

Dilemmas of Belonging: Hungarians from Romania

Irina Culic

On 5 December 2004 the citizens of Hungary were called to decide through referendum on two issues: (1) that the health system remained under full state control, and (2) that ethnic Hungarians living in the neighboring countries were granted citizenship preferentially. Sixty-five percent of the Hungarians who went to vote gave a favorable answer to the first question, and a little more than 51% gave a yes answer to the second question. Despite this, however, the referendum failed because of the low voter turnout of only 37.49% of the electorate. According to Hungarian law, for a referendum result to be valid it is required that at least 25% of the electorate endorses it. In this referendum a little less than 19% of all franchised citizens voted for granting double citizenship to ethnic Hungarians living in the neighboring countries.¹

The result of the referendum surprised, disappointed and scandalized Hungarians in Transylvania. Tens of Hungarians from Szeklerland declared that they would return the certificate of Hungarian nationality, and some of them even did it. In Miercurea Ciuc, three days after the referendum, a group of approximately one hundred Hungarians held several minutes of silence for the Hungarian nation in front of the Catholic church "Millenium." They displayed a black flag, a Hungarian flag adorned with a black ribbon, and a poster with the map of Great Hungary from which the territory of present Hungary had been cut out. On another poster somebody had written: "We were cheated twice, but with the help of God we remained Hungarians." The Szeklers' anthem was sung, and in several churches, it replaced the Hungarian anthem. At the end of the manifestation part of the participants retired into the church to pray for the Hungarian nation.²

Other reactions were more radical. A Hungarian professor declared that he would refuse to teach any longer in the Hungarian language.³ The owner of a bar in Odorheiu-Secuiesc posted a note on the door prohibiting the access of Hungarian citizens. In the open letter sent on 7 December 2004 by the leadership of the County Council of Harghita to its related counties in Hungary, those who had voted against double citizenship were warned that they would not be greeted like brothers in the county of Harghita.⁴ Many Hungarians from Hungary gave up their winter holidays in Transylvania and stayed at home, while inns and hotels in Szeklerland advertised free rooms to Hungarians from Romania, Romanians, Germans or any other people who were good at heart.⁵

Such reactions are symptomatic for the present state of diversification, multiplication and fragmentation of the institutional and symbolic sources of claim, use and

construction of the Hungarian identity of Hungarians in Romania. The study investigates the practices, institutions, events, and contexts that have shaped the national community and identity of Transylvanian Hungarians. Examining the relations of the Hungarian minority in Romania with the Romanian state and the Hungarian state, in view of the two states' policies with respect to their internal and external national minorities, the analysis contrasts the post-communist transformations and their consequences, to the communist situation. Larger issues of nationhood and state building are touched upon in this analysis.

Alongside the analysis of legislation and the use of secondary literature, I used data from various surveys of the Hungarian population in Transylvania carried out during the last decade,⁶ as well as ethnographic data resulted from participant observation and semi-directed interviews with Hungarians from Romania living in Cluj-Napoca and in Budapest between 2001 and 2005.

Hungarians from Romania under Communism: The Emergence of a Unified National Community

The peace treaty of Trianon marks the beginning of a troubled course for the Hungarian nation. In 1920, Hungary lost more than two thirds of its territory, and was left with a territory smaller than the territory received by Romania alone. It also lost a population of more than 13 million, of which a substantial Hungarian population of more than 3.2 million.⁷ Most of these, approximately 1.7 million persons, were lost to Romania, which was awarded the historical province of Transylvania, and also a sizeable territory known as Partium,⁸ which belonged traditionally to the kingdom of Hungary, but came, in various territorial shapes, under the sovereignty of Transylvanian princes.⁹ Only 53.8% of the population of this territory was Romanian.¹⁰ The trauma of Trianon has become constitutive to the Hungarian national sentiment. Revisionist courses of action and discourses guided Hungary's political actions ever since. The problem of the Hungarians left outside the borders is one of particular concern and shapes Hungary's relation with the neighboring states.

The position of the Hungarians from Transylvania was changed significantly by the territorial changes.¹¹ Not only had they become a minority, but also their political, economic and social standing deteriorated under the new rule. The political and cultural rights of the minorities had been guaranteed by the Alba Iulia Resolutions of 1 December 1918 and the Paris Minorities Treaty of 9 December 1919, which became an integral part and a condition for the Trianon Treaty of 4 June 1920. However, various measures taken by the government in Bucharest, which was achieving a social revolution on national lines, altered the community organizations and cultural institutions of the minorities. Most important in this sequence was the Land Reform of 23 July 1921. It affected the large and medium-sized estate owners, minority schools and churches whose lands were confiscated.¹² The Public Administration

Act of 7 October 1925 introduced a new administrative territorial arrangement, weakening the role of national minorities. Various acts regulating the use of the Romanian language and the requirement of taking an oath of allegiance in public administration and educational institutions resulted in dismissal of Hungarians from their jobs and their replacement with Romanians.¹³

The demographic changes in Transylvania were important, and contributed to the worsening of Hungarians' position. Between 1920 and 1924 approximately 197,000 Hungarians left Romania and, as a result of the policy of Romanianization, the ethnic ratio in Transylvania's biggest cities changed dramatically between 1920 and 1939.¹⁴ Nominally the policies of the Romanian government were to re-Romanianize that proportion of the population, which she claimed, either on the evidence of surnames or of religion, to be Magyarized Romanians.¹⁵

The liberal government from Bucharest launched a "cultural offensive" largely expanding the network of primary schools and endeavoring to unify the education system of the new three provinces according to the Old Kingdom traditions and template.¹⁶ The higher education system in Transylvania was made completely Romanian.¹⁷ The nationalization of the Cluj University represented both a political act of historical rectification and a symbolic and substantial act of cultural revival.¹⁸

The advent of the Second World War worsened the situation of national minorities in Romania as a series of authoritarian regimes came to power. Hungary saw fulfilled some of her revisionist claims under the Second Vienna Award of 30 August 1940, when Northern Transylvania was returned to Hungary. Retaliations against their respective minorities followed from both Hungarian and Romanian parts. The question of Transylvania shaped Hungary and Romania's war strategies and was finally settled in favor of the Romanian people, when Northern Transylvania was returned to Romania under Soviet supervision. The grim experiences of this period inclined Hungarians from Transylvania to express sympathy towards the Soviets and to support left-wing organizations.¹⁹

The scholarly literature and debates approach the situation of national minorities in Romania under communism in several ways, each sharing its part of uses and abuses. At least three of them are dominant in the historical and/or social-political analyses. The first approach examines the explicit policies—legislation, practices, and discourses—of the communist state with respect to national minorities. The second approach investigates the issue of national minorities through the larger framework of communist policies applied to the whole society, indicating the particular effects of these policies over the respective minority or community, engendered by its particular cultural forms, history, or social-economic and political organization. The third approach is a self-centered one, from the viewpoint of the majority population, or of a particular ethnic minority. It treats the context in a simplified and unilateral mode, ignoring the social, political, economic, and cultural complexity of a space disputed by contending groups. All these approaches produce distortions in the understanding of the phenomenon, as they emphasize certain aspects and ignore

others. A serious analysis should offer a balanced approach, giving to each fact its own importance.

Examining the explicit national policies of Romania during communism, characterized by a sequence of mixed atonement and repression, I identified several periods. The following is a concise outline of the main trends only, as important nuances and details, impossible to be captured in the space of this article, were left out.

1944–1948

As the communists seized power in Romania, the co-option of minorities represented a mutual strategy of consolidation of power, respectively of the status of minorities. During this period were established important cultural institutions for the Hungarian minority, culminating with the set up of the Hungarian University “Bolyai” by decree in June 1946. The reciprocity principle allowed free use of the Hungarian language in the public space—public administration, economic sphere, party meetings, bilingual signs etc.²⁰ The formal language adopted the term “co-inhabiting nationalities” instead of “national minorities,”²¹ justified by the Marxist–Leninist ideology which proclaimed that the ethno-cultural identities and differences would fade into the working class unity and the new communist identity.

