

4 Minority Affinities?

The Sources of Fascist Appeal for Hungarian Minority Elites and Organizations

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Andor Jaross, the Minister of Interior in Döme Sztójay's Quisling government, which ruled Hungary from March to August 1944, faced the gallows on April 11, 1946 in Budapest. Jaross was not simply the head of the ministry during the Holocaust in Hungary. Together with state secretaries László Endre and László Baky, he was actively organizing what may have been the most efficiently expedited deportations of Jews during World War II. Moreover, it was not the zeal of a capable administrator or the sense of duty of a bureaucrat that drove him: Jaross was a professed anti-Semite, openly committed to a programme of removing Jews from Hungarian society. As one of the close associates of former prime minister Béla Imrédy, he joined the latter's National Socialist party (Magyar Megújulás Pártja/ Party of Hungarian Renewal – MMP) when Imrédy broke ranks with the broad tent right-wing governing Magyar Élet Pártja/Party of Hungarian Life in 1940 and agitated for this new party until it became part of a coalition the Nazi's helped to come to power after Hungary's occupation on March 19, 1944.¹

Jaross was, however, not socialized in the deeply anti-Semitic political milieu of interwar Hungary.² Born in Komáromcsehi (today Čechy in Slovakia) in 1896, he came of age during World War I, and his home region was adjoined to Czechoslovakia. He joined the more liberal of the two large Hungarian minority parties, the Smallholder (Országos Magyar Kisgazda, Földmíves és Kisiparos Párt – OKGP, Maďarskej krajinskej strany poľnohospodárov a maloroľníkov), later Hungarian National Party (Magyar Nemzeti Párt – MNP, Maďarska Národná Strana), rose to the rank of executive chairman and was elected to the lower house of the Czechoslovak parliament in 1935. When under pressure from the Hungarian government, the MNP merged with the more openly anti-capitalist and anti-Semitic Christian Socialist party (Országos Keresztényszocialista Párt – OKP, Krajinská Kresťanská Sociálna Strana), Jaross became co-chairman, together with the Christian Socialist János Esterházy, from a secondary branch of the aristocratic Esterházy family.³

Interwar Czechoslovakia was, despite many shortcomings, more democratic than Hungary.⁴ Furthermore, and this is more significant for Jaross's story, Hungarian minority politicians, intellectuals and organizations in the interwar years regularly challenged what they understood as nationalist discrimination from the successor states. At least before 1938, they championed a political system of

democracy and minority rights. Thus, Jaross's political choices after 1938, not only his anti-Semitism, but his advocacy of a corporatist and undemocratic political organization for Hungary, may seem unexpected and hard to explain.⁵

Similarly, Dezső Albrecht, the son of a Hungarian landowner-lawyer from Bánffyhuntyad/Huedin in Transylvania, born in 1908, was a prominent member of a new generation of Hungarian minority intellectual-cum-politicians, whose views and programme were associated by contemporaries with a more democratic spirit than Hungary's social climate. While significantly younger than Jaross, Albrecht was a widely known figure within Hungarian intellectual and political circles in the late 1930s. He belonged to a circle of middle-class origins, youth from families that held important political and public positions within the Hungarian minority community. Their activism ranged from literary renewal to social research and political activism, the so-called "Erdélyi Fiatalok". Albrecht studied abroad with a Hungarian government scholarship. After returning home, he soon became one of the leaders of the Hungarian minority party, and when Northern Transylvania was reannexed to Hungary in 1940, he was sent to Budapest as one of the MPs representing the region.⁶ After a regionalist but ethnic Hungarian party (Erdélyi Párt/Transylvanian Party) was founded, he became executive vice-president and one of those leaders who shaped the party's ideological profile.⁷ As an ideologue, he promoted that the liberal-democratic state should be replaced by a "totalist state built on individual duty".⁸ In the parliament he was – unlike some of his moderate party colleagues who refrained from openly anti-Semitic remarks – ranting about the Jewish Budapest, or about how the sanctified king Saint Ladislaus, the protector of the Transylvanian Party was the first to issue a Jewish Law (in the late 11th century).⁹

After the German occupation, he sided with those party members who supported Prime Minister Döme Sztójay's attempt to establish a new, unitary right-wing party, and he participated in the respective negotiations.¹⁰ Enlisted for military service, he left Budapest in early September and abandoned the parliament following the Arrow Cross seizure of power. He died in Paris in 1976 as a well-known and politically active émigré, linked to Radio Free Europe and Hungarian émigré organizations.¹¹

Just like Jaross, Albert grew up and was socialized in an environment that contemporaries understood as opposing discrimination and being more democratic than Hungary. Albrecht and his generation agreed with this view too, making clear that they saw themselves as inherently democratic personalities due to their socialization in the minority life.¹² Yet, when it came to ideology – not only, but mostly after reannexation to Hungary – both he and Jaross represented and pushed for ideas often associated with fascism and Nazism, doing so not out of any tactical reason, but out of conviction. They even claimed to have a historical mission, leading a necessary national renewal that starts from the national periphery of Hungarian minorities, that would finally spread to and transform Hungary proper and its society.¹³

This chapter offers a possible explanation for this apparent contradiction. It argues that the main cause of these paths was commonalities with fascism in the

perception of what the national community was. It looks not only at the origins of these ideas within the context of minority politics, but at their multidirectional travel from minorities to Hungary, from Hungary to the minorities and from local right-wing nationalist, proto-fascist or fascist parties to the minority organizations. This is not to claim that either Hungarian minority parties before re-annexation or the regionalist parties the leading minority politicians founded after return to Hungary were clear-cut fascist ones. They were even after the exclusion of social democrats and liberal groups, too diverse to be qualified so simply. This essay argues that several aspects of this experience of ethnic minority existence created an ideological environment within which it was possible to align this new minority nationalism with the emerging fascism and Nazism. While struggling to make sense of their fate after the dissolution of Hungary, minority politicians tried to explain the dismemberment of Hungary, made social organization a key political programme of minority parties, and in doing so, they felt the appeal of new forms of national self-definitions.

To connect minority experience with fascism and Nazism was not necessary to embrace fascist ideologies as a whole. As fascism promised to bring about a new nationalism too, it was enough to point out or hint at similarities in the core elements of both the fascist and the minority nationalist ideologies, making differences in seemingly more variable elements of ideology insignificant.

The chapter follows definitions of fascism borrowed from Roger Griffin's concept of generic fascism: a palingenetic ultranationalism, a political movement whose goal is the renewal and rejuvenation of the nation after a period of decline and decadence. Generic fascism is radical in its nationalism, but also in its anti-liberalism and anti-individualism, the main factors of decline in its worldview.¹⁴ The aim is to capture variations of fascism to avoid the complete dissolution of the general concept into nation-specific fascisms or reducing the ideology to the double cases of Italy and Germany. As this general definition is very vague regarding concrete elements of fascist ideologies, a complementary set of more functionalist elements of fascism, helps highlighting more concrete forms of fascism's anti-liberalism and anti-individualism, which, taken together, might be understood as an anti-enlightenment stance. These features are (as elements of a not exhaustive list): a new community based on duty-bound action of the individual, subordination of the individual to the national community and its destiny, a society structured along functional lines where duty generates social harmony as the means of this national self-fulfilment, the importance of a single leader, the elimination of political divisions, a cult of the youth, virility and practice of authoritarian politics.¹⁵

The article does not, however, seek to identify fascism as a coherent ideology among Hungarian minorities. Rather, it sets out to inquire into the reason why it had a strong appeal even for many intellectuals who experienced on their skin national discrimination. Therefore, to grasp the links of these minority ideologies to fascism, it is imperative to see the differences in meaning, too. Michael Freeden's morphological approach to ideologies helps in this effort.¹⁶ Freeden argues that ideologies are composed of certain elements (concepts), some of which are crucial for the entire ideology as core elements, with others less relevant. This distinction

helps to avoid simplistic analogies or identifications based on semantic overlaps. Based on Freedén's insights, I introduce two concepts for the analysis of the relationship of minority nationalist ideologies: affinity and intelligibility.

