarian People's Federation, Kohn Hillel, president of the provincial center for the Democratic Jewish Committee, described common language and culture as part of a special bond of the Jewish community to the Hungarian nation. He relativized the horrors of fascism. Kohn also declared that the entire Hungarian nation could not be held responsible for the Holocaust, and that the majority of Transylvanian Jews would not renounce their affiliation with Hungarian culture. However, the emphasis in Kohn's reconciliation address fell on the reconciliation of affairs between two separate ethnicities (Tibori 2007: 267).

Hajdú's prediction did not entirely come true. But neither did the Hungarian assimilationist and Zionist visions of the future prove completely true. Due to emigration after the Holocaust, the population of Transylvanian Jews further decreased, and thus by 1952 the population of 80,000 in northern and southern Transylvania declined to 40,000, and as of today figures show only a few thousand people of Jewish descent. The attitude towards Hungarian identity and Jewish heritage differs at the individual level, but both are deeply determined by the

[20] In many cases the problematic questions of identity were resolved by internationalism, which equaled a complete abandonment of one's Jewish identity. For a detailed discussion of the identity consciousness of Transylvanian Jews following the Holocaust see Tibori 2007. Also see Gáll 1991: 957–969.

traumas of the Holocaust, or the memory of the Holocaust sustained by younger generations within families. Today the majority of the Transylvanian Jewish community is characterized by a hybrid identity in which, alongside ethnic Jewish consciousness, Hungarian and/or Romanian linguistic and cultural ties still exist, depending on the surrounding environment and the socialization of the individual at a young age (see more in Gidó 2004: 8–21). The image of ethnic self-identification is further strengthened by the fact that in Romania the Jewish community is considered an officially recognized ethnic minority and has its own autonomous parliamentary representation. Naturally individual life stories include examples of the maintenance of Hungarian identity on the one hand, or Romanian integration on the other. This is illustrated by the presence of individuals of Jewish descent participating in Hungarian and Romanian political bodies or cultural life.

Translated by Judit Szathmári

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Curse and Supplications:[1] Letters to Prime Minister Pál Teleki following the Enactment of the Second Anti-Jewish Law

Balázs Ablonczy

The Hungarian National Archives contain only a small number of personal documents regarding Pál Teleki, Prime Minister of Hungary at a crucial juncture in the country's turbulent history in the 20th century and a man whose character and decisions have been the subject of significant debates, some of which were set off by a statue recently erected in his honor. The dossier marked "n," which is held in the third bundle of archive group K37 (Prime Minister Pál Teleki's semi-official writings), contains letters written to Teleki and his wife, Hanna Bissingen-Nippenburg. Each of the few dozen private letters in this folder represents an effort to exert influence on the Prime Minister's decision concerning the second anti-Jewish law (officially, Act IV of 1939 "regarding the restriction of Jews in public and economic life"). The history of the second anti-Jewish law is well-known, there is a vast number of historical documents concerning it. Without entering into particulars, it is worth noting that the act, which was prepared with Teleki's direct participation (he himself wrote the preamble), constituted a continuation of the exclusion of Jews from Hungarian public, cultural and economic life, which had begun with the numerus clausus and the first anti-Jewish law of 1938.

The letters reveal very little regarding the person to whom they were addressed. Some words have been underlined with a dramatic stroke, and there are a few question marks in the margins, but there is no way of knowing whether they were put there by the prime minister himself or a member of his staff. The contents and the arguments offered in the letters do, however, yield some conclusions regarding the personalities of the authors. What rhetorical techniques did they use in their attempts to sway the Prime Minister, and what arguments did they marshal? What message did they convey to a man who had been one of the authors of the anti-Jewish legislation and who thereby had forced them to face the potential legal significance of their own Jewish identities, even when

[1] This essay was first published in Hungarian in *Szombat* [Saturday], September 25th, 2008.

some of them were not practicing Jews and did not consider their Jewish origins essential parts of their lives? Did they refuse the categories of identity implied by the act?

Or did they, by any chance, acknowledge these categories, but tried to secure a kind of exemption by referring to simple principles of Humanism? Did they consciously accept stigmatization? Did they perceive themselves as Hungarians, Hungarian Jews, Jewish Hungarians, or simply Jewish? These forms of identity are of course not exclusive, and sometimes even within the space of a single letter one of the authors would waver or hesitate. Moreover, the channel that they chose to reveal themselves itself narrows down these identities: to write a letter one needs intention, the ability to compose a coherent argument, and the willingness to attempt to establish some kind of dialogue. The vast majority of people chose not to write, but rather silently endured humiliation with patience, devised strategies to survive, and in some cases left the country. This also constitutes a manner of living one's identity. There were some people amongst the correspondents who did not address their letters directly to the Prime Minister: some of them sent them to Pál Teleki's wife, because they believed she had some influence on her husband, who was in a position of considerable power. "My Gracious Lady! Please ask your husband to grant amnesty to those who are pursued by fate, and God will reward you for your goodness!" wrote a merchant from Budapest.[2] Others emphasized the importance of solidarity among women, and referred to their fates and their children's futures in order to explain their bold decisions to compose letters to the Prime Minister's wife. As the retired wife of a captain wrote,

> I implore you, for the sake of the peace of mind of my nine-year-old child, who was baptized at birth, do not permit this terrible anti-Jewish legislation to make me, his mother, a Jew, do not let it turn my child, whom I passionately adore, against his own mother, of whom – heaven forfend – he may come to be ashamed. […] How can I make my child understand, a child who prays together with me day in, day out next to the crucifix above his little bed, absorbed at evening prayers in our faith, that the law mercilessly seeks to separate us, we who are bound by the most natural relationship before God and man.

[2] All the quotations are from the "n" dossier of the third bundle in The Hungarian National Archives (MOL). (Semi-official correspondence of Prime Minister Pál Teleki)

The letters in question were written between February and December 1939, and this is important to mention because as time passed the tone of the letters changed. In the spring, people were asking primarily for individual immunity, whereas by the time autumn had come, as people gradually or suddenly came to face the consequences of the legislation and in some cases endured serious declines in their circumstances, emphasis had shifted and voices of questioning became inreasingly strident, also accompanied by a call for reckoning.

As thorough examination of the letters reveals, the authors can be put into roughly three groups, at least as far as their attitudes towards Jewish identity was concerned.

The Uncomprehending

Members of this group did not ordinarily belong to any of the Jewish communities, since either their parents or they themselves had converted to Christianity. They only learned of their origins from the documents that they had been obliged to produce because of the anti-Jewish legislation, and they made appeals to the head of state, whom they viewed as good-hearted.

They referred to their virtues as patriots and asked for individual or legal exemption from the law, noting in the way of explanation that they had broken their institutional ties with the Jewish community and in some instances also lost their beliefs. Simply put, they did not consider themselves part of the community. Indeed sometimes they even expressed decidedly pejorative opinions regarding the Jewish cultural and social heritage. As opposed to members of the other two groups, they often revealed their names and addresses as well, because their goal was not to give voice to their judgments, but to beg for immunity, so it was important in their cases for the authorities to be able to identify them easily. In these cases we can find detailed case histories. The letters resemble pleas, and sometimes they are not free of morbid twists. It is worth citing an example from a letter written by a noblewoman who was compelled by the law to confront her origins:

> My late father, who had a career in administration, converted to the Christian faith in 1883, when he was 18 years old. He went to a Catholic secondary school for eight years, my mother, who is from an old, noble Christian family, and who was suffering because she had to keep this a secret, informed us of this only a few years ago. It was only last summer that I learnt that my husband's father, who passed away a long time ago and who, just like my own beloved father, was a

> truly honorable Hungarian Christian, converted only about sixty years ago. My husband was an officer on active service duty, he earned many badges of honor on the front. My son is a pupil in a military school, he is a fanatically enthusiastic Hungarian soldier, he is hard-working and full of plans, and he is also strongly anti-Semitic. He has absolutely no idea about his origins. We want to tell him about all this, because according to the latest regulations, we are obliged to present all four grandparents' baptismal certificates. After having agonized over this for quite some time, we are preparing to do this, and yet again, we find ourselves unable to speak! […] Why is it necessary to break the heart and the ambition of our only son, an upstanding young man? When neither he nor even we have the slightest grasp of the Jewish mentality, the Jewish religion – we have nothing in common with these things. We have always been deeply religious, and even now this is what keeps our spirits aloft – we are not wealthy, our only joys and strivings are our country and our family. My younger sister's husband is on active duty, he is an outstanding soldier, he has three years of experience on the battlefield, and now their lives are nothing but pain and suffering, too. The same is true of my younger brother, who is a government officer.

Others tried to convince the Prime Minister by referring to experiences that he had had outside the world of politics, for example scouting. Teleki had been an emblematic figure of scouting in Hungary since the early 1920s. One of the correspondents attempted to convince him by building on that experience:

> I am writing to Hungary's leading scout, as I myself am a scout, too. I am asking you as a younger man asks an older, wiser one. I am presenting myself in the name of many thousands of others, who possibly think as I do, but who do not dare to come forward, in whom there can be little doubt the desire burns to pour onto someone the many laments and bitterness that have accumulated in us.

In his letter the author gives a kind of account of his life as the leader of a business enterprise, but only after having first declared his attachment to Hungarian culture and insisted on the irrelevance of Jewish culture both to him and others who learnt of their origins only because of the new legislation:

> Not only were we born here, but so were our fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers, they lived here as we live here now, our mother tongue is Hungarian, our culture is Hungarian. Please ask any Jewish person if they know of any Jewish writer, poet, musician, or painter? They feel themselves to be Hungarians, so what part of them is Jewish?

However, towards the end of his letter – perhaps as a sign of his loyalty to the nation – he mentions a topic that was not only of interest among sociologists, but also a current affair in the national press in the late 1930s and early 1940s, namely the activities and campaigns of the German national minority in Hungary, of which he writes in a decidedly pejorative manner:

> And let me warn you, as the old proverb says: "give lodging to the Slovak and he will beat you out of your own home". I have recently visited the part of Transdanubia that is inhabited by Germans, and it was painful to see the hatred Swabians express towards Hungarians. Day in, day out, I plead with you, sir, to keep Hungary for Hungarians!!!

This tone was not unique by any means. Those who sought to emphasize their loyalty to Hungary usually called attention to the activities of the Volksbund, which they perceived and characterized as a genuine threat to the unity and future of the Hungarian state. They may have done this in the hopes of shifting the direction of state oppression. Those who were searching for ways to obtain individual exemption asked that the manners by which one might claim exceptional status be broadened, referring first and foremost in their pleas for immunity for themselves or for their spouses to their merits as soldiers:

> Olympic champions of the Jewish faith who won praise and renown for Hungary are among the exceptions under the Jewish legislation. I ask with all due respect, why is it that Jewish officers, who won the Order of the Iron Cross in the First World War, who ran in the race against death, why are they or their widows not considered worthy of this distinction?

Many people assumed that the government passed the anti-Jewish legislation under pressure from Germany (which, however, was not the case), and while they strove, in accordance with this believe, to share a kind of wink of collusion with the person to whom their letters were addressed, they also called attention to the dangers that might be brought about by the resolve of the Third Reich on the threshold of the war. As the author of one letter wrote, "I do not wish to address the reasons related to foreign affairs that prompt this Draconian rigidity." Or as one reads in a similar letter, "Is this government blind and do its leaders not see what is about to happen? Do they not recognize that the days of Hitler and Germany are numbered?"

One letter, written by an author who refers to himself (or possibly herself) as a "speck of dust," is a peculiar mixture of incomprehension, faith in general human goodness, and an unshakable belief in the "good king." The author wrote to the Prime Minister of the disapproval of the "pure-blooded" Hungarians, while also praising Teleki's achievements as a scholar in a tone of profound respect. He mentioned and praised the role that Hungarian Jews had played in the development of national industry, commerce and the sciences, and also wrote of how the Jewry had undertaken to contribute to the emergence and consolidation of the nation. He, too, also referred to foreign (i.e. German) influence.

He also reflected upon the damage that had been caused during the Commune of 1919, when for a brief period of time a communist government led by Béla Kun had come to power: "There were criminals among the Jews as well, but you cannot humiliate all of them so dreadfully just because of this. For Your Excellency himself has declared many times that one must not fall into the error of generalization." What makes this letter particularly interesting is that the author, who was pleading for some easing of the stipulations of the law, asked the Prime Minister to reply to him in a column entitled "Nyílt Tér" [Open Space] in the subsequent issue of the newspaper *Magyar Nemzet* [Hungarian Nation]. He asked him to write no more than, "Speck of dust, I have read it." This of course suggests a certain degree of naivety, as it was unlikely at best that Pál Teleki would have corresponded with someone in the column of a newspaper, but also because the mentality of the paper in question was quite distant from that of the Prime Minister. He never gave it a single interview, nor did he publish anything in its pages. Furthermore, the public prosecutor, who was considered a close friend of the head of state and was in charge of censorship during the War, was continuously harassing the paper.

Calls for Reckoning

The authors of these letters made no pretense of naivety. They understood that the goal of the legislation was to deprive them of their rights, and while many of them had converted to Christianity, they were nonetheless proud of their origins. They were aware of the danger that awaited them, and they also understood that the political mood was becoming more and more threatening, but they criticized the inhumanity of the law from a Humanist point of view, sometimes even appealing to the open-minded mentality of Hungarian liberalism of an earlier era in their demands for an explanation. On many occasions the Prime Minister himself had already declared that he would prefer to settle accounts with the her-

itage of Hungarian liberalism, and he acknowledged that the legislation deprived members of the citizenry of their rights, but he deemed this necessary "for the greater good of the nation."[3] The members of this group were not exclusively of Jewish origins. The Independent Hungarian Political Society that operated in Gary, Indiana rejected the second anti-Jewish legislation immediately after it had been adopted, alluding to the political heritage of Lajos Kossuth and to fundamental principles of Christianity.

The author of a letter signed by a "disabled Jewish lieutenant" chose to refer to principles related to foreign affairs, assuming that it was both German influence and the initiative of Hungarian politicians that led to the situation:

> Prime Minister, be so kind as to let me ask, if it is right, proper and just to propose such anti-Jewish legislation today, when Jewish blood is being shed in the Ukraine. We stand on the threshold of war! Is it right to deprive the Jewish population of any right to earn a living and to exclude them from society on the one hand, while on the other, we send them to the front to be canon fodder? Even Germany and Italy treated the Jews more reasonably than this, for they at least excluded them from the army. But Hungary expels them from society on the one hand, and then on the other, expects them to sacrifice themselves for the motherland! Please take a moment to think about this! This is not fair, not chivalrous, not proper.

Then the tone of reproach becomes increasingly threatening as the author considers the experiences and consequences of the First World War, which from Hungary's perspective had been devastating:

> We are going to lose the war if we continue to fight alongside Germany, it is time to orient ourselves towards England, otherwise not only the head of the state will share the fate of István Tisza, but so will every member of Parliament. [Translator's note: István Tisza was the Hungarian Prime Minister from 1903 to 1905 and again from 1913 to 1917. Although Tisza had initially opposed proposals to declare war against Serbia in the wake of the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in 1914, by the end of the war he was seen by many as an embodiment of the war

[3] Teleki Pál: *A második zsidótörvényről* [On the Second Jewish Law]. In: Válogatott politikai írások és beszédek [Selected Political Writings and Speeches]. Ed. Balázs Ablonczy. Budapest, 2000, Osiris. 382–383.