1948–1956

This period was dominated by the communist leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, who continued the permissive-promoting policies regarding the national minorities. Bilingualism was officially introduced and many schools in the languages of minorities were set up in areas with important minority populations. The administrative reform of 1950 established the regions Mureș and Brașov (Stalin) so that they comprised the majority of the Hungarian population in the area.²² The Constitution of 1952 set up the Hungarian Autonomous Region (RAM), the only case of integrative solution for the national minority problem in the communist space after the war (except for the case of Yugoslavia).²³

1956–1965

This is the period of deviation from the Moscow line, and is marked by two events: the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the Seventh Congress of the Romanian Workers Party in 1964. The episode of the Hungarian Revolution is exemplary for the national communist governments, for the understanding of their relations with Moscow and with their own populations. It produced a revision of the strategy of the Romanian communist party, leading to the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Romanian territory in 1958, and the proclamation of Romania’s “independence.”²⁴ This was

the beginning of the autochthonous, national, mode of realizing the developed socialist society and the socialist nation in Romania.

The policies concerning the national minorities were ambivalent during this period. On the one hand, the system of instruction in Hungarian and German languages was developed, it was allowed the choice of language at university admission examinations, and departments and colleges in the Hungarian language were set up at the Agronomic Institute and the Technical Institute in Cluj. On the other hand, starting with the 1950s, the number of schools that provided instruction exclusively in minority languages decreased with the increase of the number of mixed schools, thus affecting the autonomous status of the Hungarian language and highlighting the advantage of education in Romanian.²⁵ In 1959, the Hungarian University “Bolyai” was merged with the Romanian University “Babeş,” a move that represented a significant symbolic assertion of the power relations, and a serious institutional blow for the Hungarian minority. In 1960 the administrative reform redrew the borders of the RAM so that in the new region, called the Mureş Region—Hungarian Autonomous, the proportion of Hungarians declined from 77.3% to 62.2%.

1965–1986

The period began with Ceauşescu’s sly schemes to concentrate power and is characterized by an alternating handling of the policies concerning national minorities. The Hungarian state became an important factor during this period, as it had rediscovered the issue of the Hungarians outside the borders.²⁶ In 1971 one of the members of the Politic Bureau of the Hungarian communist party issued a declaration of interest for the fate of national minorities in Romania.²⁷ Institutionally, Hungary started to build links with the Hungarian minority in Romania, by expressing interest and involvement in the cultural and scientific activities of the Hungarians in Romania, considered products of the Hungarian nation. The Hungarian state also started to refer to the Hungarian–Hungarian relations in various international contexts. The two countries opened consulates on bilateral bases, strengthening the relation between Hungary and the Hungarian minority in Romania.

Meanwhile the Theses from April 1971 marked the beginning of a cultural revolution in Romania. The Marxist–Leninist ideology was challenged by a competing ideology that came to dominate the last decade of the communist regime. Ceauşescu started to promote a particular form of nationalism in order to assert his independence from the Soviet Union and to transform Romania into an autarchic state, dislocated from the game of power between East and West, nevertheless profiting most efficiently exactly from the competition between the two systems. If at the level of cultural-political discourses and practices the communist nationalism re-interpreted the nationalist unionist history and historiography in the terms of a vigorous genealogical teleological nationalism, at institutional level this politics meant among others the

reduction and close down of many forms of representation and functioning of the Hungarian community in Romania.

1986–1989

This is a period of grim repression of the whole Romanian society, when the policies started in the 1970s by Ceaușescu got to extremes. The situation of the Hungarian minority worsened, as did the situation of all the population. There was a gradual decline in the number of Hungarian students at the faculties providing instruction in the Hungarian language and several courses taught in Hungarian were suppressed. The use of mother tongue was drastically restrained in the public space. There were closed down Hungarian cultural centers, and the Hungarian Consulate in Cluj-Napoca. Obviously, the Romanian state continued to acknowledge the existence of Hungarians in practices and discourses invoking the unity of thought and action of the socialist nation, and to include them among those who built the multilaterally developed socialist society, “Romanians, Hungarians, Germans and other nationalities.” But Hungarians had started to feel less and less inclined to build the communist society in Romania, and, in the context of the open and energetic interest of the Hungarian state towards the fate of Transylvanian Hungarians, the exodus to Hungary began.²⁸

Apart from the specific policies directed towards national minorities, characterized by a combination of facility granting and repression, the more general policies of the communist leadership affected in a specific manner the national minorities from Romania. The land reform operated by the Petru Groza government in March 1945 expropriated the property of the national minority churches, thus diminishing one of the main sources of institutional support of the minority communities. The Law on Cults of 4 August 1948 put under state control the main administrative, financial and economic activities of the churches, restraining their activity to liturgical and pastoral functions. The role of national minority churches in maintaining and managing the communities was thus drastically curtailed, and their autonomous activity became completely subordinated to the state. The most severe blow endured by the national minority communities was the Law on Education of 1948 by which all ecclesiastical and private schools were reorganized as state schools. Moreover, by the Decree 1388/1948 completing the Law on Cults all remaining properties of churches were confiscated by the state without compensations. The most important institutions of socialization, identity construction and culture preservation of national minorities were thus almost completely dissolved. The law on the Protection of the National Cultural Heritage of 1974 had a negative impact on the national minority communities, as their cultural patrimony comprising historical documents, works of art, libraries, religious objects, rare manuscripts etc. was confiscated, and the access to it restricted. This shattered the link with their symbolic objects and deprived them of the necessary information required to form and preserve national awareness.²⁹

During the last years of the communist regime particularly, the existence of Hungarians through their own institutions had become extremely difficult. Paradoxically however, this situation unexpectedly generated a configuration of the Hungarian minority in Romania as an “imagined community,”³⁰ forging an unequivocal form of social solidarity and self-identity. In the circumstances of open and active interest manifested by Hungary after 1986, and of increasing oppression of the Ceaușescu regime, two practices of discourse naturalized as constitutive elements of the Hungarian community in Romania. The first of these was *the continuous reference to the kin-state (external homeland) Hungary*. The second one was *the representation of the communist repression as a community repression*, rather than as the repression of the whole society or of the individuals.

The awareness of the disaster represented by the peace treaty of Trianon is one of the elements of the construction of the modern Hungarian nation. The fragmentation of Great Hungary and consequently of the Hungarian nation functions like a historical foundation (anti-)act. The idea of its rectification binds all ethnic Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin and sustains all national policies of the Hungarian state. On the other hand, according to the logic of ethnic boundary building,³¹ the Hungarians who suddenly became citizens of another state, socially degraded by having been dislocated from domination positions in the administration and economy, and overwhelmed numerically, had their sentiment of distinction enhanced by the belief in their cultural superiority, and by the fact that they were ruled by the state and institutions of nations and cultures considered inferior. Irrespective of Hungarians’ sentiments after the Second World War, of how deep their conviction in the communist ideology was, and of the intentions of the first post-war Romanian governments, the discrepancies between the economic and ideological situations of Romania and Hungary of the last years of communist regime created a homogeneous and unified community of sentiment and thought among Transylvanian Hungarians. The pillars on which this community was built were (1) the fraternal relations with Hungary and the consciousness to belong to the whole Hungarian nation, and (2) the representation of their position within the Romanian political community as a dominated one, because of the essentially anti-Hungarian attitude of Romanians and their state’s institutions. In what follows, I will discuss how these two elements emerged as fundamental in the constitution of the Hungarian community in Romania by the end of the communist regime.

For a long time the communist leaderships of both Romania and Hungary had avoided the issues of their national minorities outside the borders. Romania kept silent with regard to her population in Bessarabia, the “Romanian” territory lost in 1812, regained in 1918, and lost again in 1940 and 1944 to the Soviet Union. Ceaușescu only called for Moscow to renounce the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact, and thus to raise the issue of sovereignty over Soviet Moldavia, in late November 1989.³² The reasons for the lack of claim to Bessarabia were obvious: such claims would have allowed Moscow to encourage similar claims to Transylvania by Hungary;

Ceaușescu's nationalism was directed from above, and was very different from the emerging nationalism in the Socialist Soviet Republic of Moldavia by the end of the 1980s, which had religious and popular tones, exactly the type of movement repressed by Ceaușescu; the Moldovan movement was not directed against Russians only—it was directed against the dictatorial government and the communist power too.³³ After the rise to power of the communists in Hungary, Budapest took out of its agenda the issue of the national reunification of Hungarians. Unlike the Ceaușescu regime, the Kádár regime avoided any reference to the national problem, whose explosive potential had been demonstrated by the 1956 Revolution.