Affinity denotes a situation when certain concepts within two ideologies are core elements respectively. If their meaning is close enough, a link is created through their most important ideas that makes it easy to postulate a political alignment of the two and to claim that these ideologies belong to a kind of family.

Intelligibility is a looser, mostly semantic overlap of concepts, be it core or secondary ones. It opens up space for rearranging the ideological discourse, emphasizing these overlapping concepts mutually to manifest a close relation, either for strategic reasons or as a real alignment. Especially important is when people want to display closeness as a result of a sense of familiarity because of the semantic overlaps.¹⁷

The intellectual history of how fascism was related to minority nationalism among the Hungarian minorities is also the history of affinity and intelligibility, how political ideas and ideologies are brought into relation with each other, often without making them completely identical.¹⁸

Hungarian Minorities and National Unity in the Interwar Era

Hungarian political and intellectual elites had no experience with nation-building policies from the position of an ethnic minority before 1918. It was the dismemberment of the country at the wake of World War I that created large groups of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia, Romania and the South Slav state, after Hungary lost about 2/3 of its territory with about 1/3 of Hungarian speakers, approximately 3 million (according to the official 1910 census) living there, sanctioned by the 1920 Treaty of Trianon. Henceforth, Hungarian politics in Hungary pursued the goal of restoring pre-1920 borders entirely. As for the time being, Hungary also demanded proper conditions for national existence for Hungarian minority groups, language rights in the administration and within churches, education in Hungarian at all levels, state subsidies for Hungarian cultural institutions as a minimum and personal and/or territorial autonomy as a maximum.¹⁹

With territorial revisions as their goal, Hungarian governments were haunted by the spectre of two potential social developments: demographic loss undermining claims to lost territories based on national self-determination and the loss of national consciousness of Hungarians. The second was not just the assimilation of Hungarians. Hungarian politicians considered equally detrimental the possibility of the emergence of a new group consciousness that was Hungarian but different from (or even incompatible with) the official nationalism of rump Hungary.²⁰

Parallely, the Hungarian elites in the successor states quickly turned to organizing their ethnic communities. First, they attempted to create what they called social organizations that claimed to represent and govern their ethnic groups. But as the respective governments saw them as a violation of their sovereignty, they soon had to revert to more traditional party politics. In Romania, two parties founded early in 1920–1921 merged soon to form a unified Hungarian party (Országos Magyar

Párt – OMP, Partidul Maghiar Regnicolar) that claimed to represent all Hungarians regardless of social status and religion. In Czechoslovakia, two Hungarian minority parties (MNP and OKP) existed simultaneously. The OKP – successor of the pre-1918 Christian Socialist Catholic People's Party (Katolikus Néppárt) – was more conservative and inclined to integrate Slovak catholic voters; the MNP had its roots in agrarianism, links with civic progressivism, but it was more exclusive in terms of the ethnicity of its voter base.²¹

A key issue for these parties was the unity and coherence of their minority group. They needed voters and votes, but there was more to these issues than political positions. Hungarian nation-building before 1918 used the state as its main vehicle, mobilized its resources in service of the Hungarian nation-building and used legislation to erect obstacles for its rivals. In the successor states, the roles were reversed. Czechoslovak (and Slovak), Romanian and various South Slav nation-building projects turned the state against Hungarians. As an antidote, these parties reimagined their role well beyond politics and claimed the mantle of social organizations that encompassed the totality of social activities. The goal was to build and institutionalize separate minority societies. Depending on the actual legal context, it was built on associations, denominational institutions, professional organizations and cooperatives, with Hungarian minority parties imagined as umbrella organizations.²² As social difference was an obstacle on this route (in the form of Social Democratic, Communist or Farmers' Parties and as the source of national indifference), unity was more than a matter of institutions: national solidarity. Solidarity was to be manifested in the elimination of class differences (material and habitual ones), and the community of action of all Hungarians, who accepted their duty towards the nation. Accepting their duty, they were expected to make individual sacrifices, subordinate individual freedom to the common goal of national survival.²³

In the meantime, Hungarian governments actively intervened in the politics of the new minorities in several ways. As a general principle they favoured a single minority party, promoting certain parties or pushing parties towards cooperation and merging with each other. Financial support depended on the political positions these parties took, dissuading them from a politics of reconciliation with the respective governments.²⁴ Still, minority Hungarian elites had room for manoeuvre and for a long time they retained some autonomy vis-à-vis Budapest. Mostly manifested in the possibility to elect their own leaders against the will of Budapest. In Romania, Count György Bethlen, in Czechoslovakia József Szent Ivány (MNP) and Géza Szűllő (OKP). It was only by the end of the 1930s that leaders of minority parties (in Czechoslovakia) or minority organizations (Romania) were picked by the Hungarian government.

Hungarian governments also feared that the new generations of Hungarians – among them Dezső Albrecht – would have a socialization that was incompatible with territorial revisionist goals. Thus, they monitored these developments and created institutions – scholarships, exchange opportunities – to ensure they would develop the “right” consciousness. Furthermore, a programme of integrating the new generation into leadership positions at home started.²⁵ Even though this new generation was strongly critical of social inequalities and strict hierarchies in Hungary's

society, in Romania, they were mostly willing to play along and became leaders of the minority organizations by 1940. In Czechoslovakia, however, a significant part of this generation ended up as Communists.²⁶

Finally, Hungarian governments addressed national cohesion at home, too. At the end of WWI, the country went through successive waves of revolutions and counterrevolution, and social conflict was rife; every government after 1920 promised reforms to strengthen cohesiveness. All governments championed a common national effort for rebuilding the country and regaining lost territories, and all governments saw a more active and organized society as a precondition of success too. However, while all of these visions foregrounded individual duty to the community as the foundation of social regeneration, the underlying vision of society – which social group was the most important, what kind of hierarchy was necessary and how organized society was related to the state – was very different from István Bethlen to Béla Imrédy. Bethlen (PM 1921–1931) wished to restore the pre-1918 social structure with as little agrarian reform as possible. For him, the historical middle class was the backbone of society. Peasants and workers were to enjoy extended political rights only after they developed a national spirit. Gyula Gömbös (PM 1932–1936) – a figure whose closeness to Italian Fascism is widely treated in the literature – went further, and imagined a corporatist state where social conflict was turned into harmony through state mediation. He saw the future of the nation in the peasantry elevated from its poverty, and he advocated putting limits on so-called Jewish capital. Finally, Gömbös attempted to turn the governing party into a social organization that would dominate the state administration, too. Béla Imrédy (PM 1938–1939), a banker turned politician, developed his ideas from the starting point of economic stabilization and development based on the redistribution of capital from Jews to Hungarians. As prime minister, he established a new political movement as the vehicle of his politics, but in terms of social vision, he held subtle differences from the one espoused by Gömbös. Imrédy emphasized the historically cemented leading role of the traditional middle-class, but with one condition: they should recognize their own duty to lead a more cohesive nation and adjust their life to this function within society. Adjustment was based on the ability to recognize and apply to life eternally, mostly aesthetic values: beauty, truth, doing good. Social cohesion was to be brought about by corporatist organization and a new, more modest lifestyle of the leading class that would eliminate the visible social differences. Finally, Imrédy was the first prime minister to invoke from his parliamentary pulpit minority Hungarian society as a model for his own vision.²⁷

