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THE FIRST CHANGE OF REGIME
IN HUNGARIAN HISTORY

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The fabric of history is almost seamless even though those who weave it may want it differently. Hitler proclaimed to lay the foundations of a new, a Third, Reich, one to last for a thousand years, but – though his actions affected the lives of countless millions all over the world – he built but a house of cards that stood only for a dozen of years. It was an event rather than an epoch in German history. The First, Second, and Third German Reichs – and I am ready to add to them the Federal German Republic – represent but a continuum of German history. The situation is not very dissimilar in neighboring France now living under her Fifth Republic. Years ago the billboards in the Paris Metro – pasted there by the manu-facturer of a wall-paint – could justifiably declare that *Les Républiques passent mais la peinture Soudée reste.* Yes, the republics come and go, and to use again a French saying, *plus cela change, plus c'est la même chose.* In the course of history significant caesurae are few and rare between, and are seldom the works of any one individual. There is considerable difference between pre- and post-Napoleonic Europe but, as I see it, it was but a new game on the old chessboard. In European history, I submit, the rules of the game were changed for example by the Reforma-tion, or the French Revolution, in Japan, the Meiji Restoration may have marked a decisively new epoch in the country's history. To the question whether the French Revolution had succeeded, Zhou Enlai is said to have replied "It's too soon to tell." Only time will show whether, on a world scale, the Leninist Russian revolu-tion was really the watershed Lenin and Stalin wanted it to be. Yet I have no doubt about its significance for Russian history. This paper would like to express some thoughts on a change of regime which, while it may have had little effect on European history, constitutes, without any doubt, the decisive watershed in the history of Hungary. Without it, it is safe to say, there would be no Hungary today.

In this millennial year of 2000, Hungary is celebrating another millennium: that of the founding of the Hungarian state. A few years ago, in 1989, Hungarians were proudly remembering the eleven-hundredth anniversary of the Conquest of their land (though, for reasons of political correctness the term was seldom used in texts destined for foreign readers). Thus, apparently 111 years were needed to

transform a de-facto occupation into a legitimate state, recognized as such by contemporary Europe. Today, a thousand years later, Hungary once again knocks on the door of a European Union.

In the course of Hungarian history I see but two instances of a definitive change of direction. The second of these was reached in 1945 and marked the end of a continuum.

It was a definitive break with a political construct which lasted for about 950 years, from the founding of the kingdom of Hungary by Stephen I, or, as he is called, St. Stephen, to the probably definitive creation of a Hungarian republic.

To assess the role of St. Stephen in Hungarian history one must compare the state of the land in the second half of the 10th century with that prevailing after the end of Stephen's reign. The transformation was enormous. In seventy years a weak, militarily battered tribal organization, destined to be absorbed by the preponderantly Slavic population of the region, and to be integrated into the neighboring Germanic world, became an independent regional power to be reckoned with by both the Byzantine and the Holy Roman empires.

In Hungarian historiography more pages have been written on St. Stephen than on any other person, so it may be presumptuous for me to attempt to say anything new about him.[1] Yet, speak I must, since his activities cannot be left unmentioned in a symposium dedicated to political transitions. However, it is most important to remember that the big watershed in Hungarian history was negotiated not by Stephen alone; his oeuvre could not have been accomplished and, today, cannot be understood, without examining the policies followed by his father Géza.

Géza is undoubtedly a ruler of what I like to call the "precursor" type, such as Louis XIII of France or Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia, whose work made possible the more spectacular reigns of Louis XIV and Frederick the Great respectively. Géza became head of the Hungarian confederacy probably in 970. He was the great-grandson of Árpád, head of the Magyar tribe under whose leadership in 896 the conquest of the land that was to become Hungary took place.

The occupation of the Carpathian basin met with little resistance. The Hungarians moved into a sparsely populated region with a mixed population, which certainly contained an important Slavic segment, but also remnants of the Turkic or Mongol Avar population, which survived the destruction of its state by Charlemagne. In my *History of Hungary* I put the number of conquering Hungarians at about 250,000, but in light of recent research this figure should be adjusted downward to about 100,000, about half as many as the local population.

Here I must make a short detour into the fog-bound regions of Hungarian protohistory. The great, unsolved puzzle of Hungarian ethnogenesis can be summarized as follows. Hungarian is a Finno-Ugric language, yet, their linguistic affiliation notwithstanding, in the earliest written sources in which they are mentioned, the Hungarians appear in a Turkic garb, as a warlike people of mounted archers.

Although, in principle, military tactics cannot be linked to the race or the language of the people that make use of it, the specificity of Hungarian comportment firmly places them in the world of Inner Asian nomads. In the second half of the first millennium, on the eastern approaches of Europe, the nomadic population of the steppes lying north of the Black Sea was essentially Turkic and, in their general comportment, the Hungarians do not seem to have differed from them in any significant way. The Hungarians are called Turks not only by some Arab writers such as Ibn Rustah (early 9th century) but also by the Byzantines who were in direct contact with many of their leaders. Interpreters were needed for the negotiations and the Logothete of the Course in charge of their services could not have made a mistake in their choice. To this must be added the fact that most of the Hungarian chiefs had Turkic names and that in Byzantine sources the land of the Hungarians is called *Tourkia*. We are thus bound to assume that the social stratum that sent envoys to Constantinople, was Turkic speaking. As of now, no satisfactory explanation exists of why the Hungarians speak Hungarian, and it cannot be of my concern here to offer some relevant theories. By the end of the 10th century the name by which the Hungarians were referred to in western, Latin or Greek, sources was changed to *Ungri, Ungroi,* the basic form from which all the western variants with an initial *h-*, such as English *Hungarian,* derived. That this name, too, is ultimately of Turkic origin and passed to the West through Slavic intermediaries is, from our present point-of-view, irrelevant. *Magyar,* the Hungarians' self-appellation, though known to Arabs, appear in the Latin sources only much later. The contorted efforts to give the ethnonym *magyar* a Turkic, Finno-Ugric or Turkic/Finno-Ugric etymology have remained fruitless as witnessed by the still ongoing debate that surrounds the question.

In the course of the first half of the 10th century, important segments of the Hungarian tribal confederacy appear to have been reluctant to abandon their pre-Conquest way of life. Hungarian incursions plagued their neighbors. It is safe to say that, to this day, the reputation of the Hungarians has not fully recovered from the constant reviling of which they were the objects in medieval chronicles. *Gens ferocissima* or *crudelissima* belonged to the milder adjectives used to describe them. Marauding Hungarian troops went as far as France and Spain and plagued northern Italy. In 949 King Berengar II of Ivrea had to pay a huge sum to Stephen's grandfather Taksony to obtain his withdrawal. The aim of these forays was not conquest but booty. Hungarian mercenaries also served various rulers of Italy and of Bavaria.[2] In these military campaigns the Hungarians appear as typical mounted archers as witnessed by the oft-cited *Carmina Mutinensia* in which the inhabitants of Modena pray to their patron saint St. Geminianus to save them from the arrows of the Hungarians. During this period of "adventures" the dominating personalities were the great war-lords, Bulcsu, Lél, and Gyula, while the descendants of Árpád, theoretically still heads of the Hungarian confederation, lived in relative

obscurity and the influence of the Magyar tribe does not appear to have been preponderant. It is worth noting that the Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus expressly states that the first leader of the Hungarians is of Árpád's tribe, but they also have other leaders. According to the Emperor, Bulcsu was the third prince of *Tourkia*, and in a Latin source he is even called *rex*. Bulcsu and Gyula had both been admitted by the Emperor to the dignity of a Roman patrician. At the same time the two great warlords were also baptized in the Byzantine rite. An alliance with the Hungarians played an important part in the Emperor's policy.

Lél and Bulcsu overplayed their cards. In 955, at Lechfeld, near Augsburg, a federation of German armies organized by the German King Otto I the Great (from 962 Emperor) annihilated the Hungarian forces; the two Hungarian leaders were taken prisoner and hanged. Even by the standards of the time the procedure was shocking but it served its purpose. Dead men do not fight. For the Hungarians the so-called "era of adventures" was over.

The habitats of Bulcsu's tribe lay in what is now western Hungary, near Lake Balaton. The proximity to the Germanic world facilitated the hostile incursions. With the ignominious death of Bulcsu his greatly weakened tribe inevitably lost its influence and allowed the Magyar tribe to emerge from the shadows. Géza, realizing that no heathen people would be admitted into the European community, embarked on a wholesale conversion of his people. For Géza this was a purely political decision and his own conversion was formal.

By that time Christianity, both in its eastern and western forms, was well known to the Hungarians. It should be remembered that parts of the local populations had already been converted before the arrival of the Hungarians. In the Transdanubian, i.e. the western part of the Carpathian basin, the missionary activities of the epis-copal see of Salzburg introduced Roman Catholicism already in the second half of the 9th century. At the same time, Method and Constantine, the great missionaries of the Eastern Church were also active in the region. Ultimately the influence of the Western Church prevailed and the invading Hungarians found in their new land a partly christianized, in the western regions mostly Catholic population, closely linked with the bishopric of Salzburg. The earliest missionaries active among Hungarians came from Byzantium, but following the Hungarian defeat near Augsburg at Lechfeld Constantine VII lost interest in sending missionaries to what he considered a doomed nation and Latin missionaries entered into the vacuum thus created. A request to Rome for Catholic missionaries had been presented already by Géza's father Taksony.

The land occupied by Árpád lay at the crossroads of Germanic, Slavic and Byzantine influences. Different as these might have been, they were all Christian, so there was no real external challenge to the religious development of the new kingdom. In all other spheres there were examples of different types to follow, and it does seem as if Géza, perhaps with the ultimate aim of securing independ-

ence, deliberately chose what seemed to him the best in the institutions of his neighbors. As his closest neighbors were Roman Catholic Germans, Géza staked his fortune on collaboration with the German Empire; and he won, a fact which had immense consequences not only for the Hungarians but for Eastern Europe as a whole. Whilst some of the most aggressive Hungarian tribes had bled to death at Lechfeld or elsewhere, the Magyar tribe that occupied territories west of the Danube, acquired a certain stability and prospered in comparative peace.

The chief apostle of the Hungarian conversion was St. Adalbert, bishop of Prague. Géza himself saw in the conversion only a means of securing the confidence of Hungary's neighbors, and chiefly that of Otto I, the Holy Roman Emperor. In 973 a Hungarian delegation appeared in his court at Quedlinburg and, shortly after, Géza and some five-hundred Hungarians were baptized by a monk of St. Gallen, the very monastery visited by marauding Hungarians in 926. Probably on Adalbert's recommendation, Géza's show of goodwill secured for his son the hand of the Bavarian Princess Gisela, daughter of Henry II, duke of Bavaria.

The death of Géza in 997 lead to a conflict between Turkic and western systems of succession. Chief Koppány, a senior member of the house of Árpád, following the system of levirate practiced among steppe peoples, claimed for himself Géza's widow Sarolta – and the leadership of the Magyars. With the help of the Bavarian knights brought in by Gisela, Stephen, Géza's son, defeated him and dispatched his quartered body to various parts of the country. His German ties and sympathies notwithstanding, Stephen defended the independence of Hungary against German encroachments. Thus, for example, in 1030 he successfully resisted the wanton attack of the Emperor Conrad II, and in a counteroffensive Hungarian troops even occupied Vienna. Though a saint, meekness was not Stephen's strongest virtue.

The nomadic political structure under which the conquering Hungarians had lived had no firm rules for princely succession, but in this instance, quite clearly levirate was replaced by primogeniture. Koppány's murder was not the only ruthless action undertaken in defense of the new state and a new system of succession. To secure the throne for his son Imre (who was to predecease his father), Stephen, or Gisela, caused Vazul, son of Stephen's uncle, and thus a likely candidate for the throne, to be blinded. As it happened, after a period of turmoil following Stephen's death, Vazul's son Andrew, returning from exile, occupied the throne (1047–1060). The kings of the Árpád-dynasty, which ruled over Hungary until 1301, were the descendants not of Stephen but of the blinded Vazul.

The new order had asserted itself; all that was needed was a recognition by the outside world of the fait accompli. As tradition has it, this came in the form of a crown sent to Stephen by Pope Sylvester II with which he was crowned either on Christmas Day 1000 or on January 1, 1001. The symbolism of the act, recalling the crowning of Charlemagne on Christmas Day 800 by Pope Leo III, is obvious.

The importance of papal recognition of temporal power lasted well into the 16th century as witnessed by the coronation of Charles Quint by Pope Paul III.

Let me mention here that recent research has convincingly shown that, contrary to the belief generally held by the Hungarian public and by earlier historians, the so-called Holy Crown, venerated symbol of Hungarian statehood, is of a later date, made probably for King Géza I around 1074. The crown sent by the pope was lost.

We know very little of the gradual disintegration of the original Hungarian tribal confederacy, but the result of the process was an autocratic system that showed no great difference from the political structures prevailing in contemporary Europe. However, while the Germanic world was held together by a common religion and a common language, one just cannot know whether there was an emotional integration among the people living in Stephen's country. To create one, Stephen had to impose on the people a common ideology, to wit Roman Catholicism, of which, unlike his father, Stephen became a convinced and zealous follower. His missionary activity was directed almost exclusively towards his own, Hungarian people since, as said before, Christianity was widespread among the conquered populations. In this respect it is interesting to note that the Hungarian religious vocabulary is mostly of Slavic origin. So are the names of the days of the week that are not of a descriptive nature, such as *vasárnap* (lit. "day of the market") for Sunday. In this connection it should be recalled that there is no evidence to show that the conquering Hungarians were familiar with any calendar. On purely speculative grounds and in view of the fact that people generally have a method of counting the years, one may surmise that the Hungarians were familiar with the twelve year calendar of the animal cycle. But, while known to the Bulgars with whom the Hungarians had many connections, there is no evidence to show that the Hungarians were acquainted with, let alone used, this cyclical calendar. Interestingly enough, so far as I can see, in the vast scholarly literature dealing with 10th century Hungarian history, no one seems to have emphasized the all-important step that at some moment, perhaps under Stephen, the Hungarians, or at least their leadership, had to adopt the Christian calendar. Yet this, indeed, was the decisive step taken towards integration in the western community of peoples. By taking it, Stephen, and through him the Hungarians, recognized as their own the common, Christian heritage.

Within the Carpathian basin the populated settlements were separated by uninhabited forests and – between the Danube and the Tisza – by swamps that greatly hampered communications. The efforts of generations of Hungarians notwithstanding, the ethnic mosaic of Stephen's land showed many lacunae. For example, the ethnicity and language of the "black Hungarians" mentioned in the written sources remain the subject of speculation. There were also some Turkic elements who entered the country with or after the Hungarians, among them the

Turkic Pechenegs. The very people whose attacks caused the Hungarians to move west into the Carpathian basin appear as auxiliaries in Géza's service. Géza's mother was Pecheneg.

Notwithstanding his reliance on German knights and the strong influence of his wife Gisela, Stephen was not a servile copier of Bavarian administrative practices. He adopted the Carolingian monetary system, but the Hungarian administrative terminology used for the new Hungarian state is almost entirely Slavic: *nádor, ispán, tárnok, udvarnok.* In Hungarian, the very title of the king, *király,* and the word designating the royal court, *udvar,* are Slavic. Social and administrative structures do not spring up like mushrooms after a rain. The Slavic technical terms of the Hungarian administrative vocabulary bear witness of a very strong influence of the sedentary population, much of which must have been inherited from the Moravian state. Particularly surprising is the absence of Turkic or Latin words among the designations of the various dignitaries of the state. In view of these undisputed facts, it defies understanding how in 1935 Bálint Hóman, a medievalist of great distinction, could have written of the backwardness of the Slavs (of the Carpathian Basin) in matters of political organization.[3]

In the late 19th and in the first half of the 20th century, Hungarian historians attached much importance to Stephen's choice of the Roman instead of the Byzantine branch of Christianity. I do not think that there is reason to see in this choice the proof of a singular wisdom foreseeing the development of European civilization. Stephen was Roman Catholic because he was baptized in that faith. Opinions vary whether this was done at his birth or later, but there is ample evidence to show that from his youth he was surrounded by Catholic clergy. His mother Sarolta nominally belonged to the Eastern Church, but there is no reason to surmise that this strong-willed, often violent woman paid much heed to her son's religious upbringing. Also, it should be remembered that while Eastern and Western Christendom were already two different cultures, they were not yet separated by doctrinal differences; the formal schism between the two churches was to occur only in 1054. We know of at least one Greek nunnery and one Greek bazilite monastery functioning during Stephen's reign in Hungary. The two rites coexisted peacefully in Stephen's state. Imre, his son and presumptive heir, was betrothed to a Byzantine princess. Of paramount importance was the opening in 1018–19 of the road leading Western pilgrims to the Holy Land. It facilitated contacts between Roman and Byzantine Christianity and literally put Hungary on the map, made her known to thousands of all walks of life who passed along it.

Only a handful of documents dating to Stephen's reign have survived and they do not provide answer to many important questions. The fact is that we do not know which was, at the millennium, the numerically dominant language in Hungary, nor can we assess the extent of the magyarization of the previously Slavic population. Since the self-appellation of the Hungarians and of their language is

magyar, and since Stephen was a scion of the Magyar tribe, it is probably safe to assume that Stephen knew Hungarian, but it could be that his mother-tongue was Turkic, since both his father Géza and his mother Sarolta, bore Turkic names. It could be that Stephen's original name, the one he wore before his baptism, was also Turkic (Vajk). Projecting into the past the apparently general German inability to learn Hungarian, we may presume that Gisela had never acquired that language, surrounded as she was with German knights. Was then German the language used in conversation between Stephen and his wife? Or Latin? Perhaps, at this juncture, it may be helpful to recall that we do not know whether Charlemagne's mother-tongue was French or German.

Hungarians of the Conquest probably had a script of their own, an alphabetic system recalling but unconnected with the Germanic runes, but with clear connections with some Old Turkic scripts. Some late examples are extant, but there is no reason to suppose that its knowledge was widespread. Of all the innovations introduced by Stephen, the adoption of the Latin script for general use was probably the most important though, interestingly enough, this fact is seldom emphasized in the torrent of publications dealing with his reign. While the usage of the Greek alphabet is attested in the 11th century in Hungary, by linking his land to Western Christendom, Stephen was bound to adopt the script that was its vehicle, establishing thereby an unbreakable bond between Hungary and western Europe. All things considered, script was and remains the decisive criterion in defining the cultural identity of a population.

Clearly, for better or worse, from its inception, Hungary was a multilingual, multiracial realm. Place names seem to bear witness to this. For example, of the names of the nine bishoprics functioning in the realm, four were Slavic (Bihar, Pécs, Vác, Veszprém), two were Turkic (Esztergom, Kalocsa), and only three were Hungarian (Csanád, Eger, Győr). The simultaneous use of several vernaculars would explain the lateness of the first Hungarian text that has come down to us and which dates from the 13th century. Anthropological studies clearly show that the majority of Hungary's population in the 11th century were not the descendants of the conquering Hungarians. On a heterogeneous substratum the Hungarians built a powerful state mixing their own traditions with those of the autochthonous inhabitants and adopted from the western, Latin, world its script, its religion and the political structure of a medieval European kingdom. In this respect momentous importance must be attached to Stephen's legislative activity witnessed by two legal codices, the texts of which have survived. He created an administrative and legal system which provided the institutional and juridical bedrock of the state for about two centuries.

Even without any written evidence one could have surmised that such wide-ranging reforms might not have been to the taste of everyone. The cases of Koppány and Vazul clearly show that Stephen was ready to take drastic actions. During his

reign there was no need to suppress open popular discontent. However, resentment must have been strong as witnessed by the revolts of 1046 and 1060–61, that is, long after Stephen's death. These were directed against Christianity, the introduction of an alien legal and administrative system and, of course, against the German and Italian courtiers, knight-errants, who during and after Stephen's reign gained influence in the country's life. It should be noted that the revolutionaries did not come from among the conquered populations but from the ranks of the conquering Hungarians discontented with the changes introduced. The revolts represented a conservative backlash against innovations.

The *De instructione morum,*[4] the instructions written by Stephen to his son Imre contain a much cited passage concerning the presence of foreigners in the land. In the spring of 2000 it was even cited in a special, paid supplement to the weekly *The Economist* calling for foreign investment in Hungary. Its relevance to our times is clear.

> The advantage derived from the presence of immigrants and guests is so great that it should be called the sixth jewel of the king. The might of the Roman Empire arose through the influx of noble and wise men from everywhere. Guests coming from various countries and provinces bring with them a variety of languages, customs, skills, and arms. All these serve as decorations for the royal court, contribute to its splendor and frighten outside powers. For, a monolingual and monocultural kingdom is weak and frail. *(Nam unius lingue uniusque moris regnum imbecille et fragile est.)* Thus, I instruct you my son to treat [these men] with goodwill and honor so that they prefer to stay with you rather than elsewhere.

In our time and specifically in the United States of America such views are "politically correct" though history has shown that they ultimately lead to disaster. As Hungary's destiny in the millennium following Stephen's reign has clearly shown: a multicultural and multilingual state is bound to disintegrate. It is a cause for marvel that when, in the wake of World War I, it ultimately happened, it was due less to the spontaneous action of the various nationalities than to the meddling of foreign politicians, ignorant of the ethnic realities of the region. Without such intervention, for better or for worse, the Kingdom of St. Stephen would have had another lease on life. As a matter of fact – and I hold no brief to defend Stephen's views – these were applicable less to the non-Hungarian (Turkic or Slavic) populations of the realm than to the German or Italian knights and courtiers favored by his wife. Interestingly enough, in a subsequent section of his *Instructions*, the king seems to express some misgivings about the central, uniform governance of subjects of various ethnic backgrounds: "Who among the Greeks would govern Romans with Greek laws," writes Stephen, "or who among the Romans would govern Greeks with Roman law? No one."

It so happened that at the end of his life, Stephen, grieved by the loss of his son Imre, and plagued by ill-health did not follow his own precepts. He appointed his Italian nephew, Peter Orseolo to succeed him, a disastrous choice that plunged the country into internal and external conflicts.

Many factors have led to the success of Stephen but, in essence, the diverse and plural ethnic groups within his realm were held together as a single political entity by his ingenuity and determination. He negotiated successfully the last transition in European history of a nomad people into a sedentary state. In less than a century the *gens detestanda,* as the Hungarians were often referred to in the Latin chronicles of the epoch, became a *gens ad fidem Christi conversa.* Once in Europe, the Hungarians, as it were, closed the door behind them, changed their role, and became the self-appointed defenders of Europe. Hungary became in the word of her poets the "shield of Christianity."

Notes

1.   Not surprisingly the person and the rule of Stephen has been described, analyzed and discussed in hundreds of books and articles. Because of limitations of space and the genre of this essay, I had to forego justificative footnotes. I made good use of the recent publications by István Györffy and Gyula Kristó, both excellent scholars who, however, often disagree on important questions relating to Stephen. Let me just cite István Györffy: *István király és műve* (Budapest, 1977) and Gyula Kristó: *Levedi törzsszövetségétől Szent István államáig* (Budapest, 1980) and a very recent article by Kristó, "Magyarország népei Szent István korában." *Századok* 134 (2000): 3–44. I liked Kristó's thumb-nail sketch "Szent István (980k–1038)" on pp. 1–4 of *Nagy képes millenniumi arcképcsarnok* edited by Árpád Rácz (Budapest, 1999). A judicious one volume selection of the fifty studies published in the three volumes of the collective work *Emlékkönyv Szent István király halálának kilencszázadik évfordulóján,* edited by Jusztinián Serédi (Budapest, 1938) appeared without date (!) probably in the late 1980s. It is a treasure-house of useful information. I would not disown the portrait I gave of Stephen in my *History of Hungary* (London, 1959, several later editions).
2.   There is now the excellent survey by Maximilian Georg Kellner, *Die Ungarneinfälle im Bild der Quellen bis 1150* (München 1997).
3.   Bálint Hóman, *Magyar történet* I (Budapest, 1935), 78: *"Legfeltűnőbb a szlávok hátrama-radottsága a politikai szervezet tekintetében."*
4.   I know of no translation of this document into any of the European languages. The Latin text is available in Kálmán Eperjessy and László Juhász, eds, *Szemelvények a magyar történelem latinnyelvű kútfőiből* (Budapest, 1935), 3–6.

FORMATION OF THE HABSBURG–OTTOMAN FRONTIER IN THE DANUBIAN REGION: BUDA, 1541

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On July 17, 1540 John I, the last Hungarian speaking King of Hungary, died. Stephen Werbőczy, his chancellor ventured to Istanbul to ask Sultan Suleiman for approval of naming John Sigismund, the infant son of the late king, as the new King of Hungary. This request was contrary to the agreement made in the secret Treaty of Várad of 1538 in which John I pledged that after his death Ferdinand will inherit his share of Hungary. Soon, Suleiman acknowledged John Sigismund as King John II just as the Habsburg General Vels besieged Buda to support Ferdinand's claim to the throne. In December Werbőczy returned from Istanbul and announced that Suleiman was planning a campaign in Hungary but the news did not stop Ferdinand; in May 1541 his army renewed the siege of Buda.

Sultan Suleiman arrived at Buda on August 26 and, after defeating the withdrawing Habsburg army – exactly 15 years after his victory at Mohács on August 29, 1526 – his army entered the castle without opposition. There he announced that he would continue to protect John II as the ruler of an enlarged Transylvania but will make Buda the seat of a newly formed Ottoman province under the command of Suleiman Pasha. For the protection of John II's rule he imposed on Transylvania a levy of 10,000 ducats annually. After a few weeks the Sultan left Hungary leaving behind a garrison of 3,000 soldiers.

Ferdinand refused to acknowledge the status of King John II and soon besieged Pest in 1542 compelling Sultan Suleiman to lead a new campaign to Hungary in 1543. In order to protect the military route between Buda and Belgrade he widened the narrow passage by taking Siklós, Pécs, Esztergom, Tata, and Székesfehérvár and make *Vilayet-i Budin* an indisputable province. In four years the de facto partition became recognized internationally. In the Treaty of Edirne of 1547, Emperor Charles V and Sultan Suleiman agreed to a truce for five years and both acknowledged the *status quo* in Hungary. The envoy of the emperor promised the payment of an annual levy of 30,000 ducats in the name of King Ferdinand for keeping the west and northwest parts of Royal Hungary as his share. The long process of dismantling the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom – a process

that began in 1521 with the Ottoman conquest of Nándorfehérvár/Belgrade – was completed.

Hungary remained partitioned for 150 years. In 1686–1699, in a series of fierce combats, the armies of the Holy League under the leaderships of Prince Eugene of Savoy and Count Louis of Baden wrested the region out of Ottoman control. An independent Hungary was of course inconceivable; the newly conquered territories were to be integrated into the Habsburg Empire. Not counting the short intervals of self-determination under Rákóczi and Kossuth, the House of Habsburg reigned over Hungary until 1918.

The year 1541 was indeed the turning point in the thousand-year-existence of the Hungarian nation dividing it into a period of sovereignty and a period of dependency. But it was only in the twentieth century that historians made 1541 the pivotal year. National tradition has regarded the tragic events of August 29, 1526 as the time when the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom reached its end. The carnage on the battlefield and the massacre of the prisoners, the death of seven archbishops and bishops, twenty-eight barons, 3,000 of the gentry cavalry, 10,000 of the professional infantry and – above all – the tragic death of the young king Louis II made August 29, 1526 the day when "everything was lost." Every schoolchild in Hungary could recall the immortal line of Károly Kisfaludy:

> Nemzeti nagylétünk nagy temetője, Mohács!
> [Mohács, the great graveyard of our national existence!]

450 years after Mohács, the literary historian Tibor Klaniczay still has maintained this position saying that the death of Louis II made the elections of two competing kings possible and in this way it precipitated the partition of the kingdom and the ensuing loss of national independence. ("Mi és miért veszett el Mohácsnál?" [What was lost at Mohács and why] in *Kortárs*, 1976, 783–796.)

Others, most notably Ferenc Szakály, the leading specialist of the period, have pointed out that the loss of Nándorfehérvár/Belgrade in 1521 sealed the fate of Hungary. In 1456 that fortress was heroically defended by János Hunyadi who defeated the Ottoman legions of Mehemmed II under its walls. Two generations later it was virtually abandoned by the central administration of Hungary when they did not come through with the needed financial and military aid. Its garrison defended the walls as long as it was possible. On the day of surrender – it also happened on August 29 – only 72 of the original 1500 professional soldiers were still alive and well enough to retreat. Nándorfehérvár was the linchpin in the fortification system of the southern border defense. With its loss the road to Buda was open without any stronghold on the path of an invading army. Of equal importance were the ineffectual measures of the Hungarian king that signified for the Turks that the earlier Hungarian resolve and determination to protect their

land were broken. Hungarians were still heroic enough to die for their country but not sagacious enough to muster a successful defense of it. As Szakály saw it, with this victory the eventual downfall of the Hungarian Kingdom became inevitable. After 1521 there was nothing King Louis II could have done that would have stopped the coming Ottoman expansion to the Great Plains and Buda. Already the subtitle of his article on the subject makes his views unmistakable. ("Nándorfehérvár, 1521: The Beginning of the End of the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom," in: *Hungarian–Ottoman Military and Diplomatic Relations in the Age of Süleyman the Magnificent.* Ed. Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, Budapest, 1994, 47–76.)

In the last decades of the nineteenth century some Hungarian historians – notably Ferenc Salamon (see his *Magyarország a török hódítás korában* [Hungary in the Era of Ottoman Domination], Budapest, 1886) – began to question the traditional view that regarded the tragedy at Mohács and the subsequent Ottoman conquest as unavoidable. Around this time Turcologists like József Thúry published Hungarian translations of Ottoman narratives and administrative sources on the Era of Suleiman. Instead of looking at the events of 1521 and 1541 from a purely Hungarian point of view, they attempted to reconstruct the Ottoman perception of the events. They looked at Ottoman claims that emphasized the defensive character of the conquest and found them plausible. Sultan Suleiman and the Sublime Porte wrote several missives to Hungarian and Western dignitaries stating that he was compelled to enter Buda in order to prevent the Habsburgs from taking it and that Suleiman was personally obliged to protect the kingship of John Sigismund. The Sublime Porte maintained that they would have preferred to have relations with a united and independent Hungary tied to the Ottoman Empire by a treaty of amity and friendship; a Hungary strong enough to defend itself against the Habsburg threat; a country that would constitute a buffer zone between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs. Salamon was inclined to trust the Turkish documents since the Ottoman Empire had already created such autonomous vassal principalities in Wallachia and Moldavia. He argued that Hungary was even further away from the core Ottoman lands of Anatolia, and that the Ottomans did not have enough troops to make a perpetual occupation of Hungary feasible. This sounded like a realistic assumption to him since – as he noted – the Turks did not make any attempts to convert Hungarians to Islam in order to make them loyal Ottoman subjects. In the inter-war period Sándor Takáts presented the Turkish world in Hungary in like fashion. After World War II, Tayyib Gökbilgin and Nejat Göyünç of Istanbul University in Turkey rekindled Salamon's lines of argument. They argued that Suleiman understood the immense material and manpower cost of occupying Hungary and for this reason he was unwilling to do so; in 1541 he did it anyway as his response to Habsburg aggression in the region. Göyünç published some of the annual budget summaries of the Province of Budin and proved that year after year

local Ottoman income from Hungary was not sufficient to cover the expenses; the central treasury in Istanbul had to send the total revenue from Egypt to Buda to balance the local budget, consisting mostly of garrison salaries.

Géza Perjés, a Hungarian expert in military history, worked out a detailed thesis about why most of Hungary fell outside of the "action radius" of Ottoman military might. In his monograph *Mohács* (Budapest, 1979) he measured the distance between Istanbul and Buda, the daily progress of a complex military war engine of more than 100,000 men, and the logistic problems of providing supplies through the mountainous Balkans and the marshland region of southern Hungary. He demonstrated that for a moving army of this size foraging from the local inhabitants would not be sufficient because of the fact that the military route crossed through sparsely populated regions. Supply problems could have been surmounted by establishing military depots on the route in advance; but the distance could not be shortened. The Ottoman Empire was centrally organized and Istanbul had to be the starting point of a major campaign. Furthermore the army could not start before April since they marshaled the feudal cavalry from several Asian provinces. The Ottoman forces usually arrived at Belgrade in July and they had to complete their task by October before the onset of cold, rainy weather. The small Hungarian fortresses further to the north-west could not stop the Ottoman advance but they could slow it down considerably. At best the Ottomans had forty to fifty days to engage the enemy; there was simply not enough time to break the resistance of a determined opposing army trained in the art of strategic withdrawal and avoidance of pitched confrontation. According to Perjés this extreme time constraint was known to Suleiman and for this reason he attempted to avoid a direct military occupation of Hungary as long as it was feasible. In this view, the offers of compromise to establish a vassal yet autonomous Hungarian state were sincere and Louis II should have considered them seriously.

The propagators of this type of conceptualization put the responsibility for the demise of the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom straight on the shoulders of the Hungarian government. The king and the Hungarian magnates should have understood the perilous state of Hungary. They should have fortified Nándorfehérvár before 1521 with a larger garrison; the military payments should have been the highest priority of the treasury. These historians blame the Hungarian court for the suspension of diplomatic negotiations. The first two campaigns of Suleiman – those of 1521 and 1526 – were both provoked by the arrest of Behram *çavuş*, the Ottoman envoy who delivered Suleiman's offer of cooperation. The Hungarian government should have understood the need for compromise in order to save the territorial integrity of the Kingdom. Even if such a compromise could not have worked in the long run it would have given some time for Hungary, perhaps even a few decades. In hindsight, we know that Ottoman decline had started already in

the 1550s and that after the death of Suleiman at Szigetvár in 1566, his successors had little inclination for campaigns in Central Europe.

Of course, no one in Europe at the time of Mohács could have anticipated such radical change in Ottoman military disposition. Nevertheless, for Hungary, compromise was the only viable alternative; all other options were manifestly futile. Some Hungarian historians have searched for a moral rationale stating that for the Hungarians – who were deeply rooted in Western Christianity for half a millennium – a compromise with the Muslim Turks, the archenemy of Christendom, was simply not conceivable. Perhaps. But let me note that a compromise was not beneath the "most Catholic king" Francis I, King of France who made an alliance with Sultan Suleiman when it served his anti-Habsburg policy. As one result of the alliance the entire Ottoman fleet wintered in Toulon in 1543.

To a modern student of the history of sixteenth-century Hungary the detainment of the Ottoman envoy in Buda by Louis II is inexplicable. Granted international diplomacy was at its beginnings in contemporary Europe and rules of conduct for the diplomatic personnel were not clearly defined. Yet it should have been known in Hungary that detaining a diplomatic envoy was a grievous matter; that the Ottomans often signaled the end of a truce by arrests of envoys. It should be taken for granted that the Hungarian government had no intention at this time to declare war against the Ottoman Empire. Why then the mistreatment of the Ottoman envoys? No satisfactory explanation has been offered by anyone on this subject except that it expressed a "non-negotiable" stance against any compromise with the Sublime Porte.

István Nemeskürty, the noted film critic and literary historian, wrote two highly popular essays on the critical years of 1526–1552, *Ez történt Mohács után* [This is what happened after Mohács] (Budapest, 1966) and *Elfelejtett évtized: 1542–1552* [Forgotten decade: 1542–1552] (Budapest, 1974). He lacks training in historical methodology but writes very well in a populist style. His hypothesis is a continuation of the second school of thought. In his view the Hungarian gentry was categorically responsible for the events of Nándorfehérvár, Mohács and Buda. With foresight and solidarity they could have defended Nándorfehérvár, they could have won at Mohács, and even after the establishment of the Province of Budin they would have had the opportunity to chase out the Turks from Hungary. They could not accomplish these imperative missions because of the traditional Hungarian vices; dissension and factionalism, constant squabble, greed, and a lack of common purpose. For those unacquainted with Hungarian literature his extreme self-torture would be unfathomable; but Hungarians are familiar with this "mea culpa" Ady-ist "Nekünk Mohács kell" [We deserve Mohács] mentality.

Professional historians reacted strongly against Nemeskürty's denunciation of the Hungarian nobility accusing him of distortion; that he deliberately eschewed

evidence contrary to his premises. Pál Fodor's essay on the subject, *Magyarország és a török hódítás* [Hungary and the Turkish conquest] (Budapest, 1991) is the response of a Turcologist, who has meticulously culled Ottoman narrative and archival sources. He demonstrated that raids and military campaigns against the infidels were deeply imbedded in the Ottoman collective consciousness; already in 1938, Paul Wittek called it the *"raison d'être"* of the Ottoman state. Compelled by the legacy of his ancestors and also by the traditions of Medieval Islam, Sultan Suleiman could not have changed this policy of expansion to a policy of peaceful coexistence without courting major dissent – even mutiny – among his soldiers. Fodor also described the Ottoman method of gradual conquest originally formulated by Halil Inalcik. According to this theory, Ottoman expansion traditionally took place in three stages:

    i. perennial raids across the borders causing havoc and a sharp decrease in the population of the frontier region;

    ii. defeat of the central army of the target country in a pitched battle and elimination of the ruling dynasty, yet with the continuance of a semi-autonomous state;

    iii. after a generation of vassal status, complete integration of the region into the body of the empire.

In the past this three-stage method of conquest had been successfully employed by the Ottomans in Anatolia and in the Balkans. By providing an extended transitional period after the initial shock of military defeat, the Ottomans secured a relatively peaceful integration of subject ethnic communities with many of the local traditions remaining intact.

The Inalcik theory – as espoused by Fodor – explains the five-year hiatus after the loss of Nándorfehérvár and the cautious retreat from Buda in 1526. It also confirms that any compromise with Sultan Suleiman would have been ephemeral; with the illusionary compromise the Turks would have secured Hungary and used it as base of operations with little actual expense. The task of besieging and taking Vienna would have been their next logical maneuver. After the conquest of Vienna, Hungary would have shared the fate of Serbia and would have been integrated into the Ottoman Empire. With this final argument Fodor's interpretation of the events joins Szakály's theory; after the loss of Nándorfehérvár in 1521, the demise of the Hungarian Kingdom was inevitable. Heroic resistence or compromise – whatever alternatives Louis II could have chosen, the end would have been the same.

The varying interpretations of the partition of Hungary by capable historians who start with the same basic facts yet arrive at different conclusions are not uncommon in historiography. In the Hungarian case one must also consider the circumstances of the formation of the disparate interpretations. In the late nineteenth century there existed a friendly sentiment among the anti-Habsburg faction

of Hungarian intellectuals who remembered fondly the Ottoman Empire that provided safe harbor for Rákóczi and Kossuth when their causes were lost. Most Hungarian Turcologists in that period depicted Ottoman history in friendlier terms than it was customary in earlier times. The Mohács dispute of the 1970s was similarly influenced by modern parallels. Some people might have seen similarities between the compromise with the Ottoman Empire and the compromise with the Soviet Union. Although I have been acquainted with most of the historians mentioned here I never thought it prudent to ask about this matter from them. Perhaps it is worthwhile to mention though that – in a different context – Lajos Fekete published a short essay in 1947 with the title, *Magyarság, törökség: Két világnézet bajvívói* [Hungarians and Turks: The champions of two ideologies]. He told me confidentially in 1965 that when he wrote Turks he really meant Soviet ideology.

Every generation rewrites its perception of the past since the main use of history is the justification of the present. It is time for post-Communist Hungarian historians to reconsider the demise of the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom. In my opinion, such reassessment should focus on two major themes; the first one is internal and the second one international although the two are inter-connected.

The first issue pertains to Hungarian society in the first decades of the sixteenth century. A society can be modeled as a structure of interrelated institutions. In the case of a kingdom the linchpin of the structure is – of course – the institution of kingship. In Hungary, numerous historians have observed that the role of the king changed radically between the reigns of Matthias and Louis II. By 1520 Louis II had lost most the economic base, the military authority and the policy-making power of his predecessors. His position was compromised, even undermined to the extent that he had no latitude for long range policy planning. Whatever he did was just an ad-hoc response to some crisis. Conjuring the chimera of the "traditional vices of the Hungarian nobility" is not a serious assessment of the complex forces that caused the deterioration of this fundamental institution.

Recently I have read a fascinating monograph by Attila Zsoldos, *Az Árpádok és alattvalóik: Magyarország története 1301-ig* [The Árpáds and their subjects: The history of Hungary till 1301] (Debrecen, 1997). To my knowledge, he is the only Hungarian historian who has made an attempt to write an institutional history; alas, he did it for an earlier period. Monographs like his are essential for a better understanding of the structural changes in society. I am looking forward to scholarly research of this type for the age of Jagellos.

The second issue concerns the international relations of Hungary in the 1520s. Much ado was made by Hungarian historians about the feasibility of the compromise offered by Sultan Suleiman. Much less attention was paid to the threat Hungary faced from the West even though some contemporaries considered the Habsburg blueprint for the annexation of Hungary more grievous than the Otto-

man menace. It should be transparent to observers of the period that the Austrian Habsburgs targeted Hungary for expansion and that even without Ottoman pressure Hungarian sovereignty was in serious peril. Hungarians could not choose between Scylla and Carybdis and their indecisiveness was the real cause of the partition of their kingdom.