At cultural level however, the struggles over the possession of Transylvania and over its legitimate rule had been constantly fought, especially in the form of the conflict between the Romanian and the Hungarian historiography.³⁴ On this field the identity of the Hungarians and the cohesion of their community have been permanently strengthened. The debate extended into the Hungarian political space in January 1988, when the secretary of foreign affairs of the Central Committee of the Hungarian communist party, Magyar Szocialista Munkárpárt (MSZMP), made the statement that Hungarians outside the borders were part of the Hungarian nation. One month later, an article that generated great interest in the public space considered that the problems of the Hungarian minority abroad constituted an inevitable part of Hungary's neighborhood relations.³⁵ This discourse and the alternative of the "escape" to Hungary, which by the end of the 1980s was absorbing more and more refugees from Romania, produced a communion among the Hungarians, who conceived the Hungarian nation and the Hungarian state as the answer to their precarious situation. The moment of the 1956 Revolution and the thrill of those days, the pact made by Kádár with the population which allowed the development of a secondary economy and opened a path to consumerism, the public life of the *samizdat*, all these reinforced the positive stereotypes of Hungarians about Hungarians, constituting an important source of actualization of their national identity.³⁶

The second practice used as a strategy of ethnic (national) actualization of Hungarians from Romania was the representation of the communist repression as a community repression, rather than the repression of the whole society or of individuals. Its most important manifestation, not only because of its intensity, but because it involved the Hungarian state too, was the accusation, made by the end of the 1980s, that the plan of rural systematization introduced by Ceaușescu in 1974 was directed against Hungarians and had the aim of destroying their community.³⁷

The systematization plan consisted in the demolition and reconstruction of the villages and towns of Romania, and was part of the larger project of transformation of the country into a multilaterally developed socialist society. Formulated with the intention to introduce modern facilities to the rural area, the villages were to be transformed into urban industrial centers, where schools, hospitals, and blocks of flats would have accompanied the industrial sites and constructions. Thus the small villages and hamlets whose population was less than 1,000 persons were deemed "irrational"

and would have had their land returned to agriculture and all services and facilities ceased, or would have been demolished and the population removed. The plan had been devised for the whole country, but focused initially on Moldova and on particular localities such as Ceaușescu's birthplace, Scornicești. By the 1980s the works at the rural systematization program stopped, due to lack of funds. At that moment, less than 10% of the new flats had been built in the rural historical regions. The systematization plans for most villages had in the end been abandoned before they even started, if there had been any project at all. The systematization program disregarded the history and specificity of the place, and the ethnic distribution of the population.³⁸

The international community reacted to the systematization program, more and more vigorously as the relaxation policies started by Gorbachev were felt in the rest of Eastern Europe. At the beginning of 1989, Hungary made an official complaint to the Commission for Human Rights of the United Nations, accusing Romania of serious violation of human rights. At the core of her complaint was the accusation of destruction of the Hungarian community in Romania through the village systematization plan.³⁹

There is no doubt that the communist authorities employed various strategies to change the ethnic distribution in Transylvania, beyond the natural results of the Stalinist policies of modernization of the country, that involved a rural–urban migration of the population. Internal documents of national and local party committees explicitly encouraged or ordered the emigration of Hungarians from cities like Oradea, Târgu-Mureș, Cluj or Arad, while Romanians were transferred to these cities.⁴⁰ Hungarians also talk of strategies in the repartition of work places in industry and in the layout of the socialist factories, so that Hungarians were forced to leave their birthplace and be replaced by Romanians from Wallachia.⁴¹ Hungarians' arguments accentuate the effects of these policies (including that of compulsory work repartition of university graduates) on themselves as a community, reckoning that the impact of the same policies on Romanians (e.g. Romanians from Transylvania forced to move to Wallachia) is not comparable.

Another form of the strategy that appeals to the representation of the communist repression as a community repression was the belief that the Romanian authorities introduced a policy of *numerus clausus* with regard to the Hungarian minority, in order to limit their access to the state's institutions, particularly the higher education institutions. There is no evidence of any formal provision preventing Hungarians to apply for admission at any higher education institution in Romania, in conditions equal to those required for Romanians (or any other person who passed the high school graduation examinations). Moreover, at the departments that provided education in the Hungarian language, Hungarians could opt to take the examination in their mother tongue. There was no provision stating numbers, proportions, or limits to the distribution of students by ethnic group.

It is obvious and indisputable that Hungarians were disadvantaged in the process of admission into universities where the examination language was Romanian. But it is also obvious and indisputable that this is a structural disadvantage common to any national or linguistic minority anywhere, and that it is impossible for a state to fully

eliminate this inequality. If introducing education programs in the mother tongue of the minorities at all levels can mitigate it, the inequality will still persist as long as most of the social situations in a national state favor the persons who speak the language of the majority population and of the institutions.

All these discourses, ideas and beliefs were naturally mostly rationalizations of policies that were ultimately introduced by the communist authorities in order to repress and subdue the whole population under its jurisdiction. Hungarians considered that the loss of certain rights affected them in a greater degree than it affected Romanians, because it meant the loss of collective rights, crucial for the existence of their community and for the integration of the Hungarians into the Hungarian community. Then, as now, Hungarians lived and represented their Hungarian-ness as a different form of (national) community than Romanians. The source of the Romanian national community is perceived in the institutions of the Romanian state, which function as its guarantor. The source of the Hungarian community in Romania is seen in their traditional institutions, partially destroyed by communism and permanently threatened by the present Romanian state, and is guaranteed only by their belonging to the Hungarian nation. The crucial difference stays in the unequal hold to power. As Romanians dominate the political and institutional structures, Hungarians find it impossible to impose their own institutional forms, vital for their community. They are compelled to make existential compromises (such as to put their children into Romanian schools to increase their social chances), and this is interpreted as a form of assimilation.⁴²

Often Romanians feel these attitudes and interpretations of the Hungarians as unjust “accusations.” The great majority of the villages destroyed by the program of rural systematization were of course Romanian villages, and the access to higher education institutions was restricted to Romanians too. The Romanians’ feeling (and the reality) is that the regime oppressed its population equally, irrespective of ethnic group. Romanians do not understand Hungarians’ demands for “collective” rights: at best they interpret them as claims for positive discrimination, and at worst as break-away tendencies. The political mobilization of Hungarians after 1989 was felt by Romanians as a mobilization against them, or at least indifferent to the efforts of the Romanian political class and civil society to find solutions for the important problems of the moment: the economic reform, the corruption, the poverty, etc. The political strategies of Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) and its political opportunism are only strengthening this belief among the Romanians.⁴³ I believe that Romanians and Hungarians were, and continue to be, equally insensitive to the distress of the other, and to the representation of their distress.⁴⁴

Hungarian–Hungarian Relations after 1990

Apart from atoning for the trauma of Trianon, Hungarian citizens saw little else in the proposal to grant double citizenship to ethnic Hungarians in the neighboring countries.

In fact, they relate in equivocal terms to Hungarians left outside the borders in 1920. Despite the fact that Transylvania remains the central point in the conception of the Hungarian nation, depository of its cultural and national authenticity, the Hungarian–Hungarian relations are not the simplest. There are bitter feelings and resentment in both Hungarian citizens and Hungarians in Transylvania. For Hungarians in Hungary, ethnic Hungarians from Romania and other neighboring countries represent a permanent competition on the labor force market, and a burden on the social services budget. Survey data indicate an important part of the population of Hungary holding negative sentiments for the Hungarians across the borders. Figures show that during the 1990s immigrant Hungarians from Transylvania were considered traitors (of their kin remained in their birth country) by approximately a third of the Hungarian population, and the proportion of those who did not consider Transylvanian Hungarians real Hungarians raised to approximately a quarter of the population.⁴⁵

All Hungarians from Hungary and the Hungarians from Transylvania to whom I spoke explained these figures mainly in terms of economic interest. Their arguments concur with the main ideas of the split labor market theory.⁴⁶ The discontent of the Hungarian population originates from the fact that ethnic Hungarians coming to work from the neighboring countries accept lower salaries and poorer social security guarantees, provoking the split of the market and unemployment within the local population.⁴⁷ Transylvanian Hungarians encounter hostility in Hungary, being seen as competitors in the labor market and state social services. They are often called derogatorily “Romanians,” a “quality” inevitably loaded with negative connotations,⁴⁸ or “füstöképű”—a pejorative term for Gypsies.⁴⁹ This utterly unpleasant situation brings frustration and grief, building up animosity towards both their fellow nationals and their fellow citizens. While perfectly secure in their national Hungarian identity, Hungarians across the border often find it subject to derision or request for proof.

