

**Frontière et identité à l'époque moderne
dans l'espace méditerranéen et
en Europe centrale et orientale**

**Borders and Identity in the Modern Times
in the Mediterranean and
Central Eastern Europe**

Actes du colloque international d'histoire tenu
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sous la direction de
Beáta Varga – Andrea Kökény – László J. Nagy – Péter Ákos Ferwagner

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Introduction

Le Département d'Histoire Moderne et d'Études Méditerranéennes de l'Université de Szeged a célébré son 25^e anniversaire en 2022. Le profil du département peut être considéré comme spécial au sein de l'Institut d'Histoire de l'Université de Szeged : en plus de l'histoire moderne, il comprend l'enseignement et la recherche de la Méditerranée. En tant qu'un département s'occupant d'histoire globale, en plus d'une participation active à la vie universitaire nationale, il est essentiel de construire et de maintenir un vaste réseau scientifique international pour un travail efficace et réussi. Les enseignants du département sont membres de plusieurs sociétés scientifiques internationales. Entre autres, le programme Erasmus offre une excellente possibilité de construire des relations internationales bilatérales, ce qui permet le maintien et l'expansion des relations de partenariat déjà existantes, ainsi que la construction de nouveaux partenariats. À partir des années 1990, des relations pédagogiques et scientifiques très intenses se sont établies avec les universités françaises et italiennes, ainsi qu'avec l'Université de La Manouba de Tunis. Depuis le début des années 2000, le département a établi des relations Erasmus avec des partenaires maltais, chypriotes, slovaques, tchèques, espagnols et turcs (un total de 22 connexions Erasmus universitaires).

À l'occasion du 25^e anniversaire, les enseignants du département ont décidé de célébrer cet événement de haute importance en organisant un colloque international. Conformément au profil scientifique du département, ils ont choisi le rôle des frontières jouant dans la formation de l'identité en Europe centrale et orientale et dans la Méditerranée comme guide du colloque. L'objectif de la sélection des invités était que les participants reflètent le vaste réseau de contacts hongrois et internationaux du département. Heureusement, de nombreux collègues ont accepté l'invitation, ainsi des chercheurs et des chercheuses serbes, slovaques, polonais, français, italiens, maltais, égyptiens et tunisiens étaient présents aux côtés des Hongrois.

Si l'on regarde les titres des interventions, on constate que les participants ont abordé la question des frontières et de l'identité de différentes manières. C'est la diversité de ces approches qui a donné au colloque sa singularité et sa richesse thématique. En publiant ces actes de colloque, le département souhaite contribuer à la future réflexion commune des chercheurs scientifiques et, plus largement, au dialogue entre les cultures.

Enseignants du
Département d'Histoire Moderne et
d'Études Méditerranéennes ayant 25 ans
Szeged

Rivolte e rivoluzioni: imperi, borghesie e mercati nell'Età moderna

SALVATORE BARBAGALLO
UNIVERSITÀ DEL SALENTO

Il 29 maggio del 1453, gli ottomani espugnavano Costantinopoli, la capitale dell'Impero bizantino. Si trattò di un evento che produsse in Europa il radicamento e la diffusione di sentimenti inclini alla paura e all'incredulità: una sorta di sbigottimento verso civiltà e culture difforni da quella romano-barbarica. Il 6 aprile venne posto l'assedio; il 28 maggio il sultano Maometto II, contrariamente a quanto era avvenuto nel 1422, lanciò vittoriosamente le sue truppe all'assalto delle mura messe a protezione della città sul Bosforo.

Nel 1460, un oratore veneziano presso la corte di Carlo VII di Francia con altrettanta gravità riferiva della caduta di Costantinopoli:

Tacebo Templorum et sacraroum rerum profanationem, praetiosissimae supellectilis direptionem, tot tantarumque civium nefariam necem, et luctuosissimam stragem, ingenuarum, mulierum captivitatem. Haec enim pro magnitudine acerbitatis iam per orbem volitant et pene ore omnium decantatur, nec possem oratione inopi et ingenio rudi meo indignitatem consequi rei, in qua explicanda, vel ferare validi oratoris ingenium aresceret, et eloquentissimus quisquis elinguis videretur et infans. [...] Rex Turchus Imperatorem habere captum cupiens, ubi eum cecidisse percepit, corpus quaeritari curavit, quo in strage civium, ruinisque Urbis invento, atque recognito caput abscondi iussit, spiculo deinde infixum pompa adhibita circumferri per castra¹.

Sin dal 476, la caduta dell'Impero Romano d'Occidente aveva messo in luce la fragilità di quell'impianto militare. In quegli anni maturò la convinzione che occorresse provvedere alla strutturazione di un sistema produttivo e di un'organizzazione sociale che anteponesse l'obiettivo della difesa e della protezione rispetto a qualsiasi altra finalità. Non c'è da sorprendersi che questa priorità nel Medioevo si sia affermata come una necessità in un'Europa che, in quell'Età di mezzo, aveva scacciato i musulmani in Spagna, integrato i vichinghi e gli ungari e colonizzato numerosi territori grazie all'impegno dei cavalieri teutonici nella parte orientale del continente. Eppure, nonostante questi successi, quella condizione di equilibrio era minata da una forte instabilità poiché, come opportunamente annota Carlo Maria Cipolla, i regni del continente "erano rimasti su una precaria difensiva"².

¹ BAV, Urb. Lat. 815, ff. 283r-v. Ringrazio il dott. Giulio Merlani per avermi segnalato il documento.

² CIPOLLA, Carlo Maria (1999), *Vele e cannoni*, Il Mulino, Bologna, p. 7. Sull'argomento si veda anche: CAMERON, Rondo (1993), *Storia economica del mondo: dalla preistoria ad oggi*, Il Mulino, Bologna, p. 76.

Il successo della prima crociata non deve sorprenderci perché fu il risultato di una temporanea fiacchezza dell'apparato militare e della confusione che regnava nel mondo islamico. Essa, come in effetti ha annotato René Grousset, fu dovuta alla "vittoria della monarchia francese sull'anarchia musulmana"³. Ma allorquando gli eserciti islamici ritrovarono un nuovo assetto e una solidità del complesso militare, i regni europei dovettero abbandonare i territori conquistati. Nel 1100, mentre si andava affermando un indiscusso potenziamento dell'attività mercantile europea, da un punto di vista politico e dell'organizzazione militare l'Occidente presentava invece molte fragilità. D'altronde, i regni occidentali non seppero fronteggiare l'avanzata della cavalleria mongola nel 1241 a Wahlstatt⁴. Proprio in quell'anno, soltanto la scomparsa del Kahn Ogödäi, e la rinuncia da parte dei suoi successori a proseguire tale disegno⁵, salvò l'Europa da una conquista e da un assoggettamento all'impero mongolo. Ancora il 25 settembre 1396, la debolezza dei confini orientali si palesò quando gli eserciti ottomani, guidati da Bayezid I, inflissero una dura sconfitta all'eterogeneo contingente composto da inglesi, francesi e ungheresi guidati da Sigismondo di Lussemburgo e da Giovanni di Borgogna nella battaglia di Nicopoli. L'offensiva ottomana di quel sultano, questa volta, venne contenuta il 28 luglio del 1402 nello scontro avvenuto ad Ankara dove Tamerlano⁶, emiro dell'Impero timuride, ne ridimensionò l'irrefrenabile espansione⁷.

Questo lungo preambolo serve a spiegare come, nei caratteri imperiali del mondo occidentale, allignasse questo ambivalente sentimento che da un lato si fondava sulla consapevolezza di aver conseguito un'inedita solidità commerciale ma dall'altro pativa un'insicurezza di fondo che derivava da quella fragilità difensiva dei suoi eserciti: una condizione, quindi, che amplificava le paure o quelle risonanze di poter essere sottomessi *manu militari*.

Per fronteggiare questi pericoli, già dal VII secolo Carlo Martello dovette avviare un'importante riforma dell'esercito creando, in tal modo, una struttura che modificava tutta una serie di rapporti militari ma anche di assetti politici. Tali cambiamenti sancirono così la nascita di un modello che successivamente verrà individuato come il sistema feudale. Sul piano militare, l'introduzione della staffa (un'innovazione proveniente forse dall'Asia) aveva determinato il superamento della tattica bellica fondata sulla preponderanza della fanteria. Bisognava, pertanto, approntare un esercito incentrato sugli assalti della cavalleria.

Per sostenere un impianto bellico di tal fatta, occorreva individuare le risorse necessarie per assicurare il sostegno materiale, soprattutto in presenza di un'economia prevalentemente agricola, fondata sullo scambio dei prodotti, dove le transazioni monetarie erano abbastanza esigue e il sistema di prelievo centralizzato troppo oneroso. Questi problemi vennero superati legando il reddito prodotto dal sistema curtense – che già si andava strutturando sin

³ LEWIS, Bernard (1998), *Gli Arabi nella Storia*, Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari, pp. 159-162, che riprende GROUSSET, René (1934), *L'anarchie musulmane et la monarchie franque*, Plon, Paris.

⁴ La supremazia militare dei mongoli viene analizzata da SINOR, Denis (1956), "Les relations entre les Mongols et l'Europe jusqu'à la mort d'Arghoun et de Bela IV", *Cahiers d'Histoire mondiale*, 3, pp. 45-46.

⁵ Ivi, pp. 46 e 59-61.

⁶ Su Tamerlano si veda CARDINI, Franco (2007), *Tamerlano. Il principe delle steppe*, Allegato al n. 3 (122), marzo 2007 di "Medio Evo".

⁷ CIPOLLA, *Vele e cannoni*, cit., pp. 7-8.

dall'epoca romana attraverso la formazione di grosse unità agricole latifondiste pressoché autosufficienti – a una concessione oppure a un beneficio feudale. Attraverso il conferimento di tali benefici veniva, così, imposto l'obbligo del servizio militare, dell'amministrazione e della giustizia in un feudo.

In tal senso possiamo affermare, riprendendo Rondo Cameron, che “il sistema curtense ricevette la sua impronta ‘definitiva’ nei secoli VII e IX, durante le invasioni saracene, vichinghe e magiare, allorché divenne il fondamento economico del sistema feudale”⁸. Il feudalesimo si presentava con il suo impianto economico-sociale-militare come un organismo teso a massimizzare la difesa e la conquista di nuovi territori e il feudatario, in questo contesto, assumeva al tempo stesso il ruolo di imprenditore della signoria fondiaria, di guida di un gruppo e di protettore di un territorio. Con estrema chiarezza, Marc Bloch ha opportunamente sostenuto che

il regime feudale presupponeva la rigida soggezione economica di una gran moltitudine di umili ad alcuni potenti [...] esso estese e consolidò queste forme di sfruttamento dell'uomo da parte dell'uomo; e, congiungendo in inestricabile unità il diritto al reddito del suolo col diritto al comando, ne fece veramente la signoria, a profitto di un'oligarchia di prelati o di monaci, incaricati di render propizio il cielo, e a profitto, soprattutto, di un'oligarchia di guerrieri.

Inoltre, lo storico francese aggiungeva che

tra le caratteristiche distintive delle società feudali ci sia la quasi coincidenza tra la classe dei capi e una classe di guerrieri di professione – i quali servivano nella sola maniera che sembrasse allora efficace, cioè come cavalieri armati alla pesante – il più rapido degli esami comparativi basta a mostrarlo. Lo abbiamo visto: le società dove sopravvisse un contadiname armato o ignorarono l'organizzazione vassallatica, al pari di quella della signoria, o ne conobbero soltanto forme assai imperfette: così accadde, ad esempio, nella Scandinavia o nei regni del gruppo asturiano-leonese⁹.

Intanto, proprio intorno al X secolo un'importante ripresa demografica interessò l'Europa grazie a un'accelerazione dello sviluppo economico dell'agricoltura. Tale crescita venne sostenuta dalla diminuzione delle invasioni e delle epidemie, dal miglioramento delle condizioni climatiche e delle tecniche agrarie (il dissodamento e la bonifica di nuovi campi, il ricorso di sistemi a rotazione triennale, la costruzione di attrezzi più performanti, l'utilizzo degli animali), dall'ampliamento dei territori coltivati, dall'aumento dei raccolti e dalla disponibilità di un'abbondante quantità di manodopera dovuta a una tendenza demografica in ascesa. Ma sia la crescita demografica che quella dei prodotti agricoli fu “in parte il centro strategico della grande espansione che l'Europa conobbe dopo il 1000”¹⁰. In effetti, grazie a quelle eccedenze venne avviata “una forte espansione del mercato dei beni extra-agricoli” e di conseguenza un aumento del numero dei consumatori dovuto alla maggiore possibilità di spesa, soprattutto per i consumi dei ceti più ricchi.

⁸ CAMERON, *Storia economica del mondo: dalla preistoria ad oggi*, cit., pp. 76-77.

⁹ BLOCH, Marc (1977), *La società feudale*, Einaudi, Torino, p. 494.

¹⁰ GALASSO, Giuseppe (1996), *Storia d'Europa*, Vol. I, *Antichità e Medioevo*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, p. 245.

Quei secoli rappresentarono un punto di svolta benché – per alcuni storici – i presupposti che innescarono il processo appena descritto “non – siano – sempre chiari nella visione storica del fenomeno”, nondimeno a noi sembrano decisivi e da porre sullo stesso piano dell’impatto che ebbero la rivoluzione del neolitico e quella industriale per affermare una indubbia preminenza dell’Europa rispetto al mondo che la circondava. Quella crescita demografica e delle produzioni agricole – come ha giustamente annotato Giuseppe Galasso – costituirono i fondamenti per avviare un radicale mutamento nelle attività economiche, nei rapporti e nelle gerarchie sociali: “una trasformazione che non a torto e non per caso ha meritato la definizione di ‘rivoluzione urbana’ e di ‘rivoluzione commerciale’”¹¹. Quelle premesse determinarono una “straordinaria espansione dell’economia di scambio” e avviarono un sistema che si autoriproduceva con una forza espansiva imponente per le numerose ibridazioni, slanci in avanti, cambiamenti, mutamenti qualitativi che produsse e stimolò nel tempo attraverso un’inerzia pronta ad “accogliere e assimilare”¹².

La Città, dunque, si affacciava sul continente europeo come una realtà che, con modalità e forme variegate nel tempo e nello spazio, imprimeva il rafforzamento delle attività manifatturiere ma non ancora il predominio rispetto a un’economia agricola fondata sulla gestione della signoria rurale. Pertanto, possiamo rilevare come l’importanza che il fenomeno dell’urbanesimo assunse in quell’epoca fu certamente maggiore rispetto allo stato della crescita delle attività manifatturiere. Questa vitalità non si esprimeva soltanto nel campo delle attività economiche, ma interessò anche l’ambito morale e culturale, fu un fiorire di fermenti che crearono delle condizioni tese a innescare un processo d’incubazione “dello spirito laico moderno”¹³.

È difficile stabilire in maniera univoca come si svolse il processo di enucleazione cittadino; possiamo soltanto affermare che i centri urbani rappresentarono un traguardo e una svolta nella storia della civiltà europea. Nelle città vennero sperimentati non soltanto più moderni processi produttivi di manufatti ma anche nuove modalità per ravvivare le forme dello scambio: si pensi al rifiorire di un’economia monetaria, la diffusione delle fiere, all’uso delle lettere di cambio, a quella nuova forma di contabilità fondata sulla partita doppia¹⁴ che ha reso più intelligibili i risultati delle attività di produzione e scambio. A una società cittadina più dinamica che favoriva l’ascesa sociale si contrapponeva, dunque, l’immobilismo della campagna con il suo impianto sociale ed economico tradizionale e certamente meno innovativo.

Da queste premesse presero avvio i fondamenti necessari per la costruzione di un modello civile come quello occidentale che trasse una connotazione peculiare, sempre più fondata sulla collusione, contrapposizione e assimilazione di due modelli sociali caratterizzati da una forte radice identitaria rispettivamente rilevabile nella campagna feudale e nelle città mercantili dell’Europa moderna. Questa sovrapposizione di piani attraversò tutta la modernità, la cui società di antico regime rappresentò l’ultimo tentativo per tenere assieme e far convivere il dicotomico intreccio tra l’impianto feudale caratterizzato da una forte

¹¹ Ivi, p. 246.

¹² Ivi, p. 247.

¹³ Ivi, p. 248.

¹⁴ PACIOLI, Luca (1494), *Summa de arithmetica, geometria, proportioni et proportionalita*, Paganino Paganini da Brescia, Venezia.

propensione verso la militarizzazione e le spinte creative e innovative di un urbanesimo che inclinava verso la costruzione di una società capitalistica.

Nonostante questa sfavillante traccia dell'urbanizzazione con le sue splendide botteghe di artigiani, i preziosi manufatti e gli opulenti mercati cittadini – che danno però luogo a un flusso di transazioni esigue – la civiltà dell'Europa occidentale è ancora soggiogata da uno sfondo grigio scandito da ritmi lenti, abitudinari e ripetitivi propri dell'autoconsumo che marcano la durezza del mondo feudale. In ogni caso, questa flebile affermazione del nuovo sistema produttivo fondato sulle transazioni che avvengono attraverso "l'economia di mercato" rappresenterà "il tramite, la forza motrice, l'area limitata ma vitale da cui scaturiscono stimoli, energie, innovazioni, iniziative, nuove prospettive, movimenti di crescita e persino di progresso"¹⁵. E saranno questi dirompenti rivolgimenti della tecnica bellica a rendere sempre più obsoleta quell'organizzazione militare centrata sulle prestazioni e l'abilità del cavaliere feudatario. Infatti, con l'introduzione dell'artiglieria, delle armi da fuoco e dei mercenari assoldati nei quadrati (*tercios*) come fanti armati di picche, i costi della guerra diventeranno sempre più elevati.

Se ne accorse Luigi XII nel momento in cui si rivolse a Gian Giacomo Trivulzio per chiedergli con quali risorse intendesse conquistare il ducato di Milano e si sentì rispondere: "Graziosissimo re, tre cose sono necessarie: denaro, e poi denaro, e ancora denaro". Ma anche Carlo V acquisì la consapevolezza di quanto fossero importanti le risorse monetarie per il buon esito di una campagna di guerra. Nel 1548, in una lettera inviata al figlio Filippo, scriveva: "Si è sempre visto che, quando si ha bisogno di arruolare soldati in Germania, bisogna avere soldi alla mano; a questo prezzo non vi mancheranno mai"¹⁶. Con sagacia, Gabriel Ardant rimarca che

quando dovevano informare la Signoria sulle condizioni dei regni, sulla potenza e le loro prospettive, gli ambasciatori veneziani non mancavano di sottolineare la situazione finanziaria: sapevano che essa era il fondamento della grandezza.

L'ambasciatore veneto Marcantonio Giustinian nel 1535 rilevava che la migliore organizzazione dell'esercito francese dipendesse da una più felice condizione della sua economia che garantiva un reddito di oltre due milioni di scudi e, quindi, la possibilità di aumentare le tasse senza provocare l'insofferenza dei sudditi. Gli stessi rilievi vennero confermati nel 1546 da Marino Cavalli, nel 1554 da Jean Cappello e da Jean Michiel, mentre nel 1563 Marco Antonio Barbaro sostenne che la solidità economica della Francia poteva essere stimata attraverso la valutazione del suo reddito che ammontava a sei milioni di scudi mentre quello spagnolo raggiungeva appena cinque milioni¹⁷. Lo stesso Francesco I si rese conto di questo vantaggio e lo rese esplicito nel 1535 in una conversazione con Giustinian, allorquando con una certa solennità dichiarò:

¹⁵ BRAUDEL, Fernand (1988), *La dinamica del capitalismo*, Traduzione di Giuliana Gemelli, il Mulino, Bologna, p. 34.

¹⁶ PERRENOT, Antoine, Cardinal de Granvelle (1841-1852), *Papiers d'État du Cardinal Granvelle*, Impr. Royale, Paris, voll. 9. Qui ripresa da ARDANT, Gabriel (1981), *Storia della finanza mondiale*, Editori Riuniti, Roma, p. 80. Si vedano le *Relazione degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, a cura di SEGARIZZI, Arnaldo (1912-1916), Laterza, Bari, voll. 4.

¹⁷ ARDANT, *Storia della finanza mondiale*, cit., p. 80.

Signor ambasciatore, non posso negare che desidero vivamente vedere il turco fortissimo e pronto alla guerra: non per lui, che è un infedele mentre noi siamo cristiani, ma per indebolire la potenza dell'imperatore, per costringerlo a gravi spese, per rinfancare tutti gli altri governi contro un così grande nemico¹⁸.

Sul fronte opposto, Carlo V era ben consapevole delle difficoltà finanziarie che minavano la solidità politica del sistema imperiale spagnolo. Premeditando la sua abdicazione nelle istruzioni inviate al figlio il 18 gennaio 1548 da Augusta, confessava che uno dei più importanti motivi che lo aveva indotto a perseguire una politica improntata alla pace furono le precarie condizioni economiche e la povertà che imperversava nei suoi regni. Nella stessa missiva l'imperatore, riflettendo sulle condizioni del ducato di Milano e del regno di Napoli, scriveva:

un regime equo e moderato sarebbe l'ideale per sollevare questi due Stati dagli enormi oneri che hanno finora sopportato. Vi raccomando in modo particolarissimo questo punto e vi garantisco che a questo prezzo vi troverete sempre di fronte a una popolazione sottomessa e fedele¹⁹.

Sotto la spinta della crescita demografica e dei benefici apportati dalle scoperte geografiche che comportarono un allargamento degli orizzonti commerciali, la disponibilità di più ampie risorse minerarie di oro e argento, ma anche di prodotti agricoli come la patata e il mais che per il loro alto valore nutritivo riuscirono a contrastare le carestie, il tono dell'economia cinquecentesca si ravvivò.

Il Rinascimento, con le sue splendide e innovative rappresentazioni artistiche, con la riscoperta della classicità, con il fervore che interessava il dibattito teologico, filosofico e culturale, fu anche il risultato di una più ampia forma di benessere che si infiltrava e dilatava nella vita materiale di ciascun regno. L'individualismo, il profitto, la ricchezza, che permeavano i caratteri di un'economia manifatturiera e mercantile, andavano erodendo i valori su cui si reggeva la società costituita da ordini e dignità e fondata sulla nobiltà, la fedeltà e la devozione.