> policy in the Monarchy. There were four assassination attempts against him, the last of which was successful.] But they will not be shot, they will be hanged. Your Honor should reflect on this a little.

At the end of the letter he changes tone again and returns to be prophetic: "Please store this letter in the archives so that in two years, when the events will already have proven me right it offers evidence that you were warned."

Mention of ominous consequences became ever more frequent as time passed, and the tone of the letters became more threatening. One author, who referred to himself simply as "a desperate Hungarian young man," wrote a letter in December 1939, in which he threatened to kill the Prime Minister himself if Teleki failed within two weeks to ease the provisions of the law.

> The two-week deadline, I think, is a generous gift on my part – with my empty, rumbling stomach. But if the two weeks pass by without any change, as soon as a moment arises when I can get close to you, you will be the first Christian victim of the anti-Jewish legislation that you forced on the Hungarians.

Others were less euphemistic or subtle in their expressions of anger and outrage. In letters riddled with spelling mistakes, invectives, and profanity they promise Teleki with a terrible end:

> You empty-headed, bespectacled viper, we wish on you, the whole of Christian society, whom you crested filthy old mule who will kick the bucket tomorrow anyway, that every letter of the Jewish law become an illness that does not kill immediately but only the Jews will be able to have mercy on you, you old fool, that the earth cast you to the surface every night when you are rotting and neither you nor your family have peace or rest together and that the empty-headed scoundrel, villain, nobody, who cannot speak a single correct sentence, but who sits in the seat of justice, that he have no peace either, that the two of you explode together. May the lord make you pay you scoundrels with the rest of the gang of filthy rascals with which you have surrounded yourselves for the many sufferings and grieves and woes you have created you grime of the world, you dregs of humanity and society. […] Let cancer tear through all of you, these are the wishes of a Christian woman and her family.

The role that had been played by the Jewry of Hungary in the construction of the modern state, the heritage of the liberalism of the dualist era, the adoption of harmful foreign examples and references to these models were logical parts of

the leading motifs of Hungarian politics until 1918 and in some cases until 1938, but it is just as logical that as the Jewish communities began to sense the manners in which they were being rejected they became increasingly aggressive and threatening. This can hardly come as a surprise.

The Challengers

Members of this group did not try to convince the Prime Minister to make any momentous changes, nor did they ask him to show mercy. The logic of their arguments, which rested on the principle of civic equality, constituted an unambiguous rejection of the law. They wrote their letters as a declaration of rebellion. The authors accepted their exclusion from society and the financial ruin that this brought on them, though they did so not without bitterness. One of them, who most likely had had a career as a scientist, expressed his views with great erudition in a letter that is worth citing at some length:

> I am the kind of Jew who does not want to assimilate. I fought in the World War, I was badly wounded, I returned to the battlefield. And I beg the pardon of the honorable Mr. Görgey[4] of the Upper House: I volunteered several times to defend our homeland, I asked to be sent to the battlefield – I earned distinctions, I was given the silver medal of valor, until in the end, to the great honor of our homeland, I was dismissed from my place of employment because I am Jewish. I honestly confess that I always thought it right and proper that I develop whatever small talents nature may have blessed on me and achieve as an individual the closest thing to perfection the characteristics with which I was born allow. I never strove instead to be like another person in the crowd. Perhaps the fact that I did not pursue assimilation made me worthy of being thrown out.
>
> Well, Prime Minister, I do not seek to assimilate, even now. [Author's note: the reader in the Prime Minister's office underlined this statement.] And even now, if I have to acknowledge that I belong to an obstinate race, I will not be ashamed of this, because this "race" has had offsprings such as Mendelssohn, Spinoza, Einstein, Heine, Ehrlich,[5] Disraeli, Herz and ... Christ. I am not ashamed, Sir, I am

[4] László Görgey, born in 1877, was an attorney and a member of the Upper House. It was he who presented the Second Jewish Law in the Upper House.

[5] Paul Ehrlich (1854–1915), German scientist, Nobel Prize winner in medicine (1908).

> not by any means ashamed, and I will not assimilate. I will not assimilate, on the contrary, I am proud that I belong among those who are being persecuted – and among such figures! – and not among those responsible for the persecution.

The author also indicated in his letter whom he held responsible for creating the caste of outcasts. In his view, it was the political elite and not the Hungarian nation that was to be blamed for having broken the contract of assimilation:

> That said I must apologize to the people of Hungary. I do not identify them as the persecutors, on the contrary, I know very well how much they disapprove of the deprivation of civil rights. You are the ones who identify yourselves as the persecutors. I feel sorry for the Hungarian nation, because You and Your incompetence and sometimes insatiability have sunk them into such misery, and because You try to deceive them with the terrible lie that the Jewish who do not wish to assimilate are the cause of their sufferings.

Some of the authors had ominous premonitions regarding the possibility of their eventual exclusion from society and even mass murder, premonitions that, in light of the events that transpired, proved tragically prescient.

Whatever arguments may have been marshaled against the legislation, the Prime Minister was not to be swayed, neither by pleas nor by reasoning. In front of a plenary meeting of the Upper House he made the following declaration: "those who approached me with such motives merely strengthened my conviction to the contrary." There was even one letter written by a citizen who expressed approval of the law. It offers some insights into the long-term effects of anti-Semitic propaganda that had been around for decades, as the author included a pamphlet that had been published by Ébredő Magyarok [Awakening Hungarians], a far-right organization that had been formed in the wake of the fall of the 1919 Commune. The author uses a familiar topos of taking revenge on Jews:

> The Jews should be treated here as they have been treated in Germany, no mercy. […] For one cannot know – if they escape the hands of the law now – what will they be capable of on an even greater scale! – I know from experience that they would exterminate all Christians without the slightest twinge of conscience – in public – if they did not fear the gallows.

There is, however, only one such letter among the writings in question.

What conclusions can one draw regarding the various ways of relating to and experiencing identity that find expression in these letters? It might well be interesting to offer analysis of the distinctive styles of the various categories. There are letters that were written in a threatening tone, correspondents who sometimes paid the Prime Minister a visit, and authors who chose to write to his wife, and in each category one finds particularly rhetorical devices appropriate to the type. On the one hand, as the letters make clear people had a diverse array of reactions, which in and of itself demonstrates the complexity of the situation and composition of the Jewry in Hungary. The range of attitudes was diverse, including for instance members of the Christian middle class who rejected Jewish culture and insisted on assimilation on the one hand, and members of the intelligentsia who cultivated a distinctive and independent Jewish identity on the other. There was no single "Hungarian Jewish response" to the events of the day, but rather an array of responses. One of course should also note that the types of identities depicted in these letters were the product of a response to a measure taken by the state, and given the tenseness of the moment they offer only snapshots on which tentative conclusions could be based. The horrors of the years following 1939 unquestionably caused further changes in these constructions of identity.

Translated by Georgina Sima

In Whose Interests? Transfer Negotiations between the Jewish Agency, the National Bank of Hungary and the Hungarian Government (1938–1939)[1]

Attila Novák

There have been numerous occasions in history when the phenomenon of transfer has occurred. Originally, transfer meant the resettlement of people, but more recently it has also come to refer to the transportation of articles and even complete fortunes. In general it was a consequence of political or military defeat, since (at least in the case of economic transfer) the riches and goods that were taken made the beneficiaries of the transfer wealthy. Resettlement has been all too familiar in Jewish history. The best-known instance of resettlement is probably the period of so-called Babylonian Captivity (598–538 BC, under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II), when a significant portion of the population of Judaea was resettled in Babylon. There were several waves of deportations, but they were never utter or complete, since the conquerors used their usual methods with the Jews and there was nothing particular or discriminative in their actions.

As we understand it today, however, the word transfer clearly refers to affairs of an economic nature. While properties and stores of wealth were transferred in the course of resettlements in ancient times as well, there was no modern bank and credit system that would have made complicated transactions possible across international borders. Moreover, the tools of modern economics made it possible for the politically defeated to strive to turn their unfortunate circumstances (whether momentary or permanent) to relatively acceptable economic profit. Max Nordau (born Gabriel Südfeld, in Budapest) was preoccupied with the thought of a transfer concerning the Jewish community – and not an economic transfer – in 1920, when Jews were killed on the Polish–Hungarian border. The Zionist publicist "prepared" the transfer of 600,000 Jews to Palestine, or rather he indulged in fantasies about such a transfer.

[1] This research would have not been completed without the János Bolyai Research Grant, No._: BO/00426/06. The paper will be published later in a longer and more detailed form.

Parallel to the Nazi rise to power in Germany, the Jewish Agency, the "foreign ministry," as it were, of the Zionist movement, strove to transfer Jewish wealth from Germany to Palestine. The Zionist organizations, mostly the leaders of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, endeavored to use the German-Jewish wealth in their nation building efforts in Palestine. From this perspective, the process was the inverse of the one that took place at the time of the captivity in Babel, since the wealth was transferred from the Diaspora to the Holy Land, the mother country. Economic factors made it possible only for the wealthy to emigrate, but at that time it was not clear that every Jewish person was in danger, so economic circumstances were the primary consideration, and indeed provided the impetus and momentum of the whole process.[2] The fate (and wealth) of more than 500,000 Jews living in Germany presented a serious dilemma to the Germans and the Zionist leaders as well, who in the beginning wanted the emigrant Jews to be able to bring monies equivalent to 1,000 pounds each to Palestine. That was the minimum amount of money the so-called A1 group (the wealthy) had to pay if they wanted to emigrate. After lengthy negotiations, in which German Zionists and the leaders of the Jewish Agency participated, an agreement was reached on August 25th, 1933. This was timely, because on April 1st an economic boycott had begun against the Jewish communities, and in September, one month after the agreement, anyone of Jewish origin was removed from his or her position.

According to the agreement, two clearing institutes were established to facilitate the process of transfer (in banking and finance, clearing denotes all activities from the time a commitment is made for a transaction until it is settled): Paltreu [Palästina-Treuhandstelle zur Beratung deutscher Juden, or Palestine Trust Office for Advice to German Jews], which was controlled by the German Zionist League, and the Haavara Company [Haavara is Hebrew for transfer], located in Tel Aviv. They set up two accounts, the so-called Konto I (Account I) for the existing emigrants, who had to pay the required amount of money to the German account of Paltreu. From the economic perspective the process was the following: the German exporters sold their goods in Palestine and deposited the profits they had made from the sales in the Haavara accounts. They paid the exchange value of their marks (German currency at the time) in Palestinian pounds.

Konto II was set up for those who were considering the possibility of emigration. German Jews could deposit their money in this account, but it could not be transferred until the deposits of Konto I had been repaid. This resulted in the emigration of several thousand wealthy Jews from Germany to Palestine.

[2] Edwin Black. *The Transfer Agreement: The Dramatic Story of the Pact between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine*. New York: Macmillan, 1984.

The German Haavara was relatively successful, although it was criticized by both American Jews and right-winged Zionists, and it was the subject of fierce disputes. Nonetheless, Haavara offered something of an example, and the Jewish Agency strove in other countries of Europe to turn the situation caused by the persecution of the Jews to the benefit of the growing Jewish community in Palestine. Negotiations regarding transfers were held in Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1938–39, and in Hungary as well. Werner Feilchenfeld, one of the most prominent leaders of the earlier negotiations in Germany, was delegated to Budapest. In February, 1939 he spoke and wrote about the importance of the consultations in Hungary, and argued that the Agency needed to clinch another contract in addition to the one they already had with Germany in order to demonstrate its influence and economic significance.

In May 1938 the Jewish Agency for Palestine prepared a memorandum for transfer for the Hungarian National Bank, and they used the German and Polish transfer memoranda as models.[3] The timing is no accident: the first anti-Jewish legislation had been passed on April 8th and was going to go into effect on May 29th. The leaders of the Zionist League essentially were responding to the increasingly dire exclusion of Jews from public and economic life. The aforementioned Werner Feilchenfeld, who was put in charge of the discussions, was not unknown in Hungary, for he had extended knowledge of the European banking and loan system, both from the perspective of its structure and the individuals who played prominent roles. He also had many valuable connections among the influential figures of the Palestinian Jewish economy. Though he was asked not to interfere with the internal affairs of Hungarian Jews, he was still requested, "to enlighten people as to the situation and attempt to pass on the necessary information to them in an impartial manner, on a purely business basis, as [he had] already done in Czechoslovakia."[4] The Jewish Agency for Palestine was perfectly aware of the weakness and relative powerlessness of the Hungarian Zionist movement, and was trying to win the confidence of Samu Stern (1874–1947) in vain. Stern was the leader of the Jewish community in Budapest, and someone who had maintained good relations with István Bethlen and Gyula Gömbös (former Hungarian Prime Ministers). The leaders of the League were confident, however, that the allurement of economic opportunities would bring about the desired results in spite of the traditional patriotism of Hungarian Jews. (In 1940, Julian Silberbusch, one of the Zionist leaders, explained this phenomena by referring to the

[3] The letter of the Economic Committee of the Hungarian Zionist League addressed to the Executive of the Jewish Agency. (Jerusalem) (Written by Lantos. In: CZA KH/9/B/1960)

[4] June 2nd, 1938. Letter of Senator Werner to Feilchenfeld. In: CZA S7/890.

– alleged – egoistic relationship of Hungarian Jewry to Palestine.) The speculations of the Jewish Agency did not prove groundless, but the political situation made it impossible for them to take advantage of the economic opportunities to the fullest possible extent.

The negotiations carried on by the Jewish Agency in Hungary can be divided into different stages. The first discussions took place between the summer of 1938 and February 1939, the second between February and October of the same year.

The Hungarian Zionist League, its Economic Committee in particular, began the negotiations with the Chamber of Commerce in Budapest, the National Bank and the Offices of Foreign Trade. The approval of these institutes was indispensable from a political point of view. On August 21st, 1938, the Jewish Agency submitted the completed memorandum, which bore the signature of Jichak Grünbaum (one of the leaders of the Jewish Agency), to the National Bank "on the subject of the Hungarian-Palestinian agreement on transfer." The document consisted of parts in English that had been translated into Hungarian, and also contained statistical data. An entire chapter (Chapter 5) was dedicated to the planned agreement. From Hungary's perspective, the agreement was advantageous because the buyers would pay in foreign currency for all exports the raw materials of which (and other expenses) had had to be purchased by Hungary in foreign currency. The plan also contained stipulations allowing for financial provisions taken from funds provided by the more affluent in order to assist the poor in their emigration to Palestine. The money for the transfer would have been obtained by the clearing of the pecuniary assistance sent by different individuals and Jewish organizations to Hungarian institutes and Jewish persons. Some amount of the foreign currency coming from the Hungarian exports directed to other countries would have also been used for this purpose.

According to the plan, the Hungarian Zionist League would set up an organization to oversee the processes of transfer. A fixed time would be established for the agreement by the Hungarian government and the Jewish Agency, since the setting up of the organization and the arrival of foreign currency from the first consignment of goods would have taken some time. The Jewish Agency wanted the agreement to be signed for a period of three months of preparatory time and one year of operation.