Although firmly and constantly concerned with the fate of the Hungarians outside the borders, the positions taken by Hungarian government nevertheless varied according to the party in power. In August 1992, Prime Minister József Antall said that he wished to be Prime Minister “emotionally as well as spiritually” for 15 million Hungarians, a figure that included the ethnic Hungarian populations in surrounding countries.⁵⁰ At the same time, Hungarian Foreign Minister Geza Jeszenszky asserted that his government could make no agreements or treaties with neighboring countries “over the heads” of the ethnic Hungarian minorities there.⁵¹ This government’s policy regarding Hungarians abroad was shaped according to Hungary’s foreign policy priorities: the Euro-Atlantic integration, the relations with neighboring countries, and the Hungarian national politics. During the Antall government, a legislative framework instituting minority local self-governance was introduced, setting a model for dealing with the internal ethnic and national minority issue. The Hungarian external minority problem was approached in terms of international norms of minority protection and human rights. This government established the principle, later come to

be known as the Antall doctrine, that Hungarians outside the borders should be consulted in any decision-making concerning issues of Hungarian national politics.⁵²

The socialist government of Prime Minister Gyula Horn that succeeded to power between 1994 and 1998 showed moderation and pragmatism in its approach to relations with Hungarians outside the borders. It stripped the issue of the historical and teleological connotations, subordinating it to the goal of European integration. Heeding Western powers' request to stability in the region, Hungary aimed at establishing good relations in the Carpathian Basin and concluded the negotiations with Slovakia and Romania for the bilateral basic treaties, signed in 1995 and 1996, respectively. External minorities were declined requests for greater guarantees of minority rights in their countries and the right to veto Hungary's signing the basic treaty with their host-countries.

The right-wing government led by the Alliance of Free Democrats (FIDESZ) of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán during 1998–2002 set on actively and energetically to promote new institutional forms for the relationship between Hungary and her external kin, culminating with the adoption of the *Act on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries*, discussed below. The Orbán government however was careful to imply that it was the external Hungarian minorities that led Hungary's policies in this respect.⁵³ Despite the populism of its national and nationalist policies, Viktor Orbán's party lost the elections of early 2002, mainly because of a negative economic vote penalizing the poor performance of the FIDESZ government.

The Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) candidate for the office of prime minister, Péter Medgyessy, declared soon after winning the elections, on the occasion of the meeting with the leaders of Hungarian organizations in neighboring countries on 8 May 2002, that his government will consider matters that concern them as part of the national agenda. He said that while constitutionally he will be the prime minister of 10 million Hungarians, he feels responsible for 15 million.⁵⁴ Surely, Medgyessy was thus delimiting his position from that of the former prime minister who had declared himself many times the prime minister of all 15 million Hungarians, insisting that "the border of the Hungarian nation extends as far as the Hungarian language is understood."⁵⁵ The new government pledged to continue the policy initiated by the former government, but in a more pragmatic manner, and Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány who succeeded in 2004 made this explicit during the debates over the referendum on double citizenship.

Double citizenship has been supported since mid 1990s by the World Federation of Hungarians (MVSZ) as the form through which the Hungarian state should institutionalize its relationship with the members of the Hungarian nation left outside the borders of Hungary.⁵⁶ Following a series of debates carried in the journal *Magyar Kisebbség*, the Transylvanian Society of MVSZ came out with the idea of the foreign-resident Hungarian citizenship (external citizenship), which would grant the right to travel to Hungary but not to vote or settle, which was adopted by the World Congress of Hungarians in May 2000.⁵⁷ In the summer of 2000, MVSZ framed a

law proposal concerning granting Hungarian citizenship to Hungarians outside the borders in the practical form of a Hungarian passport. This passport would have solved the problem of the visa requirements for traveling in the Schengen space, but would have not entitled to the full rights and obligations associated with proper citizenship. The project was enthusiastically supported by the Hungarian population in Romania and by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ), the ethnic Hungarian party in Romania. Despite this, many claims of juridical and political difficulties prevented the bill to enter the debate agenda of the Hungarian Parliament.⁵⁸

Meanwhile there emerged a new conception of the institutional shape for the relationship between the Hungarian state and the Hungarians living outside its borders. Eventually it was formulated as the *Act on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries LXII/2001*, and came to be known as the Status Law. The leading role in drafting the Status Law was played by the Hungarian Standing Conference (MAÉRT). This was established in 1999 by the Hungarian government, in order to meet the demand for regular and institutionalized relations between the Hungarian government and Hungarian communities living outside Hungary. MAÉRT comprises organizations of Hungarians abroad that are represented in the local or national democratically elected bodies in their host-countries, members of the parties represented in the Hungarian Parliament, and members of the Hungarian government. The idea of setting such a framework of discussion arose at the Hungarian–Hungarian summit in 1996, held under the socialist-liberal administration, but was realized only after the right-wing government led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had taken office. MAÉRT was granted a consultative role with respect to legislation affecting ethnic Hungarians outside Hungary's borders. Formally the Hungarian government acted at MAÉRT's request in proposing the law and its text was drafted and negotiated within six working committees of MAÉRT, where members of external minorities worked together with Hungarian ministry bureaucrats.

Following Article 6, Paragraph 3 of the Hungarian Constitution, which asserts that “the Republic of Hungary bears a sense of responsibility for what happens to Hungarians living outside of its borders and promotes the fostering of their relations with Hungary,” the Status Law provides facilities to ethnic Hungarians living in the neighboring countries, with the exception of Austria. These facilities are accorded on the territory of Hungary (discount transportation costs, free access to cultural institutions, work permit for a determined period of time, financial support for students and teachers who learn or teach in Hungarian) and on the territory of the host-state (the possibility to receive financial help upon request for families with at least two children, financial help for Hungarian organizations).

The law provides that ethnic Hungarians will receive a Certificate of Hungarian Nationality with photograph, and the non-Hungarian spouse and children of an ethnic Hungarian may receive a certificate for dependants, also with photograph, both valid for a period of five years. The certificate may be obtained following a

procedure that involves an organization in the host-country, considered representative for the Hungarian community in that country, which issues recommendations for applicants. The law was adopted by the Hungarian Parliament on 19 June 2001 and applied since 1 January 2002. Presently the law is applied in an altered form according to the provisions and recommendations of the Report of the Venice Commission (October 2001), the Memorandum of Understanding signed with Romania on 22 December 2001, and the Agreement Between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of Hungary, signed in Bucharest on 23 September 2003.⁵⁹

The law triggered a heated debate within the public and the political space in Hungary and in its neighboring countries, Romania in particular.⁶⁰ The academic and political stances ultimately formulated two main contending positions with respect to the understanding of the concepts of system of states, national identity, and nation: a “modern” understanding of the system of states based on principles of territoriality, sovereignty and citizenship, and a “post-modern” approach, allowing for multiple and diversified jurisdiction over a population.