I principi di "ordine" e di "status" possono essere fatti risalire verso la seconda metà del XV secolo, epoca in cui andava declinando l'impianto dello stato feudale per via delle innovazioni introdotte nella conduzione della guerra. Essi furono resi saldi quando "i teorici ricavarono dal concetto di 'monarchia assoluta' ogni giustificazione delle scelte operate dal governo in favore della politica di potenza militare; specialmente nel corso della Guerra dei Trent'anni"²⁰. All'interno del progetto²¹ che sancirà la costruzione dello Stato moderno

¹⁸ *Relazione degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato*, cit., vol. I. Qui tratto da ARDANT, *Storia della finanza mondiale*, cit., p. 82.

¹⁹ PERRENOT, *Papiers d'État du Cardinal Granvelle*, cit., vol. 3. Ripreso da ARDANT, *Storia della finanza mondiale*, cit., p. 82.

²⁰ MOUSNIER, Roland (2002), *La Costituzione nello Stato assoluto. Diritto, società, istituzioni in Francia dal Cinquecento al Settecento*, Saggio introduttivo e cura di Francesco Di Donato, Napoli, p. 49.

²¹ Aurelio Musi osserva che "insomma tutta la vita politica dell'*ancien Régime* si risolveva o nella demiurgica unità statale realizzata dal sistema assolutistico o nella meccanica contrapposizione fra autonomia e accentramento.

Alla radice di queste posizioni era un equivoco sul modo di intendere la prassi, il funzionamento della vita statale nell'*ancien Régime*: l'attribuire, cioè, all'assolutismo i caratteri di un sistema piena-

emerse anche il tentativo di assimilare i nuovi ceti borghesi nei ranghi burocratici del sistema amministrativo che si va affermando secondo forme, modalità e peculiarità proprie dei regni europei. Naturalmente, l'intero impianto che si andava formulando doveva poggiare su una gerarchia socialmente riconosciuta come tale e su valori comuni. Quindi, se tra il XVI e il XVII secolo nell'ambito della divisione del lavoro sociale²² l'utilità delle attività militari era considerata più importante rispetto alle altre funzioni manifatturiere e mercantili, l'assegnazione degli status non poteva che aderire ancora ai criteri stabiliti da un *ethos* nobiliare²³.

L'attività del saper guerreggiare, nella reputazione popolare, veniva considerata come una virtù indispensabile per aspirare a uno status elevato. Era, infatti, opinione comune che un gentiluomo dovesse saper tirare di spada. Pertanto, se l'onore si difende con la spada, attraverso la destrezza dell'uso di quest'arma si acquista la gloria, la dignità e, dunque, la ricchezza. Ma come icasticamente commenta Roland Mousnier: "non è mai vero l'inverso"²⁴. Nel mese di agosto del 1671, a Port-Louis, in Bretagna, il conte Mondeverghe, viceré delle Indie, viene accusato dalla Compagnia delle Indie Orientali "d'haver dissimati 400mila franchi, e fatte altre concessioni". Il processo "si fabricava da Monsieur Hothman". Inverosimile che il conte potesse essere tradotto in carcere²⁵; e difatti, dopo pochi giorni viene annunciato che

Pare che lo scritto signor di Mondeverghe sarà trattato nel suo processo, più mitemente, che non s'attendeva, perche s'è dato ordine di non inoltrarsi d'avvantaggio nel giudizio contro di lui, sinche si sia esaminato sopra la condotta di Monsieur di la Bar, che l'accusa²⁶.

Trascorsi poco più di due mesi, arriva il responso secondo il quale

mente realizzato, con la sovranità indivisa tutta risolta nel «*rex legibus solutus*» che dal trono riusciva a governare e stringere in unico nesso le diverse realtà del suo regno, col monopolio statale della forza legittima, con la formazione e il perfezionamento degli eserciti professionali, con apparati burocratici e quadri diplomatici in sintonia con le direttive della sovranità. Alla storiografia contemporanea appare chiaro, invece, che l'assolutismo non può essere considerato un sistema politico, un regime, ma piuttosto un progetto, una tendenza. Esso può essere compreso solo come uno sforzo costante del potere per riuscire a trovare forme e momenti più idonei di organizzazione.

È cambiato anche il modo di intendere le stesse nozioni di «centro» e «periferia» proprio entro la vicenda dello Stato moderno. Appare sempre più chiaro che la sovranità indivisa esiste solo «di diritto», non «di fatto»; che il centro statale, per costituirsi come tale, ha dovuto mutuare moduli e forme organizzative dalla società civile; che non si è mai data, per tutti i secoli dell'*ancien Régime*, una contrapposizione meccanica Stato-Società. Ci si interroga sul ruolo che nella legittimazione dei centri giocano le dimensioni del giuridico e del religioso (il ruolo del sacro, l'influenza del modello verticale ecclesiastico di organizzazione del potere e del sapere, ecc.)", MUSI, Aurelio (1991), *Mezzogiorno spagnolo. La via napoletana allo Stato moderno*, Guida Editori, Napoli, pp. 60-61.

²² DURKHEIM, Émile (1989), *La divisione del lavoro sociale*, introduzione di Alessandro Pizzorno, Edizioni di Comunità, Milano.

²³ MOUSNIER, *La Costituzione nello Stato assoluto. Diritto, società, istituzioni in Francia dal Cinquecento al Settecento*, cit., pp. 50-51.

²⁴ Ivi, p. 52.

²⁵ A.A.V., *Segreteria di Stato, Avvisi*, vol. 41, Parigi 14 agosto 1671, ff. 66r-v.

²⁶ Ivi, Parigi 19 agosto 1671, f. 67r.

Il Signor di Mondeverghe prima Vicerè nell'Indie non solo è stato assolto dall'accusa fatta contro di lui, ma di più il Re ha ordinato alla Compagnia dell'Indie Orientali di pagarli tutti i suoi assegnamenti, mà anche che li sia data significattione riparativa di honore²⁷.

Come a dire che un nobile non si inquisisce mai perché vale più del processo l'onore dell'intera casta. L'onore, dunque, procura ricchezza ma, come osserva Mousnier, non è vero il contrario.

Da queste considerazioni possono essere desunti quei valori, in quanto espressione del senso comune, che presidiano l'allocatione degli status nella società di antico regime²⁸. Si tratta di requisiti fondati sulla nozione di ordine, su un'attitudine volta a svolgere la facoltà di comando, a esercitare un potere inteso come forma di dominio²⁹.

Ma le guerre che sconvolsero l'Europa del XV e XVI secolo ostacolarono la crescita e l'espansione dell'economia di mercato: se ne accorsero gli *arbitristas* preconizzando l'implosione del sistema imperiale spagnolo. Lo stesso avvenne per le Repubbliche delle Province Unite la cui guerra franco-olandese favorì l'ascesa dei ceti aristocratico-militari rispetto a quelli mercantili³⁰.

I sistemi imperiali del XVI e XVII secolo si mostrarono inadeguati ad assimilare gli impulsi che venivano dall'ampliamento dei mercati; ciò determinò una loro progressiva e lenta subalternità che si palesò prima con una crisi politica dei centri urbani³¹ e, successivamente, dalla seconda metà del Cinquecento alla fine del Seicento, con le rivolte in Olanda³², Portogallo³³, Napoli³⁴, Catalogna³⁵ e Messina³⁶. Le borghesie reclamavano, ormai, un

²⁷ Ivi, Parigi 23 ottobre 1671, ff. 82r-v.

²⁸ MOUSNIER, *La Costituzione nello Stato assoluto. Diritto, società, istituzioni in Francia dal Cinquecento al Settecento*, cit., pp. 50-51.

²⁹ Ivi, p. 52.

³⁰ BARBAGALLO, Salvatore (2020), *Commercio, potere e territorio. Gli imperi al tempo della pace di Nimega*, Biblion, Milano, pp. 15-16.

³¹ Secondo Braudel "non è necessario parlare di un fallimento della borghesia, a condizione di portarsi abbastanza avanti nel secolo XVII. La borghesia era legata alle città; ora, le città conobbero una serie di crisi politiche, come la rivolta dei *Comuneros* spagnuoli nel 1521, la caduta di Firenze nel 1530. Le libertà cittadine ne soffrirono molto. Poi vennero le crisi economiche; prima transitorie, poi nel XVII, persistenti, esse intaccano profondamente la prosperità della città. Tutto cambia, deve cambiare", BRAUDEL, Fernand (1986), *Civiltà e imperi nel Mediterraneo nell'Età di Filippo II*, Vol. II, Einaudi, Torino, pp. 766-767.

³² HUIZINGA, Johan (1967), *La civiltà olandese del Seicento*, Prefazione di Delio Cantimori, Einaudi, Torino, pp. 3-40.

³³ DORES COSTA, Fernando (2004), *A Guerra da Restauração, 1641-1668*, Livros Horizonte, Lisboa.

³⁴ GALASSO, Giuseppe (2006), *Storia del Regno di Napoli*, Vol. III, *Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo e austriaco (1622-1734)*, Utet, Torino, pp. 247-364; MUSI, Aurelio (2002), *La rivolta di Masaniello nella scena politica barocca*, con prefazione di Giuseppe Galasso, Guida, Napoli; D'ALESSIO, Silvana (2007), *Masaniello*, Salerno, Roma; VILLARI, Rosario (1980), *La rivolta antispagnola a Napoli. Le origini 1585-1647*, Laterza, Bari-Roma.

³⁵ ELLIOTT, Sir John Huxtable (1984), *The revolt of the Catalans. A Study in the Decline of Spain (1598-1640)*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

³⁶ RIBOT, Luis (2011), *La rivolta antispagnola di Messina. Cause e antecedenti (1591-1674)*, Traduzione di Stefano Morabito, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro), p. 9; BARBAGALLO, Salvatore

posto rivolto al sole che molto spesso le venne assegnato attraverso la vendita di uffici o l'acquisto di feudi e, riprendendo una felice espressione di Fernand Braudel, quel processo di nobilitazione determinò ciò che ora indichiamo come "il tradimento della borghesia"³⁷. Gli imperi che sopravvissero a quella palingenesi assunsero una connotazione sempre più tesa a stabilire una egemonia commerciale³⁸.

L'economia di un regno non è altro che uno "spazio politico" nel quale il governo modifica e predispone le sue opzioni rispetto agli obiettivi che intende intraprendere, i quali sono determinati dallo stato di necessità e dai mutamenti della vita materiale, per formare un'unità economica omogenea e dove ciascun settore si integra all'interno di una progettualità coerente. Seguendo questo indirizzo, dobbiamo osservare che i mutamenti nell'ambito dell'agricoltura, della politica, della finanza e dell'industria vanno di pari passo rispetto a quello della formazione di un "mercato nazionale"³⁹. L'Inghilterra è stato il solo regno che per primo è riuscito a plasmare l'intero territorio costruendo il mercato nazionale. Possiamo osservare che tale intento era stato già perseguito con successo dalle Repubbliche delle Sette Province Unite ma esse non possedevano un'area sufficientemente estesa per intraprendere un cambiamento dei processi produttivi nell'agricoltura necessari per sfamare la sua popolazione. Inoltre, l'élite mercantile olandese non si curava del "mercato interno" ma la loro principale attenzione era rivolta al "mercato estero". Il Regno francese, invece, scontava la sua organizzazione economica arretrata, una povertà diffusa, un territorio troppo esteso e impervio. Era un paese con un'area ampia e con collegamenti lenti. C'era una Francia proiettata verso il mare, che beneficiava di trasporti rapidi, efficienti e di un benessere economico diffuso, che intratteneva per lo più rapporti con l'estero e poche relazioni con l'interno. Ma al tempo stesso vi era anche una Francia interna, con una economia agricola, tradizionalista, reazionaria con una mentalità greve e ripiegata nell'ambito degli scambi che si effettuavano sui "mercati locali" poiché essa non aveva acquisito la consapevolezza delle opportunità economiche offerte dal mercato internazionale. All'interno di questo dualismo, il potere veniva amministrato dalla "Francia continentale", agraria nella capitale a Parigi, mentre il centro dei traffici commerciali si era polarizzato, fin dal 1451, a Lione⁴⁰.

Questo, in sintesi, fu il dramma della modernità. Esplicabile e ben rappresentato dal titolo del libro *La Grande trasformazione* dell'economista ungherese Karl Paul Polanyi. Una Grande trasformazione che, secondo il mio modesto parere, non è ascrivibile nell'ambito della Prima guerra mondiale bensì riconducibile e retrodataibile agli accadimenti che poi condussero alla Pace di Nimega⁴¹.

(2017), *La guerra di Messina 1674-1678*. "Chi protegge li ribelli d'altri principi, invita i propri a' ribellarsi", Guida, Napoli.

³⁷ BRAUDEL, *Civiltà e imperi nel Mediterraneo nell'Età di Filippo II*, cit., pp. 766-775.

³⁸ BARBAGALLO, *Commercio, potere e territorio. Gli imperi al tempo della pace di Nimega*, cit., pp. 15-16.

³⁹ BRAUDEL, *La dinamica del capitalismo*, cit., p. 90.

⁴⁰ Ivi, p. 91.

⁴¹ Sull'argomento si veda: BARBAGALLO, *Commercio, potere e territorio. Gli imperi al tempo della pace di Nimega*, cit.

The Concept of the Border in the Polish Consciousness and its Impact on the Culture and Identity of the Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Period

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to discuss the notion of the border in Polish consciousness as it was developed in the early modern period. The concept can be interpreted at three levels: spiritual, moral and political and can be seen in the light of linguistic, cultural, political and economic exchange between Poland and neighbouring countries. It can be argued that its very nature had both Christian and classical foundations and to a large extent was shaped by the policy and *modus operandi* of the Jesuit Order. The terms such as “*intemarium*”, “*bulwark of Christianity*” and “*borderlands*” were also strongly associated with the chivalric culture, in which not only a particular territory but also spiritual values and moral virtues were defended and promoted. These high ideas could not be put into action, and much less fulfilled, without the grounding paradigm which found its finest expression in the concept of *miles Christianus* – a personal role model patterned after Christ and the Church Triumphant, which combined the idea of spiritual struggle for the salvation of one’s soul with a physical combat waged in defence of Latin civilization against schismatics and Muslims.

Keywords: Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Eastern Europe, Jagiellonian Commonwealth, bulwark of Christianity

Introduction

From the earliest times, Poland, geographically situated in the basin of the Vistula River, established ties with the Ruthenian lands, especially with the western part of the former Kievan Principality. This was determined by the fact that its eastern part came under the Tatar domination for more than two centuries after the terrible defeat at the Kalka River in 1223.¹ It is worth recalling at this point that the principality of Moscow managed to free itself from this Mongol yoke only after 250 years and the traces of that oppression have remained both in mentality of the contemporary Russian society and in the political and legal doctrines of the country. A different cultural and political development was pursued

¹ Nossov, Konstantin (2016), “The ravage of Rus’,” *Medieval Warfare* 5/6, 36.

by that part of Rus, which at that time came under the protectorate of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland.²

Concluded in 1385, the union of Poland and Lithuania began a process of remarkable political, religious and social transformation in the vast areas of Eastern Europe in the spirit of medieval federalism. Indeed, those changes mostly affected the Ruthenian lands. Those were the territories where the culture and mentality of the Latin West made its presence felt. This influence manifested itself in the introduction of new legal systems and political institutions, it stimulated cultural development which found its expression not only in architecture and urbanization, but it completely transformed the old patterns of life, touching almost every aspect of it, including local customs, clothing and cuisine.³

The Kingdom of Poland bordered with the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary and the Moldavian Principality along the line of the Carpathian Mountains. Despite shared ethnic and language ties, Poland had disputes with Bohemia over the Silesian borderland. In the Middle Ages, these tensions on several occasions escalated into a long and bloody warfare. After the outbreak of the Hussite Revolution, the religious conflict added only fuel to fire and consolidated the causes of antagonism in the following century.⁴

The western border, where the Polish population coexisted with the German element was relatively peaceful. In that time, the Germans were represented by peaceful craftsmen and merchants living in towns and industrious, hard-working peasants living in the countryside. In the early modern era, the conflicts in the Polish–German borderland occurred rather rarely.⁵ The notable exceptions were the disputed territories of Pomerania and Prussia which were at that time under the control of the Teutonic Order. The problem with the Teutonic Knights was that they brought a foreign civilization from the Middle East to the Baltic coast, where the Order had been established, which went against Latin political and religious practice, which believed and taught that you can convert pagans by force. Killing, stealing property, raping and doing violence in the name of Christ was unacceptable to the Poles. It has been a part of Polish political culture to defend “the rights of nations”, criticize the “conversion by a sword”, and impose any ideologies including the religious once by force. It was believed that the state is not in a position to tell what people should think and believe in. In other words, the state could not violate the individual conscience.⁶

This justified and reasonable opposition to the activities of the Teutonic Order was not always understood in the Roman Curia. The Teutonic Knights used their overwhelming financial and political position to convince the pope’s officials to support them. In the Middle Ages, after each election of a new pope, Polish diplomacy had to explain the same problems again and again. That situation changed for the better for Poland only at the end of

² LORD HOWARD, Robert (1944–1947), “The Russo-Polish Boundary Problem,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 68, 410.

³ HALECKI, Oscar (1960), “Federalism in the History of East Central Europe,” *The Polish Review* 5, 5–19.

⁴ KOLBUSZEWSKI, Stanisław (1939), “Influences of Czech Culture in Poland in the Middle Ages,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 18/52, 155.

⁵ KNOLL, Paul (1992), “Economic and Political Institutions on the Polish–German Frontier in the Middle Ages: Action, Reaction, Interaction,” in BARTLETT, Robert – MACKAY, Angus (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 151–174.

⁶ WIELGUS, Stanisław (2022), “The Medieval Polish Doctrine of the Law of Nations. *Ius Gentium*,” *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 70/4, 27–60.

Middle Ages, after the victorious wars with the Teutonic Knights. The defeat of the Teutonic Knights by a united Polish–Lithuanian army in 1410 at the Battle of Grunwald put a stop to this expansion. However, it was not until the Polish victory in the Thirteen Years' War of 1454–1466 that the problem of the German threat from the Baltic Sea was resolved for nearly 200 years.⁷

It seems that Poland had the best relations with Hungary. What brought Poland and Hungary together was their immediate geographical proximity and historical concurrence of conversion to Latin Christianity which enabled both countries to enter the stage of European history.⁸ The alliance with Hungary played a key role in the foreign policy of the last Piasts and undoubtedly contributed to the reunification of the Polish Kingdom during the reign of Władysław Łokietek at the beginning of the 14th century. The rule of the Angevin dynasty in Poland brought about the transfer of Hungarian legal and political solutions to their new dominions as initiated by the Golden Bull of Andrew II. The first half of the 15th century saw a further tightening of these ties due to the increasing encroachment of the southern Hungarian borders by the Ottoman army. The assumption of the throne in Buda by Matthias Corvinus in 1458 led to the deterioration of good neighbourly relations and the Polish–Hungarian border became a typical case of the political rivalry.⁹ Peaceful relations were restored with the return to the Hungarian throne of the Jagiellonian dynasty in 1490, but their ascendancy did not prevent the collapse of the Kingdom of Hungary after the battle of Mohács in 1526. This tragedy partly resulted from the failure of Polish diplomacy, as Sigismund the Old pursued the northern policy at the expense of the Ottoman expansion, which not only posed a threat to Hungary but also to Christianity. Moreover, by entering the path of the so-called “political realism”, a manifestation of which was the secularization of the Teutonic Prussia in 1525, the king of Poland badly misjudged the real state of affairs and made the fateful decision which had far-reaching and disastrous consequences for the countries of Central Europe.¹⁰

We should remember that the Middle Ages were the period of deeply rooted tensions between the secular rulers and the Church. The most crucial one was the rivalry between the Popes and the German Emperors. In that conflict, Poland always stood by the Popes. From the perspective of Rome then, Poland was an element of religious stability in Europe. Moreover, Poland was a loyal ally of the Church promoted that loyalty to other countries within the sphere of her influence.¹¹ In the 14th century, it brought Lithuania, which controlled vast territories of Eastern Europe, into close connection with Rome, and in the 15th

⁷ MAKILLA, Dariusz (2021), “Poland after the Thirteen Years' War (1454–1466). The Scope of Political and Structural Changes,” *Studia Iuridica Lublinensia* 30, 205–217.

⁸ FELCZAK, Waław – FISCHINGER, Andrzej (1979), *Polska–Węgry, tysiąc lat przyjaźni*, Warszawa, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 12.

⁹ STRZYŻ, Piotr (2017), “A Firearms in Military Activities in the Borderland of Bohemia, Silesia and Lesser Poland in the Times of Matthias Corvinus,” *Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae* 30, 143–151.

¹⁰ NOWAKOWSKA, Natalia (2018), *King Sigismund of Poland and Martin Luther. The Reformation before Confessionalization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 64–65.