At this critical stage, diplomacy in Hungary was without perspectives. Her diplomatic endeavors amounted only to requests of financial aid against the Turkish menace without indicating anything in return. In the early sixteenth century diplomatic activities in Europe reached new heights. Alliances were formed and broken in West Europe with rapidity; eventually even the Ottoman Empire was drawn into the fight against the Habsburgs. The Holy League of 1511 was formed not against the Turks – as in the seventeenth century – but against the French in order to drive them out from Italy. Under Francis I (1515–1547) France was searching for allies and concluded treaties with all potential anti-Habsburg regimes. Yet, in Louis II's reign Hungary was not a player in the diplomatic ventures in spite of the manifest need for international affiliations. Through the double marriage contract with Archduke Ferdinand, King Louis II was commited to the Habsburg side; but it was a one-sided obligation that did not include shared responsibility for the defense of the integrity of Hungary against Turkish attacks. In truth, at that time Austria had neither the inclination nor the military strength to effectively protect Hungary. When Hungary needed it most she was left alone to face the Ottoman onslaught. Possibly the reasons for the ineffective diplomatic relations could be found in the deteriorated condition of central authority; nevertheless, this failure of Hungarian diplomacy to attract international alliances warrants further investigation. Without substantial foreign assistance – military, financial or diplomatic – Hungary was not able to withstand the increasing pressure from two sides of her borders; her collapse was predictable even without the Mohács disaster.

The burden of the subversion of Hungarian royal authority and the lack of diplomatic perspectives proved to be fatal to Hungarian sovereignty. The decline of Hungarian central authority happened at the worst possible time; at the time of the global formation of the frontier between two superpowers, the Habsburgs and the Ottomans. Because of the simultaneous pressures from west and south, Hungary ended in the worst possible position with the line of demarcation going through her center.

ALTERNATIVES IN HUNGARIAN HISTORY
IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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During the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the eighteenth century the Hungarian political elite, the Hungarian aristocracy and the Hungarian nobility, faced dramatic political choices and very important alternatives.

After the Battle of Mohács in 1526 and after the capture of Buda, the ancient capital of the Hungarian kingdom, in 1541 the territory of Hungary came to be divided into three – temporarily even four – parts. The middle of the medieval Hungarian kingdom, the region around Buda, fell directly under Ottoman direction. The Turkish authorities divided the area subject to their control into vilayets and sanjaks. The northern and western part of historic Hungary, or so-called royal Hungary, became a part of the Habsburg Empire. In the eastern part of the former Hungarian kingdom a new state, which had never existed before came into existence. This was the princedom of Transylvania, which – along with the two Roumanian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia and the republic of Ragussa – came to be considered as one of the sultan's Christian vassals.

However, this simplified view corresponded only in part to seventeenth-century realities and hardly at all to the image of Hungary, which contemporaries in the Carpathian Basin had fashioned. These previously mentioned states did not exist beside each other, they existed within each other. A letter of the Bey of Koppány from the year 1637 will help us to see this complicated situation more clearly. In his letter the Turkish officer wrote to Count Ádám Batthyány, a nearby Hungarian commander, about a matter concerning the peasants of Nagyegres, a village in the territory held by the Ottoman authorities. This village, as many other villages in Turkish territory, paid taxes to both sides, to their Turkish as well as to their Hungarian landlords. The existence of this system of double taxation revealed very clearly how different the occupation of Turkish Hungary was from the occupation of the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

The inhabitants of this village paid taxes to both sides, but then suddenly bandits had appeared and began to harass the villagers. Thus, the bandits were hindering the normal payment of taxes. Therefore, the Turkish commander wrote to the Hungarian count that they should join in a common effort against these ban-

dits because then the taxes would be paid peacefully to both sides, to the Turks and to the Hungarians. Even more interesting is the argumentation of the Turkish bey. The two captains, the Muslim and the Christian, should act together because, "The village of Nagyegres is in Turkey in my possession but it is in Hungary in the possession of your Lordship." At first sight this observation of the Turk appears to be completely nonsensical. But the words of the Turkish bey expressed better than many historians' monographs the almost schizophrenic situation of Turkish Hungary. It had become part of the Ottoman Empire without ever ceasing to be a part of Hungary. This situation was not simply a fiction maintained by seventeenth-century contemporaries but, as the taxes paid to both sides clearly showed, it also reflected hard realities.

The Hungarian nobility never ceased to consider the territory occupied by the Turks as its own. During the seventeenth century the history of the market town of Csongrád included family inheritance disputes, the sale of the town from one noble to another, the assignment of the town in pledge, and the imperial confiscation of this market town from a family, which had come to be considered as unfaithful. In considering these events we can easily forget that the market town of Csongrád lay far behind the Turkish lines and had, of course, Turkish landlords as well.

Transylvania was a vassal state of the sultan, but the Hungarians viewed the principality as a part of their country that had become provisionally detached. Even more interesting was the situation of northwestern Hungary, or the region around Kassa. Under Imre Thököly near the end of the seventeenth century this area became a vassal state of the sultan. Even before the time of Imre Thököly these lands, the so-called seven counties, were several times given by the Habsburg Kings of Hungary to the rulers of Transylvania, but each time only for the lifetime of a particular prince. Juridicially this region remained a part of the Habsburg Empire but was ruled by Transylvania and paid taxes to its prince. With one third of the country under Habsburg rule, a second third existing as a semi-independent vassal state of the sultan, and the final third constituting a joint Turkish-Hungarian dominium, the political situation of Hungary was more than a little complicated. In this situation the Hungarian nobles had to defend their interests and to balance themselves between the empires of two great emperors.

At the end of the Fifteen Years' War the Hungarian nobility had a serious political alternative for the first time since beginning of the Turkish occupation. By 1604 it had become clear that despite the enormous efforts of the imperial army and the Hungarian nobility and after a decade and a half of war Hungary had still not been liberated from the Turks. On the other hand the Turks had not been able to conquer Vienna and occupy the whole of Hungary. The Habsburg Emperor Rudolph II, whose behavior had become less and less rational, falsified a law on Protestantism and began to occupy Protestant churches by military force. For the

first time the Hungarian estates could revolt against the Habsburgs without endangering the potential liberation of the country from the Turks because after fifteen years of warfare this liberation had proven to be impossible.

The struggle against the Habsburgs was led by a formerly pro-Habsburg aristocrat István Bocskai. Over a decade earlier Bocskai had executed those Transylvanian aristocrats who had formed the Turkish party in Transylvania and who had wanted to break up the alliance with Emperor Rudolph II. Bocskai at that time had believed in the liberation of Hungary from the Turks, and he had also believed in the alliance with the emperor. However, later he reversed himself and carried out exactly the same policy that he had formerly considered treason and punished with death. The long war finally convinced Bocskai that the liberation of Hungary was not possible under the existing circumstances, and consequently the Hungarian nobility had to try to secure whatever advantages the situation offered. The nobility has to use the presence of Turkish power in Hungary and the existence of an independent Transylvania to assist in the preservation of their rights as estates against the emperor.

Bocskai was elected Prince of Transylvania, and thus he became a vassal of the sultan. After his military successes in the campaign against the emperor, the Hungarian nobility and the Hungarian estates elected Bocskai the Prince of Hungary. Since Hungary was a kingdom, this title was completely new, and Bocskai was neither a king nor a governor. Bocskai considered his position strong enough to ask the sultan for a crown. At first the Turks were surprised by Bocskai's request, but then they hastily fashioned a wonderful golden crown with precious stones. (Today the so-called "Bocskai Crown" is one of the treasures of the imperial treasury in Vienna.) But when Grand Vezir Lala Mehmet offered the crown to Bocskai as King of Hungary and vassal of the sultan Bocskai would not accept it as such. He did accept the crown as a gift of the sultan.

The explanation for Bocskai's change of heart can be found in the rapidly evolving military and political developments. During these months the military situation changed fundamentally. The imperial army had begun to reassert itself, and the behavior of the Turkish forces made clear to Bocskai that if he occupied additional forts from the imperial soldiers, then the Turks would soon take possession of them. Consequently the Hungarian prince would become a tool of Turkish expansion and help to return to Turkish hands important fortresses that had been liberated by the Christians from the Muslims. Bocskai responded by making peace with the emperor. He remained the Prince of Transylvania and the ruler of northwestern Hungary, but he renounced the title of Prince of Hungary and acknowledged the rule of the new Hungarian king Matthias, the brother of the mad emperor Rudolph II. Thus, Bocskai had a crown but he never became a king. The rule of Bocskai, who was generally respected in Hungary, could have been very fruitful. In the peace that Bocskai had concluded with the emperor, he had made

dispositions for the future of his prospective sons. But he never even had the chance to marry. Six months after Bocskai concluded the peace with the emperor he died.

If the end of the Fifteen Years' War had provided the possibility of a political choice for the Hungarian nobility, the beginning of the Thirty Years' War supplied an even better opportunity to the nobility for shaping the political world in Hungary. After the success of his military campaign in Hungary Gábor Bethlen, Prince of Transilvania since 1613, was elected King of Hungary by the Hungarian estates at the diet of Besztercebánya in August 1620. The Hungarian nobles had cried, "Vivat rex Gabriel!" After having captured Pozsony, Bethlen had even gained possession of the Holy Crown of Hungary. However, he did not ask for a coronation. Why not? Perhaps religious considerations restrained him. All of the Hungarian kings had been Catholic, the crown was considered to be a holy relic attached to the person of a Roman Catholic saint and former king, and the Hungarian kings had traditionally been crowned by the Archbishop of Esztergom. At first sight these religious difficulties could have been the reason why the Calvinist Bethlen had felt compelled to renounce the very Catholic coronation ceremony. However, this could not be the real cause of Bethlen's refusal because at exactly the same time the equally Calvinist Frederick of the Palatinate was being crowned by the leaders of the various Protestant churches with the crown of Saint Venceslas as King of Bohemia. The religious and ceremonial problems did not hinder the coronation of Bethlen. On the other hand the rapidly changing military and political situation did. Even though he had successfully occupied royal Hungary, Bethlen had remained cautious in his policy. If we consider the fact that a few months later at the Battle of White Mountain an imperial army crushed the Bohemian estates and put an early end to the reign of Frederick, who would soon be ridiculed as the "Winter King," then Bethlen's cautious attitude was more than justified. The Turks had made it clear to Bethlen that they would never allow the unification of Hungary and Transylvania under his rule. They would have been more than satisfied if instead of their great enemy, the emperor, their ally Bethlen had become the Hungarian king. But the sultan insisted that if Bethlen became King of Hungary, he must abdicate in Transylvania because could not rule in both.

This policy of the Turks was in clear contradiction with Bethlen's hopes. He had wanted to unify the two territories under his own authority as the "raison d'etre" of his rule in Hungary and in order to legitimate himself as king. The Turk's reluctance to permit the unification of Hungary and Transylvania under the rule of one man was understandable. They simply did not want any of their vassals to become too powerful. Nevertheless, it was true that during the second half of the sixteenth century, under the threat of a Habsburg gaining the Polish throne, the sultan had allowed Stephen Báthory, their vassal and the Prince of Transylvania, to accept the Polish crown. But as soon as the danger of a Habsburg ruler in

Poland disappeared, the Turks prohibited the unification of Poland and Transylvania under Stephen Báthory. When György II Rákóczi ignored the instructions of Grand Vezir Köprülü, who had prohibited Rákóczi's campaign in Poland and aspirations for the Polish throne, and went to Poland anyway, the Turks punished Transylvania with a brutal invasion.

Gábor Bethlen was elected King of Hungary, and he also had in his possession the Crown of St. Stephen but he never became a crowned King of Hungary. As Bocskai before him, Bethlen remained an effective ruler in Transylvania, held a portion of northern Hungary – the previously mentioned seven counties – and exerted a strong influence on politics in Royal Hungary. One of Bethlen's successors in Transylvania György II Rákóczi, however, overestimated the possibilities for independent action by this small state. When the Swedes invaded Poland, Rákóczi, as an ally of the Swedish king, also attacked the Polish kingdom. The Prince of Transylvania hoped to follow in the footsteps of Stephen Báthory and become King of Poland.

However the Polish adventure turned into a catastrophe. The Transylvanian troops occupied Krakow and Warsaw but soon afterwards fell into the hands of the Tartars, who took them to the Crimean peninsula and held them for ransom. These developments were made even worse for Transylvania by the complete political volte-face in Istambul. The new Grand Vezir Köprülü was determined to pursue a more aggressive policy and introduced a period of expansion in an empire already on the brink of collapse. Köprülü came to Transylvania in person to punish his unfaithful vassal. Then the Turkish and Tartar troops devastated the flourishing small state, and tens of thousands of Christian prisoners were taken and sold as slaves. A civil war broke out between the followers of Rákóczi and those who favored a more pro-Turkish orientation.

The Viennese court was very much aware of the danger that the assertive grand vezir would put an end to the semi-autonomous status of Transylvania. The Habsburg advisers were convinced that the Turks would like to transform this principality into a directly ruled Turkish territory. The imperial court was determined to prevent – by military force if necessary – this transformation of a century old status quo. Nevertheless, when the Turks nominated Ákos Barcsay as their candidate for the Transylvanian throne, the imperial army withdrew from Transylvania. However, Mehmet Köprülü, the son of the former grand vezir, who had succeeded to his father's place, wanted to use the new strength of the Ottoman Empire for further conquests. He launched an attack in 1663 and in 1664 went after Vienna itself. He desired to finish the never completed project of Sultan Suleiman and to conquer the whole of Hungary. These Turkish plans, however, came to naught when at the Battle of Szentgotthárd the Turks suffered an annihilating defeat in 1664. Nevertheless, only ten days later the Viennese court concluded the Peace of Vasvár and conceded surprisingly lenient conditions to the

Turks. Vienna granted the favorable terms only because the emperor feared that the Spanish king could die at any moment and a war with France would break out over succession to the Spanish throne. Therefore, he wanted to end the eastern war as quickly as possible. After this shameful peace the Hungarian nobility fell into a state of complete despair. Many had hoped that the great campaign to liberate Hungary from the Turks was about to begin, and now with the Peace of Vasvár it seemed that all hopes for a liberation of the country by the Habsburgs had evaporated. Leading aristocrats, among them the palatine and the archbishop of Esztergom, began to conspire against the emperor. This constituted a complete about face. The conspirators decided that if it was not possible to expel the Turks, then all of Hungary should become a Turkish vassal kingdom. I think that this solution would have been a political catastrophe for Hungary. It would have prolonged the occupation by the Turks and would have led Hungary down a path similar to that of the Balkan countries. Fortunately for Hungary, but unfortunately for the conspirators, after such an advantageous peace with the emperor and in the middle of a prolonged war with Venice the Turks were not interested in what the conspirators had to offer. The conspiracy was discovered and the leaders were arrested, tried, and executed. However, the project of creating a Turkish vassal kingdom in Hungary did not disappear. In the years that followed Imre Thököly, a young Hungarian aristocrat and the son of one of the original conspirators, rallied the jobless soldiers and the persecuted noblemen to a series of military campaigns against the emperor. In 1682 he got the blessing of the sultan for the territory around Kassa [Košice] in northwestern Hungary. He wanted to hold it as a vassal principality. The Turks soon declared Thököly to be the Prince of Upper Hungary (in Turkish Orta Madzar, or Middle Hungary). The new territory together with the Transylvanian principality meant that there were now two Turkish vassal states in Hungary, and the territory of Hungary that did not depend directly, or indirectly, on Istambul had diminished dramatically. The raison d'être of Thököly's state was the axiom that the liberation of Hungary from the Turks would be impossible for generations because of the impassivity of the imperial court. Therefore the Hungarian political class had to forge an arrangement with the Turks and derive whatever advantage it could from this situation. The emperor was interested in maintaining the status quo in Hungary and in preserving his army for the inevitable war over the Spanish succession. However, two decades after their campaign of 1663 the Turks overestimated again their power and directly attacked Vienna for the second time since 1529. It seemed to many that a new turning point had arrived in the history of central Europe, and the Ottoman Empire was once again as in the days of Suleiman the Great entering a period of conquest. With very few exceptions, the Hungarian aristocrats came to the camp of the Grand Vezir Kara Mustafa, when the Turks attacked Vienna, and the grand vezir promised them further Habsburg lands as vassal provinces, which they could hold in the same

way as Thököly held Upper Hungary. In this way, for example, Styria and Moravia were promised to new overlords. However, the Turks were decisively defeated at Vienna and a new era began. Thököly's state collapsed, when it became clear that there was a serious possibility for the liberation of Hungary. Entire regiments abandoned Thököly and went over to the imperial army to fight against the Ottoman Empire.

The situation of Transylvania also changed dramatically. As a Turkish vassal state, Transylvania was forced to fight against the emperor, a task that the state of the Prince Apafi fulfilled only with reluctance. However, it was evident that Transilvania could be a semi-independent state only as long as the castle of Buda was in Turkish hands. After the capture of Buda by the Christians in 1686 Transylvania could no longer remain independent; and under the pretext of looking for winter quarters the imperial army soon occupied it. In the next few years several treaties were concluded with Vienna. In these agreements the conditions, reflecting the changes in the military situation, became increasingly less favorable for the Transylvanians. During the great Turkish counterattack of 1690 Thököly came to Transylvania and had himself elected as the Turkish vassal prince. But only five weeks later, after the arrival of the imperial army, he felt compelled quickly to abandon his second Turkish vassal state. Ferenc II Rákóczi, the stepson of Thököly, would also lead a war of independence against the emperor from 1703 to 1711. At first sight this struggle appears to be a continuation of those led by Bocskai, Bethlen, György Rákóczi I and Thököly. Hungarian patriotic historians for a long time tried to portray these wars as a series of anti-Habsburg struggles for independence. In my opinion, however, there were very few common features between the movement led by Ferenc II Rákóczi and the seventeenth-century conflicts with the Habsburgs. Ferenc II Rákóczi was elected Prince of Transylvania but this title was for a semi-sovereign state that had just ceased to exist. Although Rákóczi's title was Prince of Transylvania, in direct contrast to the other wars against the Habsburgs, rule in Transylvania did not at all form the basis of Rákóczi's power. His base was Hungary. As a consequence Rákóczi quickly abandoned Transylvania, and the territory came to be occupied by the imperial army. All of the seventeenth-century struggles against the Habsburgs were supported by an ideology emphasizing the defense of Protestantism (generally Calvinism, but in the case of Thököly Lutheranism) against the aggressive Counter Reformation of the Viennese court. Ferenc II Rákóczi, however, was a staunch Catholic and the author of pious Catholic works. He never put the religious issues at the center of his political program. On the contrary he did everything to introduce the toleration of all the denominations in the territory he occupied. The real difference between Ferenc II Rákóczi's war and those of the seventeenth century was, however, the lack of Turkish support. Earlier Bocskai, Bethlen, György Rákóczi and Thököly all fought against the emperor with the help of the Turks. At

first sight the lack of Turkish support for Ferenc II Rákóczi against the Habsburgs seems to be completely irrational. The Turks had concluded with the emperor what for them must have been a catastrophic peace at Karlowitz in 1699. Within a few years the War of the Spanish Succession broke out. This would preoccupy Vienna for the next decade and a half, as the emperor fought with France in Belgium, Spain, Italy, and Germany and Ferenc II Rákóczi occupied Hungary. During this time the Turks did not try to attack the Habsburg Empire or attempt to recapture their lost Hungarian territories. After the collapse of the Rákóczi movement and after the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, the Turks began a new war with Austria, one that the Turks quickly lost. However, it was reasonable that the Turks, who were in a state of shock after their defeat in Hungary – and very much occupied on other fronts, for example, fighting with the Russian Tsar Peter the Great – did not want to break the peace with the emperor by helping Rákóczi. For his part Ferenc II Rákóczi was also more than reluctant to ask for Turkish help because he feared that Turkish assistance would discredit his movement in the eyes of the Hungarians, who had, after all, just been liberated from the Turks. The example of his stepfather Imre Thököly, who was abandoned by his soldiers, had to be a clear warning for him.

This short overview of Hungarian and Transylvanian history between 1604 and 1711 may perhaps convince us that for Hungarians not only the twentieth century was a period of dramatic changes and painful decisions, of repeated transitions between political regimes. However, I believe that it would be a great mistake to think that the Hungarian political elite had to choose between two equally bad solutions.

Later, the historians of the nineteenth century and even those of the twentieth century have often presented these alternatives as a choice for the Hungarian nobility between two equally dangerous enemies, between two equally bad alternatives. These works suggest that the Hungarians had to balance between the empires of two great emperors, and they often use a quote from a late seventeenth-century Kuruc [pro-Rákóczi] song, "Between two heathen enemies, for one fatherland we shed our blood."

There can be little doubt that the Habsburg rulers were not at all respectful of the liberties or interests of the Hungarians. This was especially true for those who met Habsburg power in its worst form, in the form of its plundering army. On the other hand to believe that the two great empires constituted equal dangers for Hungarian interests would be a complete misunderstanding of the political alternatives of seventeenth-century Hungary. The basic question can be thus stated: Would Hungary remain a part of Latin Christian culture, a part of Europe, or would Hungary follow the fate of the Balkan lands, which would live for centuries under Ottoman rule and in continuous stagnation?

After the defeat of Ferenc II Rákóczi the Hungarian nobility forged a fruitful compromise with the Habsburg rulers. Rákóczi's manifestos and letters from his exile in Turkey remained without effect. Neither he nor his son proved able to remobilize his former followers. The durable solution emerged from the compromise between the Habsburg dynasty and the Hungarian nobility. The Hungarian nobility remained loyal even when the Habsburg dynasty faced its greatest crisis, when the dynasty died out in the male line and the young Queen Maria Theresa was attacked from all sides in 1741. The Hungarian political elite made a sound choice and supported the Habsburg Empire in its moment of crisis. The Hungarian noblemen who pledged their lives and their blood knew only too well the danger that still lurked on Hungary's southern frontier. The possibility that Hungary would follow the fate of the Balkans was still very near.

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FROM ENLIGHTENMENT UNIVERSALISM
TO ROMANTIC NATIONALISM

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"Tradition ist nichts, was Einer lernen kann, ist nicht ein Faden, den
Einer aufnehmen kann, wenn es ihm gefällt; so wenig, wie es möglich
ist, sich die eigenen Ahnen auszusuchen. Wer eine Tradition nicht
hat und sie haben möchte, der ist wie ein unglücklich Verliebter."
(Ludwig Wittgenstein)[1]

"Der Sinn aller Tradition ist Konzentration des Seelischen. Das Wesen
allen 'Fortschritts' ist Zertsreuung, Macht und damit Verlassen des
eigenen Zentrums." (Wilhelm Furtwängler)[2]

"Das Überlieferte, das uns anspricht – der Text, das Werk, die Spur –
stellt selbst eine Frage und stellt damit unser Meinen ins Offene."
(Hans-Georg Gadamer)[3]

"(...) Mahler said that tradition is laziness, and I agree with him."
(Pierre Boulez)[4]

1. Imagined Communities

As Benedict Anderson argues, a community can be called imagined if its mem-
bers have a sense of belonging together even though they have no direct, personal
knowledge of each other.[5] This characterization applies to religious communities,
the citizens of states, social classes, and nations. All of these are of historical
nature. Except in states in which ruling dynasties play a role, in most imagined
communities canonized texts and "great narratives" guarantee continuity. For
Christians the Bible, for Moslems the Koran is the sacred book, for socialists the
works of Marx and his disciples may constitute the core of the cultural canon.
Most nations were defined in texts. The self-image of the Hungarians was at least
partly created by Ferenc Kölcsey (1790–1838), the author of *Hymn* (1823), the
text that became the national anthem after it was set to music by Ferenc Erkel in
1844. Four other works by Kölcsey, *Zrinyi's Song* (1830) and *Zrinyi's Second
Song* (1838), two visionary poems predicting the death of the nation, and two
longer essays, both published in 1826, *Mohács*, a meditation on the battle fought

in 1526 that led to the partition of Hungary, and *National Traditions*, a work that is usually regarded as an early statement about the significance of folklore, have exerted a decisive influence on the interpretation of Hungarian identity. Since this last can be considered the most important contribution to the shaping of the Hungarian nation, I shall focus on this text.

Nation and class emerged after the dissolution of communities attached to religions and ruling dynasties. Homogeneous Christianity was so closely linked to the Latin language that the decline of monolingualism coincided with that of the unity of written culture. The authority of ruling dynasties suffered a serious blow with the executions of Charles I and Louis XVI. The idea that "workers have no fatherland of their own" was formulated as an antidote to nationalism and seemed to replace it at some stage. For the time being this prediction seems to have proven wrong. The distinction between ruling and oppressed classes can no longer hold in view of the growing stratification of societies. The prophecy implicit in the universalism of social utopia that nations would disappear in the near future has lost its credibility.

The cult of national character must be interpreted in the context of changing values. Although it would be misleading to sustain a monolithic vision of the Enlightenment, it is possible to suggest that some of its representatives saw a link between the perfectibility of man and the gradual move towards the unity of the human race. Paradoxically, the imperialism of the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars could be regarded as a logical consequence of the cosmopolitan dream about a universal society. Such technological inventions as Jean-Rodolphe Perronet's bridges or Mongolfier's baloons could suggest both the impracticableness and the growing dimensions of war.

For Count István Széchenyi, the founder of the Hungarian Academy, the goal was to imagine and create a nation. The attitude represented by the poet Kölcsey and his successor János Arany (1817–1882) was more ambiguous. For them tradition was partly to be established and partly to be discovered. Kölcsey was brought up on empiricist philosophy, and Arany lived in an age dominated by positivism. Both saw a link between tradition and oral culture.

What may be of lasting value in Kölcsey's approach is the observation that culture is not only a product of individual talent but also of a collective memory that is not a matter of personal choice. The validity of this argument seems to have been confirmed even by deconstruction criticism: "Those who do not study history are condemned to repeat it, though studying is also a form of repetition."[6]

The starting hypothesis in Kölcsey's essay is that poetry represents the highest form of culture, and the highest form of poetry is "deeply rooted in national traditions" and "stands close to the nation."[7] In his view the perfect realization of this idea can be found in Homer. This assumption is based on two preconceptions: a) the definition of a national character has to be found in early history, b) orality is

superior to writing. The first of these hypotheses has never ceased to affect Hungarian culture, although some historians suggest that it is not possible to speak of nations before the Enlightenment and the rise of the bourgeoisie. The second served as the basis for the institutionalization of folklore in the nineteenth century and seems to have a revival, especially among those who speak of a second(ary) or second-degree orality.

It is one of the inherent qualities of history that perceptions that appear dated in the short term may prove to be significant in the long run. An obvious example is the reading of Ossian offered in Kölcsey's essay. The premise that "the disappearance of tradition makes it impossible for us to develop an authentic interpretation of the characteristics of the past,"[8] leads to the conclusion that "in a late phase of culture the ancient is given the features of the present age."[9] Other elements in the Hungarian Romantic's line of argument – the organicist view of national character, the emphasis on the capacity of the mother tongue to create reality or on cultural relativism – may be questioned, but the idea of the interdependence of past and present, of memory as a sine qua non of culture seems as valid as ever in the self-perception of nations.

The oppositions between exterior and interior, surface and depth, short-term and long-term processes suggest that the past is always rewritten by the ever-changing present and raise the thorny question how influence or success is related to value.

A disciple of both the Enlightenment and Romanticism, Kölcsey was aware of what lay outside the domain of national traditions. He saw Christianity and science as supranational fields. Literature he thought to be their antidote. The idea of this duality of human culture continued to be influential in the twentieth century. In a book written in defence of small states, published in neutral Switzerland during World War II, Jan Huizinga described the humanist of Christianity and science as cosmopolitan: "Die Teilung in Nationen mußte ihm als ein die wahre Kultur störendes Hindernis vorkommen."[10]

Today a similar gap exists between the international terminology of science and the language of the historians of national literatures. Generic concepts and periods differ according to linguistic areas and literary texts are still read as manifestations of national spirit.

2. National Character

In contrast to a view widely held, this concept was not born with Herder or the reaction against the wars fought by the French revolutionary army. The origins of counter-images can be traced back to earlier times. In Britain, for instance, a great number of articles were published with the aim of discrediting the Italian opera in

the early 18th century. One could also refer to the self-contradictions of the En-
lightenment, more specifically to some works of the author of *Essai sur l'origine
des languages* and *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne* (1772). The
first among Jean-Jacques Rousseau's texts on national character dates from 1752.
The comparison of organic and inorganic, familiar and alien, autonomous and
imitative – closely reminiscent of Kölcsey's oppositions – is followed by the fol-
lowing observation:

> Si j'étais chef de quelqu'un des peuples de la Nigritie, je déclare que
> je ferais élever sur la frontière du pays une potence où je ferais pendre
> sans rémission le premier Européen qui oserait y pénétrer, et le pre-
> mier citoyen qui tenterait d'en sortir.[11]

Another relevant passage occurs in *Du contrat social*, published a decade later.
Peter the Great is dismissed for imitating foreign models instead of letting na-
tional culture develop:

> Pierre avait le génie imitatif; il n'avait pas le vrai génie, celui qui
> crée et fait tout de rien. (...) Il a d'abord voulu de faire des Allemands,
> des Anglais, quand il fallait commencer par faire des Russes; il a
> empêché ses sujets de jamais devenir ce qu'ils pourraient être, en les
> persuadant qu'ils étaient ce qu'ils ne sont pas.[12]

Rousseau's and Kölcsey's meditations on cultural universalism versus relativ-
ism have to be examined against the background of a wide-spread debate. No
significant thinker was prone to extremist position. Universalists were not neces-
sarily conservative; utopias were often based on the monolithic idea of one
"Weltgeschichte." Relativism, on the other hand, frequently implied the preserva-
tion of existing values.

Rousseau's relativism may have been inspired by his reading of Montaigne
and Montesquieu. It is also possible that the Swiss thinker formulated his ideas in
reaction against the essay *Of National Characters*, published in 1748, in which
David Hume considered "the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the Whites," on
the ground that they did not display "any symptom of ingenuity,"[13] in other words,
they could not develop a culture of their own.

Although in most cases national character was created in texts, it would be a
mistake to ignore other factors. The evidence offered by the history of visual arts
is summarized by a recent work in the following manner: "The growing numbers
of accessible international collections and the availability of prints from all over
Europe allowed eighteenth-century artists of even the most mediocre fortunes to
build up a cosmopolitan visual imagination. This, combined with the decline of
the tradition of regional workshop training, established a social environment which,
in general terms, did not favour the natural production of idiosyncratic regional

styles of production. Increasingly, therefore, national and regional artistic charac-
ter had actively to be invented or re-established in the wake of vigorous political
campaigns to assert national identity. Being the artist of a certain locality or nation
increasingly became a matter of choice rather than accident of birth."[14] In his
Treatise on Ancient Painting (1740) George Turnbull argued that "the general
and national Character of a People may be conjectured from the State of the Arts
amongst them: and reciprocally".[15] From Jacques-Louis David's early *The Oath
of the Horatii* (1784–5, Musée du Louvre) to Caspar David Friedrich's painting
known as *The Stages of Life* or *The Three Ages of Man* (1834–5, Museum der
Bildenden Künste, Leipzig) many works of art can be seen as the visual illustra-
tions of the parallel between the cycle of the life of an individual and that of a
nation. The belief that culture developed cyclically from a state of youthfulness
towards maturity, old age, and death was supported by the cult of ruins.

Kölcsey was well-versed in the philosophy of the French Enlightenment, so
the opening words of his essay have to be read in the context of the ideas on
cultural universalism and realitivism formulated by such authors as Montesquieu,
Voltaire, Buffon, Rousseau, Diderot, Condillac, Helvétius, and Condorcet:

> Nations have the same phases in their life as individuals. Their child-
> hood is followed first by the promises of youth and later by the strength
> of maturity, which, in turn, is replaced by the decline of old age.[16]

This old topos, inherited from Classical Antiquity, gained special significance
in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Széchenyi used it inconsist-
ently, which today may appear more acceptable than Kölcsey's blunt statement,
although it has to be admitted than many national literary histories seem to com-
ply with an explicit teleology similar to the one underlying Kölcsey's work.

In marked contrast to Kölcsey and many others, Széchenyi often toyed with the
idea that national character has to be created in writing. Innumerable fragments
from his works were given a proverbial status by later generations and the closing
sentence of *Credit* (1830), his most influential book – "Many think: Hungary h a s
b e e n; I like to believe she w i l l b e"[17] – served as a slogan in what is still called
the Age of Reform, the period between Waterloo and the revolutions of 1848.

As a diary entry dated 7 April 1819 indicates, the source of Széchenyi's ideas
on national character was *A Classical Tour Through Italy in 1802* by John
Chetwoode Eustace, published in four volumes in London, in 1815. The quotation
from this work starts with the following words:

> National character, though it may be influenced both by the will and
> the climate, is not the effect of either. Government and education, are
> the grand and efficient causes in the formation of character both pub-
> lic and private.[18]

A month later Széchenyi made the following remark:

> Eine Nation entstehet ebenso wie ein Kind geboren wird – gehet
> durch die Jahre der Adolescens, der Jugend, der Mannheit, und des
> Alters – und stirbt endlich ab – der einzige Unterschied nach der
> Tode einer Nation und eines Menschen ist nur, dass der Leichnahm
> eines Menschen von Würmern gefressen wird, und zu sein gänzlich
> aufhört, indessen der verlebte Körper einer Nation – lange Jahre noch
> fortvegetirt –. Ob eine Nation gross werden oder unbedeutend bleiben
> soll, hengt von dem Zufall eben so sehr ab, als von der Erziehung die
> es in seinen Kinder Jahren bekommen hat.[19]

Since Széchenyi's diaries were not published until much later, it is not likely that Kölcsey had access to them. Széchenyi, however, could rely on the poet's essay when later he blamed Hungarians for the preservation of the outmoded and for superficial imitation: "We have no national habits; our existence and knowledge depend on imitation. Unlike other nations, we stick to the old and are superficial in imitating others."[20]

Are the characteristics of the Hungarian nation to be preserved or to be created? The main reason for Széchenyi's great influence on both conservatives and liberals is his inconsistency in answering that question. "Hungary is an old fortress that needs restoration." One page after this statement quite a different tone is set by the following remark: "The Hungarian is but a child. He has not achieved anything yet but the psychic and physical energy hidden in his young soul may enable him to do great things."[21] When defining the character the Hungarian nation should acquire in the future, he resorts to the figure of speech known as oxymoron: "Our country needs an old head attached to young shoulders".[22] The paradoxical nature of the combination of tradition and innovation suggests not only a compulsion to fuse contradictory experience into a unity but also the possible disappearance of national character. His declaration made in the Upper House, on 2 October 1844, refers to the second alternative:

> It may be possible that those who will replace us will be more honest
> and intelligent, but I take it for certain that they will not be Hungar-
> ians.[23]

Throughout his life Széchenyi viewed national character as the product of literature. Here is a passage of a work entitled *Dust and Mud*, written on 13 June 1858:

> If in youth an individual or nation had nothing similar to what mortals
> could never express but Schiller, Alfieri, Moore, Berzsenyi,
> Vörösmarty, and others suggested, that nation would sink to the level
> of a machine and may achieve material but no spiritual prosperity.[24]

A similar contrast of organic and inorganic, coupled with the idea of the different ages of nations, can be found in the works of numerous French authors. Several texts by Taine, *L'avenir de la science* (written in 1848) and *De l'origine du langage* (written between 1848 and 1858) by Renan, or Gobineau's notorious *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (written between 1853 and 1855) could be mentioned in this context.[25]

The last of these works may illustrate the damage theories about the diversity of human communities have done to human culture. Yet it cannot be denied that the preconception concerning the ages of nations sometimes went together with tolerance toward alterity – as the examples of Spengler, Toynbee, Berdyaev, Valéry, and Wittgenstein indicate. The traces of the same conception can also be found in the debates over the explanation of the end of the Habsburg Monarchy or in the revival that makes Spengler an early critic of Eurocentrism.[26]

In view of the international survival of the organicist interpretation of history, it cannot be called anachronistic that the questions raised by Kölcsey and Széchenyi continued to tempt Hungarian writers until the present day. Here I have no space for a summary of these later developments.[27] In the rest of this essay my intention is to focus on an issue that preoccupied virtually all the interpreters of Kölcsey's text: to what extent have texts to be evaluated on the basis of their contribution to the shaping of national character.

3. The Driving Forces of Development: Originality, Language, and the Future

"In the age of public education the brilliance of individual greatness is more sporadic and less spectacular."[28] This statement may echo *Émile* and *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. It also reveals the ambiguity of Kölcsey's approach to progress: on the one hand, it seems an organic process, on the other, it leads from the natural to the artificial.

The duality of imagination and learning was a cliché throughout the nineteenth century. The double meaning of "original" implied that the specificity of a culture has to be discovered in early history. The fundamental question for Kölcsey was whether the early legacy of the Hungarian people was sufficient for the survival of their culture. He clearly saw that distance was a source of alienation. At the same time, the Greek example convinced him that the greatness of a culture consisted in its capacity to recognize itself in the other. No culture could do without foreign influence, yet imitation was a sign of the weakness of native traditions.

The language reform supported by Kölcsey represented a compromise between the legacy of the Enlightenment and the Romantic approach to language: it as-

serted the claims of the vernacular, yet it aimed at creating a standard "polished" idiom, purged of all signs of local dialect.

One of the reasons why Kölcsey's essay *National Traditions* could serve as a starting-point for so many and so different interpretations is that its message is rather ambivalent. Culture is both influence and self-reliance. On the one hand, it seems to suggest that the significance of a culture depends on its ability to make an impact on others; on the other hand, it draws a distinction between two relations between self and other: imitation and appropriation. Not all foreign occupations are viewed in the same way: the Arab settlers of Spain are said to have created a culture of their own, whereas the Ottoman Turks are harshly criticized for destroying the civilization of the peoples they conquered. A similar duality is ascribed to the oppressed: appropriation is contrasted with servile imitation.

The ideal of Greek Antiquity is upheld to exclude one extreme, that of unlimited cultural relativism. The other extreme would be the utopia of one mankind and one history. In recent years a similar critique of these two attitudes was formulated by Paul Ricoeur, who condemned both the racist interpretation of history and the belief in the unity of Weltgeschichte, the globalizing force of the American way of life that leaves no room for a dialogue with the histories of the different parts of the world.[29]

One of the possible readings of Kölcsey's essay was given by Mihály Babits (1883–1941), an outstanding poet and the author of two seminal discursive works, the long essay *Hungarian Literature* (1913) and its counterpart *A History of European Literature* (published in Hungarian in 1934–35 and in German translation in 1949). If Kölcsey's essay is viewed from the perspective outlined in these two works, its message is that the development of a culture depends not only on its unity but also on the multiplicity of the tasks it can handle, so that the main goal a nation has to reach is dialogue with other cultures. To preserve one's identity is linked to tolerance towards others. Kölcsey's emphasis on "influence" implies that a familiarity with the other is a precondition of culture. "I am another" also means "the other is myself." Culture is mediation and so depends on our ability to keep a distance from our own community and assimilate the alien. The duality of self and other need not cause schizophrenia, although it may not exclude opposition or conflict.

If read from the perspective of Romanticism, *National Traditions* marks a shift from the preconception that a) traditional rural culture was a barbarity to be forgotten, and b) the primary task for the national community was to absorb the culture of the other parts of Europe. After the universalist teleology of some Enlightenment thinkers committed to the task of dragging Hungarians out of a barbarous rustic dark age and towards a bright cosmopolitan future had been rejected, artists and writers created an ideology based on the notion that Hungary represented a unique cultural entity that had grown out of a distinctive landscape.

In the 1840s, in the works of Petőfi and others, the untrammelled plainland, the "puszta" became an icon of national identity. Such long epic poems as *The Flight of Zalán* (1825) by Vörösmarty or *The Death of Buda* (1863) by János Arany expressed a deep, consecrating sense of belonging to one's own land and folk. It was at least partly due to Kölcsey's influence that in the nineteenth century some Hungarian writers regarded literature as a moral force to preserve the decorum of a national community threatened by cosmopolitan positivists.

Undeniably, it is also possible to make a more destructive interpretation of Kölcsey's essay. "What is national character? Bad habits." This categorical condemnation by Imre Madách (1823–1864), the author of *The Tragedy of Man*,[30] – a 4117-line-long dramatic poem on the history of mankind that contains no more than a single reference to Hungarian history – foreshadows Nietsche's association of decline with parochialism and the ossification of national character:

> Wenn nämlich ein Volk vorwärts geht und wächst, so sprengt es jedesmal den Gürtel, der ihm bis dahin sein *nationales* Ansehen gab; bleibt es stehen, verkümmert es, so schließt sich ein neuer Gürtel um seine Seele; die immer härter werdende Kruste baut gleichsam ein Gefängnis herum, dessen Mauern immer wachsen. Hat ein Volk also sehr viel Festes, so ist dies ein Beweis, daß es versteinern will und ganz und gar *Monument* werden möchte: wie es von einem bestimmten Zeitpunkte an das Ägyptertum war.[31]

If the identity of a nation becomes easily recognizable, the next stage is the loss of that identity.