The Hungarian policy-makers declare that the space and political community forged by MAÉRT and the Status Law are not forerunners of an alternative order to the present system of states and borders in the Carpathian Basin. Quite opposite, the bilateral relations regulated through the basic treaties signed with Slovakia (1995) and Romania (1996) which guarantee the present common borders and the multidimensional links established between Hungary and these two states provided the platform from which Hungary could move on building a different type of relationships with her kin across the border.⁶¹ Her approach implies notions of multiple identity, attenuated or shared sovereignty, and membership in multiple political communities, and allows the possibility to establish relationships between states and individuals based on other elements than citizenship and territoriality: language, nation, kin.⁶²

For the Romanian government, the relationship between Hungary and her external national minorities devised through the Status Law challenges the sovereignty of the host-state, its exclusive citizenship relationship with its own citizens, the territoriality principle, and the assumption of a single basis of loyalty and identity for the citizens of a state.⁶³ Romania maintains that the fundamental units of international law and international relations are territorial states. Citizenship constitutes the legal relationship between states and individuals, and defines the borders of the political community of a state—the source of its legitimacy and power. The Romanian government affirms clearly that “a person cannot have several identities. A person can have several citizenships but not dual identity.”⁶⁴ The Romanian government also considers that the declaration to belong to the Hungarian community (or the Hungarian nation as a whole) required by the Status Law cannot be considered a manifestation of the principle of free choice of national identity, as long as those who obtain the Certificate of Hungarian Nationality as a result of a recommendation based on such a declaration benefit of certain advantages, including social-economic

rights. The Romanian government believes that freedom of choice of national identity should be characterized by awareness of belonging to a national community. Moreover, “free choice does not suppose supplementary confirmation from any organization or authority.”⁶⁵

The European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) carried out a careful scrutiny of the law, and of the objections and arguments presented by the two states.⁶⁶ The Commission’s report insisted on the formula of the bilateral and multilateral treaties, intergovernmental agreements on specific issues, domestic legislation stipulating their implementation, permanent cooperation and work in mixed committees. Even though the Commission argues that “the emerging of new and original forms of minority protection, particularly by the kin-States, constitutes a positive trend insofar as they can contribute to the realization of this goal towards the satisfactorily solution of this key problem,” internationally acknowledging the role of kin-state, it considers that kin-states can create individualized rights for their co-ethnics only in certain conditions and to a certain extent. The Commission considers that states can adopt unilateral measures on the protection of their kin-minorities, irrespective of whether they live in neighboring or in other countries, upon the condition that the following principles are respected: territorial sovereignty of states, *pacta sunt servanda*, friendly relations amongst states, and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the prohibition of discrimination.

In what concerns the Status Law, the Commission accepted that privileges, facilities and rights may be granted to members of external minorities in their kin-state, but expressed doubts in what concerns granting them in the host-country, and forbade giving administrative, quasi-official prerogatives to non-governmental minority organizations registered in another country. It also required that the criteria used in order to grant facilities and rights on an ethnic basis should be regulated by law. The Commission expressed concern with the fact that Hungary extended the facilities and rights beyond the aim of preserving the Hungarian cultural identity (e.g. according to Article 10 Hungarian students in the host-state benefit of similar rights in Hungary as their fellow students in Hungary), thus favoring professional groups or functional communities.

While the Status Law seems to have nurtured more of a symbolic, emotional need of Hungarians across the borders to assert their Hungarian-ness,⁶⁷ double citizenship would have answered needs that were more practical. The advantages of holding Hungarian citizenship are obvious, as they are congruent with the advantages of belonging into the EU. While access to the EU labor market and the freedoms of movement are principal, there are other, no less important, advantages, such as the option to immigrate to Hungary, or the protection of the Hungarian state. MVSZ once again had the initiative of holding a referendum on granting double citizenship, and managed to gather all 200,000 signatures required to submit its proposal to vote. The enthusiasm and support it received from ethnic Hungarians abroad were surely fostered by the prospect of these

advantages, leaving national sentiment a secondary concern. The action targeted in particular the approximately 150,000 Hungarians living in Transcarpathia (Ukraine) and the approximately 300,000 Hungarians from Vojvodina (Serbia) who, as a consequence of Hungary's accession to the EU, are required visas to travel into their mother-country or to visit their relatives across the border.

Not surprisingly, Romania objected to the organization of the referendum. The Romanian political leaders interpreted the granting of double citizenship to ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania as a means to increase Hungarian government's influence over minority policies in the neighboring countries and the control of the Hungarian population in these states, infringing on their sovereignty. Reinforced by the need to secure the votes of the nationalist Greater Romania Party (PRM) in the second round of the presidential election on 12 December 2004, the Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Năstase, the candidate of the government Social Democratic Party (PSD) for presidency, criticized vigorously the referendum. He said that "the idea that citizenship can be granted to compact ethnic groups, the way one spreads chemical fertilizers over a field, is totally incompatible with the provisions of constitutional law (...) citizenship is granted to individuals."⁶⁸ He also invoked an agreement from 1979 between Romania and Hungary whose provisions interdicted double citizenship.⁶⁹ Moreover, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mircea Geoană, PSD candidate for the office of Prime Minister, sent a letter warning that any ethnic Hungarians who applied for Hungarian citizenship, were the referendum to pass, would be stripped of their Romanian citizenship.⁷⁰

The topic of the referendum also reflected the division within the Hungarian political space. The Civic Union, led by Viktor Orbán, placed itself on the side of the proposal and his rhetoric played on the nationalism card. Attacking the ruling party, which opposed the referendum, Orbán stated that the referendum would determine "for our descendants (...) what kind of Hungarians we were."⁷¹ Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány retorted against nationalism with Europeanism, insisting that Hungary should let go of her past and focus on the process of full European integration, and accused Orbán of cultivating nationalist populism. Forced however to defend the legitimacy of the referendum, Gyurcsány pointed out that Romania's constitution permitted dual citizenship and that approximately 300 Romanian citizens applied for Hungarian pensions each month.⁷² Hungarian Foreign Minister Ferenc Somogyi said that all countries had the sovereign right to choose whom they wanted to recognize as their own citizens. He was backed by the European Commission, which issued a statement on 6 December 2004 that "it was the full right of Hungary to have a referendum on citizenship."⁷³ At the same time, Gyurcsány urged the people not to vote on the referendum, bringing forward practical arguments that appealed to the Hungarian taxpayers. He estimated that 800,000 ethnic Hungarians might move to Hungary if the proposal passed, generating an additional USD 2.9 billion expenditures in welfare each year and thus impeding the improvement of the health services.⁷⁴

Institutional Choices: Too Many Yet Not Enough

When the referendum failed, Hungarians from Romania expressed their rage. If this was to be expected, then there were several accounts for it. They all epitomize the complex situation of a significant national minority (i.e. politically mobilized national minority), within a national (and nationalizing) Eastern European state, holding an external homeland.

The national politics of the post-communist Hungarian governments, between 1998 and 2000 particularly, and the activity of MVSZ created expectations and dispositions for the Hungarians abroad, through their discourse on nationhood and the unitary Hungarian nation, downplaying the relevance of territorial borders in a united Europe. The creation of MAÉRT involved and made political organizations of Hungarians abroad even more important in the politics of Hungary. While becoming a significant actor in the Romanian political life, UDMR, so far unchallenged by other political organizations in Romania, cannot be ignored by any parliamentarian party in Hungary.⁷⁵ Its vast success almost made UDMR gain an existence of its own, autonomous from its own electorate. UDMR is the dialogue partner of the Hungarian government, and as such, the political link between Hungarians in Romania and Hungary. In the 2004 general elections campaign, in his efforts to mobilize ethnic Hungarian voters, UDMR Chairman Béla Markó related the general elections in Romania to the referendum for double citizenship in Hungary. Declaring that Hungarians from Romania will take a huge decision in the 28 November 2004 elections, he said, "On 28 November, the referendum for double citizenship will take place here as well. We are tied together; separately we cannot be Hungarians. This is the lesson of the last fifteen or one hundred years for the whole Hungarian nation, including the Hungarians from Transylvania."⁷⁶ The issue of double citizenship might bear more consequence to the Hungarian state than to the Romanian state, economic costs of Hungarian immigration invoked by the Hungarian Prime Minister being left aside. For the political context, it is crucial whether Hungary has seven or ten million voters.⁷⁷

One can consider that Hungarians across the borders acquired some sort of dependency syndrome, in terms of an alternative space to carry on their existential strategies, whose key element is Hungarian citizenship as a means to get full access to the resources of this space. By the liberalization of the movement of persons, Hungarians from Romania have got enhanced access to the Hungarian economic and social space, doubling their social networks of economic, work, academic, and leisure relations.⁷⁸ This extraordinary chance, taking into account the discrepancy between the economic development of Romania and Hungary, and the faster Euro-integration of the latter, signified the supplementation and diversification of their economic and social opportunities. It however brought along a change in the fabric of the Hungarian community from Romania. Hungarians from Romania lost the certitude of the place and position that they had shared during the communist period. Incapable of identifying with the Romanian state and the Romanian political community, Hungarians were also

unpleasantly surprised to encounter difficulties in identifying with the Hungarian state and with the Hungarian political community. Moreover, the diversification of their existential strategies diminished the effectiveness of the mechanisms promoting the sentiment of unity and community among the Hungarians from Romania.