¹¹ BUCZEK, Daniel S. (1966), “Church, State and Holy See in Medieval Poland,” *Polish Review* 2/3, 62–66.

and 16th centuries, it promoted the Union between Catholic and Orthodox Churches, not only in the eastern territories but in the Balkans as well.¹²

It can be argued that Poland was the defender of the proper understanding of the nature of the western civilization. Its very nature had both Christian and classical foundations and to a large extent was shaped by the policy and *modus operandi* of the university-educated people and church elites in the late Middle Ages and early modern era. In Poland of the 16th and 17th centuries, the Jesuit order made the greatest contributions in this field, through the establishment of schools, colleges and universities, where these ideas were preached and promoted.¹³ It was then that concepts such “bulwark of Christianity”, “borderlands” and “intermarium” were formed. They were strongly associated with the chivalric culture, in which not only a particular territory but also spiritual values and moral virtues were defended and promoted. These high ideas could not be put into action, and much less fulfilled, without the grounding paradigm which found its finest expression in the concept of *miles Christianus* – a personal role model patterned after Christ and the Church Triumphant, which combined the idea of spiritual struggle for the salvation of one’s soul with a physical combat waged in defence of Latin civilization against schismatics and Muslims.¹⁴

It was then that the privileged position of the gentry in Polish language *szlachta*, which had been developing throughout the preceding centuries, was legally established. The most important concession had to do with money. The king agreed to reduce taxes to a small, merely symbolic payment. Since that time no extra taxation was possible without the agreement of the Polish gentry. Equally important was the participation of the nobles in political affairs. They could decide about all important internal and foreign affairs, both at local and central levels. In fact, those concessions were the origin of parliamentary government in Poland.¹⁵

The assumption of power in Poland by Jadwiga of Anjou decided that these freedoms extended far to the East with Hungarian help. A bishopric was founded in Vilnius. This gave birth to an ecclesiastical structure and charters of liberties patterned on the Polish model which were granted to the Lithuanian Church and nobility. At the same time, the queen conducted an expedition into the Ruthenian province. The whole region with Lwów as its capital accepted Polish sovereignty and in exchange was granted similar privileges.¹⁶ What we witness in Eastern Europe at that time is a great civilizational process, similar in

¹² SMÓLUCHA, Janusz (2022), “Poland as the Bastion of Christianity and the Issue of a Union with the Orthodox Church,” *Perspektywy Kultury* 36/1, 35–50.

¹³ RZEGOŃKA, Jolanta (2016), “Civic Education on Stage. Civic Values and Virtues in the Jesuit Schools of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth,” in MARYKS, Aleksander (ed.), *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ways of Proceeding within the Society of Jesus*, Boston: Brill, 41–61.

¹⁴ TAZBIR, Janusz (1977), “Poland and the concept of Europe in the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries,” *European Studies Review* 7, 29–45; LENART, Mirosław (2020), “Pojęcie granicy jako klucz hermeneutyczny myślenia o polskiej historii,” *Rocznik Filozoficzny Ignatianum* 26/1, 14.

¹⁵ TAZBIR, Janusz (1982), “Polish national consciousness in the 16th–18th centuries,” *Acta Poloniae Historica* 46, 47–72; GRZEŚKOWIAK-KRWAWICZ, Anna (2012), *Queen Liberty. The Concept of Freedom in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth*, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 3–24.

¹⁶ JANECEK, Andrzej (2002), “New authority, new property, new nobility. The foundation of noble estates in Red Ruthenia during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,” *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* 7, 77–125.

its scale to that one which accompanied the transformation of societies and cities in Poland due to Magdeburg law. This process introduced to Eastern Europe something which could be called a civil society rooted in the Mediterranean civilization. In this territory, a political mentality and culture began to form a type of Western republicanism, based on a theory derived from the Roman Republic. We can argue, that the process of the formation of civil society in Eastern Europe is strongly related to Polish history and political culture. People who belonged to that sphere of influence, be it Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Belarusians, and many others greatly benefited from it.¹⁷ At the same time, Moldova and Wallachia (nowadays parts of Romania) found themselves within the sphere of Polish and Hungarian influence and paid homage to the Polish and Hungarian King.¹⁸

It is important to emphasize that for a long time the University of Krakow was the most important scientific institution in the entire region. The role of the University in Krakow increased even more in Central and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 15th century. It was due to the Hussite revolution, which broke out in Bohemia, and which ideology began to be propagated at the University of Prague. The Hussites attacked traditional culture and science, and the people who did not agree with their ideas. They hated the people who thought differently. The Hussite government expelled many professors from Prague University and the students who supported them. Many of the expelled scholars and students from Germany, Silesia, Moravia, Hungary, and other nations went to Krakow. Since that time the role of the university in Krakow grew immeasurably as a center of tolerance and freedom.¹⁹

The union between Poland and Lithuania is a success story. We cannot talk now about all the positive aspects of it. But let me state the obvious. The union completely changed the map of Europe and strengthened both countries politically, culturally and economically. Not everybody in Europe was happy with that development. There should not be a surprise that Moscow, traditionally Polish and Lithuanian opponent, tried to interfere in the unifying process, but the biggest threat came on the part of the Germans in Prussia. The union existed even after the extinction of the Jagellonian dynasty in 1572 for more than two hundred years. From the beginning, it was a family of nations bringing together Poles, Lithuanians, and Ruthenians, into one political body. It was a safe haven for various peoples: Germans, Jews, Armenians, and even some of the Muslim Tatars. In terms of territory which was almost 1 million square kilometers, it was the biggest country in Europe. It stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. It attracted also smaller neighboring territories because of its freedom and political culture.²⁰ And at the height of its power, the members of the Jagellonian dynasty were kings of Bohemia and of Hungary. They ruled over the area which is now called "the Land Between the Seas" (in Latin *Intermarium*), limited by the Baltic, the

¹⁷ SNYDER, Timothy (2003), *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999*, New Haven – London Yale University Press, 17–25.

¹⁸ KACZKA, Mariusz Wiesław (2011), "The Gentry of the Polish–Ottoman Borderlands. The Case of the Moldavian–Polish Family of Turkuł/Turculeț," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 104, 129–150.

¹⁹ KRAS, Paweł (2002), "Polish–Czech Relations in the Hussite Period – Religious Aspects," in DAVID, Zdeněk V. – HOLETON, David R. (eds.), *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice*, Praha, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 177–192.

²⁰ DEMBKOWSKI, Harry E. (1982), *The Union of Lublin. Polish Federalism in the Golden Age*, New York, East European Monographs.

Adriatic and the Black Seas, and which was free from foreign oppression, be it German, Muscovite or Turkish.²¹

The Jagiellonian Commonwealth was based on the rule of law and the conviction that that rule should be protected by the growing participation of representatives of the constituent nations. It promoted a parliamentary form of government and its political and social system was rooted in the old, Latin culture. In the Commonwealth, which was also described as the Crowned Republic, not only clergy and scholars but almost all nobility used and benefited from the Latin language still in the 18th century. It enabled the leading elites and nobility from various nations and ethnic circles to communicate with one another more easily and efficiently. For a long time, “the Land Between the Seas” was a bulwark of Catholicism, favoring a reunion of the Orthodox population with Rome but without enforcing it. Serious internal, social and political problems began to appear with the Reformation. In the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth that Reformation grew out of the spirit of tolerance and the right to individual freedom. It is worth noting that the first Protestant country in the world was the Ducal Prussia established as a result of the secularization of the State of the Teutonic Order in 1525.²²

There is a great number, not only Polish historians, who believe that the consent to the secularization of the Teutonic Order in Prussia was one of the biggest mistakes of the Jagiellonian dynasty. Later, a fatal threat to the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth came from that side. To defend the Jagiellons, it is worth remembering the following exchange. Once King Sigismund Augustus was asked why he would not impose one religion on all citizens according to the principle of “*cuius regio eius religio*” (“Whose realm, his religion”), as it was the case in the West. He replied briefly: “I am not the King of the human conscience”.²³

Polish culture promoted also the rule of law and the Christian values, which served as the foundation of civic virtues. There was the saying in Poland that: *in Polonia lex est rex sed rex non est lex*. [In Poland the law is the king, but the king is not the law.]²⁴ The Polish people prided themselves on this principle not only because they embraced rulers but also because it respected the rationality of human existence. Hence the Crowned Republic. This rule differed in Poland from almost all of Europe, which was dominated at that time by the royal absolutism and the interest of the state.

Poland is one of those Central European nations which does not limit the concept of border to political and economic interests only. Equally important for the Poles are spiritual and intangible dimensions of the border, which are traditionally associated with the sense of honor, dignity and freedom. What united the former Commonwealth with its closest neighbors were both the common civilizational and cultural values and historical experiences that compelled them to help each other in case of danger. With Hungary or the Romanian prin-

²¹ CHODAKIEWICZ, Marek Jan (2012), *Intermarium. The Land Between the Black and Baltic Seas*, New Brunswick – London, Routledge, 46–59.

²² WANDYCZ, Piotr S. (1992), *The Price of Freedom. A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages*, London – New York, Routledge, 48–77; GRZEŚKOWIAK-KRWAWICZ, *Queen Liberty*, 25–40.

²³ STYCZEŃ, Tadeusz (1994), “Towards an ethos of right,” *Aletheia, an International Journal of Philosophy* 6, 243.

²⁴ KARABOWICZ, Anna (2023), “Anna Jagiellon (1523–1596),” in LONGCHAMPS DE BERIER, Franciszek – DOMINGO, Rafael (eds.), *Law and Christianity in Poland*, London – New York, Routledge, 91–93.

cialities, this social and political glue was manifested, among other things, in the unassailable conviction that Islam could only be restrained by force. With Lithuania and most of the inhabitants of the Ruthenian lands, the shared belief was that the greatest danger to their existence was both the Moscow's autocracy (*samoderżavie*) and the Prussian arrogance and haughtiness. The common set of values and similar legal systems were a mark of distinction not between the countries of Central Europe on one side and the Muslim Turkey, schismatic Moscow and, also, the Holy Roman Empire on the other. This sense of belonging to the same social world was naturally linked to the idea of maintaining and defending the border. Until recently, we lived in the borderless world where nothing was worth defending and fighting for except the open societies and nations. In this utopian world there was no need for any walls, borders and limites. However, history has come full circle again and it forces the countries of our region to take a clear stand about the civilizational and cultural borders, which they used to defend in the past.

Hungarian polymath Matthias Bel (1684–1749): crossing the boundaries of interpretation of his work in the modern Slovak historiography*

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Abstract

Matthias Bel, as one of the most influential Hungarian polymath, scholar, teacher and evangelical priest of the 18th century, was a big inspiration not only for Hungarian scholars and historiography, but also for the Slovak academic milieu. Following the example of leading European scholars, his rich scientific, pedagogical and spiritual career predestined him to compile a historical-geographical description of Hungary in the form of a multi-volume work called *Notitia Hungariae Novae historico-geographica*, which even more than two centuries after its creation offers a rich information base for a wide range of Hungarian and Slovak academics. The paper reflects Matthias Bel's work in the Slovak historiography of the second half of the 20th century and also new trends in research of his legacy at the beginning of the 21st century.

Keywords: Matthias Belius, polymath, scholar, Hungary, Slovak historiography, Modern Times

Matthias Bel¹ (1684–1749) was a Hungarian polymath, scholar, teacher and evangelical priest born in the village of Ocsóva,² who, in addition to theology, was interested in history, geography, philosophy, medicine and folk customs and traditions. He knew several languages; studied or worked in various Hungarian cities and beyond the borders of Hungary, and with his works and activities contributed to the development of science, education, culture, language and literature. After his death, he earned the nickname “the Great Ornament of Hungary” (*Magnum decus Hungariae*), which contemporary authors still call him in scholarly literature. His most valued scientific work, which was published during his

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¹ Latin: Matthias Belius; Hungarian: Bél Mátyás; Slovak: Matej Bel; German: Matthias Bel.

² Older Hungarian spelling in Kingdom of Hungary. Nowadays it's a village under the name Očová of the Zvolen District in the Region of Banská Bystrica, Slovakia.

active career, is considered to be a multi-volume work called *Notitia Hungariae Novae historico-geographica*.³

The work contains a valuable source base for the humanities, natural or even applied sciences. Researchers have been drawing on the work for several decades when designing their studies, monographs or complex translations. Attempts to analyze and interpret individual parts of the work are thus still alive today. In the individual volumes, there are references to important historical figures, Hungarian families, military clashes, historical events, religious conditions, and the occurrence of diseases and epidemics. Within selected localities, historical toponyms and their location, memorable architectural objects, lakes, rivers, streams, mineral waters, bridges, caves, minerals and animals are highlighted. There are also frequent references to the occurrence of forests, pastures, mountains, hills and fertile land cultivated in the mirror of the cultivation of agricultural crops and grain or the planting of fruit orchards and vineyards. Last but not least, the work also points to the multi-ethnic character of Hungary. The ethnic composition of the population is also depicted in the form of a description of folk customs and traditions, language, clothing, crafts or traditional way of life and livelihood. The work is thus a tiny probe into the way of life and behavior of the inhabitants not only in the urban but also in the rural environment. Four volumes published between 1735–1742 offer a description of the towns and villages of the districts falling under *Pozsony County*, *Turóc County*, *Zólyom County*, *Liptó County*, *Pest-Pilis-Solt County*, *Nógrád County*, *Bars County*, *Nyitra County* and *Hont County*.⁴

Although the work of Matthias Bel was sporadically used and appreciated for more than two centuries, a more striking effort to analyze Bel's life and work was noted from the perspective of Slovak historiography by a Slovak historian and employee of the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Ján Tibenský (1923–2012). His monographs and studies,⁵ especially from the 1980s, brought a systematic overview not only of Bel's scientific career, but also of the broader context of his life. This caused an appropriate im-

³ BELIUS, Matthias (1735–1742), *Notitia Hungariae Novae historico-geographica*, Tomus I–IV, Vienna, Typis Johannis Petri Van Ghelen.

⁴ In Latin (and Slovak) form: *Comitatus Posoniensis (Bratislavská stolica)*, *Comitatus Thurociensis (Turčianska stolica)*, *Comitatus Zoliensis (Zvolenská stolica)*, *Comitatus Liptoviensis (Liptovská stolica)*, *Comitatus Pestiensis et Pilisiensis et Soltensis (Peštiansko-Piliško-Šoltianska stolica)*, *Comitatus Nogradiensis (Novohradská stolica)*, *Comitatus Barsiensis (Tekovská stolica)*, *Comitatus Nitriensis (Nitrianska stolica)*, *Comitatus Hontiensis (Hontianska stolica)*.

⁵ TIBENSKÝ, Ján (1984), *Veľká ozdoba Uhorska. Dielo, život a doba Mateja Bela* [Great Ornament of Hungary. The work, life and times of Matej Bel], Bratislava, Tatran, 288 pp.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (1984), *Matej Bel. Život a dielo. Najslávnejší a najdokonalejší polyhistor, rodák očovský* [Matthias Bel. Life and work. The most famous and perfect polymath, a native of Očová], Bratislava, Osvetový ústav, 152 pp.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (ed.) (1984), *Matej Bel o svätajurskom víne* [Matthias Bel about the wine of Svätý Jur], Bratislava, Obzor, 75 pp.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (ed.) (1984), *Bratislava Mateja Bela* [Matthias Bel's Bratislava], Bratislava, Obzor, 225 pp.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (1987), *Doba život dielo* [Time, life, work], Bratislava, Veda, 411 pp.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (1977), "Matej Bel a apológia Trenčianskej stolice" [Matthias Bel and the apology of Trenčén County], *Historický časopis*, vol. 25, n° 2, 239–260.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (1984), "Matej Bel a jeho vzťah k Slovákom" [Matthias Bel and his relationship with Slovaks], *Historický časopis*, vol. 32, n° 2, 193–218.; TIBENSKÝ, Ján (1995), "Výskum života a diela Mateja Bela na širších a pevnejších základoch" [Research of the life and work of Matthias Bel on broader and firmer foundations], *Historický časopis*, vol. 43, n° 2, 230–245.

pulse, thanks to which many contemporary scientists, institutions or universities are also dedicated to analyzing Bel's legacy. Around the same time as Tibenský, the Slovak geographer and historian Ľubomír Viliam Prikryl (*1934) also published several studies based on his interdisciplinary approach. Prikryl focused on geographical elements contained in Bel's work.⁶ After the publication of monographs or partial studies on activities and works of Matthias Bel, translations of individual counties from Bel's *Notitia* gradually saw the light.⁷ At first, this process was not systematic, which changed thanks to an initiative of the Kysuce Museum in Čadca. By involving its employees in cooperation with the leading Slovak philologists and historians, the museum began a gradual process of publishing transcriptions and critical translations of particular counties in Slovak language. Academics from the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and the University of Trnava in Trnava assisted in this process,⁸ not to mention also the Hungarian historian and philologist Gergely Tóth (*1977).⁹

⁶ PRIKRYL, Ľubomír Viliam (1984), "Matej Bel a jaskyne na Slovensku (k 300. výročiu narodenia Mateja Bela)" [Matthias Bel and caves in Slovakia (on the 300th anniversary of Matej Bel's birth)], *Slovenský kras*, vol. 22, 5–24.; PRIKRYL, Ľubomír Viliam (1984), "Matej Bel ako geograf" [Matthias Bel as a geographer], *Geografický časopis*, vol. 36, n° 1, 3–18.; PRIKRYL, Ľubomír Viliam (1984), "Spolupracovníci Mateja Bela v oblasti geografie" [Collaborators of Matthias Bel in the field of geography], *Geografický časopis*, vol. 36, n° 1, 60–69.; PRIKRYL, Ľubomír Viliam (1985), "Matej Bel a vyučovanie zemepisu" [Matthias Bel and the teaching of geography], in KREJČOVÁ, Margita (ed.), *Pedagóg Matej Bel (1684–1749)* [Teacher Matthias Bel (1684–1749)], Bratislava, Slovenská pedagogická knižnica a Ústav školských informácií v Bratislave, 224–230.; PRIKRYL, Ľubomír Viliam (1994), "Prvky geografie obyvateľstva v diele Mateja Bela" [Elements of population geography in Matthias Bel's work], *Geografický časopis*, vol. 46, n° 1, 87–93.

⁷ BEL, Matej (1989), *Turčianska stolica* [Turóc County], translated by Július Sopko, introduction and notes by Richard Marsina, Martin, Osveta, 97 pp.; BEL, Matej (2000), *Užská stolica* [Ung County], translated by Martin Slaninka, Bratislava, Veda, 221 pp.; BEL, Matej (2000), *Zemplínska stolica* [Zemplén County], translated by Martin Slaninka, Bratislava, Veda, 91 pp.; BEL, Matej (2001), *Oravská stolica* [Árva County], translated by Jozef Minárik, Liptovský Mikuláš, Transoscius, 169 pp.

⁸ NAGY, Imrich – TURÓCI, Martin (eds.) (2013), *Matej Bel: Trenčianska stolica* [Matthias Bel; Trenčsén County], Čadca, Kysucké múzeum v Čadci, 448 pp.; TURÓCI, Martin – KORDOŠ, Jozef (eds.) (2014), *Matej Bel: Liptovská stolica* [Matthias Bel; Liptó County], Čadca, Kysucké múzeum v Čadci, 391 pp.; NAGY, Imrich – TÓTH, Gergely – TURÓCI, Martin (eds.) (2015), *Matej Bel: Oravská stolica* [Matthias Bel; Árva County], Čadca, Kysucké múzeum v Čadci, 430 pp.; JURÍKOVÁ, Erika – TURÓCI, Martin (eds.) (2016), *Matej Bel: Turčianska stolica* [Matthias Bel; Turóc County], Čadca, Kysucké múzeum v Čadci, 412 pp.; NAGY, Imrich – TURÓCI, Martin (eds.) (2017), *Matej Bel: Zvolenská stolica* [Matthias Bel; Zólyom County], Čadca, Kysucké múzeum v Čadci, 609 pp.; TURÓCI, Martin – KORDOŠ, Jozef (eds.) (2019), *Matej Bel: Tekovská stolica* [Matthias Bel; Bars County], Čadca, Kysucké múzeum v Čadci, 532 pp.

⁹ From his other works we can highlight, e. g.: TÓTH, Gergely (ed.) (2006), *Bél Mátyás kéziratai a pozsonyi evangélikus liceum könyvtárában (Katalógus) = Catalogus Manuscriptorum Matthiae Bél, quae in bibliotheca Lycei Evangelici Posoniensis asservantur*, Budapest, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár – Gondolat Kiadó, 159 pp.; TÓTH, Gergely (2012), "Theatrum Nobilitatis Hungaricae. Genealogické výskumy Mateja Bela, so zvláštnym zreteľom na rod Thurzo" [Theatrum Nobilitatis Hungaricae. Matthias Bel's genealogical research, with special reference to the Thurzo family], in LENGYELOVÁ, Tünde (ed.), *Thurzovci a ich historický význam* [The Thurzo family and their historical significance], Bratislava, Pro Historia, 203–215.; TÓTH, Gergely (2015), "Bél Mátyás besztercebányai diákjai" [Matthias Bel's students from Banská Bystrica], in *Humanista történetírás és neolatin irodá-*

Employee of the Matej Bel University, Imrich Nagy (*1972), has not only been active in translating individual counties, but he also produced a number of studies and monographs related to Bel's person.¹⁰ It was similar with the employee of Trnava University in Trnava, Erika Juríková (*1974).¹¹ Among the other Slovak universities whose employees devoted themselves to research related to Matthias Bel, we can also include the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra¹² and the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Peter Chrastina (*1969), whose scientific career has been linked to both aforementioned universities, and who is one of the pioneers of historical geography and environmental history in Slovakia, points out the possibilities and limits of interdisciplinary research regarding Bel's work. Therefore on one hand, there are his studies,¹³ and on the other hand,

lom a 15–18. századi Magyarországon [Humanist historiography and neo-Latin literature in Hungary in the 15th–18th centuries], Budapest, MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 135–170.

¹⁰ NAGY, Imrich (2012), "Dejiny slobodného kráľovského mesta Zvolen v pohľade Mateja Bela" [The history of the free royal city of Zvolen in the view of Matej Bel], in *Sambucus VIII: Práce z klasickej filológie, latinskej medievalistiky a neolatinistiky* [Sambucus VIII: Works from classical philology, Latin medieval studies and neo-Latin studies], Trnava – Kraków, FF TU v Trnave – Towarzystwo Słowaków w Polsce, 119–145.; NAGY, Imrich (2012), "Beckov vo Vedomostiach Mateja Bela" [Beckov in Matthias Bel's Knowledge], *Acta historica Neosoliensia*, vol. 15, n° 1–2, 345–358.; NAGY, Imrich (2010), "Matej Bel a Banská Bystrica" [Matthias Bel and Banská Bystrica], in SNOPOKOVÁ Blanka (ed.), *Významné osobnosti v dejinách Banskej Bystrice: Fenomén osobnosti vo výskume regionálnych dejín* [Significant personalities in the history of Banská Bystrica: The phenomenon of personality in regional history research], Banská Bystrica, Štátna vedecká knižnica, 93–104.; NAGY, Imrich (2017), "Cicavce vo Vedomostiach Mateja Bela" [Mammals in Matthias Bel's work Notitia Hungariae Novae], *Quaestiones rerum naturalium*, vol. 4, n° 2, 5–18.; NAGY, Imrich (2018), "Matej Bel ako historik antických dejín" [Matej Bel as a historian of ancient history], *Studia Historica Nitriensia*, vol. 22, n° 2, 474–485.; KOLLÁROVÁ, Ivona – NAGY, Imrich (2021), "Matej Bel: Osobnosť, médium a transfer ideí na prahu osvietenstva" [Matthias Bel: Personality, medium and transfer of ideas on the threshold of enlightenment], Bratislava, Literárne informačné centrum, 176 pp.