Imrédy was prime minister when Southern Slovakia was reannexed in November 1938, and his successor, Pál Teleki, when Northern Transylvania in September 1940. At both occasions, the Hungarian parliament co-opted a number of politicians, who held elected positions earlier in Czechoslovakia and Romania, this group including Jaross and Albrecht too. These politicians first formed separate regional parties: the Hungarian Party of Upper Hungary (Felvidéki Magyar Párt) led by Jaross, the Transylvanian Party (Erdélyi Párt) led by Béla Teleki. Jaross's party merged with the governing party, the Transylvanian Party, and concluded a

party alliance and governed together with the Party of Hungarian Life (Magyar Élet Pártja), which lurched gradually further to the right.²⁸

Minority Nation-Building and National Renewal

Before fleeing Hungary in 1945, both Jaross and Albrecht represented parties whose core programme was national renewal with and through national unity, and a new national community of harmony through work for the nation as national duty, as opposed to detrimental liberal individualism and its consequence, social conflict. Albrecht's Transylvanian Party postulated that Hungarians from Transylvania were already beyond the point of renewal, and their party was the new social organization. This model was to be transplanted to Hungary proper to facilitate the renewal of the whole nation. Moreover, many of its prominent politicians, like writer and MP József Nyírő, expressed admiration for Nazi Germany's social organization. They claimed that Transylvanians achieved something similar in the interwar and this transformation located Transylvanian Hungarians at the forefront of the transformation of Europe, granting them a place in Germany's *Neues Europa*. While such analogies were sometimes employed strategically in an instrumentalist way (people like Nyírő refused to take into account the possibility of Nazi defeat and it was Germany which reannexed their region to Hungary) comparisons like this implicitly or explicitly made minority nationalism analogous with Nazism and fascism.²⁹

Jaross, who also proudly stated that his regional group, Hungarians from Slovakia, experienced national renewal before 1938, was, after 1940, the leading figure of a party that bore in its name the idea of renewal of the whole Hungarian national community: Party of Hungarian National Renewal. (MMP) It was officially allied with the Hungarian National Socialist Party (Magyar Nemzetiszocialista Párt), while its leader, Béla Imrédy, steered the country through the reintegration of the reannexed Southern Slovakia.³⁰ Jaross was the minister without portfolio responsible for the reintegration process.³¹ As Imrédy's trusted lieutenant, he had the "privilege" to manage another large-scale operation seen as crucial for national renewal: the murder of Hungarian Jews in 1944.³² His party also propagated a new vision of a more harmonious national society as a way of renewal and finding a place in Germany's orbit.

Thus, both men located national renewal in the past (as an accomplished fact for one part of the national community) and the future (for the nation as a whole) alike. They did not necessarily agree on the details of what this new society meant, and sometimes differences were substantial. But they were one in the assumption that both of their communities had something to bring into Hungary, something that was at the moment only a regional specificity, but it represented the general trends of social, political and economic transformation in Europe, and as such, they were necessary for national existence.³³

The concept of unity as the Unitary Hungarian Party of Czechoslovakia understood it in 1938 or the Transylvanian Party in 1940 was the result of a long maturing process that started back in 1920. National unity was part of pre-1918 political

rhetoric and discourse, but only the dissolution of dualist Hungary turned this issue seemingly existential for Hungary and Hungarian minorities alike. The new borders not only divided Hungarians: they reconfigured their relationship to the state, be it the Hungarian nation state or the successor state they were living in. So far, national unity was given through the unifying framework of Hungary. The end of self-evident national unity raised the spectre of new generations in Hungary and in the successor states being socialized differently.³⁴

The end of World War I put national unity to the test in a different sense, too. The revolutions and their political programmes highlighted deep social and political divisions that belied again the idea of a unitary nation. Peasants demanded agrarian reform, workers and the middle-class broadened social services and welfare, and everyone expected political democratization: extended suffrage, republican parliamentarism and local autonomy. Even after the suppression of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, politics in Hungary revealed deep divisions between Christian Socialists (whose social reform programme was entangled with anti-Semitism)³⁵ and the Independent Smallholders' Party (Független Kisgazdapárt – FKGP), which represented the peasantry.³⁶

Hungarian minority groups initially reflected these internal political divisions. In Czechoslovakia the whole social spectrum was covered by four parties: Hungarian Social Democrats (independent of the Czechoslovak party), Smallholders, Hungarian Civic Party (Magyar Polgári Párt, these two merging soon as Hungarian National Party) and OKP, saturated by the mid- and high-level clergy that aimed to bring together Slovak and Hungarian Catholics behind a programme of anti-capitalist and anti-Semitic reform.³⁷

In Romania, a group of intellectuals with close ties to progressive and small-holder politics created the Magyar Néppárt/Hungarian People's Party (Partidul Popular Maghiar), while politicians closer to István Bethlen's government and of a more traditional view of society created the Hungarian Alliance/Magyar Szövetség (Uniunea Maghiara). After the latter was banned by the government, the two groups founded the OMP.³⁸ During the king's dictatorship, the corporatist Magyar Népközösség/Hungarian People's Community (Comunitatea Națională Maghiară) was created within the framework of the National Renewal Front (Frontul Renașterii Naționale), and it continued operation beyond September 1940 in Southern Transylvania, in the North, the Transylvanian Party emerged.³⁹

Thus, the first step was institutional unity, which was only achieved in Romania soon. Here, the Hungarian Alliance was already, in 1920, imagined not as a party but as an umbrella organization that was to become the overarching institutional frame of all Hungarian social and economic activities. Exactly this claim was the reason it was banned, and only the existence of political parties accepted by the government. The unification of the two Hungarian parties happened at the end of 1922, creating the OMP, uniting nominally all political currents apart from the Social Democrats and the extreme left.⁴⁰

A different model emerged in Czechoslovakia. The left did not join the Hungarian minority politics here, too (although the independent Social Democrats, still the strongest Hungarian party at the elections in 1920, gradually lost their

significance), and the three parties were unable to agree on the terms of a merger. Christian Socials, unlike the others, attempted to attract Slovak rural voters, and their anti-capitalism and anti-Semitism targeted Jewish capital supporting the Hungarian National Party.⁴¹ Here, under pressure from the Hungarian government, the two parties established a common steering committee and cooperated at the elections. Only after 1935 did they come to institutional unity – the founding of the Unitary Hungarian Party. In 1938, after the southern strip of Slovakia was reannexed to Hungary, the party split, János Esterházy remaining in Czechoslovakia.⁴²