That the vision held by the leaders of Haavara was not completely irrational (and that it was also widely known) is made clear by the fact that when Sándor Eppler, the secretary-general of the Israelite Religious Community of Budapest, met with Martin Rosenblueth in London, the only word he knew with regards to Palestine was Haavara.

However, when it presented its plans and ideas, the Hungarian Haavara did not receive an unambiguously warm welcome. There were people in Palestine, for example, who did not favor the agreement (though admittedly for economic reasons), as it was not in their interests for the Hungarian State and the Jewish Agency to come to an agreement. But other problems arose in Palestine, where at the time the importation of any Hungarian live-stock was prohibited because of an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Hungary. Jakob Freund, a representative of a company in Tel Aviv that imported cattle, "has been negotiating for weeks with the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture and Offices of Foreign Trade to surmount the obstacles that stand in the way of importing Hungarian cattle to Palestine. From the negotiations he has carried on it is inferred that the export could go through within the frame of a transfer as well."[5] The economic experts of the Zionist League saw the growing export of cattle as a possible beginning of the transfer. A new kind of businessman appeared in Hungary, the Palestinian (Jewish), who wished to work individually, and wanted a private contract with the state in order to get around the organized and monolithic relationship with the Jewish Agency.

The negotiations broke down in Hungary because the National Bank rejected the idea of Feilchenfeld traveling to Budapest for the discussions, referring in their explanation to additional burdens they allegedly faced because of the territorial annexations. In the end, the National Bank was willing to receive Feilchenfeld in February 1939. The chief negotiator of the Jewish Agency met and had a discussion with Sándor Urbányi, the general inspector of the Hungarian National Bank, on February 15th in Budapest. Urbányi declared that the Hungarian State needed Jewish capital and wealth, which was essentially the fundamental standpoint of the authorities, and that he was therefore unable to approve of any measure that might allow this wealth to leave the country. He also noted that the Hungarian State insisted on more payment in foreign currency from Palestine, since while the volume of Palestinian export remained trifling, 60,000 pounds worth of this was still paid for in Hungarian currency, while Egypt, Syria and Iraq paid 40% in

[5] The Economic Committee of the Hungarian Zionist League. Letter of Dr. Lantos Klein to Jerusalem, Jewish Agency. Subject: the activities of Sir Jakob Feund concerning the export of cattle to Palestine. In: CZAs7/890. Lantos repeated the same on January 5th, 1939, when he discussed the issue with Senator Werner. He emphasized the necessity of the Senator's visit to Budapest, since there were attempts to set up private transfer businesses. A certain Chaim Silberherz, for example, who allegedly was maintaining relations with the Chamber of Commerce and Offices of Foreign Trade, offered to pay an extra 60% for foreign currency. And a certain Jakab Feund was interested in buying cattle, and was somehow connected to the city of Tel Aviv. There were also agents in Hungary who were trying to sell building sites in exchange for illegal assets. In: CZAS7/890.

foreign currency. Feilchenfeld pointed out that nowhere had transfer export ever endangered the economy, and it did not increase the export industry in any country, at least not to an extent that would have been dangerous. They also made it clear that they could not renounce the premium coming from the exports, which they referred to as a fundamental condition and the contribution of the Hungarian state to the emigration of the Jews. Urbányi contended that the issue was so important that the ministers affected by the question should come together with the representatives of the National Bank and initiate a conference on the topic. He said he would notify the Prime Minister. Feilchenfeld also negotiated with Félix Bornemissza, the director of the Hungarian National Port of Budapest. As an expert on economics, Bornemissza saw significant opportunities to strengthen the Hungarian economy through the export of Jewish capital under the control of the Jewish Agency, because in his view, it would help the country use frozen assets in pengő (Hungarian currency before 1946). These assets would have been used to build new Hungarian ships for overseas trading.

However, the negotiations met with some difficulties, since Count Pál Teleki had been appointed as the new Prime Minister (the leader of the Zionist League trusted him more than his predecessor; they saw him as someone who would enforce the anti-Jewish legislation in a humanitarian way). Feilchenfeld spent this period of quiet trying to revive or accelerate the negotiations with the Czech Republic and Poland (the discussion had ended completely in Poland, and had not even begun in Prague, where the Zionist League was reluctant to argue with the National Bank). As Samu Stern's opinion had changed over the course of this process, Feilchenfeld asked him for help, and they managed to set up an appointment with the Minister of Commerce. Feilchenfeld also strove to persuade the leaders of the National Bank to start the negotiations before Parliament passed the second anti-Jewish law, for he feared that if they dallied too long, they would have to wait not only for the passage of the bill, but also for the provisions that would accompany it. Samu Stern kept his promise and helped Feilchenfeld to get into the office of the Minister of Commerce, Antal Kunder. Feilchenfeld left the capital city on March 10th with the promise that the Minister would ask for an interlocutory provision on the issue of transfer on March 12th, when there was to be a Cabinet meeting at which the Chair would be absent. However, according to other sources, the National Bank never really wanted to reach an agreement, because they did not consider the Jewish disinvestment to be suitable for the national economy. Samu Stern intervened, and at least according to Feilchenfeld's memoires he discussed the question with Kunder twice. Kunder wanted to reduce the original amount of money by half, and suggested new negotiations. So Feilchenfeld returned to Budapest. They started a new discussion on March

21st. The Minister of Commerce submitted an application to Minister of Finance Lajos Reményi-Schneller and confirmed his intention of coming to an agreement. Kunder made another promise that he would put the issue on the agenda of the next meeting of the Cabinet.[6] At the national conference of the Hungarian Zionist League it was declared that "in principle" the government accepted the transfer proposal of the Zionists, and that "detailed discussions are in process."

The cause of the main controversy between the National Bank and the Jewish Agency was that in the beginning the Jewish Agency insisted on the 1,000,000 pengő limit, while the National Bank insisted on keeping the limit lower, at 500,000 pengő. The Bank also insisted on using its usual methods to establish which goods should be qualified as collateral or exceptionally supplemental. On March 27th (right before his departure) Feilchenfeld received a letter from the National Bank in which the Bank informed him that the government looked favorably on the idea that the value of the annual transfer should be as much as 150.000 pounds.[7] They also declared, however, that the Bank did not approve of any individual export activities, "but rather everything should stay under the control of the National Bank."[8] The Jewish Agency, or rather Feilchenfeld to be more precise, would rather have relied on his own Palestinian export subventions, but he nonetheless asked for the help of his Hungarian acquaintance, Tibor Eckhart, who was the leader of the opposition Small Holders Party, for his assistance in composing the conditions of the National Bank. Feilchenfeld and Tibor Eckhart probably knew each other through Samu Stern, a mutual friend (Eckhart had assured his support during the parliamentary debate regarding the Second Jewish Legislation of the governing party.) "We succeeded in changing the point of view of the government, which in the beginning had been utterly hostile to the idea, and now we are making progress step-by-step. We are going to come to an agreement by May at the latest, after the passage of the second anti-Jewish legislation."[9] The April 1st, 1939 issue of *Újság* [News] gave a similar account of the negotiations, though regarding the export limit of 500,000 pounds no

[6] March 21st, 1939. Feilchenfeld's letter to Sclossberg from Budapest. In: CZA S7/890.

[7] March 29th, 1939. Feilchenfeld's letter to the Haavara LTD from Rome. In: CZA S7/890.

[8] Idem.

[9] Idem.

mention is made whatsoever of the Jewish Agency.[10] The article also emphasizes that other countries would be included as destinations as well, and that Palestine indeed represented only a small proportion of the total transfer.

There was a conference in the Ministry of Finance on May 3rd: the session was led by under-secretary Béla Czizik, and the delegates of the competent ministries were all present.[11] The Ministry of Finance was represented by head of department Zoltán Kállay, the representative of the National Bank was inspector general Sándor Urbányi, and government commissioner István Kultsár, who was in charge of the enforcement of the anti-Jewish legislation, was also there. The representatives of the National Office also made an appearance in the presence of the Committee before and after the discussions. They were disappointed to hear that it was only a nominal sum that the Committee wanted to obtain from the foreign relief funds. Kállay was put in charge of the arrangement of immigration. "They wish to solve the problem by making the Office of Emigration examine the case of each individual emigrant. The Office would get full power from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and would investigate every application with the help and consent of the competent Jewish organizations. It will be necessary to determine whether or not the applicant has all the necessary entry permits, if they have overdue taxes, what kind of furnishings they wish to take with themselves, etc.

[10] "An additional export worth 500.000 pounds to support the emigration. The companies that have been entrusted with carrying out the transportation are obliged to pay a pre-determined part of the sum in foreign currency. The Hungarian National Bank and other interested parties that have a share in the business have been dealing with the question of encouraging Jewish emigration for some time. They expected the Jews to leave the country due to the anti-Jewish legislations, and they strove to find a way to make economic arrangements that would make it easier for them to do so." *Újság* [News] pointed out the difficulties that were caused by the problems of transfer several times: "Under prevailing circumstances today only half-measures can be passed. Of these, the most significant is the one that will be passed by the National Bank, which will create the possibility to transfer assets during emigration by authorizing an additional export framework of 500,000 pounds. According to our sources, the Cabinet approves of this proposal." Within the framework of this 500.000 pounds, the organizations entrusted with carrying out the transportation had to undertake some obligation to procure the required amount of foreign currency. These obligations refer to a certain percent of the value of the exported goods. "According to our sources, the plans which refer to ambitious exports to Palestine cannot be implemented at the moment, so for the foreseeable future only a fraction of these exports can be sent to Palestine. The total exports will be divided among the markets of several such countries where in exchange for Hungarian goods we receive pounds or other convertible currencies." According to the account, further negotiations regarding the details of the 500,000 pound export framework were to begin soon. It was significant that this framework included the export of Hungarian goods the sale of which was important from the perspective of the national economy and which would be favorably appraised on foreign markets.

[11] May 11th, 1939, presumably with a note by Feilchenfeld indicating that it was strictly confidential. In: CZA S7/890.

Only after completing all these investigations will the Office of Emigration be able to transfer the required or rather the permitted amount of money, depending on the financial circumstances of the emigrants. The transfer would be carried out by the National Bank." According to the decision of the conference there were to be no temporal transfers of wealth, only the amount of money needed to emigrate. To a question regarding this issue, they gave a concrete answer: in the case of emigration to Palestine, the maximum amount of money to be paid was 1,000 pounds, considering that in the case of a particular category of emigrants this amount was required. This limit was not to be exceeded, and if this were to happen in some entirely unusual instance, an increase of 10 to 20 percent would be allowed. The collection of the currency that was to be put at the emigrant's disposal was to happen through the introduction of a so-called "superadditioneller Export."

The second anti-Jewish legislation (May 5th, 1939, article IV, paragraph 22) mentions the possibility of emigration and the export of capital, and also declares that the law can establish the rules applying, for instance, to customs in order (allegedly) to protect the wealth of the country. The preamble makes this very clear: "If Hungarian Jews wish to emigrate to a land or country that for whatever reasons does not disapprove of their immigration, this ambition should be supported by Hungarian law and the Hungarian State by any means available, not only because this is in harmony with the interests of the Hungarian nation, but also because it is in the interests of the Jewry." The same preamble refers to the significance of the long negotiations and agreements on the issue, and also declares that the Hungarian State has no intention of depriving Jews who sought to emigrate of their property.

On June 27th the banking department of the National Bank gave permission to the Jewish Agency to use the exchange value of certain extra exports to further emigration.[12] The permission was valid for a year, but specified strict conditions. The amount of money that could be spent on the transfers could not exceed the 500.000 pounds that was established in the contract. The authorization also declared that companies that wished to participate in the export had to submit a tender in which they estimated the costs of their activities, and that these calculations had to be submitted to an authorized financial institution. In order to obtain permission to make the extra transfer, they obliged the companies "to transfer a proportion determined on a case by case basis [of the countervalue of the exported goods] to the National Bank according to the official rate of exchange, including premiums." The authorization also stipulated that any amount exceed-

[12] The authorization of the Hungarian National Bank regarding certain goods. In: CZA S7/890.

ing the proportion to be paid to the National Bank would be placed in preapproved "emigration" or "credit" accounts, and the companies would have to pay a 150 percent surcharge, in addition to the other obligatory costs.[13]

As far as we know this is the last information on the transfer negotiations. There are no sources indicating that there was ever actually any transfer of Jewish wealth from Hungary to Palestine, just as there are no sources suggesting that either industrial or agricultural exports from Hungary to Palestine ever grew significantly.

[13] *Idem*. If the average of the amounts to be paid exceeded 25 percent of the completed exports, this additional amount will be transferred back to you under the same conditions as if you were receiving them from the exports.

5. In the export of goods, the company must undertake its obligation to settle the complete countervalue with a red certificate used exclusively for surplus exports marked with the letter F. This obligation will only be considered met if the company:

a. delivers the prescribed quota,
b. an authorized financial institution verifies with a document that You credited the countervalue of the international currency allowed for the purpose of emigration with the 150 percent surcharge in the manner prescribed in clause 4 to the "emigration" or "credit" account. To receive the money from this account you must ask for our approval.

6. With the exemption from exports, we at the same time oblige you to give an account of the foreign exchange currency that you received for emigratory purposes. These foreign currencies can only be used (after deduction of costs) following our assent to cover the needs of emigrants who have paid the pengő countervalue in foreign currency to the emigration account (kept in pengő). Thus foreign currency cannot be paid out in exchange for payment into the "separate credit account" described in clause 8. Regarding the foreign currency withdrawn or used, you must send an invoice containing the date, the goal (the name of the recipient), and the amount four times annually to the Banking Department of the Hungarian National Bank.

7. You can only accept payment in pengő from would-be emigrants if we give you permission to do so, and only to a "separate emigration account" held by an authorized financial institution. We will give you our permission to deposit money in such an account only if it can be proven that the depositor has fulfilled the regulations of the competent authorities, and these authorities have given consent. Those who wish to emigrate need to clarify the conditions they have to meet with the competent authorities of the government.
Beyond the 150 percent surcharge, you must inform the Hungarian National Bank and the competent authorities of other costs, and these can be put to your account upon approval.

8. In principle we give our consent to provide the necessary sums to make advances on the exports on the basis of the previously requested approval, as a credit transaction. These sums made available to you on the basis of the loans approved in this manner must be paid into a "separate credit account" held by an authorized financial institution, and payments made from this account can only be made with our consent.
In principle there is no obstacle to you availing yourself of credit from the person seeking to emigrate, with our approval. These sums, however, can only be transfered from the credit account to the emigration account with our prior approval. This approval can be given in accordance with the conditions described in clause 7. Without such approval the sums taken from the emigrant must be repaid within six months of the date of request.

The Jewish Agency, the Zionist organization that was authorized by the League of Nations, made use of the valuable help of assimilated, patriotic Jews who were living in Budapest, of whom they had earlier thought very little. By eliciting their assistance, they were able to get close to influential governmental circles, which was important, seeing as how the local Zionists had few connections in the Hungarian capital (in part because they lacked social influence and were not an integrated community). Both parties had to reinterpret their former priorities as they began to develop a relationship. The common denominator between the Jewish Agency and the Jewish community of Budapest was economic rationale, which helped further negotiations in the name of a common cause. The discussions touched on other questions as well, such as the issue transferring the wealth of non-Zionist Jews out of the country or helping poor Jewish youth who were uneducated but still affected by the anti-Jewish legislation to emigrate.