> Ein historisches Phänomen, rein und vollständig erkannt und in ein Erkenntnisphenomän aufgelöst, ist für den, der es erkannt hat, tot.[32]

Although Kölcsey's essay contains no such explicit prediction, it does not exclude the disappearance of nations in a more distant future. More than a century after the publication of *National Traditions*, in 1939 a collection of essays appeared with the title *What Is Hungarian?* Edited by the historian Gyula Szekfű, this book was meant to suggest that the concept of national character had lost its validity by the twentieth century. As in so many other cases, the counter-identity of Germans supplied the background. What counted as a brave dismissal of racist theories at the time of the threat of Nazi Germany may be interpreted in a somewhat different way in 2000. It seems rather paradoxical that a historian made the following sweeping generalization:

> People are everywhere, in every period, season, and climate the same; the same laws of life make them weep, laugh, relax, join groups, and kill each other.[33]

While such a statement resembles the clichés of rationalistic universalism pro-
pounded by rather ahistorical representatives of the Enlightenment, the claims
made by the poet Babits and the composer Kodály, suggesting that Hungarians
take no interest in metaphysics and "labirinthine" complexity in art, appear of
rather doubtful value. More relevant might be the point made by the Protestant
bishop László Ravasz that

> there is no objetctive feature that could be considered to be a canoni-
> cal measuring rod, an unambiguously Hungarian characteristic in lit-
> erature or in the arts.[34]

Such a negative definition is compatible with the view that a national commu-
nity can be defined only in linguistic terms. The idea that being Hungarian means
using the conceptual map constituted by the Hungarian language is by no means
absent from Kölcsey's essay. "Hungarians can achieve originality by the use of
their language,"[35] the poet writes, lamenting that in the age of the rise of poetry
composed in the vernacular, Janus Pannonius (1434–1472) "used a Roman lute
when singing fine, yet foreign songs."[36] The opposition between the written lan-
guage of the Latin Antiquity and Middle Ages on the one hand and the constantly
changing, spoken vernacular tradition handed down by word of mouth on the
other, is related to the debate mentioned earlier: "the defenders of writing were
inclined to universalism, whereas the adherents of orality preferred relativism."[37]

Put another way, it is possible to read *National Traditions* with the eyes of
Dezső Kosztolányi (1885–1936), the most important exponent of a language-based
cultural relativism in twentieth-century Hungarian literature. Understandably, this
poet relied on Széchenyi's numerous works rather than on Kölcsey's essay. The
idea than human consciousness is inseparable from language, implicit in Kölcsey's
line of argument, was more consistently expressed by Széchenyi, who was con-
vinced that the disappearance of even the tiniest linguistic community was an
irreparable loss to mankind. "I have received my language from God and I will
return it to Him upon my death." This declaration, made in the Upper House on 30
November 1835,[38] is symptomatic of the attitude Kosztolányi attributed to
Széchenyi in his *To Be or Not to Be* (1930). This long essay is a counterpart of
Hungarian Literature by Babits. Babits urged his reader to look at his/her culture
with the eyes of an outsider. Kosztolányi's point is that a native reader can never
keep that distance from his/her own literature. In that sense the gap between the
self and the other cannot be bridged.

The idea that speaking a mother tongue means having preconceptions is more
explicitly stated by Széchenyi but can also be detected in Kölcsey's text. Hunga-
rian literature is the legacy of the language, taking language in a rather broad
sense as the historical memory, belief system, and way of life of an imagined

community. Irrespective of the possible disappearance of nations as imagined communities in the future, this language-based conception may be the most obvious manifestation of the role of texts in shaping national identity.

Notes

1. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Vermischte Bemerkungen* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984) 76.
2. Wilhelm Furtwängler, *Aufzeichnungen 1924–1954* (Wisbeaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1980) 264.
3. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: S. J. C: B: Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1986) 379.
4. Pierre Boulez, "History in the Present Tense," *CD Review,* December 1990, 23.
5. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).
6. J. Hillis Miller, *Reading Narrative* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998) 3.
7. Ferenc Kölcsey, *Nemzeti hagyományok* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1950) Vol. I, 505–506.
8. Kölcsey, *Ibid.,* 513.
9. Kölcsey, *Ibid.,* 514.
10. J. Huizinga, *Im Bann der Geschichte: Betrachtungen und Gestaltungen* (Burg: Burg-Verlag, 1943) 162.
11. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur les arts et les sciences – Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1971) 117.
12. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du contrat social* (Paris: Gernier-Flammarion, 1966) 82.
13. David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971) 213.
14. Matthew Craske, *Art in Europe 1700–1830: A History of the Visual Arts in an Era of Unprecedented Urban Economic Growth* (Oxford University Press, 1997) 110.
15. Quoted by Matthew Craske in *Art in Europe 1700–1830,* 24.
16. Kölcsey, *Ibid.,* 490.
17. István Széchenyi, *Hitel* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1930) 492.
18. *Gróf Széchenyi István Naplói.* Vol. I (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1825) 577.
19. *Gróf Széchenyi István Naplói,* Vol. I, 629.
20. István Széchenyi, *Világ vagy is felvilágosító töredékek némi hiba 's előitélet eligazítására* (Pest: Füskúti Landerer, 1831) 72.
21. Széchenyi, *Világ,* 101–102, 103.
22. Széchenyi, *Világ,* XXIX.
23. *Gróf Széchenyi István Beszédei* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1887) 358.
24. *Gróf Széchenyi István Döblingi Hagyatéka,* Vol. III (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1925) 862–863.
25. See Tzvetan Todorov, *Nous et les autres: La réflexion française sur le diversité humaine* (Paris, 1989) 154, 174.
26. See, for instance, Mireille Marc-Lipiansky, "Crise ou déclin de l'Occident?" *L'Europe en formation 306–307,* automne – hiver 1997, 47–79.
27. See my essay "A *Nemzeti hagyományok* korszerűsége," *Valóság* 1999/5, esp. 36–38.
28. Kölcsey, *Ibid.,* 492.

29. Paul Ricoeur, *Histoire et vérité. Troisième édition augmentée de quelques textes* (Paris: Seuil, 1964) 185.
30. *Madách Imre Össszes Művei* (Budapest: Révai, 1942) Vol. II, 757.
31. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches: Ein Buch für freie Geister* (Wilhelm Goldmann, 1981) 412.
32. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1981) 106.
33. Gyula Szekfű (ed.), *Mi a magyar?* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle, 1939) 489.
34. Gyula Szekfű (ed.), *Mi a magyar?* 32.
35. Kölcsey, *Ibid.,* 508.
36. Kölcsey, *Ibid.,* 515.
37. Katalin Neumer, *Gondolkodás, beszéd, írás* (Budapest: Kávé, 1998) 38.
38. *Széchenyi István Válogatott Művei* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1991) Vol. I, 692.

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN COMPROMISE OF 1867 AND ITS CONTEMPORARY CRITICS

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Though the revolutions of 1848–1849 were ultimately put down by the Habsburgs and their Russian allies, Austria came out of this Pyrrhic victory as a much weakened power.

A series of international conflicts such as the Italian wars of 1859 and 1866 and, particularly, the Prussian war of 1866 clearly demonstrated that Austria was no longer the major military power that it had been during the long decades when Prince Metternich's Holy Alliance system was at work. The international status of the empire was increasingly dependent upon its unavoidable internal, structural reorganization which was destined to recreate the economic and social energies of this vast East-Central European realm. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise was the last, and perhaps the most fundamental reorganization of the Habsburg Empire before it went down in history after World War I.

As Hungary had been part of that Empire since 1526, the Compromise reshaped the constitutional status and political standing of Hungary in a major way. From a pseudo-colonial province the country invented itself as a semi-autonomous part of the Habsburg Empire which was reconstituted as the dualist structure of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. In many ways, this transformation was made possible by the revolution and war of independence of 1848–1849 which, among other results, helped reshape the international position and image of Hungary.[1]

What were the essential features of the dualist Monarchy? To what extent was it indeed based on the principle of "dualism" and how much did it retain from the absolutist legacy of the Habsburg Empire? The debate about these questions is almost older than the newly established system itself, as discussions were started right during the formative years of the Dual Monarchy.

Theoretically, the Monarchy became divided into two legally equal parts with their relations based on parity. The two parts were internally sovereign, with their own legislative, legal, and law enforcing mechanisms. It was the common monarch who regulated their relationship at the topmost level, while the three most important "common" affairs were managed jointly.[2] Some of these "common" affairs such as foreign policy, defense and finances related to those two were de-

duced from the *Pragmatica Sanctio* of the Emperor Charles III in the early 18th century.[3]

The highest (and perhaps best documented) executive body of the dual monarchy was the Common Council of Ministers. If presided over by the monarch, it was called the Crown Council. Out of the "joint" ministers, the role of the minister for foreign affairs was particularly crucial: not only was he responsible for foreign affairs, but he was a leading policy maker for the whole empire, in terms of the basic political guidelines. The dual Monarchy had two parliaments which never met but communicated through the institution of the "delegations" only. They were designed to guarantee the constitutionality of foreign and military affairs. Soon, however, they turned out to be unfit for fulfilling their parliamentary functions, and thus helped maintain some of the unconstitutional powers of the monarch. The common ministries were also allowed to function essentially without constitutional control. Foreign affairs, however, were influenced by "the ministries of both halves," including of course the Hungarian government and parliament.[4]

After the unification of Buda, Pest, and Old-Buda into one municipality in 1873, the newly constituted Monarchy had two capital cities: Vienna and Budapest. While Vienna was the old imperial capital city of the Habsburgs, Budapest emerged astonishingly quickly, basically by the end of the 19th century, as a beautiful, modern city to serve as the administrative and economic center of the Hungarian part of the Monarchy. In some ways it was designed to impress the many different ethnic minorities of the country by the visible ability of the *Magyar* ruling élite to govern their land. Overlooking the Danube across the Royal Palace, the building of Parliament dominated the landscape as a symbol of constitutionalism and political power.

Considering its legal status and structure, the newly established Monarchy was different from all the major powers of Europe. It differed from the centralized model of the French or the Russians, but it was also different from the Swiss model that recognized the equal rights of the constituent elements, or from the German model built on the preponderance of the Prussian element. To some extent it showed some resemblance to the Swedish–Norwegian arrangement of 1814 though it had particular qualities that made it special.[5]

Despite the obvious and major changes in 1867, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy became a curious mixture of constitutionalism and absolutism. The personal power of the monarch remained very strong throughout the life of Emperor-King Francis Joseph I (1830–1916) who maintained his personal influence in his increasingly constitutional monarchy. The chief adversary of the system, the revolutionary leader of 1848–49 Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894) spent much of his long exile harshly criticizing the unconstitutional elements of the new arrangement.

> There is no dualism here, dreadfully no dualism. But there is a common Austro-Hungarian ministry; is this dualism?
>
> There are common ambassadors, diplomatic representatives, even common consuls; is that dualism?
>
> There is an Austrian and a Hungarian delegation, which [together] are more united a body than the two houses of the Hungarian Parliament because those do not vote together while the Austrian and Hungarian delegations do so; is that dualism?
>
> Who decide the military budget, this most serious item of the public purse, quite independently from the control of both the Hungarian as well as of the Austrian legislative bodies? The two delegations together! Is that dualism?
>
> And if these two bodies that meet in two rooms but vote together ... can't come up with a majority vote...?
>
> [Then] the unified ruler of the unified Österreich–Ungarn takes a decision, without asking the nations, without their participation, with absolute power; is this dualism?[6]

Apart from foreign affairs, for Kossuth it was particularly the right of *preapproval*, an imperial-royal prerogative kept for the Monarch as well as the unified German language of the army that suggested danger for the constitutional future of the Monarchy.

Kossuth made his criticism internationally known not only later as this document showed, but also in his open letter addressed to Ferenc Deák, chief architect of the Compromise of 1867, as early as May 22, 1867. Published in *Magyar Újság,* this much quoted Paris letter reminded Kossuth's former political friend and fellow minister in the revolutionary government of 1848 of the legacy of the revolution and warned the compromising statesman "not to drag the country to the point where it cannot be master of its own destiny."[7]

Kossuth continued to shower his criticism on his former friend and political ally attacking the new laws of 1867 which for him

> run against the state life conditions of Hungary, clash with the political tendencies to which our nation, in good and bad fortune had always and steadfastly adhered to for three centuries and a half, and to the loyalty to which our nation can thank its existence; counteract the age in which we live, its direction, the suggestions of the European trends; are so dangerous in their power and lack the motivation of need, of constraint, of the status of the Austrian House, or of the necessities of the simplest political arithmetic ...[8]

Deák answered Kossuth's open letter in the *Pesti Napló* of May 30. He stated that it was his conviction

> that in our position it is better to make a peaceful settlement than to let our future depend on policies that are founded on vague promises,

> that would cause further delays and suffering, and that would prob-
> ably depend on happenstance, on revolution and the dissolution of
> the empire, on foreign aid (for which our interests would certainly
> not be the main motive), or on new foreign alliances, the form, pur-
> poses and advantages of which cannot yet be known. I have also
> stated that the means I have proposed for settlement does not jeop-
> ardize our constitutional freedoms and, in many respects, is advanta-
> geous to the country. These statements of mine, which were never
> addressed to passions but rather to calm common sense, have always
> been made openly.[9]

Equally serious contemporary criticism came from Prague. Though Francis Joseph made some symbolic gestures to his Czech sovereigns, these proved to be far from enough to appease Czech nationalists. For the Czech the constitutional settlement which left them out of the new arrangement seemed to be directed against their own national interests. František Palacký, the most influential advocate of a federal reconstruction of the Habsburg Empire, deplored the hegemony of the Germans and Hungarians in a reconstituted Monarchy and declared:

> The day dualism is proclaimed ... will also be the birthday of
> Panslavism in its least desirable form, and the godparents of the lat-
> ter will be the parents of the former. What will follow every reader
> can divine for himself. We Slavs will look forward to that with sin-
> cere grief, but without fear. We existed before Austria; we shall still
> exist when it is gone.[10]

The Poles of Galicia also requested their full administrative, judicial, and educational autonomy which the Austro-Hungarian settlement refused to grant out of deference to Russian sensibilities.[11]

More compassion was shown towards the restructuring of the Monarchy outside the Habsburg realm. German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck repeatedly praised the idea in his conversations with illustrious visitors from the Monarchy. To the famous Hungarian author Mór Jókai he declared his views concerning the necessity of maintaining the Dual Monarchy. Only the German and the Hungarian element can govern, he said, they alone possess statesmanlike qualities and knowledge. It would be impossible to maintain the system of small nation-states in East-Central Europe. Vienna and Budapest have the mission to become the rich centers of Eastern civilization and commerce. This seemed to be the very essence of the Central European policy of Bismarck also in a broader sense.[12] Almost a decade later Bismarck reiterated his views to Crownprince Rudolf von Habsburg and emphasized the importance of the Hungarian participation in the Monarchy. There alone can the Hungarians gain their security amidst the sea of Slavic peoples, he suggested. Bismarck explicitly attacked the oppositional stance of Kossuth

when declaring to the Crownprince that in critical moments Hungarians demonstrate the overbearing "self-confidence of the hussar and the lawyer."[13]

In Britain, the new political structure attracted great interest for its obvious implications for Ireland. The First Lord of the Treasury, W. E. Gladstone sounded most appreciative in the Government of Ireland debate of 1886. He was convinced by the very existence of two parliaments in the Monarchy. "In Austria and Hungary there is a complete duality of power," he argued on April 8, 1886.

> I will not enter upon the general condition of the Austrian Empire, or upon the other divisions or diversities which it includes, but I will take simply this case. At Vienna sits the Parliament of the Austrian Monarchy; at Budapesth sits the Parliament of the Hungarian Crown; and that is the state of things which was established, I think, nearly 20 years ago. I ask all those who hear me whether there is one among them who doubts? Whether or not the condition of Austria be at this moment, or be not, perfectly solid, secure, and harmonious, after the enormous difficulties she has had to confront, on account of the boundless diversity of race, whether or not that condition be perfectly normal in every minute particular, this at least, cannot be questioned, that it is a condition of solidity and of safety compared with the time when Hungary made war on her — war which she was unable to quell when she owed the cohesion of the body politic to the interference of Russian arms; or in the interval that followed, when there existed a perfect Legislative Union and a supreme Imperial Council sat in Vienna? [14]

British critics of the Compromise, however, seemed to echo Kossuth's stern warnings. Members of Parliament such as G. J. Goschen pointed out that "Austria–Hungary ... is bound together by the power of the Crown and by the authority of the three Common Ministers, who are responsible to no Parliament at all."[15] As if to repeat Lajos Kossuth, Sir John Lubbock, MP quoted Sir Henry Elliot, British Ambassador to Vienna, who in a letter to *The Times* "had expressed far from favourable opinion as to the result [of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy], and if it worked at all it was greatly due to the large powers possessed by the Emperor."[16]

Towards the end of the 19th century a new, radicalized generation of Irish nationalists fighting for their Ireland also praised the Austro–Hungarian arrangement of 1867 conceiving it as 'A Parallel for Ireland.'[17] In an article for *The United Irishman* of January 2, 1904, Arthur Griffith went out to declare:

> You may be old enough yourself to remember when Hungary fell and 'Freedom shrieked aloud' — when Kossuth was a fugitive, with the bloodhounds of Austria on his track, when the Austrian dragoon was the Law from Buda-Pesth to the Carpathians, when day after day Hungarian patriots were shot or hanged like dogs by the victori-

ous soldiery of Francis Josef, when in fact 'Peace reigned in War-
saw', and men said — 'Hungary was'. Therefore, when you look
around today and see Hungary freer and stronger and more prosper-
ous than Austria, when you know that if Hungary declared herself a
republic tomorrow — which she intends to do when the sad old man
who reigns in Vienna dies — Austria would not fight, because she
could not — you may well rub your eyes, reflecting that Hungary
never once sent a Parliamentary Party to Vienna to 'fight on the floor
of the House' for Home Rule, never once admitted the right of Aus-
tria to rule over her, never once pretended to be 'loyal' to the Power
that had smitten her, never once held monster indignation meetings
and resolutioned, and fired strong adjectives — and yet, notwith-
standing, forced Austria to her knees and wrung from her unwilling
hands the free Constitution which has made Hungary the Power she
is to-day...[18]

Critics of Griffith observe that he misunderstood the nature of the Austro–
Hungarian Compromise. In his *Modern Ireland 1600–1972,* Professor Roy Foster
described "the Irish *Ausgleich*" as "the withdrawal of support for British institu-
tions, from Parliament down. The corollary, that such a policy would have to be
backed up by violence and intimidation, was ignored."[19] To boot, it was also pointed
out more recently that "in the compromise of 1867 Hungary did not *wrest* free-
dom from Austria...[its] conservative-liberal elements, rather than its revolution-
aries, struck a deal..."[20]

The official French response to the Compromise of 1867 was extremely posi-
tive. The French Ambassador to Vienna, the Duc de Gramont (whose devastating
policies as French Foreign Minister in 1870 were to facilitate the outbreak of the
Franco–Prussian War), suggested that the Hungarians need the other parts of Aus-
tria just as Austria needs the Hungarians, as they can only exist if combined in a
major empire. He expressed his hope that constitutional developments will end
the tensions among the individual parts of the realm. Responding to the Ambassa-
dor, French Foreign Minister Lionel Marquis de Moustier declared how important
the consolidation of the Monarchy will be for the maintenance of the European
equilibrium.[21]

Later commentators in France were much less enthusiastic for the Austro–Hun-
garian Compromise. French public opinion was divided: most people would have
favored federalism, and even those who accepted the new structure intended to
give the other ethnic groups of the Monarchy gradually more rights. French con-
cern for the ethnic minorities of the Monarchy led to disillusionment in Austria–
Hungary and ultimately brought about an anti-Austro–Hungarian and anti-Hun-
garian French foreign policy with fatal consequences after World War I.[22]

The Austro–Hungarian Compromise made a tremendous impact on Central
European history in the fifty years before World War I. It was remarkably well

received by the European powers, but was rejected by the many ethnic groups inside the Monarchy. Its failure to create a stable and livable political system for the major ethnic groups of the Monarchy was not compensated by the economic and cultural success it produced. It started capitalist development in Hungary, for which it secured a semi-great-power status. It recognized the emancipation of the Jews, and helped create an aura of liberalism in the Monarchy. In many ways, however, it paved the way toward the one-sided Austro–Hungarian–German orientation and military alliance which directly contributed to the dissolution of the Monarchy and the tragic Peace Treaties of 1919–1920. It did not guarantee the same rights to the ethnic minorities that Hungarians and Germans were to enjoy themselves. It preserved the agricultural bias of Hungarian economy within an imperial division of labor. It created a capital city for Hungary which was over-developed vis-à-vis rural Hungary.

To this day, international historiography has made repeated efforts to comprehend the significance and legacy of the Compromise, without ever solving its major dilemma signaled already by the contemporaries: was it a success or a failure? The question often assumed political and even symbolic significance. In the last few decades some of the most important books on Hungarian history were in fact written on issues related to the Compromise and functioned like political arguments in an era, particularly after 1956, when opposition views had to be voiced through doublespeak.[23] Generations of modern Hungarian historians have been coping with the issue of the Compromise which became one of the central pivots of historical thought in Hungary.[24]

Contemporary criticism, as is so often the case, continues to survive in the form of historiographical arguments, sometimes highly charged by the heated aura of daily politics.

Notes

1. Most recently see the complete new overview by Domokos Kosáry, *Magyarország és a nemzetközi politika 1848–1849-ben* [Hungary and International Politics in 1848–1849] (Budapest: História – MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1999).

2. Tibor Frank, "Hungary and the Dual Monarchy, 1867–1890," in: Peter F. Sugar, Péter Hanák, and Tibor Frank, eds., *A History of Hungary* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 252.

3. Horst Haselsteiner, "Cooperation and Confrontation between Rulers and the Noble Estates, 1711–1790," in: Peter F. Sugar, Péter Hanák, and Tibor Frank, eds., *A History of Hungary* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 143–145.

4. Tibor Frank, "Hungary and the Dual Monarchy, 1867–1890,", *op. cit.,* 253.

5. István Diószegi, *Bismarck és Andrássy. Magyarország a német hatalmi politikában a XIX. század második felében* [Bismarck and Andrássy. Hungary in the German Power Politics of the Second Half of the 19th Century] (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 1998), 20. For the comparison

with Sweden and Norway see the interesting comments of W. E. Gladstone in the 1886 Government of Ireland debate, April 8, 1886, House of Commons, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 1886, col. 1046–1047.

6. Lajos Kossuth, "A dualizmus értéke" [The Value of Dualism], First publ. in *Irataim,* Vol. V, repr. in *Kossuth Lajos válogatott munkái* [Select Works of Lajos Kossuth], ed. Ferencz Kossuth (Budapest: Franklin, n.d.), 366–367.

7. Lajos Kossuth, "Nyílt levél Deák Ferenczhez" [Open Letter to Ferencz Deák], Paris, May 22, 1867, in *Kossuth Lajos válogatott munkái* [Select Works of Lajos Kossuth], ed. Ferencz Kossuth (Budapest: Franklin, n.d.), 187.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Deák Ferenc beszédei [The Addresses of Ferenc Deák] (Budapest, 1903), Vol. V, 8–10. Quoted by Béla K. Király, *Ferenc Deák* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), 181–182.

10. Joseph F. Zacek, "Palacky and the Austro–Hungarian Compromise of 1867," in Anton Vantuch, ed., *Der österreichisch-ungarische Ausgleich 1867: Materialien der internationalen Konferenz in Bratislava 28.8.–1.9.1967* (Bratislava, 1971). Quoted by Béla K. Király, *Ferenc Deák* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), 181.

11. Tibor Frank, "Hungary and the Dual Monarchy, 1867–1890,", *op. cit.,* 254.

12. Otto von Bismarck, "Gespräch mit dem Dichter M. Jókai, Berlin, Februar 27, 1874," Otto von Bismarck, *Die gesammelten Werke,* Vol. 8, No. 74. Summarized by Imre Gonda, *Bismarck és az 1867-es osztrák–magyar kiegyezés* [Bismarck and the Austro–Hungarian Compromise of 1867] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1960), 162.

13. Otto von Bismarck, "Gespräch mit dem Kronprinzen Rudolf von Österreich, Februar 28, 1883. Based on Ludwig Ritter von Przibram. Otto von Bismarck, *Die gesammelten Werke,* Vol. 8, No. 346. Summarized by Imre Gonda, *op. cit.,* 162–163.

14. William Ewart Gladstone in the Government of Ireland debate, April 8, 1886, House of Commons, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 1886, col. 1047.

15. George Joachim Goschen in the Government of Ireland debate, April 13, 1886, House of Commons, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 1886, col. 1465.

16. Sir John Lubbock in the Government of Ireland debate, April 9, 1886, House of Commons, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 1886, col. 1235.

17. Arthur Griffith, "The Resurrection of Hungary," *The United Irishman,* January 2, 1904. In: Arthur Mitchell and Pádraig Ó Snodaigh, eds, *Irish Political Documents* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), 117.

18. Arthur Griffith, "The Resurrection of Hungary," *op. cit.*

19. Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600–1972* (London, 1988), 457.

20. Miklós Lojkó, "National Loyalties in the Peripheries of Europe," *Proceedings of the John Hewitt Summer School,* Belfast, 1995.

21. István Diószegi, *op. cit.,* 24–25.

22. André Lorant, *Le Compromis Austro-Hongrois et l'opinion publique française en 1867* (Genève: Droz, 1971), 67–149. (For a review in French see Tibor Frank, *Annales Universitatis Scientiarum Budapestinensis de R. Eötvös Nominatae, Sectio Historica,* 1977, 267–271.) For a European survey of how the various powers related to the Compromise see Endre Kovács, *Ausztria útja az 1867-es kiegyezéshez* [The Road of Austria to the Compromise of 1867] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1968), 210–331.

23. An excellent example was the *magnum opus* of György Szabad, *Forradalom és kiegyezés válaszútján* (1860–61) [On the Crossroads of Revolution and Compromise, 1860–61] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1967).

24. See Péter Hanák, "Historizálás és történetiség a kiegyezés vitájában" [Historicity and Historicality in the Debate on the Compromise] in Péter Hanák, *Magyarország a Monarchiában* [Hungary in the Monarchy] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1975), 159–221.

SCAPEGOATS IN POST-WORLD WAR I
HUNGARIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

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Studying the history of twentieth-century Eastern and Central European politi-
cal thought, one often comes across a basic stereotype that is common to both
liberals and conservatives, communists and Fascists, nationalists and cosmopoli-
tans, as well as to the ideologists of ruling and oppositional parties of Poles, Czechs,
Slovaks, Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, and Slovenians. When
they are trying to explain the defeats, losses, failures, and sufferings of their re-
spective nations in the course of the centuries, they often make an attempt at blaming
influential personalities, smaller or larger social groups (layers, classes) or even
non-personal factors (such as ideologies, traditions, or prejudices). Whether these
explanations take the form of detailed analyses, or very superficial argumenta-
tion, or even merely occasional cursory remarks, the result is often the same: the
identification of a *scapegoat*. This paper will make an attempt at examining the
peculiarities of Eastern and Central European scapegoating on the basis of a case
study of one of the greatest national tragedies in Hungarian history: the collapse
of the Hungarian state in the aftermath of World War I, which entailed the loss of
two thirds of the country's territory and about forty percent of the Hungarian
ethnic population. The justification for the choice of this topic lies not only in my
own historical interests but also in several more current experiences. Since the
"annus mirabilis" of 1989 and for the first time after many decades (or even cen-
turies) most of the peoples of the region can indeed try to enjoy self-determination
and sovereignty. However, the scope of action for these small nations is limited by
numerous external and internal factors, and they will experience many more fail-
ures than they might have expected. Declining living standards, widespread cor-
ruption, the lack of substantial economic and political (or sometimes even moral,
not to speak of military) aid from the "West" and the lack of a true, promising
vision of the future make one ponder about the causes of these problems. All too
often clear-cut, monocausal explanations are being demanded. Furthermore, so-
cial cohesion must also be strengthened and, as we shall see in a minute, both
needs can be satisfied with the help of scapegoats. In difficult, critical situations

scapegoating has become a recurring motive in Eastern and Central European political thought. This trend toward finding scapegoats first fully emerged after World War I.

The Conceptual Framework of the Research

In describing the "Day of Atonement" the Old Testament presents a story in the Book of Leviticus. In the story the Lord tells Moses to make Aaron "come into the holy place: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering ... Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself and for his house ... And when he has made an act of atoning, for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and send him away into the wilderness ... The goat shall bear all their iniquities upon him to a solitary land ... "[1] It is obvious here that there can be no scapegoat without a sense of guilt, and guilt means breaking the law. If being tortured by remorse, feeling qualms of conscience, a handy way out of this uncomfortable situation is to transfer the guilt onto someone else.

These ideas, however, are already the terrain of modern social psychology. It was mainly Allport, Heider and most recently Tom Douglas, who in their works on group-dynamics and prejudices extensively dwelt on this issue.[2] The analysis of the behavior of smaller and larger groups shows that whenever tensions of any kind accumulate, there also appears a demand for finding a scapegoat (one or several individuals or a group, category of people), who can be presented as the ultimate cause of all the troubles. Within the group the prevailing attitude toward the scapegoat is one of violence, and this violent attitude is often encouraged. The deeper-lying, social-psychological motives of this process seem to be two-fold: enforced attribution and the mobilizing-recruiting functions.

Enforced attribution refers to the socio-psychological need for calling for clear, monocausal explanations in the case of very complex events. As historians know, such explanations are in most cases impossible, and finding a scapegoat (be it an individual, or a smaller, or a larger group of people) is a comfortable way of satisfying this need. Responsibility is thus transferred onto the scapegoat. Responsibility, however, can be defined in at least three forms: legal, moral, and historical-political. The most fertile ground for creating scapegoats is the situation when these three types of responsibilities do not overlap: what is fair according to the current penal code can not always be tolerated by the standards of the Ten Commandments or on the basis of historical-political considerations.

The major element of the scapegoating process is the mobilizing-recruiting function, or the "prospective" creation of scapegoats. Scapegoats in the original,

Biblical sense of the word are not necessarily hated — one can even feel a little sympathy or sorrow for them. Most "mobilizing" scapegoats are substantially different. Their creation is part of the birth and emergence of every modern totalitarian movement. This scapegoat (be it "exploiters" or the Jews or the "others" – whoever they are) is the object of a common, collective hatred, and this feeling of hatred generally includes a certain amount of guilt as well. This might result in what E. H. Erikson called "pseudo speciation,"[3] where the scapegoat is considered to be a part of a "different species" such as an "inferior" race or class. Therefore the otherwise valid prohibition of aggression against members of one's "own species" does not apply when dealing with them.

Szekfű and Jászi

With the help of this conceptual framework I should like to focus on three different analyses of Hungary's post-World War I situation.

The most important and most influential book in twentieth-century Hungarian political literature was published in 1920[4] and aimed at pointing out the deeper-lying causes of Hungary's post World War I tragedy. The author, Gyula Szekfű was 37 years old at that time and a well known archivist and historian. A few years earlier Szekfű had risen to prominence with a book on Ferenc Rákóczi, the leader of an important early eighteenth-century Hungarian anti-Habsburg uprising. Dispensing with the glorification typical of the previous Hungarian secondary literature, he gave a most realistic picture of Ferenc Rákóczi during his years of exile after the defeat of his anti-Habsburg war for the independence of Hungary. This led to widespread accusations leveled at Szekfű as a "traitor" to the sacred Hungarian national traditions. The accusations were further inflamed by the circumstance that Szekfű had worked for several years in Viennese archives. Szekfű was shocked by these reactions; and in his monumental historical essay written in the tragic mood of the aftermath of Hungary's disintegration after World War I, he found the main causes of Hungary's tragedy in the series of the futile attempts at the liberal transformation of Hungary. "Three generations" (that is also the title of his book) were misled by the illusions of Western liberalism, which could not take root in Hungary. The book reads as a medical constat and therapy. The patient, which is Hungarian society, has become infected by the disease of liberalism. Szekfű's argumentation can be interpreted as a peculiar case of enforced attribution, where the liberal generation that adopted alien political institutions, that might apply in England but not in Hungary, are being blamed. As a consequence, Szekfű argues, the backbone of the Hungarian nation, the Hungarian nobility, turned out to be a loser in the emerging liberal market economy, no indigenous Hungarian bourgeoisie could develop, and the economic and cultural

gap was filled by the alien Jewish middle and upper class. Thus, Szekfű put the main responsibility for the national tragedy on the liberal nobility. Nevertheless, quite a number of his readers interpreted the chapters on the rule of the Jewry as the presentation of a mobilizing-recruiting scapegoat. Szekfű's very self-critical approach appealed little to the wider public; and the alien Eastern Jews seemed to be a much more proper scapegoat for the Hungarian society.

In his book Szekfű devoted a special chapter to those tendencies in later nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Hungarian political and intellectual life that one way or another were in opposition to the dominant liberalism. In it he analyzed the so-called bourgeois radicals, who from a leftist platform had systematically criticized the pre-World War I Hungarian political regimes. The members of this group had consisted mainly of Jewish middle class intellectuals; most of whom had been born between 1875 and 1885. Among their ranks we can find some of the best, most widely traveled, and most widely read Hungarian writers of the time. They studied modern French, English and American sociology and wanted to apply their newly acquired intellectual arsenal in order to work out a plan for the modernization of Hungarian society. They concentrated their attacks on the antiquated feudal structure of Hungarian agricultural society the "reactionary" (their favorite term was always contrasted with "progressive") economic, social and political role of large feudal holdings. They had also called their contemporaries' attention to the possible fateful consequences of the maltreatment of the ethnic minorities living in Hungary. In 1918–1919 Jászi and some of his comrades found themselves in prominent political positions. From 1 November 1918 to 19 January 1919 Jászi served as minister in charge of negotiating with the politicians of the minorities. Thus, during that time he was in a position to try to put his ideas concerning the territorial autonomy of the national minorities into practice. Under the given circumstances Jászi's efforts in this area were obviously doomed to failure. Afterwards Jászi and a number of his friends had to go into exile.

In 1920, same year that Szekfű published his book on the failures of liberalism in Hungary, Jászi also summarized his views concerning the responsibility for Hungary's post-World War I tragedy. His book[5] argued that the deepest root of problems was the fact that true liberalism could not gain ground in Hungary: "... all serious intellectuals were subsided into silence during the last quarter of century; all cultural and liberal aspirations were trampled down by drunken patriots, plundering gang-leaders and ... adventurers ..."[6] This revealed the total and the final failure of historical Hungary because it demonstrated that the noble-plutocratic class-rule had not been able to do any organizational and creative work.[1] Despite their conflicting premises Jászi then arrived at a conclusion that was surprisingly close to that of Szekfű. "The Hungarian soul turned out to be sterile and the thinning ranks of the cultural elite were increasingly filled by aliens, first of all Jews ..." which in turn led to a disgusting mixture of "feudalism and usury." [7]

If we now interpret Jászi's argumentation in terms of enforced attribution, he also came up with a scapegoat that had lurked within Hungarian society: the "feudal-clerical" reactionary groups. Szekfű had blamed a rootless liberalism for the misfortunes of Hungary, whereas Jászi had explained the national tragedy by concentrating on the lack of true liberalism. Still, Jászi's conclusion could also be understood as pointing to the responsibility of the infiltrating, alien Jews as mobilizing-recruiting scapegoats.

These two typical and – to say the least – conflicting views thus seem to share a peculiar feature. Their conclusions concerning the role of Hungarian Jewry, most likely contrary to the two very different authors' intentions, both emerged in the eyes of numerous contemporaries as advocates of mobilizing-recruiting scapegoats. The primary subject of this paper is not, however, the tracing the history of anti-Semitism in Hungary, and so I would like to emphasize a different point. What I should like to call the reader's attention to is that different as these two analyses of the causes of Hungary's post-World War I tragedy might be, they share the convention that pre-World War I Hungary was fatally sick and the flawed, cruel and poorly prepared decisions of the victorious Great Powers only gave the final blow to a society that was already in agony. Thus, the deepest roots of the collapse were to be found within the state and society of Hungary.

Negotiations in Paris

During approximately the same months, when Jászi and Szekfű were working on their books, the "official" Hungarian analysis was also being prepared. Albert Apponyi, head of the Hungarian delegation sent to the Paris peace talks, delivered an excellent summation of his views in a speech on 10 January 1920;[8] and his explanation also echoed the main points of his previously developed line of argumentation. In Apponyi's version the emphasis was on the *external* factors of the national tragedy. He went back to the time of the wars against Ottoman expansion. Hungary had taken a lion's share in defending the Christian West from barbarism. This sacrifice in the service of European interests had at least two fateful and disastrous consequences in the long run. On the one hand, Hungary had lost the dominantly Hungarian character of its population, and on the other hand it had become dependent on the Habsburgs. Even the Compromise of 1867 had only been a formal restitution of independence. Responsibility for the participation in the war thus solely lay with the Habsburgs; it had been contrary to the will of the Hungarians. When, however, the final decision to start the war was made, the traditionally loyal Hungarians had no choice left but to fight on the side of their old allies. The relationship between Hungarians and the national minorities in Hungary had always been fraternal and the conflicts had been due to Viennese

intrigues. Hungarian tolerance and liberalism were well reflected by the 1868 law on the status of nationalities in Hungary.

The redrawing of borders in Eastern and Central Europe cannot be based on the ethnic principle, Apponyi argued. This would be contrary to economic rationalism and will only result in the upsurge of intolerant nationalism in the region. Consequently, the responsibility for the open conflicts, which may arise, rests entirely with the victorious great powers, which were dictating the conditions of the peace settlement. The "official" scapegoats are thus the Habsburgs, the victorious great powers, and the misled national minorities. In effect these constituted external, not internal, factors.

Let me now conclude by referring back to my introductory remarks about the topicality of scapegoating in post-1989 Hungary in particular and in Eastern and Central Europe in general. There is a desperate need in these societies to find explanations for past and current failures. As a result, both the leading politicians and the average citizens frequently think in terms of simplifying stereotypes. We can only hope that the newly established democratic institutions guarantee that realistic and sober self-criticism, combined with the representation of Hungarian interests in the international political arena will not give way to scapegoating with all its possible fateful consequences.

Notes

1. Leviticus, 16. 3, 5, 6, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22. *The Holy Bible*, Revised Standard Version (Toronto–New York–Edinburgh, 1953), 119–120.
2. Gordon Willard Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Reading, MA, 1949); F. Heider, "Social Perception and Phenomenal Causality" in R. Taguiri and L. Petruib, eds, *Person, Perception and Interpersonal Behavior* (Stanford, CA, 1958), first published in *Psychological Review* 51 (1944): 358–374; Thomas Douglas, *Scapegoats: Transferring Blame* (London–New York, 1995).
3. E. H. Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility* (New York, 1964).
4. Gyula Szekfű, *Három nemzedék* [Three Generations] (Budapest, 1920).
5. Oszkár Jászi, *Magyar kálvária – magyar feltámadás* [Hungarian Calvary – Hungarian Resurrection] (Vienna, 1920). In English: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary* (London, 1925).
6. Jászi, *op. cit.,* 154.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Albert Apponyi, *Lutte pour la paix juste. Expose verbal du comte Albert Apponyi* (Budapest, 1933), 10–32. Cf. Anikó Kovács-Bertrand, *Der ungarische Revisionismus nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (München, 1997), 78–83.

RESTORATION, NOT RENEWAL:
FROM NAZI TO FOUR-POWER OCCUPATION –
THE DIFFICULT TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY
IN AUSTRIA AFTER 1945

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> *"[T]he Austrian tragedy ... consisted in the fact that the democrats
> weren't sufficiently patriotic Austrians, while the Austrian patriots
> in their turn weren't democratic enough."*[1]

Introduction

It is notoriously difficult to measure the *rootedness* of democracy in a nation. What ought to be our yardstick for success in democratic governance – the depth of civil society? the liveliness of grass roots politics in political culture? voter participation in campaigns and the electorate's turn-out in elections? adherence to human rights and tolerance in political discourse? What are our models – an abstract theoretical paragon of a model democracy constructed by philosopher kings, or American and British democracy, the oldest and most successful practicing democracies in the world?

Reestablishing democratic governance after long periods of totalitarian repression represents a particularly daunting task. In 1945 Austria after five years of Austro-Fascism and seven years of Nazi dictatorship was not so different from Hungary in 1990 after more than 40 years of communist totalitarianism. The long dark period of repression and intimidation and enforced non-participation in the political process made people's instincts to practice grass roots politics and civil society whither. Sheer survival forced people to levels of collaboration with totalitarian regimes, which dulled their will for political action and hobbled their respect for the arena of contentious democracy. Both denazificiation in Austria after 1945 and, for want of a better word "decommunization" ("lustrace" in Czechoslovakia, uncovering the Stasi regimes in the former German Democratic Republic and Poland, etc.) after 1989 were, widely resented by the implicated populations and produced new "victims myths." How to purge a body politic of the ghosts of the past?[2]

Looking at the case study of the Republic of Austria and its difficult transition from National Socialist ("Nazi") dictatorship to democracy after 1945 we need an

analytical tool that allows us to observe the process of democracy successfully taking roots after World War II. I propose to do this introducing some comparisons to the West German transition after 1945.[3] As far as suitable comparisons go, these two Central European neighbors offer similar trajectories of transitions from totalitarian rule to democratic governance under the tutelage of four-power occupation regimes. There are major differences in the history, political culture and traditions of these two countries, but we cannot dwell on these.