¹¹ JURÍKOVÁ Erika (2002), "Matej Bel o Trnave" [Matthias Bel about Trnava], *Auriga*, vol. 44, n° 1–2, 25–33.; JURÍKOVÁ Erika (2008), "Problémy prekladu a interpretácie Notícií Mateja Bela" [Problems of translation and interpretation of Matej Bel's Notitia], in *Sambucus III*, Trnava, FF TU v Trnave, 152–158.; JURÍKOVÁ Erika (2009), "Matthias Bel and Trnava: An Analysis of Latin Written Sources", *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 49, n° 2, 241–248.; JURÍKOVÁ Erika (2009), "Matthias Bel a Trnavská univerzita" [Matthias Bel and University of Trnava], in *Latina v cirkevnom a svetském školství* [Latin in church and secular education], Praha: Filosofický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, Kabinet pro klasická studia, 161–178.; JURÍKOVÁ Erika (2010), "Belove Vedomosti vo svetle súčasných poznatkov" [Bel's Knowledge in the light of current knowledge], in *Sambucus Supplementum II*, Trnava: FF TU v Trnave, 13–21.

¹² Here we can mention the works of Katarína Rácová: RÁCOVÁ, Katarína (2014), *Dejiny Nitrianskeho biskupstva v Belovom diele Notitia Hungariae Novae historico-geographica* [History of the Bishopric of Nitra in Bel's work Notitia Hungariae Novae historico-geographica], Bratislava, Historický ústav SAV, 299 pp.; RÁCOVÁ, Katarína (2012), *Trenčín pohľadom Mateja Bela* [Trenčín through the eyes of Matthias Bel], Nitra, UKF v Nitre, 168 pp.

¹³ CHRASTINA, Peter – RÁCOVÁ, Katarína (2015), "Mosty na území Nitrianskej stolice v prvej polovici 18. storočia podľa Notícií Mateja Bela (historicko-geografický prístup)" [Bridges on the territory of the Nyitra County in the first half of the 18th century according to Matthias Bel's Notes (historical-geographical approach)], *Studia Historica Nitriensia*, vol. 19, n° 1, 160–165.; CHRASTINA, Peter

there are lectures and seminars that he leads at the Department of Historical Sciences and Central European Studies of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Finally, there are his popularizing lectures and workshops where he presents his research to non-academic audiences.

The scientific grant with which Peter Chrastina covers his research at the Department of Historical Sciences and Central European Studies in Trnava, as well as his teaching methods, are also an inspiration for his younger colleagues. Since the complete translations of the Slovak counties in *Notitia* have still not been published, some of Chrastina's colleagues have tried to focus on specific topics¹⁴ or Bel's descriptions of cities and villages particularly from those counties that are yet to be translated into Slovak. It was a matter of course that the department also conducted bachelor and diploma courses on topics that were based on the knowledge contained in Bel's work. The students thus had to master various languages. In addition to teaching Latin and German, Hungarian language is also taught at the department for Slovak students. In connection with this, in 2020, a grammar textbook¹⁵ from which the students learn, was also published. Apart from grammar and historically focused texts and exercises intended for translation, the textbook also contains a chapter

(2017), "Dudváh, Blava a Holeška v Notíciách Nitrianskej stolice (historicko-geografický výskum a environmentálne dejiny)" [Dudváh, Blava and Holeška from Nyitra County in the Notitia (historical-geographical research and environmental history)], in *Forum Historiae: časopis a portál pre históriu a príbuzné spoločenské vedy* [Forum Historiae: a journal and portal for history and related social sciences], vol. 11, n° 1, 52–64.; CHRASTINA, Peter – RÁCOVÁ, Katarína – ŠIMÚNEK, Robert (2017), "Ore Minerals of the Nitra County according to Notitia Hungariae historico-geographica by Matthias Bel", *Revista Transilvania*, n° 4–5, 118–126.; CHRASTINA, Peter (2019), "Jaskyňa Čertova pec vo vedomostiach Nitrianskej stolice Mateja Bela" [The Čertova pec cave from Nyitra County in Knowledge of Matthias Bel], *Historická geografie*, vol. 45, n° 1, 139–154.; CHRASTINA, Peter – JURÍKOVÁ, Erika – TROJAN, Jakub (2021), "Blesková povodeň v Sobotišti v roku 1672 vo Vedomostiach M. Bela a ďalších písomných prameňoch" [Flash flood in Sobotište (1672) in the Matthias Bel's Notitia of the Nitra County and other written sources], *Studia Historica Nitriensia*, vol. 25, n° 2, 362–392.

¹⁴ JABLONSKÝ, Dávid – SOUČKOVÁ, Taťána (2022), "Obraz mesta Šahy v zrkadle vybraných historických a historicko-demografických prameňov" [The image of the town of Šahy in the mirror of selected historical and historical-demographic sources], *Populačné štúdie Slovenska*, vol. 15, n° 1, 5–20.; JABLONSKÝ, Dávid – SIPEKIOVÁ, Nicol (2020), "Charakteristika obcí modrokamenského slúžnovského okresu v zrkadle Belových Vedomostí" [Characteristics of the Villages of the Modrý Kameň District in the Mirror of Bel's Knowledge], in *Sambucus XIV: Práce z klasickej filológie, latinskej medievalistiky a neolatinistiky* [Sambucus XIV: Works from classical philology, Latin medieval studies and neo-Latin studies], Trnava, FF TU v Trnave, 69–98.; JABLONSKÝ, Dávid – SIPEKIOVÁ, Nicol (2021), "Zmienky o víne a vinohradníctve v obciach modrokamenského slúžnovského okresu nielen v zrkadle Belových Vedomostí" [Mentions of wine and viticulture in the villages of the Modrý Kameň district not only in the mirror of Bel's Knowledge], in KLOKNER, Tomáš (ed.), *Terra Vineatica: kultúra vinohradníctva a vína v stredoeurópskom priestore* [Terra Vineatica: the culture of viticulture and wine in the Central European area], Pezinok, Malokarpatské múzeum v Pezinku, 65–78.; SOUČKOVÁ, Taťána (2021), "Epidemie ve vybraných slovenských prekladech Vědomostí Matěje Bela" [Epidemics in the selected Slovak translations of Matthias Bel's Notitia], in *Historia Medicinae Slovaca VI*, Bratislava, LF UK v Bratislave, 56–67.

¹⁵ JABLONSKÝ, Dávid (2020), *Maďarčina pre historikov: základy gramatiky a prekladové texty pre študentov histórie* [Hungarian for Historians: Basic Grammar and Translation Texts for (Slovak) Students of History], Trnava, UCM v Trnave, 140 pp.

dedicated to Matthias Bel. In addition to gaining language and historical knowledge, this helps to develop empathy and tolerance towards other nations and ethnicities and supports interest in studying the history of Hungary not only from the perspective of its northern part, from which Slovakia broke away in the 20th century, but also in a complex understanding, that reflects multicultural and the multi-ethnic nature of the Kingdom of Hungary, its diversity and rich history.

In 2022, another textbook based on the work of Matthias Bel was published as part of the project activities at the Department of Historical Sciences and Central European Studies. The authors Peter Chrastina and Tat'ána Součková prepared a series of teaching texts devoted to the problems of the natural conditions of the Nyitra County and contextually also to other Hungarian Counties.¹⁶ The textbook is a collection of examples of work with Bel's texts. It provides concrete examples of the application of interdisciplinary approaches, primarily historical-geographical methodology. The textbook is a manifestation of the aforementioned potential of Bel's work, which can be extended by didactic level.

It is significant, that the work of Matthias Bel, who actively advocated for the continuous improvement of his pupils' education, is used in modern times exactly in accordance with Bel's didactic concept of linking history and geography.¹⁷ The use of Bel's texts in the university didactics of history is another example of crossing not only disciplinary boundaries. The work of the Hungarian scholar speaks to today's students in a language that both future historians and history teachers are learning to understand. Furthermore, by interpreting excerpts from *Notitia*, which describe the shape of the Baroque landscape and also its inhabitants, the students are learning to better comprehend today's cultural landscape as well. Bel's work thus becomes a bridge between the past times and the present.

In the courses offered at the Department of Historical Sciences and Central European Studies, the use of texts in teaching is the primary focus of Peter Chrastina, who incorporates *Notitia* texts into courses on historical geography, regional history or environmental history. These courses are attended both by students of single-subject history and by students of teacher training in history (history in combination with another subject).

An example of didactic and historical-methodological use of Bel's texts in university teaching is the model where, for example, in the course of historical geography or regional history the students are given a task of choosing one of the villages depicted by Bel in one of the volumes of *Notitia*. If the students choose a municipality that is close to them in some way (it may be their home municipality), the important didactic potential of the task, which is to activate the students and motivate them by arousing their interest and curiosity, is already fulfilled at this initial stage.¹⁸

¹⁶ CHRASTINA, Peter – SOUČKOVÁ, Tat'ána (2022), *Príroda a krajina Nitrianskej stolice v prvej polovici 18. storočia. Podľa Vedomostí M. Bela a vybraných autorov obdobia baroka* [Nature and landscape of the Nyitra County in the first half of the 18th century. According to M. Bel's *Vedomosti* and selected authors of the Baroque period], Trnava, FF UCM v Trnave, 115 pp.

¹⁷ KOLLÁROVÁ – NAGY, Mátěj Bel, 104.

¹⁸ SOUČKOVÁ, Tat'ána (2020), "Historická geografie v kontextu vysokoškolské výuky historie: príklad využití díla Vědomostí Matěje Bela" [Historical geography in the context of the didactics of history in undergraduate education: an example of use of Matthias Bel's work *Vedomosti*], *Slavonic Pedagogical Journal*, vol. 9, issue 1, 64–65.

However, the aim of the task is to compare Bel's description of the village with its current appearance. Thus, the students are directly acquainted with the historical source, but at the same time they must pay attention to heuristics, i.e. collecting other available sources and literature, typically monographs on a particular village, articles in journals, anthologies, etc. If necessary, the research can be supplemented by fieldwork, photographic documentation or ethnographic exploration. In this way, students are introduced to the basic methodological procedures of historical analysis and, in addition, they learn to work within a fixed time and organisational plan, where they have to schedule the individual phases of their research appropriately.¹⁹

The advantage of such tasks is, that their difficulty can be gradually increased as wider variety of both analysed sources and specialist literature can be involved. Students move on to analysing a larger number of settlements, for example within a particular micro-region, or to noticing more thoroughly the changes in the landscape, looking for traces of landscape elements that have already disappeared. All this is combined with a continuously developing knowledge of the Latin and Hungarian languages, for which they use, among other things, the above-mentioned Hungarian grammar textbook.²⁰

Moving on to the context of international cooperation based on the analysis of the work of Matthias Bel, it is important to mention the publication outputs that stretch beyond the borders of Central Europe. As a scholar from the Enlightenment era, Matthias Bel was part of a network of intellectuals who exchanged and discussed their knowledge through correspondence and sent each other their published works. This phenomenon has entered history under the name of the Republic of Lettres.²¹ Its reflection in the surviving Bel's correspondence has become another of the themes developed by the members of the Department of Historical Sciences and Central European Studies within their scientific research activities.

In this respect, Taťána Součková critically reviewed an analysis of Bel's correspondence with academics of the Russian St Petersburg Academy of Sciences carried out in the 1960s and 1970s. Součková has managed to expand the already known facts with new information, as she found the hitherto neglected context of the real impact of Bel's scientific work, whose fragments were quoted in Russian academic milieu by Bel's contemporaries, Gottlieb Siegfried Bayer (1694–1738) and Vasily Nikitich Tatishchev (1686–1750). Such spreading of Bel's legacy as a scholar was possible because of the then existing collaboration of European intellectuals that crossed mental, academic and geographical boundaries.²²

Matthias Bel's work is still alive and relevant today. It is not only the subject of extensive publishing and editorial activity in Slovakia and Hungary, but it is also a platform for interdisciplinary research and collaboration. Experts working on this topic are constantly searching for new dimensions and interpretations of Bel's *Notitia*. They are successfully implementing the outputs of projects in scientific monographs and articles, which also help in educating new generations of historians and history teachers. The work and legacy of

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ VAN MIERT, Dirk – HOTSON, Howard – WALLNIG, Thomas (2019), "What Was the Republic of Lettres?", in *Reassembling the Republic of Letters in the Digital Age*, Göttingen, Göttingen University Press, 30–31.; KOLLÁROVÁ – NAGY, Matej Bel, 13.

²² SOUČKOVÁ, Taťána (2022), "Matthias Bel and the Russian Academic Milieu during the Enlightenment", *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University, History*, vol. 67, issue 2, 467–479.

Matthias Bel, the eminent polymath, priest and educator, is timeless and universal, across the borders of the former Kingdom of Hungary and far beyond.

The identity-shaping/forming role of the border/peripheral region – “kraj” – in the formation of Cossacks in Ukraine

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Introduction

In the 14th and 16th centuries, in historical sources, East Slavic people living in the south-western territories of the Kievan Rus were called ‘Ruthenians’ or ‘Rus’ people, while their lands were referred to as ‘Ukrainian territory’. During this time period, the term ‘Ukraine’ (originating from the word ‘kraj’) referred to the borderlands lying at the southern border of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. The population of Ukraine is called a “*society set for self-defence*”¹ in historiography, moreover, Cossacks are evaluated as a phenomenon connected and conditioned to, and intertwined with the economic and social development of the Ukrainian border area.

Appearance of the term ‘Ukraine’

The term ‘Ukraine’ appeared in different contexts that vary in time and space, as over the centuries it was used to refer to geographic, political and ethnic areas as well. Regarding its meaning, *the term can designate a borderlands or an entire country*.²

The appearance of the term ‘Ukraine’ is associated with the age of the *Kievan Rus*: as early as the 10th century in Latin written sources the Kievan Rus was referred to as *Ruscia* (originating from the word ‘Rus’) or as *Ruthenia*. The inhabitants of this East Slavic State (late-9th century–1240) were called Ruthenians or Rus’ people (Rutheni-Russi).³ Here, it is important to highlight the fact that the demonym ‘Ukrainian’ appeared quite late. For a long time, it was the term ‘Little Russia’ that was in use, which originated from the expression ‘*Russia Minor*’⁴ making reference to the Principality of Halych and the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, territories occupied by the Polish in the 14th century. According to historical

¹ KUMKE, Carsten (1993), *Führer und Geführte bei den Zaporoger Kosaken Wiesbaden. Struktur und Geschichte kosakischer Verbände im polnisch-litauischen Grenzland (1550–1648)*, Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte, Band 49, Berlin – Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 61–63.

² Thanks to the Ukrainian People’s Republic, Ukraine was first considered a country or state from 1917 to 1921. After that, the term ‘Ukraine’ would recover this meaning in 1991 when the sovereign Ukrainian state was founded.

³ FONT, Márta (2001), “Az Árpádok országa és az „orosz kapun” túli szomszédjai,” *Tiszatáj* (55) 11. 71. (71–78.)

⁴ Русина, О. В. (1998), *Україна під татарами і Литвою*. Київ, Видавничий дім «Альтернативи», 274.

sources, from the 12th century, the term ‘Ukrainian’ was used to refer to the border areas along the middle course of the Dnieper River, lying between the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia and the steppes.

After the partition and the dissolution of the Kievan Rus, new administrative and political successor states, called principalities emerged. Their names often included the term ‘Rus’ to indicate their common origin.⁵ In the south-western territories of the former Kievan Rus, the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia became the most significant successor state. After the breakup of the Golden Horde from the 1340s onwards the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania started to compete with each other to obtain the territories that once belonged to the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia. By 1349, the Polish had seized Galicia and Western Volhynia, while the eastern territories of today’s Ukraine (except for Western Volhynia) had become part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Claiming that he had the right to inherit the Kievan Rus, Gediminas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania (1316–1341), took control of all Volhynia gradually. His successor, Algirdas (1341–1377), incorporated the Principalities of Chernigov, Pereyaslavl and Kiev into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The idea of reuniting the territories of the former Kievan Rus was proposed as early as the reign of Algirdas who had the intention to annex the ‘entire Rus to Lithuania’.⁶

During the age of the ‘Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Rus’ (1340–1385), the East Slavic population living in the south-western territories of the former Kievan Rus – present-day Ukraine – was still called ‘Ruthenians’ or ‘border people’ (*ukrainnije ljudi*).⁷ The area where they lived, comprising the borderlands near the steppe, was referred to as ‘Ukrainian’ land.⁸

As a result of the *Union of Krewo of 1385*, a personal union was established including the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This union meant the end of the ‘Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Rus’, which ensured favourable conditions for the Ukrainian territories and the people living there. As early as the 16th century, in Lithuanian written sources, ‘Ukraina’ was used as a proper noun: the borderlands of Kiev, Volhynia and Podolia was designated with this term.

At the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, the term ‘Ukraine’ acquired a narrower meaning: it did not mean borderlands in general anymore; but it stood for a specific geographic unit, lying along the middle course of the Dnieper River, that is, the central regions of present-day Ukraine. By this time, in Polish written sources, the word ‘Ukraine’ had been used as a proper noun: e. g. “villages and towns in Ukraine”, “Kievan Ukraine”, etc. The population living in this area was referred to as ‘Ukrainians’; however, this did not make reference to an ethnic group, but it was a geographic and administrative designation.

According to the *Union of Lublin*⁹, signed on 1 July 1569, the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became united in a single state, called the Polish–Lithuanian

⁵ E. g. Principality of Halychian Rus’, Vladimir-Suzdalian Rus’.

⁶ Supposedly, by the expression ‘entire Rus’, Algirdas referred to those territories of the Kievan Rus that were found between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the southern steppes.

⁷ ДОВНАР-ЗАПОЛЬСКИЙ, М. В. (1899), *Акты Литовско-русского государства*, Вып. 1, Москва, Университетская типография, 229.

⁸ The Ukrainian territories were often called ‘South-Western Rus’ as well.

⁹ KUTRZEBA, Stanisław – SEMKOWICZ, Władysław (eds.) (1932), *Akta uniji Polski z Litwą, 1385–1791*, Kraków, Polska Akademia Umiejętności – Towarzystwo naukowe warszawskie, 414.

Commonwealth (Rzeczpospolita). As a consequence, Lithuania lost its rights of possession over nearly every 'Ukrainian' territory.¹⁰ This meant that almost every territory¹¹ inhabited by Rus' people/Ruthenians became part of the Polish state. The relatively tolerant political methods of Lithuanian rulers regarding religions and ethnic groups were replaced by strict measures taken by the Polish leaders which aimed to foster the expansion of Catholicism as well as Polish culture and language.

According to the official documents of the era, besides the titles of 'King of Poland' and the 'Grand Duke of Lithuania', the monarchs also held the title of 'Grand Prince of Rus'.¹² Stephen Báthory was the first Polish king to use the term 'Ukraine' as a synonym of 'Rus' territories.

On 14 June 1596, Sigismund III declared the *Union of Brest* to preserve the unity of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.¹³ At this time, the country had two official Churches, the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches. According to this union, a third Church, the Ruthenian Uniate or Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, was established.¹⁴ The religious conflict was further deepened by the fact that after 1596 the Orthodox Church was outlawed in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which meant that its believers lost their political rights. Sigismund III with this decree ultimately contributed to the perpetuation of Cossack uprisings under the slogan of protecting the Orthodox religion, which resulted in the Rzeczpospolita losing Ukraine in the middle of the 17th century.

The term 'Ukraine' had been widely used by the beginning of the 17th century to refer to the south-western borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, that is, this term had acquired a more specific meaning: it did not comprise all the borderlands, but a concrete geographical unit that lied along the middle course of the Dnieper River, in other words, the central regions of present-day Ukraine.¹⁵

One of the most important travelogues written about Ukraine in the 17th century is associated with *Guillaume Levasseur De Beauplan*, a French military engineer, architect, cartographer and writer.¹⁶ He was the first person to write about Ukraine as an independent

¹⁰ After taking control of Halych and Western Volhynia in 1387 and Western Podolia in 1430, the Kingdom of Poland, after 1569, extended its authority over entire Podolia, Volhynia and Kiev.

¹¹ The Zakarpattia Oblast belonged to Hungary for a long time. After the Treaty of Trianon (1920), it became part of Czechoslovakia.

¹² *Архив Юго-западной России, издаваемый временной комиссией для разбора древних актов*, (Архив ЮЗР) Т. 1, Киев, Университетская типография, 1859, 359.

¹³ PELESZ, Julian (1881), *Geschichte der Union der rutenischen Kirche mit Rom*, Band II, Wien, Mechitharisten-Buchdruckerei, 23.

¹⁴ The Greek Catholic Church could still hold its masses in Old Slavonic, but they had to accept Roman Catholic dogmas and the Pope as the head of their Church, meaning that they would depend directly on the Vatican.

¹⁵ The Polish sources of this period used the word 'Ukraine' as a proper noun. The population living in this area was referred to as 'Ukrainians'; however, this still did not stand for an ethnic group, but a geographic and administrative unit. That is to say, a Ukrainian ethnic group did not exist; the East Slavic people living within the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were still called 'Rus' people' or 'Ruthenians'.