However, national unity for these politicians meant more than a unitary political organization. First, party politics was condemned as creating national divisions, futile and barren, one of the reasons for the collapse of the country in 1918. Thus, the aim was not party-building but national reorganization with a new institutional framework for nation-building everywhere. Second, it was not just restoration, even though Hungarian political imagination hoped for the reversal of territorial changes and the reconstitution of pre-1920 Hungary.⁴³ There was a general understanding of the necessity of renewal: social reconfiguration towards reduced differences and the generation of a stronger and more affectionate national identity. The reason for advocating such reforms was linked to the explanations of the dismemberment of Hungary in WWI. The lack of social reforms and the resulting political tensions before 1918 and the failings of Hungarian nationalism to permeate all social strata were considered to be among the most important reasons for the catastrophe.⁴⁴

Thus, national unity was not just a means of territorial revision; it was the future of the nation and the basis of its resilience. In Hungary, it was soon juxtaposed as the mainstream ideology of the counterrevolutionary regime with liberalism and its alleged extreme individualism.⁴⁵ Another, almost natural opposition was Communism, both as a Jewish ideology and as a communitarian idea based not on unity but social conflict.⁴⁶ However, it was less easy to draw such stark contrast within the Hungarians in Romania or Czechoslovakia, due to the delicate political balance of parties and as a result of the potential attractiveness of their state ideologies: in Czechoslovakia, democratic republicanism, and in Romania, agrarianism.⁴⁷

Thus, from the very beginning, the directions of potential transfers of new nationalist ideas about what constitutes the community were mutual between Hungary and the minorities. While these were initially not understood as part of fascism, they already resonated with some of fascism's core ideas on national unity as well. One factor behind the lack of appeal of fascism as a whole was that the first strong impulses of a new vision of the nation came not from the minorities, but from Hungary, especially to Transylvania. The Conservative Bethlen government kept a distance from fascism as an ideology (unlike Fascist Italy as a revisionist power), because it feared social convulsion in the country. But it was also afraid of the possibility of the disorganization of the minority communities. Government officials and politicians who managed 'national policy' (Hungary's relationship with Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring countries) tried to pre-empt such developments by actively shaping the ideologies and nation-building practices of the minority political organizations.⁴⁸

At the focus of Hungarian government projects stood ideas about national reorganization to foster unity: to generate more detailed knowledge about the minority group, to use this knowledge to devise adequate policies and to establish institutions to execute the policy. Already in 1924, Benedek Jancsó, the most significant expert in the government, sent a detailed memorandum to intellectuals in Kolozsvár/Cluj to make them formulate a working programme of their own. Jancsó had three concerns he saw not addressed by the existing party organization: knowledge production, social organization and social cohesion. His first recommendation was to start a wide-ranging ethnographic, statistical and sociological research to map the Hungarian minority.⁴⁹ The second was the strengthening of organizations that reached social groups hitherto not included in party politics – lower middle-class, workers, urban poor, even those living outside Transylvania, mainly in Bucharest. He pointed out existing initiatives like the Katolikus Népszövetség/Catholic People's Alliance to build on, but more importantly, he urged the party to study and follow the example of the German-speaking Transylvanian Saxons and their *Kulturamt*.⁵⁰ (An institution led by Richard Csaki and tasked with coordinating social activities and nation-building efforts between the various German-speaking groups in interwar Romania.⁵¹) Thirdly, he concluded that the Hungarian minority needed social harmony, the precondition of which was the engagement of the intellectuals and urban middle-class (so-called “people in trousers”) with the people, mostly with the peasantry. Together they should work towards the alleviation of their economic and social ills to dismantle social barriers. According to Jancsó, this kind of social unity was democracy itself, not parliamentary or electoral politics, and he even linked it with the dismemberment of Hungary. He argued that this form of unity was successfully established among Romanians in Hungary before 1918, lending the necessary strength and resilience to the ultimately successful Romanian minority politics before 1918.⁵² Thus, Jancsó pointed out important impulses of knowledge generation and models for the transfer of knowledge that could induce new ideas about what constituted national unity, making the previously vague idea – unity of the national soul, solidarity of all Hungarians – more concrete.⁵³

After Jancsó's intervention István Sulyok (a catholic intellectual-politician who towards the late 1930s gradually turned towards active anti-Semitism and received Nazism positively⁵⁴) prepared a more detailed working plan mainly focusing on the knowledge production. He also attempted to define national unity because he saw practical self-organization as a derivative of how one perceived the role of the Hungarian Party. For him, the party was not a political organization, but rather the nation itself. Therefore, as he argued, it must have brought everyone into its fold regardless of social and religious differences and devoted its organization and activities to the direct and practical resolution of their everyday problems.⁵⁵

The idea of national unity embodied by a political organization, the minority party slowly gained traction and gradually infused the political discourse of the Transylvanians, mainly expressed through metaphors that suggested a kind of totality of this community over individual lives. Party chairman György Bethlen spoke of the party as a community of blood, a natural occurrence of which every Hungarian was a member, even if they wanted to depart from it.⁵⁶ Sulyok defined

the nation and the national minority in 1931 as an organic entity which “entailed the individuality of its members in its totality”, making a bold claim on members’ lives.⁵⁷ Finally, in terms of organization, the party was reimagined as a corporatist body with professional sections and special policy committees.

Social harmony, through a kind of spiritual unity that eliminates social dividing lines,⁵⁸ was one of the ways of imagining national unity in Czechoslovakia, too, especially with a deeply divided Hungarian minority political organization. However, exactly because of political divisions, the meaning of unity was divergent. For the Smallholders, courting the landed peasantry, it was more the representation of rural and peasant interests – an issue that drove a wedge between Smallholders and the other Hungarian parties in the mid-1920s.⁵⁹ The Christian Socialist vision of unity was much broader and featured ideas that were easier to align with fascist ideas, not least because Hungarian Christian Socialists competed with Slovak Catholic nationalism – Andrej Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party marching towards Josef Tiso’s clerical fascism⁶⁰ – for a sizeable number of Slovak-speaking voters too.

First, they focused not on ethnic unity but on Christian society, meant as a growing influence of Christian social groups on the state and transition from capitalism to socialism. The main opponent in this vision was Social Democracy with its deleterious idea of class conflict and its goal, a politics of Christian unity of harmony which organizes every Christian individual into a whole, regardless of ethnicity. Society needed a stable and solid moral foundation that could only be found in Christianity.⁶¹

But under pressure from Hungary, the party soon moved to a more nationalistic position, emphasizing the necessity to build separate national Slovak, Hungarian and German Christian societies. Party chairman Jenő Lelley spoke of the idea of a Christian international based on the existence of different nations as a law of God’s order, while saying it was not nationalism, as its main goals are beneficial for all nationalities and not just one.⁶² The party moved further towards a more exclusive Hungarian nationalism under Géza Szűllő’s leadership (1925–1932), mostly deploying the concept of “natives” (*öslakos*), a label denoting Slovaks, Hungarians and Germans struggling together against Czech “colonization”. Simultaneously, Szűllő, who was an MP from the Catholic People’s Party already before 1918, criticized Lelley because of alleged party politicking and neglecting the social organization of the community through the party.⁶³