Several people – many of whom bore anti-Semitic feelings and some of whom did not – representing the Hungarian state (which sought to restrict the Jewry of the country) thought that a rational solution to the "Jewish question" would prevent further anti-Jewish legislation. They were ambivalent, however, with regards to the extent to which the transfer of Jewish wealth to destinations outside the country was in the interests of the Hungarian nation. For the Hungarian state, the biggest contradiction was caused by the question of how much room for manoeuver to allow the Jewry (which the state simultaneously sought to restrict) in the economic sphere if it sought to emigrate (in a legal manner). And here various levels of discriminative policies emerge, as do the various ways in which a desire to offer rational help took form. It became clear that the diplomatic potential of the Jewish Agency was at its most effective in times when the Jewry was in danger, which of course reduced its scope for action, since it had to negotiate with nations and institutions that disapproved of the Jewish national movement.

The war that broke out in September 1939 drastically affected the failure of the negotiations and in the end sealed the fate of the plans and hopes for transfer. As the concept of transfer had fallen victim to the events in Germany, in Hungary, too, the embryonic plans were stillborn. As Central Europe was transformed into a political and military battlefield, the complex economic interconnections and "routes" simply ceased to exist, and the frontlines came to be drawn in different territories of life.

Translated by Georgina Sima

Stigma and Renaissance

András Kovács

The scholarship that has been done over the course of the past twenty years on the Jewish communities of Hungary has revealed an important change in identity strategies. While the Jews who survived the persecution and massacres of the Second World War and remained in the country attempted to sever themselves from their Jewish identities (which both they and their children born in the decade following the war experienced as a kind of stigma), a significant portion of the next generation strove to ensure a renewal of Jewish identity.

The repressiveness of the communist party-state and the simultaneous lure of the prospect of complete assimilation (which seemed to promise complete acceptance) shaped the identity strategy characteristic of the generation born between 1935 and 1950. Members of this generation went farther than any other generation in their rejection of Jewish identity, particularly if they pursued careers that allowed them a degree of upward mobility. However, a larger group born after 1965 diverged from this path and sought possibilities to reformulate Jewish identity. Two research projects shed light on this significant shift.

According to the results of a research project undertaken in the middle of the 1980s involving 117 interviews regarding family and individual histories, 31 of the participants learned of their Jewish identities from strangers, not from family members, or simply drew this conclusion themselves on the basis of various indications. Another 24 had remained unaware of their heritage for a long time, until eventually they had found themselves in a situation in which one of their parents had felt it better to "enlighten" them as to the secrets of their origins. It is hardly surprising that 56 of those interviewed knew absolutely nothing about their family histories before the Second World War, and another 42 knew very little about the older generation. For 47 of the participants the first confrontation with their Jewish identity had been a stigmatizing experience, and for another 54 the identity itself was seen as a stigma, laden with connotations of persecution, defenselessness, and fear.

Research undertaken in 1999–2000 yielded similar results. 2,015 interviews were conducted. Twenty-two percent of those interviewed indicated that they almost never spoke of Jewish identity among their family members. For 30 percent, Jewish identity was not a natural part of family tradition, but rather merely

a piece of information of which they had learned either in their childhoods or later, and in the case of 8 percent of them this information had not been passed on by a family member. A break-up of the answers on the basis of the ages of those interviewed corroborates the findings of the research undertaken in the 1980s. The 36 percent who never spoke about Jewish identity with their family members were between 35 and 54 years of age, and only half of this generation indicated that Jewish identity was part of family tradition.

For those who sought to break entirely with Jewish identity, however, this strategy of severance was difficult, even painful to put into practice. In an environment in which being a Jew constituted something meaningful from a social perspective, and indeed in some cases made one a target of discrimination and prejudice, efforts to conceal Jewish ancestry – the stigma of Jewish ancestry – demanded complex strategies and at times could involve serious conflicts.

The two basic forms of concealing this stigma were to manipulate the symbols that were used to identify someone and to obscure biographical details that might betray one's heritage. Both techniques were widely used in all of the 117 families questioned in the course of the research undertaken in 1984–1986. Only 43 of the people interviewed regarded the acceptance of their identities as members of the Jewish community as natural, regardless of the circumstances. Another 20 attempted to conceal their Jewishness entirely, and 46 based their decisions regarding whether or not to reveal their Jewish identities on the given situation. Among the members of the parents' generation (the survivors who assimilated), even more – 63 families – attempted to conceal their Jewishness, and they passed this example on to their children as well. In total there were only 40 families the members of which did not adopt some similar strategy after 1945, and 19 adopted a tactic of extreme dissimilation, in other words they attempted to conceal their Jewish origins entirely. The following excerpts from interviews exemplify the strategies with which the interviewees attempted to handle this trauma:

1. You see, there was a Jewish church near where we lived earlier. Well, we never went inside. From time to time I wanted to go in, especially because they said it was a Jewish church, and it was very hard for her, but my mother came in with me. I had the feeling that she was ashamed to be seen going in. So this was the first time that I felt that this was something strange, but I thought that it was because my mother was a party member, that this was the reason, but we went into other churches much more easily. So when we took excursions we would go into any church. There was another church close to the Jewish church, also on Frankel Leó Street, and we could go in without further ado and she showed it to

me. She really did not want to go in the Jewish church, at least she never suggested we go. There was a sort of soup kitchen next to the church for the elderly, and I thought it must be a Jewish charity kitchen. I looked around there a lot, for instance, but she was not willing to talk about the people who went there and what they ate, etc. In short for a long time the family made no mention of such things. In fact, when I was a bit older, let's say ten years old, and I asked about my religion, my father gave an impossible answer which, however he thought it, was quite striking: "my boy, say you are not part of any denomination." It was then, at roughly ten years of age, that I began to realize that there was something strange going on, something that I did not yet know or understand.

2. Not too long ago we sent our child to France as an exchange student. … Then it turned out that they were all being taken to a camp. … We got the news at the beginning that everyone prayed and went to the church there, and this was very unpleasant for him. We didn't know, we had not prepared him, and then it became clear that it was a Catholic boy-scout camp. Before they went to the camp, they asked him whether we observe Jewish holidays. … Then he went to the boy-scout camp, where he tried to do everything to assimilate, but for example they told him that he couldn't eat the [communion] wafer because he was Jewish. They explained to him, not in an anti-Semitic way, but to protect him, that he couldn't do it because of his own religion, and not because of them. Well it was an awful trauma, perhaps more so for me than for him. … So it is not enough that we are Jews, but we don't even know who we are. That's the biggest problem… because we want to belong, but without faith. We don't want to practice the religion itself, but still we want to belong. … A Catholic man, if he is pious, goes to church, if not, he doesn't belong there. … This does not create any problems for him. … [In our case] it is extremely difficult, we are "colorless black people" [translator's note: this phrasing is intended to indicate victims of discrimination who racially are indistinguishable from the majority].

The manner in which Jewish identity had thus been made relatively vapid or without content exercised a considerable influence on the attitudes of members of the next generation to Jewishness, though it did not make it impossible for new claims to be made in a manner that was quite palpable for a redefinition of the very concept of Jewish identity, especially among people who had been born after 1965. As the data from the survey taken in 1999–2000 indicate, 40 percent

of the generation between the ages of 18 and 34 come from a homogeneous family, in other words both of the parents were Jews, and 30 percent of them followed traditional practices. For the generation between the ages of 35 and 54, 69 percent came from religiously homogeneous families, and 30 percent followed traditional practices. Among the older generation, more than 85 percent came from a homogeneous family, but only 20 percent followed traditional practices, more or less. Thus the tendency to abandon traditional practices did not keep pace with the growth in the number of people of mixed parentage. To summarize, some element of Jewish tradition appeared in only half of the families between the ages of 18 and 34, whether in a profound or symbolic way.

The process by which Jewish identity was reconstructed began at the end of the 1980s and was led by members of the younger generation, but it progressed more rapidly following the fall of the communist system. This was due in part to a general rise in interest in ethnic and religious identity, which is of course a natural phenomenon at a time of significant social changes. Multiculturalism was also in vogue, and this gave further impetus to this kind of search for identity. The opening of the borders between East and West in Europe made it easier to choose an identity strategy, especially given the rapidly developing connections with Jews living in Israel or the United states. The most important motif of the search for identity, however, was the desire for liberation from the stigmas of identity that had been characteristic of the previous generation. Many of the members of the generation that had sought to hide the stigma said that they only considered themselves Jews when they were confronted with anti-Semitism. They felt that the borders that divided them from others were defined from the outside. But – as the excerpts from interviews cited above demonstrate – this definition, the stigma is incorporated into the mentality and behavior of those to whom it is ascribed. It is a general phenomenon for the stigmatized – even if they feel that there is no justification for their stigmatization – to try to form patterns of behavior and communication that make it easier for them to live with the stigma. One consequence of this is that whether intentionally or not they themselves come to draw a line between the group they represent and others. With or without good reason, they are fearful when confronted with social conflicts, political incidents, or forms of rhetoric that for others do not cause any anxiety or fear. They speak and behave differently, and they attach different meanings to certain words, gestures, and acts depending on whether they happen to find themselves with members of the group or not. This behavior, however, which they develop in order to make it easier to live with the stigma, can be recognized as distinctive, both by those in the group and those outside of it, and if it can be recognized as distinctive then it constitutes an identity, and often a burdensome and even

torturous identity. For this reason, for members of the younger generation of Jews, who are and are able to live in the world of today without the constraints and restrictions with which their parents had to cope, this approach is not simply unappealing, but even unbearable. They do not wish to remain "colorless black people." They want to find positive meaning in Jewish identity and arrive at a concept of being Jewish that they can openly embrace. Indeed the program of openly accepting one's origins and faith is part of this creation of a new Jewish identity.

Most of the families who are searching for new identity strategies do not endure the same pressures to assimilate that their ancestors had to endure – their social mobility can be considered completed and the expectations of the world around them have changed considerably. The change in circumstances has important consequences. It is probable that in the foreseeable future a relatively significant group of Hungarian Jews will maintain an identity that finds expression in Jewish tradition.

Similar developments have been observed in the Jewish communities of other post-communist Eastern European countries. But the situation of the Hungarian Jewry is different from the situation of the Czech, Slovak or Polish Jewry in one extremely important aspect. In Hungary, where – according to various estimates based on different methods – the number of Jews is somewhere between 80,000 and 140,000, the size of the groups that are searching for new identity strategies probably reaches the critical number that is necessary in order to bring about a change in the attitude and circumstances of the Jewry as a whole. In the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Poland, because the number of Jews is so trifling, these "movements for renewal" can hardly bring to a halt the gradual disappearance of the Jewish communities. In contrast, in Hungary the movements can slow down or even counterbalance the process of fraying that is taking place on the fringes of the community.

However, in all likelihood only in the case of small groups will the new identity strategy entail the complete revival of the religious traditions that pervade the lifestyle of the community. Traditional elements unquestionably will serve as group identifiers of an ethnic-like group consciousness. The elements of tradition, freely selected and structured into a system, will function as symbols and symbolic gestures that are called upon to give expression to the coherence of the group.

Ethnic groups have, perhaps first and foremost, political functions. Their possible political goals include the fight against discrimination, the attainment of better positions in the division of social goods, but most importantly the assurance of the conditions necessary for the maintenance of the group as a social source of

identity. The stability and strength of an ethnic group depends on the extent to which it is institutionalized and the extent to which its institutions are capable of putting the problems considered important by the group it represents in the focal point of interest, as well as the extent to which they are capable of convincing the members of the group that the goals it seeks to achieve are relevant to them. Assuming there is no large wave of emigration among Hungarian Jews induced by the worsening of conditions exterior to the group, then the question of how far Hungarian Jewry will progress on the path towards the evolution of consciousness as an ethnic group depends on how these factors shift and evolve.

Translated by Petra Lakatos

Ways of Interpretation of Hungarian-American Ethnic-Based Public Life and Identity

Attila Papp Z.

Between 2006 and 2008 we carried out a research which tried to use a variety of methodologies to best capture the main characteristics of the Hungarian-American institutions, civic activities, and social life, and to identify the worldview of the participants and leaders of Hungarian-American public life.[1]

Below, we define the methods used to classify the functions and characteristics of Hungarian-American institutions, in order to arrive at an institutional typology. We also examine and try to identify the ethnic identity profiles that emerge from participants in Hungarian-American institutional life, since participation in public life is a constituent factor in the dynamics of Hungarian ethnic institutions. Finally, we try to determine fundamental diaspora community relationships, employing our research-based institutional and identity profiles, and to explore connections between community life in the diaspora and the ancestral homeland (or the perception of the homeland). Further, we attempt to determine whether such relationships create an autochthonous ethnic culture or, instead, represent an adaptation of the old cultural heritage to a new environment.

1.1 Types of Institutions

There are a number of ways to classify Hungarian-American institutions. One of the most palpable and frequently used way is to classify them by the date of their foundation and their goals. This, mostly historical approach is linked to the various waves of migration and results in the following groups:

- Traditional ("old") Hungarians' institutions, such as: fraternal associations, Catholic parishes and Protestant congregations

[1] Based on the research we published a book: Papp, Attila Z. (ed.) *Beszédből világ. Elemzések, adatok amerikai magyarokról*. MKI, Regio Books, Budapest, 2008. 514 pp. This paper appeared in the book as the summary of the research findings.

- DP (Displaced Persons, that is, refugees from World War II) organizations, such as: MHBK *(Fraternal Association of Hungarian Veterans), Hungarian Scout Federation in Exile, Hungarian National Committee* (a forty-seveners organization)
- Organizations of 1956 refugees, such as: *Hungarian Freedom Fighters' Associations*
- Organizations partly maintained and created by economic refugees and newly arrived immigrants, such as: *HungarianAmerica Foundation* (Washington, DC), some Hungarian Sunday schools and Magyar/Hungarian Houses in various cities (i.e. Los Angeles).

This classification, although it takes into account fundamental factors, is of limited use because in today's Hungarian-American community, the traditional group definitions that characterized migrating patterns have either disappeared or have evolved. Currently, we have simultaneously first, second and third generation DP immigrants, first and second generations of refugees of 1956, the wave of migration of the 1960's to the 1980's (the so-called Kadar's orphans[2]), and the skilled immigrants of the 1990's seeking to make a better living. The immigrant institutions were also affected by the fact that the end of the Cold War and the attendant emergence of newly democratic states in Europe also meant the disappearance of the "enemy image" that was part of the legitimacy, and indeed, the identity of the institutions. A third factor affecting the institutional crisis, besides the end of the underlying context of the ideological divide, was the advanced age of institutional leaders and the dying out of their generation, which brought new challenges for those institutions striving to endure.

The institutions may also be categorized by areas of activity. In this respect, the most important are those that have an orientation toward a particular set of activities, such as politics, culture, worship, scouting, or professional affiliation.