We will introduce some analytical tools of the German scholars Hermann-Josef Rupieper and Anselm Doering-Manteuffel about the genesis of postwar West German democracy to an analysis of the Austrian transition.[4] Rupieper has looked at the process of restoration and/or reform in the reestablishment of West German democracy and uses the inclusion of German *emigrés* and resistance fighters in the reconstruction of the Federal Republic of Germany – they were the conscience of their nation and provide a yardstick to observe an open mind for reform; Rupieper has also investigated the seriousness of denazification and reeducation as a measure of purging the old regime – the popular acceptance of liberal democracy indicated the willingness to welcome a radical new beginning. Behind all of this looms the question of continuities and discontinuities with the pre-World War II era after 1945. Was there a new beginning in 1945 – a "zero hour" *("Stunde Null")*? While Rupieper has closely studied the emergence of the Federal Republic in the years 1946 to 1952, Doering-Manteuffel takes a longer perspective and makes a crucial distinction between the establishment of "formal democracy" in the 1950s and the more important growth of liberal democracy ("inner democracy") in the 1960s.[5]

The Genesis of the Second Austrian Republic
after World War II

1. Restoration, Not Reform: No "Stunde Null"

In 1945 the defeated Germany experienced total control by the four-power occupation of the Soviet Union, United States, Great Britain, and France. The noted constitutional scholar Carl J. Friedrich called Allied control a "constitutional dictatorship." The emergence of party life and a free press was heavily circumscribed. Grass roots local control emerged slowly in 1946; in 1947 West Germans began to participate more directly in building democracy and public life. In 1948 West Germans began drafting a constitution, and in the fall of 1949 they elected their first national government.[6]

The trajectory of (re)building a new republic in Austria was very different. The Allies gave the *"liberated"* Austrians much more political leverage than the *de-*

feated Germans to reconstitute their democratic institutions. The basic American planning document from 1944 stated that Austria would be accorded "different treatment from that applied to Germany" and the Austrian people would be permitted "a voice in the determination of their future status."[7] This preferred treatment of liberated Austria had the consequence that the *formal institutions* of democratic governance emerged in 1945, much more quickly than in defeated Germany. This gave the Austrians a huge jump start in reestablishing their state and nation (scholars have called it Austria's *"Vorsprung an Staatlichkeit"*).

Considerable continuity prevailed among the political elites of the First and the Second Republic.[8] Even before the liberation of Austria from Nazi Germany was completed and the war ended, the Provisional Government led by Karl Renner proclaimed a new Austrian Republic from the Ballhausplatz on 27 April 1945. Renner's "declaration of independence" informed the world about the reestablishment of the democratic Republic of Austria and the reinstitution of the Constitution of 1920.[9] This Provisional Renner Government operated as a broad "national unity" Conservative-Socialist-Communists three-party coalition. While the liberation of Vienna by the Red Army was still afoot, the conservative Christian People's Party and the Socialist Party had emerged in the early days of April 1945 largely through efforts of elder statesmen such as Karl Renner and Leopold Kunschak (ÖVP) and a younger generation of party hacks from the entrenched prewar political camps. Renner as a founder and first Chancellor of the First Austrian Republic was the prime example of the restoration of some of the prewar political elites as *patres patriae*. Next to Renner, Julius Raab and Leopold Figl in the ÖVP, as well as Adolf Schärf and Oskar Helmer in the SPÖ, had been politically active before the war. Raab, for example, had been a member of the last Schuschnigg Cabinet in 1938. The conservative-Christian People's Party (ÖVP) harbored many politicians like Felix Hurdes and Heinrich Drimmel who had supported the Austro-fascist regime and never explicitly renounced this anti-democratic heritage of the prewar Christian Social Party. Leopold Figl was one of the few prominent members of the Renner government to have spent most of the war in Nazi concentration camps, Schärf sat the war out in his Vienna "inner exile." Karl Gruber (ÖVP) was the only prominent resistance fighter against Nazism to join the Renner government when it came to govern all of Austria in the fall of 1945. Communist leaders such as Ernst Fischer were directly flown in from Moscow to reconstitute the Communist Party – the third party in the provisional Renner coalition. There was a strict prohibition for a party to be formed in 1945 from the old nationalist pro-German camp since Austria's most prominent Nazis hailed from this "third" camp, which in 1949 would start its own "fourth" party. The Western Allies considered the Renner Government a "Soviet puppet regime," similar to other such regimes established by the Red Army in Eastern Europe after

liberation. They only recognized it in late October 1945. Until then the Renner government had no authority beyond the Soviet zone of occupation and was totally isolated from the Western occupation zones.[10]

A strong sense of a new beginning prevailed in these political elites, who created the myth of the *"Wiederaufbaugeneration."* The founding fathers' myth of a "new beginning" ("zero hour") – Austrians single-handedly and without outside support rebuilding both their polity and economy from the rubble of World War II – prevailed until the 1970s.[11] The reality is much more complex than this founding myth of the Second Austrian Republic. Most historians today agree that there was no *"Stunde null"* in Austria![12] The Austrian diplomat Josef Schöner called Austria's beginning in April/May 1945 a return to the First Republic *("Rück-bruch")*. Schöner was an archetypal representative of his colleagues in the Foreign Ministry and much of the higher federal bureaucracy. Many had served under the Dollfuss and Schuschnigg regimes and lost their job in 1938 (or worse, went to concentration camps), yet considered the "elimination" of democracy necessary in 1933/4 "to prevent worse things to happen."[13] Some of the higher officials who had "done their duty" and served the Nazi regime may have briefly lost their jobs in 1945 but the majority were smoothly reintegrated by getting party memberships in the ÖVP and SPÖ.[14] Many of those who had supported the authoritarian Dollfuss and Schuschnigg and the totalitarian Hitler regimes did not pay a price after 1945.[15]

Statism, the *"long shadow of the Austrian state"* so deeply-rooted in Austrian political consciousness, prevailed after World War II. So did the political symbolism with the revival of the prewar constitution, coat-of-arms and flag (only a new hymn was written).[16] Renner ruled his Cabinet like a mini-Metternich. He dominated decision-making in the *"Staatsrat"* with the principal party leaders. His full Cabinet then discussed these decisions but ultimately had to endorse them. He single-handedly nipped any basic constitutional debate in the bud by pressuring his Cabinet to reinstitute the Constitution of 1920, which was amended in 1929. Naturally, by perceiving the enemy in the Austro-Fascist regime rather than in National Socialism, which he had endorsed in 1938, Renner did not want to return to the authoritarian constitution of 1934. But neither did he desire to unleash a lengthy constitutional debate. Renner found all the support he needed in his coalition, when the Communists demanded a new constitution that would be "more democratic" like those in the "people's democracies" established in Eastern Europe. Obviously, the Austrian model for democratic government would not the "people's democracies." The Communists and their Soviet patrons criticized the Austrian government as late as 1950 for their failure to rewrite the constitution.

The American planners actually had envisioned a similar process that had been used in southern reconstruction after the American Civil War (1861–65). After the setting up of an interim provisional government they wanted the election of a

constituent assembly that could (presumably draft and) promulgate a new consti-
tution. While the process of the reconstitution of the new Austria was going on,
the occupation authorities could rely on the provisions of the 1920 Constitution,
amended in 1929. The provisional government emerging in Vienna in the late
days of April 1945, of course, was not to the liking of the Anglo-American pow-
ers. Renner most likely had no inkling of such American plans. Relying on his
practical experience of 1919, the shrewd opportunist Renner followed his healthy
instincts as nation builder and nipped, in the bud, any lengthy constitutional de-
bate, which might revive the old party strife by reinstituting the 1920/1929 consti-
tution.[17]

Renner operated on the age-*old Austrian political culture of enlightened au-
thoritarianism*, where patronizing small political elites made the crucial decisions
in the style of Emperor Joseph in the best interest of the people.[18] Such
"Josephinism" did not need public opinion or allow for contentious political de-
bates.[19] The patronizing style of Austria's political elites prevailed in the grand
coalition long after Renner. Take Austria's secret rearmament in the early 1950s
as an example. The Communist strike of October 1950 (frequently exaggerated to
have been a "putsch attempt") precipitated the building of the nucleus of an Aus-
trian army. It was driven and financed by the Americans in close cooperation with
some Austrian military planners and the top Austrian leadership (Figl, Gruber,
Schärf and Helmer). Given the high level of secrecy, parliament was not con-
sulted, let alone the public informed. But then, much of Austria's postwar legisla-
tion was generated in a similar fashion from the "top down." Draft bills were
written by senior experts in the ministerial bureaucracy, then passed by the coali-
tion leadership in Cabinet sessions, before they were rubberstamped by parlia-
ment to become laws. The public was denied any input – it had to swallow and
live with the results.[20]

The great fear in the Second Republic was a return to the confrontational poli-
tics of the First Republic. The sea change in the Second Republic amounted to
creation of *political consensus* across the principal political camps. This amounted
to a reinvention of Austrian political culture. This basic acceptance of political
cooperation and the spirit of bipartisan consensus across the jagged old ideologi-
cal divides, born from the trauma of prewar party stride between the camps, marked
the principal difference to the First Republic.[21] While the political leaders of the
First Republic such as Otto Bauer and Ignaz Seipel had been intellectual heavy-
weights beyond the narrow Austrian confines, the leadership of the Second Re-
public (not counting Renner and Bruno Kreisky), with their narrow-minded prag-
matism, was a better fit for small Austria.[22]

Proporz – the unique postwar Austrian system of massive patronage – became
the principal tool to build this cherished consensus (its *pendant* in the arena of
political economy was the Austrocorporatist *"Sozialpartnerschaft"*). The Ameri-

can planners had anticipated the most important problem of future Austrian politi-
cal tranquility: *"success of democracy in Austria will depend on an adjustment of
the political differences* between the two sections of the population formerly or-
ganized in the Christian Social and Social Democratic parties" (emphasis added).[23]
To guarantee postwar political stability the Western occupation powers forced
these two principal camps dominating Austrian political life to cooperating through-
out the occupation period. At the slightest hint of tensions in the fragile coalition
(and they were frequent), the Americans and British called on party leaders and
reminded them that the grand coalition was the best recipe for political stability in
Austria, as well as maintaining the anti-communist consensus (the enemy image
of postwar anti-communism glued the ÖVP and SPÖ together and amounted to a
quasi-constitutional political force[24]). In 1946 the British Labor government even
considered using the Pope as mediator to remind the People's Party not to threaten
the coalition with their constant backbiting and bickering. One American observer
noted that only a shared "distaste for communism" held the coalition together,
otherwise they remained "steadfast in their disagreements on most other issues."
Indeed, during the emerging Cold War East-West conflict, rabid anti-communism
("red fascism") became the new postwar ideology uniting the two dominant Aus-
trian political camps and replacing their old ideological baggage that had disu-
nited them so profoundly before the war.[25] Like in West Germany later,
"Entideologisierung" was the basic prerequisite for political comity. Both camps
had to abandon much of the heritage of their traditional Catholic and Marxist
ideologies respectively.

   "Lustrace" Austrian-style was a*greeing on taboo zones ("Tabuisierung") about
Austria's homegrown Fascist and National Socialist past* (1933–1945). The con-
spiracy of silence about Austria's recent past was the other crucial precondition
for fostering cooperation in the grand coalition governments after 1945. The So-
cialists had to forget that many in the People's Party had served the Austro-Fascist
regime, which in 1934 had thrown them into jail and drove them into exile. The
People's Party had to suppress the anticlerical tradition in the Socialist Party. Af-
ter the Anschluss many Socialists (including Renner) had allied themselves with
the NS regime and helped deport the likes of Figl and Hurdes into concentration
camps. Under the tutelage of the Western occupation powers an implicit agree-
ment was reached that the new enemy was neither the prewar ideological foe nor
the Fascist/Nazi threat from the past, but the "red peril" on Austria's (and West
Germany's) borders.

   Constructing and agreeing on a new common master narrative of history was
mandatory for the strange bedfellows in the Austrian coalition to stay in bed to-
gether. The postwar consensus was built on this "coalition history."[26] It was built
on taboos and repressed memory of the Austrofascist and Nazi pasts and the pow-
erful *myth of Austria as first victim of Nazism*. With their ambiguous Moscow

Declaration of 1943 the occupation powers provided the basic tool for construct-
ing this postwar myth. Anglo-American planning had been based on the premise –
now called a "half-truth" by historians – of Austria as a "victim of Nazi aggres-
sion rather than integral part of Germany." Peter Pulzer is correct in averring that
such "reconciliation meant a conspiracy of silence about the past." By 1955 the
People's Party and the Socialists had made coalition governments and the rich
patronage of *Proporz* the mainstays of Austria's new political culture of consen-
sus politics. In spite of habitual disagreement and tensions over most important
political issues, the "grand coalition" survived until 1966 and revived again dur-
ing the past fourteen years (1986-2000). Peter Pulzer's judgement is again on the
mark when he charges that the coalition practiced "suffocating avoidance of con-
troversy." It also stifled "the types of conflicts that are inherent in a modern, ma-
ture society" and the lifeblood of settled democracies.[27]

2. Preempting Reform:
The Exclusion of Emigrés and the Resistance
from Political Reconstruction

One of the prime lessons from twentieth century totalitarianism has been that
resistance fighters and dissidents have to be considered as the conscience of their
nations. Active defiance of totalitarian repression takes courage and deserves the
highest respect. The Scholl siblings and Martin Niemöller (or Franz Jägerstätter
in the *Ostmark*) did not bring down Nazism. But their noble deeds helped postwar
Germany appreciate the survival of a tiny core of decent humanity – civilization
had not entirely been uprooted under Hitler. Similarly, Andrei Shakarov, Vaclav
Havel and Lech Walesa did not bring down communism but helped preserve a
sense of decent humanity under the long dark night of Communist oppression.
The Czech people showed extraordinary gratitude towards Havel for the courage
of his convictions by honoring him with the highest office in their land. No such
Havels as the postwar Austrian George Washington!
   It became both hallmark and yardstick of the character of postwar political
regimes in Germany and Austria whether the postwar political elites dared in-
clude those who had actively resisted National Socialism and invite the emigrants
from Nazi oppression back. In Germany *emigrés* were welcomed back and resist-
ance fighters included in the new political elites. Both contributed to rejunvenating
the democratic climate and actively confronting the past. In Austria emigrants
were generally not invited back; the new regime also failed to include resistance
fighters. Why were the Austrians so ungenerous towards those *who single-handedly
preserved the continuity of the Austrian nation abroad or in the underground at
home under most difficult circumstances*?

With his two volumes on the *"Vertriebene Vernunft,"* Friedrich Stadler has documented the massive exodus of artistic talent and intellect from Austria in 1938 and in previous years.[28] In the course of World War II some 130,000 Austrians ended up in exile in 90 different countries around the globe. It is rare in the annals of history for a nation to suffer such a massive self-inflicted brain drain. The personal serendipitous journeys towards physical survival and safety of those expelled were harrowing, as Egon Schwarz has recently reminded us.[29] Admission and assimilation to new cultures was always painful and difficult. Given the intellect and education backgrounds of a Paul Lazarsfeld, Marie Jahoda, Ernst Badian, Raul Hilberg, Karl Popper, Friedrich von Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, Gottfried Haberler, Victor Weisskopf, Billy Wilder, Hilde Spiel, Stefan Zweig, Oskar Kokoschka, Joseph Roth, Henry Grunwald and the endless list of gifted Viennese Jews who were often brutally expelled after the Anschluss, they would go on to brilliant careers in academia, science and the arts in exile and soon fill the *Who's Who* of Anglo-American arts and letters. Their gain was Austria's loss. They helped make American universities the intellectual hub of the world. Their absence cast Austrian universities into a long postwar twilight of provinciality and mediocrity.[30]

Ironically, these cosmopolitan exiles were also the most profound Austrian patriots. More than the numerous Nazi fellow travelers and *Mitläufer*, who sat the war out in the *Ostmark*, these *emigrés* kept the idea of Austria alive. They formed the "Free Austrian Movement" in London and defied Hitler's attempt to erase the idea of Austria. As Edward Timms has demonstrated, London became Austria's intellectual and cultural capital during the war with regular lectures, art shows and exhibits being organized by the gifted Austrian exile community. While the exiled Socialist and Christian Social politicians carried on with their interminable prewar ideological feuds in Prague, Paris, London and New York, the intellectual and artistic *emigré* community preserved and breathed life into the idea of Austria.[31]

Uninspiring university professors in the 1940s and 1950s and 1960s, who often had served the Nazi regime, created dull and lazy minds who failed to absorb new ideas from abroad and favored tradition and restoration and failed to question authority. Only in the 1960s did a younger generation, born during or soon after the war, start to question such dull-witted authority, when their protests forced the resignation of the unreconstructed Nazi and outspokenly racist anti-Semite with the unlikely German name of Taras Borodajkewicz from the Economics University in Vienna.[32] An intellectually unquestioning climate in the universities, of course, provided the *ambiance* to cement the postwar consensus that petrified the coalition for so long and made reform and democratic renewal so difficult. Who could question that the political apathy of the wartime/postwar generation was related to this? Austria was too poor for an American-style "GI-Bill of Rights" to educate and democratize in the marketplace of ideas the veterans that had been

politically socialized in the Hitler Youth and then "did their duty" in the deadly and aggressive German Wehrmacht. The failure to bring back the "best and the brightest" expelled in 1938 amounted to the raising of an *iron curtain* vis-à-vis democratic renewal and lively intellectual discourse; the fostering of a vibrant civil society was nipped in the bud early. Here too patronizing Josephinian restoration generally prevailed over reform.

Most of these talented *emigrés* were not invited back because they were Jews. Most refugees that had been politically active before the war had been Socialists. Anti-semitism after the war was no longer as vile and brutally open as in had been in1938. It flowered more subtly behind the scenes. The postwar Socialist Party set out to liberate itself of the brilliant Jewish leadership that had dominated the party before the war. The SPÖ consequently moved from the Austro-Marxism left to the tame middle of the political spectrum. The postwar leaders of the SPÖ came from the prewar moderate right wing like Renner, or were younger party hacks such as Schärf and Oskar Helmer. People like Helmer and Heinrich Schneidmandl from rural Lower Austria were intimidated by the sharp intellect of the urban Viennese Jews and did not want them back. It would have threatened their ascendancy to positions of power in the party. Having sat out the war at home supposedly entitled them to enjoy the rich postwar party patronage. Their mild anti-semitism and rabid anti-communism not only helped build the coalition consensus in the "shotgun marriage" with their reluctant old ideological enemies in the ÖVP, but also endeared them to the Western occupation powers in the emerging Cold War. These new Socialists were even more pro-American than their hidebound ÖVP counterparts.[33]

Only few *emigrés* returned after 1945. Oskar Pollak came back from London to edit the *Arbeiterzeitung*. A small group of a younger generation of Jewish Socialists like Bruno Kreisky, Walter Wodak, and Hans Thalberg returned from exile to go into the diplomatic service; they became the leading impresarios of formulating Austrian foreign policy in the 1960's and 1970's. Kreisky is the best example to demonstrate how valuable the return and reintegration of talented Jewish Socialist refugees was for the SPÖ. He put his dominant imprint on the Socialist Party and Austrian politics during a time of belated democratic renewal in the 1970s and single-handedly kept the Socialists in power for an entire generation. Otto Leichter's attempt to come back and assume the intellectual leadership of the SPÖ as the postwar Otto Bauer failed. Schärf apparently would have welcomed the return of theoreticians like Benedikt Kautsky and Adolf Sturmthal, but his party was not exited about the prospect of reintegrating such serious intellectuals.[34]

Hilde Spiel returned for a few weeks in the spring of 1946 under the auspices of the British Army and left with a devastating account of the intellectual climate prevailing in Vienna:

> Here everything is delightful apart from the attitude of the Viennese,
> who are either Nazis (whose sting has admittedly been drawn), or
> charming, politically absurd members of the Volkspartei, or prosaic
> bourgeois Social Democrats, or doctrinaire Communists, or charm-
> ing but absurd Communists. That is roughly the extent of it. They are
> either corrupt or exhausted or politically obtuse or fanatical, but one
> thing does speak in their favour: their great love of art ... I am con-
> vinced that the only chance for the Austrians lies in their enormous
> talent for all art forms, their exceptionally good taste and their artis-
> tic sensitivity. If they learn to restrain themselves and to leave poli-
> tics to others, they will have a future in Europe.

The culture that reawakened was very traditional and the politics hidebound. In his fine essay on Spiel, Timms concludes that "those who did return found little scope for realizing their dream of a 'Free Austria' – radical socialist democracy in which they would themselves have been welcomed back to provide a new style of intellectual leadership."[35]

While the exiles, who had personally experienced vibrant but confrontational democracies at work in England and the U.S., were not welcomed back, the fellow traveling Nazis were on the rise again and were quickly reintegrated into Austrian life. The *Mitläufer* did not want to be reminded by the exiles, who had cultivated the idea of the Austrian nation during the war, that they had abandoned not only their conscience but also bet on the wrong horse and lost. The fellow travelers felt comfortable living in a hidebound Austria now almost without Jews.[36]

The restored Austria also unceremoniously rejected the participation of resistance fighters in positions of political leadership in its postwar political reconstruction. Austria's resistance movement during the war operated under extraordinary difficult circumstances and never took off. The majority of dedicated and courageous resistance fighters were Catholics and Communists. Most of them went to concentration camps or the execution blocks early in the war. *Laissez-faire* Austrians seem to be better followers than resisters. In a country where regimes have changed frequently in the twentieth century switching party allegiance becomes a way of survival for the hangers-on. It had happened in 1938 and would happen again in 1945. This also means that political convictions cannot be running very deep, let alone fighting for one's persuasions. Most Austrians *("Ostmärkers")* were lethargic during the war and not prepared "to sacrifice their lives in a somewhat forlorn cause," reported the OSS. The typical Viennese was an indifferent grumbler *("Raunzer")*. The OSS reported a representative Viennese as noting: "I do not care how the war ends. All I want is to be able to get my motor car back." When the war ended they joined their old political camps again – some even took a secret Communist Party membership as an insurance policy for worse to come.[37]

Austrians after the war did not want to be reminded by resistance fighters that most of them had failed in providing aid to bring down the Nazi regime. By not including them in leadership roles they could not agitate as the conscience of the nation and possibly even demand reparations for the suffering of the true victims of the Nazi regime. Most Austrians preferred constructing the myth that they all had been victims of the war and therefore deserved reintegration into society and possibly even reparations or welfare (eg. crippled veterans) rather than grant Jews, euthanasia victims and resistance fighters a special status of victimhood.

The only resistance fighter from the "0–5" organization to make it into the Provisional Renner Government as an Under State Secretary in the Communist controlled Interior Ministry was the colorful maverick Raoul Bumballa. Renner presumably included him only upon communist pressure to have at least one resistance fighter in the coalition. Operating within the People's Party in the summer of 1945 Bumballa tried to form a liberal wing to make it "a new party and more democratic party with a definite middle class and international orientation." But the peasant and clerical reaction in the ÖVP feared that such a liberal wing might split the party and rejected Bumballa's attempts at democratic modernization. Oliver Rathkolb is on the mark in concluding that only "experienced party hacks with good contacts in Austria managed to launch political careers after 1945."[38] The return of these obtuse prewar party warriors effectively contained both wartime dissidents and *emigrés* from playing prominent political roles.

Karl Gruber was *the* exception to the rule. The young man from the Tyrol had somehow managed to sit the war out in Berlin. In the final weeks of the war he joined the resistance movement in the Tyrol and emerged as a leader and province's first postwar provisional governor, in part due also to his knowledge of English and his maverick daredevil character. Once the Western powers had established their presence in Vienna by September 1945, Renner called a conference with representatives from all the states *("Länderkonferenz")* to broaden his Provisional Government and make it acceptable to the West. The 37-year old Gruber received the Foreign Ministry probably more for reasons of including some politicians from the Western provinces than to have a resistance fighter in the government. His diplomacy was also expected to accomplish the return of the South Tyrol for Austria. Gruber's record as resistance fighter came in very handily in persuading the world that Austria had been a nation of victims during World War II. Incidentally, the diplomatic leadership returning to the Foreign Office in April/May 1945 already had been serving in the Dollfuss and Schuschnigg Foreign Ministry and was either fired in 1938, gone into exile (some into "inner" exile), or were shipped to concentration camps. The profile of such opposition to the Nazi regime, along with a younger generation of Socialist exiles who returned from England, France and Sweden made the Foreign Ministry bureaucracy an unusual exception in its discontinuity with the Nationals Socialist regime.[39]

The unmistakable trend in postwar Austrian politics, then, was not to call upon the expelled Jews or the wartime resistance fighters as the noble conscience to reconstitute the nation in democratic renewal; instead the entrenched old party hacks began to practice consensus, *Proporz* and *Sozialpartnerschaft.*

3. Reemergence of the Fellow Travelers
and Political Apathy:
Denazification and Public Opinion

The reestablishment of a viable Austrian polity after the war required the purge of the Fascist/Nazi mindset just like viable democracy in the post-Communist regimes in Eastern Europe called for the purge of the totalitarian mindset through investigations into the "*Stasi*-regimes" and/or "lustrace" measures. Central European transitions after 1945 and 1989 have demonstrated that such radical breaks with the past are fraught with difficulties. The huge segments of population that had aligned themselves with the totalitarian regimes made wholesale purges impossible and called for amnesties as well as forgiving and forgetting.

Denazification can be seen as a from-the-top-down bureaucratic approach to purge Nazi ideology from the body politic and reeducate a mindset that had been steeped in totalitarian doctrine, in the case of Austria for twelve years (1933-45). It can also be perceived as a great chance for democratic renewal. The half-hearted attempt to purge the Nazi-*mentalité* constitutes a missed opportunity for democratic renewal and building a framework for civil society to prosper (in the former Soviet satellites the concept of civil society was a much stronger model for nation building after 1989 than it had been in postwar Austria). After 1945 democracy in postwar Austria was implanted from above in the usual paternalistic Austrian fashion. It was accompanied on the one hand by a mild tutelage from the Western occupation powers and on the other hand constant charges from the Soviet occupiers of both failed denazification and "democratization" . It did not provide for grass roots democracy to sprout on the local level and grow into genuine self-government.[40]

The *Ostmark* had some 537,000 registered party members (about 12 percent of the population). It had produced the likes of Adolf Eichmann, Odilo Globocnik and Friedrich Rainer and other infamous Nazi butchers and bureaucrats, who had contributed inordinately to the implementation of the Holocaust and Nazi atrocities all over occupied Europe. Austrians served in the police and SS units, which implemented the early stages of the final solution in Eastern and Southern Europe. Moreover, almost 1.3 million Austrians served in the Wehrmacht,[41] which more recently has been singled out by historians as having played a prominent role in the implementation of the Holocaust. What to do with this mass of more or

less implicated "Nazis," fellow travelers and "doing-their duty" fellow travelers *("Pflichthengste")*?[42]

In order to build a new spirit of political comity and consensus between the camps in postwar Austria, not all NS-party members could be sent to jail. Until 1949 they suffered disenfranchisement and political (not social!) isolation. Very soon after Austria's liberation and until the end of 1945 two denazification regimes emerged: an Allied one and an Austrian one. The four occupation powers initiated their own denazification regimes in the course of 1945, based on their more or less complete planning efforts during the war to eradicate Nazism and punish the implicated Nazis. The Americans came to Austria intent on severe denazification. Initially they even planned to go after the Austro-fascists. They quickly realized that this would have rendered the People Party non-viable. When they instituted their elaborate questionnaires to be filled out by former Nazis, their efforts soon bogged down in bureaucratic inertia. The British half-heartedly followed the American model but were more interested in building democracy than alienating the huge stock of Nazi fellow travelers along with their families. The French had learned before they came to Austria that wholesale purges produced chaotic situations and entered Austria more skeptical about the chances of denazification. The Soviets wanted to punish the worst-case offenders quickly and attract the "little Nazis" into their ranks by exercising forgiveness. When the Austrians elected their own government in November 1945, the Allies handed their bogged-down and ambivalent denazification efforts over to the Austrians. Starting in 1946 they merely supervised Austrian denazification. It quickly bogged down in the Cold War when the West considered an anti-Communist Austria a higher priority than a thorough Nazi purge.[43]

Vigorous Austrian denazification efforts had begun right after the war but quickly eased with the alleviating of Allied pressure for a thorough purge. In its first few weeks in office, the very productive Provisional Renner Government debated and passed two tough denazification laws – one criminalizing all Nazi organizations *(Verbotsgesetz)*, the other defining and beginning to persecute the worst war criminals *(Kriegsverbrechergesetz)*. During these early Cabinet discussions the very peculiar Austrian species of a *"good Nazi"* emerged – the perennial fellow traveler *("Mitläufer")*, who joins each and every political movement coming to power as a survival strategy. The argument went that one could not possibly exercise tough punishment on the *Mitläufer,* since they had never been very serious about their Nazi party affiliation. They had *passively* joined to keep their jobs, or only run with the Nazi crowd under pressure. They were supposed to be screened, atone for their errors and permitted to redeem themselves. "To outlaw them and make pariahs out of them," argued the Communist Minister of Education Ernst Fischer who had just returned from Moscow, "would not only be unwise but also unjust."[44]

One wonders how all those people, who had welcomed the German Army en-

thusiastically on March 12, 1938, managed to return to the woodwork? From day one of the Second Republic, the political camps competed for the vote of these fellow-traveling "good Nazis." The Communists right away after liberation, the People Party close second, and the Socialists last. When in 1948 the 480,000 "good Nazis" were amnestied, the competition for their votes became fierce and ended in the creation of a "fourth party." The new "League of Independents" captured many of their votes but so did the SPÖ and ÖVP. Austrian denazification efforts were most vigorous as long as the occupation powers kept the pressure on in 1946/47. With the Cold War came the great amnesties of 1948. Denazification increasingly became a political football in the growing propaganda battles of the Cold War. Austria did punish some 40,000 Nazis *("Belastete")* through disfranchisement and loss of political rights, exclusion from the workplace and loss of jobs, fines and even jail sentences and internment camps. Fourty-two of the worst case offenders were executed. As soon as the occupation powers left, most of the Nazis still in jail were amnestied. By 1957 the Austrian effort had petered out. There were few riveting trials of Nazis in Austria like the Eichman trial in Jerusalem or the Auschwitz trials in West Germany, which also turned into effective contemporary history and civics lessons about the depravity of the Nazi regime for an entire nation. The lack of Nazi trials in Austria in the 1960s, in fact, aided the Austrians in their skillful art of forgetting and historical amnesia.[45]

Most Austrian *Mitläufer* soon came to see themselves as "victims of denazification" and griped about the impertinence of being branded as "Nazis." In another one of those peculiar postwar Austrian inversions of reality, "the harshness of de-Nazification laws was termed *'undemocratic'* [emphasis added]."[46] The *Mitläufer* and the returning soldiers argued that they had only "done their duty" and did not feel responsible for Hitlerite war crimes. 71 percent of Austrians felt that "the Austrian people do not share in the guilt for World War II and only 15 percent thought Austrians were partly to blame." The Austrian-born American diplomat Martin F. Herz correctly concluded from this polling evidence: "It stands to reason that *the emphasis on Austria's separateness from Germany results in corresponding feeling of guiltlessness* [emphasis added]."[47] It seems like a major moral failure aided and abetted by the church that in deeply Catholic Austria no record of remorse ever surfaced over Austrians' major contributions to the implementation of the Holocaust and brutal and destructive Hitlerite expansionism, occupation and exploitation. Instead, a strange inversion of "victims" emerged in postwar Austria, where Jews and resistance fighters had no special claim to victim status. By 1950 all of Austria perceived of itself as a "nation of victims." The veteran organizations got busy commemorating their *"Kriegsopfer."* Denazification and exclusion from both politics and the civic arena before 1949 bred political apathy. So did the continued foreign occupation. The Austrian government was more serious in instilling the idea of a non-German "Austrian nation" than in

purging the Nazi mindset and reeducating the population in a liberal democratic value system. With the coming of the Cold War, the Western occupation powers withdrew their pressure to cleanse the body politic from the mental baggage of Nazi racism and aggression. Until the 1980s forgetting became the Austrian trajectory of postwar remembrance.[48]

The high bureaucracy led the charge. Austrian schools concentrated on teaching the new doctrines of "Austrian identity" constructed in the Education Ministry after 1945 by bureaucrats, who had faithfully served the prewar authoritarian regimes. They evoked Austria's great historical pre-World War I past and stressed its separateness from Germany. The World War II war crimes had been imported from Germany. Austrians had had no part in them. The reactionary Ministry of Education officials missed the opportunity to instill liberal democratic values. The Foreign Ministry officials set out on their mission to persuade the world of the basic postwar Austrian doctrines: Austria's victim's status and sterling resistance record during the war. Official government publications such as the *Red-White-Red* book spread these historical half-truths. These doctrines also had to be popularized in the domestic arena. State sponsored propaganda exhibitions such *Niemals Vergessen* did the trick. Hundreds of thousands of Austrians saw this show in Vienna in the fall of 1946.[49]

The school curricula pushed this indoctrination via the school curricula. Nazi atrocities were generally mentioned only in tandem with Allied atrocities like the bombing of Dresden. In this peculiar moral equivalency the Hiroshima bombing was on the same level as the Nazi Holocaust. Once the "final solution" started entering the schoolbooks in the 1960s and 1970s, the specific role of Austrians went unnoticed. Loyalty to the new Austrian state (i.e. reinforcing the "long shadow of the state") had a much higher priority than a liberal democratic value system and the ideal of autonomous political responsibility. The Josephinian ideal of Austrian citizenship prevailed – to be loyal subjects to the authority of an all enlightened state. Simple patriotism prevailed over a democratic and anti-fascist agenda.[50]

Parallel to this curricular policy of instilling the sense of separate Austrian nationhood in the youth, the hidebound Ministry of Education pushed a "postfascist" (R. Fleck) agenda rather than a clean sweep with the past. Writers like Heimito von Doderer were favored and coddled with state prizes. Von Doderer had thrown in his lot with the Nazi regime and after the war became a propagandist of the Austrian idea by creating the Habsburg myth of Austria's great historical past. No Thomas Manns appeared on the scene. Mann returned to Germany as the great representative of "the integrity of a better Germany in exile" (A. Bushell). Famous Austrian exile writers like Stefan Zweig and Joseph Roth had committed suicide in exile or drank themselves to death. Young writers who had been expelled like Hilde Spiel returned only with the occupation forces as observers of

postwar Austria. The University of Vienna refused to give Hermann Broch, who had fled Nazi Germany, an honorary doctorate. Like ordinary Austrians, the obsequious writers survived the regime changes. Those who acted as conscience to their nation and took the hard road to exile lost their homeland permanently.[51]

A similar restoration of the prewar aesthetic occurred in the Austrian art and literary scene. In postwar Austria the Nazi idea of "degenerate art" died a slow death. Young artists had a hard time getting access to the new aesthetic of radical modernism and abstract expressionism unless they went to Paris or New York, which few of them could afford. In the Academies of Art the professors who had taught during the war kept their jobs and continued with their hidebound pathetical aesthetic after the war. Radical abstractionism came to Austria late. The highly experimental "Viennese action group" of the Sixties was a reaction against this postwar restoration, just like Gernot Wolfsgruber's and Franz Innerhofer's attacks on Austria's feudal society and the crypto-serfdom of its people were responses to the continuity in Austrian literature after the war.[52]

The cultural *milieu* in Austria after 1945 was as distinctively anti-modernist as it had been before the war. As Dieter Binder has persuasively argued, Austrian cultural elites continued to see creative individualism as a destructive force threatening the imagined national unity. The same generation was in charge that dominated cultural debates before and during the war and rejected experiments. In the prevailing Cold War mindset intellectuals such as Friedrich Torberg and Hans Weigel practised Austrian-style anti-communist McCarthyism. The postwar return of hidebound backward-looking pride in everything *"Heimat"* was only challenged by a new generation in the 1960s.[53]

The survival of this postfascist *mentalité* produced widespread political apathy. It resulted in both distance and ambiguity vis-a-vis liberal democratic values as the first public opinion surveys demonstrated. The American occupiers brought their obsession with public opinion polling to postwar Austria. From 1946 onwards they regularly polled the Austrian population about the idea whether "National Socialism was a bad idea, or a good idea badly executed?" Between a third and half of the population consistently answered that it "was a good idea badly executed." When polled about their favorite form of government, only about 40 percent favored democracy, 24 percent a Socialist Republic, still 16 percent monarchy and only 3 percent outright dictatorship. 46 percent of the young Austrians in their twenties favored democracy, but only some 31 percent of their elders over 60. Austria's postfascist mindest was coupled with rabid anti-communism. This can be gathered from 1948 polls where in Vienna 36 percent preferred National Socialism, while 6 percent preferred Communism (in Salzburg 43 percent and 3 percent respectively). About 50 percent preferred neither and can be considered democrats. Oliver Rathkolb is correct in concluding that democracy had not yet

taken firm roots in Austria and the authoritarian fascist potential was still strong in postwar Austria.[54]

In 1951 the State Department sent the well-known political scientist as a consultant to Austria to assess the country's state of mind. After his many interviews with Austria's political elites Morgenthau wrote a long report about Austrian political culture. He observed the consensus democracy emanating from the "shot gun marriage" of the ÖVP–SPÖ coalition; he also observed the shallow roots of democratic institutions in political and economic life. He saw deep political apathy in the population and disinterest in politics among the youth. In another report a pupil from the 1950s is reported as saying: "I am not concerned with the political situation, or only as much as it is befitting an Austrian citizen."[55]

Given this long postwar history of official soft-pedaling of National Socialism it should not come as a surprise in the late 1980's that the Austrians generally harbored much more positive views of National Socialism than the West Germans with their much more strict postwar reeducation policies did. While 16 percent of the Austrian population thought that National Socialism featured "only bad sides," almost twice as many (29 percent) of the West Germans thought so (43 percent of the Austrians felt National Socialism had "bad and good sides," while 35 percent of the West Germans agreed with this proposition). Small wonder that the populist Jörg Haider's positive references to National Socialism produced so much political support rather than profound disgust.[56]

This postfascist mindest runs concurrent with the low prestige of democratic government in postwar Austria. Given the general political apathy dating back to the Nazi period, as well as the above mentioned quasi-authoritarian approach to politics by a patronizing and small political elite, the average Austrian citizen took little interest in politics and less in the rejuvenation of democracy. Austrians regarded democracy as "the antithesis of repression and dictatorship." Austrians desired democracy "as a political atmosphere," argued Martin F. Herz, but distrusted it "as a method for getting things done." Parliament as an institution had little prestige because "it seems incapable of reaching quick decisions." The grand coalition agenda of uncompromising consensus democracy had proffered a view that saw "discord between political parties not as evidence of the of the vitality of Austrian democracy, but as a dangerous deviation from it." In 1945 and thereafter Austrians were in general very tired of political parties. Political campaigning reminded them of Nazi party propaganda. Austrians associated party competition with the strife and struggle of the prewar party system, the give and take of contentious democratic discourse with a general disturbance of the political consensus. Austrians were ignorant of the fact, argued Herz, "that a democracy without active, virile parties is doomed."[57]

Conclusion

The Vienna-born American diplomat Martin F. Herz was a keen observer of postwar Austrian politics and political culture. He interviewed most of the Austrian political leaders after he entered Vienna late in July 1945. He recognized early on the deep-seated suspicion between the People's Party and the Socialists, papered over by superficial consensus politics and desire for unity after the trauma of prewar party strife between the camps. He recognized that Austrian ignorance about the essence of democracy was deeply rooted in the contentiousness of constant prewar clashes between political opinions and parties. Herz's subtle skills as political observer also gathered the deep roots of mutual historical recriminations in both political camps. The Socialists gave the purging of "Heimwehr-Fascism" in the People Party higher priority than the eradication of Nazism, while the People's Party constantly dwelt on the Socialists' unpatriotic pro-German Anschluss orientation before the war.[58]

Were there any alternative paths available in 1945? As early as October 1945 Herz suggested one. He advised the Allies to interfere in the domestic Austrian battle over the country's past and the future of its democracy by truthfully addressing their parties' historical mistakes in the prewar period. "To avoid the fatal handicap of Austrian democracy," Herz averred, the Socialists should be forced to openly renounce the Anschluss idea as a mistake and the People Party should "be *made* to dissociate itself clearly and publicly from the anti-democratic heritage of the Christian Social party" (Herz's emphasis). He also suggested that the Allied Council should issue a historical review of the prewar period in which "the pernicious elements of the totalitarian state is clearly exposed." When the Allies were ready to end their occupation, Herz suggested, they should leave behind a solemnly worded *"Charter for Austrian Democracy."* Therein a review of Austrian democracy should be attempted and the two principal camps be admonished not to resuscitate their past ideological struggles. This authoritative *Charter* could be a quasi "Declaration of Austrian Independence" – a postwar Austrian *magna carta* serving as the "basis for study in Austrian schools and for public display for a long period of time to come." Herz added: "It might, equally fittingly, contain brief discussions of the rights of man, of civil liberties, the treatment of minorities, and the benefits of the parliamentary system."[59]

The trajectory of postwar Austrian democracy might have been quite different had the occupation powers interfered more strongly after the war to remind the Austrians to face their historical failures squarely in order to start mastering their own past. Such an Austrian "bill of rights" might also have reeducated the Austrians more deeply about the nature of democratic government, human rights and civil society. But the occupation powers did not do so and thus permitted the historical untruths or half-truths expressed in Renner's Declaration of Independ-

ence from April 27, 1945, and subsequent official pronouncements such as the *Red-White-Red* book to stand. Austria, after all, was a liberated country where the Allies generally allowed Austrians to take matters of domestic governance into their own hands. They did not control Austria like defeated Germany, were Allied control of domestic politics was total until 1947/48.

This allowed Austria to revive democratic government in their age-old way of paternalistic enlightened authoritarianism. No enlightened electorate was needed and one actively participating in governance not desired. The complex historical truth was papered over with the myth of Austrian victimhood during World War II, possibly a necessary historical fiction designed to build a truce between the two camps and consign their ideological antagonism to the past. The Western powers went along with and supported this historical fiction, both to build much needed political stability for the economic reconstruction of the country and keep the strongly anti-communist Austria in the Western fold during the Cold War struggle against the Soviet Union.