As party leaders came from the regional landowners and middle class, their vision of national unity was rather traditional. They kept distance from essentialism; instead, they emphasized the role of history and traditions in the creation of the national consciousness. Thus, its reproduction was based on social education of the peasants and workers, too, and a rejection of new ideas, most notably any progressivism (a core idea of Czechoslovak self-image) and regionalism that would have pitted minority Hungarians against Hungary. Instead, the task of minority organizations was to work with the people in a way that upheld the unity of Hungarians with Hungary, too, not just within the minority community.⁶⁴

Thus, while unity was still rather contour-less, it was clear that national organization should have been total in the sense of integrating everyone into the community through specific organizations – often with special reference to Italian models.⁶⁵ Moreover, in this vision, the nation demanded more from the individual than liberal nationalism before 1918 did, to devote all of their work and fulfil their duties for the nation, because without the nation, “there is no life, no happiness”. In turn, it was the responsibility of the whole Hungarian minority society to provide the means and institutions for the new generations where they could exercise their duty, because the state was closed to them.⁶⁶

Ideas about national unity and unitary organization had to handle the problem of the relation between state, society and nation-building. This issue was inescapable in the minority, even though state-centric programmes of nation-building dominated in István Bethlen’s counterrevolutionary Hungary between 1921 and 1931 and in Mussolini’s Italy, two potential models of national renewal. The new generations, socialized in the context of minority existence, did have a different view of what nation-building meant⁶⁷

Arguments in this regard reached back to the end of WWI: Hungary collapsed because the nation was not organized independently of the state, and Hungarian nation-building relied too heavily on the state. Thus, when the state collapsed, there was nothing to step in and push back against the neighbours. Thus, society should have precedent over the state as the solid foundation of the national community, just like – allegedly – the Romanian national movement in dualist Hungary successfully did.⁶⁸ Logically, in the work of rebuilding a unified Hungarian nation, these mistakes should be avoided, and society should get at least as much as or even more attention than the state. In this sense, the detachment of the nation from the state was the guarantee of the existence of Hungarian minorities.

The Flow of Ideas from Hungary and Back

The first impulses of a new concept of community came to the minorities from Hungary, most notably from government circles. But in the 1930s, a much more complex web of transfer routes emerged, linking Hungary to minorities, successor states to Hungarian minority groups and to the broader European intellectual developments. The new generation was socialized in a different institutional setting, and it left its imprint on their ideologies, too. In Romania, their education happened in denominational schools under the tutelage of teachers whose worldview bore the mark of protestant and catholic social reform ideas, including catholic social teaching.⁶⁹ Even while attending university at home, they relied on denominational institutions to sustain themselves. In Czechoslovak public universities in Brno and Prague socialized them into a spirit of progress and reform and into a political system in which – uniquely among the successor states – Communism was a legalized option.

Migration, temporary and permanent helped transfer too. As for the latter, important intellectuals and politicians left the successor states and occupied significant government positions or intellectual roles in Hungary. Lajos Körmendy-Ékes,

Ernö Flachbart from Czechoslovakia and Emil Grandpierre from Romania joined the “national policy” management circle. Calvinist Bishops László Ravasz and Sándor Makkai from Transylvania were highly praised intellectuals, with Makkai being one of the ideologues of the new minority consciousness emerging around 1930.⁷⁰ In parallel, the Hungarian government organized study migration to Hungary and beyond for talented students who were trained to become the leaders of their respective groups.⁷¹

Finally, the political changes in Hungary after 1932 facilitated the flow of ideas, too.⁷² Unlike Bethlen, whose main goal was restoring social stability, all of his successors promoted a programme of thorough social reform. First, it was Gyula Gömbös, an arch-radical of extreme nationalism who took the role of prime minister (1932–1936) with a programme of transforming Hungary into a corporatist party-led state inspired by Mussolini, followed by Béla Imrédy (1938–1939), who professed to a vision closer to Nazism, just to being followed by arch-antisemite Pál Teleki, who was one of the main supporters of social reform ideas and movements in Hungary before he took over government.⁷³ All of these politicians aimed at radical state and social reforms based on their own visions of how social unity and harmony (national unity) should be established in Hungary. Their ideas were discussed widely in public, and occasionally – mostly in Czechoslovakia – they sought out Hungarian minority politicians whom they considered like-minded ones as new leaders of the community. Moreover, Imrédy and Teleki were not just an inspiration for intellectuals within the Hungarian minorities. They looked eagerly for ideas and examples among Hungarian minorities for their own programmes, because of the idealized view of these communities, which allegedly embodied social and national unity.⁷⁴

Gömbös’s plans still revolved around the state reorganized with corporations and focusing on the elevation of the peasantry, to foster a “unity of the souls”, and a unity through work for the nation, an “indivisible labor unity”. Hungarians were expected to go through a renewal, the emergence of a new Hungarian was postulated, while the party was elevated to the role of the organizer of the national society. The ultimate goal was a dictatorship based on national harmony stemming from a unitary national soul, which would locate Hungary in the forefront of the international trends of national renewal – alongside Nazism and fascism but following its own version.⁷⁵

It is easy to see how this vision could be attractive to and seen as identical with the ones that propagated minority unity as a model for national unity, and postulated that parties were not political organizations, but rather institutional frames of the nation. But Gömbös never directly addressed the issue of Hungarian minorities – it was Imrédy who made those connections explicit in his politics. The most striking example is his parliamentary speech on the occasion of the re-annexation of Southern Slovakia. Imrédy told the chamber that the social transformations the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia experienced and created were at the core of his own political programme, a statement proven by Jaross’s alliance with him.⁷⁶

A closer look at Imrédy’s ideas, however, reveals visible differences and potential tensions too, not with Jaross, but with the more general ideology of the

Czechoslovak and Romanian Hungarian minority parties. Although Imrédy, just like Gömbös before him and Pál Teleki afterwards, posited the “unity of the souls” as the basis of national unity, the way he assigned social positions and social roles was markedly different. Most notably, in Transylvania, the new generation promoted the idea of “serving the people” (népszolgálat),⁷⁷ an apolitical perception of how national society worked. The key to understanding it was the notion of the small-scale, practical and non-political everyday national work, often essentialized into a character trait of Transylvanian Hungarians.⁷⁸ Makkai added the concept of a self-centred life of the nation based on an organized and resilient social unity anchored in the peasantry. This was everyone’s duty, most notably the middle classes, to work for this goal, engage with, educate and organize the peasants. Makkai welcomed the idea that social divisions were eliminated, and a form of equality came into being among minority Hungarians, too. However, he did not explicitly advocate mass social mobility; rather, cultural elevation and education, selection of talent and a change of lifestyle for the middle-class to create a kind of corporatism without the state. He equated democracy with the harmonious operation of this organization and saw the unique national characteristics of a group as the basis of its existence. Thus, he envisioned a world in which all nations had a place, given by God, and could exist in harmony as soon as all of them discovered what their specificity was and organized their life accordingly.⁷⁹

The most important difference between Imrédy and the Transylvanians (and most Czechoslovak Hungarians, too) lay in their perception of social roles and position. Imrédy subscribed to the idea of national duty and work, but he took it as the natural role of the middle class to lead. They must have only recognized this duty and embraced it to perpetuate their social role. In this sense, Imrédy stood closer to the hierarchical conservative view of national unity that dominated Hungarian minority politics in the 1920s than to the new ideas among minorities. What made it different was the aestheticization of the middle-class role.⁸⁰ Even though Imrédy offered more room and responsibility for social organization than Gömbös, his remained an institution-centred view, built on the transmission of politics from state to society instead of the self-organization-focused minority ideas.