The permissive Romanian political framework burgeoning political ambitions of UDMR and traces of century old Hungarian revisionism brought about striving political projects for the Hungarian community in Romania. Thus, alongside political projects in the mother-country, the Hungarian minority from Romania has started to develop its own nation-building projects—of the Hungarian nation in Romania, independently of what goes on in Hungary.⁷⁹ The disagreement over contending views has lately fractured the Hungarian political community from Romania, segmenting the electorate of UDMR too.⁸⁰ According to the Romanian majority population, Hungarians are not fully members of the Romanian society as long as they care only about the problems of their minority, such as they are represented by UDMR, even though survey data constantly indicate that Hungarians are equally concerned by poverty, corruption, unemployment, health, like their Romanian fellow citizens.⁸¹ Neither the Romanian politicians, nor the Hungarian politicians from Romania, were able to reformulate the topic of the Hungarian minority other than in the old bipolar terms of integration/assimilation versus autonomy/separation. Hungarians did not succeed in convincing the Romanian population that they see the Romanian state as their state and share the interests of the political community of this state. Nor did they manage to shape a plausible formula for the institutional form desired for the Hungarian community in Romania.⁸²

The diversification of economic and social opportunities of Hungarians in Romania was accompanied by a diversification of the meanings associated with the position, place and concept of the “Hungarian.” The conflict between the practical possibility and the symbolic meaning of the same things was disturbing. Thus, the certificate of Hungarian nationality represented a symbolic form to assert belonging to the Hungarian nation, but at the same time, the Status Law restricted the access to the Hungarian labor market for the Hungarians in the neighboring countries. It also prompted the reduction of funds granted by Hungary to her external minorities. There is conflict in Hungary’s policies too. On the one hand, Hungary anticipates a serious demographic decline that can be dealt with least painfully and least costly by immigration of ethnic Hungarians from the neighboring countries. This was an anticipated effect of granting double citizenship, and even of the Status Law at that moment. On the other hand, the main rationale of the Status Law, as stated in the preamble of the law, was “to ensure that Hungarians living in neighboring countries form part of the Hungarian nation as a whole and to promote and preserve their well-being and awareness of national identity within their home country.” Keeping Hungarians on their birth territories serves the goal of the symbolic conservation of the “territorial” boundaries of the Hungarian nation, as they were in 1918.

In the vision of a de-territorialized nation, proposed by Hungary, Hungarians outside the borders should not be regarded as external minorities, but as communities

within the reach of their kin-state, to which it can get as easy as to its own political community. The practical elements of Hungary's politics may somehow change the sentiments and actions of the external members of the nation. But the daily routine and practical reasons of these people have their own logic. Transylvania was and continues to be populated, assumed and possessed, practically and symbolically, by Romanians and Hungarians equally, in parallel and perfectly symmetric socio-cultural spaces and mental representations.⁸³ The way Hungarians become aware of their nationhood and nation is marked by their everyday experiences, the local context, and the social, political and cultural structures of the host-state. Hungary and her population are only in a slight degree points of reference in the national identification of the Hungarians in Transylvania, and so are the Hungarian government's discourses of the nation. The homeland of the Transylvanian Hungarians is Romania, and this coexists unproblematically with the fact that they are Hungarians.⁸⁴ The awareness and pursuit of their Hungarian-ness, of their belonging to the Hungarian nation, increases with the level of education and degree of urbanization.⁸⁵ In the everyday life of Transylvanian Hungarians, nationality is secondary to social stratification or the economic and social-political context, for the structuring of social interaction and their existential strategies.

The reactions to the result of the referendum thus expressed the fact that Hungarians from Romania took for granted the support of the "Hungarian population" for double citizenship, as a manifestation of brotherly relations between Hungarians from Hungary and Hungarians across the borders. The unresponsiveness of the former represented a betrayal, raising the question of who were the "real" Hungarians and who constituted in fact the Hungarian nation. On the other hand, the reactions of Hungarians outside the borders presented a fine duplicity. By distancing themselves from the Hungarian citizens who voted against double citizenship, they conditioned brotherhood into nation by gestures that are measurable in costs for the Hungarian citizens. They wanted to benefit at once from both what the Romanian state provided, as a public good, and what the Hungarian nation provided, as a club, and were upset with both of them when they did not obtain the maximal package.⁸⁶

The essence of these reactions however stays in the changes in their situation after 1989, which they have not yet been able to fully internalize. The diversification and fragmentation of institutional and symbolic sources of claim, use and construction of Hungarian-ness make Hungarians from Romania experience institutional perplexity and existential discontent. The practice of negotiating the identity formula according to the context and the set of available resources, when there exist multiple institutions of and multiple discourses about the Hungarian nation, complicates and makes fluid the concept of national identity that had been unequivocal and clearly shaped during the communist period. This exercise in trying out conflicting institutional casts for the Hungarian identity is triggered and paradoxically maintained exactly by those political actors that should bring assurance, trust and reinforcement of their own identity. These are principally the Hungarian state with its policies

concerning the Hungarian minorities abroad, and the organizations of Hungarians in Romania, designing political projects for them. All of a sudden, Hungarians themselves have become of many types. The national homogenization achieved during the Ceaușescu regime produced homogeneity-as-unity of the Hungarians in Romania, but the diversification that became possible after 1989 endangered this unity, through its various contexts of defining what is nationality and the various ethno-cultural social and political spaces that are now available and accessible.⁸⁷

If there still are elements that function in favor of the integration and unity of the Hungarian minority in Romania, like the demographic stress or the vote in national elections, there is no doubt that the elements that work towards its disintegration are now much more important. And the most painful and the most confusing situation is that where the integrating element of the Hungarians in Romania is the one and the same that separates them from the Hungarians in Hungary, thus scattering the idea of the nation.

NOTES

1. National Election Office Hungary 2005, <http://www.valasztas.hu/en/08/8_0.html> (accessed 22 November 2005).
2. "Maghiarii dezamagiti dupa esecul referendumului privind dubla cetatenie," *Buletin Divers*, Vol. 45, No. 191, 9 December 2004, by Mediafax News Agency, <http://www.divers.ro/cgi-bin/buletin_ro.py?id=191#2437> (accessed 7 January 2006).
3. Personal communication.
4. "Maghiarii dezamagiti."
5. E.g. the advertisement of the "Turul" inn, published in Harghita Népe, 29 December 2004: "Kiadó 30-40 férőhelyes terem kosaras évszáróra, de csak igaz magyaroknak vagy románoknak, esetleg németeknek, végül, de nem utolsósorban más nemzetiségű rendes embereknek."
6. These surveys were designed and conducted by the author in collaboration with Horváth István and Marius Lazăr within the framework of the Research Center for Interethnic Relations (CCRIT) in Cluj-Napoca. See I. Culic *et al.*, *Radiografia opiniei publice maghiare din România* (Cluj-Napoca: CCRIT, 2004), I. Culic, I. Horváth and M. Lazăr, *Ethnobarometer: Interethnic Relations in Romania* (Cluj-Napoca: Research Center for Interethnic Relations, 2000); I. Culic *et al.*, *Carpathian Basin. Romanians and Hungarians in Transition. Mental Representations and Interethnic Relations in Transylvania* (Cluj-Napoca: CCRIT, 1998); L. Năstasă and L. Salat, eds, *Interethnic Relations in Post-Communist Romania* (Cluj-Napoca: Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, 2000).
7. C. A. Macartney, *Hungary. A Short History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962), <<http://mek.oszk.hu/02000/02086/02086.htm>> (accessed 7 January 2006).
8. Awarded by the Allies on practical reasons, in order to allow her access to her Northwestern territories. It was admitted that this involved a certain sacrifice of the strict ethnographic principle. C. A. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors. The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences 1919–1937* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 278.
9. E. Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania. Change in Transylvania* (Boulder, CO: Columbia University Press, East European Monographs, 1982), pp. 10, 21–22.

10. Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, p. 21.
11. See Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*; Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*; I. Livezeanu, *Cultură și naționalism în România Mare. 1918–1930* (București: Humanitas, 1998), originally published in English as I. Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
12. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, pp. 317–321; Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, p. 90.
13. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, pp. 293–298; Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, pp. 91–92.
14. Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, pp. 23, 59–65.
15. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 286.
16. Livezeanu, *Cultură și naționalism*, pp. 41–63, 157–224; Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, pp. 306–315.
17. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 306.
18. Livezeanu, *Cultură și naționalism*, pp. 260–269.
19. Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, pp. 80–86, 95–101.
20. See also the provisions of the Nationalities Status introduced on 6 February 1945.
21. Decree Law 629/1945 of 3 August 1945.
22. Redrawing the borders of the historical land of the Szecklers.
23. For the set up of RAM, its significance and consequences, see S. Bottoni, “The Creation of the Hungarian Autonomous Region in Romania (1952): Premises and Consequences,” *Regio Yearbook*, 2003, pp. 71–93.
24. F. Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului român*, 3rd revised edn (București: Editura univers enciclopedic, 2002), p. 463 asserts that one of the lessons learnt by Gheorghiu-Dej was the necessity of a proper balance between the ethnic structure of the power and of the population, as national minorities were over-represented in the communist leadership. For the break with Moscow see the article published in the party journal *Lupta de clasă*, Vol. 4, 1964, pp. 3–35, which asserted that “the differences between the peoples and countries will continue for a long time, even after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. (. . .) No party occupies a privileged position or a claim to occupy one, and no party can enforce its own line or approach on another party.”
25. For figures on the evolution of minority education in communist Romania, see Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, pp. 155–212.
26. According to N. Bárdi, “Hungary and the Hungarians Living Abroad: A Historical Outline,” *Regio Yearbook*, 2003, pp. 121–138, during the period 1968–1986 Hungary developed the ideology of the double loyalty—Hungarians are culturally linked to their national culture, and through citizenship to the culture of their host-country, and of the bridging role played by the national minorities in the national communist states. See pp. 124–126.
27. Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, p. 152.
28. The flight of citizens from Romania to Hungary increased from 6,500 in 1987 to 15,000 in 1988, to a rate of about 300 persons a week in 1989. The proportion of Romanians among the asylum-seekers in Hungary increased gradually to 25% in the last weeks of 1989. Data provided in D. Deletant, “România sub regimul comunist,” in Mihai Bărbulescu *et al.*, *Istoria României* (București: Editura enciclopedică, 1999), pp. 567–568.
29. The German minority in Romania was similarly affected. Taking into account the specific of their community and economic organization, the processes of nationalization of the industry, the collectivization of the agriculture, and the subordination of the churches led to the destruction of the bases of their existence as a community.

30. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
31. F. Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1969).
32. R. R. King, "Romania," in R. F. Staar, ed., *Yearbook on International Communist Affairs—1990* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1990).
33. J. Eyal and G. Smith, "Moldova and the Moldovans," in G. Smith, ed., *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Longman, 1996), p. 238.
34. The war of historiographies, whose main object of contention was the Dacian-Roman continuity in Transylvania versus its later colonization by Romanians migrated from the South of the Danube, peaked with the publication in 1986 of the *History of Transylvania*. See B. Köpeczi *et al.*, *Erdély története* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986).
35. Bárdi, "Hungary and the Hungarians," p. 127.
36. The reference to the kin-state continued to be a constant element of the community identity of Hungarians from Romania after 1989, a phenomenon amplified by the multiplication and diversification of the relations and exchanges between the Hungarian community in Transylvania and Hungary, through state or private institutions, or among individuals and social groups. A crucial element in the conception of their Hungarian-ness through reference to Hungary is undoubtedly the much better economic situation of Hungary compared to Romania. The many opportunities and advantages opened by the access to the labor market and social relations in Hungary make their identification with the Romanian state contextual and weak.
37. D. Ionescu, "Chronology of Hungarian Protests at Romanian Rural Resettlement Plans," in Radio Free Europe Research, *RAD Background Report*, No. 129 (Hungary), 1988, pp. 1–8.
38. L. Anania *et al.*, *Biserici osândite de Ceaușescu. București 1977–1989* (București: Editura Anastasia, 1995).
39. Triggered by criticism from both West and East the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva adopted on 9 March 1989, by 21 votes for to 7 against, a resolution calling for an inquiry into alleged human rights abuses in Romania, the first such investigation to be authorized in any country for five years. The Eastern bloc allies the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and East Germany abstained from voting, while Hungary joined the resolution's supporters. The resolution highlighted the rural systematization plan and the country's treatment of its ethnic minorities.
40. See the collection of documents by A. Andreescu, L. Năstasă and A. Varga, *Minoritățile etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Maghiarii din România (1945–1955)*, Vol. 1, (1956–1968), Vol. 2 (Cluj: Editura CRDE, 2003).
41. Illyés, *National Minorities in Romania*, pp. 55–70.
42. "Hungarians understand the communist period as one of a 'double repression': as individuals (be they Hungarians, Romanians or other) and as members of a community. The loss of the rights that were founded on the belonging to the Hungarian community was so painful because there was no other alternative to them than a better integration in the existing social structures (obviously dominated by Romanians). I believe that this is the source of Hungarians' permanent accusation of 'forced assimilation.' For example, the dissolution of the Szeklerland and the set up of districts was perceived by the Hungarian community as an essentially symbolic gesture asserting the domination of the majority over the minority, even though it had been part of the reorganization plan which affected the whole territory of the country." Communication from a Transylvanian Hungarian.
43. For an analysis of the activity of UDMR especially during 1996–2000, see N. Bárdi and Z. Kántor, "Az RMDSZ a romániai kormányban, 1996–2000," *Regio*, Vol. 4, 2000, pp. 150–185.

44. My inevitably incomplete readings of Hungarian historians, sociologists, or political analysts, whether born or not in Transylvania, revealed almost uniformly the lack of their availability to relate to Romanians and the institutions of the Romanian state other than in terms of a relation of domination, defined as anti-Hungarian attitude and action. See, for example, the book published in 1982 by Illyés in an American prestigious academic series, remarkable for the rigorous documentation and data provided, and its uniform interpretation in terms of Romanian anti-Hungarianism.
45. See data summarized by J. Tóth, "Pulling the Wool over Hungarians' Eyes," *Regio Yearbook*, 2002, p. 130.
46. The split labor market contains at least two groups of workers whose price of labor differs for the same work, or would differ if they did the same work. Price of labor refers to all costs born by the employer: wages, recruitment, transportation, room and board, education, health care, and costs of labor unrest. Ethnic antagonism first germinates in a labor market split along ethnic lines. See E. Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 37, 1972, pp. 547–559. In the case of Hungarian–Hungarian relations, the competition on the split labor market between local Hungarians and immigrant Hungarians from across the borders reshapes ethnicity so that both groups feel a differential in their Hungarian-ness.
47. See also J. Bodnar, "Assembling the Square: Social Transformation in Public Space and the Broken Image of the Second Economy in Postsocialist Budapest," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 57, No. 3, 1998, pp. 493, 499, 506.
48. According to the various surveys on the Hungarian population in Transylvania, Hungarians assign primarily the following characteristics to Romanians: religious, hypocrites, united, hostile, superstitious, backward, lazy. A great majority of them also agree that there are some things that should make them feel ashamed of being a Romanian citizen. See I. Culic *et al.*, *Ethnobarometer*.
49. Bodnar, "Assembling the Square," pp. 493–494.
50. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, "Premier Antall Assumes 'spiritual' Leadership of Hungarians Beyond the Borders", 22 August 1992, quoting Hungarian TV, 16 August 1992.
51. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, "Hungarian Foreign Minister on Signing Agreements with Neighbouring Countries," 22 August 1992, quoting Hungarian Radio, 18 August 1992.
52. N. Bárdi, "Hungary and the Hungarians Living Abroad: A Historical Outline," *Regio Yearbook*, 2003, p. 129.
53. B. Fowler, "Fuzzing Citizenship, Nationalising Political Space: A Framework for Interpreting the Hungarian 'Status Law' as a New Form of Kin-State Policy in Central and Eastern Europe" (Birmingham: Centre for Russian and East European Studies, European Research Institute, University of Birmingham, 2002), WP No. 40, p. 46.
54. "Future Hungarian Premier Meets Ethnic Hungarian Leaders," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Newslines*, Vol. 6, No. 86, 9 May 2002, <<http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/rferl/2002/02-05-09.rferl.html#53>> (accessed 25 January 2006).
55. V. Orbán, *Discourse*, held in Tököl, 10 March 2000. Available on the Hungarian Parliament website <<http://mkogy.hu>> (accessed 6 June 2003).
56. According to the second paragraph of the MVSZ charter, its main task is to exert pressure towards the idea that any ethnic Hungarian who requests Hungarian citizenship should be entitled to it by objective law.
57. "All-Hungarian Congress Proposes 'British Model' of Overseas Citizenship," *BBC Monitoring Service*, 23 May 2000.
58. Z. Kántor, "Legea statutului(1) și politica națională maghiară," *Provincia*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 2001, <<http://www.provincia.ro>> (accessed 13 January 2005).