¹⁶ LEVASSEUR DE BEAUPLAN, Guillaume (1650), *Description d'Ukraine qui sont plusieurs provinces du royaume de Pologne contenues depuis les confins de la Moscouie, jusques aux limites de la Tran-*

geographic and political unit that had different environmental, economic and cultural characteristics than the Polish and Lithuanian territories.¹⁷ In the French and English versions published in 1648, he called the region ‘Wild Fields’; however, in the versions published in 1650, he used the word ‘Ukraine’ instead.¹⁸ Interestingly, the borderlines of Ukraine on Beauplan’s maps almost perfectly corresponded to those of present-day Ukraine. Moreover, on later maps, the term ‘Ukraine’ did not appear. The Ukrainian territories under Russian control from the mid-17th century were referred to as ‘Russia Minor’. The French traveller did not only ‘discover’ and put Ukraine on the map of Europe, but he believed that *Ukraine – the border region – was the country of the Cossacks*.¹⁹

From 1648, territories under the control of the Zaporizhian Host²⁰ were called ‘Ukraine’, that is, the term was not used to refer to the borderlands anymore. However, this was not an official name. From 1654, the administration of the Hetmanate – under Russian protectorate – occasionally used the term ‘Ukraine’ as the synonym of Hetmanate or Zaporizhian Host.²¹ In 1667, as a result of the Treaty of Andrusovo,²² Ukrainian regions along the Dnieper River were divided between Russia and the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Following the truce, the term ‘Transdníeper’ (beyond the Dnieper River) was used in official documents to refer to the Ukrainian territories. Within the Hetmanate, the terms Right-bank and Left-bank Ukraine appeared only in the 17th and 18th centuries, when the expanding Russian state gradually conquered the Eastern European territories under Polish control. This process was ended in 1795 by the partition of Poland. *This means that Right-bank and Left-bank Ukraine existed for no more than 200 years; however, their marks have been preserved until these days.*

The Ukrainian territories annexed to Russia in 1654 were officially called Hetmanate or Army of Zaporizhia, whereas, from the 18th century, they were referred to as Little Russia. The term ‘Ukraine’ never appeared in this context. In 1764, Catherine II abolished the Hetmanate, replacing it with provinces. From this moment, the terms ‘Ukraine’ and ‘Little Russia’ were barely used.

silvanie, ensemble leurs mœurs, façons de vivre et de faire la guerre, Rouen, chez Jacques Cailloué, dans la cour du palais.

¹⁷ The French scientist was also a pioneer regarding the fact that he included detailed maps about Ukraine in his travelogue entitled literally putting the ‘Terra Incognita’ or the ‘Wild Fields’, that is, the southern borderlands of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth on the map of Europe.

¹⁸ In the Russian translation of Beauplan’s book, the expression ‘South Russia’ is used instead of Ukraine.

¹⁹ ЛЯСКОРОНСКИЙ, В. Г. (1901), *Гийом Левассер де Боплан и его историко-географические труды относительно Южной России*, Киев, Типография И. И. Чоколова, 21–23.

²⁰ According to the Treaty of Zboriv of 1649, the ‘Cossack Ukraine’, including the Voivodeships of Kiev, Braclaw and Chernihiv, was led by a Hetman, elected by the Zaporizhian Host.

²¹ *Воссоединение Украины с Россией. Документы и материалы в 3 томах*, Т. III, Москва, Издательство Академии Наук СССР, 1953, 564–565.

²² *Полное собрание законов Российской Империи, повелением государя императора Николая Павловича составленное – Собрание Первое. с 1649 по 12 декабря 1825, Т. 1 с 1649 по 1675*, Санктпетербург, 1830, 656–669.

Disputed issues regarding the genesis of Cossacks in historiography

Already back in the 16th and 17th century in Ukrainian chronicles and noble historiography, the genesis of Cossacks proved to be a core issue. G. Grabjanka (1666–1738) *etymologized Cossacks from the Khazars*, who fled the Khazar Empire, dissolved as a consequence of the Mongolian offensive to the region of the Don and Dnieper Rivers, and established their peculiar ‘order of chivalry’.²³ Cossacks, similarly to Western-European orders of chivalry, devoted their lives to the combat against infidels, that is the Tatars and Turks. While examining the genealogy of the Cossacks, G. Konyssky (1717–1795) argued in favour of the fact that *Cossacks had been Slavic soldiers* and adapted simply one thing, that is the name of Cossacks.²⁴ Furthermore, his entire work is pervaded by the notion of “*the independence of Ukrainian chivalry*”, who had served Polish, Lithuanian or Russian monarchs alike, all of their own free will. Despite some minor differences, it is common in the works depicted above that *they consider Cossacks to be an elite category, a peculiar order of chivalry*, which later may have provided a sound basis for being granted nobility. This is why one can call this period the age of noble historiography.

Certain books regard Ukrainian Cossacks as a local phenomenon even if they had taken shape due to partly Tatar, that is a foreign impact. Yet their appearance can be definitely interpreted with local economic, social and political factors. B. Antonovich (1834–1908) *studied the history of Cossacks in close relation to the free communities of the Kievian Rus’, namely the obshchinas*.²⁵ Thus, he followed through the process of the centre of power being shifted to Halach and Volhynia after the Tatar attack, while the regions along the Dnieper had gradually become more and more scarcely populated. Here only obshchinas remained, who paid taxes to the khans and maintained their specific way of life. Owing to the geographical position of these areas, the local population was constantly exposed to Tatar attacks. As a result, the only way to protect themselves was to set up armed self-defence. Ultimately, this obshchina-establishment had taken its foreign designation, that is, the Cossacks.

Ukrainian historian N. I. Kostomarov (1817–1885) regarded the Cossacks and the term representing them to be undoubtedly of *Tatar origin*.²⁶ As a matter of fact, based on his theory, the expression of Cossacks may carry more meanings. On the one hand, it might have referred to wandering individuals not bound to the soil, that is who separated from their dependence as peasants. On the other hand, he used this category for free armed forces who at the time dealt with industry and trade as well in order to make a living.

M. S. Hrushevsky (1866–1934), generally known as the “*father of Ukrainian historiography*”, radically reassessed and shed new light on the formation and significance of Cossacks. Investigating the genesis of Cossacks, he assumed that at the turn of the 15th and 16th

²³ *Летопись гадячскаго полковника Григорія Грабянки*, Киев, Университетская типография, 1853, 16.

²⁴ *Исторія русовъ или Малой Россіи-Сочиненіе Георгія Конискаго, Архієпископа Белорускаго*, Москва, 1846, 2.

²⁵ *Архив ЮЗР. Ч. 3, Т. 1, Акты о козаках (1500-1648)*, Киев, Университетская типография, 1863, XXIII–XXV.

²⁶ *Богдан Хмельницкий. Историческая монография Николая Костомарова*, Санкт-Петербург, Типография М. М. Стасюлевича, 1884, Издание 4-е, Т. I, 303.

centuries Cossacks did not represent an organized social class, however, as a way of life it had already been known for long. *Clearly, this way of life had been a result of a permanent struggle conducted by an already settled, farmer population against raider and looter nomad peoples of the steppe, lasting for centuries.*²⁷ Consequently, the local population was forced to establish itself in self-defence, moreover, at times they carried out counter-attacks and facilitated raids on Turkish-Tatar regions. According to Hrushevsky's theory, the term Cossack was first used to assign this lifestyle from the 15th century onwards, but as a distinct social group Cossacks had crystallised only during the 1600s, while their *definite organisational and legal form, and respectively, recognition emerged only by the turn of the 16–17th centuries.*²⁸

Starting from the 1920s and 1930s, the “Ukrainian issue” proved to be a delicate one, carrying a political charge within the history of the Soviet Union, therefore books dealing with Ukrainian and Cossack themes were being significantly sidelined. Following the 300th anniversary of the “reunification” of Russia and Ukraine in 1954, the interest in Ukrainian-related books increased, many of which were related to V. A. Golobutsky.²⁹ In the historian's book written on the Zaporizhzhia Cossacks, he discusses how smaller settlements, that is, slobodas, emerged on the left bank of the Dnieper at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, with the population, predominantly runaway peasants, considering themselves as Cossacks, meaning free men.

Moreover, within *contemporary Ukrainian historiography*, one can in fact see the revival and further involvement of M. S. Hrushevsky's theory regarding the genesis of Cossacks.³⁰ Research of national history played a crucial role in the elevation of Ukrainian identity, what is more, it was imperative that *the past should be glorious and carry continuity. The formation of Cossacks and their determining historical role as well as being capable of establishing a state had become a central element in the glorious Ukrainian history.*

Based on the historiographical overview of the Cossacks' genesis, the majority of historians agree that the term Cossack can be of Turkish-Tatar origin,³¹ this category having been generally widespread from the end of the 13th century to connote military personnel fulfilling border patrol duties, who occasionally involved in steppe raids to the enemy's territories.

As a result of the study regarding the genesis of Ukrainian Cossacks, we can conclude that they began to take shape *from the end of the 15th century, yet, up until the mid-1600s, thus representing only a disorganised military force.* These military classes located in be-

²⁷ ГРУШЕВСКИЙ, М. С. (1913), *История украинского казачества до соединения с Московским государством. Т. I: До начала XVII века*, Киев, 98.

²⁸ Ibid. 96.

²⁹ ГОЛОБУЦКИЙ, В. А. (1957), *Запорожское казачество*, Киев, Госполитиздат УССР, 44–47.

³⁰ ЩЕРБАК, В. О. (2000), *Українське козацтво: формування соціального стану-Друга половина XV - середина XVII ст.*, Київ, КМ Академія, 36.; НАЛИВАЙКО, Д. (1992), *Козацька християнська республіка*, Київ, Дніпро, 34–38.; ЧУХЛІБ, Т. (2009), *Козаки і монархи. Міжнародні відносини ранньомодерної Української держави 1648-1721 рр.*, Київ, Вид-во ім Олени Теліги, 34.; SUBTELNY, Orest (2000), *Ukraine. A History*, Toronto – Buffalo – London, University of Toronto Press, 108–110.; MAGOCSI, Robert Paul (2010), *A History of Ukraine. The Land and its Peoples*, Toronto – Buffalo – London, University of Toronto Press, 188–195.

³¹ STÖKL, Günther (1953), *Die Entstehung des Kosakentums*, München, Isar Verlag, 202–203.

tween noblemen and serfs, forming a differentiated and heterogeneous *intermediate social category*, moreover, at the same time, consequently emerging as a blow off valve for social tensions. Much as they were capable of affecting the course of domestic and international politics of their country, during their making and shaping history they still, on several occasions, clashed with the producer society.

The Cossacks of Ukraine

It may not be possible to accurately determine the exact starting date and time when Slavic Cossack in Ukrainian territories emerged as the term Cossack. It was initially used for the denotation for a peculiar craft or lifestyle rather than a specific ethnic group. Therefore, it was the Slavicisation of Tatar Cossacks as an institute, not Tatar Cossacks in the service of the Polish–Lithuanian monarch that actually bore decisive significance.

As a matter of fact, the steppe was wide open to Ukrainian peasants from the very onset, however, they were unable to consider the dangerous lifestyle characteristic of Cossacks as their own. Were they to remain within this way of life, even though it may have meant having to gradually abandon their economic independence, in most cases they opted for this change. This might explain the sluggish formation of Cossacks as a group and their only becoming a social mass phenomenon by the end of the 16th century. It was only when colonisation of peasants gradually advanced to the southern border area of the steppe and the thus far alternating dependence of peasants had become a level of being bound to the soil with the 3rd Lithuanian Statutes in 1558 that the Cossacks' lifestyle turned out to be acceptable and desired by serfs.

As a result of the violent actions of the state and the nobility against them, the Cossacks could choose from the following options: 1) they join the official border guard service of the Polish–Lithuanian state; 2) they enter the noble private armies; 3) they retreat to the mostly uninhabited or depopulated border areas, preserving their freedom. Based on these three alternatives, three types of Cossacks emerged: *free or Zaporozhian, state or registered, and private landowner Cossacks*.

Zaporozhian Cossacks

The Polish monarchs in the 16th century attempted to hold the restless Cossacks off by issuing a series of threatening decrees,³² yet with little success, since they mostly did not possess the necessary power to have the decrees enforced. The denomination of Cossack at the time was used for groups difficult to control and living on the southern border of the Polish–Lithuanian state, who resettled to the waterfalls of the Dnieper (“*za porogi*”), which area, due to its excellent geographical features, with its thick forests, swamps and islands, offered sound protection as a natural boundary against intrusions by Turks or Tartars. Also, their “combat state”, the Zaporozhian Sich was³³ “established” here in the 1540s. Further-

³² Архив ЮЗР. Ч. 3, Т. 1, Акты о козаках, 4, 12, 28, 33, 44, 84, 130, 190, 200, 253.

³³ АНТОНОВИЧ, В. В. (1991), *Про козацькі часи на Україні*, Київ, Дніпро, 51–52.; ГУРБИК, А. О. (1999), “Виникнення Запорозької Січі (хронологічний та територіальний аспекти проблеми)”, *Український Історичний Журнал*, № 6, 5–7.; GEBEL, Sándor (2013), “Bethlen Gábor viszonya a

more, these people had built a social and political organisation of military nature in the Zaporozhian Sich independent from the Polish–Lithuanian administration, and eventually effectively integrated into the protection of the southern borders.

Compared to the Tatars, the Zaporozhian Cossacks can be considered as the “by-product” of the steppe life, who were transformed into soldiers by necessity due to the Tatar and Turk attacks from the 15th century onwards. Living in groups they created a “brotherhood” which was called Cossacks in the ranks of Tatars.

However, formally the Polish–Lithuanian government acknowledged privileges of only registered Cossacks in state service,³⁴ and officially Sich Cossacks were regarded to be outlaws. Still, the *Zaporozhian Sich* actually functioned as a “*state within the state*” in the framework of the Rzeczpospolita. The central power reluctantly tolerated its existence due to its determining role in defending the borders, however, no official recognition came along. *It was this being pushed to the background in the first place that resulted in the fact that they had begun to serve outlandish monarchs as mercenaries.*³⁵ Therefore, the major problem posed to the Polish administration in handling the Cossack-issue was that it had been unable to hire for state service all Cossacks desiring to get registered, for this endeavour had been hindered by either the lack of financial resources or the hostile attitude of the Polish nobility towards Cossacks. The Polish Szlachta had a good reason to hamper the growth of registered Cossacks. On the one hand, they were afraid to lose their labour supply if too many of the villeins attempted to make it to the ranks of the privileged registered Cossacks, and, on the other hand, they recognised that a ready and sizeable army built on Cossacks in the hands of the “elected” Polish monarchs may very well be dangerous to their own privileges, too.

Registered Cossacks

In 1572, Sigismund II Augustus of the Polish–Lithuanian state succeeded in passing the introduction of Cossacks as an institution registered in the Sejm.³⁶

As the King of Poland between 1576 and 1586 Stephen Báthory experimented with several methods to regulate unregistered “*free*” Cossacks, using intimidation³⁷ and executions to restrain Cossacks. Also, he hired some of them for serving the state. Although 300 “free”

Rzeczpospolitához”, in PAPP, Klára (ed.), *Bethlen Gábor képmása*, Speculum Historiae Debreceniense, Debrecen, Debreceni Egyetem Történelmi Intézete, 94.

³⁴ *Жерела до історії України-Руси. Матеріалів до історії української козащини*, Т. 8, Львів, Видано під редакцією Михайла Грушевського, Накладом Наукового Товариства імені Шевченка, 1908, 57–64.

³⁵ The Fifteen Years’ War was the first occasion when the Habsburgs employed the Cossacks as mercenaries, later several times they were hired for military services, e.g. during the Thirty Years’ War.

³⁶ ГРУШЕВСКИЙ, М. С. (1913–1914), *История украинского казачества до соединения с Московским государством*. Том I–III, Киев, Типография 1-й Киевской Артели Печ, Дела, Трехсвятительская 5. Том I, 185.

³⁷ VERESS, Endre (ed.) (1944), *Báthory István erdélyi fejedelem és lengyel király levelezése*, II. 1576–1586, Kolozsvár, Gróf Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet, 69.; POLKOWSKI, Ignacy (1887), *Acta historica res gestas Poloniae illustrantia ab anno 1507 usque ad annum 1795* – Sprawy wojenne króla Stefana Batorego, T. 11, Krakow, 32.

Cossacks had already sworn to be loyal to the last Jagiellonian monarch previously, *in fact it was Stephen Báthory who*, in accordance with his statute of September 1578 titled “*Agreement with Sich Cossacks*”³⁸ *created the institute of registered Cossacks*. This act of Báthory basically meant providing to initially 500, then in 1583 600 state-registered Cossacks³⁹ *tax exemption, exemption from church and landlord taxes. In addition, they gained independence from the scope of authority of local Polish authorities, that is they acquired the right to act as a local government*.⁴⁰ Eventually, *registered Cossacks* fulfilled the hopes placed in them by the Polish monarch, moreover, they actively participated in the Livonian war against Russia, serving along Stephen Báthory.⁴¹ The concept of registered Cossacks as such practically legalized the opportunity to escape from the dependence on landlords, and endowed *registered Cossacks* significant privileges,⁴² nevertheless, they were in fact merely treated as supporting troops in the military system of the Polish–Lithuanian state.⁴³

A significant change in the position of Cossacks took place as a result of the *Kurukovo Agreement of 1625*,⁴⁴ signed between the Polish government and the state Cossacks. As its consequence, *Cossacks emerged as an organised military formation, and thus registered Cossacks became a public institute that provided them with a livelihood including a combination of legally obtained takings and military pay*. The officially registered six regiments of Cossacks were allowed to apply privileges separately supported to them by the monarchs of Poland.

By the 1630s, the registered Cossacks had become a regular army with an ever-increasing involvement in politics, all this in spite of the fact that apart from the “noble uprising”, only supporting troops were trained within the military of the Polish state. This marginalization also explains that more and more of them began to sympathise with the revolts of free Cossacks, which ultimately meant that part of the registered Cossacks’ joining the 1637 Cossack uprising in fact served as a pretext for the Sejm, controlled by Polish nobility, to issue a decree of 1638 named “*Ordination of the Zaporozhian Cossack Army*”.⁴⁵ According to this, *Cossacks as a whole had lost all their previously obtained rights and privileges*, and henceforward became equal with villeins. Even though the number of registered ones still remained 6.000, *they were not allowed to have their own, elected leaders*, but instead they were put under the direct authority of a supervisor (commissar) of Polish origin, appointed by the monarch. *Under the Ordination, from then on Cossacks differed from villeins in that they owed not agricultural, but military service to the Polish–*

³⁸ POLKOWSKI, *Acta historica res gestas Poloniae*, 337.

³⁹ *Сборник летописей, относящиеся к истории Южной и западной России*, Киев, Тип. Г. Т. Корчак-Новицкого, 1888, 92–93.

⁴⁰ ЩЕРБАК, В. О. (2010), *Запровадження козацьких реєстрів*, Магістеріум. Бип. 41, Історичні студії, Київ, Національний університет Києво-Могилянська академія, 9.

⁴¹ SZABÓ, Béla (2009), *Báthory István erdélyi fejedelem és lengyel király katonai és katonapolitikai jelentősége*, Doktor (PhD) értekezés, Budapest, 73–74.; BESALA, Jerzy (1992), *Stefan Batory*, Warszawa, PIW, 102–103.

⁴² ЯКОВЕНКО, Н. (2009), *Напис історії України*, Київ, Критика, 263.

⁴³ MAGOCSI, *A History of the Ukraine*, 196.

⁴⁴ *Архив ЮЗР. Ч. 3, Т. I, Акты о козаках*, 284–292.

⁴⁵ *Воссоединение Украины с Россией. Документы и материалы в трёх томах*, I, Москва, АН СССР, 1954, 255–256.

Lithuanian state. Thus, owing to the reforms of 1638, registered Cossacks lost their personal alliance character based on extensive self-government, and were transformed into state-controlled and organised complex military unit furnished with an institutionalised leadership.

Up until the middle of the 17th century, Cossacks could not be regarded as a sovereign social class, but only an “intermediate” category, as the population of Ukraine was characterized by a relatively amorph social system at the time. The “*great revolution*”⁴⁶ of 1648–1654, led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky brought significant changes and transformation in the composition of social stratification in Ukraine. The crucial change was apparent in the act of the Cossack elite (starshina) seizing governance, and in the Hetmanate⁴⁷ society within the Russian bond a relatively free opportunity of moving up in society emerged. As a consequence, villeins were allowed to become common Cossacks by undertaking military service, while the latter could rise to cement themselves in “Cossack aristocracy”. Following the outbreak of the Khmelnytsky movement, the Polish and pro-Polish Ukrainian szlachta fled the so-called “*Cossack Ukraine*”⁴⁸ leaving their lands behind. Then, in the age of the Hetmanate (1654–1764), after the union with Russia, the Cossack elite and common Cossacks started to become distinct from each other. While the starshina assumed control of Ukraine, accumulating offices and lands, at the same time common Cossacks became gradually impoverished and tried to avoid the more and more costly military conscription.

Conclusion

The Cossacks of Ukraine, as a new social and political factor, evolved in the second half of the 15th century. The social identification of the Cossacks can be considered as a heterogeneous composition, as in addition to runaway villeins⁴⁹ settled at the southern border of the Polish–Lithuanian state, the so-called “no-man’s-land”, impoverished city-dwellers and outcast gentry were present in their ranks, who recognised the king of Poland as their only lord. Indeed, free tenant communities fulfilling military services in several Eastern European countries had developed and formed to be almost separate social groups which *in practice were waging a war against both the internal feudal oppression and external enemies, particularly the Ottoman conquerors.*

Ukrainian Cossacks ultimately developed in a forced “coexistence” with the Tatars and Turks of the Southern border region as well as in their struggle for existence on the steppe.

⁴⁶ Contemporary Ukrainian historiography applies the terms “national-independence war, and revolution” for the denomination of the 1648–1657 movement in Ukraine. СМОЛИЙ, В. С. – СТЕПАНКОВ, В. А. (1997), *Українська державна ідея XVII-XVIII. століть: проблеми формування, еволюції, реалізації*, Київ, „Альтернативи”, 81.

⁴⁷ The Hetmanate consisting of Ukrainian territories joining Russia voluntarily in 1654 gained full autonomy, and Cossack privileges were reconfirmed.