The new generations’ rejection of structurally defined leading roles in society made them more receptive to Teleki’s ideas. Not incidentally, Teleki created the Transylvanian Party as his own party in 1940,⁸¹ and propagated the importance of social organizations (scouts, churches, professional organizations etc.), together with corporatist state reform. Only the efficient duality of the state and the society made nation-building effective and the nation resilient.

In all these variants of national unity, however, individuals remained subordinated to the community, and liberty was perceived as an anti-individualist quality. It existed only through the acceptance of responsibility, fulfilment of duty to the nation and through work for the nation, as part of a national community that finally could reach the form of its authentic existence and liberate the community as a whole.⁸²

Therefore, attempts to redefine democracy are hardly surprising at all. It was an ideological necessity to define it against liberalism because liberalism conceived democracy based on individual political freedom. And it was – at least in

Czechoslovakia – a political necessity due to the country's operational democracy. We have already seen how some thinkers tried to depoliticize democracy and make it equal to social harmony and unity. There were other ways to offer an alternative.

János Esterházy, while describing how the party will achieve social harmony – “everyone should get their due” – manifested an attitude that almost made the party an object of religious faith, declaring that he loved “the party, the God blessed land, together with its native inhabitants, and I will do my work with this faith, hope and love and with God's holy name”.⁸³ Jaross juxtaposed “total minority unity” with both fascism and liberal parliamentarism and claimed that it was not in opposition with democracy, just an alternative to it, because it was not an aggressive, only a defensive totality.⁸⁴ Thus, he also drew a line to the Sudeten German and the Carpathian German Parties, even though the German model of social organization was a source of inspiration in Czechoslovakia too. But in political terms, Hungarian ethnic differences were more important than ideological affinities. Jaross and his fellow politicians did not cease to emphasize that Nazism was a German thing, Hungarians obviously needed a different, specifically Hungarian way of national organization that fulfilled the same purpose of national renewal that Nazism served among Germans. Nevertheless, Jaross reorganized the party's youth organization into a hierarchical one where everyone was supposed to follow orders from above (Jaross's, who was often called in the press “Youth Führer” (ifjúsági vezér)).⁸⁵

Contrasted with the concrete Czechoslovak democracy, one way to claim real democracy for themselves, minority politicians could condemn mass democracy as fake democracy, representing factional interests of the elites and neglecting the moral aspects of politics. This led to the claim that democracy was not competitive politics and representation but a matter of organizing the minority community as a unity. Delineation from totalitarian ideologies – if it was necessary – happened mainly through tautology based on the idea of a specific minority moral: minorities cannot subscribe to totalitarianism because they could not exist without democracy.⁸⁶

The debate over democracy highlights how much these ideas were entangled with ideas from without the narrower Hungarian intellectual world. Not only the large tendencies, but also local actors and their ideas shaped minority ideologies. In Romania, social work and the ethics of responsibility were formulated in interaction with the sociologist and social reformist Dimitrie Gusti's rural research programme (the “monographic school”) and the Iron Guard's rural working camp programmes. Even the religious overtones of the “serving the people” ideology chimed with the Iron Guard ideology's entanglement with Orthodox mysticism.⁸⁷ In Czechoslovakia, the political rivalry with Hlinka's and later Tiso's party could not obscure such affinities, too. According to Tiso, democracy was impossible without educating the people into a spiritual nationalism. Otherwise, materialism defined their choices, creating masses instead of individuals making sacrifices and acting for the nation. Thus, Tiso also equated democracy with sacrifice and duty.⁸⁸

From the minority politicians who stayed in the successor states after Hungarian territorial revision, only János Esterházy could do politics publically. As an MP in the fascist Slovak parliament, he abstained from voting on anti-Jewish legislation, but he did not change his views on society and social organization. However, he

was too attached to the elites of interwar Hungary and not radical enough for the Hungarian Arrow Cross party that tried to remove him from his position as party chairman after October 1944.⁸⁹

The most significant development of Hungarian minority politics after 1938 and 1940 was how intellectuals returning from Czechoslovakia to Hungary and politicians of the Transylvanian Party used their own concept of unity to reposition themselves as regionalists. Both groups used their recognition from Hungary as models of successful national renewal to lay claim to institutionalized forms of difference and distance, retaining influence over politics, local and regional administration. Transylvanians were relatively successful in terms of institutional influence. In terms of conceptualization, similarly to their peers from Czechoslovakia, they postponed unity with Hungary because of the failings of social reform in the latter. They argued that reannexed minority Hungarian groups were models of authentic national organization, they were the ones that showed the way how to fit into the Nazi New Europe, therefore Budapest should not interfere with their affairs, instead focus on its own transformation – led by these regional groups.⁹⁰

Just Fascist, Not Fascism? Fascist Affinities and Hungarian Minorities?

After World War I, Hungarian politicians and intellectuals, within and outside the country, agreed that their nation needed a reset. The dismemberment of Hungary was linked to deficiencies of Hungarian nation-building, and it lent the focus towards a key issue of the community: how to strengthen and institutionalize it without the state to make it more resilient. Until territorial revisions, the fate of the new Hungarian minorities in the successor states was entangled with this question, too.

First, the cause of the collapse was found in the lack of social cohesion of Hungarians. Detrimental effects of pre-1918 Liberalism and individualism, identified with the policy of the Hungarian state, were found responsible for this situation by many already in the 1920s. By the 1930s, there was a growing sentiment that liberalism had failed the nation again, with the deficient and unworkable construct of minority rights and treaties. Instead of conferring enforceable rights, its limitation of rights to individuals and to a limited number of aspects of social life, it rather fostered assimilation. Only a strong and unified community with community rights would be able to resist those pressures.

In the Europe of the early 1920s, Mussolini was the most prominent figure offering the same: a redefinition of the nation. But while Mussolini's state-centred ideology could have suited Hungary and its governments well, the fate of the Hungarian minority was hard to pin on the state as the tool of nation-building. Thus, their politicians and intellectuals – while occasionally hailing Mussolini's successes in general terms – should have looked for inspiration elsewhere, in the various communitarian ideas, like Christian Socialism, organic-biological nationalism and corporatism. Nazism with its focus on the *Volk* that precedes the state would have offered an alternative from within the fascist genre, but until the early 1930s it was not broadly received and discussed.⁹¹ Its intellectual precursor, the German

Conservative revolution, which offered a form of inclusion through ethnic ties and perceived common national essence into a more equal community, even without the institutions of a state, was better known, especially as one of its important currents was engaged in debates around the collapse of Austria-Hungary too.⁹²

Thus, the reconceptualization of the nation in the minority started under the influence of various new nationalist currents, first coming from abroad. But soon a kind of “autochthonous” variety emerged based on what Hungarian intellectuals called “minority experience” – living discriminated and mostly deprived of national rights and relying on their own efforts for protecting national culture. According to this argument, Hungarian minorities faced an existential challenge after WWI, and they were only saved by thorough social reconfiguration.⁹³ They had to rely on a new internal organization, finding harmony between social groups, creating a more equal society and starting national work based on the sense of duty of individuals who recognized their responsibility for the nation. It was social reform and at least the starting point of a national renewal.