In its 2006 report, the since-abolished Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad (HTMH) uses yet another set of categories[3] to classify Hungarian organizations in the United States:

[2] The term is used by Huseby-Darvas, Éva V. *Hungarians in Michigan*. Michigan State University Press, 2003. p. 27.

[3] Office of Hungarians Abroad (HTMH): *Report on Hungarian Communities outside the Carpathian Basin,* 2006.

- Organizations which focus on Hungarian-American relations and represent Hungarian interests, and which no longer fit the mold of the traditional civic institutions (e.g. *Hungarian American Coalition, Center for Hungarian-American Congressional Relations)*
- Organizations that are "transitional" in the sense that they seek both to represent Hungarian interests and to protect the Hungarian heritage (e.g. *Manhattan Hungarian Network)*
- Organizations that function in the framework of traditional immigrant institutions.

Based on our research, and particularly on an analysis of the interviews undertaken, we propose to categorize the organizations in terms of spheres of influence, separating the local organizations from the national ones. From this vantage point, we have three types of organizations: local, buffer and national organizations.

In this classification, "buffer" means organizations which are essentially both local and national in scope: their sphere of activities goes beyond local boundaries. Such is the case for the church-based organizations, the scouts (the *Hungarian Scout Association Abroad)*, and to some extent the Hungarian schools. For the church-based organizations, the organizational structure is a given (i.e. diocesan framework); the scouts have their own strong linkage between the local troops and the Scout Association which oversees them. In case of the schools, however, national integration is, for the most part, a desirable but unfulfilled goal. The operation of Hungarian schools has not been standardized despite the creation of *American Hungarian Educator's Association* (AHEA) and *Hungarian Language Conference* (Anyanyelvi Konferencia). As for the national organizations, our analysis shows that they are primarily lobby, trade or professional affiliations, while the local organizations concentrate on local Hungarian cultural and social activities, and have very little involvement in the political sphere. Both the local and national organizations suffer from internal and external, as well as inter-organizational conflicts; these might be overcome with the influx of younger generations.

Another way to classify the organizations is to examine how a given organization formulates its goals and how it carries them out: according to this logic, organizations may be divided into two large categories:

- Closed ethnic organizations
- Open ethnic organizations

The working language of *closed ethnic organizations* is primarily Hungarian; their perception of the Hungarian-American community is static, and echoes their self-perception. This type of organization entails a folk-populist culture with the traditional ethnic overtones (e.g. traditional Hungarian food).

In the *open ethnic organizations,* English-language communications are also acceptable and the perception of the Hungarian community is dynamic, in the sense that the organization's activities involve interacting with local and national American groups. From the perspective of representatives of this type of organization, Hungarian-ness is not just for preservation, but should be showcased before the wider society.

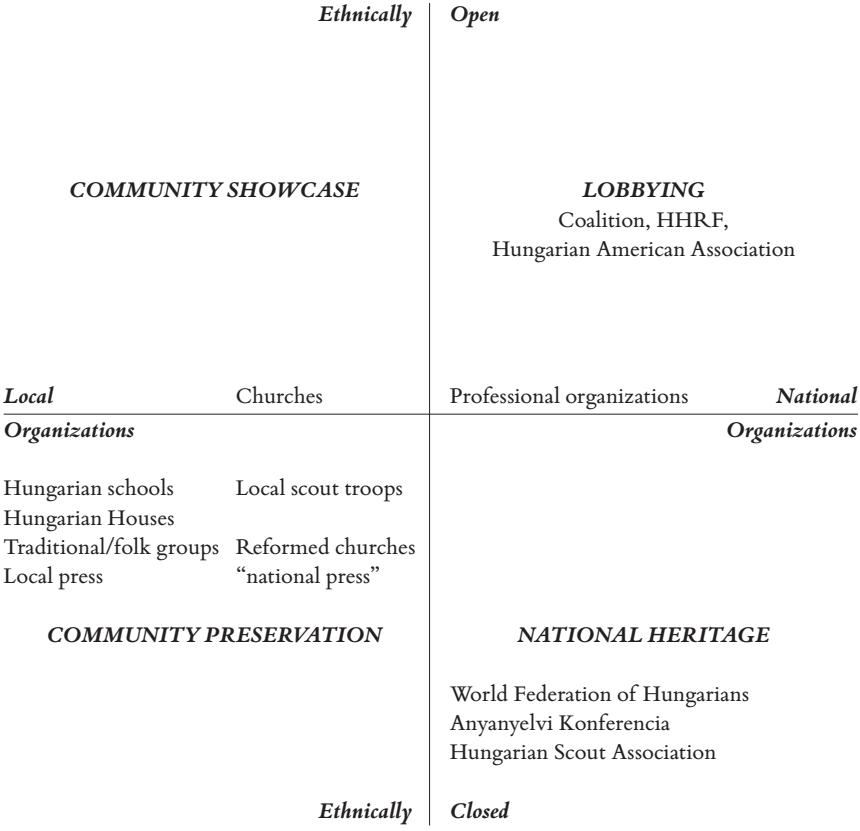
The organizing principle of open vs. closed ethnic organizations is relevant at both the local and national levels. We could say that while ethnic openness is a precondition for organizations representing Hungarian interests at the national level, in other types of organizations the opposite is true: their closed ethnic organizational mode allows them to transcend local boundaries and function successfully at the national level as well (e.g. scout troops). An analysis of the historical narrative of Hungarian organizations indicates that these organizations were primarily closed ethnic organizations, since they were largely created to preserve an ethnic culture. However, because of integration into American society, the feeling of being immigrants has receded, and with increasing frequency we find ethnically open organizations at the local level, where Hungarian identity is more relational with the wider community. It should be noted that this type of organizational vantage point is, perhaps paradoxically, more typical in communities where larger numbers of citizens of Hungarian ancestry live. It is reasonable to assume that in these geographic enclaves (Cleveland, Florida, New Jersey) there is a greater pool of second and third generation Hungarians and of economic immigrants, partly due to mixed marriages, and this favors the ascendance of open ethnic organizations.

If we combine the organizing principles described above (local vs. national, and open vs. closed) we can create a matrix that encompasses four major types of organizations (see *Figure 1): lobbying organizations, national heritage organizations, community preservation organizations* and *community showcase organizations*. These types of organizations, even though we included some actual organizations in the illustration, are really sociological ideal types,[4] that is, theoretical structures designed to accurately reflect operational aspects or the most salient characteris-

[4] The term is used in the Weberian sense. See Weber, Max: *Gazdaság és társadalom. A megértő szociológia alapvonalai 1. Szociológiai kategóriatan*. Közgadasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1987. (mainly on pages 49–51)

tics of organizations. We should note that these ideal types seldom if ever exist in their pure form in everyday life. In reality, actual organizations share characteristics of different types, although usually its most salient characteristic allows us to characterize it as a single type.

Figure 1. Operational Typology of Hungarian-American Organizations



Lobbying organizations aim to achieve a national profile, which is reflected in their rhetoric, and their very existence is predicated upon ethnic openness. These organizations seek to represent Hungarian interests by building relationships with American and Hungarian political entities. These institutions seek to look "greater" than they actually are. We can get a sense of an organization's size by membership figures, or – as a better indicator – by the number of its constituent

member organizations, although it is often difficult to settle on a specific number. In reality, membership figures are not fundamental; instead, the number of member organizations empowers representing organizations to act or communicate on behalf of 1.5 million Hungarian-Americans. We should note that there are organizations that, although by charter without any organizational membership, may still claim to represent Hungarian-Americans in general.

A particular subset of lobbying organizations is *professional interest group*. These interest groups, although they transcend locality, still cannot be regarded as national in the full sense of the term. Their activity centers on cooperation among professionals of various professions or trades, and though they achieve a measure of success, they cannot achieve a complete professional integration. These professional organizations work on behalf of Hungarian interests but their very professional orientation requires a working relationship with American counterpart organizations, which precludes the use of Hungarian as the exclusive language of communication.

The *heritage organizations* are also national organizations (or even transnational) and their activities focus on protecting the heritage of the Hungarian nation. These organizations are ethnically closed, as indicated by their working language (Hungarian) and their presence in Hungary and the Carpathian basin. We may include in this group cultural institutions which may not be fully national in terms of sphere of activity, but which transcend locality and operate in a wide area including Hungary and other parts of Central Europe (i.e. Anyanyelvi Konferencia).

The *community preservation organizations* function primarily as local entities; their emphasis on "preservation" means ensuring the continuity of their own communities. These organizations are active locally and they interact with other local organizations intensively, but know little of similar organizations in other locations, and do not really maintain relationships with them. Of course, there are exceptions to this "insularity", but this generally takes the form of a loose network of relationships among Hungarian-American intellectuals, which, however, does not reach the level of formal connectedness among the local communities. The Hungarian identity of community preservation organizations is not merely a sense of national kinship, but also rests upon specific local community activities. For example, the local scout troops, schools and Hungarian Reformed churches largely focus on daily tasks that serve the community; they do not necessarily wish to set goals of national policy. This does not mean that individuals active in these organizations do not have an ethno-social or national consciousness, rather that they are active in community roles instead of serving the nation in the more abstract sense.

In our illustration, we placed the press in the category of *community preservation organizations*. In the case of the local electronic media or publications of local organizations, this categorization is understandable, but the inclusion of the "national-level press" in this community category requires elaboration. This seeming paradox is explained by the fact that the so-called "national" press actually functions within a local framework. Whether considering the Hungarian papers in California, or the newspaper that reports from Chicago but is published in Canada, we see strong affiliations with local interests. The *Amerikai Magyar Népszava Szabadság,* currently published in New Jersey, includes topics of interest nationally and news from Hungary, yet it is inward-looking and plagued by internal conflicts, and so retains the characteristics of a local institution.

The function of *community showcase organizations* is to present Hungarian ethnicity to the American public. The need to be "visible" becomes an organizing force; Hungarian-ness becomes something to be introduced to the local non-Hungarian-speaking public. Museums are the most obvious examples of such an organization (one which involves both being Hungarian and also showing our heritage to others), since museums are places that show and preserve. In addition, the churches, as buffer organizations, also belong to this category to some extent, because the growing trend toward bilingual services assumes ethnic openness. However, a sizable proportion of the Reformed congregations nevertheless more properly belong to the *community preservation* category described above, since these churches, besides nurturing the faith, act locally to preserve Hungarian culture.[5]

In *Figure 1* we placed a few organizations in the diagram in an attempt to suggest the operational logic of the diverse organizational functions. Two things should be noted here. First: organizations placed in the various coordinates of the diagram most likely have characteristics that might make them equally suited for another category. The Hungarian schools, for example, are interested in the preservation of the Hungarian heritage and nationality, but their functions are carried out locally. Similarly, the *community showcase organizations* also have community preservation functions, although their defining function is to present the national heritage to the American public. In short, the classification gives greater emphasis to the organization's operational method over its heritage-preserving aspects, which is, in some measure, common to all of the organizations.

Our second observation is regarding the nature of our analysis. We do not intend to apply a value judgment to the organizations and their operations. For us, these modes of functioning are value-neutral, since the purpose of the analysis and research is not to evaluate the organizations according to their relative

[5] And this twin function may be a source of repeated conflicts.

importance, but to shed light on this small universe of Hungarian-American organizations and thereby to reach an understanding of the character of (a segment of) the Hungarian-American present.

1.2 Hungarian-American Identity Structures

Although the primary aim of the qualitative research was to enter the inner world of Hungarian-American organizations, our interviews gave us an opportunity to learn about the identity awareness of a significant group of Hungarian-Americans.

In our analysis, we came up with three levels of identity in the Hungarian-American community. We defined an *ethno-personal identity* level, where the relationship is between the individual and the host country. We defined an *ethno-social identity* level, characterized by a well-defined relationship with the American way of life within the context of belonging to a Hungarian community. And third, we defined an identity level which assumes a more encompassing sense of *national consciousness,* strongly influenced by returns to the ancestral homeland and by the individual's view of the Hungarian nation.[6] Naturally, these identity levels and their characteristics occur to varying extents among different individuals: this became evident through our own direct interaction with the interview subjects, but also indirectly, from what the interviewees had to say about their fellow Hungarian-Americans. A number of interview subjects stated that those individuals who regularly participate in Hungarian-American community life are a small proportion of the entire Hungarian community, estimated at most at 5 to 10 percent of the total. As we have detailed in our demographic analy-

[6] It should be noted that although from a different perspective and with a different terminology Miklós Szántó arrived at a similar descriptive identity structure. (Szántó, Miklós: *Magyarok Amerikában* [Hungarians in America]. Gondolat, Budapest, 1984. pp. 36–40.) According to him, the strength of the levels of Hungarian identity depends on contacts with the ancestral homeland, integration in the adopted country, and degree of participation in the life of the ethnic community. These determinants may be further examined according to their respective sociological, cultural and political dimensions. Based on these criteria, there are 8 types, ranging from those who have a harmonious dual relationship with both the ancestral homeland and the host country to those who are more prone to reject the new country and remain at the periphery of its society. This model is largely consonant with research on nationalism and minorities pursued by Rogers Brubaker, though in 1984 Szántó could not possibly have known the work of Brubaker, which was published in 1996. Brubaker also says that the situation of the minorities is defined by relationships with the ancestral country, the minority community and the host country. (Brubaker, Rogers: *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.)

sis U.S. census data estimating the number of persons of Hungarian ancestry include an element of uncertainty, but it is generally accepted that 10 percent of Hungarian-Americans regularly speak Hungarian at home. But who are the Hungarian-Americans who do not participate in Hungarian community life and who do not speak Hungarian?

The above-described levels of identity, which emerged from our series of interviews, are helpful in identifying – at least in theory – the identity consciousness of these "other" Hungarian-Americans. If our point of departure is that the three-level framework is observable to varying degrees for each person (that is, each of the three identity levels either applies to an individual or not), then we can define a range of identity-consciousness. At one pole, we find those who actively participate in the organizational life of the community; his/her Hungarian identity is important at the individual level (for instance, s/he uses the Hungarian language); s/he feels, in some fashion, part of the Hungarian nation and regards himself or herself as a member of the Hungarian community. At the other pole, we find those who are completely assimilated (third, fourth or nth generation) Americans of Hungarian ancestry for whom Hungarian identity is unimportant both at the individual and community levels, who do not speak Hungarian, and who have no sense of belonging to the Hungarian nation either symbolically or more substantially.

Within these extremes we can find several transitional stages, each of which can be defined as an identity profile. We have identified a total of eight such profiles, as shown in *Table 1*.[7]

[7] In fact, it is possible to further refine the identity types by indicating the relative presence or absence of each identity level's typical characteristics, ranging from "very much present" (+++) to "entirely absent" (---).