Ultimately, the massive postwar American economic aid proved to be the strongest nostrum for Austria's postwar political reconstruction. After 1945 Austrian democracy survived on a steady diet of U.S. Army and UNRRA food aid and the Marshall Plan. The spectacular success of the reconstruction of the Austrian economy in the 1950s allowed the grand coalition to paper over their deep-seated mutual suspicions and firmly rooted ideological disagreements. Economic revival and growing prosperity fostered cooperation across the camps and reinforced consensus politics. The prewar myth of Austria's non-viable economy was proven to be a *myth* only. The Marshall Plan helped give Austrians their cars back and injected broad prosperity into the country. This postwar economic prosperity – along with the Western pressure to work out their mutual hostility – gave the grand coalition sufficient time to stay together, reluctantly respect each other, and gradually begin the strengthening of formal democratic governance in the next generation.[60]

It seems that the Austrian population instinctively recognized this crucial nexus between economic prosperity and political stability. Austrians were polled in 1995 on what they considered the most crucial factors for Austria's reconstruction in 1945. 37 percent answered the reconstruction of the economy, 33 percent rebuilding of democracy; again it does not come as a surprise that a meager 6 percent considered denazification as the top priority.[61]

"Inner democracy" along the lines of a "liberal consensus" began to sprout in Western Germany in the 1960s. Authoritarian patterns of behavior, long considered national traditions and deeply rooted in German society receded slowly. In his anatomy of postwar Austrian democracy the German historian Anselm Doering-Manteuffel has shown how the long shadow of the state in Germany began to pale over a long period of time. The old patterns of a political culture that priced loy-

alty to the state above all else were replaced in the new West Germany by a new political culture of "discussion, participation, and reconciliation." The German baby boomers helped unleash this new political culture by forcing an active discourse about the crimes of Nazi Germany and the German guilt emanating from the Holocaust upon their fathers' generation. The new Socialist German Chancellor Willi Brandt posited the new paradigm: "We will dare more democracy." Democracy became the cornerstone of both state and society in West Germany.[62] It was much aided by strict American reeducation policies that helped unleash the astounding Westernization and Americanization of West Germany. This also included the planting of deep roots of liberal democracy – what Jürgen Habermas in the much different context of the 1980s *"Historikerstreit"* has called a new West German *"constitutional patriotism."*

The hypothesis here is that in the Austrian transition such *"inner democracy"* (Western-style liberal democracy) has been different from West Germany's and came about considerably later. In Austria the Socialist government of Bruno Kreisky began to "dare more democracy" in the 1970s. Kreisky presumably followed the experiment in democratic renewal by his friend Willi Brandt closely. The Austrian 1968'ers (among them Kreisky's own son Peter), led by artists and writers, demanded more democratic transparency in the political institutions; they also called for the long overdue confrontation with the past. Yet for pragmatic political reasons, Kreisky did not dare to question the prevailing political consensus of the "victim's myth." In Austria the debate about the country's World War II taboos did not break open until the 1980s.

"The infusion of democracy" in the universities through Kreisky's reform movements did open up a new spirit of discourse about the past the only came to fruition in the 1980s. The myth of Austria's World War II past were questioned in a wholesale fashion. The old "coalition history" was exposed as a tissue of half-truths and myths that had long ago ceased to serve its purpose of building postwar consensus. The "Waldheim debate" of 1986, as well as pressure from abroad, helped speed up the process of "mastering the past." But confronting the World War II past had started earlier in the intellectual community.[63]

When he had to confront it in the Zwentendorf plebiscite, Kreisky did not like the outcome of the participatory democracy he had unleashed. The close result of this plebiscite forced him to stop a finished and very expensive nuclear power plant from going on line. Such successful civic action encouraged an incipient and rapidly growing environmental movement in Austria to protest government plans to build a Danube river hydroelectric power plant. Success in that highly confrontational civic campaign made "citizens movements," especially in the environmental arena, more commonplace. In the mid-1980s such participatory grass roots democracy finally had arrived in Austria and became viable and entrenched. At

last, "inner democracy" was emerging and the long shadow of the state was beginning to recede in Austria in the 1980's as it had done in West Germany in the 1960s.[64]

Notes

I would like to thank László Borhi for inviting me to the Indiana Conference, and Melanie Boulet and Peter Utgaard for their suggestions in improving this paper.

1. The Communist Ernst Fischer cited in "The views of Victor Kienböck," Herz Memorandum, Aug. 8, 1945, in: Reinhold Wangleitner, ed., *Understanding Austria: The Political Reports and Analyses of Martin F. Herz Political Officer of the US Legation in Vienna, 1945–1948* (Salzburg: Neugebauer, 1984), 28.

2. For Czechoslovakia, Poland and the GDR after 1989, see Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe's Ghosts after Communism* (New York: Vintage, 1996).

3. This brief an essay obviously will not allow an exhaustive comparison.

4. Hermann-Josef Rupieper, *Die Wurzeln der Westdeutschen Nachkriegsdemokratie* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1993); Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, "Turning to the Atlantic: The Federal Republic's Ideological Reorientation, 1945–1970," in: *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 25 (Fall 1999): 3–21.

5. See also Charles Maier's reply to the Doering-Mantteuffel essay "'Mehr Sozialgeschichte Wagen': Comment on 'Turning to the Atlantic: The Federal Republic's Ideological Reorientation, 1945–1970," which first was delivered as the 1998 annual lecture at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C., *ibid.*, 22–28.

6. Rupieper, *Wurzeln*, 12f; see also, Daniel E. Rogers, *Politics after Hitler: The Western Allies and the German Party System* (New York: New York University Press, 1995); Carolyn Eisenberg, *Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany 1944–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

7. Post-War Programs Committee Document 218, "The Treatment of Austria," June 8, 1944, in: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944*, vol. I: *General* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966), 437–449 (citation 439).

8. For brief biographical sketches of all the postwar political leaders mentioned in this paragraph, see the useful prosopography by Herbert Dachs, Peter Gerlich, and Wolfgang C. Müller, eds, *Die Politiker: Karrieren und Wirken Bedeutender Repräsentanten der Zweiten Republik* (Vienna: Manz, 1995).

9. The text of the "declaration of independence" is reprinted in Eva-Marie Czaky, ed., *Der Weg zu Freiheit und Neutralität: Dokumentation zur österreichischen Aussenpolitik 1945–1955* (Vienna, 1980), 36f.

10. Günter Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War, 1945–55: The Leverage of the Weak* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 52–56.

11. This founding myth has seen an anachronistic revival by some prominent ÖVP-politicians such as Josef Riegler, Andreas Khol, Alois Mock and Josef Taus in the volume by Robert Kriechbaumer, ed., *Österreichs Nationalgeschichte nach 1945: Die Spiegel der Erinnerung: Die Sicht von innen* (Vienna: Böhlau 1998).

12. Based on the rich evidence of OSS reports on the Austrian situation in 1945, Oliver Rathkolb has already dismantled the myth of the "Stunde null" 15 years ago, see his *Gesellschaft und Politik am Beginn der Zweiten Republik: Vetrauliche Berichte der US-Militäradministration aus Österreich 1945 in englischer Originalfassung* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1985), 9–11 and *passim*.

13. Eva-Marie Czaky, Franz Matscher, Gerald Stourzh, eds, *Josef Schöner: Wiener Tagebuch 1944/ 1945* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1992), 198, 207, 255, 378, 395; see also Ernst Hanisch, *Der Lange Schatten des Staates: Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1994), 395–497.

14. An interesting case study of Nazis joining the Socialist Party is Robert Hoffmann, "Aus 'Braun' mach 'Rot'," *Salzburger Nachrichten*, 3 May 2000.

15. Hanisch, *Lange Schatten des Staates*, 398; see also the case studies in Sebastian Meissl, Klaus-Dieter Mulley, and Oliver Rahtkolb, eds, *Verdrängte Schuld, verfehlte Sühne: Entnazifizierung in Österreich 1945–1955* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1986).

16. Ernst Bruckmüller, "Die Entwicklung des Österreichbewusstseins," in Kriechbaumer, ed., *Österreichische Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, 376.

17. "Future of Austria," June 8, 1944, *FRUS, 1944*, I, 444; on the Cabinet debates, see *Protokolle des Kabinettsrates*, 64–66, 75–80; most up-to-date on the constititonal debate, and based on new Soviet documents, is Oliver Rathkolb, "Wie homogen war Österreich 1945? Innenpolitische Optionen, in: Wolfgang Kos and Georg Rigele, eds., *Inventur 45/55: Österreich im ersten Jahrzehnt der Zweiten Republik* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1996), 167–172.

18. On Renner's authoritarian style of government, see the introduction in Gertrude Enderle-Burcel, Rudolf Jeřábek, Leopold Kammerhofer, eds., *Protokolle des Kabinettsrates der Provisorischen Regierung Karl Renner 1945*, vol. 1: *"...im eigenen Haus Ordnung schaffen": Protokolle des Kabinettsrates 29. April bis 10. Juli 1945* (Horn/Wien:Verlag Ferdinand Berger & Söhne, 1995), III–XIV.

19. Günter Bischof, "Where May Meets Lazarsfeld: American Public Opinion toward Austria in the Early Cold War," in: Akira Iriye, ed., *Rethinking International Relations: Ernest R. May and the Study of World Affairs* (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 1998), 310; Kurt Tweraser has also averred the theme of the "Josephinian style" of government in Upper Austria, see his *US-Militärregierung Oberösterreich 1945–1950*, vol. 1: *Sicherheitspolitische Aspekte der amerikanischen Besatzung in Oberösterreich-Süd 1945–1950* (Linz: Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv, 1995).

20. On Austria's "secret rearmament," see Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, and *idem* "'Austria Looks to the West': Kommunistische Putschgefahr, geheime Wiederbewaffnung und Westorientierung am Anfang der fünfziger Jahre," in Thomas Albrich, Klaus Eisterer, Michael Gehler and Rolf Steininger, eds, *Österreich in den Fünfzigern* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 1950), 183–209; on the peculiar Austrian drafting of laws and the legislative process, see Anton Pelinka, *Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998), 50–54, and *idem*, "Austrian political culture: from subject to participation orientation," in Luther/Pulzer eds., *Austria 1945–95*, 09–120.

21. The political scientists have coined the awkward term "consociational democracy" for such across-the-board consensus politics, see Pelinka, *Out of the Shadows of the Past*, 22–29 and *passim*.

22. This is Heinz Kienzl's judgement. Through high level position in the institutions of "social partnership" and top National Bank jobs, Kienzl worked closely with most of them. See his thoughtful essay "Die starke Republik," in: Kriechbaumer, ed., *Österreichische Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, 469.

23. "Future of Austria," June 8, 1944, *FRUS, 1944*, I, 441.

24. See the shrewd analysis of Austrian postwar anti-communism by Ingrid Fraberger and Dieter Stiefel in *The Marshall Plan in Austria*, (*Contemporary Austrian Studies*, VIII) (New Brunswick, NJ–London: Transaction, 2000), 56–69.

25. Letter Denby to Williamson, June 19, 1946, Folder: "Mission Personnel," Box 4, Lot 54 D 331, RG 59, NA. Manfried Rauchensteiner, *Die Zwei: Die Grosse Koalition in Österreich 1945–1966* (Vienna: Bundesverlag, 1987); idem, "Geregelte Verhältnisse? Innenpolitische Ma-

növrierräume und ihre Spielregeln," in: Kos–Rigele, eds, *Inventur 45/55*, 268–286; Günter Bischof, "Between Responsibility and Rehabilitation: Austria in International Politics 1940–1950," PhD diss., Harvard University 1989, chs. 5–7 and *passim*, Hanisch, *Der Lange Schatten des Staates*, 397.

26. Ernst Hanisch, "Der forschende Blick. Österreich im 20. Jahrhundert: Interpretationen und Kontroversen," *Carinthia* 189 (1999): 567–583 (here 573–576).

27. For the Moscow Declaration see *FRUS, 1943*, I: *General* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1963), 761; "Treatment of Austria," *FRUS, 1944* I, 438; Peter Pulzer, "Between Collectivism and Liberal-ism: The Political Evolution of Austria Since 1945," in Kurt Richard Luther and Peter Pulzer, eds, *Austria 1945–95: Fifty Years of the Second Republic* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 229f; Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 52–67; Anton Pelinka, "Taboos and Self-Deception: The Second Republic's Reconstruction of History," in: *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity (Contemporary Austrian Studies,* V) (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997), 95–102.

28. Friedrich Stadler, *Vertriebene Vernunft I & II: Emigration und Exil österreichischer Wissenschaft* (Vienna: Jugend und Volk, 1987–1988), as well as idem, *Kontinuität und Bruch.*

29. One such an odyssey is retraced in the elegant essay by Egon Schwarz, "Mass Emigration and Intellectual Exile from National Socialism: The Austrian Case," in: David F. Good and Ruth Wodak, eds, *From World War to Waldheim: Culture and Politics in Austria and the United States* (New York: Berghahn, 1999), 87–108.

30. Marie Jahoda, *'Ich habe die Welt nicht verändert': Lebenserinnerungen einer Pionierin der Sozialforschung* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1997); Raul Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory: The Jour-ney of a Holocaust Historian* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996); Walter Hölbling and Reinhold Wagnleitner, eds, *The European Emigrant Experience in the U.S.A.* (Tübingen: Gunther Narr, 1992); Günter Bischof, "Anglo-amerikanische Planungen und Überlegungen der österreichischen Emigration während des Zweiten Weltkrieges für Nachkriegs-Österreich," in: Manfried Rauchensteiner and Wolfgang Etschmann, eds, *Österreich 1945: Ein Ende und viele Anfänge* (Graz: Styria, 1997), 17–22.

31. See the brilliant essay by Edward Timms, "Austrian Identity in a Schizophrenic Age: Hilde Spiel and the Literary Politics of Exile and Reintegration," in Luther–Pulzer, eds, *Austria 1945–95*, 55–59; Bischof, "Anglo-Amerikanische Planungen," 20f.

32. Gerard Kasemir, "Spätes Ende für 'wissenschaftlich' vorgetragenen Rassismus," in: Michael Gehler and Hubert Sickinger, eds, *Politische Skandale in Österreich: Von Mayerling bis Waldheim* (Thaur: Kulturverlag, 1995), 486–501.

33. Fritz Weber, *Der Kalte Krieg in der SPÖ: Koalitionswächter, Pragmatiker und Revolutionäre Sozialisten 1945–1950* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1986); Adolf Sturmthal, *Zwei Leben: Erinnerungen eines sozialistischen Internationalisten zwischen Österreich und den USA* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1989); Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 54–56; on the continuity of anti-semitism in postwar Austria, see Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 301ff.

34. Sturmthal, *Zwei Leben*, 212–214.

35. Timms, "Austrian Identity in a Schizophrenic Age," 59–64 (citations from 59 and 62); on Spiel, see also Andrea Hammel, "Remembering and Forgetting: Hilde Spiel's *Rückkehr nach Wien* in 1946," in Bushell, ed., *Austria 1945–1955*, 84–98.

36. Günter Bischof, "Spielball der Mächtigen? Österreichs aussenpolitischer Spielraum im beginnenden Kalten Krieg," in: Kos–Rigele, eds., *Inventur 45/55*, 133–136.

37. The best single volume on the resistance is Radomir Luza, *The Resistance in Austria, 1938–1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); on the public mood in Vienna/the *Ostmark* (with OSS quotations), see Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 19f, and now much

more extensively, Evan Burr Bukey, *Hitler's Austria: Popular Sentiment in the Nazi Era, 1938–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

38. Oliver Rathkolb, "Raoul Bumballa, ein politischer Nonkonformist 1945," in: Rudolf G. Ardelt, Wolfgang J. A. Huber and Anton Staudinger, eds, *Unterdrückung und Emanzipation: Festschrift für Erika Weinzierl* (Vienna: Geyer n.d.), 295–317 (quotations 305, 306).

39. Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 70–77; *idem*, "The Making of a Cold Warrior: Karl Gruber and Austrian Foreign Policy, 1945–1953," *Austrian History Yearbook* 26 (1995): 99–127; *idem*, "Spielball der Mächtigen?," 126–156; see also Michael Gehler's introduction to his edition of the Gruber speeches *Karl Gruber: Reden und Dokumente 1945–1953* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1994).

40. For a different trajectory in Germany see Rebecca Boehling, *A Question of Priorities: Democratic Reform and Economic Recovery in Postwar Germany* (Providence, R. I: Berghahn, 1996).

41. Rüdiger Overmans, "German and Austrian Losses in World War II," in: *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity (Contemporary Austrian Studies,* V) (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997), 293–301.

42. Hans Safrian, *Die Eichmann-Männer* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1993; Walter Manoschek, *"Serbien ist judenfrei": Militärische Besatzungspolitik und Judenvernichtung in Serbien 1941/42* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1993); Hans-Dieter Müller and Hans-Erich Volkmann, eds, *Die Wehrmacht: Mythos und Realität* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1999).

43. Dieter Stiefel, "Nazifizierung plus Entnazifizierung = Null? Bemerkungen zur besonderen Problematik der Entnazifizierung in Österreich," in: Meissl et al., eds, *Verdrängte Schuld,* 28–36; *idem, Entnazifizierugn in Österreich* (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1981); for a comparative treatment (with an essay by Stiefel on Austria), see Klaus-Dietmar Henke and Hans Woller, eds, *Politische Säuberung in Europa: Die Abrechunung mit Faschismus und Kollaboration nach den Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich: dtv, 1991).

44. "Observations by State Secretary Ernst Fischer," Herz Memorandum, August 2, 1945, in: Wagnleitner, ed., *Understanding Austria,* 22.

45. The Cabinet discussions are a gold mine on early discussions on denazification and the passing of the two laws; for "good Nazis," see the discussion of the 13th meeting on June 19/20, 1945, in: *Protokolle des Kabinettsrates,* I, 272; see also Stiefel, *Entnazifizierung,* and the thoughtful summary by Hanisch, *Langer Schatten des Staates,* 420–425, as well as the many useful cases studies of denazification of the principal Austrian institutions in *Verdrängte Schuld, Verfehlte Sühne.*

46. "Report on Austrian Public Opinion," March 18, 1947, in: Wagnleitner, ed., *Understanding Austria,* 133.

47. *Ibid.,* 132.

48. Much of this can be inferred from the cases studies presented in Meinrad Ziegler and Waltraud Kannonier-Finster, *Österreichs Gedächtnis: Über Erinnern und Vergessen der NS-Vergangenheit* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1993).

49. Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War,* 60–67; on *"Niemals Vergessen,"* see Wolfgang Kos, *Eigenheim Österreich: Zu Politik, Kultur und Alltag nach 1945* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1994); on hidebound education policies, see the thoughtful essays by Robert Knight, "Education and National Socialism after the Second World War," in: Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms, eds, *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective (Austrian Studies* V) (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 178–195.

50. Peter Utgaard, "Remembering and Forgetting the Holocaust in Austrian Schools," in: *The Vranitzky Era in Austria (Contemporary Austrian Studies* VII) (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1999), 201–215; on historical memory, national identity and forgetting the World War II past, see also my introduction and review essay, as well as the topical essays in Günter Bischof

and Anton Pelinka, eds., *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity (Contemporary Austrian Studies* V) (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997), 1–13, 302–341.

51. On the restoration of the literary canon, see Anthony Bushell's introduction and the essay by Andrew Barker on von Doderer, in: Bushell, ed., *Austria 1945–55*, 1–110, 37, 54.

52. On the restoration of the traditional art scene, see the brilliant essay by Robert Fleck, "Kunst in einer Zeit der Restauration: Die Rekonstruktion einer Szene moderner Kunst in der österreichischen Nachkriegszeit," in Kos–Rigele, eds, *Inventur 45/55*, 441–471; on postwar literature, see also Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, "Das neue Land: Die Konzeption einer neuen österreichischen Identität in der Literatur," *ibid.*, 404–440.

53. For a sober analysis, see Dieter A. Binder, "Kontinuität – Diskontinuität: Notizen zur österreichischen Kultur nach 1945," in: Kriechbaumer, ed., *Österreichische Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, 727–743 (esp. 727f, 739–741).

54. The best summary of American polls and the survival of the authoritarian mindset is Oliver Rathkolb, "NS-Problem und politische Resturation: Vorgeschichte und Etablierung des VdU," in *Verdrängte Schuld, Verfehlte Sühne*, 74–79; some of these polls are also published and analyzed in Wagnleinter, ed., *Understanding Austria*, 127–133, 333–340; for an interpretation of some of these polls, see also Hanisch, *Langer Schatten des Staates*, 421f.

55. A summary of Morgenthau's report is in Oliver Rathkolb, "Hans J. Morgenthau und das Österreich-Problem in der letzten Phase der Truman-Administration 1951/52," in: Emil Brix, Thomas Fröschl and Josef Leidenfrost, eds, *Geschichte Zwischen Freiheit und Ordnung* (Graz: Styria, 1991), 277–298; the pupil from the 1950s is quoted in Siegfried Mattl, "Vor der IV. Republik: Politische Kultur in Österreich im 20. Jahrhundert," *Zeitgeschichte* 22 (January/February 1995): 39.

56. The 1989/90 polls are cited and analyzed in Bruckmüller, "Entwicklung des Österreichbewusstseins," in: Kriechbaumer, ed., *Österreichische Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, 393.

57. "Report on Public Opinion," March 18, 1945, and Herz memorandum "Dangerous Tendencies in Austrian Political Thinking," October 8, 1945, in: Wagnleitner, ed., *Understanding Austria*, 133, 54.

58. *Ibid.*, 53f.

59. *Ibid.*, 53f.

60. American State Department records of the early 1950s are replete with Western worries about the stability of the grand coalition and the continuing necessity of American aid to keep it together in an age of imminent Cold War threats on Austria's borders. I have briefly summarized American thinking in *Austria in the First Cold War*, 127–129.

61. Kienzl, "Die starke Republik," in: Kriechbaumer, *Österreichsiche Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, 468f.

62. Doering-Manteuffel, "Turning to the Atlantic," 15.

63. See my essay "Founding Myths and Compartmentalized Past: New Literature on the Construction, Hibernation, and Deconstruction of World War II Memory in Postwar Austria," *Contemporary Austrian Studies* V (1997): 302–341; an important milestone in the historical reassessment was Anton Pelinka and Erika Weinzierl, eds, *Das Grosse Tabu: Östereichs Umgang mit der Vergangenheit* (Vienna: Edition S, 1987); for the analysis of the larger international context of the Waldheim affair, see Richard Mitten, "Bitburg, Waldheim, and the Politics of Remembering," in: Good–Wodak, eds, *From World War to Waldheim*, 51–84.

64. The best analysis of these complex changes in Austrian democracy is Pelinka's fittingly entitled *Austria: Out of the Shadows of the Past, op. cit.*

REVOLUTION RECONSIDERED:
INSTITUTION-BUILDING IN A MORAL VOID

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The series of events that began in early 1989 and culminated in the free elections in March 1990 have been characterized as "revolution" of one of four kinds.

According to the British journalist T. G. Ash, it was a "refolution" suggesting that what happened in Hungary was more than reform but less than a revolution.[1] Though intended as a clever oxymoron, the term is grossly misleading as it obscures and trivializes the qualitative difference between the point of departure and the point of arrival, that is, the difference between dictatorship and democracy

Acccording to the former democratic oppositionist ideologue János Kis and several others who chose this formulation, the Hungarian events amounted to a "lawful revolution."[2] The term stresses the notion of legal continuity and the non-violent and non-confrontational nature of events. In my view, it is a misnomer as it deliberately overlooks the essentially politics- and power-driven substance of the process and, by design, fails to make any kind of moral distinction between the "before" and "after" spirit and normative content of laws and institutions.

"Constitutional revolution" was the label chosen by András Bozóki and his fellow editors and contributors to an 8-volume documentary collection and analytical commentary to characterize the outcome of the National Roundtable talks of the summer of 1989 which paved the way to free elections and the change of the political regime in March-April 1990.[3] The formulation is attractive, yet it is still an oxymoron which fails to reconcile, in terms legitimacy and cognitive consonance, the yawning gap between the means, that is, an improvised legal artifact in the form of a modified constitution, and the ends, that is, revolution and the customary epistemological connotations of this term.

"Negotiated revolution," is my formulation, that depicts the events as a series of elite pacts which culminated in public endorsement of the outcome by free elections in March–April 1990. Such pacts, by the nature of the enterprise, tend to incorporate the negotiators short-term political and economic interests and hide their personal beliefs, ethical choices, and moral preferences.[4] The point is that real revolutions are meant to be fought and won on the barricades rather than behind closed doors at the negotiating table. Moreover, real revolutions are ex-

pected to yield moral and cognitive sea change, thus provide for a shared cathartic experience and, with it, the opening of a new page in the community's history. Therefore, the modifier "negotiated" is crucial to an understanding of what did and did not happen in 1989–1990. It is also the master key to comprehending how the people feel about political institutions, political processes and political actors today.

The main issue is the legacy of these events in terms of institutional outcomes, operating principles and political precedents and the way in which over the years these have been accepted, ignored or rejected by the Hungarian public.

Ten years after the fact, we are confronted with a paradox. On the one hand, Hungary strikes most foreign observers as a consolidated and outwardly stable parliamentary democracy; an arguably regional model of successful economic transformation; and, as the tourist posters claim, "the new spirit of old Europe."

On the other hand, the citizens of this new democracy, when asked about the great men of the past millenium, picked János Kádár as third behind St. Stephen and István Széchenyi, thus the top statesman of 20th century Hungary. Something is amiss here.

To make my case, I would like to submit three propositions.

(a) In the tenth year of an "existing democracy" a decisive majority of the Hungarian people have yet to come to terms with their nation's recent history and have yet to find their personal space in a democratic polity and market economy.

(b) Civil society, the traditional shelter for the norturing of the citizens' community spirit is still more of the old and the new local elites' normless political playground than a safe haven for the affirmation of personal values and civic virtues.

(c) Therefore, as demonstrated by countless surveys on citizen attitudes toward politics and political institutions, the non-elites still perceive their personal efficacy in public affairs in terms of voicelessness and powerlessness and are reluctant to attribute moral authority to political institutions.

Social psychologists speak of "deferred catharsis," "self-imposed amnesia" and a chronic sense of malaise. In my view, these labels, however accurate, are simplistic pathologies of complex cognitive processes that have been spawned by Hungary's rapid transformation from one type of political regime to another.

Institutions and Moral Values

The subject of this brief paper is institution-building and moral values and the way in which these are promoted or thwarted by Hungary's political class and the general public.

By moral values I understand complex sets of privately held beliefs that have been shaped by personal and family histories, religious and secular norms, political exigencies, social and economic conditions and other extraneous circumstances. Hungary's troubled history that included a half dozen drastic political changes in the 20th century, tended to aggregate individual life experiences into generational clusters. The latter tend to penetrate and reshape personal judgments about right and wrong, fair and unfair, just and unjust, moral and immoral and, in the realm of public affairs, legitimate or illegitimate.

What are institutions? They are man-made legal artifacts whose purposes are specified in constitutions, laws and statutes which define the framework within which interactions between the citizens and the state take place. Traditionally, political institutions set norms, structure behavior, and regulate outcomes of interactions not only between the citizens and the government, but among key institutional actors, such as Parliament, the head of state, the courts, political parties, and local governments.The main point is that political institutions are elite-made instruments that embody the "architects" and, in the context of Hungary's negotiated revolution, the "founding fathers" material interests, personal values, and their vision of the public good.

Postcommunist Hungary's political institutions were crafted by two elites, each with clashing, as well as compatible values and interests. Both elites were products of the country's survivalist political culture which put premium on pragmatic compromise on the institutional-legal essentials and on the rolling over of intractable moral-ideological issues to be resolved by future generations. Accordingly, the National Roundtable negotiators of 1989 chose to set aside their ideological differences and, on the basis of shared short-term political interests, they sought the semblance of consensus, rather than agreements "carved in marble," for the sake of peaceful transition between two very different political systems.

Peaceful transition saves lives and property. Therefore, as a political strategy of choice, it must be seen as a morally and ethically superior alternative to violence or a civil war. On the other hand, institutions built on elite political compromises tend to be deficient with respect to legitimacy, that is, the public's moral and value identification with the process and its outcomes. Elite-orchestrated mass public participation in 1989, such as that on June 16 (for the ceremonial reburial of Imre Nagy and fellow victims of communist repression) and the "four question" referendum of September–November of that year (to deny the presidency to reform communist Imre Pozsgay) were preemptive moves to keep the masses off the streets to prevent the reenactement of the "people's (real) revolution" of 1956.

The House of Democracy and its Moral Guardians

The institutional products of elite negotiations were components of an architectural blueprint for the nation's democratic political home. The building had a foundation of sorts in the form of a vague consensus on the ground rules of the democratic political game. The house was propped up by five institutional pillars: Parliament, the president of the Republic, the cabinet government, the party and the electoral system, and the Constitutional Court. The revised constitution served as the roof of the house, as well as a legal-ideological shelter for the protection of its inhabitants.[5]

Whereas four of the pillars were designed to serve as pragmatic instruments of policymaking and policy implementation, the Constitutional Court was the designated guardian of a law-governed state, that is, of public and private norms of lawful behavior.

This is how László Sólyom, the first President of the Court described the activist majority's constitutional philosophy:

> The Constitutional Court's main objective was to develop the Constitution into a coherent system. It is questionable whether it is a moral principle. The Constitutional Court never stated that the basic law presupposes some kind of moral structure. Quite deliberately we did not wish to follow the German model which, particularly until the mid-1960s, generally spoke of a moral structure and other natural rights-derived antecedents. We also stressed that the Constitution, particularly since its modification in 1990 which eliminated all ideological language, is a neutral legal text. At the same time, it is quite clear that human rights are legal formulations for moral categories. The Constitutional Court perceived and extracted moral content, or with Dworkin's phrase, "moral reading," of each basic right according to the peculiarities of each of these rights. In doing so, it became unnecessary to cite generalities, such as the "value structure of the Constitution," thus moral principles became instrumentalized. We translated each moral right into the language of constitutional law, so that the Court could reasonably claim to have rendered judgment not on moral, but legal principles.[6]

Political Rights as Welfare Entitlements

The Hungarian constitution lists and protects two kinds of "human rights." The first is a cluster of the so-called "second generation" of negative rights, such as freedom of speech, of assembly, of religion and so on. The second is a cluster of

the so-called "third generation" of positive rights, such as the right to work, to social security, health, education, welfare, and a clean environment.

Now it is our turn to translate Sólyom's legal pieties into the language of politics.

Whereas the state's delivery on the citizens' negative rights is a relatively cost-free proposition, in a market economy the satisfaction of public expectations associated with the citizens' social-welfare entitlements is a vastly different matter. These rights, and some new ones, were lifted, under the smoke screen of "legal continuity," intact from the old, communist-era constitution and became the public's, de facto socialist-era, moral yardstick by which to judge the performance of democratic institutions.

In my reading, the Court's "instrumentalization" of human rights was a key element of the "Founding Fathers'" reform socialist and left-liberal jurists' commitment to legal continuity. This, in turn, led to the relegitimation of the old regime's politically relatively uncompromised institutions, such as the state's technocracy and the judiciary. With respect to "positive rights," the same notion entailed the reaffirmation of the market-preemptive policies of state redistribution and, with it, the resuscitation of the much cherished, but economically unsustainable, socialist welfare package.

A brief detour. For understandable reasons, Kádár had been a vehement opponent of moral introspection. He used to say "we don't need soul-searching" (or in Hungarian, *"nem kell nekünk lelkizés."*) Instead, he defined the public good in consumerist terms with respect to access to food, shelter, welfare entitlements and restricted personal autonomy.

Much of this gave birth to the amoral rent-seeking world of the Homo Kádáricus. Under the old regime values of self-realization, civic probity, interpersonal trust and social solidarity were replaced by a Hobbesian world of unregulated pursuit of private interests (or *érdekérvényesítés* in Hungarian) at the expense of the public good. In this world, ethical standards, altruism, and personal decency, let alone public profession of religious faith, became counterproductive to survival and success.

From the early 1970s on, Kádár's rule became a kind of 'soft dictatorship' and a normless 'live-and-let-live' pragmatic survival pact between the regime and the people, particularly the intellectuals. All but a handful of these one-time champions of liberty and national identity became coopted (and economically well-compensated) tools in the service of a coerced 'all-people's consensus' behind the regime's political objectives. In the age of 'soft dictatorship' Julien Benda's notion of the betrayal of the intellectuals was realized in Hungary in a massive and statistically demonstrable fashion. Alone in the Soviet bloc, Hungary had the dubious distinction of 40 percent of its ruling communist party's membership com-

prised of intellectuals and holders of university degrees. The courageous few – democratic, populist and reform socialist – dissident intellectuals tried to take the moral high road by staking a claim for the leadership of an alternative "second" society – albeit for and by the intellectuals, rather than for and by the people. Their definiton of the public good was, and could not be anything else, but a tribal affair rather than an agenda of moral emancipation of the unenlightened masses.

Toward an Uncivil Society?

Within the context of Hungary's negotiated revolution the accumulated moral deficit of the past could have been overcome by the public's extensive participation in various phases of systemic change. Instead, the elite negotiators kept the masses demobilized and dispensed what might be called 'catharsis by the spoonful.'

The pact-makers sought to legitimate their stance by targeting vaguely defined scapegoats, such as the "old regime," "lawless behavior by certain groups," and, of course, "Soviet rule," as the main culprits responsible for forty-five years of state-sponsored terrorism against the Hungarian people. Kádár somehow escaped criticism and during the 1990s became a nostalgic symbol of the normalcy of the "golden 1970s": that of limited political freedoms, attenuated morality, and severely eroded standards of civic probity. The elites' shared objective was to deflate the public's potentially revolutionary expectations. At the end, it was not a public referendum, but the outgoing Parliament's approval which gave birth to the constitution and the renaming of the state from a People's Republic to a (parliamentary) Republic. The bottom line: democracy "for the people" but definitely not "by the people."

According to Adam Przeworski, "Democratic institutions that fail to provide moral leadership cannot cope with conflicts arising from economic inequality and deprivation... Consent to democracy is contingent... on the congruence between the moral content of institutions and the basic values of society."[7]

In the past ten years, hundreds of laws, several political parties, three governments, three Parliaments, the head of state, and two Constitutional Courts have been trying to fill the moral void with old and new values.

Of the three cabinet governments since 1990, József Antall's Christian democratic coalition had by far the most difficult task of simultaneously building democratic institutions and of trying to gain acceptance of traditional values (or indeed values of any kind) by the postcommunist public. It was a futile undertaking from the outset. Antall's proposed "value package" consisting of Populism, Christian democracy and national liberalism struck the intended recipients, particularly the predominantly leftist intellectuals, as a hidden agenda for the restoration of the

prewar Horthy regime's values and political style. Competing ideological paradigms, such as those offered by the left-liberal intellectuals, though helpful for discrediting the government's moral posturing, also failed to resonate with the disenchanted public.

The socialist-liberal government of 1994–1998 had no moral agenda of any kind. Instead, the regime stressed notions of expertise, modernization, and "Euroconformity." On the whole, it was a schizophrenic proposition: the old regime's third-echelon time-servers reinvented themselves as social democrats pursuing a value-free neoliberal agenda of marketization, while their liberal partners – most likely as a compensatory tactic to cover up for their mesaliance with their former political adversaries – extolled postmodern virtues by paying lip service to minority rights, gender equality and, above all, patronage/welfare for the intelligentsia. Terms, such as "nation," "patriotism," and citizen-Burgher (*polgár*) were expunged from the regime's official vocabulary.

It can be argued that the center-right Fidesz-Citizen's Party-led electoral coalition's victory in 1998 was due in equal measure to the voters' perception of widespread corruption by incumbent government party officials and to the spontaneous emergence of public yearning for the restoration of traditional civic values. The new regime promised to turn a new leaf by calling the electoral outcome a mandate not only for changing the government, but also hinted at measures with which to complete the unfinished process of political transformation from a postcommunist to a democratic regime.

As it may be inferred from the Orbán government's record after two years in office, there is still a wide gap between rhetoric and acccomplishment. Manipulation of symbols, such as the transfer of St. Stephen's crown to the Parliament building and lip service to national identity and moral rectitude represent the plus side of the balance sheet. Widespread corruption – offical and private – brazen nepotism and continuing verbal warfare over ideological trivia are some of the key items on the debit side. Some of these liabilities may be dismissed as growing pains of a new democracy. However, the problem is that at the onset of the new millenium with the Fidesz regime the political class exhausted its diminishing supply of morally untainted politicians. The voters of 1998 expected youthful vigor and clean government, but got a brilliant, but willful and unpredictable prime minister and his disciplined team of earnest-looking young political piranhas bent on maximizing their grip on political, economic and cultural power.

In sum, throughout the 1990s the politicians' and their constitutional guardians' attempts at staking out the high ground of moral leadership has been considered and promptly rejected by a small army of media intellectuals and upheld by assorted party- or government-hired pens posing as authentic advocates of public interest. As it may be inferred from public opinion polls, people believe neither the politicians, nor the self-appointed intelligentsia spokesmen of moral virtue

and political correctness. Their message simply does not resonate with the public's core beliefs.

The Hungarian public's core beliefs are similar to those of its Central European postcommunist neighbors. These consist of a strong sense of national identity; deep frustrations over deferred social and political justice; ambivalent-to-hostile attitudes toward market economy and capitalism in general: fear and trepidation toward globalization and European integration; and, above all, distrust of authority of any kind, especially the state. A decade's worth of democratic institution building has yet to yield the acceptance and internalization of implicit beliefs in law and order and the primacy of the public good over greed, distrust and unbridled individualism. It is not a pretty picture.

What is missing from the cognitive equation is a new kind of political culture and a new consensus on the public good. These call for civil courage to come to terms with the past, the embracing of a new democratic identity, the acceptance of the new rules of the political game and of the giving the benefit of doubt to freely elected politicians, lawful insitutions, and fellow citizens alike. None of this is going to happen anytime soon. The house of democracy is still under construction in Hungary today.

Notes

1. Timothy Garton Ash, "Refolution, the Springtime of Two Nations," *New York Review of Books,* July 5, 1989.
2. cf. Béla Király and András Bozóki, eds, *The Lawful Revolution in Hungary, 1989-1994* (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1994).
3. András Bozóki et al., eds, *Alkotmányos forradalom. Tanulmányok* [Constitutional revolution. Studies] (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2000) vol. 7 of András Bozóki et al., eds, *A rendszerváltás forgatókönyve. A kerekasztal tárgyalások 1989-ben.* [Change of the regime in Hungary – Scenarios. The National Roundtable Negotiations of 1989] (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2000) 8 vols.
4. Rudolf L. Tőkés, *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution: Economic Reforms, Social Change and Political Succession, 1957–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 1998).
5. On this see, Rudolf L. Tőkés, "Intézményalkotás Magyarországon: elemzési szempontok, alkotmányos modellek, 1989" [Institution-building in Hungary: analytical issues and constitutional models] in: Bozóki et al., eds, *Alkotmányos forradalom,* 147–179.
6. "A 'nehéz eseteknél' a bíró erkölcsi felfogása jut szerephez. Sólyom Lászlóval az Alkotmánybíróság elnökével Gábor Attila beszélget" [In difficult cases the judge's moral conceptions play a role. Interview with László Sólyom, president of the Constitutional Court], *Fundamentum* No. 1, 1997
7. Adam Przeworski et al., *Sustainable Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 42.

THE ROUNDTABLE TALKS OF 1989:
PARTICIPANTS, POLITICAL VISIONS,
AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES

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Introductory Remarks

In East Central Europe the Poles began the first transition to democracy, and therefore the Polish opposition had to behave in a most cautious manner. Originally the Polish roundtable talks were not so much about paving the way for a full democracy, rather they were meant to produce an agreement. This agreement was designed first to legalize Solidarity and second to set up semi-democratic and partially fixed elections.[1] As a result the June 1989 elections in Poland could not be evaluated as fully democratic ones.

In historical perspective, on the other hand, one can safely say that the Polish negotiations had already started in August 1980. Polish dissidents became the pioneers in inventing negotiations with the communists in the region.[2] The self-limiting revolution of Solidarity in 1980–1981 set a pattern of behavior for other opposition groups in East Central Europe. For Poland 1989 meant simply the last chapter of a long historical process, which had been a decade-long transition first from communism to an authoritarian military regime and then to democracy. Viewed from a narrower perspective, between February and April 1989 the Poles closed an era of military dictatorship. The first task was to restore legality and the granting of legalization to Solidarity. The governing bloc, not the opposition, had initiated these steps after the failure of the 1988 referendum. By late 1988 even the communists had to realize that there was no other option for them.

While the Polish and the Hungarian roundtable talks represented efforts at extrications from dictatorships, the German and Czechoslovakian roundtable talks only came after the actual revolutionary changes had occurred. In Germany and Czechoslovakia the discussions were about the establishment of the institutional structures for the new regimes, because the extrications from the dictatorships had already been accomplished. Poland was the first to undertake the transition but ended up with semi-free elections. The intention of the Hungarian negotiators, who started after the Poles, was to start down the Polish path but to achieve more than the Poles had.

In Hungary the roundtable talks actually mattered in both senses. The negotiations were meant to be the extrication from the old regime and also the creation of an institutional order for a democratic government.[3]

There were overt references to Poland by the Hungarian negotiators.[4] Many people openly held the view that the Polish opposition could agree with the communists on a semi-free election as a compromise because it was much stronger than the Hungarian opposition. In effect the Poles could afford to accept substantial compromises because they were strong enough to mobilize masses of people on the streets and could thereby hope to change the results of the round table talks later.[5] According to this argument, the Polish negotiators could accept a compromise without damaging their political credibility.