Thus, with time, an important space opened for the transfer of ideas and experiences in several directions and looking for models in countries where communitarian as opposed to liberal individualist national renewal was promised by politics. As the circle of such countries broadened (after Fascist Italy came Nazi Germany, the Austrian *Ständestaat*, Salazar’s Portugal) the room for aligning minority ideologies with larger European ideological trends grew too. Moreover, they could find inspiration even closer, especially in Christian-Catholic politics in Slovakia. And the Slovak case was just one of the examples of anti-liberal and anti-capitalist political Catholicism lurching to the extreme right in the successor states.⁹⁴

In a way, all these trends were analogous to each other. A core concept of minority Hungarian ideologies was national unity (or harmony), and it was based on the idea of a specific moral obligation of sacrifice and duty for the nation. Other concepts were brought into relation with these core ideas, like democracy, state, society, liberalism, individualism, either affirmatively (for society, state, democracy) or rejected (liberalism, individualism). Several configurations of these concepts around the core appeared throughout the 25 years of the existence of minority (or regional) Hungarian political organizations, which uniformly claimed to be more than parties – social organizations of the national subgroup and community. As a result, they reconsidered the individual’s place and turned against liberalism, equated with individualism and/or capitalism. This way democracy was dissociated from politics and parliamentarism, dissolved in the common work for the nation and understood as various, but the least frequently material, aspects of equality within the national community. Besides the ideas of duty and anti-liberalism, corporatist organizational principles seem to lie at the intersection of the various configurations, either with or without the state. Their goal is always to create harmony by bringing factional interests to the fore and providing means of their balancing without politicizing conflict and always subordinated to the national interest, either represented by a broader group or understood by the designated leader. It was also a means of imagining the possibility of parallel national existence as a minority through self-sufficiency, without a state.

But these ideas were located within the broader field of ideological trends in Europe (one that affected many non-Hungarian national minorities similarly⁹⁵), most often situated as part of a more general national(ist) renewal, which included fascism and Nazism. The more the power of Italy and Germany grew, and especially after Hungary pinned its hope for territorial revision – national unity within a state – on these Great Powers, the more common it became to highlight, at least rhetorically, that somehow Hungarian national ideology, and specifically the Hungarian minorities' social transformation, was a similar kind too. It was rarely called Hungarian fascism or Nazism, but often the reason of not doing it was the common claim of fascists that every nation had its own, peculiar version of authentic national existence. Thus, none of the Hungarian minority parties and organizations embraced fascism explicitly, nor was their ideology a clear-cut fascist one, but real closeness of ideas, semantic overlaps and overlaps of core concepts (especially that of national unity and duty) made it very easy to create implicit or explicit linkages with fascism.⁹⁶ To the extent that official party programmes integrated at the end anti-Semitism, advocated for material redistribution measures at the expense of Jews and promoted the idea of limiting Jewish presence in select professions. They easily accepted discriminatory policies towards other minorities (Romanians, Slovaks, Serbs) too and talked of the alleged impossibility of assimilation of non-Hungarians due to their race.⁹⁷ However, when it came to the physical elimination of Jews, a significant group of minority politicians and intellectuals refused to follow and support this policy, and several of them tried to intervene on behalf of persecuted Jews on an individual basis. Finally, only a small part of them were ready to go with the Hungarian Arrow Cross until the end, Jaross (and the Transylvanian politician, writer and Third Reich admirer, Nyírő) being one of them.⁹⁸

Still, while most of the Hungarian intellectuals outside Hungary's 1920 borders were not fascists or Nazis (although there was a smaller group in Transylvania, which embraced Nazism rather wholeheartedly)⁹⁹ the core concepts and the usual configurations signalled an affinity towards these ideologies too. Renewal (or re-birth), anti-liberalism and social transformation were part of the "great" ideologies too, and their envisaged outcome often pointed to similar directions. There was an undeniable closeness of ideas, often together with a distance in practice or regarding the acceptable and unacceptable action. But for a very long time fascism's and Nazism's were trends lending legitimacy to minority reorganization programmes, later to regionalist claims and it strengthened their ideological appeal too. In light of this story, it is probably less surprising that Andor Jaross became a war criminal, and Dezső Albrecht supported his party's alliance with Jaross's even after the deportations were finished in the Hungarian countryside.

Notes

- 1 Péter Sipos, *Imrédy Béla és a Magyar Megújulás Pártja* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1970); Attila Simon, *Magyar idők a Felvidéken* (Budapest: Jaffa, 2014).
- 2 Paul Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary. Religion, Nationalism, Antisemitism 1890–1940* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007).

- 3 Béla Angyal, *Érdekvédelem és önszerveződés. Fejezetek a csehszlovákiai magyar párt-politika történetéből* (Galánta – Somorja: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet – Lilium Aurum, 2022).
- 4 Peter Bugge, “Czech Democracy 1918–1938 - Paragon or Parody?” *Bohemia* 47 (2007) 1, 3–28. On the state of democracy in interwar Central Europe in more general terms, see the edited volume Sabrina P. Ramet (ed.), *Interwar East Central Europe, 1918–1941: The Failure of Democracy-building, the Fate of Minorities* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020).
- 5 For Jaross’ post-1938 antisemitism see Ildikó Bajcsi, “Az új életnek útjában áll a zsidóság,” in *Jaross Andor és a zsidókérdés (1938–1940)* (Budapest: Clio Intézet, 2023).
- 6 Miklós Csapody, *Egy nemzedék iskolája. Erdélyi Fiatalok 1930–1940* (Budapest: Korona, 2011); Nándor Bárdi, “A múlt mint tapasztalat. A kisebbségből többségbe került erdélyi magyar politika szemléletváltása,” in *Az emlékezet konstrukciói. Példák a 19–20. századi magyar történelemből*, eds. Gábor Czoch and Csilla Fedinec (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2006), 237–292.
- 7 Gábor Egyr, *Az “erdélyiség” színéváltozása. Kísérlet az Erdélyi Párt ideológiájának és identitáspolitikájának 1940–1944* (Budapest: Napvilág, 2008), 14, 38.
- 8 Dezső Albrecht, “A jobb magyar jövő” *Ellenzék*, January 23, 1943, 2.
- 9 Egyr, *Az “erdélyiség” színéváltozása*, 167.
- 10 Egyr, *Az “erdélyiség” színéváltozása*, 74.
- 11 Sándor Kónya-Hamar, “Albrecht Dezső,” *Hitel* 27, no. 7 (2014): 77–84.
- 12 See Bárdi, “A múlt mint tapasztalat”; Gábor Egyr, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika. Magyar kisebbségek nacionalizmus és regionalizmus között Romániában és Csehszlovákiában 1918–1944* (Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó 2015), 180–189.
- 13 Egyr, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika*, 189–217.
- 14 Roger Griffin, “The Primacy of Culture: The Current Growth (or Manufacture) of Consensus within Fascist Studies,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 37, no. 1 (2002): 21–43. See also Dezső Tamás Ziegler, “The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition as a Common Framework of Fascism and the Contemporary Far Right,” *Fascism* 10, no. 1 (2021): 16–51.
- 15 Ziegler, “The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition.”
- 16 Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theories: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- 17 Gábor Egyr, “Nép, nemzet, állam, társadalom: népszolgálo közösségkép és társadalomszervezés az erdélyi magyar politikában 1918–1944,” in *Népszolgálat. A közösségi elkötelezettség alakváltozatai a magyar kisebbségek történetében*, eds. Nándor Bárdi, Tamás Gusztáv Filep, József D. Lőrincz (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2015), 48–71, 59–69.
- 18 Armin Mohler and Karlheinz Weissmann, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918 – 1933*. 6. völlig überarbeitete Auflage (Graz: Aser Verlag, 2005).
- 19 Nándor Bárdi, “O încercare de integrare. Apariția societății minoritare maghiare din România, 1920–1940,” in *România interbelică. Modernizare politico-instituțională și discurs național*, eds. Sorin, Radu and Oliver, Jens Schmitt (Iasi: Editura Polirom, 2023), 434–472.
- 20 Gábor Egyr, “New Horizons from Prague to Bucharest. Ethnonationalist Stereotypes and Regionalist Self-Perceptions in Interwar Slovakia and Transylvania,” *History-Is-sues-Problems/Historie-Otázky-Problémy* 8, no. 2 (2016): 47–58.
- 21 Nándor Bárdi, *Otthon és haza. Tanulmányok a Romániai magyar kisebbség történetéből* (Csíkszereda: Pro Print, 2013), 87–167, 405–470; Béla Angyal, *Dokumentumok az Országos Keresztényszocialista Párt történetéhez (1918–1935)* (Somorja – Dunaszerdahely: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet – Lilium Aurum, 2003); Béla Angyal, *Dokumentumok az Országos Magyar Kisgazda Földmívelő és Kisiparos Párt és a Magyar Nemzeti Párt történetéhez 1920–1936* (Somorja: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet, 2017).