Table 1. Hungarian-American Identity Profiles

	Ethno-personal identity exists	***Ethno-social identity exists***	***National identity exists***
Sample Questions / *Identity Profile*	*Is being Hungarian important at a personal level? (for example: does the person speak Hungarian?)*	*Is being Hungarian important at the local community level? (e.g. does s/he participate in Hungarian events?)*	*Does s/he self-identify as part of the Hungarian nation? (e.g. is s/he aware of his/her Hungarian ancestry?)*
1. Active Hungarian	+	+	+
2. Local Hungarian	+	+	-
3. Cautious Hungarian	+	-	+
4. Private Hungarian	+	-	-
5. Hungarian in Heart	-	+	+
6. Festive, Occasional Hungarian	-	+	-
7. Census-Hungarian	-	-	+
8. Assimilated Hungarian	-	-	-

Let us examine what these identity types may entail:

1. *Active Hungarian Identity:* A sense of Hungarian identity exists at both the individual and communal levels, and the question of national identity is also very much present. Such an individual speaks Hungarian, participates in Hungarian events and public life and has opinions about his/her own Hungarian identity, about Hungary and about the Hungarians who live as minorities in Central Europe.

2. *Local Hungarian Identity:* For this individual, the country of ancestry and the fate of the Hungarian nation have become less relevant. This individual still speaks Hungarian and attends Hungarian events from time to time, but it is unlikely that he or she travels to Hungary, or does so infrequently.

3. *Cautious Hungarian Identity:* This individual speaks Hungarian, and Hungary and a sense of belonging to a larger Hungarian community are still important, but s/he does not attend explicitly Hungarian events. Based on our interviews, the oft-mentioned "illegal Hungarians," "new Hungarians," and "fresh-off-the-boat" Hungarians might be classified in this group. Other members of this group include those immigrants who came earlier, and whose Hungarian identity is still important, but who for some reason do not wish to participate in the activities of the Hungarian-American organizations.

4. *Private Hungarian identity:* These individuals have lost their relationship with the Hungarian community, whether in a close-knit family sense or in the wider sense. S/he still speaks some Hungarian, if only the colloquial language. For these individuals, Hungarian identity is a private matter which is rarely expressed to others.

5. *Hungarian in Heart:* We could define this identity type by the saying "the nation lives not only through its language but in the heart as well." These individuals, as a rule, barely speak Hungarian or do not speak it at all, but they have a sense of respect and responsibility toward the country of ancestry, and as a result they participate in Hungarian-American community events, still visit Hungary, and concern themselves (whatever that concern may be) with Hungarian issues.

6. *Festive or Occasional Hungarians:* This is where the individual's ancestry is foggy or unsettled, although s/he participates from time to time in Hungarian events (perhaps events where Hungarian dishes are served, for example). Individuals in this category may not indicate their Hungarian ancestry in the census questionnaire and they do not speak Hungarian at all.

7. *Census-Hungarians:* These individuals have some notion of Hungarian ancestry, which they indicate in the census questionnaire. Otherwise, they do not consider Hungarian identity important, nor do they attend Hungarian events.[8]

8. *Assimilated Hungarians:* These are individuals for whom their Hungarian roots are completely irrelevant and any consciousness of Hungarian origin is absent.

The eight ethnic identity types cover all variations of Hungarian-American identity consciousness. It should be noted that only seven of these are reflected in the census, since those who have been assimilated completely probably do not even know whether their ancestors were Hungarian. In the course of our analysis, our interviews were mostly with members of the first group, that is, the Active Hungarian Identity, plus a few persons who do not speak Hungarian, but nonetheless are active in Hungarian-American organizations and may be classified by Identity type number 5 or perhaps number 6. Our theoretical identity types do not cover dual-identity or dual allegiance issues, although such issues are likely

[8] A returning theme for census professionals is how to measure and statistically differentiate those respondents having a significant ethnic consciousness from those individuals for whom ethnic identity is merely occasional, such as when responding to a census questionnaire.

to occur in all of the first seven identity categories. (In the last identity type, dual identity issues do not arise.) If we were to undertake a more detailed analysis, we could examine to what extent these eight identity types are present in the various migration groups and their descendants.

Using these identity types, we can extrapolate theoretical processes of (ethnic) identity loss. This process of loosening ethnic affiliation may begin at any level of identity, that is, either at the individual, social or national level.

A. If an individual no longer speaks Hungarian, theoretically s/he (and his/her descendants) could take the path of becoming a Hungarian in heart, then a "festive" Hungarian, then a census Hungarian, and finally reach the stage of full assimilation. In other words, after losing the language, ethnic or national identity may still remain, but after two or three generations even this level of identity is easily lost.

B. If we find that the significance of national identity deteriorates then the individual may still participate in community events. But if this level of participation does not remain steady then there are two possible outcomes: participation becomes haphazard as a result of loss of language skills, leading down the path to total assimilation, or else attendance at Hungarian events ceases altogether, with the result that Hungarian language use is restricted to the home. Here, the next stage might well entail the total loss of language skills, which again leads to assimilation.

C. If an individual does not participate in Hungarian institutional activities, s/he may still preserve his or her Hungarian identity privately, but either because the use of the Hungarian language recedes or because of a diminishing sense of national identity we again arrive at full assimilation.

Figure 2. Assimilation paths beginning by loss of ethnic language.

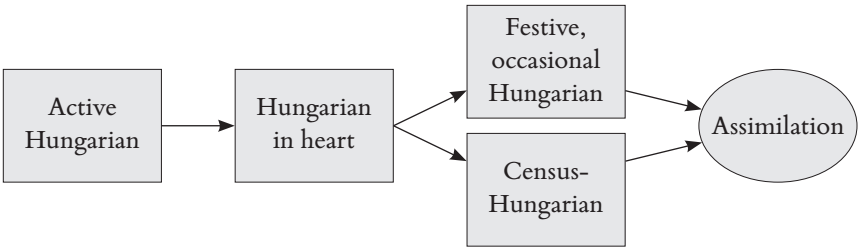


Figure 3. Assimilation paths beginning by weakening of national identity

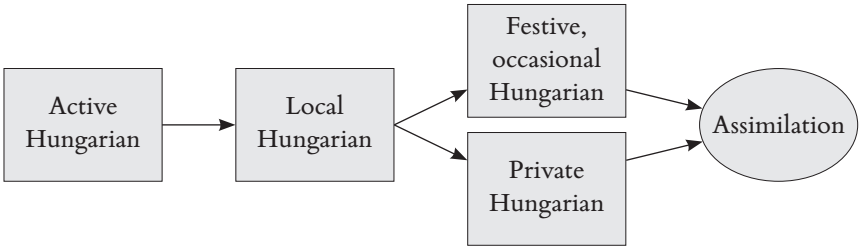
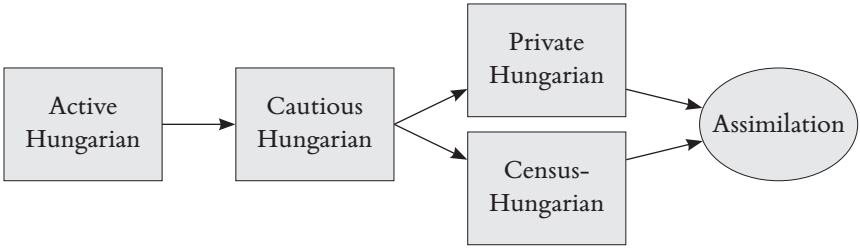


Figure 4. Assimilation paths beginning by non-participation in ethnic public life



Given these defined paths to assimilation, and given our hypothetical assumptions about the behavior of the different generations, we can also determine the time horizon of the phenomenon of assimilation. If our point of departure is that with each new generation a given level of identity is damaged or diminished, that is, the children will not consider their Hungarian identity (either at individual, social or national level) as important as their parents do, then we may easily conclude that full assimilation will come about within four generations, regardless of the path followed. But if, for instance, the parents are not particularly active as individuals, or as members of an organization, or, for example, the parents do not consider their national identity relevant for whatever reason, then the path to assimilation becomes shorter: the assimilation trajectory speeds up to three or even two generations. Similarly, the path to assimilation becomes shorter inasmuch as the younger generation's identity levels are diminished simultaneously. An example of this, which often happens in reality, is that the younger generation simultaneously loses both its language capabilities and does not participate in Hungarian-American organizations.

In these theoretical pathways, a reverse process is also possible – that of an ethno-cultural revitalization. In this case, it is possible that a completely assimilated individual may be induced to attend Hungarian events, and if s/he learns

Hungarian and the ancestral national ties become important, then in two or three generations the descendants may even become Active Hungarians in terms of identity level. Although it is possible to find instances of this, the usual reality and our interviews indicate that the younger generations are increasingly unlikely to speak the language of their parents and their links to Hungarian institutions are also decreasing.

This assimilation pathway is described by Julianna Puskás as the process by which group identity is gradually replaced by the development of individual identity.[9] In the course of her micro-historical research, Puskás describes the main stages of this identity modification. Initially, the Hungarian sections of a town begin to lose their ethnic quality. Daily commuting distance replaces the earlier physical proximity and neighborliness of daily interactions. However, ethnic institutions do support the community's sense of togetherness despite its physical dispersal. But with time, these institutions also start to become bilingual, and in addition, their names often shed their distinctive Hungarian designation. For example, the former *Verhovay Fraternal Association (Verhovay Testvérsegítő Egyesület)* merged with the *Rákóczi Association (Rakóczi Egyesület)* and became *The William Penn Fraternal Association* – which sells better in the American marketplace. This institutional evolution placed the older generation, who favored keeping the Hungarian designation, at odds with the younger members, who favored Americanization (and who prevailed). Later on, even the reference to the communal character of the institution was dropped, so that it sounded even better in English: *William Penn Association*.[10] In a parallel development, the originally Hungarian-language publication of the Association became bilingual and later on an English-only publication. A similar process can be observed in the Hungarian churches, where the formerly all-Hungarian congregation becomes a bilingual one, then an English-speaking one. (This is more frequent in the Hungarian Catholic congregations, whose parishioners have no say in choosing the pastor.)

Besides the institutional evolution towards bilingualism, the identity individualization process is reinforced by developments in the marriage market: on the one hand manifested by the desire to overcome the intra-ethnic conflicts generated by marriages of diverse backgrounds and, on the other hand, the increase in mixed marriages.

[9] Puskás, Julianna: *Ties that Bind, Ties that Divide. 100 years of Hungarian Experience in the United States*. Holms Meier, New York / London, 2000. pp. 290–303.

[10] Underscoring the "Hungarian in heart" categorization we created, this organization up until recently described itself: "American in Name…..American in Spirit….. But Hungarian in Heart. Serving Hungarians and their Families since 1886" (See the publication *A Nyugat Oldali Magyar Református Egyház 1906–2006* [English Title]. *Celebrating on 100th Anniversary*. Cleveland. p. 20.)

The second element supporting the move toward individualization is related to the educational opportunities of the descendants of Hungarian immigrants, many of whom surpassed their parents' working-class, blue collar status. Thus, social mobility and career considerations contribute to creative impulses and willingness to take initiatives – both hallmarks of individualism, which, in turn, strengthens the assimilation process.

Based on our model, we can also state that the assimilation process may be delayed if at least one of the identity levels is shared by both the children and the parents. For instance, if the child speaks Hungarian and is active in community life, the assimilation process takes longer, but assimilation still occurs. We experienced this in a number of interviews: our subject belongs to the younger generation; he has an active Hungarian identity, speaks Hungarian and participates in Hungarian organizations. Yet, in our conversation he concedes that for him the Hungarian language is a second language, and that he is more at home in English. He also may reveal that his Hungarian national identity lacks a cognitive component and is largely built on emotional kinship or perhaps on elements which were natural for his parents but which, for him, are relevant only as "a parental legacy." The assimilation process slows, but we can nevertheless see the "end of the ethnic tunnel."

Identity and national identity are situational. A socio-psychological survey taken in Hungary indicated that Hungarian identity is important for 37% of respondents, but only in the context of a "foreign situation," while under "domestic" normal circumstances the importance of national identity falls to only 3%.[11] The immigrant and above all the refugee is permanently in "a foreign situation," so in the socio-psychological sense their greater degree of commitment is completely understandable. It is also true that if this commitment borne of the "foreign situation" comes into contact with the realities of the homeland – that is, if these two worlds, the imagined Hungarian identity in a foreign setting, and the experience of the identity levels of citizens in present-day Hungary meet, then these varying levels of Hungarian identity may either reinforce or cancel each other out. Those individuals who return to Hungary and those whose thoughts are occupied by the situation in the homeland resist this cognitive dissonance by seeking out kindred spirits in the homeland, or those thought to be kindred spirits. Quite naturally, they are more likely to maintain relations

[11] György, Csepeli: *Szociálpszichológia* [Socio-Psychology]. Osiris, Budapest, 1997. p. 526.

with groups in Hungary that stress their commitment to the Hungarian nation.[12] Whether we are looking at immigrant parents or their descendants, a measure of alienation will always be present and passed on to the next generation. The refugee, the immigrant will develop and change in his new setting, and the environment left behind will continue to develop as well, and will not remain the same as when the refugee left. For the individual who stays abroad the myth of returning may be tantalizing, but his own transformation, combined with unseen changes in the old setting, may result in illusory perceptions.[13] The individual (whether a refugee, second or third generation immigrant) senses this disconnect, perhaps subconsciously, and thus his relationship with his ethnic group, his country of ancestry and birth, and with his nationality involves the search for some validation of authenticity. Thus, there is a constant struggle to maintain an "authentic" national identity, and to prefer and display the "pure" forms of Hungarian worldview, style, music (e.g. an insistence on teaching only authentic folk songs), values and cognition, and history (in which the emphasis is on the "pure," ancient myths regarding the origins of the Hungarian people). In the course of our interviews and analysis we saw all of these effects and their repercussions on the ethnic institutions.

Becoming aware of the assimilation process, as well as its opposite (ethnic and cultural revitalization), is relevant because these processes deepen our understanding of the organizational universe we are trying to describe and understand. Today, it is the assimilation process that provides the larger framework of the world of Hungarian organizations.

This was not always so, since the organizations, which were created in parallel with the arrival of sequential waves of refugees, were often motivated by political issues and by the exigencies of immigrant life. But with the change of regime in Hungary in 1990, these immigrant-centered underpinnings have crumbled. The organizations have consequently undergone a distinct ethno-cultural transformation, whose rhetoric centers on strategies for survival (strategies which, inciden-

[12] One of our survey respondents elaborated on this; he found it hard to believe that [Hungarians] could espouse views other than those of the right: *"Even today, when I hear pronouncements that are at variance with my national sentiment, I am taken aback that there are such things. This is because I hear very little of that."* (38)

[13] Lewin, Kurt: The Psycho-Sociological Problems of Minorities. In: Lengyel, Zsuzsanna (ed.): *Szociálpszichológa. Szöveggyűjtemény* [Socio-Psychology. Text Compilation]. Osiris, Budapest, 2002. pp. 491–449.

tally, never took any comprehensively expressed form).[14] The Western diaspora of the early nineties sensed this fundamental change and in addition to pondering the new ramifications of identity issues began to interpret their minority status not in terms of immigrant destiny, but as a challenge and a duty.[15] In the United States, this ethno-cultural change began to emerge even before the change of regimes in Central Europe, as the melting pot ideology in the U.S. was discarded in favor of a vaunted ideology of ethnic and cultural pluralism, accompanied by a greater measure of ideological and legal frameworks for preserving communal cultural heritage.[16] Although this wider legal framework[17] varied by state, and its popularity faded in the 1980s, it did nonetheless contribute, if selectively, to the strengthening of Hungarian communities within the paradigm of ethnic revival.[18] Multiculturalism and the end of the sense of immigrant destiny both contributed to the strengthening of the so-called *community showcase organizations:* preserving Hungarian communities and presenting their heritage to the wider public satisfied both the duty to preserve Hungarian identity and the expectations of American society.