⁴⁸ The chief achievement of the movement was the 1649 Treaty of Zboriv, which stated that the Polish government declared “Cossack Ukraine” containing the voivodes of Kiev, Bratslav and Chernihiv to be an autonomy. A Tsichirin-based Hetmanate administrative organisation vested with self-government was built up as a result, headed by Bohdan Khmelnytsky. *Воссоединение Украины с Россией. Документы и материалы в трёх томах*, Т. II, Москва, АН СССР, 1954, 299–306.

⁴⁹ Free lifestyle of the Cossacks became “popular” with the villeins only when, after the 3rd Lithuanian Charter of 1558, the thus far alternating dependence of peasants was converted to a soil-bound status.

The Polish influence on pre-1648 Ukrainian nobility had born its stamp on it, as by the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries only few Ukrainian noblemen remained who had been unaffected by the Polonisation process.⁵⁰ This caused Ukrainians to “lose” the majority of their political and social elite, therefore Cossacks took over to “lead” and represent the interests of the Ukrainian society. Ukrainian Cossacks were actually groups created by wars, since border protection combats perpetuated on the borders of the Ottoman Empire and neighbouring countries. Constant military preparedness in the region of “border fortresses”, partly provided livelihood to these “*voluntary border protectors*”, what is more, this latter role justified a social separation from their perspective. Since the emergence of Cossacks dates back to the Ottoman conquest, their primary significance was demonstrated in the *protection of borders*, therefore their military tactics formed accordingly. Prospects of the Cossacks was caused by a power vacuum that formed at the border region of the Ukrainian territories: it existed between the Polish–Lithuanian state, and the outposts of Russia and the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century.

⁵⁰ ЩЕРБАК, *Українське козацтво: формування соціального стану*, 167.

Les Français dans le Sud de la Hongrie au XVIII^e siècle

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Notre étude s'articule autour de trois problématiques. On définira d'abord la Hongrie du Sud en tant qu'espace géographique. En deuxième lieu, on passera en revue les différentes composantes de la présence française au XVIII^e siècle. Enfin on terminera par nos conclusions.

En ce qui concerne l'espace géographique, il est en fait déterminé au XVIII^e siècle par quatre traités de paix.

Le premier est celui de Karlóca, ou Karlowitz, en français Carlowitz (26 janvier 1699). En vertu de cette paix, l'Empire Ottoman a perdu toutes ses possessions de Hongrie, à l'exception du Banat et d'une partie de la Syrmie. Il a également renoncé à ses droits féodaux sur la Transylvanie et, en vertu d'un accord parallèle, a interné Imre Thököly et sa femme Ilona Zrínyi en Nicomédie. À la fin du XVII^e siècle, les confins militaires se situent sur la ligne de la Save, du Danube et de la Tisza-Maros.

Le deuxième traité a été signé à Pozsarevác ou Passarowitz, le 21 juillet 1718. Avec ceci, l'occupation turque du Banat et de la Syrmie, longue de 164 ans, prenant fin, le Grand Sud hongrois rejoint la zone étudiée. L'empire des Habsbourg acquiert le Banat, le Nord de la Serbie et le territoire du banat médiéval de Severin.

Le troisième traité est celui de Belgrade (18 septembre 1739). S'il n'est qu'une modification de la paix de Passarowitz, il assure la paix la plus longue dans cette aire, pendant un demi-siècle. Ainsi perd l'Autriche d'importants territoires acquis par la paix de Passarowitz en 1718 : le banat de Craiova, les confins nord de Bosnie, Belgrade, Orsova, les territoires des banats situés au sud du Danube. Côté russe, la paix de Belgrade est restée en vigueur jusqu'à la signature du traité de Küçük-Kaynarca. Orsova ainsi que quelques villages frontaliers croato-bosniaques de Lika ne passèrent aux confins militaires de l'empire des Habsbourg que par la paix de Sistovo concluant la guerre austro-turque de 1787-1791.

Enfin, quelques mots sur le quatrième traité : à Sistovo ou Sitova (le 4 août 1791), on reprend Belgrade et Orsova. On peut dire que la paix de Sistovo a rétabli le traité de Passarowitz.

Si l'on veut examiner la présence des Français, plus précisément ceux qui parlaient la langue française à l'époque en question, il faut considérer trois facteurs : 1) l'histoire des experts militaires et colons français en Hongrie ; 2) les récits de voyages, mémoires, notes, rapports sur la Hongrie du XVIII^e siècle ; 3) l'histoire des prisonniers de guerre français de l'époque des guerres révolutionnaires.

Au XVIII^e siècle, on rencontre encore bon nombre d'experts militaires qui sont venus encore à la fin du XVII^e siècle et ont participé aux luttes menées contre les Turcs. La Grande Guerre turque, la Guerre de la Sainte Ligue ou la Cinquième Guerre austro-turque, a eu lieu entre 1683 et 1699. L'un des théâtres les plus importants de cette guerre était le

sud de la Hongrie. Plusieurs documents manuscrits sur la lutte des Français contre les Turcs ont été conservés. Le célèbre maréchal Villars¹ commémore ces événements dans ses mémoires. Les mémoires ne donnent bien sûr que des détails sur les événements militaires de la guerre. En voici un exemple :

« La campagne étoit déjà ouverte en Hongrie. Le duc de Lorraine, dont le véritable dessein étoit de marcher à Esseck, comme à la plus importante conquête que l'on pût faire, et parce qu'il est d'ailleurs très difficile à une armée considérable de faire la guerre loin du Danube, qui apporte toutes les provisions et les munitions de guerre et de bouche, essaya de partager les forces des Turcs, en les inquiétant pour la droite et pour la gauche du Danube, et prit d'abord sa route vers Segedin, avec une partie de l'armée, comme s'il eût voulu entrer en Transylvanie ou attaquer le Grand Varasdin. »²

Par conséquent, dans la région sud-est de la Hongrie, on enregistre de nombreux noms de famille d'origine français chez les individus employés par l'armée impériale ou chez les officiers des Chambres. En tous cas, il n'est pas du tout étonnant que le premier plan de Szeged ait été dessiné par un officier français, du nom de De la Croix Paitis. Dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, on peut aussi trouver deux Français, nommés Piliers et Serrière dans les commandements militaires de la forteresse de Szeged. De nos jours, leurs pierres tombales se trouvent dans l'église catholique de Bas-Szeged. Entre 1731 et 1733, la garnison de la ville de Szeged se compose des soldats du régiment de Lorraine³.

En ce qui concerne la population française de cette région, il faut dire qu'elle était beaucoup moins insignifiante qu'on ne le croyait : durant la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, des colons étrangers avaient été installés en Hongrie pour repeupler la terre déserte abandonnée par les Turcs après cent cinquante ans de domination aux conséquences économiques néfastes en particulier. Parmi eux, bon nombre de Français s'installèrent dans la région sud-est du royaume⁴, notamment dans le Banat⁵. L'existence d'une population française dans le Banat est assez bien connue. Il s'agit des descendants d'anciens colons français transplantés en masse d'Alsace, de Lorraine et du grand-duché de Luxembourg au cours du XVIII^e siècle. La colonisation des Français dans cette région lointaine de l'empire d'Autriche s'est faite en deux étapes : colonisations effectuées par l'empereur Charles VI d'Autriche entre 1717 et 1734, et colonisations reprises sous Marie-Thérèse et achevées par son successeur Joseph II, de 1763 à 1790.

¹ Claude Louis Hector de Villars est un militaire et diplomate français (1653-1734), maréchal de France, président du Conseil de la guerre (1700-1715). *Mémoires du maréchal de Villars* (1884-1904), Tome 6, publiés, d'après le manuscrit original, pour la Société de l'histoire de France, et accompagnés de correspondances inédites par M. Mis de Vogüé, Renouard, Paris.

² Ibid. t. I, 1884, pp. 65-66.

³ PALASTI, László (1959), *Francia családnevek Szegeden a XVIII. században* [Les patronymes français de Szeged au XVIII^e siècle], Szeged, p. 43.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 44-45. Ainsi dans le registre des baptêmes de la paroisse de Szeged on note 22 noms français entre 1713 et 1750, et 21 entre 1750 et 1775.

⁵ Du point de vue géographique, le nom de Banat (Bánát) désigne une région de 38 526 km², comprise entre les fleuves Maros au nord, la Tisza à l'ouest, le Danube au sud, et les versants sud des Alpes de Transylvanie à l'est. Cf. FENYES, Elek (1847), *Magyarország leírása* [Description de la Hongrie], Pest, pp. 332, 342 ; KRISTO, Gyula (dir.) (1994), *Korai magyar történeti lexikon* [Encyclopédie d'histoire de la Hongrie ancienne], Budapest, p. 78.

Les premières colonisations font partie de l'ensemble des mesures administratives prises par le comte Florimond-Claude de Mercy (1666-1734), premier gouverneur civil et militaire du Banat, qui était issu d'une ancienne famille de la noblesse bavaroise⁶. Il avait organisé l'assèchement des marais, l'agriculture (vignobles, pêches de vignes, sériciculture), l'activité industrielle (soierie, moulin à papier) de cette région⁷.

Le premier appréciateur et chroniqueur de l'œuvre de Mercy fut Franz Grisellini⁸, qui la décrit dans son ouvrage de 1780 : le grand mérite de Mercy a été l'organisation de l'administration, la direction de la colonisation de la région et la modernisation de son économie⁹. Sa mémoire est aussi conservée par un petit village nommé Mercyfalva (Kárány, Merczifalva, Merczyfalva, Merczidorf, Cârani, aujourd'hui Caranie, en Roumanie)¹⁰. D'après la description fidèle de Peter Schiff¹¹, le sol de cette région était en général marécageux, particulièrement aux endroits situés sur les rivières Tisza et Maros. Les conditions hygiéniques étaient déterminées par les bourbiers, fondrières, marais, lacs et rivières indomptés.

Les conditions malsaines de cette région sont également décrites par un rapport en langue française de l'époque, publié par Charles Kecskeméti¹². Ce rapport nous donne un

⁶ GYEMANT, Richárd (2019), « A Temesi Bánság első kormányzója : gróf Claude Florimond de Mercy (1666-1734) » [Le premier gouverneur du Banat de Temes : Comte Claude Florimond de Mercy], *Forum, Acta Juridica et Politica*, 2019/2, pp. 31-48. voir https://acta.bibl.u-szeged.hu/68896/1/juridpol_forum_009_002_031-048.pdf (consulté le 10 janvier 2023)

⁷ BAROTI, Lajos (1893), *Adattár Délmagyarország XVIII. századi történetéhez I.* [Documents sur l'histoire de la Basse-Hongrie au XVIII^e siècle], Temesvár, p. 7 ; HORVATH, Mihály (1873), *Magyarország története VII.* [Histoire de la Hongrie], Franklin, Budapest, p. 158.

⁸ GRISELINI, Franz (1780), *Versuch einer politischen und natürlichen Geschichte des Temeswarer Banats in Briefen an Standespersonen und Gelehrten, Erster Theil* [Essai d'une histoire politique et naturelle du Banat de Timisoara dans des lettres adressées à des personnes de condition et à des érudits], Im Verlage bei Johann Paul Krauf, Wien.

⁹ MARJANUCZ, László (2013), « Franz Grisellini Bánság-képe » [L'image du Banat par Franz Grisellini], *Aetas*, 2013/3, pp. 24-43.

¹⁰ GYALAI, Mihály (1989), *Magyar igazgatástörténeti helységnévlexikon* [Encyclopédie des noms de localités dans l'histoire de l'administration hongroise], Budapest, p. 636.

¹¹ SCHIFF, Peter (1934), *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Gemeinde Mercydorf* [Contributions à l'histoire de la commune de Mercydorf], Buchdruckerei « Sonntagsblatt », Timișoara, voir <https://www.dvhh.org/mercydorf/Mercydorf-1734-1934-Peter-Schiff/index.htm> (consulté le 10 janvier 2023)

¹² Kecskeméti Károly, Charles Kecskeméti (1933-2021), archiviste de renommée internationale et éminent historien hongrois, est arrivé en France en tant que réfugié politique en 1956, et a commencé à travailler aux Archives nationales en 1957. Il a rejoint le CIA (Conseil international des archives, dont le siège est à Paris) en 1962 en tant que Secrétaire, puis a occupé plusieurs postes : Secrétaire exécutif (1969-1988), Directeur exécutif (1988-1992), puis Secrétaire général (1992-1999). Dans chacun de ces postes, il a eu un énorme impact sur la communauté archivistique internationale. Historien de renom, il a beaucoup contribué à notre compréhension de la politique et de l'histoire hongroises. Principales publications : *La formation professionnelle des archivistes. Liste des écoles et des cours de formation professionnelle d'archivistes*, Unesco, Bruxelles, 1966 ; *La Hongrie et le réformisme libéral. Problèmes politiques et sociaux, 1790-1848* (Fonti e studi di storia moderna e contemporanea), Il Centro di Ricerca, Roma, 1989 ; *Sovereignty disputed claims professional culture. Essays on archival policies*, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels, 2000 ; *Notes, rapports et témoignages français sur la Hongrie 1717-1809* (Documenta Hungarorum in Gallia), Institut Hongrois &

tableau authentique du repeuplement du Banat, parce que l'auteur a des informations précises concernant le problème du repeuplement. Selon l'auteur inconnu des *Notes sur le Banat, l'Esclavonie et de la Hongrie*, datées d'avant 1778, Temesvár, la capitale du Banat

« est une place très forte, mais sa situation au milieu des marais la rend malsaine, sur tout en été, et y occasionne beaucoup de fièvres qui désolent toute la plaine du Bannas. On a déjà commencé à saigner plusieurs de ces marais avec succes, mais jusqu'à ce qu'on ait des forests, on est obligé d'en conserver une partie en faveur des roseaux qu'ils produisent et qui sont la seule ressource des habitants pour se chauffer et faire la cuisine. Le Bannat est presque tout peuplé d'étrangers. »¹³

Le descripteur nous donne une image vivante et précise des difficultés quotidiennes des colons.

« L'Impératrice donne à chacun en arrivant une habitation, 4 chevaux, les charues et ustenciles de l'agriculture et du ménage nécessaires avec une certaine quantité de bétail et du terrain pour le cultiver. On compte que chaque famille établie revient à 400 florins et jusqu'à ce qu'ils le soient on leurs donne par jour 6 creutzer pour les personnes faites et 3 pour les enfants. Mais ceux qui sont chargés de ce soin ne s'en acquittent pas avec toute la fidélité requise et ces nouveaux colons se plaignent qu'on a pas observés à beaucoup près les promesses qu'on leurs avoit faites. Néanmoins, ils ne peuvent pas quitter leur nouvelle patrie sous peine de mort. Ils sont enrégimentés, disciplinés, exercés comme les Slavons. Ils paient de plus qu'eux annuellement 4 florins par tête pour leurs armes, et tant par pièce de bétail qu'ils ont au-delà du nombre de bétail qu'on leur a accordé. Le Bannas a de belles prairies, d'excellens pâturages, des vignobles excellens, des bains et des herbes salutaires dans les montagnes, un climat très doux et tempéré, des rivières très poissonneuses qui l'entourent de toute part, et il me paroist qu'il ne lui manque pour un commerce très avantageux que des débouchés et une meilleure administration. Mais on a voulu trop se hater de jouir, et comme ce pays paioit avec facilité ses impositions, on a voulu les augmenter. Le cultivateur, désespéré de voir qu'il ne travailloit plus pour lui, n'a plus cultivé que ce qui lui étoit absolument nécessaire et l'a consommé à mesure, de sorte que depuis quelques années, on est réduit envers eux à des exécutions militaires, et elles ont produit un nouveau mal en ce qu'elles ont obligés plusieurs personnes à vivre du métier de voleur dont le nombre s'est tellement accru qu'ils infestent le pays et malgré les poursuites que l'on fait, n'empêche pas de mettre un grand obstacle au commerce qui n'y est déjà que trop gêné par les énormes droits d'exportation auxquels sont soumis même les denrées du pays. Les chevaux n'en sont pas exempts, mais ils sont assés modérés à leur égard puisque moiennant vingt ducats on peut avoir une jolie paire de sauvage. Pourtant le pays rend infiniment moins qu'avant l'augmentation des nouvelles impositions. Elle ren-

Bibliothèque nationale Széchényi, Paris – Budapest – Szeged, 2006 ; *Magyar liberalizmus, 1790-1848* (Eszmetörténeti könyvtár), Argumentum – Bibó István Szellemi Műhely, Budapest, 2008 ; *Le libéralisme hongrois, 1790-1848* (Bibliothèque d'études de l'Europe centrale), Champion, Paris, 2010.

¹³ « Notes sur le Banat, l'Esclavonie et la Hongrie (avant 1778) », in KECSKEMETI, Charles, *Notes, rapports...*, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

doit alors un million de florins. Il y a en quartier dans tout le Bannas 3 régiments de cavalerie et un d'infanterie qui est dans les places. Le Bannas a tous les avantages que peuvent donner un sol fertile et un climat tempéré ; il ne lui manque pour un commerce très utile que des débouchés et une meilleure administration et des impôts levés plus équitablement. L'augmentation qu'on en a faite et la mauvaise perception qu'on a établie, en ont fait tomber les revenus malgré les exécutions militaires au dessous ce qu'ils rendoient cy devant. Cette contrainte a donné naissance à plusieurs bandes de voleurs qui malgré les poursuites que l'on fait infestent le pays et genent le commerce qui y est déjà bien restreint par les énormes droits d'exportations auxquels sont même soumises les productions du pays. Le Bannas peut rendre 11 à 12 cent mille florins. Les laines du Bannas sont estimées et pourroient devenir meilleures avec un peu de soin. Les chevaux sauvages, y sont à si bon marché qu'on peut les choisir dans les harras à cent sous la pièce. Il n'y a dans tout le Bannat que trois régiments de cavalerie et un d'infanterie. »¹⁴

Un autre voyageur, qui se rend dans le Banat à la même période, écrit également sur les difficultés quotidiennes des colons. C'est Antoine Joseph Zorn de Bulach, qui a rédigé un mémoire¹⁵ sur la période de 1771-1774 et sur ses voyages de Hongrie, en tant qu'officier supérieur de l'escorte du prince de Rohan, ambassadeur du Roi à Vienne¹⁶. Au printemps de l'année 1772, il traversa la Hongrie en direction de la Slavonie. Il suivit l'itinéraire Pozsony-Magyaróvár-Győr-Komárom-Esztergom-Buda-Adony-Mohács-Eszék-Zimony. Pendant le chemin de retour, il passa par Siklós, Pécs, Szigetvár, Kanizsa, Körmend, Zalaegerszeg, Kőszeg et Sopron, avant d'arriver à Vienne. Zorn de Bulach fut surtout intéressé par les questions d'ordre économique. Il a analysé dans les détails les possibilités de production convenables aux conditions climatiques et naturelles de la Hongrie. Il posa partout des questions, prit des notes et enregistra le prix des produits agricoles et de la nourriture, etc.

D'après Antoine Zorn de Bulach, la terre est en général mal cultivée. Il constate avec surprise l'étendue de la surface laissée en jachère. Il en voit la raison dans le nombre peu

¹⁴ Ibid. pp. 105-106.

¹⁵ *L'Ambassade du prince Louis de Rohan à la cour de Vienne 1771-1774*, Notes écrites par un gentilhomme, officier supérieur attaché au prince Louis de Rohan ambassadeur du roi et publiées par son arrière-petit-fils le baron Zorn de Bulach, Imprimerie alsacienne Anct. G. Fischbach, Strasbourg, 1901.

¹⁶ Le baron Antoine-Joseph Zorn de Bulach est né en 1736. En 1756, il est parti dans la Guerre de Sept Ans, avec le régiment de cavalerie française appelé de Wurtemberg. En 1781, il a quitté le service militaire comme mestre de camp de cavalerie, avec la croix de Saint-Louis obtenue en 1774. Il a été nommé grand veneur du Grand Chapitre de Strasbourg en 1769. A partir de 1779, il a été membre du Directoire, puis du corps de la noblesse immédiate de la Basse-Alsace et du corps de la noblesse immédiate de l'Empire au canton de l'Ortenau (Bade), Capitulaire de l'Ordre équestre de Saint-Georges. Il a survécu à la Terreur, mais il n'a jamais émigré. Après la Révolution et l'Empire, le baron Antoine-Joseph Zorn de Bulach n'est plus rentré dans la vie politique. Il est mort à Osthausen en 1817, à l'âge de 81 ans. Entre 1771 et 1774, il a été attaché comme officier supérieur à Louis-René-Edouard, Prince de Rohan Gueménés, ambassadeur du roi de France Louis XV auprès de l'Impératrice Marie Thérèse et de son fils l'Empereur Joseph II. Pendant ces années passées dans la monarchie habsbourgeoise, il a traversé différentes parties de la Hongrie et fait quelques notices et rapports à l'ambassade du Prince de Rohan à la Cour de Vienne. Voir KÖVER (2016), Lajos, *Documents et témoignages français imprimés sur la Hongrie 1565-1814* (Documenta Hungarorum in Gallia IV), JATEPress, Szeged, p. 215.

élevé de la population et dans le commerce sous-développé. Ce dernier mérite particulièrement son attention, puisque selon les enseignements des physiocrates, très populaires à cette époque en France, le développement d'un pays peut être fondé sur deux pierres d'achoppe : le commerce aux marchés libérés de toute entrave, et l'agriculture rationnellement organisée, exempte de toute douane intérieure et de la corruption. Selon lui, les activités agricoles constituent la seule occupation du peuple hongrois ; on ne rencontre que très peu de commerçants ou d'artisans.

Il est passé par Temesvár sur sa route vers le sud de la Hongrie. Il observe également le Banat d'un point de vue militaire, et est bien conscient que cette région du Sud-est de la Hongrie est une zone de guerre.