The Hungarian National Roundtable negotiations occurred after the Polish elections. Therefore in many respects the task of the Hungarians proved to be easier than that of the path-breaking Poles. The negotiations took place between the oppression of the student demonstrations at Tienanmen Square in China in June 1989 and the formation to the first non-communist Polish government after four decades in September 1989. Between June and September of that year, between the Polish elections in early June and the beginning of Leipzig's Monday demonstrations in mid-September, only Hungary was on the road to democratization. The Hungarian negotiations occurred with the participation of three sides: the MSZMP [the communist party], the Opposition Roundtable, and the so-called "Third Side" (which included the satellite organizations of the communist party and had been invited to join the talks by the MSZMP). Despite some suggestions to the contrary from reformist circles the Opposition Roundtable refused to negotiate with the incumbent cabinet and insisted on the idea of bilateral talks only with the communist party. The opposition wanted to draw a symbolic line between "us" and "them." Had the change of regimes already taken place, the opposition would then have negotiated the policy issues with the cabinet. But in the early summer of 1989 that was not yet the case. The Hungarian Constitution still declared that "the leading force of our society is the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party."

In such a situation the opposition had to negotiate with the real holder of power: the communist party. The cabinet was not against the transition; it was the communist party that symbolized the old regime and stood to be the obstacle of change. As a compromise, however, the Opposition Roundtable accepted the representatives of some of the satellite organizations of the Party as participants. Therefore, the negotiations became trilateral discussions.

In formal terms the negotiations were designed to occur on three levels (plenary sessions, middle-level sessions and working sessions) between three negotiating parties, and included the participation of sixteen organizations represented by altogether 573 individuals. (For the structure of the National Roundtable talks,

see *Appendix 1.*) During these three summer months of 1989 Hungary captured the attention of the international press. During that summer the democratization process in Hungary was not yet completed; it was just in the making. Although the negotiators were divided in their tactical and strategic considerations, and some of them were "ultra-moderates," they did not have to compromise on the outcome of the talks. Their compromises concerned only the modes of the transition.

Among the members of the Opposition Roundtable some political parties, the ultra-moderates, were ready to offer strategic concessions. Nevertheless, those parties that differed primarily in their tactical rather than their strategic considerations kept the ultra-moderates in the background. The moderates controlled the ultra-moderates by engaging in tactical compromises, while the radicals played within the rules of the game by following self-limiting political behavior and urging the moderates to limit their tactical concessions. This delicate balance was characteristic of the internally fragile Opposition Roundtable, which despite its internal fragility was able to stay together until the agreement of September 1989. (For the internal divisions of the Opposition Roundtable and the National Roundtable talks see *Appendix 2.*)

Transitions are usually pictured in the literature as elite games.[6] True, it is hard to form a democracy without the existence of an elite/counter-elite, which are both willing to commit themselves to negotiating frames for a democratic process. Since Schumpeter it has been commonly held that elites and democracy are not incompatible concepts, both are important.[7] Still, I would not subscribe completely to the idea that the Hungarian transition was only a game of the elite groups. It was an elite-driven process, but it was not fully an elitist exchange. There was interplay between the masses and the elite; and the elite and non-elite linkages were observable on many different occasions.[8] On March 15, 1989, for instance, there was a huge mass demonstration in Budapest, where speakers openly called for a unification of the opposition because they recognized the danger that the communist party might divide the opposition by negotiating with its representatives one by one.[9] On May 1 there was a huge demonstration in a Budapest park. It had been organized by independent trade unions and attended by tens of thousands. And finally, of course, on June 16 the reburial of former Prime Minister Imre Nagy and his fellow martyrs from the 1956 revolution drew 250,000 participants and revealed massive popular support for the opponents of the communist regime.[10]

The negotiators could feel the support of ordinary men and women even after the agreement of September 18, 1989, when some parties from the Opposition Roundtable started a petition campaign for a referendum to settle the unresolved questions of the talks by popular decision. In a matter of three weeks, they were able to collect more than 200,000 signatures on the streets. So the negotiated revolution in Hungary went well beyond the scope of small, well-organized elite groups.

The negotiations were supported by large masses and led to the first post-communist free elections in 1990.

International factors also played a role: most notably the visit of U.S. President George Bush and the support of Soviet party chief Mikhail Gorbachev.[11] Internal pressures from below as well as external pressure from the Western democratic communities both proved to be important. The by-elections in late July reinforced the notion that the opposition had gained strength. It is true that until March 1990 none of the negotiating parties' positions had been legitimized by democratic elections. Still, the emerging political society clearly supported the self-appointed intellectual groups' struggle for democracy.

The Participants
in the National Roundtable Talks

The participants of the negotiated revolution of 1989 had arrived from many different places and with very different biographies. Then one day they found themselves sitting next to each other and discussing the issues of democratic transition.[12] Depending on their degree of involvement, they spent weeks or months together debating the future of their country. And after the historic moment had passed, they all went their own way. Some became professional politicians in the different party elites; others went into business; still others returned to their previous careers. For some the experience proved to be a crucial turning point in their lives, while for others it was just a short excursion into the world of politics and left no lasting effects.

Although by now most of the data is available, no exhaustive analysis has been made of the social and political backgrounds of the 573 participants of the roundtable talks. From our former and still unfinished investigations I can summarize some major findings on the comparison of the participants according to their age, gender, profession and places of origin. Those who were born between 1944 and 1953 made up more than one-third of the participants. This generation was strongly influenced by the opening up of the Hungarian regime in 1968 and by the reform period from 1968 to 1972. They had also been impressed by certain Western cultural and political tendencies of the late sixties. The second largest age group was composed of the youngest participants. One-fourth of the participants was born after 1954; consequently they were age thirty-five or younger in 1989. As a whole those under forty-five composed 64% of the negotiators. The relative youth of the negotiators is remarkable because until the second half of the 1980s the old regime was led by a gerontocratic oligarchy of first generation communists, who tended to regard even fifty-year-old cadres as youngsters. These data suggest that those members of the MSZMP who were willing to negotiate and

therefore participated in the roundtable talks mainly came from the less ideological, more pragmatic, second generation. Although the MSZMP negotiators were still on average a bit older than the other participants, they were already significantly younger than the first communist generation. One of the "secrets" of the smoothness of the transition was that a generational change in the lower and middle level ranks of the MSZMP had preceded the regime change.

The MSZMP negotiators came basically from three different groups. Some came from the headquarters of the Party and represented a relatively more "hardline" position. Others came from different secretariates in and around the Németh cabinet. These included people such as advisors to Imre Pozsgay, Péter Medgyessy and the like, who were strongly in favor of reforms. Finally, a number of MSZMP negotiators came from various ministries and different executive bodies of the state administration. These included lawyers, economic experts and bureaucrats, who often did not consider themselves to be "political animals," and some of whom were not even members of the communist party.

The Opposition Roundtable was a mix of generations covering everybody from the oldest (BZSBT, FKGP, KDNP, MNP, MSZDP) to the youngest (Fidesz). The historical experiences of the oldest and the youngest members of the opposition differed a great deal. While the elderly representatives of the former groups were the most cautious in the negotiations, the young Fidesz representatives, who had not personally experienced the full rigidity of the regime behaved most radically. As far as the Third Side was concerned, there was no over-represented age group among its members.

Of the participants 87% were men and only 13% were women. The proportion of women was only 8% among the representatives of the Opposition Roundtable, while their proportion reached 21% among the negotiators of the Third Side. Part of the explanation for the relatively high percentage of women in this group is that the representatives of the Alliance of Hungarian Women were included in the Third Side. At the same time the Third Side was the most politically weightless party in the negotiations. It seems that there was a negative correlation between the importance of a political organization and the participation of women in that organization. One can form a hypothesis by saying that first, the more "historic" the organization, the less representation was given to women; and two, the closer a party stood to power, the fewer opportunities were offered to women in its ranks.

The data concerning the educational and professional background of the participants makes clear that almost exclusively intellectuals, or professionals, participated in the negotiations. Their proportion reached 90% among the participants. Most of them – one-third of all participants – came from "freelance intellectuals," while others came most commonly from the legal-administrative sphere and from the state-owned companies. Among the MSZMP delegates, the proportion of administrative-governmental professions was 75%. Most of the MSZMP

delegates preferred to define themselves as "experts" rather than as "party cadres." Independent intellectuals were far over-represented in the organizations of the Opposition Roundtable, where their proportion reached 70%. (Due to Fidesz, there were more than a dozen university students as well.) The parents of half of the intellectuals had also been intellectuals. Multiple generation intellectuals were characteristic in the ranks of MDF, SZDSZ and the League of Independent Trade Unions (FSZDL). First generation intellectuals dominated the MSZMP, and these were also notable in the ranks of FKGP and Fidesz.

If we look at the twelve Working Committees, we will not be surprised to find that people with degrees in economics dominated the committees concerned with the economy. Following Hungarian traditions that reached back centuries, lawyers took the lead in the debates of the political committees. The lawyers formed the majority in all but one political committee. People with degrees in the arts and the humanities ruled the committee that discussed the reform of the media; and people born in Budapest constituted 50% of the participants. The rest came in roughly equal proportions from other cities, towns, and villages. But in the actual negotiations, however, the inhabitants of Budapest were far over-represented, due to the simple fact that the talks took place in the Parliament building in the capital, and people living in the countryside could not afford to travel to Budapest two or three times a week.

Only 10% of the participants did anything before 1989 that could be judged as even moderate oppositionist activity. By oppositionist activity we mean signing a petition, disseminating *samizdat* journals in friendly circles, or participating in an opposition meeting (in Monor, Szarvas, or Lakitelek), or in movements (such as the independent peace or environmentalist groups). Just as most of the members of Hungarian society, 90% of the participants had remained silent during the Kádár era. Only one-third of the participants in the negotiations ran for office in the first free elections in March–April 1990, and only one-fifth of them did so during the second elections in 1994.[13]

To sum up, the "regime changing elite" of the negotiators was younger and better educated than the members of the previous elite. Many negotiators held degrees in economics, law, or one of the humanities. These people were overwhelmingly males from Budapest. Many belonged to the "freelance" intellectual circles, while others can be associated with various government bureaucracies. Although this new, or transitory, elite was much better educated and more innovative than the leadership circles of the Kádár regime, in terms of male/female representation it remained just as segregated as the old elite had been.

Political Values and Visions

Among the most important political values of 1989, I would like to discuss the following: freedom, non-violence, sovereignty, representative government, consensual democracy, and civil society. The most important vision of the future concerned a democratic society, which "returns to Europe" and enjoys widespread social welfare, a market economy, representative government, and an internationally neutral military.

Among the political values expressed by the participants of the roundtable talks one should above all mention the idea of freedom, which was understood both as a liberal and as a democratic value. Freedom as a liberal value meant the possibility that people finally could exercise their human rights and civil liberties. They could freely talk to each other, both privately and publicly. The press was declared to be free. The rights to associate and form political parties were also considered to be the inevitable rights of all citizens. Freedom was understood negatively rather than positively. This meant that the state (the Party, the police, the military, in short the government) should stay away from individual citizens and should not harass, disturb or control them. This constituted a freedom from something, freedom from the intervention of the state. Such an understanding of freedom clearly resulted from an aggregation of two major political influences. First, the roundtable participants' idea of freedom derived from the legacy of dissent in East Central Europe. This dissent placed a high value on human rights and an equally high value on human dignity (see the writings of Benda, Bibó, Havel, Konrád, Kundera, Kuron, Michnik, Patocka, and others). On the other hand, this concept of freedom also owed a debt to the then dominant Western neo-liberal and neo-conservative ideologies represented by theorists such as Hayek and Friedman, as well as by politicians such as Thatcher and Reagan.

The democratic conception of freedom was understood as a popular sovereignty, recovered after decades of Soviet occupation, during which the presence of the Soviets and the Red Army always strongly influenced the political calculations. Interestingly, democracy was understood as a representative form of governance, where people exercise their constitutional powers not so much directly, but rather through the activities of their elected representatives. If democracy, as Robert Dahl emphasized, consists of three major elements: competition, participation and civil liberties, it is interesting to note that the Hungarians emphasized the first and the third components and did not speak much about the second. Since communism based itself on the forced, involuntary participation of the masses, people were not eager to insist on the value of political mobilization from the top to the bottom. In a way they preferred a liberal, "non-participatory" democracy.

One of the reasons why the Hungarian regime change was so smooth lies in its cautiously defended peacefulness. *Non-violence* was highly valued and taken seriously by all sides. I would even say that non-violence was viewed as almost as important as freedom and remains among the central legacies of 1989. The negotiators desired non-violence, accompanied by negotiations, and a tended to strive for a consensus. Ordinary people did not want to repeat the revolution of 1956. But their behavior was also influenced by the evolutionist strategy of the opposition. Nor did the communist holders of power want to initiate violence. Both sides were waiting for each other to respond with violence; but fortunately no one did. The determination for non-violent conflict resolution was accompanied by the then still vital legacy of self-limiting political behavior. Even the so-called radical opposition was, in fact, quite moderate in comparison with other radical democratic oppositions, especially those of Latin America. This value came from the decade-long co-operation of the democratic oppositions of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The high moral value of non-violence, among other political values, was just recently hotly debated and re-evaluated in relation to the NATO air strikes in Yugoslavia. In the spring of 1999 there was a split in Hungarian public opinion on how to evaluate the NATO intervention, which followed the crisis in Kosovo. Members of one camp felt that the intervention went against the legacy of 1989, while people in the other camp felt that, after all, freedom was more important than non-violence. People had to re-think whether non-violence should be evaluated as highly as freedom.

The reason why non-violence was so important lies in the violent legacy of 1956. Everybody wanted to avoid another bloody revolution. Just as in the case of Poland, the legacy of 1980–81 constituted the starting point for the negotiation process all over East Central Europe. In Hungary learning the lessons of non-violence proved to be a long process. Nevertheless, this peaceful, consensus-building, deliberative process formed democracy through negotiations and in a non-violent way. The ideal form of democracy was therefore seen as a consensual democracy. The participants in the negotiations agreed that transitory institutions might survive the period of transition. Later they will be re-established as inseparable parts of the new democracy. This consensualism was later harshly criticized by the radical Right, which wanted a more sweeping change in the power relations of the elite. Prime Minister József Antall, the leader of the MDF government, had a famous reply to these claims. He said that the radicals should have made a revolution ("tetszettek volna forradalmat csinálni"), if they wanted a complete change of the elite. This is not to suggest that overarching consensualism is the ideal form of democracy, but this attitude reflected perhaps a more naive approach to democracy, which had been current during the transition. The consensualist views had been influenced by many different thinkers, from Rousseau to Lijphart, and the theorists of *civil society*.

Up until 1989 the victory of democracy was imagined as a victory of civil society over the state. A strong state was understood as a sign of a weak democracy and vice versa. One interesting feature of the Opposition Roundtable was that it transformed wishes concerning a united front, an umbrella organization of opposition, into the reality of a newly emerging political elite. This new political elite could be characterized as internally divided and conflict ridden, but also as the co-operative, consensus oriented body of the opposition.

Democracy is about conflicts, conflicting values, and interests. Decisions should be made on the democratic principle of majority rule and the liberal principles of equal human rights and civil liberties. As Hirschman and others have pointed out, conflicts are not dysfunctional in a democracy. Indeed, they are the very essence of it. The point is not to eliminate conflicts in the name of consensualism, but to channel the conflicts through the functioning democratic institutions. Political visions were based on the idea of a "return to Europe" and the new Hungarian politicians took it almost for granted that "the West" would be eager to embrace the newcomers and accept them into the world of democracy. Ten years later we can safely say that this has not proven to be the case. The MDF first advocated the idea of a "third way" but then in order to promote a safer and less painful transition abandoned it and started to emphasize Konrad Adenauer's "social market economy." The liberal parties, on the other hand, influenced by contemporary neo-liberalism, spoke of a "liberal market economy," based on a non-interventionist state.[14] For a while Finlandization served as a model for Hungary, and the development of Austria was repeatedly mentioned as well. Both cases suggested a militarily neutral status for the country. At that time such neutrality constituted the best that could be hoped for. Only beginning in 1990 did some politicians start to speak of joining NATO. At that time the European Community (later Union) was still far more popular than NATO because it was identified with welfare, and people did not feel any external fear that might induce them to think of joining NATO. This public attitude only started to change after the coup in Moscow in August 1991 and, most visibly, after the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Historical References

I have already mentioned the legacy of the 1956 revolution as a pattern that most of participants in the regime hoped to avoid. The only exception was the Hungarian October Party, led by György Krassó, which did not participate in the Roundtable Talks and opted for a revolutionary strategy. But this party remained on the margins of political life. The Hungarian October Party criticized the negotiating partners as different elite groups talking over the people's heads and suggested that the parties at the roundtable talks were only interested in following

their own self interests and not the common good. All other parties insisted on taking a peaceful path from dictatorship to democracy and thus refused to take a revolutionary road. Nevertheless, all of the parties had to deal with the legacy of 1956. They could not possibly ignore it. The revolution crushed by the Soviets and the execution of Imre Nagy, the revolutionary prime minister, made the political position of those who supported János Kádár and associated themselves with his policies morally unacceptable. To remind the public that Kádárism had been born in the state of an "original sin" was the best tool for the opposition to delegitimize the communist regime. The events of 1956 were important as long as they served the opposition's goal of distinguishing itself from the Kádár regime and proved useful for denouncing the Kádár system on moral grounds. While for some speakers at the reburial of Imre Nagy and his fellow martyrs Nagy constituted a role model in politics, for the young radical Viktor Orbán, Nagy was an honorable person only because he had been able to rid himself of his communist beliefs. Nobody from the opposition wanted to follow either Nagy's ideas of a "democratic socialism," or the revolutionary practice of 1956. After June 16, 1989, the moment when communism was morally sentenced to death publicly in Budapest, the legacy of 1956 as the first anti-totalitarian and anti-communist revolution, faded away as well.

Thus the participants of the Roundtable Talks had to search for other usable historical references. As it turned out, Hungarian history had produced some similar patterns of change, which offered some symbolic rediscovery for 1989. First and foremost, during the "lawful revolution of 1848" the lower noble strata had initiated a bloodless transition, a "glorious revolution,"[15] which was supposed to have led from a more traditional to a more civic and liberal regime. In 1848 the old parliament had passed the bills necessary for the change that made the famous Batthyány cabinet possible. This government had included ministers such as Kossuth, Széchenyi, and Eötvös. Historians at the roundtable, including György Szabad, József Antall and András Gergely, often referred to the example of 1848 as a model worthy of being followed.

The re-start of political life after World War II constituted yet another reference point. The bill 1946:I on the legal status of the president of the republic was often quoted as the "little constitution" of those times.[16] It contained legislation on the procedure for electing the president, and by adopting that bill, the opposition wanted to follow the parliamentary traditions of Hungarian politics. They did not favor a presidential system. Politically, 1848 provided the idea of national liberalism that demonstrated the harmony of the values of "homeland" and "progress." On the other hand 1945 supplied a legacy of a peacefully established democratically oriented regime based on a center-right umbrella party, which was at that time the Independent Smallholders' Party. Both legacies were seen as focusing on institutional rearrangement rather than on revolutionary upheaval. The establishment of

the historic link of 1848–1945–1989 was an important achievement by the Opposition Roundtable.[17] This connection allowed the Opposition Roundtable to present itself as the heir to the peaceful and radical democratic traditions of Hungarian history.

As far as the foreign historical and political references were concerned, explicit references were made to the Spanish way to democracy in the 1970s. Both government and opposition studied the Spanish transition quite thoroughly. But the most important foreign reference point was obviously Poland. The idea of an "ethical civil society,"[18] and the new political evolutionary theories were taken from the experiences of the Polish opposition. Moreover, frequent personal contacts were developed between the members of the Polish and the Hungarian oppositions. Members of the Hungarian democratic opposition had long ago established friendships in Poland with Michnik, Kuron, Smolar and others, while the activists of the new Hungarian trade unions were eager to establish links with Solidarity in order to learn about the Poles' negotiating experiences.

1989 Revisited: On the Costs and Benefits
of the Smooth Change

The roundtable negotiations of 1989 created an unprecedented historical situation in which a political elite was able to craft the constitution and the institutional framework of a democracy. Nevertheless, in many countries, it was not seen as "clean" process. The "original sin" of the negotiations of 1989 was that those talks had included the communists, as the MSZMP leaders also participated in this crafting process. Although the communists were sitting on the other side of the table, they were undeniably there. The uneasiness of the former opposition forces with this situation was accurately represented recently in a statement by the current Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. Although Orbán had been an active and even an enthusiastic participant in the 1989 negotiations, he later changed his mind and observed that the costs of the negotiations were actually higher than their benefits. In June 1999 he gave a speech in Vienna, at another conference on the roundtable talks. Orbán said:

> I ask myself, is there anything that should have remained from 1989.
> In a vague sense many people think that it was the first year of liberty. Others, and I include myself, believe that 1989 was the last year
> of dictatorship. Consequently, I think the less that has remained from
> 1989, the better.[19]

Once again this is the question of the bottle that can be seen as half-full, or as half-empty, at the same time. Obviously 1989 was the last year of the dictatorship

because it was also the year of the collapse of the dictatorship. Orbán's statement served to fulfil some ideological purposes. He wanted to emphasize the need for a sharper discontinuity, and by so doing he distinguished between the 1989-ers and the 1990-ers. And he added that the '89ers are the people of continuity because they were sitting there and negotiating with the communists. On top of that, he basically claimed that the '89ers were only interested in slow changes and partial changes. They were interested in modifying the institutional order but did not want to change the personnel in the media. Moreover, they were not in favor of a fair privatization or a fair economic transformation. On the other hand, as opposed to the '89ers, for Orbán, the '90ers are the people of a radical break. They are the people of free elections, and they are not going to enter into the mish-mashing of things in the way the '89ers were doing.

Orbán continued by describing some of the costs of 1989: namely that former communists remain in the forefront in the public and commercial media, and that during the privatization process the former communists could transfer public money into their own private hands. This is an interesting argument; for it attempts to portray the roundtable talks as the safest way for communists to preserve themselves for the future. If we study the round table process in the light of this criticism, we may note that the discussions had a formal structure that covered, at least theoretically, both political and economic issues. And the political negotiations proved to be far more important than the talks on the economy. Why was this so? Because the Opposition Roundtable, which favored negotiations, claimed that they were there to legislate new bills. So, for those people, who were at the Opposition Roundtable, the major goal was to achieve popular sovereignty, or pluralistic democracy, and they were against all of those organizations that had allied themselves with organizations having monopolistic powers. So, they were interested in designing the fundamental institutional changes necessary for a new democracy. They were not so much involved in discussions about privatization and the issues of economic transformation. Why was this so? Were they not interested in the economic matters at all? No. They simply did not feel entitled and legitimized by the people to discuss issues of economic policy. Even at the beginning of the talks, the Opposition Roundtable resisted re-writing the constitution. The participants argued that the discussions over economic matters should be carried out in the future by the freely elected parliament and the new government.

In order to achieve economic change one can set up a new institutional order in a matter of months but it is much more difficult to control a privatization processes and design an economic transformation in practice. And, after all, these people on the opposition side of the roundtable talks were uncertain whether they should control privatization at all. Although rhetorically they were always against it, the negotiators finally accepted a spontaneous transformation. They thought that they had started to build a democratic/market society in order to build capital-

ism. So, if they were in favor of capitalism, they could not oppose spontaneous privatization, which was understood as original capital accumulation, as the "hardware" of capitalism. The participants argued that in terms of history it is not particularly important who is going to be the new owner. The important thing was not so much to put good or reliable guys into positions of ownership but to change fundamentally the economic and political relationships. They thought in this way perhaps because of their ideological foundations, but also because the outgoing technocratic communist elite had already secured the necessary privatization bills before the trilateral talks began in June 1989. The laws on the companies and the economic transformation had been already enacted in 1988 or early 1989. So, there was not much talk on this issue at the roundtable talks. The economic committees in the roundtable talks found themselves in a vacuum. Members of these committees were sitting together, speaking about privatization and agrarian policies, but they did not conclude with any decisions. Finally, these questions were left to the Blue Ribbon committee and the Bridge committee, which were to be formed by late 1989.

While political change and institutional change were under the more or less strict oversight of the public, or at least those processes were more visible, the games of economic transformation proceeded largely unnoticed. The legislation of the outgoing government and the installation of expert committees for discussing the strategy of economic transformation were much closer to the elitist design of economic change than was the case in the political negotiations.

Some of the anger expressed by those who only came to power late, or only in the post-privatization phase, may be understandable. Still, I think, it is their misfortune, and I do not think that a "second revolution" needs to be implemented. I think, those radicals who would like to re-start the revolution cannot win elections. Those who are playing with revolutionary rhetoric in order to stimulate another "regime change" can only lose. The change of regimes has been accomplished, and another democratic regime change is not on the agenda of the majority of society. However, these critics wanted to expand the meaning of transition from one of narrow institutional political change to an overarching concept that included broad cultural, economic, and political transformation. Post-1989 radicalism has its democratic limits, and this was recognized recently by Prime Minister Orbán, who has claimed that the change of regimes is finally over.

If we enter a discussion of the cost/benefit analysis of the roundtable discussion, then I believe that the benefits will prove to be far more significant than the costs. The costs are mainly observable in the collective mentality. Many people feel that the economic transformation and the redistribution of economic power did not proceed democratically. People feel that they have somehow been robbed by the "Big Business" that has emerged. The managers, the technocratic elite – all those who were already co-opted by the old Kádárist elite – are viewed as the

ultimate winners of the transformation. Ordinary people tend to think that they were the victims of communism before the change of regimes, and now they are the victims of globalization.

In terms of the narrower political change, there was a clear elite settlement, a rapid re-negotiation of the political and institutional-legal situation.[20] In terms of economic change, however, it was a mixture of elite settlement, co-optation, and convergence. These were parallel processes. There were no competing elite groups for the new technocracy. The "new entrepreneurs" of the late Kádár era won the battle. Being still close to the circles of power, the economic elite of the late Kádár era could not be excluded from the benefits of the economic transformation.[21] Like it or not, they were a part of the game. Their success was part of the price to be paid to avoid revolutionary methods and to accomplish a peaceful transition.

Notes

1. On the Polish negotiations see: Wiktor Osyatinski, "The Roundtable Talks in Poland," in Jon Elster, ed., *Roundtable Talks and the Breakdown of Communism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 21–68.
2. See Neal Ascherson, *The Polish August: The Self-Limiting Revolution* (New York: Viking, 1983); Jadwiga Staniszkis, *Poland's Self-Limiting Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).
3. For the minutes of the negotiations see: András Bozóki, Márta Elbert, Melinda Kalmár, Béla Révész, Erzsébet Ripp and Zoltán Ripp, eds, *A rendszerváltás forgatókönyve: kerekasztal-tárgyalások 1989-ben*, 4 vols., (Budapest: Magvető, 1999) [from now on: ARF]; on the historical context of the Hungarian negotiations see Rudolf L. Tőkés: *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
4. Independently of each other, both the communists and the opposition sent delegates to Poland in May 1989 to learn firsthand the experiences of the Polish negotiators.
5. This was a characteristic argument by Viktor Orbán of Fidesz in 1989, and the other radicals in the opposition bloc accepted it.
6. See for instance: Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamanouros and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
7. Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1942).
8. On this see in detail: Alan Renwick, "Eliten kívüli erők szerepe a rendszerváltásban," in András Bozóki, ed., *Alkotmányos forradalom*, vol. 7, ARF (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2000) [forthcoming].
9. On this see: Tamás Hofer, "Rendszerváltás szimbolikus mezőben: 1989 március 15-e Budapesten". *Politikatudományi Szemle* 1/1 (1992).
10. János Rainer M., "A rendszerváltozás és az ötvenhatos hagyomány," in András Bozóki, ed., *Alkotmányos forradalom,* vol. 7, ARF (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2000) [forthcoming].
11. Interestingly Gorbachev and Bush did not urge the Hungarians to speed up the tempo of the transition. Instead, they warned them that the process of democratization should be kept controlled and the direction of the changes is more important than their speed. It seems that the Hungarian negotiators were more impatient and more eager to speed up the process of change than the

pro-democratic politicians in either the East or the West. See in detail: Csaba Békés, "Vissza Európába: A magyarországi rendszerváltás nemzetközi háttere," in András Bozóki, ed., *Alkotmányos forradalom*, vol. 7, ARF (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2000) [forthcoming].

12. On the biographies of the main participants see: Márta Elbert and András Bozóki, *Portrék és életrajzok,* vol. 8, ARF (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 1999); on the analysis of the biographies see András Bozóki and Gergely Karácsony, "Életút és politika: a kerekasztal-tárgyalások résztvevői," in Bozóki, ed., *Alkotmányos Forradalom*, vol. 7, ARF (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2000) (forthcoming).

13. Empirical data are based on and taken from the 1996–1997 research on the Hungarian change of regimes, which was led by András Bozóki and co-ordinated by Krisztina Schay at the Department of Political Science of the Central European University, Budapest.

14. On the linguistic battles of the transition see: András Bozóki, "The Rhetoric of Action: The Language of the Regime Change in Hungary," in *Intellectuals and Politics in Central Europe*, ed. András Bozóki (Budapest–New York: Central European University Press, 1999), 263–283.

15. The notion of a "glorious revolution" stems from the English "transition" of 1688. For the application of this term to 1989 see: Ferenc Fehér and Ágnes Heller, *Kelet-Európa dicsőséges forradalmai* (Budapest: T-Twins, 1992).

16. The text of the 1946:I bill can be found in ARF, vol. 3 (1999), 645–648.

17. See especially the contributions of József Antall in the August 29 meeting of the Opposition Roundtable; see also: János Kis, "1989: a víg esztendő," *Beszélő* 4/10 (1999): 22–46. For the documents see: ARF, vol. 3 (1999), 520–653.

18. See the chapter on Poland in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

19. See Viktor Orbán's speech at a conference entitled "Ten Years After" and held at Vienna, Austria on June 26, 1999. www.meh.hu/kormany/kormanyfo/1999/O6/990626 becsen.htm

20. Michael G. Burton and John Higley, "Elite Settlements," *American Sociological Review* 52(1987): 295–307; John Higley and Michael G. Burton, "The Elite Variable in Democratic Transitions and Breakdowns," *American Sociological Review* 54(1989): 17–32; John Higley, Jan Pakulski and Wlodzimierz Wesolowski, eds, *Postcommunist Elites and Democracy in Eastern Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

21. On this see for example: Erzsébet Szalai: *Gazdaság és hatalom* (Budapest: Aula, 1990).

Further information:

András Bozóki is the editor-in-chief of a project to publish all of the documents of the Hungarian roundtable talks of 1989. The first four volumes of the eight volume series were published as *A rendszerváltás forgatókönyve: Kerekasztal-tárgyalások 1989-ben* [The Script of the Regime Change: Roundtable Talks in 1989] (Budapest: Magvető, 1999); the 5th and 8th volumes were published by Új Mandátum in 1999 and 2000 respectively; the 6th and 7th volumes are to be published by Új Mandátum in May 2000. These books are and will be available in Hungarian. A CD version of the eight volumes is also under preparation. One volume will be published in English: the minutes of the National Roundtable talks, which will (I hope) be published by the Central European University Press.

Previous books on this topic include:

András Bozóki, András Korosenyi and George Schopflin, eds, *Post-Communist Transition: Emerging Pluralism in Hungary* (London: Pinter, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

Béla K. Király and András Bozóki, eds, *Lawful Revolution in Hungary, 1989–94* (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1995).

András Bozóki, ed., *Intellectuals and Politics in Central Europe* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 1999).

Appendix 1

THE STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE TALKS IN HUNGARY, 1989

Plenary Session

(Agreements, political declarations)
(3 delegates from each participating organizations)

Middle-level Sessions

Political coordinating committee
(Defining the rules and principles
of the democratic transition.)
(2 delegates from each organizations)

Economic and social committee
(Strategic issues in combating
economic and social crisis.)
(2 delegates from each organizations)

Working Committees

1. Political committees
    (5–5 delegates from the three sides)
1.1 Constitution drafting
    (President, constitutional court)
1.2 Legal regulation of political parties
    (Party finance, party assets)
1.3 Electoral law
1.4 Remaking of the penal code and the
    Rules of criminal procedural law
1.5 Liberation and regulation of the mass
    media. (Public TV, newspapers)
1.6 Legal guarantees for the completion of the
    non-violent transition to democracy

2. Economic committees
    (5–5 delegates from the three sides)
2.1 Debt problem, structural change,
    inflation
2.2 The social consequences of the
    economic crisis
2.3 Property reform, privatization
2.4 Land reform. (The problem of
    agricultural co-operatives.)
2.5 Principles of the budget regulation

2.6 Anti-monopoly regulations,
    protection.

Goodwill Committee

(To solve problems in the negotiating process, operating every level.)

Appendix 2

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR POSITION
AT THE NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE TALKS
(in fact *trilateral* talks)

1. MSZMP – Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party (Communist Party)
Internally divided, but increasingly dominated by reformist elements, willing to negotiate and compromise.

2. *Opposition roundtable* (9 organizations)

"Ultra-moderates"

Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Society (BZSBT)	(Center-right, cultural-political association)
Christian Democratic Party	("Historic" party, center-right, Christian/social)
Hungarian People's Party (MNP)	("Historic" party, center-left, third way)

"Moderates"

Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	(New; centrist, national/liberal/conservative, mixed)
Independent Smallholders Party (FKGP)	("Historic" party, agrarian/traditionalist)
League of Free Trade Unions (FSZDL)	(New; union led by urban intellectuals)
Social Democrats (MSZDP)	("Historic" party, internally divided)

"Self-limiting Radicals"

Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	(New; social/economic liberal, former dissidents)
Federation of Young Democrats (Fidesz)	(New; liberal/radical/alternative, students etc.)

3. *Third side* (7 organizations)

National Council of Trade Unions (SZOT)	(official unions, puppet organization of the CP)
Patriotic People's Front (HNF)	(reform-minded; umbrella organization)
Democratic Youth Alliance (Demisz)	(formerly: Communist Youth League)
Women's Alliance (MNSZ)	(puppet organization of the CP)
Ferenc Münnich Society (MFT)	(hard-liner, Cold War-communists)
Alliance of Resistance Fighters and Anti-fascists (MEASZ)	(WWII communists, former partisans)
Left Alternative	(intellectuals in the humanities)

POLAND'S TRANSITION AS POLITICAL REPOLARIZATION

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Poland's development since the collapse of communism reveals a contradiction. On the one hand, Poland is often represented as the paradigmatic success story of the postcommunist economic and political transformation.[1] On the economic front, the country has demonstrated the fastest growth rate and recovery in the region, despite the fact that it was perceived as an economic basket case on the eve of the transition.[2] On the political front, Poland is solidly in the forefront of the consolidated democracies, with firm institutional and constitutional foundations and strong popular support for the values of democracy.[3] There is no doubt that Poland has joined the family of democratic states.

On the other hand, these accomplishments occurred in the context of an "extremely unstable political landscape."[4] Electoral politics and party systems have been highly volatile, whether judged by voting preferences, party fragmentation, or cabinet instability. Contestation over basic institutions and rules, such as the 1997 Constitution, has been vociferous and extreme. Collective action beyond the bounds of legitimate "normal" political behavior, in the form of strikes or street protests, has been a continuing feature of post-1998 Poland. The process of politics, in short, has often been chaotic and contentious. In this regard, the Polish scene is often contrasted with the evolution of its East Central European neighbors. The Czech Republic and Hungary in particular are imputed to have solved the issue of political stability and institutional sustainability, with the deployment of mature party systems and civic political norms.[5]

What, then, accounts for the Polish paradox: success and instability? The answer lies in the nature of the political transformation in Poland over the past decade, which has evolved along two distinct tracks: that of the politics of identity and the politics of interest.[6] The first centers around a normative world infused with values and moral judgements as benchmarks of political communities. In this context, politics is built around substantive understandings and goals rather than the procedural tenets of democracy. Politics of identity form around norms of belonging to particular groups, whether Christian or Moslem in Bosnia, or Catho-

lic or secular in Poland. The constituencies defined by identity politics are attached to entrenched values build around consensus movements that use a normative discourse to advance their cause.[7] The attachment to identity politics in postcommunist Poland is a reflection of the old divide between "we" the people, Solidarity and "they" the communist regime. Indeed, it is the persistence of this old division in Polish society that has enabled its renewed political uses and the return to prior values as the language of contemporary politics. The difficulty with such an approach is that identity politics are essentially "indivisible," for normative and moral judgements cannot be easily compromised and resolved through bargaining. The tendency of identity politics, as a result, is to contribute to conflict and instability.

The second track in contemporary Polish politics evolves around the politics of interest. In contrast to the previous identity construct, interests are formed around economic and social policy issues that are primarily distributive in nature. For that very reason, the politics of interest are "divisible," so that differences can be split, bargained over, and resolved through compromise. Interest based constituencies are specific groups with defined policy preferences over the allocation of social and economic goods.[8] Rather than restrained by moral and value commitments, these groups operate in a political world attuned to the give and take of interests and policies. The trend on this track favors political negotiation, compromise, and hence stability.

The Nature of Poland's Transition

In Poland it is the interfacing between the politics of interest and the politics of identity that has contributed to the instability of its democratic pluralism. During the initial years of the transition, the attempt to institute a political space defined primarily by group interests was thwarted by the persistence of strong values and ethical codes associated with the former division between Solidarity and the regime. This produced a dual system, by superimposing identity, value politics upon the emergent political process built around interests and policy bargaining. The effect was the continued intrusion of norms derived from the past on contemporary politics. Furthermore, the appeal to values favored the recreation of communities built around identities rather than interests. This was so since the interests of many groups associated with the former Solidarity camp were too dispersed and too underrepresented to have a meaningful voice in the country's transformation. Since many groups were blocked from effective participation in the policy process, the temptation to return to the political contestation of ethical positions increased significantly. Thus during the latter part of the decade, the voice of nor-

mative, identity politics became ever more pronounced in the discourse of Polish political life. In turn, the renewed emphasis on identity politics destabilized the political process.

The Politics of Interests

The collapse of communism throughout the Soviet bloc ushered in a new type of politics. The single voice of a dominant ideology and ruling party gave way to multiple demands and new political actors. In the emergent democratization, one of the primary questions was which issues were the most significant dividing line of postcommunism. The adaptation of market oriented programs rapidly altered the socioeconomic landscape, particularly in a country like Poland, which embarked immediately on a strategy of shock therapy. This policy increasing differentiation around income, job, or welfare distinctions. The interests of diverse social groups were being shaped, even created, by the rapid economic transformation. The question, however, was how these interests were to be represented in politics and engaged in policy deliberations. The emergence of socioeconomic differences was not sufficient, what was also necessary was the translation of these divisions into salient political cleavages.[9]

In the context of postcommunism, this was not a simple task, precisely because of the rapidly changing economic and political environment.[10] On the one hand, this is due to the highly fluid sociological picture associated with the transition. The movement from a command to a market economy, from a monopolistic to a pluralistic polity, involves many simultaneous, complex tasks that encompass economic, social, historical, and cultural issues. Individuals and social groups have difficulty discerning priorities among the multiplicity of transformations; and remain disoriented by the apparent chaos of the transition. The confusion is enhanced by uncertainty, for many people cannot determine how the processes of marketization and democratization will affect their standing in society. They thus defer the expression of political preferences. In political terms, this signifies that interest groups tend to be weak in terms of identification, coherence, and organization.

One consequence is difficulty in channeling interests into political remedies by finding appropriate channels for representation. The political side of the transition, i.e. the propensity for the emergence of numerous political entrepreneurs forming new parties to capture a share of the electorate, further exacerbates the problem. The removal of the communist monopoly opens up the opportunity for competition, but one that is largely unrestrained by past commitments or linkages. Politics becomes an open arena, where many ambitions are expressed through a

variety of political programs, ideologies, and interests. Precisely because there are so many competitors in the political arena, the ability of the voters to distinguish among them is blurred and confusing. In such conditions, voters find problematic selection and attachment to specific political parties and programs. This political chaos reinforces the already complex sociological picture of the postcommunist transition, reinforcing the fragility of democratization. Interests tend to be too weak and politics too fluid to assure the stability of political development.

Political and institutional factors combined to reinforce this tendency in Poland, and fracture the political scene at the dawn of democratization.[11] On the political side, the solidarity exemplified by the movement of that name and built previously on opposition to communist power, splintered into a variety of groups, interests, and personal ambitions. As a political force, *Solidarnosc* was no longer an "umbrella" movement bringing together various tendencies but an expression of rival political opinions. This disintegration reinforced the already confusing socioeconomic conditions associated with the turn to a market economy. The multiplicity of interests was exacerbated by institutional choices for the new democracy. In particular, an election system based on full proportional representation for the *Sejm* contributed to the ambitions of political actors, who were not restrained by barriers to electoral success, such as a minimum legal threshold for representation in parliament. The result was an extreme fragmentation of the Polish political space around the October 1991 elections.[12] At the time, for example, 111 electoral lists competed for voter support, and 29 different political lists gained representation in the Sejm. The vote was splintered among numerous parties, with no single one attaining more than 14% of the vote. The fragmentation of the political landscape revealed the existence of multiple axes of competition around several different dimensions: left-right economic issues, tradition-modernity concerns, religious-secular differences, Europeanist-nationalist sentiments, were all part of the mix. It became difficult to translate the diversity political cleavages into effective governance, since many different political parties laid claim to representation of these interests. Governing coalitions were fragile, and contributed to the instability of the political scene through successive cabinet turnovers.