Today, most organizational functions are really geared to responding to the challenge of assimilation. The controversial term *"magyarkodás"* (a negative term particularly in the current political context of Hungary, loosely translatable as "doing the Hungarian thing") is, when uttered by Hungarian-Americans, considered a useful form of activism without which organizations cannot exist. Since the process of assimilation is most effective when an individual lives his private

[14] One of the most obvious signs of this cultural change, evident in our interviews, is that Hungarian-Americans' assessments and expectations toward the Hungarian government are cultural: that is, their image of Hungarian-ness is related to cultural preferences (and is not political in nature).

[15] Borbándi, Gyula: A nyugati magyar szórványok identitáskérdései [Identity Questions among the Hungarian Diaspora of the West]. In: *Kisebbségnek lenni nem sors, hanem feladat*. Tanácskozás Kismartonban 1992. szeptember 19–20 [To be a Minority is a Duty, not Destiny. Meeting in Kismarton, Austria, September 19–20, 1992]. Published by Ausztriai Magyar Egyesületek és Szervezetek Központi Szövetsége, 1992. pp. 43–47.

[16] Borbándi also determined in his 1985 book that with diminished political activity there is a widening of efforts to preserve the national patrimony, identity consciousness, and intellectual achievement. (Borbándi, Gyula: *Emigráció és Magyarország. Nyugati Magyarok a változások éveiben 1945–1985* [Political Emigration and Hungary. Western Hungarians in Changing Years 1945–1985]. Európai Magyar Protestáns Szabadegyetem, 1985. p. 447)

[17] For example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or the Bilingual Education Act of 1968.

[18] See Fejős, Zoltán: Magyar szórványok multietnikus környezetben és az etnikus politika [The Hungarian Diaspora in a Multiethnic Environment and Ethnic Politics]. In: *Magyarságkutatás. Magyarságkutató Intézet Évkönyve*. Budapest, 1989. pp. 23–35.

and social life free of ethnic and national ideologies, the process may be slowed and delayed by committed intervention in the community setting. If the organizations are to survive, logically they require an unusually intensive degree of activity, which entails considerable commitment in terms of time, energy and often finances from the active individuals. The intensity of commitment is particularly noticeable if we consider that the individual has not only to respond to assimilation challenges but also has to fulfill ordinary private duties involving career and family. Upholding and preserving ethnic identity therefore cannot be separated from other segments of social identity. Three routes are possible: 1. Career takes priority, which implies a less intensive process of revitalizing ethnic identity. 2. Maintaining ethnic identity at all cost, with sometimes negative consequences for the career. 3. Finding a balance between the competing goals. In our interviews we found instances of all three cases, though we heard most often that involvement in organizational life implies career failure in some way, or else a tendency toward "counter-selection" of the individuals who become activists and leaders of the community. This does not necessarily mean that those active in organizational life did not build successful careers, rather it means that these individuals get their community experiences and find satisfaction in shared activities not at their jobs, but in the framework of the organization they helped to create.

The relationship between participating in organizational life and maintaining ethnic identity brings the unavoidable question of how to ensure organizational continuity from one generation to the next. By now, it is a widely accepted view that the future leaders for Hungarians in the West are likely to come from among the scouts. The scouts and the schools they support provide the formative framework to produce the future organizational leaders, that is, the elite of the Hungarian Western diaspora. All identity formation, including the scouts' program, can be successful if it transmits the type of knowledge that the individual can use at various stages and fields of interest of his or her daily life. Just as technical or professional knowledge is built up at various levels of education and they satisfy the evolving requirements of the workplace, so Hungarian-related studies can also represent high value if they can be used both in narrower and wider environments. For today's Hungarian-American youth, the practical application of their formative experiences is given a clear boost by the possibility to travel and study in the ancestral homeland. However, a curriculum built on essentially static and rigid concepts of Hungarian nationhood, sometimes even with an ideologically exclusionist outlook, could be outright counterproductive in terms of heritage protection. A good example, and also a warning sign, is the case of Burg Kastl, a Hungarian high school established in 1957 in Bavaria.

The goal of the institution was to educate future leaders for the Hungarians of Hungary and of the West. Although the school produced excellent physicians, engineers, lawyers and economists, the participation of Burg Kastl graduates in Hungarian community organizations was disproportionately low. Already in the mid-eighties, Gyula Borbándi observed: "It is as if the education they received at a Hungarian school alienated them from Hungarian concerns and from activities of Hungarian organizations, instead of strengthening bonds or increasing their sense of solidarity."[19] And to make the point more complete – about the pitfalls of a totally self-contained method of ethnic identity formation that lacks nearly any reference to interrelationships with the everyday environment - we must note that this church-supported institution closed its doors for good in 2006.

The question therefore emerges: is it possible to preserve ethnic identity and activity in the absence of some kind of ethno-political paradigm? Shoring up ethnic revitalization or fighting assimilation can only be successful if these efforts are linked to a more general and explicitly stated ethno-political conceptual framework and policy of ethnic recognition-building.[20] If there is no internal and external assistance for these, then attempts to build and showcase ethnic identity may run into serious hurdles. In the Hungarian-American context, this process of identity revitalization is a difficult undertaking because there is no apparent consensus on a policy of Hungarian ethnic identity-building. We have seen that Hungarian-American institutions and communities are characterized by fragmentation and, in many cases, an ad-hoc nature. The challenges of assimilation crop up in varying and unequal measure; they take on innumerable local particularities. The national organizations are not able to act as overall coordinators, and, in general, the relationship between local communities is so weak that we may even question the very notion of "Hungarian-Americans", at least in the sense of a social subset. The most startling observation about these organizations is the absence of initiatives that attempt to perform a coordinating function. Although there are umbrella organizations, or organizations that coordinate professional or technical activities, these are, as we have seen, interest groups with limited or incidental reach. The teachers association (AHEA), for instance, does not coordinate the teaching activities of the schools, and the rest of the professional organizations, except for that of the medical doctors, are all but invisible. The Hungarian-language press is fundamentally local, so there is no unified pub-

[19] Borbándi: 1985. p. 338

[20] There are those who go further: "There is no self-knowledge without recognition, self-identity without function. There is no ethnicity without ethnopolitics, no identity without the politics of identity." Kovács: 2003. p. 54.

lic media. Most organizations focus on local issues; their inception is rooted in the interests of certain individuals rather than as a response to local or general social needs (apart from recognizing the process of assimilation). The organizations, then, do not serve as unifiers of the Hungarian-American community (or the Hungarian minority); their achievements are often tied to the organizational abilities and interests of particular individuals. This is true for national organizations, schools, university-level Hungarian programs, and scout troops alike.

The historian Julianna Puskás reached a similar conclusion from a different research perspective. According to her there are serious challenges to the preservation of Hungarian ethnic identity, and these are not only the result of the small number of communities but also of conflicts among them. According to Puskás, the Hungarian-American community as such exists only as a subject of theoretical research; in reality, they are disparate groups that compete, or are adversarial or indifferent toward each other.[21]

1.3 Is 'American Hungarian Diaspora' a Diaspora?

As we have seen there is no such thing as a Hungarian-American community that is organized around a system of common principles. Instead, we have local communities which are able to revitalize ethnic identity with varying degrees of intensity. With the exception of the churches and the scout movement, there is no solidarity or cooperation between the organizations. The Hungarian-American community, then, is not a unified community, but rather a set of "islands" or scattered groups, which are connected to each other psychologically. This connectedness stems in part from its members harboring an ethno-social or diaspora consciousness, and in part by informal networks among the locally based elites.[22] For these elites, a sort of mental map exists of Hungarian-American communities that are spread (albeit in varying concentrations) throughout the country. This network among local elites crosses the whole continent, joining the Hungarian communities that are located at great distances from one another. These networks of individuals regularly organize nationwide speaking tours to a series of Hungarian-American local communities for illustrious figures (political or

[21] "Only in theory we can speak of American Hungarianhood, of an American ethnic community – this notion can be used as an instrument of research. In reality one can only find a great number of competitive groups, who feel aversion or at least indifference to each other. Uprooted or transplanted, both adjectives are valid for great numbers among them." (Puskás: *op.cit*. p. 318)

[22] These relationships may also be family-based.

cultural leaders) visiting from Hungary or the surrounding countries. These speaking tours, or more poetically the "peregrination among like-minded souls," strengthens or potentially strengthens the notion of a unified Hungarian-American community.

According to Károly Nagy, the organization of these speaking tours and the resulting exchanges are one of the most important activities of the Western Hungarian "islands," in addition to identity preservation, interest-representation and serving as liaisons between their adopted and their ancestral homelands.[23] These functions undoubtedly exist, but we should add that they affect only a certain segment of the elite. In our research we tried to bring in other perspectives, through intensive interviews. Through our conversations, there emerged not only those topics that the activist elite deem important, but also the ethnic and non-ethnic identity issues that stem from the everyday activities of social groups and individuals. True, some of these issues became evident without the conscious intent of the interview subject, or were merely alluded to, but including these points of view in the structure of our documentation may have helped us to present a more complete picture of Hungarian-American organizational life. Through these discourses, we attempted to discover perspectives on the inner life of the communities and their system of relationships, as well as to analyze the abovementioned activities.

The initiatives for preserving ethnic identity continue to this day through the activities of the schools, the scouts, the press and the churches, although the challenge for our research is not just to document these laudable activities, but also to determine, for example, how these schools function (individually and together), what role the scouting association plays in addition to performing their declared and explicit functions, and how the church or the media adjusts to local conditions. In addition, we must give at least a brief answer to the question of whether this organizational universe can be described using the concepts peculiar to a diaspora, and to the question of whether it can be characterized as operating under its own particular operational logic (known in the sociological literature as "uprooted"), or whether it is just an extension and adaptation – "transplantation" – of experiences brought over from Central Europe.

In our analysis, we consider "diaspora logic" to be the organizational *modus operandi* that developed within the ethnic community, as described by active members of these Hungarian-American organizations. In order to determine whether the various local communities constitute a diaspora, we must first define

[23] Nagy, Károly: *Szigetmagyarság és szolidaritás*. [Scattered Hungarians and Solidarity]. Corvin Kiadó, Montreal, 1988.

the diaspora concept. Among the many interpretations of diaspora,[24] one of the most comprehensive is that of Gerard Chaliand and Jean-Pierre Rageau. These researchers defined a diaspora as a community that results from a communal dispersal (usually with political origins), whose members are driven by a collective memory and the desire to preserve their identity. It is also important, however, to consider the historical context of an ethnic or religious community's functioning, since the term "diaspora" only applies to communities which survive over a period of time. In considering how these communities operate, important factors include their relationship with the ancestral homeland and the relationships among the communities that constitute the diaspora.

Our analysis considers all of these factors in addressing the diaspora nature of the Hungarian-American community. The collective dispersal originating in political events is a given, since the current presence of Hungarians in the United States is due, among other things, to immigration, though this immigration includes economic refugees from the 1960's and 1970's, and others who emigrated for economic reasons in the 1990's. This circumstance indicates that the condition of a universal dispersal does not quite apply, since the Hungarian-American communities were replenished over time by ever newer waves of immigrants, whose reasons for immigrating varied. Despite this, the collective memory of these communities did evolve, and continues to be passed on. In our discussion of Hungarian-Americans' impressions of the Hungarian nation, we have seen that this process of passing on collective memory is not universal, yet the varying and competing ideological or cultural conceptions of Hungarian-ness do survive, and in some cases serve to create the institutions (scouting, churches, schools) which strive to pass on these views and to preserve Hungarian identity. All of these factors tend to support the existence of a Hungarian-American diaspora, though it would be a too-optimistic simplification to simply declare that such a diaspora exists. Indeed, there are important factors which work against the existence of a comprehensive diaspora.

First, it is questionable whether the Hungarian diaspora will pass the test of time. Up till now, the continuity of Hungarian American communities has depended on great political cataclysms. In the absence of such cataclysms, the

[24] See Fejős, Zoltán: Diaszpóra és az "amerikai magyarok" – háttér egy fogalom alkalmazhatóságához [Diaspora and the "Hungarian Americans" – Background to the Use of a Teminology]. In: Kovács, Nóra (ed.): *Tanulmányok a diaszpóráról* [Studies on Diaspora]. Gondolat, MTA Ethnic and National Minority Research Institute, Budapest, 2004. pp. 9–24. Biczó, Gábor: A szórványkérdés transznacionális dimenziói és a magyar szórványkutatás [English Title]. In: Ilyés, Zoltán – Papp, Richárd (eds.): *Tanulmányok a szórványról* [Studies on Diaspora]. Gondolat, MTA ENKI, Budapest 2005. pp. 21–42.

survival of Hungarian America will depend solely on the economic immigrants whose Hungarian identity is of varying intensity and, more importantly, whose motivations in immigrating vary widely. Yet these groups alone cannot ensure the continuity of Hungarian-American communities, since the economic immigrants usually arrive to the United States as individuals, to this country in which individualism is so highly prized. Also, the organizational life of these new immigrants is hampered not only by their own motivations, but also by the resistance of the existing communities and the existing organizational framework. The psychological distance between these groups threatens the communities' future, for whom ensuring continuity is a constant problem – one for which no strategy exists, and indeed no strategy is possible.

Second, we must recognize that only a small proportion of Hungarian-Americans participate in the current diaspora communities that are supported by the organizations. If we confine ourselves to the estimates given by our interview subjects we can say that at most 10 percent of Hungarian-Americans participate in such organizations. Not all of them speak Hungarian but their connection to a Hungarian community survives. But as we have seen in our discussion of the process of ethnic identity loss even these groups are fighting a difficult battle against assimilation and the number of active members of these organizations continues to decline.

Third, as we concluded earlier, we cannot really speak of a unified Hungarian-American community, only of multiple local communities. This "structure" might even be appropriate for sustaining a state of diaspora, but the communities' internal conflicts and the physical and mental divides between sub-groups of these communities do not support the survival and continuity of a state of diaspora. Moreover, while the spread of new communications technologies has, in a few instances, created and maintained new types of communities, generally speaking the internet's capacity for community-building (or diaspora-building) is not being used to its full potential.

Putting all these considerations together, we may conclude that only a certain segment of the Hungarian-American communities can be considered diaspora communities. Diaspora functioning takes place primarily in cases where the communities, centered on organizational life, are self-sustaining and contribute to the preservation of some folk-based or cultural form of Hungarian-ness. In other words, a particular segment within the larger set of Americans of Hungarian origin constitutes a diaspora community but we cannot speak of a Hungarian-American diaspora in general, for if there is no organizational participation or if links to these organizations is not accompanied by a certain level of commitment then we can only speak of a "sleeping" diaspora, one that will perhaps never be

awakened and which cannot be mobilized. But that segment which does behave like a genuine diaspora is quite vital, despite the pressures toward assimilation. The ethnic identity of those belonging to these communities is nurtured by the active, local, and festive Hungarians and "Hungarians in heart," to use the categories described earlier – it is these types of individuals who display the particular emotional and cognitive conditions that generally characterize a diaspora. These diaspora-type communities have developed very specialized modes of functioning – and here we come to the crucial dilemma posed by rootlessness versus transplantation.