« Dans le Banat les rivières de Temes et Theiss. Presque rien que des marais dans cette province. Une manufacture d'étoffes de soie à Temesvar... Temesvar est la capitale du Banat. Il y a quatre régiments de cuirassiers en quartier et quatre bataillons. Comme le pays est encore la plus grande partie dépeuplé, la Cour a établi des colonies allemandes sur la frontière turque. Elle leur donna des chevaux, du bétail et les terres nécessaires. Tous les villages sont et seront aussi militaires. Il se trouve dans le Banat cinq mines de cuivre et de fer. Différents particuliers en ont l'entreprise, moyennant l'obligation de céder les minéraux au Souverain à un prix inférieur au prix courant. Ce pays appartient en propre à la Reine ; il n'y a point de terres seigneuriales. »¹⁷

Malgré ces difficultés, dans des conditions même particulièrement défavorables, la terre du Banat, devenue inculte sous la longue domination turque, durant plus de 150 ans, fut remise en culture et devint un véritable grenier¹⁸.

A la fin du XVIII^e siècle, les colons français ont leurs écoles françaises, et leur langue maternelle s'est maintenue aussi dans les églises. Les instituteurs de Nagyösz (précédemment nommé Triebswetter, Treisbszvetter, Trübsetter, Trübswetter, aujourd'hui connu sous le nom de Tomnatic, en Roumanie)¹⁹ par exemple, sont des Français jusqu'en 1806²⁰. Les enfants des colons ont des manuels scolaires en langue française, mais dans le Banat, comme partout, les seuls livres scolaires étaient les catéchismes. C'est le chanoine Jean Baptiste Róka²¹, l'un des premiers curés de Mercyfalva, qui a demandé en 1770 à l'administration

¹⁷ Zorn de Bulach in KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages...*, op. cit., pp. 230-231.

¹⁸ PALASTI, László (1991), « Souvenirs de la présence lorraine au Banat », *Le Pays lorrain*, 1991/2, p. 143.

¹⁹ GYALAI, *Magyar igazgatástörténeti...*, op. cit., p. 665.

²⁰ BOTIS, Emile (1946), *Recherche sur la population française du Banat*, Timișoara, p. 23.

²¹ À propos de l'origine de ce Jean Baptiste Róka et de son patronyme, Emile Botiš écrit : « En ce qui concerne la personnalité du Père Roka, nous remarquerons... qu'il s'agit d'un Français de Lorraine (originaire de Dorsweiler). Il paraît certain que son nom a subi une déformation par magyarisation : Roka écrit aussi Róka, en hongrois - Renard. D'autre part le nom magyarisé Roka peut également dériver de Roques. » (BOTIS, *Recherche sur la population...*, op. cit., p. 25). László Palásti attire notre attention sur l'erreur de Botiš sur l'origine du chanoine Róka et de son nom de famille. Ce n'est pas à Dorsweiler, mais à Győr (Raab) en Hongrie que le chanoine Róka est né, comme en témoigne la légende d'une gravure sur cuivre représentant le chanoine Róka : « Joannes Róka S.S. Theol. Doctor Cath. Eccl. Boshensis Canonicus natus Arrabonae VU. Idus ianuari MDCCXXVII. » PALASTI, László (1990), « Erreurs sur l'identité de certains patronymes français du Banat », *Nouvelle Revue d'Onomastique*, n° 15-16, p. 108.

provinciale des livres français pour les écoliers dudit village, et trois ans plus tard il a lui-même entrepris de publier à ses frais un catéchisme français, tiré à mille exemplaires. Le révérend père Róka a aussi écrit un livre sous le titre *A. B. C. françois ou Instruction pour les petits enfants*. En 1773 était publié à Temesvár (Temeswar, Temesch-war, Temesburg, aujourd'hui Timișoara en Roumanie)²² le premier livre scolaire français admis dans les écoles des trois communes sœurs françaises St. Hubert, Charleville et Seultour, le *Catéchisme du Père Canise*. En voici le titre complet : « *Méthode généralement utile et nécessaire pour instruire et examiner les enfants et les jeunes gens par demandes et réponses sur le petit Catéchisme du Père Canisse de la Compagnie de Jésus : Traduit de l'Exemplaire allemand ci-devant imprimé par ordre de son Eminence le Cardinal de Kollonitz, Archevêque de Vienne, par Jean Lamhoy, Temeswar, chez Math. Joseph Heimerl Imprimeur de l'Administration* ».²³

Les colons français ont eu pendant assez longtemps des curés français. Ainsi à Nagyösz on peut trouver en 1771 le révérend père Leclerq, originaire de Bastogne (Luxembourg), nommé titulaire de ladite paroisse. Károlyliget (Charleville, Kis-oroszi, Klein-oroszi, Sarlevil, Sarjlevil, aujourd'hui Banatsko Veliko Selo en Yougoslavie)²⁴, nouveau village fondé en 1771, a eu jusqu'en 1824 des prêtres français, à savoir Pierre François Leclerq (1773), Pierre Frank (1779-1782), François Xavier Plesingh de Pernthal (1782-1789) et Joseph Eustache (1789-1824). Peu à peu, les cantiques et les sermons français disparaîtront, et les catéchismes français deviendront de plus en plus rares.

On peut encore constater l'arrivée de colons français à la fin du XVIII^e siècle. Au début de 1791, un voyageur français écrit :

« Près de Témesswar j'ai rencontré une famille française, trois hommes, deux femmes et deux enfants. Ils étaient venus de Nancy par le Danube en partie, et de Vienne jusqu'à cette extrémité de la Hongrie comme ils avaient pu, s'expliquant sans savoir un mot d'allemand, portant alternativement leurs petits enfants, dont la fraîcheur était aussi étonnante après une route pareille, que les soins qu'on avait d'eux étaient touchants. Ces bonnes gens alloient rejoindre des parents établis dans un de ces villages de Hongrie que l'empereur François I^{er} avait peuplés de Lorrains. Il y en a plusieurs dans le Bannat ; d'autres où on parle allemand, esclavon. »²⁵

Les colons français se sont assimilés peu à peu au cours du XIX^e siècle ; pourtant en 1840, 5691 se disent encore Français²⁶.

En ce qui concerne l'histoire de cette population « perdue », nous citerons deux articles. Dans le *Dictionnaire géographique de la Hongrie* publié en 1851 par Elek Fényes, nous trouvons la description suivante sous le nom de Charleville : « village français dans le comitat de Torontál à une heure du sud de Komlos. La population se compose de 640 catho-

²² GYALAI, *Magyar igazgatástörténeti...*, op.cit., p. 816.

²³ BOTIS, *Recherche sur la population...*, op.cit., pp. 23-25.

²⁴ GYALAI, *Magyar igazgatástörténeti...*, op.cit., p. 546.

²⁵ IRRUMBERRY, Charles Marie d', comte de Salaberry (1799), *Voyage à Constantinople, en Italie, aux îles de l'Archipel, par l'Allemagne et la Hongrie*, de l'imprimerie de Crapelet, Paris, chez Maradan, Libraire, rue Pavée-André-des-Arls, n°16., in KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages...*, op. cit., pp. 255-269.

²⁶ FÉNYES, Elek (1851), *Magyarország geográfiai szótára I.* [Dictionnaire géographique de la Hongrie, t. I], Pest, p. 25.

liques et de 24 orthodoxes. Le village constitue une seule paroisse possédant une église. Les terres du village sont d'une excellente qualité et les habitants sont de bons agriculteurs. Le village est connu par son beurre de qualité. »²⁷ Dans une encyclopédie publiée en 1895, on peut lire au sujet de cette colonie sous le nom Károlyliget (Charleville) : « Petit village dans le comitat de Torontál (arrondissement de Zsombolya). Population : 828 Allemands (1891). Au siècle dernier, le village a été peuplé de Français qui ont perdu de nos jours leur identité originelle. »²⁸ Enfin notons quelques livres anciens, qui ont été utilisés par les colons français. Voici les titres de quelques-uns :

1) *L'Ange Conducteur dans la Dévotion Chrétienne réduit en pratique en faveur des âmes dévotes avec l'Instruction des riches indulgences, dont jouissent les personnes enrôlées dans la Confrérie de l'Ange Gardien*, Nouvelle Edition Revue, corrigée et accommodée au nouveau et meilleur style où l'on ne trouve point de vieux mots, et enrichie de quelques tailles douces ; À Cologne ; chez Guillaume Metternich, Marchand-Libraire au Griffon, L'an MDCCXIX, Avec permission des Supérieurs ;

2) *Catéchisme du Diocèse De Toul*, Imprimé par l'Ordre de Monseigneur l'Illustrissime Evêque Comte de Toul, Prince de S. Empire, A Toul, chez Joseph Carez, Seul Imprimeur de ladite Ville & de Monseigneur l'Evêque, Avec Privilège du Roi ;

3) *Introductions Chrétiennes pour les jeunes gens, Utiles à toutes de personnes mêlées de plusieurs traits d'Histoires & d'Exemples édifiants*, Corrigés par l'ordre de Monseigneur l'Illustrissime & Révérendissime Claude Douras Evêque, Comte de Toul, Prince de Saint Empire & à l'usage de son Diocèse, A Epinal, chez Claude-Anselme Dumoulin, Imprimeur-Libraire du Collège, MDCCLXII, Avec Approbation et Privilège du Roi ;

4) *Cantiques spirituels traduits d'Allemand en français à l'usage des colons Lorrains dans le Banat de Temeswar*, Pest, 1786²⁹.

A propos de la première statistique démographique de cette région, il faut remarquer que les descendants des anciens colons français ont été considérés comme des « Souabes »³⁰, et recensés comme tels. D'après le premier recensement fait en 1770 par le gouverneur comte de Clary, leur nombre s'élève à 42 201³¹.

Si nous jetons un tout petit coup d'œil sur les voyageurs qui traversent le Sud de la Hongrie, nous pouvons recenser quatre types de voyageurs français : les diplomates (le Marquis de l'Hopital, François Emmanuel Guignard de Saint-Priest, Zorn de Bulach) ; les voyageurs « à la recherche des connaissances utiles » (Jean Claude Flachet), et enfin les émigrés (Aubry de La Mottraye et Charles-Marie d'Yrumberry, le comte de Salaberry). Nous citerons deux voyageurs, Aubry de la Mottray et le comte de Salaberry.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 191.

²⁸ *A Pallas Nagy Lexikona X* [Encyclopédie Pallas, t. X], Budapest, 1895, p. 212.

²⁹ BOTIS, *Recherche sur la population...*, op.cit., pp. 28-29.

³⁰ On appelle habituellement « Souabes » les Allemands de cette région, bien que peu d'entre eux soient d'origine souabe, et ces derniers eux-mêmes, à vrai dire, sont Français et Italiens d'origine. Voir LASSU, István (1829), *Az Austriai Birodalomnak stalistikai, geographiai és históriai leírása* [La description statistique, géographique et historique de l'Empire d'Autriche], Buda, pp. 60-62.

³¹ BOTIS, *Recherche sur la population...*, op.cit., p. 17.

La Motraye³² a visité Szeged et Temesvár dans la première moitié des années 1710, et donne une image plastique et réelle sur cette partie de la Hongrie :

« Comme je desirois voir Segedin & Temeswar, avec le Païs qu'on traverse pour y arriver de ce côté-là, je passai le Danube... & me rendis à Pesth,... jusqu'à un petit Village, nommé Oftcha³³,... je me rendis le lendemain à Kecskemet. C'est un assez gros Bourg, avec deux Eglises, l'une Catholique & l'autre Lutherienne, assez mal bâties, mais grandes : les maisons à proportion sont encore plus mal construites... me mener jusqu'à Segedin, lui offrant une recompense pour lui, ... Il y consentit ; & nous nous y rendîmes en moins de vingt-quatre heures. C'est une ancienne Ville située sur la Teisse, qui est le Tibisir ou Tibiscus des Anciens, lequel se décharge dans le Maros. Elle est bâtie sur les ruines de leur Singidava, Ville de leur Dacia. C'est si peu de chose aujourd'hui qu'elle ne me parut pas meriter la peine que j'avois prise, étant même à demi ruinée par la guerre. On travailloit aussi lentement qu'à Bude à la reparer. Ses principaux habitans consistoient en Rasciens & quelques Hongrois Catholiques, qui étoient encouragez à bâtir des maisons pour se mieux loger qu'ils n'étoient, par les privilèges que l'Empereur leur avoit accordez, en considération des services qu'ils lui avoient rendus contre les Hongrois mécontents, joints à quelques Troupes Auxiliaires à la solde de la France.

Les premiers sur tout sont admirables pour les courses & pour harasser des Troupes régulières, de sorte qu'ils sont à Sa Majesté Imperiale, ce que les Tartares sont au Grand Seigneur. Au reste le Païs entre Pesth & cette Ville est fertile, les pâturages sont gras ; & une preuve de cela, c'est que les bœufs en quelques endroits sont aussi gras qu'en Angleterre.

Ayant traversé la Teisse, je trouvai sur sa rive Orientale un Emin, qui recevoit les droits ou les douanes des Marchandises qui passoient par là. Cet officier, contre la coutume des Turcs, qui ne fouillent jamais les coffres des voyageurs, ou du moins qui n'avoient pas jusques alors visité le mien, y fouilla ; & y trouvant quelques montres d'or, à la vérité il ne les confisqua pas ; mais il les exigea de moi à raison de

³² Aubry de la Mottraye (1674-1743) est un voyageur, diplomate, collectionneur et explorateur français, auteur de récits relatifs à ses témoignages. Il s'est établi en Angleterre pour pratiquer librement le protestantisme. C'est d'ici qu'il s'est mis à visiter les contrées du nord, la Tartarie, la Turquie. Cet érudit luthérien était à la fois diplomate et « touriste » avide d'aventures. Il n'a cessé de voyager entre 1696 et 1729, et s'est enfin installé en Angleterre. Il n'est revenu à Paris, sa ville natale, que pour mourir. Il a parcouru toute l'Italie, et a passé beaucoup de temps à Rome, ville très chère à son cœur. Au cours de son voyage au Proche-Orient, il a vécu à Jaffa, à Tripoli ainsi qu'à Alexandrie. Il a voyagé volontiers aux îles grecques, et évidemment il est souvent parvenu jusqu'à Constantinople. C'est dans cette dernière ville qu'il a fait connaissance avec Imre Thököly. Au retour de ce long voyage, il a repris en Europe le cours de ses voyages, et a terminé sa vie en France. Son œuvre célèbre a été publiée en 1727 sous le titre *Voyages du Sieur A. de La Motraye, en Europe, Asie et Afrique*. Où l'on trouve une grande variété de recherches géographiques, historiques et politiques, sur l'Italie, la Grèce, la Turquie, la Tartarie, Crimée, & Nogaye, la Circassie, la Suède, la Laponie, etc... avec des remarques instructives sur les mœurs, coutumes, opinions &c. des peuples & des païs où l'Auteur a voyagé [...], La Haye, T. Johnson & J. Van Duren. Voir KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages...*, op. cit., p. 99.

³³ Ócsa est une ville hongroise de la région de Pest.

trois pour cent de leur valeur. Après quoi il me donna un de ses Valets, pour me conduire en bateau à un Village tributaire de la Porte, situé environ à deux Mille plus bas, où je louai un chariot & des chevaux pour me rendre à Temeswar, n'y en ayant point d'autres, à ce qu'on me dit, entre ce Village-là & cette Ville-ci. En effet je n'y rencontrai que les mesures de deux Villages, dont les Eglises étoient par conséquent désertes. »³⁴

Il a voyagé de Szeged à Temesvár.

« Je n'arrivai à Temeswar que le 3. de Mai. Je fus conduit d'abord par un des Janissaires de la Garnison, devant le Pacha qui me reçut fort bien. Son Interprète voulut que je logeasse chez lui ; mais je fus attaqué le lendemain d'une fièvre tierce à peu près telle que celle qui me saisit entre Chipre & Jaffa. Je restai là cinq ou six jours, & pendant le relâche qu'elle me donna, j'eus le tems de voir la Ville & les environs. Cette Place tire son nom de la rivière Temes, qui coule dans ses fosses.

Cette Rivière, avec un espece de Marais qui règne autour, & qu'elle inonde, en rend les approches fort difficiles, & la deffendent beaucoup mieux que les Fortifications, qui sont peu considérables, partie à l'antique, partie à la moderne. Ses maisons sont généralement mauvaises & mal bâties : elle a un Tchiarchis ou marché assez spacieux à la manière Turque, mais on ne peut l'appeller une belle Ville, outre qu'étant bâtie dans un lieu bas & marécageux, ses rues sont fort sales. Cela étoit du moins ainsi alors, car ne l'ayant pas vu depuis que les Allemands l'ont enlevée aux Turcs, je ne puis rien dire de son état présent. J'ai remarqué que la Rivière Temes lui donne son nom, contre l'opinion de quelques Géographes qui, faute d'avoir voyagé ou d'avoir bien lû l'Histoire qu'Ovide fait lui même du lieu de son exil, prennent cette Ville pour l'ancienne Tomi, qui a été appelée Temiswara par ses habitants modernes, & qui est située entre Kustangi (l'ancienne Constantia) & Varna, comme je ferai voir ci-après. Le Gouvernement de Temeswar comprenoit autrefois toute cette étendue qui est entre la Teisse & la Transsilvanie, & depuis le Danube jusqu'au grand Waradin inclusivement. Le Grand Seigneur l'a possédée depuis 1552 jusqu'en 1716, qu'elle lui fut enlevée par l'Empereur, à qui Sa Hautesse l'a cédée par la paix de Passarowitz. Ma fièvre s'augmentant, au lieu de diminuer, l'Interprète du Pacha me vouloit retenir jusqu'à ce que je fusse rétabli ; mais je m'en excusai sur des affaires qui m'appelloient à Constantinople. Comme il vit que je voulois absolument partir, il me conseilla d'aller prendre à Widin la voye du Danube, sur un bâtiment qui devoit porter quelques balots que le Pacha envoyoit à Ismaeli, d'où je pourrois aller à Killia prendre la commodité de la première Tchaique qui en partiroit pour Constantinople. »³⁵

L'ouvrage de Salaberry (intitulé *Voyage à Constantinople, en Italie et aux îles de l'Archipel par l'Allemagne et la Hongrie*), écrit sous forme épistolaire, se compose de soixante lettres, dont six (les lettres XV-XX) sont des témoignages sur la Hongrie.

³⁴ La Mottray, in KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages...*, op. cit., p. 112.

³⁵ Ibid. pp. 112-113.

Charles-Marie d'Yrumbery, comte de Salaberry était un homme politique français, né en 1766 à Paris, et mort le 7 juillet 1847 à Fossé, près de Blois. Sa famille était d'une noblesse ancienne et originaire de la Navarre ; son père, président à la Chambre des comptes, est mort sur l'échafaud en 1794. Le jeune Salaberry émigra en 1790, et fit un assez long séjour en Turquie, rejoignit l'armée de Condé, puis se joignit aux troupes royalistes de Vendée, où il commanda une compagnie de cavalerie. Après le coup d'État de Bonaparte, il se retira dans son domaine de Fossé, s'y occupa de lettres et d'agriculture, et resta sous surveillance jusqu'à la chute de Napoléon. Durant les Cent-jours il a combattu en Vendée avec La Rochejaquelein³⁶. À partir de 1815, il siégea à la Chambre des Députés, où il représenta son département, le Loir-et-Cher. Après la révolution de Juillet, il vécut tout à fait à l'écart de la scène politique. Il n'a pas été seulement un homme politique, mais aussi un Français lettré qui publia en 1799 à Paris, sans nom d'auteur, son *Voyage à Constantinople*³⁷.

La Hongrie, Presbourg, la ville des diètes de la noblesse hongroise est présentée par la lettre XV, et dans la lettre XVI, Salaberry décrit précisément la situation géographique de la Hongrie³⁸ et présente la politique de l'empereur Joseph II. A son avis, les Hongrois prennent en naissant les inclinations et les opinions qui les distinguent au moral, comme leurs traits et leurs habits au physique³⁹, c'est pourquoi

« le plus grand tort de Joseph II est de n'avoir pas su composer avec le caractère des Hongrois. La plupart des changemens qu'il vouloit introduire chez eux étaient salutaires ; mais il fait comme ces médecins durs qui, sans ménagement pour un malade et comptant sur l'efficacité de leurs remèdes, les font prendre avec une violence qui en détruit l'effet. Il n'a retiré de ses bonnes intentions que l'exécration d'un peuple aussi extrême dans ses haines que dans son amour. Ils ne l'appellent que le tyran ou Joseph II, qui se disoit roi de Hongrie... Il faisoit le roi d'une manière encore moins constitutionnelle. Un des privilèges auxquels on pourrait dire que les Hongrois tiennent le plus, ils n'étaient pas également jaloux des uns et des autres, c'est celui de s'imposer eux-mêmes. Joseph II sans les consulter autrement, leur envoyoit demander une contribution telle qu'il la vouloit. »⁴⁰

La forme du gouvernement de Hongrie est décrite par la lettre XVII, et les trois autres lettres présentent la partie centrale du royaume de Hongrie et le Banat. Selon l'auteur,

³⁶ Henri du Vergier, comte de La Rochejaquelein (1772-1794), ancien membre de la garde du roi, célèbre chef royaliste vendéen.

³⁷ MICHAUD, L.-G. (1847), *Biographie universelle*, t. LXXX, Paris, pp. 437-739. Voir aussi *Nouvelle biographie générale*, t. XLIII (1864), Firmin Didot Frères, Paris, pp. 163-165 ; HUMBERT, Jean (1938), « La Hongrie du XVIII^e siècle, vue par des voyageurs », *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, septembre 1938, pp. 234-240. Humbert ne mentionne pas que l'auteur du *Voyage à Constantinople*... s'appelle Charles-Marie d'Yrumbery, comte de Salaberry.

³⁸ « La Hongrie est bornée au nord par la Moravie et la Pologne allemande ; à l'orient par la Transilvanie et la Valachie ; au midi par l'Esclavonie et la Serbie ; à l'occident par la Croatie, la Styrie et l'Autriche. » *Voyage à Constantinople*... in KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages*..., op. cit., p. 258.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 259.

⁴⁰ Ibid. pp 259-260.