The fragmentation and volatility of the political process during the early phase of Polish democratization needed to be redressed to produce a more stable political environment.[13] While all political forces recognized the need, there were substantial disagreements as to the specific remedial course. In The end, a consensus was reached on instituting a minimum 5% vote threshold for representation in the Sejm, so as to preclude participation in the policy making process of parties with minimal voters' support. The intent of this innovation was to curb the tendency to political fragmentation by imposing both mechanical and strategic constraints on the proliferation of parliamentary parties. In the 1993 elections, however, only the mechanical effects worked as many politicians did not respond in time to the new

rules by altering their strategic behavior. This was especially true of the political right, who failed to coalesce around a standard bearer. Instead many parties on the right contested the election independently, and were unable to clear the 5% minimum requirement.

For the political system, this meant that the prior fragmentation was replaced by another phenomenon: political disproportionality.[14] In the 1993 contest, close to 35% of the vote was "wasted," for that portion of the vote was so dispersed among numerous parties that none could clear the 5% requirement for entry into the legislature, so a third of the electorate was left without parliamentary representation. In turn, this produced extreme disproportionality, for the left coalition was able to muster 66% of the Sejm's seats based on 36% of voter support. This pattern did solve governance instability, but at the cost of political misrepresentation and legitimacy. So while a left political coalition was able to maintain power in the ensuing parliament, it was on the basis of minority support by the Polish population. In contrast, the political right had claimed a third of that support but due to its splintering was unable to have a voice in legislative policy deliberations. The post-1993 disproportionality, in other words, preempted the representation of some interests and overstated that of others. This called into question the legitimacy of the ruling SLD-PSL *(Democratic Left Alliance-Polish Peasant Party)* coalition, founded by parties previously associated with the communist regime. However, to mount an effective challenge to the status quo, the right extra-parliamentary opposition had to revert to the former politics of identity and values.

The Politics of Values

The resurgence of normative identities as the primary contestation in Polish politics after the 1993 election was driven by the political imbalance created by the disproportionality of legislative politics and the continued fragmentation of societal interests. To overcome the disequilibrium, politicians on the right turned to the former division of the "we" versus "they" to undermine the political outcome produced by the electoral process and their own strategic failures. To contest the procedural legitimacy of the democratic endeavor, the best option was to revert to the language of morality and values so as to question the identity of the emerging "community" of Poland. The reformed communists had betrayed the "true" Poland in the past, and could not be trusted to govern in the name of the renewed Polish nation. In that sense, the politics of old came to infuse with new vigor the political disputes of the 1990s.

The net effect of the new political discourse was to repolarize Polish politics around the identities of "we" and "they," a division that echoed Polish history both distant and proximate.[15] In many ways the appeal for popular support around

the moral categories of good and evil and the values of unity and community was a long-standing practice associated with the historical struggles of the Polish nation against foreign occupation and for resurgence as an independent state. In that struggle, the perception of Poland as "Christ among nations" was a deeply ingrained ethos that helped to preserve Polish culture and traditions. This historical path was reinforced by the immediate past of the communist period, when social outbursts against an alien regime expressed political struggles as normative, moral commitments — visible most forcefully in the Solidarity-regime divide of the 1980s. This powerful collective memory was an important element of the postcommunist transformation, but had been undermined by the give and take of interest politics.

In the mid-1990s, the disfranchised forces of the political right reached for this neglected symbolism to reassert their political legitimacy and regain a place in the political game. The symbols of old were to serve the needs of today, so the past divide along the communist-anticommunist axis was to serve as a political marker. The task here was to rebuild the former Solidarity ethos of freedom, dignity, and unity as universalistic message, but now serving partisan needs. The inclusive notion of national solidarity and of the true Poland was cast as a weapon of the political right against the political left, a reformulation that was appealing precisely because it echoed the values and struggles of the Polish people against communism.

Value Contestation in Polish Politics

The infusion of values as a currency of politics was manifest in a number of ways throughout the second half of the postcommunist decade. Its most significant elements were (1) the awakening of dormant, nostalgic movements as the primary political actors, (2) the framing of a political discourse of contestation around the former struggle between "we" and "they," good and evil. Both these factors have shaped the political style of Polish democratization during the latter half of the decade, which has come to be characterized increasingly around an indivisible, value mode of politics.

Political Actors

One of the primary factors affecting development in Poland was the activation into politics of institutional actors whose basic identity lay outside the realm of political action, notably the trade-union Solidarity and the Polish Catholic Church. Of course, these institutions had in the past played an important political role and

even in the post-1989 period engaged in public policy discourse. But the results of the 1993 parliamentary and 1995 presidential elections signified escalation in their public, political visibility, precisely because of the defeat of the forces associated with Solidarity and the Church. Their claim as symbols and guardians of the Polish nation came into the fore, to safeguard these values against the reviving power of the former communist side.

Most important in the structuring of Polish politics at the time was the reformulation of the Solidarity trade union as an overt political force. Since the defeat of communism in 1989, Solidarity has been mainly relegated to and concentrated on its role as a union representative of the workers. Its political nature has been effaced by the mushrooming of diverse political parties and groups associated with the movement during the anti-Communist struggle. Now, the electoral defeat of these forces had deprived that political side of a meaningful presence in the formal institutions of power. To create a new equilibrium, the Solidarity trade union moved to form a political movement capable of challenging the dominance of the left coalition. To that end, Solidarity became the primary agent in the formation of a broad political movement in June 1996, known as *Akcja Wyborcza Solidarnosc* (AWS), the Electoral Action Solidarity. As its very name intones, AWS had a dual purpose. One was to engage in electoral politics as a means to revive the fortunes of the political stance left without a voice in the aftermath of the 1993 and 1995 vote. The second was to invoke the tradition and the mystique of the Solidarity trade union as a powerful weapon in the political contest.

In essence, the purpose of the June 1996 action was to revive the pre-1989 coalition that challenged the communist regime and perform once again the same task by defeating the successor communist parties. The Solidarity union was able to use its legacy to act as a pivot in the new AWS movement, bringing together a variety of political parties, trade unions, family associations, social groups, and think tanks. The new political formation was grouped around common roots and common values, exemplified foremost by a nationalist and religious identity and the former struggle with communist power. In its founding declaration, AWS openly proclaimed its identity and its aim as a political undertaking uniting diverse social and political groups committed to a rightist political agenda centered on truth and solidarity in order to build "an independent, just, and democratic Poland."[16]

A similar attempt to mobilize support on the basis of historical roles and national traditions was played out by the Roman Catholic Church. The hierarchy of the church had pursued an active social and political agenda throughout the transition period, bridging its anticommunist stance in the pre-1989 days with an effort to find a new place for the church in the days of democratization. The latter period was devoted to the safeguarding of religious values in the new Poland. To attain that goal, the church clergy and its lay supporters constructed an ambitious agenda around the issues of religious education, antiabortion legislation, ratifica-

tion of the concordat with the Vatican, and a general preservation of Christian values in Polish society. These undertakings were not without political conflicts, and precisely for that reason placed the Church in a more vulnerable position in the aftermath of the 1993 and 1995 election results. Fearful that the victory of the postcommunist left and its government would lead to an erosion of its social agenda, the Church moved to reassert its political weight by supporting the AWS initiative and engaging in the debate on the political front.[17] The urgency of the initiative was enhanced by the fact that the constitutional process that was to bestow a new democratic foundation for the country was coming to fruition, now under the hegemony of the postcommunist party coalition. The fear of a Constitution that would enshrine values and practices outside the religious nature of Poland was tantamount to a call for political vigilance. The Church engaged in the political debate on the constitution to preserve its Poland, one committed to traditional religious values.

On the other side of the political divide, the practice of building political coalitions around a diversity of organizations and interests was well established by the mid-1990s. The former ruling communists had taken on the mantle of a reformed socialist party soon after the collapse of their regime, and had moved to create a broad social democratic movement, the *Left Democratic Alliance*. The latter was compromised of the ex-communist SdrP (Social Democracy of Poland) party, the previous pro-regime trade union movement OPZZ, and several other leftist trade unions and social associations. Nonetheless, the 1993 parliamentary victory created the impetus to forge a left ruling coalition with the Polish Peasant Party, itself a satellite organization of the communist in the pre-transition period. The post-1993 ruling coalition was the recreation of forces associated with the communist regime, representing a diversity of political actors united foremost by a common political heritage rather than similar interests. Indeed, the coalition included supporters of a liberal and statist economy, of religious and secular legislation, and pro-Europe integrationists and nationalist protectionists. The point is that the political identity of this grouping was based in their past association with the communist regime; and was governed by their identity as the "they" of the previous political epoch and their fear of a new accounting with the past.

It is evident that several institutional political actors in the mid-1990s continued to reflect the old division in Polish politics between pro- and anti-communist regime forces. The identity of these movements was vested in their past actions and reflected the normative, value divisions of old. Driven by heritage associations and future concerns, the organization of politics was an echo of "we" the people of Solidarity and "they" the rulers of communism. In that sense, the public scene was the continuing politicization of institutional arrangements along the inherited value differentiation. In a similar vein, it meant the infusion into the political realm of actors that were a reflection of past "umbrella" movements

rather than "pure" parties. These movements were catchall, heterogeneous en-
claves that grouped together diverse interests but still espoused a common ethos
along a moral, normative identity that transcended their respective policy prefer-
ences and agendas.

Political Discourse

Reference to a normative political worldview was grounded in more than the
institutional makeup of the political organizations active in Poland's transition.
Even more so, the political discourse of the past decade was increasingly framed
in the language of morality, identity and value. In many respects, the construction
of a new language of politics was vested with a mission mentality driven by the
struggles of the past.[18] First, as noted above, the call was for a collectivist ethos
that required the sacrifice of distinct interests and separate goals for the common
good: solidarity was essential for success. More important than the specific inter-
ests of social constituencies was the assurance of the historical mission embodied
by the anticommunist coalition and the resurrection of the true Poland. Second,
the very substance of the political discourse was framed along a stance that tran-
scended past and present. The language of politics was a reprise of the national-
liberation movement that fought the regime in the previous era, and had to echo
the same values and morality to defend the Polish people against the treacherous
acts of the ex-communists. In these terms, the AWS political position was vested
in the values that had defined the duality of Polish politics throughout the years of
communist rule.

A number of issues came to the forefront during the debate concerning the
political future of Poland, represented mainly by ratification of the new constitu-
tion and mobilization for a new round of elections in 1997. In these controversies,
the predominant language of politics was that of morality and history, with a vir-
tual disregard of the economic and social interests that were being transformed by
the rapid and vast socioeconomic transformation of the country. While the issues
of contention were varied, they can be grouped round three principal arenas: na-
tional identity, decommunization, and social values.

The question of national identity took several forms, but was most evident in
the debate on the constitution.[19] The draft worked out in the legislature for ap-
proval by the citizenry was a compromise among different political forces, but
tied in the eyes of many to the dominating parliamentary side at the time, the
leftist ruling coalition. For that very reason the extra-parliamentary opposition,
represented by AWS and supported by the Church, denounced the working ver-
sion of the constitution. It saw the document as failing to reflect the true nature of
Poland, and perceived it instead as an assault on its basic values, such as sover-

eignty, faith and family. For some, it was a "foreign" creation written by former communists, and thus meriting condemnation as an act of betrayal. Instead, the AWS movement and the Church favored an alternative citizens' draft that emphasized the historical identity of the Polish nation and culture, tied to God and Christian virtues. The debate on the constitution produced intense political debate and mutual recriminations. The disagreement was particularly contentious in conjunction with the preamble to the constitution, which sought to define the very nature of the new democratic Poland. The eventual solution to the rival understandings of Poland's identity was the inclusion of two distinct definitions, reflecting both preferences. This resolution on the preamble was not a true "compromise," for neither side could give up its particular normative vision of the Polish state. Rather the compromise consisted of the inclusion of both versions of Polish identity in the constitutional foundation, joining side by side an *ethnos* definition and a civic one. Among the opening words of the 1997 constitution, we read:

> We, the Polish Nation – all citizens of the Republic, Both those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty, As well as those not sharing such faith but respecting those universal values as arising from other sources ... Beholden to our ancestors for their labors, their struggle for independence achieved at great sacrifice, for our culture rooted in the Christian heritage of the Nation and in universal human values.

The text thus combines two views. One of the Poland as the historical nation tied to Christian faith and traditions, defining the very existence of the country through past struggles of the Polish people. The other view asserts a civic understanding of the country, where citizenship is not a reflection of religious beliefs or nationalist traditions but universal and civic values.

The two definitions of Poland found in the basic document are testimony to the politics of identity and values defining the contemporary political scene in the country. They represent core elements of a moralistic faith that sees the world in terms of right and wrong, of we and they, and of truth and betrayal. Under such circumstances, there is little room for a true compromise that helps to narrow the difference between the two sides by reducing the difference, and instead moves to a solution where both worldviews are simultaneously incorporated into the very definition of Poland. Even this solution proved problematic, for the constitutional draft was opposed by social forces associated with AWS and the Church, which called for a rejection of the document in the referendum. The October 1997 popular vote did endorse the constitution, by a 54% to 46% margin, but with a turnout of only 43% of eligible voters. In the end, then, the acrimonious debate surrounding the constitutional issue led to the adoption of the supreme basic law by only one-quarter of the Polish citizenry.

The problematic nature of the politics of value in Poland was further evident in the growing resurgence of the decommunization issue. An earlier attempt sought to remove the matter from the political agenda. Thus the first postcommunist Prime Minister of Poland, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, proclaimed a policy of the "think line" – a clear demarcation between past and present, preferring to look to the future rather than settle accounts with the past. But the thick line policy was never fully accepted by the entire political spectrum, and was denounced early on by some groupings with Solidarity lineage, even becoming fodder for political intrigue. The turn to the left in the 1993 and 1995 elections and the ensuing infusion of the politics of identity revived the saliency of the issue. The power of ex-communists was again visible, and brought into sharp relief the question of settling accounts with the past. Opportunity came again in the aftermath of the 1997 election and the alteration in power in favor of the AWS coalition. Concerns with the communists' role in the nation's history became once more a prominent political dispute between forces of the right and left, couched in the discourse of value politics. For the right, lustration was part of a moral indignation that targeted the continuing influence of the "reds" in Polish politics and society, and decommunization was equated with the salvation of the Polish nation. For the left, the lustration policy was nothing but a political witchhunt design to remove legitimate political opponents and impose a religious, conservative cloak on the country.

The two contrasting visions of decommunization became the object of intense political rhetoric and contestation. The predominance of the conservative political wing in the post-1997 Sejm, however, led to the passage of several acts and laws aimed at imposing a screening of the past, both through condemnation of the communist era and the association of individuals with its regime.[20] Reflecting the first aspect was a June 1998 bill that held responsible "in the highest degree" the former ruling communist party, the PUWP, for the imposition of the communist system on Poland. Decommunization of the second type was pursued through a series of legal actions that limited the right of former communist officials to hold public office, set-up a Screening Court as a mechanism for the lustration of officials, and created an Institute of National Remembrance to house communist secret police files. In all, these various steps represented a systemic attempt to come to terms with the immediate past. As such, the policy negated the concept of the "thick line" between the communist and democratizing periods of Poland's political life. Instead, it reintroduced the old divisions as a litmus test in contemporary politics; divisions concerning attitudes under the former communist regime as symbolic elements in the competing vision of the new Poland.

Another contentious arena in the definition of what the country represented and stood for concerned social and cultural understandings build around Christian and secular values. The discourse here was as intense as in the constitutional and

lustration debates, for the very identity of Poland was also vested in policies concerning specific policies that enhanced or challenged the Christian roots of the nation. In that respect, history and morality were once again played out in the political battlefield. On one side stood the reading of Poland as a historically fashioned set of values and moral precepts that were at the core of its self-identity, free to emerge after years of suppression, whether in the distant or more immediate past. To that end, the obligation of the people and its representatives was to encode those values in the constitutional and legal framework of the free, democratic Poland. The range of social and cultural concerns falling in the "identity" column was broad. It ranged across such steps as cementing the special relationship between Poland and the Vatican through a Concordat, legalizing a strict abortion law and a family planning policy, and placing a ban on the sale of pornographic materials. Despite the Sejm's approval of legislative acts aimed at instituting this vision of Poland, the entity of the sociopolitical agenda was derailed by presidential vetoes. President Aleksander Kwasniewski, coming from a political lineage associated with the former communist party, stood on the opposite side of the normative discourse, and favored a more universalistic, civic, and secular identity for Poland.

In many ways, then, Polish political discourse over recent years has centered on the overarching question of national identity, whether in the context of constitutional, lustration, or social policies. The political confrontation is taking place against the backdrop of profound economic, social, and cultural transformations often too complex and too chaotic for easy comprehension. In these circumstances, the intensity of the change contributes to the desire to simplify reality through a "language of morality, memory, ideology, and faith."[21] But the recourse to a normative worldview is not simply an escape from the politics of interests and its transformative socioeconomic reality. The language of values, the politics of identity, are no less real, and represent a genuine attempt to reclaim the very identity of the nation. For many, this struggle reflects echoes of the past around the former divide between "we" the nation and "they" the power. It is manifest foremost in the attempt to build a country rooted in the Christian traditions of the past, in the rejection of an alien communist ideology and its postcommunist variant, and in the preservation of moral strictures formed around the Church and the nation. For others, the revival of historical memory and Christian faith as definitions of political identity signify a too narrow understanding of Polish-ness, and seek a conceptual expansion to a civic, secular, and democratic Poland that overcomes the past and its political divisiveness.

Conclusion: Repolarization

Polish politics during the course of the postcommunist decade has moved to a more polarized setting, in terms of the main actors, their political discourse and style. Political space has come to be defined by extreme ideological positions that emphasis normative, value positions rather than pragmatic, interest policies. This is manifest first in the coalescence of the opposing camps at different ends of the political spectrum: the AWS coalition grouped around the Solidarity trade-union and rightist parties is clearly distinguished form a leftist coalition built around parties whose identity is vested in the former communist regime.[22] These conglomerate political actors have attained the predominant position in politics, and in the process have displaced parties with more narrow or centrist positions. For example, the PSL (Polish Peasant Party) representing the specific sectoral interests of rural Poland has declined significantly as a major player in politics. Similarly, the UP (Labor Union), a centrist party that sought to bridge the gap across the value divide by incorporating elements from both the Solidarity and excommunist camp has been eradicated as a voice of the working class.

While fewer political actors signify an improvement over the previous fragmentation, it is their political stance and their emphasis on an irreconcilable moral stance that has proved problematic. This is most manifest in the framing of the political discourse over the past several years, a language of politics that emphasizes identities rooted in the past, the embrace of moral and value positions, and the use of symbolic interactions. Such an approach precludes the exercise of moderate, give and take politics in favor of entrenched, polarized agendas. The consequence is a kind of "polarized pluralism," a political system defined primarily by parties and coalitions that are separated by wide value distance.[23] In the case of Poland, this gap is created by the attachment to past identities and constructed around a collective ethos that perpetuates the former political abyss between Solidarity and the communist regime. In turn, these politics of identity and moral codes affects the style of politics. Rather than pluralist politics in the sense of bargaining and compromise around divisible interests and policies, we have a polarized political structure. The latter accounts for the turn to an "indivisible politics" mirroring entrenched positions in a zero-sum politics, where neither side is willing to give in on its substantive, normative positions. For the moment, the postcommunist transition is marooned in identities of the past that continue to define Poland's future.

Notes

1. Valerie Bunce, "The political economy of postsocialism," *Slavic Review* 58:4 (Winter 1999): 759–761.
2. Ben Slay, "The Polish economic transition: Outcome and lessons," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33:1 (March 2000): 50–51.
3. See the surveys by Freedom House, in Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander Motyl, and Charles Graybow, eds, *Nations in Transit 1998: Civil Society, Democracy and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States* (Piscataway, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1999), and the public opinion data from CBOS, "Spoleczna ocena democracji i institutcji politycznych," *Serwis Informacyjny,* April 1999.
4. Aleksander Smolar, "Poland's emerging party system," *Journal of Democracy* 9:2 (April 1998): 122.
5. *Ibid.,* 122–123, and Anna Seleny, "Old political rationalities and new democracies: Compromise and confrontation in Hungary and Poland," *World Politics* 51:4 (July 1999): 487.
6. For an early distinction between interests and values, see Jack Bielasiak, "The dilemma of political interests in the postcommunist transition," in Walter D. Connor and Piotr Ploszajski, eds, *Escape from Socialism: The Polish Route* (Warsaw: IFiS Publishers, 1992), 204–205, and Jack Bielasiak and Barbara Hicks, "Solidarity's self-organization, the crisis of rationality and legitimacy in Poland," *East European Politics and Societies* 4:3 (Fall 1990): 489–512.
7. Michal Wenzel, "Solidarity and Akcja Wyborcza 'Solidarnosc:' An attempt at reviving the legend," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31:2 (June 1998): 149.
8. See Aleks Szczerbiak, "Interests and values: Polish parties and their electorates," *Europe-Asia Studies* 51:8 (1999): 1401–1432.
9. Herbert Kitschelt et al., *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-party Cooperation* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 43–92.
10. Jack Bielasiak, "Substance and process in the development of party systems in East Central Europe," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 30:1 (March 1997): 24–28.
11. Krzysztof Knyzewski, *Partie i System Partyjny w Polsce w Okresie Transformacji Ustrojowej* (Warsaw: Scholar, 1998).
12. For a discussion of elections in Poland, see for example Francis Millard, "The Polish parliamentary elections of October 1991," *Soviet Studies* 45:5 (1992): 837–955; Kenneth Ka-Lok Chan, "Poland at the crossroads: The 1993 general election," *Europe-Asia Studies* 47:1 (1995): 123–145; and Aleks Szczerbiak, "Electoral politics in Poland: The parliamentary elections of 1997," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 14:3 (September 1998): 58–83.
13. For an overview of the period, see Richard F. Staar, ed., *Transition to Democracy in Poland* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).
14. For a discussion of this issue, see Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "Dead ends and new beginnings: The quest for a procedural republic in Poland," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33:1 (March 2000): 110–114.
15. See Jasiewicz, "Dead ends and new beginnings;" Smolar, "Poland's emerging party system;" and Wenzel, "Solidarity."
16. For a discussion of the movement see Leszek Graniszewski, "Akcja Wyborcza Solidarnosc – Sojusz prawicy demokratycznej" in Stanislaw Gebethner, ed., *Wybory '97: Partie i Programy Wyborcze* (Warsaw: Elipsa, 1997), 59–85; and Wenzel, "Solidarity," 143–144.
17. For a discussion of the role of the Church, see especially Mirella W. Eberts, "The Roman Catholic Church and democracy in Poland," *Europe-Asia Studies* 50:5 (July 1998): 817–842; and Andrzej Korbonski, "Poland ten years after," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33:1 (March 2000): 123–146.

18. Smolar, "Poland's emerging party system," 126.

19. See Wiktor Osiatynski, "A brief history of the constitution," *East European Constitutional Review* 6:2 and 3 (Spring/Summer 1997); and Pawel Spiewak, "The battle for a constitution," *East European Constitutional Review* 6:2 and 3 (Spring/Summer 1997).

20. See the reports in the "Constitutional watch – Poland" in *East European Constitutional Review* 7:1 (Winter 1998); 7:3 (Summer 1998); 7:4 (Fall 1998); 8: 1–2 (Winter/Spring 1999); and 8:3 (Summer 1999).

21. Smolar, "Poland's emerging party system," 129–130.

22. For a general discussion see Andrzej Kojder, "Systemic transformation in Poland: 1989–1997," *Polish Sociological Review* 3 (1998): 247–266.

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THE BALTIC STATES AFTER THE COLLAPSE
OF THE SOVIET UNION

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At first glance it may appear that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania belong in a separate post-communist transitional category from the pace-setting former people's republics of East Central Europe such as Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. As union republics of the USSR, the Baltic states were fully integrated into the Soviet political and economic system with virtually no opportunity for exercising autonomy in policymaking. Moscow's centralized control was evident in all phases of life, especially in the social policy of promoting massive in-migration of non-Balts that resulted in sweeping changes in ethnic composition during the decades of Soviet rule. Nevertheless, it is striking that the political and economic transition in the Baltic states during the 1990s most closely paralleled that of the Visegrád countries rather than that of other former Soviet republics.[1] Historically, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had experienced Central European, especially German and Polish, political and cultural hegemony, and they constituted the most Westernized and modernized parts of the USSR. Unlike other Soviet republics, they also benefitted from two crucial decades of independence during the 1920s and 1930s. It is thus no accident that the Baltic states played a key role in the collapse of the Soviet Union, particularly through the activism of such mass organizations as the Popular Fronts of Estonia and Latvia as well as Sajudis in Lithuania, all of which drew inspiration from East European models, especially Solidarity and the Prague Spring. The most significant difference between the Baltic states and the countries of East Central Europe in the twentieth century has been the greater geopolitical vulnerability in the Baltic case, as reflected in their location and size, although their current security concerns may well be mitigated by growing European and international integration. The following overview will stress the commonalities in the Baltic experience in the 1990s, but it also important to bear in mind the distinctive profile of each country.

The restoration of Baltic independence in August 1991 was the culmination of a long process that began more than five years earlier with demonstrations organized by the Latvian human rights group Helsinki '86.[2] The East Central European events of 1989, especially in Hungary and Poland, and the withering away of the

Brezhnev Doctrine provided significant encouragement for the Baltic movements and helped convince public opinion that renewed independence was indeed possible. Lithuania declared outright restoration of its independence on March 11, 1990, and Estonia and Latvia followed with declarations of a transition period toward the same goal on March 30 and May 4, respectively. The Kremlin refused to accede to these demands, but following a long political stalemate, the abortive August 1991 coup by desperate hard-liners in Moscow – by discrediting the strongest supporters of a highly centralized political system – suddenly made the reestablishment of Baltic independence feasible.

In all three Baltic states the domestic political transition was dominated by a similar process of relatively rapid democratization. The task of returning to constitutional rule based on Western models became the first order of the day. Latvia took the lead by declaring the restoration of the interwar Constitution of 1922 already in August 1991, and voters soon approved newly created constitutions in Estonia (June 1992) and in Lithuania (October 1992). In each case the emphasis was on continuity from the liberal democratic period (1920–1934 in Estonia and Latvia, 1920–1926 in Lithuania) of the interwar era. A restored unicameral parliament (the Estonian Riigikgu, the Latvian Saeima, and the Lithuanian Seimas) took the same name as in the 1920s and was intended to play the leading role in political life, particularly in Estonia and Latvia where the president was meant to be largely a figurehead, mainly performing symbolic functions. In Lithuania, on the other hand, the makers of the new constitution, following the views of Vytautas Landsbergis, the increasingly conservative head of Sajudis, created a rather strong presidency. Ironically, however, the first post-communist presidential elections in Lithuania in February 1993 resulted in victory not for the political right, but for the former leader of the Communist Party of Lithuania (CPL) Algirdas Brazauskas, who captured 60 percent of the total popular vote.[3] His triumph points to a key political difference between Estonia and Latvia, on the one hand, and Lithuania, on the other, based on their experience under Soviet rule. In the northern two Baltic republics, the communist parties were never seen as representing the national interest, especially since native Balts were a bare majority (Estonia) or a minority (Latvia) of the membership, and as organizations, they faded from the scene with the fall of communism. In contrast, the CPL and its successor, the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party, were viewed as legitimate national parties by most Lithuanians, and Brazauskas maintained a high level of personal popularity.[4]

Institutionalization of the electoral process is an important element in the consolidation of democracy. During the 1990s the Baltic states made significant progress in this direction as all elections, both national and local, were held as scheduled, and they were declared fair and free by international observers. Each country conducted regular parliamentary elections according to the respective

constitutional guidelines: Estonia in 1992, 1995, and 1999; Latvia in 1993, 1995, and 1998; and Lithuania in 1992 and 1996. Presidential elections took place every three to five years. As befitted the greater power of the presidency in Lithuania, the elections were direct in that country while Latvia and Estonia chose their chief executives in the parliaments. The simple majority stipulated in the Latvian case presented no logistical problems, but in Estonia, the requirement of a two-thirds majority for the election of a president proved to be a difficult task in practice. In 1996, for example, the Riigikogu failed to agree on a successful candidate, and the election was thrown into the Electoral College, a larger body consisting of members of parliament and representatives of local government. Here the vote is by simple majority, but the procedure is cumbersome at best.[5] On the local government level, elections were held every three years in each country. The distinctive feature of the Estonian case is that non-citizens are also permitted to vote in local elections, although only citizens may run for office.[6]

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the political transition in the Baltic states was the absence of violence, a key parallel with the situation in East Central Europe and a significant contrast with developments in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Clearly, ethnic tensions and much economic hardship existed in the Baltic region, but they never spilled over into violence. With the minor exception of the unstable 1930s, the use of violence has never been part of modern Baltic political culture, and the Balts tended to look to the Nordic countires as models of stable development. As noted above, during the post-Stalin era, Baltic activists and intellectuals greatly admired the East European non-violent reform movements, especially the Prague Spring and Solidarity. Moreover, since Russians and other non-Balts were overwhelmingly recent immigrants, there was no long history of ethnic grievances to contend with in contrast to several other regions in the post-communist world. Finally, any use of violence by the Baltic peoples would have been counterproductive from their own point of view since the major potential antagonists were ethnic Russians, who were representatives of the hegemonic nationality of the Soviet empire and later the Russian Federation. It is worth recalling that according to the 1989 census, there were 145.1 million Russians in the Soviet Union and only 5.3 million Balts in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.[7]

Despite the positive trends noted above, there remains the question of how deeply democratic values have been internalized in the Baltic societies. In all three countries, voter participation in parliamentary elections declined substantially during the 1990s. In Estonia, the proportion of eligible voters taking part in the Riigikogu elections fell from 69 percent in 1995 to 57 percent in 1999. In Latvia and Lithuania, the rate of decline was even greater – from 90 percent (1993) to 72 percent (1995) in the Saeima elections and from 75 percent (1992) to 53 percent (1996) in the Seimas elections.[8] Several factors contributed to this trend. Once

independence had been reestablished and the initial contests for post-communist parliaments had taken place, there appeared to be considerably less at stake in later elections for many voters. Despite the positive macroeconomic indicators by the second half of the 1990s, there is also little doubt that the economic difficulties most people experienced in their daily lives contributed to a certain level of voter alienation. Furthermore, it is likely that various scandals associated with some leading politicians in all three Baltic states tended to increase cynicism among the public. Although the level of corruption in the Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania was probably lower than in most post-communist countries, the public perception of it became more acute in the course of the 1990s. Fledgling political parties faced an enormous challenge in trying to overcome the legacy of the Soviet era and the profound cynicism it had fostered regarding any political organization, and opinion polls suggested that popular identification with political parties was low. Voters were clearly bewildered by the large, fragmented, and unstable party landscape which seemed to be in state of flux. In addition, political parties generally lacked a strong grass-roots base and were created from above by small elites with little participation from below.[9]

Another significant factor in assessing the process of democratization in the Baltic states is the question of citizenship, a particularly thorny issue in view of the major population changes that took place under Soviet rule. In the Lithuanian case there has been a remarkable stability in the proportion of the native population in the country despite all the upheavals of the twentieth century. In contrast, the Estonian and Latvian proportions of the population in their respective countries plummeted between the mid-1930s and 1989 (26.7 percentage points in Estonia and 23.7 in Latvia) while the ethnic Russian share more than tripled in both cases. Such a precipitous decline was unique among union republic nationalities in the former Soviet Union. On the eve of the collapse of the USSR, the Latvians comprised a bare majority in their homeland, and the Estonians constituted just over 60 percent in theirs. Although all three nationalities suffered the same kinds of population losses in the 1940s (mainly, Soviet deportations, wartime deaths, and flight to the West), the greater demographic dynamism in the Lithuanian case allowed them to maintain the native share of the population. Furthermore, this situation helped Lithuania to limit the in-migration of Russians and other non-Balts, a trend which Estonia and Latvia were much less able to withstand.[10] As a result of these developments, in the early 1990s, Estonia and Latvia had the highest foreign-born populations in Europe (over 25 percent) after Luxemburg, while the proportion stood at just over 10 percent in the case of Lithuania.[11]

In view of the large non-native populations in their countries, the governments of Estonia and Latvia were reluctant to move rapidly on the citizenship issue before the restoration of independence for fear of committing themselves to a long-

term solution before the question of political sovereignty was resolved. In contrast, the Lithuanian government, with a solid native majority in place, felt able to offer the "zero option" already in November 1989, i.e., citizenship (after a two-year waiting period) to all permanent residents, who declared their loyalty to Lithuania. The great majority of non-Lithuanians in the country exercised this option, and thus the issue of voting rights was quickly settled in the Lithuanian case. In Estonia and Latvia, however, the process dragged on much longer. After the restoration of independence, in November 1991, Estonia reinstated its 1938 citizenship law, which meant that all persons who had been citizens in June 1940 and their descendants, regardless of ethnic background, were automatically considered citizens. All others desiring citizenship, including the great majority of the Russian and other non-Estonian population, had to follow a three-year naturalization procedure, including a modest level of competence in Estonian.[12] In practice, this meant that the citizenship rolls would only expand incrementally. By 1999 the non-Estonian population in Estonia was divided as follows: about 30 percent were citizens of Estonia, nearly 20 percent were citizens of Russia, and about 50 percent were stateless.[13] Clearly, this situation was not desirable from the point of view of political integration, and finding a workable solution remained a challenge for the Estonian authorities. In Latvia, where a citizenship law was passed only in July 1994, the process of inclusion was even more difficult, especially since a complicated timetable for eligibility slowed naturalization in the initial years of implementation.[14]

The evolution of the Baltic political systems in practice in the 1990s witnessed wide swings of the political pendulum in each country. In every succeeding parliamentary election the ruling party or coalition failed to retain its hold on power, largely because the voters blamed the existing government for the difficulties they had experienced during the post-communist transition. In Lithuania, the Democratic Labor Party's huge victory in 1992 was matched by a crushing defeat at the hands of the conservative Homeland Union in 1996.[15] Despite a threshold of 4 or 5 percent in order to gain representation in parliament, Estonia and Latvia in particular were plagued with the problem of fragmentation and the multiplicity of political parties, a phenomenon that substantially complicated the formation of governing coalitions. In all three countries as well, the presidents proved to be the most popular politicians according to public opinion polls, probably because they were seen as standing above day-to-day politics and infighting. As suggested above, the political spectrum in the Baltic states was checkered and changing. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the basic political fault line in each country was already evident in the waning years of Soviet rule and continued during the 1990s, i.e., a division between "fundamentalists," who emphasized issues of principle and completely rejected the communist past, and the "pragmatists," who proceeded from

the concrete situation at hand and were willing to make compromises in a less than ideal world. In the post-communist era the experience of governing narrowed the gap between these two broad groupings.[16]

Since the first period of Baltic independence ended with the military occupation and forced annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania by the Soviet Union, security issues played a major role in the transition of the 1990s. Given geopolitical realities and the legacy of the recent past, it was clear that Baltic relations with the Russian Federation would be the most important challenge in this decade. During these years, Russia struggled with its own post-Soviet identity crisis, which was further exacerbated by continuing economic and political instability. A substantial proportion of its political and military elites still exhibited an imperial mentality, and as former Soviet republics, which had been part of the Russian Empire since the eighteenth century, the Baltic states were generally viewed as part of the "near abroad" (Russ. *blizhnee zarubezh'e*), i.e., within a special sphere of influence reserved for Russia. In the early 1990s the issue of ex-Soviet troops in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania dominated all others, since their presence was a continuing affront to Baltic sovereignty. From a total of about 300,000 troops in the Brezhnev era, the numbers declined quickly in the glasnost' era and the early 1990s to some 30,000 in July 1993. In large part because of its relatively small Russian minority, Lithuania's relations with Russia were the smoothest among the Baltic states, and it was not surprising that ex-Soviet troops left that country first in August 1993 and only in August 1994, after considerable pressure from the West, did they agree to leave Estonia and Latvia.[17]

Nevertheless, Lithuania continued to face the unique question of Russian land access to Kaliningrad, the anomalous ex-Soviet exclave and prize of World War II to its west. In the second half of the 1990s, Russia dragged its feet on a final resolution of border issues with Estonia and Latvia and often criticized the treatment of the large Russian minorities in the two countries. It is also noteworthy that Russia has refused to accept responsibility for Soviet actions in the Baltic states or to apologize for them, in contrast to its willingness to do so for the Katyn massacre in the case of Poland and the Winter War with Finland.[18] However, there were also indications that the priority assigned to the Baltic states in Russian foreign policy towards former Soviet republics was in decline, particularly in comparison to such larger entities as Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

In order to balance the unsettled relations with Russia and to return to the European and international community of nations, which they had been part of during the interwar era, the Baltic states placed great emphasis on integration with Europe and the West in the 1990s. Following quick admission to the United Nations and the Conference (later, Organization) on Security and Cooperation in Europe in fall 1991, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became founding members of the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) in March 1992, a ten-country regional

organization that also included the Nordic states, Germany, Poland, and Russia. The CBSS was particularly attractive to small countries such as the Baltic states, not only as a means to foster regional cooperation in a number of areas but also to moderate the powerful influence of large states such as Russia and Germany.[19] An important milestone in the early independence years for all three Baltic states was admission to the Council of Europe (Estonia and Lithuania in May 1993, Latvia in February 1995) since its membership criteria demanded adherence to strict standards on democratic elections and human rights.

By the second half of the 1990s, the foreign policy of the Baltic states focused increasingly on gaining membership in the European Union and NATO. In June 1995, the EU concluded similar association agreements with all three Baltic countries, but Estonia's alone did not stipulate a transition period. In July 1997 Estonia was invited, along with Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, and the Greek portion of Cyprus, to enter into negotiations for EU membership in the next round of expansion. Although Estonia argued that the entry of one Baltic state into the EU would open the door for the other two, it was clear that the exclusion of Latvia and Lithuania from this first group of candidates raised intra-Baltic tensions. Nevertheless, in December 1999 Latvia and Lithuania joined Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Malta as additional EU candidate members, and it remained possible that Estonia's two southern neighbors could catch up in the negotiations.[20] However, the pace of the projected EU expansion would clearly be uncertain since it depended on a wide range of factors, not the least of which was the organization's capacity for internal reform. None of the Baltic states was selected by NATO for its first round of post-Cold War enlargement in which Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic became full members in March 1999, and the governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania repeatedly expressed concern about the possibility of a "gray zone" of insecurity emerging between a partially expanded NATO and Russia, as Baltic-NATO negotiations continued. Among the Baltic states in the year 2000, Lithuania was best prepared to enter NATO, but in all three countries, a growing public debate was joined about the cost of association. Public opinion regarding possible membership in both the EU and NATO during the second half of the 1990s showed considerable volatility.[21]

An intriguing issue regarding the post-communist Baltic states is the extent to which they will develop a substantive regionalism and sense of solidarity. The historical record of Baltic cooperation in the interwar period was rather dismal, dramatically illustrated by their inability to come together in a united front in the crisis of 1939–1940. However, the common experience under Soviet rule brought the Balts closer together, and the height of cooperation clearly came during the glasnost' years when the need for solidarity against Moscow was greatest. Following the restoration of independence, each Baltic state tended to follow its own path, seeking to develop ties to its richer and more powerful neighbors. For exam-

ple, Estonia strengthened its already strong connections to Finland, and Lithuania formed a new alliance with Poland that moved beyond their troubled historical relations. Relations between the Baltic states became tense at times in the 1990s over oil deposits and fishing rights in the Baltic Sea and over trade disputes. On the other side of the coin, the three countries did show solidarity in foreign policy toward Russia, and military cooperation, especially the formation of the Baltic Battalion in September 1994, went much further than during the 1920s and 1930s.[22] In addition, with the opening up of the entire Baltic Sea region in the post-Cold War era, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had an important model in the neighboring Nordic countries with their long experience in regional cooperation.

One of the most difficult challenges facing the post-communist states was the necessity of simultaneously coping with the political *and* the economic transition. Nevertheless, in the economic realm as well, the Baltic states outpaced the other former Soviet republics and achieved considerable macroeconomic success, although not on the level of the Czech Republic or Hungary. Led by Estonia, the Baltic states quickly established new currencies and thus escaped the "ruble zone," which in turn allowed them to bring inflation under control. They were also able to diversify their trade relations and move away from strong dependence on Russia as a commercial partner. By 1998 Estonia and Latvia (whose main trading partners were Finland and Germany, respectively) had the most success in this regard, as in both cases trade with Russia only comprised about 12 percent of the total. For Lithuania, Russia remained the leading partner, but the share of this trade had fallen to less than 20 percent of the country's total in 1998. Following the inevitable economic downturn in the early transition years, all three countries showed strong economic growth during most of the second half of the 1990s. However, their continuing vulnerability to events in Russia was demonstrated by the negative growth rates in each Baltic state in 1999, a direct result of the impact of the Russian financial crisis of August 1998. Per capita GDP was highest in Estonia as was direct foreign investment, the latter clearly encouraged by the country's liberal economic policies.[23]

Despite this relatively strong economic performance in the 1990s, the actual impact of the transition on the daily lives of much of the population in the Baltic states was no doubt painful. As elsewhere in the post-communist world, there was substantial socioeconomic dislocation and a heightening of inequality of income and wealth. The gap in standard of living between urban and rural areas and between richer and poorer regions of each country increased, and generational differences also grew, as older workers and retired persons found it harder to adjust to the new conditions of a free market. As measured by Eurostat's purchasing power standard (PPS), the average living standard in Estonia at the end of the 1990s was only slightly more than one-third of the EU average, while in Lithuania

and Latvia it was about one-third and one-fourth, respectively. Even in relatively well-off Estonia, the per capita GDP was only one-seventh of that of neighboring Finland.[24]

With regard to society, the greatest challenge for the Baltic states was coming to terms with the sweeping population changes brought about under Soviet rule, especially in Estonia and Latvia. As can be seen in Table 2, the native proportion of the population crept upward in these two countries in the 1990s, mainly due to out-migration of Russians and other non-Balts. However, by the late 1990s, emigration slowed to a trickle and became a minor factor in the demographic balance sheet. As Baltic politicians assessed their options in the post-communist years, it became increasingly clear that the only viable alternative was integration, i.e., the goal of a tolerant multicultural society in which each ethnic group retained it separate cultural identity, but also acquired a common civic identity based on loyalty to the given Baltic state and a working knowledge of the state language.[25] It was obvious that creating such a common identity in each of the Baltic countries would require enormous resources and good will on all sides and that integration would be a long-term process. There was also little doubt that a fully reformed and effective educational system would have to play a major role in achieving this goal.