1.4 Beyond the Uprooted versus Transplanted Dilemma

In analyzing the character of American ethnic communities, a frequently recurring question is whether these communities are truly independent, both culturally and operationally. There are two general answers to this question. One of them, which favors the interpretation of the communities' uprootedness,[25] posits that the ethnic immigrants to America found themselves in an entirely new environment,[26] in which the values they brought from their homelands seemed irrelevant, producing a feeling of great loneliness despite the new emphasis on individualism in the U.S. The immigrants found they could rely only upon themselves. The other interpretation[27] contends that the immigrants to the U.S. never really cut their ties to their homelands, and their activities in the New World can be considered a continuation of their old way of life. Julianna Puskás (cited earlier) and Zoltán Fejős both generally support this second "transplantation" interpretation, though not completely, and both recognize the erosion of ethnic culture. However, our own interviews have apparently led us to conclude that the "uprootedness" thesis is the more accurate analysis.

[25] Handlin, Oscar: *The Uprooted*. Boston, Little, Brown, 1953.

[26] The Hungarian expression "idegenbe szakadt," "wrenched into a foreign environment," accurately conveys this sense of uprootedness, loneliness, and the rift between the old and new environments.

[27] Veccoli, Rudolph: The Contadini in Chicago: A Critic of the Uprooted. *The Journal of American History,* 1964, Vol. 51, 404–417. Bodnar, John: *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1985. On the specifically Hungarian American experience, see also Fejős, Zoltán: *A chicagói magyarok két nemzedéke 1890–1940* [Two Generations of Hungarians in Chicago 1890–1940]. Central European Institute, Budapest, 1993. Gyáni, Gábor: Könyvszemle. Puskás Julianna: Kivándorlás és az amerikai magyarság sorsa [Book Review. Julianna Puskás: Emigration and the Fate of Hungarian Americans]. *Magyar Tudomány,* 2001, Vol. 4.

Upon consideration, however, we believe that these two approaches – uprooted vs. transplanted – cannot really be applied to Hungarian-Americans in a mutually exclusive sense: our analysis of community life, of the small micro-universe which display certain characteristics of diaspora, are more assuredly hybrids: they are unique community cultures which, however, are built upon inherited values.

Undoubtedly, Hungarian-American community life is rooted to some extent in experiences from the old homeland. This applies to the churches and to the scouts, but many other organizations – particularly the lobbying groups, the "showcase" and national heritage groups – are less dependent on any such roots in the homeland. These organizations, as we have shown, operate just like American civic groups: they are self-sustaining, and they are based on mutual cooperation and solidarity. The active members of local Hungarian communities fulfill their needs for civic and social life through these organizations. This is partly sustained by these groups' middle-class and ethnic foundations – as seen, for example, in the widespread custom of balls and dances. These factors differ markedly from recent social customs in Central and Eastern Europe, even though the post-Communist societies experienced an upswing in civic activity.

Leaving aside the organizational framework, it is important to consider the Hungarian worldview and attitudes of these activist Hungarian-Americans. With respect to their Hungarian worldview (i.e. their conception of "Hungarian-ness"), we have seen that the Hungarian American mentality of these leaders does not include (for ideological and cultural reasons) the multi-faceted cultural life of present-day Hungary – it only includes those cultural elements that are in sync with their concept of higher culture or "pure" folk/popular culture. With respect to attitudes, as we have seen, interviews with Hungarian-American leaders in many cases have created a social divide between themselves and the Hungarians from Hungary as well as the new immigrants from Hungary (who have come for economic reasons). This divide between Hungarians who were born in the United States and those who have newly immigrated is ever-growing.

Putting together the particularities of the organizations and the attitudes of the active individuals we can see that the result is a community that points to a sort of American-style, ethnic-based independence – in short, the American spirit prevails. It is into this context that Hungarian symbols and Hungarian values are placed. One might say they have been "transplanted," but in fact these symbols and values continue to evolve in their new context. A map of greater Hungary, a folk song or even an expression (like the differing interpretations of the phrase "magyarkodás") mean different things in a Hungarian-American context than they do in Hungary. True, the internet promotes the impression

of transplanting, for the symbols of modern-day Hungary become easily and instantly available half a world away, yet these symbols are used selectively by Hungarian-Americans, and adapted into the local institutional framework that has evolved in an essentially rootless context.

The argument in favor of the "uprooted" nature of Hungarian-American organizations is further supported by their diaspora nature. If we contend that a diaspora can be identified with reference to its organizational life then we must be able to identify a *modus operandi* that is peculiar to those organizations – because "diaspora" implies, to a certain extent, a rootless nature; it is this rootlessness that defines or legitimizes a community's characterization as a diaspora. Just as a community must pass the test of time to be considered a diaspora, so does its rootless nature require the passage of time before it evolves or becomes apparent. Over the past century, ever-newer waves of Hungarian immigrants have arrived, who did not let the existing organizations to become entirely rootless. But it is likely that in the future the organizations that are maintained by Hungarians born in the United States will more clearly display their rootless character – that is, a truly specialized *modus operandi*. There are already signs of this particularity.

For example, the organizations created to maintain ethnic identity – as described earlier – actually function as cultural, static institutions that aim to preserve and pass on unchanging values: they serve to maintain the community. Scouting explicitly strives to maintain traditional values; the schools strive to preserve the Hungarian language; the media tries to maintain the community; and other local organizations support these efforts and similarly aim to preserve the ethnic communities. And they do this in a constantly changing, fast-paced nation that is at the forefront of globalization. In this context, we see the Hungarian-American organizations as a kind of "pressure valve," a response to the psychological pressures of voluntary or forced emigration. Although most of these activities occur in the Hungarian language, these volunteer-based free-time activities, which have adapted the ethos of American-style community groups, have the effect on the whole of integrating Hungarian-Americans into the wider society. In other words, Hungarian activities actually strengthen the active individuals' integration into American life, and the Hungarian-American communities are just one more part of the United States' pluralistic culture. By now, Hungarian-American organizations have developed their own operational logic which differs from the institutional life of the ancestral homeland, although this development varied over time and was affected by political and administrative factors. For example, the way the Hungarian-American churches operate is similar to that of the American churches; the scouts are sometimes confounded by their counterparts in Hungary, who are "not Hungarian enough"; the press

is isolated from the internet-fueled growth of the world of Hungarian media; Hungarian-American schools make little use of professional experience from Hungary; and the values held by the organizations are in many respects much narrower than the values of today's Hungary (Hungarian-Americans' music is dominated by folk music and operettas; the values of scouting are antithetical to modern youth culture, etc.).

Based on all these considerations it is safe to say that after a period of uprootedness Hungarian-American ethnic culture as generated by its organizations has by now become largely rootless. Although the symbolism used by this culture also exists in Hungary, Hungarian-American culture is unique and its institutions do not resemble the workings of similar institutions in Hungary. The adopted symbols used by Hungarian-Americans acquire a different meaning in their new context: what in the US is Hungarian, or appears to be Hungarian (churches, organizations, festivals) are in fact very American.

The organizations' response to the pressures of assimilation relies on a particularly American mixture of self-reliance, rootlessness, and preservation of existing cultural patterns. Self-reliance means that individuals recognize their own problems and those of their community; they act to manage these problems; and in all this the American example of volunteer community cooperation is of great assistance. The community creates its own self-sustaining organizations, based on volunteerism, mutual trust, and solidarity. But in the absence of direct experience, the new organizational structure is characterized by a kind of "permanent *ad-hoc*" nature. The ability of such organizations to gain strength over time is hampered by the fact that the various groups of immigrants, who all bring their different backgrounds and varying immigrant experiences, create their own organizations. As a result, the continuity of the organizations is brought into question and their internal structures easily fall apart. Exceptions to this tendency are the highly structured organizations with explicit rules – those "built on the ten commandments" (e.g. churches, scouts). But overall, most organizations are personality-based – that is, they hinge on the selfless efforts of one or two dedicated individuals. This factor, as other researchers have noted, does not at all detract from these organizations' worth, but it is certainly a particularity of their *modus operandi* that deserves notice.[28]

[28] This is also noted by Gyula Borbándi, a scholar of Western Hungarians, including the Hungarian-American organizations: "Most studies on the activities and achievements of the ethnic communities in the West give little mention to the individual and communal achievements of the "one-man show" institutions, but this author would like to call attention to the value and importance of the

1.5 American Hungarian Public Life as Provincialism and Locality

In the absence of firm foundations and professional management, and due to the constant conflicts arising among them these organizations cannot work effectively enough; often they are characterized by a kind of provincialism. The oft-mentioned conflicts are most often due to denigration of another person's background, an overemphasis on personalities, the inability to communicate dispassionately, and a kind of permanent oversensitivity. In such situations, an individual's identity becomes a hypersensitive issue, leading the individual to seek out situations in which he can validate his identity.[29] The term "provincialism" is not used here as a value judgment, but rather as a particular characteristic that is best described by the scenario of "agonizing tribes" whose situation is neither urbanized nor rural.[30] The "neither city nor village" scenario is a good metaphor for the particular contradiction that characterizes Hungarian-American communities: while they are located in a country that is at the forefront of globalization, often in or near metropolises and urban centers, or else physically at great distances from each other, their behavior and face-to-face style of communication suggests a close proximity characteristic of village interactions. The conflict between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (Toennies) – that is, community and society - is resolved by a provincialness that we also noted during our interviews: our interview subjects, even when literally surrounded by skyscrapers, often spoke as if they were chatting about the everyday activities in a village. It is as if the huge geographical distances did not exist in their minds. Thus, the narratives about the Hungarian-American organizations remained at a localized level. The interviewees speaking on behalf of their communities seemed to be seeking the security of the long-lost village amid the alienation of the concrete jungle. Put another way: they seem to be seeking a people-friendly little green oasis in the vast alienating desert of American life.[31] This is the imagined location, the province, in which most Hungarian-American communities still exist. But the perception

contributions of these unnamed Hungarians." (Borbándi, Gyula: *Emigráció és Magyarország. Nyugati Magyarok a változások éveiben 1985–1995* [Political Emigration and Hungary. Western Hungarians in Changing Years 1985–1995]. Európai Magyar Protestáns Szabadegyetem, 1996. p. 54)

[29] On the negative strategy of assimilation, see Csepeli: *op. cit*. p. 523.

[30] See Konstantinovic, Radomir: The Philosophy of the Province. Forum, Novi Sad / Kijárat, Budapest.

[31] For the use and explanation of the metaphor of America as a desert, see Baudrillard, Jean: *Amerika* [America]. Magvető, Budapest, 1996.

of stability underlying these communities is continually threatened by the ever-returning thought: we are diminishing, and will become extinct. The agonizing caused by the oft-cited demographic crisis is becoming more prevalent, and this worry is not only on behalf of Hungary and the Hungarians of Central Europe, but also their own Hungarian-American communities. This threatened feeling affects the internal life of the organizations, but in an apparent contradiction, does not result in an atmosphere of panic, at most, it is a source of disagreements; it does not, however, spur – in each case – the organizations to any initiatives to shore up their institutions. Instead, the agonizing spirit characteristic of a provincial community just sweeps the feeling of threat under the rug and calmly sits on it. And the very fact that there are a few individuals who raise their voices against this situation demonstrates that these organizations are not undertaking an honest self-assessment; there are no generally accepted strategies for how the time frame of the inevitable process of assimilation might be lengthened.

We have often used the term "local" to describe the Hungarian-American communities and the manner in which their organizations operate. For the most part, we use the word "local" in the sense defined by Appadurai, who states that locality is a phenomenological characteristic which is expressed through the ability to take action, the impulse to join forces, and the ability to reproduce itself as a community, and which provides a structure for an individual's emotional makeup. In today's globalizing world, with migration on a global scale, it is important to understand locality as not strictly or exclusively tied to geographical location. This implies the deterritorialization of localities, and also emphasizes the existence of translocal communities: these communities extend beyond the bounds of physical proximity, yet still embody the type of locality expressed in "the spirit of a place." At the same time, it is important to distinguish between locality and proximity: while the former is based upon a kind of local knowledge, the latter means physical closeness and actually existing social forms (through which locality might be expressed, though not necessarily). According to Appadurai, the key question is how to create the locally based knowledge that is capable of recreating locality even amid anxiety and entropy, the erosion of social structures and constant change.[32]

Using Appadurai's terms, we may easily conclude that the deterritorialization of localities – i.e., the existence of communities that are not limited by geographical place – applies to the great majority of Hungarian-Americans, as a result of the changes in the ethnic geography of American cities. The Hungarian-American organizations may be considered, in this construct, to be proximities

[32] See Appadurai, Arjun: *Creating Locality*. Regio, 2001, Vol. 3.

that embody a locality that provides (a segment of) Hungarian-Americans with an identity and a structure for emotional ties. As with every other locality, this one faces the challenges posed by a globalized media and the internet, which in our case means – among other things – that new communications technologies can theoretically bring immigrant Hungarians and their descendents closer to the ancestral homeland, with all the positive and negative effects of this proximity. Such communications can expand the locality concept to include a global-national dimension, but this dimension can also erode the neighborhoods and exacerbate local conflicts.[33] With respect to textual media, as mentioned earlier, new communications technologies make it easier to produce these texts but the extent to which they are read, and by whom, becomes more uncertain: today, it is all too easy to publish information that is useless in the creation of local knowledge. But the locality remains, and the "spirit of the place" continues to rule the media and its assessment.

Similarly, we can place the Hungarian Scout Association Abroad into this framework. The scouts embody the ethos of "glocalization" twice over. First, on an ideological level: scouting is a global movement, but within this framework, the Hungarian scouts have pledged to preserve national goals in keeping with diaspora logic. Second, on an organizational level: while the Hungarian Scout Association Abroad is a global organization, its functioning is based on localities: the scout localities create the geographically determined neighborhoods, so that its local troops are active participants in the local Hungarian communities. And again, we can use this framework in considering the formerly "buffer" or transitional Hungarian-American organizations, such as the churches. But the big issue facing the lobbying and professional organizations is this: are they capable of creating localities? Our interviews indicate that they are not. And for this reason, it seems that these organizations may be struggling with a crisis of legitimacy from the point of view of the Hungarian American communities, since the organizations are neither able to act as integrators nor to participate in creating local knowledge.

The great challenge facing Hungarian-American organizations in general is whether, following the above-described cultural transition, they are able to create or recreate local (Hungarian) knowledge. For the most part, the answers to this seemingly rhetorical question cited the demographic decline among the local elites, assimilation, the lack of new members, the destructive internal conflicts, and fears that the organizations purporting to unify the Hungarian-American

[33] For example, if the local participants have differing interpretations of a current political event in Hungary.

communities lack the necessary strength. Perhaps the data and results of our current research, and the descriptions in the report, written by dispassionate "outsiders" in a scholarly and non-emotional style, may help Hungarian-American communities and decision-makers in Hungary, respectively, to face up to their challenges, chart their possible strategies, and make the necessary decisions in the interest of ensuring a longer time-frame for the survival of these communities.

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