59. For detailed analyses of the law and the disputes aroused by it, see Z. Kántor *et al.*, *The Hungarian Status Law: Nation Building and/or Minority Protection* (Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 2004).
60. See the debates in the bilingual journal *Provincia*, or Kántor *et al.*, *The Hungarian Status Law*.
61. Fowler, "Fuzzing Citizenship," p. 43.
62. See, for example: "In the future it won't be the territorially defined state that determines everything. Its role will remain important, but alongside it national communities, for example, will also strengthen. For me, in the future there won't be minorities, only communities. And I believe that our continent will become a community of communities." János Mártonyi, Hungarian Foreign Minister, on the Hungarian Status Law, *168 Óra*, 31 May 2001, or "The status law is a milestone in the process whereby Hungarian nation-policy shifts the emphasis from borders, which are becoming ever less significant in the uniting Europe, to people and their communities." Zsolt Németh, State Secretary for the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 April 2001, during the first day of parliamentary debates over the Status Law.
63. Government of Romania, *The Official Position of the Romanian Government on the Law on Hungarians Living in the Neighbouring Countries. Commentary Concerning the Position Document of the Hungarian Government on the Law on Hungarians Living in the Neighbouring Countries*, submitted to the Venice Commission, 2001.
64. Government of Romania, *The Official Position*, p. 6.
65. Government of Romania, *The Official Position*, p. 5.
66. Council of Europe, *Report on the Preferential Treatment of National Minorities by their Kin-State*, adopted by the Venice Commission at its 48th Plenary Meeting, Venice, 19–20 October 2001. See also Government of Romania, *The Official Position*, Government of Hungary, *Paper Containing the Position of the Hungarian Government in Relation to the Act on Hungarians Living in Neighbouring Countries*, submitted to the Venice Commission, 2001; A. Năstase *et al.*, *Protecting Minorities in the Future Europe. Between Political Interest and International Law* (Bucharest: RA Monitorul Oficial, 2001), Kántor *et al.*, *The Hungarian Status Law*.
67. See M. Stewart, "The Hungarian Status Law: A New European Form of Transnational Politics?," *Diaspora*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2003, pp. 67–102.
68. M. Stoica, "Năstase își ridică ungerii în cap: Dubla cetățenie, spulberată de PSD," *Evenimentul zilei*, 2 December 2004, <http://www.evz.ro/politica/?news_id=173124> (accessed 13 January 2006).
69. "Ungurii, cetățeni români mai devreme în UE," *Cotidianul*, Vol. XIV, No. 287, 4 December 2004, p. 4.
70. M. Stoica, "Marii diplomați Năstase și Geoană gafează monumental," *Evenimentul zilei*, 4 December 2004, <http://www.evz.ro/politica/?news_id=173297> (accessed 13 January 2006).
71. M. Weinstein, "Hungary's Referendum on Dual Citizenship: A Small Victory for Europeanism," *Power and Interest News Report*, 13 December 2004, <http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=245&language_id=> (accessed 13 January 2006).
72. Weinstein, "Hungary's Referendum."
73. Weinstein, "Hungary's Referendum."
74. Weinstein, "Hungary's Referendum." The Hungarian government initiated the program "Motherland" aimed to develop economically and socially the areas inhabited by ethnic Hungarians in the neighboring countries. See the website of the program <<http://www.szulofold.hu/>>.

75. UDMR was part of the 1996–2000 government coalition. For an evaluation of its performance, see Bárdi and Kántor, “Az RMDSZ a romániai kormányban.” During the 2000–2004 legislature, UDMR supported the governing Social Democratic Party (PSD) in Parliament, annually signing an agreement of cooperation. UDMR is at present one of the partners of the government coalition of the Justice and Truth Alliance (Alianța D.A.). While there are splinter organizations from or factions within UDMR competing for the ethnic Hungarian vote, so far only the Hungarian Civic Union (UCM) posed certain challenge to UDMR in the local elections, where UDMR also loses votes to Romanian parties (mainly to PSD and PNL), but was prevented from taking part in the national elections. According to survey data, more than 10% of the Hungarians voted for the PSD candidates in the 2004 local elections. Data come from the survey carried out by the Research Center for Interethnic Relations (CCRIT) in September 2004, commissioned by UDMR. Author’s database.
76. S. Silviu, “Marko Bela—Alegerile, referendum pentru UDMR,” *Jurnalul Național*, 24 November 2004, <http://www.jurnalul.ro/articol_22889/marko_bela_alegerile_referendum_pentru_udmr.html> (accessed 13 January 2006).
77. According to the 2002 Census and the estimates of the National Commission for Statistics, there are approximately 1.1 million ethnic Hungarians voters in Romania.
78. I. Culic, “Nationhood and Identity: Romanians and Hungarians in Transylvania,” in Trencsényi Balázs *et al.*, eds, *Nation-Building and Contested Identities. Romanian & Hungarian Case Studies* (Iași: Polirom & Budapest: Regio Books, 2001), pp. 241–242.
79. “Hungarians from Romania consider themselves as a political and social independent entity. The acknowledged or unacknowledged aim of this community is the constitution of an independent society organized according to the national principle,” Z. Kántor, “Cîteva probleme teoretice ale autodefinirii și autoorganizării,” *Provincia*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 2000, <<http://www.provincia.ro>, accessed> (accessed 15 December 2004). According to Kántor the Hungarian nation in Romania builds itself both politically (from top down, by means of the Hungarian political organizations) and socially (at the level of the civil society), by segregating their institutions from the Romanians’, and through projects of territorial segregation.
80. According to data from the survey carried out by the Research Center for Interethnic Relations (CCRIT) in September 2004, commissioned by UDMR, approximately 9% of Hungarian voters would have voted for PSD, 4% for USM, 4% for the National Liberal Party (PNL). Author’s database.
81. See Culic *et al.*, *Ethnobarometer*.
82. This is obvious even at the academic level in conclusions such as the following: “For the case of the parents who decide to send their children to Hungarian schools, the ethnically closed character of the micro-community relations functions, on one hand, as a conservation factor and plays an important role in preserving and forming the identity of the children, but we have to emphasize that exclusivity [...] represents in the same their condition.” A. Sorbán, “Copilul să studieze în limba română, ca să se poată afirma mai bine—Radiografia asimilării,” in *Alternative minoritare: Prezentarea problemelor minoritare în revista Magyar Kisebbség (1995–2000)* (Sfântu Gheorghe: Editura T3, 2002), p. 189. Or the following: “An important part of the political parties in Romania are not anti-Hungarian because this doctrine may bring success to the party, and not because this is the conviction of their members/leaders. This does not mean that there do not exist anti-Hungarian sentiments, but rather the fact that anti-Hungarianism plays a functional role in the Romanian political life.” M. Bakk, A. Horváth and L. Salat, “În prag de an 2000: politică și minoritate maghiară în România,” in *Alternative minoritare*, p. 319.

83. See, for example, the article by M. Lazăr, “Metastaza ostentației. Imagini în alb-negru din Clujul tricolor,” *IDEA. arts + society*, No. 15–16, 2003, pp. 125–134.
84. According to the survey conducted by the Research Center for Interethnic Relations (CCRIT) in 1997, 68% of the Transylvanian Hungarians consider Romania their homeland, 21% Transylvania, 3% the place where I live, 2% Hungary, and 5% did not answer. Author’s data.
85. See V. Veres, “A társadalmi struktúra etnikai sajátosságai a posztoszocialista Erdélyben,” *Erdélyi Társadalom*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2003, pp. 87–112.
86. Culic, “Nationhood and Identity,” p. 240.
87. “I wish it were like in the old times when everything was clear and all things were at their place, when we had no dilemmas and had peace.” Excerpt from a discussion with a Hungarian from Szeklerland.