- 22 Bárdi, “O încercare de integrare”; Zoltán Kántor, “Kisebbségi nemzetépítés. A romániai magyarság mint nemzetépítő kisebbség,” *Regio* 11, no. 3 (2003): 219–241.
- 23 Egyr, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika*, 156–180.
- 24 Angyal, *Dokumentumok az Országos Keresztényszocialista*; Angyal, *Dokumentumok az Országos Magyar Kiszgazda*.
- 25 Gábor Egyr, “Endangered by Alienation? Raising a Minority Elite between Nationalizing Higher Education Systems: The New Generation of Hungarians in Interwar Romania,” in *Universities and Elite Formation in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe*, eds. Florian Bieber, and Harald Heppner (Zürich: LIT Verlag, 2015), 39–58.
- 26 Egyr, “Endangered by Alienation; Deborah S. Cornelius, *In Search of the Nation: The New Generation of Hungarian Youth in Czechoslovakia 1925–1934* (Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Monographs, 1998); Ildikó Bajcsi, *Kisebbségi magyar küldetés Csehszlovákiában: A sarlós nemzedék közösségi szerepvállalása Trianon után* (Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2021).
- 27 Egyr, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika*, 106., 167–171.
- 28 Egyr, *Az erdélyiség, “színeváltozása”*; Simon: *Magyar idők*; Ildikó Bajcsi, “Az új életnek útjában áll a zsidóság.”
- 29 Egyr, *Az erdélyiség színeváltozása*.
- 30 Péter Sipos, *Imrédy Béla és a Magyar Megújulás Pártja*; Simon Attila, *Magyar idők*.
- 31 Bajcsi, “Az új életnek útjában áll a zsidóság.”
- 32 Randolph M. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide. The Holocaust in Hungary* (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 2000); László Karsai, *Az Endre-Baky-Jaross per* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi, 1994).
- 33 Egyr, “Népe, nemzet, állam”; Simon, *Magyar idők*.
- 34 Egyr, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika*; Bárdi.
- 35 Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*.
- 36 Pál Hatos, *Elátkozott köztársaság, Az 1918-as forradalom és összeomlás története* (Budapest: Jaffa, 2018), 361–416; Gábor Egyr, “Nationale Selbstbestimmung ohne Nationen/ Territoriale Neugliederung und nationalstaatliche Legitimation in Westungarn/ Burgenland 1918–1922,” in *Frieden durch Volksabstimmung. Selbstbestimmungsrecht und Gebietsreferenden nach dem ersten Weltkrieg*, eds. Oliver Jens Schmitt, Reinhardt Stauber (Wien: ÖAW Verlag, 2022), 221–248, 231–238.
- 37 Angyal, *Dokumentumok az Országos Keresztényszocialista Párt*; Angyal, *Dokumentumok az Országos Magyar Kiszgazda*; Attila Simon and József Tóth, *Kis lépések nagy politikusa - Szent-Ivány József, a politikus és művelődésszervező* (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2016).
- 38 Bárdi, *Othton és haza*.
- 39 Egyr, *Az erdélyiség színeváltozása*.
- 40 Bárdi, *Othton és haza*; On the left in Romania see János Főcze, *A Madosz. Baloldali magyar történet a Román Királyságban (1934–1944)* (Kolozsvár: Kriterion, 2021).
- 41 Angyal, *Érdekvédelem és önszerveződés*.
- 42 Attila Simon, *Egy rövid esztendő krónikája. A szlovákiai magyarok 1938-ban* (Somorja: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet, 2010).
- 43 Miklós Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revision in Hungary: 1920–1945* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2007).
- 44 Egyr, *Etnicitás, identitás*; Egyr, “New Horizons.”
- 45 Gyula Szekfü, *Három nemzedék* (Budapest 1920); Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*.
- 46 Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe. The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 2018).
- 47 Attila Simon, *Az elfeledett aktivisták. Kormánypárti politika az első Csehszlovák Köztársaságban* (Somorja: Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet, 2013); Egyr, “Endangered by Alienation”.

- 48 Bárdi, *Otthon és Haza*.
- 49 On the model of German knowledge production and Fascism see Michael Fahlbusch, *Wo der deutsche ... ist, ist Deutschland* "Die Stiftung für deutsche Volks- und Kulturbodenforschung in Leipzig 1920–1933 (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1994) and Robert Pech, "Zwischen Nähe und Distanz: Fritz Valjavec und die Südost Forschung im Nationalsozialismus," *Nordost-Archiv* 29 (2017): 30–56.
- 50 Sacha E Davis, "Constructing the "Volksgemeinschaft": Saxon Particularism and the Myth of the German East, 1919–1933," *German Studies Review* 39, no. 1 (2016): 41–64.
- 51 Sacha E Davies, "Constructing," 54.
- 52 Hungarian National Archives Central Archives (MNL OL)K 437 1927 2. t. 8. cs. 51–64. f.
- 53 Egry, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika* 134.
- 54 Ferenc Sz. Horváth, "Az Erdélyi Lapok ideológiája. Zsidókérdés, katolikus antiszemitizmus és nemzetiszocializmus Erdélyben (1932–1940)," *Regio*, 12 no. 3 (2004): 101–141.
- 55 MNL OL K 437 1927 2. t. 8. cs. also Egry, *Etnicités, identitás, politika* 148.
- 56 Egry, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika* 134.
- 57 Egry, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika* 149.
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