In conclusion, it may be noted that there were numerous parallels between the post-communist transitions in the Baltic states and those in East-Central Europe, including substantial progress toward democratization, absence of violence, macroeconomic success, and growing participation in the process of European and Western integration. Nevertheless, distinctive features could also be found in the Baltic case, especially the challenges of integrating large numbers of non-Baltic immigrants from the Soviet era and reaching a viable modus vivendi with Russia after fifty years of Soviet occupation and rule. Among the smallest states in Europe in terms of population, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania debated the future of their identity during the 1990s as part of an integrating continent and a globalizing world. The recent experience of their northern neighbor Finland, an EU member since 1995, suggested that a national and a European identity could coexist in a small country.

Notes

1. See, for example, Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, eds, *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe* (Cambridge, 1997), which has chapters on Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.
2. For brief overviews, see Alfred Erich Senn, "Lithuania's path to independence," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 22 (1991), 245–250; Toivo U. Raun, "The re-establishment of Estonian independence," *ibid.*, 251–258; and Andrejs Plakans, "Latvia's return to independence," *ibid.*, 259–266.

3. Alfred Erich Senn, "Lithuania: Rights and responsibilities of independence," in: Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, eds, *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations* (Cambridge, 1997), 363–365; Richard J. Krickus, "Democratization in Lithuania," Dawisha and Parrott, *Consolidation of Democracy*, 305.

4. The Lithuanian share of CPL membership showed a clear upward trend during the Soviet era. For comparative statistics on the native role in Baltic communist parties, see Romuald J. Misiunas and Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States: Years of Dependence, 1940–1990*, expanded and updated ed. (Berkeley, Calif., 1993), 359–360.

5. *Republic of Estonia Constitution* (Tallinn, 1993), 25.

6. *Ibid.*, 44. A residency requirement of five years was dropped before the October 1999 local elections, making it easier for non-citizens to vote.

7. Toivo U. Raun, "Ethnic relations and conflict in the Baltic states," W. Raymond Duncan and G. Paul Holman, Jr., eds, *Ethnic Nationalism and Regional Conflict: The Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia* (Boulder, Colo., 1994), 171–174.

8. Rein Taagepera, "Valimisreeglid Eestis aegade jooksul," *Riigikogu valimised 1999* (Tartu, 1999), 23; Andrejs Plakans, "Democratization and political participation in postcommunist societies: The case of Latvia, Dawisha and Parrott," *Consolidation of Democracy*, 281; Krickus, "Democratization in Lithuania," 303; *Lietuvos statistikos metraštis 1998* (Vilnius, 1998), 55. The figure for Lithuania in 1996 is only for the first round of parliamentary elections.

9. Rain Rosimannus, "Political parties: Identity and identification," *Nationalities Papers*, 23 (1995), 36–39. For an overview of the changing Baltic party landscape in the 1990s, see Vello Pettai and Marcus Kreuzer, "Party politics in the Baltic states: Social bases and institutional context," *East European Politics and Societies*, 13 (1999), 184–189.

10. Raun, "Ethnic relations and conflict," 158–160.

11. Kalev Katus, "Estonia and Europe: Population dimension," *Society, Parliament and Legislation* (Tallinn, 1999), 134.

12. Dzintra Bungs, Saulius Girnius, and Riina Kionka, "Citizenship legislation in the Baltic states," *RFE/RL Research Report*, 1, no. 50 (1992), 38–40; *Riigi Teataja*, no. 7 (1992), 175–176.

13. *Estonian Human Development Report 1999* (N.p., 1999), 40–43.

14. Nils Muiñnieks, "Making citizenship work," *The Baltic Times*, March 13–19, 1997, 23.

15. *The Baltic Times*, November 14-20, 1996, 1.

16. Toivo U. Raun, "Democratization and political development in Estonia, 1987–1996," Dawisha and Parrott, *Consolidation of Democracy*, 347, 361.

17. Raun, "Ethnic relations and conflict," 162–63, 179; *New York Times*, July 27, 1994, A1.

18. *Luup*, June 29, 1998, 29.

19. Eve Kuusmann, "Estonia and cooperation in the Baltic Sea region," Pertti Joenniemi and Peeter Vares, eds., *New Actors on the International Arena: The Foreign Policies of the Baltic Countries* (Tampere, 1993), 83–93.

20. *The Baltic Independent*, June 16-22, 1995, 1; *The Baltic Times*, July 27–23, 1997, 1, 8; December 16, 1999–January 5, 2000, 1, 3.

21. *Postimees*, December 17, 1999, 11.

22. *Postimees*, October 25, 1999, 9; Mare Haab, "Potentials and vulnerabilities of the Baltic states: Mutual competition and cooperation," Birthe Hansen and Bertel Heurlin, eds., *The Baltic States in World Politics* (New York, 1998), 10–11.

23. Estonian Institute of Economic Research, *Baltic Facts 1999* (Tallinn, 1999), 21, 67–69; *Statistical Yearbook of Estonia 1999* (Tallinn, 1999), 352–353; *Postimees*, September 29, 1999, 11.

24. *Helsingin Sanomat*, April 21, 2000, C1; May 15, 1999, B7.

25. Mati Heidmets, "The Russian minority: Dilemmas for Estonia," *Trames*, 2 (1998), 264–272.

BELA LUGOSI – EIN LIEBHABER, EIN DILETTANT

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I.

„I am Dracula". So lautete der erste Satz, den ein Vampir in einem amerikanischen Tonfilm sagen mußte, und der auch seinen Darsteller unsterblich machen sollte. Bei dem Namen *Dracula* bedürfen wir weder der Anschauung noch auch selbst des Bildes, sondern der Name, indem wir ihn verstehen, ist die bildlose einfache Vorstellung einer Urszene, die 1897 zum ersten Mal als Roman erschienen, und dank dem Medienverbund zwischen Phonograph, Schreibmaschine, Hypnose, Stenographie und der Sekretärin Mina Harker schon im Roman selbst technisch reproduzierbar geworden ist.[1] Aber ausgerechnet über ein Medium, das im Roman nicht erwähnt wird, sollte Draculas Wiederauferstehung seitdem Nacht für Nacht laufen.

Weil Vampire und Gespenster Wiedergänger sind, und im Gegensatz zu Büchern und ihren Autoren bekanntlich nicht sterben können, müssen sie sich neue Körper und Medien suchen, in die sie fahren können. Der Journalist Abraham Stoker hat den Nachruhm und die Wertschätzung seines Namens zusammen mit dem Medium eingebüßt, das ihn berühmt gemacht hatte, nur damit fortan der Name seines schattenlosen Titelhelden für immer als belichteter Schatten über Kinoleinwände geistern konnte. Aber Spielfilme kennen so wenig originale Schöpfersubjekte wie Individuen. Dracula ist eben bloß ein Name, und als solcher ein „individuelles Allgemeines" wie die Bezeichnung der Goethezeit, jener Epoche und Dichtungskonzeption, der auch Dracula poetologisch noch angehörte, für sogenannte Individuen und Phantome gleichermaßen lautete. Es ist in diesem Namen, daß wir Bela Lugosi denken.[2]

II.

Seit Tod Brownings *Dracula* von 1931 braucht dieser Name um vorstellbar zu sein, nicht mehr verstanden werden, weil er selbst angefangen hatte, sich vorzustellen. Zu Zeiten Stokers lernten die Bilder laufen, zu Zeiten Lugosis brauchten die auf Phonograph gespeicherten Stimmen des Romanpersonals nur noch mit

den Kamerabildern synchronisiert zu werden, damit der Graf sein „ich bin der ich-bin-da" zitieren und also sagen konnte: „I am Dracula". Dieser Name als tönendes Wort verschwand nicht mehr zwischen Buchdeckeln und in der Zeit, vielmehr wurde die Rede des Vampirs, wie sie gewesen ist, unsterblich. Solange *Dracula* eine bilderlose einfache Vorstellung in einem Vampirroman der *schwarzen Romantik* (Mario Praz) war, konnte er noch wahlweise als das Unbewußte, das Andere oder als Personifikation des eigenen Kolonialismus aus „dem tiefen Schacht des Ich" (Hegel) seiner westeuropäischen und amerikanischen Leser hervorgebracht werden. Erst Bela Lugosi und der Hollywood-Film haben dem Namen mit den vielen Masken ein unverwechselbares Gesicht gegeben: „Let me admit with no apology that to me Dracula is Bela Lugosi, and Lugosi is Dracula. There is no separation of the two".[3] Der Doppelgänger seiner Leser ist zu einem einzigen Schauspieler geworden, und die Wunschkonstellationen von Zuschauern und Produzenten richten sich nicht mehr an bilderlose Namen, sondern direkt auf die Schauspieler und das *Universal*[4]-Medium Film. Im Imaginären des Films wird das Unbewußte von Namen und Zuschauern unmittelbar in Medientechniken übersetzbar. Rückblenden, Großaufnahmen, Zoom, Totale, Kamerafahrt und Schnitt vertreten und manipulieren Assoziation und Aufmerksamkeitsselektion. Im Film hören Namen auf bloße Vorstellungen zu sein, und fortan konnte Dracula auch im Tageslicht des Realen seine Opfer heimsuchen.

Seitdem wurde der damals fast fünfzigjährige Lugosi seinen Wiedergänger nicht mehr los. Anstelle des romantischen Liebhabers,[5] den er so gerne auf der Theaterbühne gegeben hatte, aber niemals in Hollywood darstellen durfte, waren die Monster getreten. Wunschprojekte Lugosis wie eine *Faust*-Verfilmung oder *Cyrano de Bergerac* kamen über Probeaufnahmen nie hinaus. Der 'Dracula-Fluch',[6] wie Lugosi die neue Machtkonstellation des Genrekinos für sich benannte, befahl ihm regelmäßig auf der Leinwand zu sterben, nur um im nächsten Film wieder von den Toten auferstehen zu müssen. Die Rolle, die ihn unsterblich machte, hat ihn auch buchstäblich in das Grab gebracht. Ob er diese Form der Unsterblichkeit wirklich geliebt hat, ist nicht sicher. Fest steht aber, daß Bela Lugosi auch als Monster eigentlich immer ein Liebhaber geblieben ist. Nicht nur erscheint er in vielen seiner Filme als „bösartige Karikatur des romantischen Liebhabers europäischer Herkunft",[7] sondern er hat sich vor allem selbst liebhaberisch – oder eben auch: ohne sein Metier wirklich zu beherrschen – seiner Profession gewidmet.

III.

Obwohl er für einige Jahre am Ungarischen *Nationaltheater* in Budapest gespielt hatte, besaß Lugosi keine Ausbildung als Schauspieler. Aus Liebe zum Theater brach er mit elf Jahren die Schulausbildung ab, riß von zu Hause aus, nur um

sich einige Jahre später der Theatergruppe seines Schwagers anzuschließen. Seine ersten Bühnenauftritte in der Stadt Szabadka gerieten nicht zufällig zur Präfiguration seiner späten Film- und Bühnenauftritte zwischen 1945 und 1956:

> Ich ging in den Chor, aber da ich nichts anderes gewesen war als Handarbeiter, war ich unbeholfen. Sie versuchten mir kleine Rollen in ihren Stücken zu geben, doch ich war so ungebildet, so einfältig, daß die Leute nur über mich lachten. Aber ich schnupperte Bühnenluft. Und ich kostete auch den ranzigen Geschmack von Demütigung.[8]

Wie Goethes *Wilhelm Meister* reiste Béla Ferenc Dezsö Blaskó, wie der spätere Dracula-Darsteller mit bürgerlichem Namen hieß, mal unter dem Namen Géza Lugosi oder Dezsö Lugosi mit einer Wanderbühne durch Ungarn und Rumänien. Schon bald nahm er dann endgültig den Künstlernamen Bela Lugosi an, den er auch gerne als Lugossy buchstabierte, da das 'y' adlige Herkunft signalisiert. Dazu passend behauptete er in Hollywood, sein Vater sei ein ungarischer Baron gewesen, um den gleichsam naturgemäß aristokratischen Anspruch auf seine Dracula-Interpretation zu unterstreichen. Für die *Star*-Filmproduktionsgesellschaft in Ungarn spielte er unter dem Pseudonym Arisztid, was direkt 'Aristokrat' bedeutet. Mit anderen Worten: er war ein Hochstapler und Dilettant, was ja schon etymologisch nichts anderes bedeutet, als eben ein Liebhaber zu sein. Das italienische *dilettante* (abgeleitet vom lateinischen *delecto, delectare* = sich oder jemanden „erfreuen") bezeichnet ursprünglich den Liebhaber (einer Kunst) aus reinem Genuß und Unterhaltung. Der sich liebhaberisch an allen Künsten und Wissenschaften beteiligende Dilettant war ein Bildungsideal der europäischen Oberschicht bis ins 18. Jahrhundert.[9] Adelige Beteiligung an höfischer Kunstproduktion oder auch an den literarischen Gesellschaften des 17. Jahrhunderts sind daher die bekanntesten Erscheinungsformen des Dilettanten. Dieser alteuropäische Dilettant war ein normaler Künstlertypus, der sowohl in der Rezeption als auch durch seine Produktionen am Kunstbetrieb ganz selbstverständlich teilnahm. Seine Nachahmungen fielen als solche nicht besonders auf, weil die gesamte Kunstproduktion und Poetik der vormodernen Zeit auf mimetischen Verfahren basierte.

Erst mit der Ausdifferenzierung eines autonomen bürgerlichen Kunstsystems wird der Dilettant zum Gegenstand von Kritik und soll aus dem Kunstsystem ausgeschlossen werden. Die neue Autonomie- und Genieästhetik setzt auf strikte Trennung: „sachlich: Trennung von Produktion und Rezeption, Schreiben und Lesen; zeitlich: Trennung von Primärem und Sekundärem; sozial: Trennung von Profis auf der einen und Laien-Publikum auf der anderen Seite. Was diese Ordnung verletzt, wird als Dilettantismus abgetan".[10] Erst durch diese tiefgreifenden Veränderungen im europäischen Kunstsystem bekommt der Dilettant seine pejorative Bedeutung als 'Pfuscher', 'Lügner' oder 'Stümper', und erscheint da-

mit als Bastard, als illegitimer Bruder des (jetzt) professionell ausgebildeten Künstlers, der sich auch etymologisch als 'Kenner' und 'Könner' ausweist. Der Dilettant war von einem kultivierten Amateur und gern gesehenen Teilnehmer am Kunstbetrieb selber zu einem Monster geworden. Nicht umsonst weicht das adelige Liebesideal mit seiner Betonung der Momente von Verführung und Genuß stark von den bürgerlichen Tugendidealen ab – erst recht bei einem transsylvanischen Fürsten, der als Vlad Tepes seine Perversion schon im Namen trägt.[11]

In Goethes und Schillers Entwurf zu einem Schema *Über den Dilettantismus* (wie man seitdem erst sagt) hat die neue Kritik an dem Dilettanten ihre Programmschrift bekommen. Bezeichnenderweise wird dort ausgerechnet der dilettantische Schauspieler als „schlimmster Fall" des Dilettantismus bestimmt: „Ueberall, wo die Kunst selbst noch kein rechtes Regulativ hat, wie in der Poesie, Gartenkunst, Schauspielkunst, richtet der Dilettantism mehr Schaden an und wird anmaßender. Der schlimmste Fall ist bei der Schauspielkunst".[12] Die Schauspielkunst ist besonders anfällig für dilettantische Verfahren, weil dort das Verhältnis von Ursache und Wirkung nicht eindeutig zu bestimmen ist:

> Weil der Dilettant seinen Beruf zum Selbstproducieren erst aus der
> Wirkung der Kunstwerke auf sich empfängt, so verwechselt er diese
> Wirkungen mit den objektiven Ursachen und Motiven, und meint
> nun den Empfindungszustand in den er versetzt ist auch produktiv
> und praktisch zu machen, wie wenn man mit dem Geruch einer Blu
> me die Blume selbst hervorzubringen gedächte.[13]

Der Dilettant scheint im Schauspieler zu sich selbst zu kommen, weil beide ihre Kunstproduktion auf Nachahmung gründen. In der Tat sind die „objektiven Ursachen und Motive" der Nachahmungen des Schauspielers schwer zu bestimmen, denn direkt sichtbar ist nur deren Wirkung. Indem der Dilettant, insofern er Schauspieler ist, durch Nachahmung etwas anderes darstellen soll, als er selbst empfindet, verdoppelt er nicht nur das Problem der Nachahmung, sondern droht die Unterscheidung zwischen Künstler und Dilettant selbst ad absurdum zu führen. Das macht den Schauspieler wie den Dilettanten nicht nur grundsätzlich verdächtig, sondern zum Problemfall der goethezeitlichen Kunsttheorie.

Der Schauspieler ist eine zentrale „Reflexionsfigur" für die zeitgleichen Debatten um Originalität und Naivität als den neuen ästhetischem Idealen in der Kunst.[14] War in der gelehrten Tradition die *simplicité* noch selbstverständlich ein rhetorisches Prinzip und eine Tugend in Kunst und Rede, so sollte die neu konzipierte Naivität natürlich sein, und frei von aller Künstlichkeit und rhetorischer Technik. Das Naive soll aus einer natürlichen Seele kommen, und in Gedanken, Manieren, der Sprache und des Körpers, kurz: überall zum Ausdruck kommen. Der naive Ausdruck in der Kunst sollte für die Wahrheit, Schönheit und Aufrich

tigkeit der Gedanken einstehen. Für die Schauspielkunst liegt darin ein unauflösbares Paradox begründet, denn wie sollen naive Ursachen und Motive an einer Kunst festgestellt werden, deren offensichtliche Verfahren Nachahmung und Simulation sind:

> Daß aus dem Munde des Nachahmers die Herzenssprache vernommen und seine Gebärdung als natürlich-unmittelbare Aktion begriffen werden kann, ist nur dann einsichtig, wenn man – anders als das bekannte Diderotsche Paradox, welches die Abwesenheit von Empfindung zur Voraussetzung ihrer Darstellbarkeit erklärt – einen wahrhaftig empfindenden und erlebenden Akteur vorsieht.[15]

Die Paradoxie der Nachahmung darf demnach nicht reflektiert werden. Vielmehr muß der professionelle Schauspieler jede Künstlichkeit und bewußte Reflexion auf seine Tätigkeit dissimulieren, damit seine Simulation von Natürlichkeit gelingen kann. Der dilettantische Schauspieler ist dazu nicht in der Lage. Ihm merkt man das 'Gewollte' und die Künstlichkeit seiner Handlungen immer an. Er ist in mehrfacher Hinsicht ungeschickt, und das ist Naivität in einem sehr trivialen Sinne.

IV.

Obwohl diese Unterscheidung nicht funktioniert, nicht funktionieren kann, war sie mehr als erfolgreich, und bestimmt noch heute das Bild vom Schauspieler. Aber auch die Probleme sind geblieben: „Ueberall, wo die Kunst selbst noch kein rechtes Regulativ hat" (Goethe/Schiller) erweist sich der Dilettant als unabweisbar, als *eingeschlossener* ausgeschlossener Dritter.[16] Vor allem am Anfang, wenn eine Kunstform noch neu ist, sich überhaupt erst als Kunst etablieren muß, darf es nur wenige Standards geben, damit Innovationen möglich werden. Noch weiß niemand so genau was funktioniert und was nicht. Dieses Nicht-Wissen ist eine Lücke im System, die eine Unentscheidbarkeit zwischen wirklicher Innovation und Dilettantismus erzeugt.

1931 fielen in *Dracula* zwei Innovationen zusammen, von denen man noch nicht wußte ob sie funktionieren würden: Der Tonfilm und der erste amerikanische Horrorfilm mit einer 'übernatürlichen' Kreatur. Daß der dilettantische Schauspieler Bela Lugosi einzig in der Rolle des Grafen Dracula Erfolg haben konnte, war, so gesehen, alles andere als Zufall. Der Horror ist kein naives Genre. Um aber überhaupt erst einmal in diese 'Lücke' eindringen und im professionellen Hollywood bestehen zu können, mußte Lugosi fingieren. Also erzählte er allen, die ihn nach seinem Werdegang befragten, „rather grim tales from my home castle in Transylvania":

> Aus Publicitygründen, um zu vereinfachen, habe ich es stets für bes-
> ser erachtet, eine Lüge über die frühen Jahre meines Lebens zu ver-
> breiten. Ich habe immer erzählt, ich sei auf die übliche Weise zu
> Ungarns *Royal National Theater* gestoßen. Ich habe immer erzählt,
> ich hätte höhere Schulen, Universitäten, die Akademie der Theater-
> künste, das Gymnasium in Budapest besucht. Mit Lügen zu prahlen
> ist vielleicht die Tollheit junger Menschen, wo die geistige Reife fehlt
> zu erkennen, daß die Wahrheit zu sagen manchmal wirklich achtba-
> rer ist.[17]

Manchmal ist aber eine Lüge der notwendige Anfang einer Karriere. Das Spiel
mit falschen Namen beherrschte er ja schon gut, als ein Darsteller für den Namen
mit den vielen Masken gesucht wurde. Lon Chaney, der berühmte Stummfilm-
Horrorstar und „Mann mit den 1000 Gesichtern" war 1930 gerade gestorben, und
obwohl erst alle anderen möglichen Schauspieler und sogar Verwandte der Produ-
zenten getestet worden waren, fand sich niemand, der die Rolle spielen konnte.
Erst dann probierte man es mit Lugosi, der die Rolle schon seit einigen Jahren
erfolgreich auf der Bühne spielte. Aber weil er die Schauspielkunst nur als Auto-
didakt, mit einer Faszination für große Gesten und pathetische Mimik sich ange-
eignet hatte, konnte er den Dracula im Film, wo im Gegenteil eine Zurücknahme
aller Bühnentheatralik gefordert war, nur hoffnungslos überspielen. Und genau
darin lag sein überraschender Erfolg, wie auch das schnelle Ende seiner 'Karrie-
re'.

Schon in *The Silent Command* (1923), Lugosis erstem amerikanischen Film,
waren alle Komponenten der dilettantischen Künstlichkeit sichtbar, die sein Spiel
auszeichneten:

> This film revealed early trade-mark Lugosi mannerisms which became
> familiar in horror films particulary in closeups of the piercing eyes,
> menacing hand movements and the smooth way in which Bela smoked
> cigars. [...] Lugosi's destiny in wicked roles was fixed in this first
> American film, a preliminary for the characterization that would
> follow him to his grave.[18]

Manierismus war in der Tat schon immer das pejorative Markenzeichen des
dilettantischen Schauspielers und eine Abweichung, die zeitgleich auf der Theater-
bühne oder in einem anderen Genre negativ beurteilt wurde.[19] Für den Erfolg von
Dracula war Lugosis *Inkompetenz* mit dem Medium und der Darstellung jedoch
die entscheidende Voraussetzung. Das schlechte Englisch, die zusätzliche Beto-
nung langgezogener Vokale, die pathetischen Blicke, die kinderhafte Begeiste-
rung für Grimassen und weit ausgestreckte, verkrampfte Hände: all das waren
unvorhersehbare Neuerungen für ein Filmmonster, das zum ersten Mal keine häß-
lichen Masken und verkrüppelte Gliedmaßen vorzeigte (wie Chaney diese Rollen

geprägt hatte), sondern ganz ohne unheimliche Kostüme, lange Zähne, Schminke und Blut einfach nur im Smoking auftrat. Was in späteren Rollen – wenn es nicht sowieso Komödien waren – das Publikum zum Lachen anregte, konnte in *Dracula* überzeugen. Ein vormoderner Liebhaber, der schon seines Blutes wegen weder arbeiten noch mit technischen Medien umgehen konnte, dessen Macht sich auf Rituale und sexuelle Anziehungskraft verlassen muß, anstelle über Geld und Wissen verfügen zu können – wer hätte diesem unzeitgemäßen Namen ein besseres Gesicht geben können als Bela Lugosi?

V.

Das Geheimnis seines Erfolges als Schauspieler sah der Autodidakt in einer bestimmten Technik des Selbst:

> ...daß ich die Fähigkeit hatte, meinen Willen, meinen Verstand, meinen Körper, meine Gefühle in einem einzigen tiefen und strömenden Kanal zusammenzuführen [...] wenn das, was ich damals tat und noch heut tue, Wahnsinn ist, dann laßt mich wahnsinnig sein, da ich so mein Ziel erreicht habe.[20]

Ganz wie sein gräfliches Vorbild sah er sich auch in der Lage durch Hypnose oder eben gleich durch Wahnsinn, alle Sinne und Daten, die ihm zur Verfügung stehen, in einem einzigen Informationsfluß bündeln und damit verstärken zu können. Aber allen Hypnotiseuren, die Lugosi im Film gespielt hatte, zum Trotz, war diese Fähigkeit allerdings weder einer natürlichen Gabe noch hypnotischen Fähigkeiten Lugosis zuzuschreiben, sondern ganz einfach der Konditionierung von autodidaktischen, d.h. passionierten und anleitungslosen Lesern durch das Medium Buch.[21] Denn aller Wille, Verstand und alle Gefühle Lugosis stammen aus Büchern. Um seine kaum vorhandene Schulbildung zu kompensieren, entschloß sich der Autodidakt zu dem einzig möglichen „self-improvement program: „For ten years, day and night, night and day, with only one, two, three hours sleep, I read and read and read until I could talk with any college professor in the world".[22] Der vermeintlich wahnsinnige Schauspieler war ganz einfach ein 'ausschweifender' Leser, der sich rühmte, täglich sechs verschiedene Zeitungen zu lesen.[23] So viel typographische Informationsverarbeitung bleibt nicht ohne Folgen. Der Buchdruck hat ja nicht nur zu einem Niedergang des lauten Lesens geführt, den Leser isoliert und verstummen lassen, sondern – wie Marshall McLuhan immer wieder betont hat – vor allem durch die Linearität der Buchstaben- und Gedankenführung die Vielfalt der Sinneswahrnehmungen in den Hintergrund gedrängt und in einen einzigen Gesichtspunkt, einen Sinn gebündelt.[24] Dieser „Kanal", in dem Lugosi alle seine Sinne bündeln zu können glaubte, heißt nicht „Wahnsinn" sondern ist

ein „Engpaß der Signifikanten" (Kittler), durch den alle Information fließen muß – erst recht wenn sie durch das technische Medium Druck in eine lineare Reihe gebracht wird.

Aber weil nicht nur Wahnsinnige, sondern auch Dilettanten aus dem professionellen Ablauf jedes Systems und Metiers ausgegrenzt werden, war Lugosis Erfolg nur geliehen. Durch die Systemlücke *Dracula*, die Hollywood notwendig nicht schließen konnte, war Lugosi nicht nur der Eintritt in eine unerreichbar scheinende Welt gelungen, sondern gleichzeitig auch jede Chance auf individuelle Veränderung genommen. *The Mark of the Vampire*, wie sein nächster Film mit dem *Dracula*-Regisseur Tod Browning heißen sollte, hat ihn nie mehr losgelassen. Im Zeichen des Vampirs sollte Bela Lugosis einzig mögliche Zukunft in Hollywood verlaufen. Das Establishment hatte zurückgebissen, und den eingeschlichenen Dilettanten exakt durch die Rolle, die ihm Einlaß gewährte, als solchen enttarnt und markiert.

Nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs und der Medienkonkurrenz mit dem Fernsehen, war Bela Lugosis kurze Karriere zu ihrem Ende gekommen. Seine alten Filme wurden mittlerweile im Fernsehen gezeigt – ein Medienwechsel, der sein unnatürliches Spiel unnatürlicher Kreaturen plötzlich lächerlich aussehen ließ. Der Film war das „ideale Medium" für den Horror gewesen, ganz einfach weil dem Unheimlichen der Romantik ein Gesicht gegeben wurde, und dessen psychologischen Funktionen direkt als filmtechnische Verfahren implementiert werden konnten.[25] Im detailarmen Fernsehformat verflüchtigten sich romantische Phantastik und Effekte des Films gleichermaßen. Wie Philip Auslander gezeigt hat, wird jeder Kinofilm, der im Fernsehen ausgestrahlt wird, zu einer Aufführung in der Gegenwart ('live performance') „remediatisiert".[26] Die Performanz des Mediums Fernsehen beruht auf der Erzeugung einer Rezeptionshaltung von Unmittelbarkeit und Natürlichkeit der gezeigten Ereignisse. Nicht nur die Nachrichtensendungen mit ihrem Anspruch auf Realität und Wahrheit, sowie eine Vielzahl von Live-Sendungen machen den Unterschied zum Film aus, sondern vor allem die Selbstinszenierung des Fernsehens als Theater:

> It is my contention that this ideologically engrained sense of television as a live medium makes its historical relationship to the theatre different from that of film, and enabled television to colonize liveness, the one aspect of theatrical presentation that film could not replicate. [...] Whereas film could only remediate the theatre at these structural levels, television could remediate theatre at the ontological level through its claim to immediacy. It is also significant in this context that television not only remediates live performance, it remediates film in a way that film has never remediated television.[27]

In der erzeugten Illusion von Aktualität und Unmittelbarkeit des Fernsehens, sowie dem mitaufgerufenen Kontext einer Theateraufführung, fiel Lugosi wieder

als nicht naiver, dilettantischer Schauspieler auf, dessen Bewegungen übertrieben und Figuren überspielt waren.

Dementsprechend mußte der verarmte Schauspieler im hohen Alter und seinen letzten Tod vor Augen aus finanziellen Gründen immer noch in der (Wander-) Bühnenversion des Dracula für kleines Geld vor einem ebenfalls kleinen und gröhlenden Publikum auftreten. Der alte Mann, gehüllt in einen schwarzem Umhang, mit seinen manierierten Bewegungen, war längst zu seiner eigenen Karikatur geworden.[28] Selbst in einem Nachtclub in Las Vegas gab der über 70jährige in der „Bela Lugosi Revue" sechs Wochen lang noch jeden Abend den Dracula. Er wünschte sich sogar ein 3-D Remake in Technicolor. So sollte sich für sein Leben bewahrheiten, was er als Dracula schon zu Mina Seward gesagt hatte: „...to die, to be really dead: that must be glorious. There are far worse things, awaiting man, than death". In einem seiner späten Interviews wußte er bereits, daß er die letzte Ruhe wohl niemals finden würde:

> – „Did the role depress you?"
> – „Very much. It hunted me. I often dreamed of the dead."
> – „Doesn't Dracula ever end for you?"
> – „No, no. Dracula never ends. I don't know whether I shall call it a fortunate recall, but it never ends".[29]

Anmerkungen

1. Zu den verschiedenen Möglichkeiten einer technischen Reproduzierbarkeit in Stokers *Dracula* als dem „Sachbuch unserer Bürokratisierung" vgl. nach wie vor Friedrich Kittler: *Draculas Vermächtnis*. In: Ders.: Draculas Vermächtnis. Technische Schriften. Leipzig 1993. S. 11–57.
2. „Der *Name* ist so die *Sache*, wie sie im *Reiche der Vorstellung* vorhanden ist und Gültigkeit hat. Das ßß) *reproduzierende* Gedächtnis hat und erkennt im Namen die Sache und mit der Sache den Namen, ohne Anschauung und Bild. [...] Bei dem Namen Löwe bedürfen wir weder der Anschauung eines solchen Tieres noch auch selbst des Bildes, sondern der Name, indem wir ihn verstehen, ist die bildlose einfache Vorstellung. Es ist in Namen, daß wir *denken*" – Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*. Dritter Teil (1830). Frankfurt/Main 1986. S. 278.
3. So die Schauspielerin und Filmpartnerin Carroll Borland in ihrem Vorwort zu Richard Bojarskis *The Films of Bela Lugosi*, Secaucus – N. J. 1980. S. 9.
4. *Universal* ist auch der Name der berühmten Filmproduktionsgesellschaft von *Dracula* und anderen Filmen Lugosis. *Universal* war das führende Filmstudio für Horrorfilme in den 20er, 30er und 40er Jahren, und prägte Stil, Sujets und Ausstattung dieses Genres bis heute. Daß der Erfolg von *Dracula* hauptsächlich seinem Medium zu verdanken ist, wußte auch sein Hauptdarsteller: „...the popularity of horror pictures is understandable. The screen is the ideal medium for the presentation of gruesome tales (...) And they have an almost universal appeal" – so Bela Lugosi in einem Interview, zit. n. Richard Bojarski: *The Films of Bela Lugosi*, Secaucus – N. J. 1980. S. 34.

5. Während seiner Zeit an Ungarns *Nationaltheater* in Budapest spielte er tatsächlich oft in klassisch-romantischen Dramen, allerdings, bis auf den Romeo in Shakespeares *Romeo and Juliet* und Jesus von Nazareth in der *Passion*, immer nur in Nebenrollen.

6. „Where once I had been the master of my professional destinies, with a repertoire embracing all kinds and types of men, from Romeo to the classics of Ibsen and Rostand, I became Dracula's puppet [...] The shadowy figure of Dracula, more than any casting office, dictated the kind of parts I played [...] never, surely has a role so influenced and dominated an actor's personal life and private fortunes", so Lugosi in einem Interview, zit. n. Robert Cremer: *Lugosi. The Man behind the Cape*. Chicago 1976.

7. Hans Scheugl: *Sexualität und Neurose im Film. Die Kinomythen von Griffith bis Warhol*. München 1974.

8. Bela Lugosi in einem Interview mit Gladys Hall (*Memoes of a Madman*, Juli 1941), zit. nach Rolf Giesen: *Lexikon des phantastischen Films*. Bd. 2. Frankfurt/Main – Berlin – Wien 1984. S. 55.

9. Zur Etymologie und Sachgeschichte des Dilettantismus vgl. Georg Stanitzek: *Dilettant*, in: Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft. Hrsg. v. Klaus Weimar. Bd. 1. Berlin – New York 1997. S. 364–366.

10. Georg Stanitzek: *Über Professionalität*. In: Mitteilungen des Deutschen Germanistenverbandes 43, Heft 4 (1996). S. 19.

11. 'Vlad Tepes' ist der Name des Rumänischen Fürsten, der die Walachei von 1456–1462 regierte und der das historische Vorbild für Bram Stokers Dracula war. Sein Name bedeutet „Vlad der Pfähler" und leitet sich von dessen Vorliebe für eine Foltermethode her, bei der ein Pfahl langsam durch den Anus in den Leib eines Opfers eindrang. Zu dem historischen Hintergrund vgl. Ralf-Peter Märtin: *Dracula. Das Leben des Fürsten Vlad Tepes*. Frankfurt/Main 1991.

12. Johann Wolfgang Goethe und Friedrich Schiller: *Über den Dilettantismus*. In: Schillers Werke. Nationalausgabe. Bd. 21. Hrsg. v. Benno von Wiese. Weimar 1963. S. 61.

13. Ebenda. S. 60. Gegen diesen schädlichen Trieb des Dilettanten „oder eigentlich Pfuscher" über die Nachahmung von Gefühlen oder Stimmungen zur Nachahmung von Kunstwerken zu gelangen, gibt es laut Goethe und Schiller nur ein Remedium: „Allgemeine Grundsätze" und „strengste Regeln" für die Kunst. Hier wird besonders deutlich, daß die positive Selbstbeschreibung des Klassizismus in Deutschland eigentlich negative Beweggründe und Ursachen hat: die neuen, strengen Regeln der Kunst haben in erster Linie die Funktion einer Diskurspolizei und dienen u.a. einer Abwehr des Dilettantismus.

14. Ausführlich dazu Ursula Geitner: *Menschen als Schauspieler und Schauspieler als Menschen*. In: Dies.: Die Sprache der Verstellung. Studien zum rhetorischen und anthropologischen Wissen im 17. Und 18. Jahrhundert. Tübingen 1992. S. 284–343.

15. Ebenda. S. 286. Die klassische Studie zu diesem Problem von Naivität und Bewußtsein in der Kunst ist nach wie vor Heinrich von Kleists *Über das Marionettentheater*.

16. Vgl. hierzu Erhard Schüttpelz: *Die Akademie der Dilettanten. (Back to D.)*. In: Akademie. Katalog. Hrsg. v. Stephan Dillemuth. Köln 1995. S. 40–57.

17. Bela Lugosi in einem Interview mit Gladys Hall (*Memoes of a Madman*, Juli 1941), zit. nach Rolf Giesen: *Lexikon des phantastischen Films*. Bd. 2. Frankfurt/Main – Berlin – Wien 1984. S. 53.

18. Richard Bojarski: *The Films of Bela Lugosi*. Secaucus, N.J. 1980. S. 22.

19. In einer *Variety*-Kritik zu *Arabesque*, dem ersten Brodway-Stück Lugosis, wird dessen Darstellung eines arabischen Scheichs aus genau diesen Gründen kritisiert: „The Sheik is overplayed and underdone by Bela Lugosi, but [at least] he gets the idea across", zit. n. Ebenda. S. 23.

20. Bela Lugosi in einem Interview mit Gladys Hall (*Memoes of a Madman*, Juli 1941), zit. nach

Rolf Giesen: *Lexikon des phantastischen Films*. Bd. 2. Frankfurt/Main – Berlin – Wien 1984. S. 55.

21. Daß der Buchdruck *als technisches Medium* auch einem scheinbar illegitimen Umgang mit Wissen förderlich werden konnte, hatte schon Joseph von Eichendorff bemerkt. Anhand von Büchern konnten ungebildete Leser plötzlich in jeder Form von Wissen herumblättern: „Durch den Druck ist aber in der Tat die ganze Literatur ein *Buch* geworden, in welchem jeder nach Belieben blättern mag und daraus ein allgemeiner Dilettantismus der Produzenten wie der Konsumenten entstanden" – Joseph von Eichendorff: *Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands*. In: Ders.: Werke. Bd. 3. München 1976. S. 605. Zit. n. Georg Stanitzek: *Über Professionalität*. In: Mitteilungen des deutschen Germanistenverbandes 43 (1996). S. 22.

22. Lugosi zit. n. Richard Bojarski: *The Films of Bela Lugosi*. Secaucus, N. J. 1980. S. 15

23. „His hobbies consisted of building up his stamp collection, hosting Hungarian-style parties at his home and spending hours „dry reading" in his extensive library of subjects such as politics, history, economy, social revolution, religion and philosophy. A liberal democrat, Lugosi read up to six newspapers daily to stay abreast of current events". Ebenda. S. 37.

24. z. B. Marshall McLuhan: *Die Gutenberg-Galaxis*. In: Ders.: Medien verstehen. Der McLuhan-Reader. Hrsg. v. Martin Baltes u.a. Mannheim 1997. S. 85–86. McLuhan zitiert in diesem Zusammenhang aus William Ivins Studie *Prints and Visual Communications*, der wie Lugosi für das Phänomen die technische Metapher des „Kanals" gebraucht: „je genauer wir unsere Daten bei einer Beweisführung auf die Daten beschränken, die uns durch ein und denselben Sinneskanal zukommen, desto weniger neigen wir dazu, in unserem Gedankengang Fehler zu machen". Ebenda. Der Leser bekommt demnach alle Informationen aus einem 'Gesichtspunkt', aus einem 'Kanal', eben aus einem Buch übermittelt, und lernt dementsprechend auch selber in seiner Produktion alle Daten unter einem Gesichtspunkt zu präsentieren und durch einen Kanal fließen zu lassen.

25. Dazu immer noch überzeugend Friedrich Kittler: *Grammophon Film Typewriter*. Berlin 1986. S. 214–255.

26. Philip Auslander: *Liveness. Performance in a mediatized culture*. London – New York 1999. S. 10–23.

27. Ebenda. S. 13.

28. Folgerichtig begründen diese „trade-mark Lugosi mannerisms" auch seinen Nachruhm. Aus dem Wahnsinn (der Lektüre) entstanden, sind sie immer noch eine Parabel für „weise Idioten" wie Osbie Feel in Pynchons Roman *Gravity's Rainbow*: „'Osbie, bin ich verrückt geworden?' [...] 'Na klar, na klar', macht Osbie und vollführt eine fließende Bewegung von den Fingerspitzen bis zum Handgelenk, frei nach der Geste, mit der Bela Lugosi irgendeinem Idioten von jugendlichem Helden in *White Zombie* das prekäre Glas voll präpariertem Wein kredenzt, im ersten Film, den Osbie je gesehen hat, und in gewisser Weise auch dem letzten, denn immer noch rangiert er, neben *Son of Frankenstein* und *Freaks* und *Flying Down to Rio*, ganz oben auf Osbies Liste seiner Lieblingsstreifen" – Thomas Pynchon: *Die Enden der Parabel* (1973). Reinbek bei Hamburg 1981. S. 173. Den Hinweis auf diese Stelle verdanke ich Markus Krajewski.

29. Bela Lugosi im Interview, zit. nach dem Dokumentarfilm *Bela Lugosi. The Forgotten King* [1990] von Forest J. Ackerman.

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