« De Bude à Témesswar, il n'y a de remarquable que la monotonie des plaines, l'ennui et la laideur des chemins qui ne permettoit souvent pas d'aller à pied. Les noms des villages hongrois sont d'une douceur qui contraste avec la pauvreté qui s'annonce sur l'extérieur des habitans des maisons. Kitsea, Aïs, Komora, Nesmüli, Oësa, voilà des noms aussi agréables, que les villes qui les portent le sont peu. C'est ainsi qu'une Hongroise enveloppée dans ses fourrures, patauge avec ses bottines dans le plus crotté des pays... Au milieu de la Hongrie, à-peu-près, est Fregedin [Szeged] sur la plus triste et la plus jaune des rivières, mais... il ne faut pas juger de la Hongrie par ce que je dis de la partie que j'ai traversée ; c'est la partie centrale, et les mieux cultivées sont le côté de la Transilvanie, et celui qui a pour voisine la Croatie. »⁴¹

Salaberry accorde une grande attention à l'importance militaire de Temesvár.

« Témesswar est la clé de la Hongrie et la capitale du Bannat, ce fameux théâtre de la dernière guerre dont le résultat a été une grande dépense en hommes et en argent, la perte des meilleurs généraux de l'Autriche, et la dévastation du pays le plus florissant.

C'est une ville très-bien fortifiée, selon le système réuni de Cohorn et de Vauban.

Le général Sora a le commandement de Témesswar et de tout le Bannat. La ville peut avoir douze mille hommes de garnison. Il y a un hôpital pour deux mille hommes, et un autre hors de la ville pour les blessés. Les soldats y sont fort bien.

Dans leur administration sage, on reconnoît le fruit des leçons que Joseph II a prises dans ses voyages. Chaque soldat a son lit. L'air est continuellement purifié avec de l'encens, du vinaigre, etc. Une partie des revenus de l'hôpital consiste dans la paie du soldat, qui est retenue pendant son séjour. La ville peut être inondée à une lieue ; mais ce moyen de défense devient aussi nuisible aux assiégés qu'aux assiégeans, par les maladies que causeroient les eaux croupies. On ne peut pas être mieux reçu que nous ne l'avons été par le comte Soro. Il nous a prêté sa voiture, sa loge au spectacle, nous a donné un fort bon dîner où il y avoit d'aussi jolies femmes que la ville le permettoit ; des officiers allemands sentant bien la pipe, et par conséquent vous parlant dans le nez, soufflant de petits complimens au tabac à de bonnes grosses beautés qui ne s'embellissent pas à minauder, qui se croient mises comme à Vienne, où on se croit mis comme à Paris. »⁴²

Les lettres de Salaberry sont quelquefois des lectures particulièrement joyeuses et intéressantes. En voici quelques lignes : « après Témesswar, on trouve Ragosh. C'est la première couchée. Le pays est bien boisé. On y cultive avec succès le blé de Turquie et le tabac. Le changement de mœurs et d'habillemens devient extrêmement sensible. Le premier village qu'on rencontre est grec. Les femmes y sont plus agréables que les Hongroises. Elles ont un mouchoir de couleur sur la tête, en forme de turban ; vont nu-jambes avec des petits jupons extrêmement courts. Cet endroit-là est très joli et très peuplé. On n'y regrette ni les crottes de la Hongrie, ni les bottes qui sont à toutes jambes d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfans. »⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 265.

⁴² Ibid. p. 266.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 266.

Si l'on voulait trouver une page spéciale et particulièrement intéressante dans l'histoire des relations franco-hongroises, ce serait assurément l'histoire des premiers prisonniers de guerre de la Révolution en Hongrie⁴⁴. A cette époque, environ 1000 officiers et 10 000 sous-officiers et simples soldats français avaient été transportés vers le Royaume de Hongrie. Les sources en question permettent de compléter nos connaissances dans le domaine de l'histoire militaire aussi bien que de présenter la vie quotidienne des prisonniers français d'après leurs mémoires, d'étudier leurs relations avec la population hongroise et les autorités civiles.

Quoique la guerre ait été déclarée à l'Autriche le 20 avril 1792, la problématique des premiers prisonniers de guerre apparaît seulement un an après, en 1793. A la suite du changement de camp de Dumouriez, l'armée de la Coalition s'engage dans une guerre de forteresses. Cobourg commence l'invasion du Nord.

Il dispose de plus de cent mille hommes : 45 000 Autrichiens, 13 000 Anglais commandés par York, 12 000 Hanovriens, 8000 Hessois, 15 000 Hollandais, 8000 Prussiens. Avec une extrême lenteur, il se dirige sur la ligne Condé-Valenciennes-Le Quesnoy. Désormais le nombre des prisonniers français augmente de jour en jour. Mais il fallait se rendre compte de ce que ces soldats n'étaient plus de simples mercenaires au moment de la prise de Condé-Valenciennes-Le Quesnoy, mais de vrais patriotes, révolutionnaires et même agitateurs ; des messagers de la Liberté-Égalité-Fraternité de la Révolution.

La force de la nation et le défi d'une guerre idéologique choquent la vieille Europe. Il est évident que ces soldats ne sont plus des recrues de l'armée royale et que leurs officiers ne sont plus les représentants de la noblesse, faciles à reconverter et prêts à changer de camp. Ainsi, le problème des prisonniers de guerre deviendra vite un problème politique de première importance.

Pour le résoudre, la vieille Europe invente le prototype du camp de prisonniers isolé, placé loin du pays d'origine et facile à surveiller, et qui peut accueillir un grand nombre de prisonniers. Pour le commandement militaire autrichien, les forteresses du sud-est de la Hongrie, qui ont perdu beaucoup de leur importance stratégique avec la décadence de l'Empire ottoman, offrent une solution idéale comme lieux de détention. L'itinéraire du transport était le suivant : du champ de bataille, les prisonniers étaient conduits à Kintzbourg,⁴⁵ ensuite, par voie fluviale (sur le Danube, la Drave, la Tisza) ils étaient transportés dans cette région lointaine, où les travaux préparatoires avaient déjà été entrepris pour assurer leur accueil, depuis le mois d'août. En effet, on s'est mis à rénover les casernes, on a recensé leur capacité d'accueil. Malgré tout cela, leur installation, les problèmes sanitaires et les inconvénients politiques ont causé de sérieux problèmes aux autorités militaires⁴⁶. Cet itinéraire est bien connu par les autorités, parce qu'il s'agit de l'itinéraire du repeuplement depuis des décennies !

⁴⁴ LENKEFI, Ferenc (2000), *Kakas a kasban. Francia hadifoglyok Magyarországon az első koalíciós háború idején 1793-1797* [Coq dans la cage. L'histoire des prisonniers de guerre français en Hongrie pendant la Guerre de la Première Coalition 1793-1797], Petit Real, Budapest.

⁴⁵ Günzburg, Guntzbourg est une ville de Bavière (Allemagne) située dans l'arrondissement de Guntzbourg.

⁴⁶ BARCSAY-AMANT, Zoltán (1934), *A francia forradalmi háborúk hadifoglyai Magyarországon, ideletelepülésük első esztendejében. 1793* [Les prisonniers de guerre de la Révolution française en Hongrie. La première année de leur établissement, 1793], Budapest, pp. 26-63.

L'intensité de l'activité militaire révéla rapidement l'insuffisance des plans d'installation. Par exemple, le Conseil de Guerre Suprême prévoyait l'installation de quatre mille prisonniers français à partir de l'été 1793, mais les rapports parlent de plus de sept mille, et en octobre ils avançaient un chiffre beaucoup plus élevé, onze mille prisonniers. Il fallut donc modifier le plan, et ajouter aux lieux de détention fortifiés du sud-est de la Hongrie (Szeged, Temesvár, Arad, Pétervárad, Eszék, etc.) d'autres régions, comme la Transylvanie (Fogaras, Gyulafehérvár, Medgyes, Nagyszeben, etc.), quelques forteresses du nord-ouest (Győr, Pozsony, etc.), une forteresse subcarpatique (Munkács) et même celles de Pest et Buda, au centre du pays. De plus, sous la pression d'une multitude inattendue de prisonniers – et malgré la volonté expresse de l'empereur François – ils étaient également installés en Styrie et en Basse-Autriche⁴⁷. Deux facteurs ont défini principalement la situation des prisonniers : leurs conditions sanitaires d'abord, et leur hygiène mentale ensuite ; c'est-à-dire le fait qu'ils avaient été « contaminés » politiquement, par conséquent, ils étaient considérés comme des éléments dangereux en Hongrie.

La mortalité des transports s'élevait à 15-20 %. Le scorbut, la diarrhée, la dysenterie, la fièvre des blessés avaient leurs victimes. Avec l'arrivée du mauvais temps, le nombre des malades ne cessait d'augmenter. N'oublions pas que la majorité des prisonniers de guerre est arrivée en Hongrie à la fin de l'automne, et que l'hiver faisait geler les rivières : ils devaient faire le reste du chemin à pied.

Du point de vue de leur condition physique, les rapports militaires distinguaient trois niveaux : ceux qui étaient en bonne santé, ensuite les transportables, enfin ceux qu'on devait hospitaliser le plus rapidement possible. Ces derniers pouvaient rester dans les hôpitaux militaires de Presbourg et de Pest. Des feux et de la fumée témoignèrent souvent du passage des prisonniers français et de la peur de la population locale d'une épidémie⁴⁸. Les mémoires nous permettent de reconstituer l'itinéraire du transport aussi bien que la vie quotidienne des prisonniers français. Dans la présente étude, nous souhaitons attirer l'attention sur deux mémoires.

Ceux du général Dellard⁴⁹ ont été rédigés juste après événements, mais le manuscrit en

⁴⁷ BERTAUD, Jean-Paul (1985), *La vie quotidienne des soldats de la Révolution 1789-1799*, Hachette, Paris, pp. 250-263.

⁴⁸ BARCSAY-AMANT, *A francia forradalmi háborúk...*, *op.cit.*, pp. 70-78.

⁴⁹ Jean-Pierre Dellard est un général de brigade français, né le 8 avril 1774 à Cahors et mort le 7 juillet 1832 à Besançon (Doubs). Il a fait les campagnes de 1792 et 1793 aux armées de Hollande et du Nord, a assisté à l'occupation de la place de Geertruidenberg, et a pris part à toutes les affaires qui avaient lieu en avant de Lille. Le 29 floréal an II, il a contribué à la prise de 400 Autrichiens, et est tombé au pouvoir de l'ennemi le 3 prairial suite au combat de Templeuve, près de Tournai. Les mémoires de Jean-Pierre Dellard nous permettent la reconstruction de l'itinéraire du transport et de la vie quotidienne des prisonniers français. Rendu à la liberté dans le mois de frimaire an IV, il a rejoint son régiment à l'Armée de Sambre-et-Meuse. En 1808, Napoléon I^{er} l'a promu officier de la Légion d'Honneur, et fait, peu de temps après, baron de l'Empire. Après la chute de Napoléon, Louis XVIII lui a confié le commandement de la place de Valenciennes. Dès octobre 1814, il est promu chevalier de Saint-Louis. Pendant les Cent-Jours, il a contribué à la conservation de la ville. Sous la seconde Restauration, le gouvernement le maintient à son poste. En 1818, il est passé à celui de Cherbourg. En 1823, Louis XVIII lui a donné le commandement de Besançon. Il est mort dans cette ville. Ses mémoires ont été publiées à Paris, en 1892. Voir DELLARD, B^{on} François (1892), *Mémoires militaires sur*

a été perdu pendant la campagne de Russie en 1812. Il les a reconstitués par la suite, mais ce nouveau manuscrit n'a été que partiellement retrouvé. La partie qui a été publiée apporte une contribution intéressante à l'histoire des premiers prisonniers de guerre de la Révolution française.

Nous avons retrouvé un autre manuscrit quasiment oublié, celui du *Manifeste* du capitaine Joseph Hautière, écrit en 1796, à son retour de Hongrie, dans un style peut-être trop souvent déclamatoire et très proche de la langue parlée, mais qui présente tout de même une authenticité remarquable, et contient des renseignements précieux.

Les impressions et les expériences semblent être déterminées avant tout par des péripéties et par les souffrances du transport qui menait les auteurs vers la Hongrie.

Le premier mémorialiste, le général Dellard commençait son voyage forcé à Cologne ; ensuite, arrivé au bord du Danube, il continua par voie fluviale, avec d'autres prisonniers français, sur des radeaux de bois :

« Nous faisons par jour de vingt à trente lieues. Il fallait conséquemment se pourvoir de vivres dans les endroits où nous couchions sur les bords du fleuve. Un bateau qu'on appelait l'Infirmerie nous suivait, portant les malades du convoi. Malheur à celui qui y mettait les pieds, il était à l'instant frappé d'une espèce de peste qui l'envoyait bientôt au tombeau. Tous les soirs, on en retirait les cadavres de malheureux qui avaient succombé à cette affreuse épidémie et on les enterrait sur le bord de l'eau. Il n'était pas rare d'en voir jeter encore vivants dans les fosses mortuaires, creusées par les prisonniers eux-mêmes, sous la surveillance de notre escorte... En passant sous Vienne, un grand nombre de malades qui avaient jusqu'alors évité d'aller à l'Infirmerie, demandèrent à entrer à l'hôpital. Cette grâce leur fut refusée... »⁵⁰

Après cette traversée dramatique et pleine de souffrances, les conditions de vie de Dellard se sont améliorées lorsqu'il est arrivé dans un camp de prisonniers à Djakovo⁵¹, à la frontière de la Turquie. Ici, 300 officiers vivaient dans un ancien camp militaire :

« Le local qu'ils occupaient avait jadis servi d'infirmerie à la cavalerie autrichienne dans la dernière guerre contre la Turquie. Les officiers français étaient par chambres et vivaient à l'ordinaire comme des soldats. Cet arrangement était le seul qui nous convint, vu la modicité de notre paye et l'impossibilité de vivre isolément. Des soldats français qu'on nous avait permis de retirer des casemates de Temeswar, place située dans notre voisinage et où ils mouraient comme des mouches, allaient nous chercher des provisions dans le bourg voisin et nous servaient en même temps de Cuisiniers. »⁵²

les guerres de la République et de l'Empire Paris, à la Librairie Illustrée, in KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages...*, op. cit., p. 273.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 274.

⁵¹ Djakovo est une ville dans le Comitat d'Osijek-Baranja, en Croatie. Elle fut conquise par les Turcs ottomans en 1536, et resta dans leur possession pendant 150 ans. Djakovo est devenue en 1773 le siège de l'évêché de Bosnie-Djakovo et Syrmie.

⁵² Ibid. p. 276.

Le 8 novembre 1793, le capitaine Joseph Hautière et ses camarades arrivèrent aux cantonnements préparés dans les environs de Kintzbourg, en attendant les ordres pour l'embarquement.

« Les barques – écrit-il – sur lesquelles nous étions montés étaient d'une construction faible et peu sûre. Le nombre n'ayant pas été suffisant, on construisit des radeaux sur lesquels on mit les malheureux soldats. Un ou deux officiers, chargés de l'inspection de ces misérables, avaient seuls une espèce de cabane construite sur le milieu du radeau, où ils se mettaient à l'abri du mauvais temps et se chauffaient à l'aide d'une espèce de poêle qu'on y avait mis. Depuis notre embarquement, les soldats furent séparés des officiers et ne purent conséquemment en recevoir des secours dans les moments où ils avaient le plus besoin.

Notre destination était pour Pest, Mungatz (*Munkács*), Esseg (*Eszék*), Segedhin (*Szeged*), Temeswar (*Temesvár*), Grand-Waradin (*Nagyvarasdin*) et Ratza (*Racsa*), villes de la basse Hongrie et la plupart voisines de la Turquie.

Pendant les premiers jours de notre trajet sur le fleuve, nous ne perdîmes pas beaucoup de soldats, mais lorsque nous commençâmes à nous approcher de l'Autriche, chaque jour, nous voyions sur les rives de ce fleuve des cadavres jetés ça et là, le mauvais temps, le manque de vivres, l'abandon des malades, tout, en un mot, conspirait notre destruction. Nos chefs d'escorte n'en pouvaient mais on ne leur donnait aucun moyen de soulager l'humanité souffrante. Nous eûmes une perte assez considérable depuis Kintzbourg à Lintz. »⁵³

Le 23 décembre 1793, ils arrivent à l'hôpital de Pest :

« Ce bâtiment immense à trois quarts de lieue de Pest, est bâti sur la rive gauche du Danube – écrit-il. Les colonnes du Quesnoy et de l'affaire d'Avesnelesec achevèrent de remplir ce lieu par le grand nombre de malades qu'elles avaient. Ces malheureux restèrent trois à quatre jours sans recevoir aucun soulagement. Le petit nombre de bien portants fut transféré à Mungatz. Dans l'espace de quinze jours, 12 à 1800 prisonniers furent détruits, sans secours suffisants pour se soulager au besoin ; point de chirurgiens instruits, sans linge pour changer, couverts de vermine, sans cesse en butte aux injures et à la barbarie des officiers de police, beaucoup ne purent résister à tant de dureté : chaque jour, plus ou moins de malheureux étaient sacrifiés. Pendant le fort de la maladie, un tombereau était continuellement occupé à transporter les morts dans les trous immenses des sables de la rive droite du fleuve, où des milliers de victimes demandent à hautes cris vengeance des assassinats commis en leur personne. »⁵⁴

De ce point de vue, il faut aussi mentionner les problèmes de religion chez les prisonniers. L'exigence de leur entretien spirituel a fait son apparition dès la fin de 1793. C'est pourquoi, conformément aux ordres du Conseil de Guerre de la cour de Vienne, le devoir

⁵³ *Manifeste du traitement des prisonniers français pendant leur captivité (en Hongrie) en 1793, 94 et 95*, par le citoyen Joseph Hautière, capitaine au 6^e bataillon de Soissons, fait prisonnier à l'affaire du 12 septembre 1793, à Avesnelebec, Bibliothèque Nationale - Manuscrits 10173.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

du Haut Commandement militaire de Buda était, avec l'aide des archevêques d'Esztergom et de Kalocsa, d'envoyer des prêtres français émigrés aux endroits où les prisonniers étaient gardés, sur proposition de leurs propres évêques et par présentation bénévole. Sur ces territoires, douze prêtres travaillent au comble de l'initiative, mais la fluctuation était importante à cause d'éventuels décès et des fréquents déplacements forcés⁵⁵. La vie quotidienne des prisonniers français avait été déterminée avant tout par l'attitude des autorités militaires autrichiennes, mais leurs conditions de vie réelles – souvent malgré la volonté expresse du Haut Commandement militaire – changeaient d'une localité à l'autre. Ainsi, par exemple à Djakovo – écrit Dellard – « nous vivions bien ; les subsistances étaient faciles à se procurer et peu coûteuses. Une oie, par exemple, ne valait que six à sept sous... Nous jouâmes, il est vrai, quelques pièces du Théâtre Français, particulièrement de Voltaire, mais elles ne pouvaient nullement porter atteinte au bon ordre et encore moins à l'esprit des sujets de François II. Ce qui n'empêcha pas que trois de nos principaux acteurs ne fussent enlevés de nuit et conduit en Transylvanie, où ils expièrent par une plus longue captivité l'innocent plaisir que ce délassement leur avait procuré. »⁵⁶

Les mémoires du capitaine Joseph Hautière insistent sur les difficultés financières des soldats prisonniers :

« En vain nous avons voulu soulager les malheureux soldats : les officiers autrichiens y ont mis opposition. On empêchait ces misérables d'entrer dans les salles d'officiers, et des sentinelles veillaient à ce qu'ils ne reçussent aucun secours de leurs chefs. On a encore, depuis ce temps malheureux, cherché à faire passer des fonds aux soldats, mais le gouvernement de Pest s'y est opposé. Il y a seulement eu 200 florins qu'on a remis au lieutenant commandant à l'hôpital de Pest, et il est prouvé que cet argus n'a distribué qu'une cinquantaine de florins tout au plus. Voici l'emploi qu'il en a fait. Il donnait environ un quart d'once de tabac à fumer ou en poudre pour 10 à 12 malheureux. Cette répartition se faisait sur le nombre de soldats qui se trouvaient à l'hôpital et tous les 10 à 15 jours. Ainsi 100 ou 200 soldats s'y trouvaient, alors cette somme n'a jamais pu être entièrement dépensée. Qu'est devenu le reste ? Ceci n'est pas bien difficile à trouver. Prudhomme, commandant au 3^e bataillon de Paris, avait remis au capitaine de police à Grand-Varadin, une somme 30 à 40 florins pour être distribuée aux soldats de son bataillon ; on la lui a remise, en répondant que le cabinet de Vienne avait fait une défense expresse de rien laisser passer aux prisonniers des officiers. »⁵⁷

Les autorités militaires contrôlaient et censuraient les lettres, la correspondance des soldats français. Il fallait d'abord présenter toutes les lettres au Conseil de Guerre de la Cour, pour pouvoir leur donner une suite favorable.

En même temps, il était sévèrement interdit à la population d'aider à transmettre le courrier des prisonniers français. Plusieurs fois des avertissements ont été lancés à la population « de ne point converser avec ces prisonniers »⁵⁸. Les sous-officiers et les simples soldats avaient très peu de liberté de mouvement. Ils ne pouvaient quitter leurs prisons pour

⁵⁵ LENKEFI, *Kakas a kasban...*, *op.cit.*, pp. 115-121.

⁵⁶ Dellard in KÖVER, *Documents et témoignages...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 276, 278.

⁵⁷ HAUTIERE, *Manifeste du traitement des prisonniers français...*, *op.cit.*

⁵⁸ Archives départementales du comitat Csongrád, protocole du conseil municipal, 2049/1793.

aller en ville que pour faire des achats, et ceci sous escorte, ou bien à une occasion extraordinaire, par exemple pour l'enterrement d'un camarade. Ces mesures sévères n'étaient pas employées à l'égard des officiers. Il ne leur était pas interdit de prendre contact avec la population, mais ils devaient donner leur parole d'honneur de ne jamais parler de « leur propre constitution » aux habitants, et de ne jamais quitter les limites de la ville⁵⁹. Pour assurer leurs frais, les commandements militaires locaux versaient une certaine somme d'argent aux prisonniers. Les officiers, les sous-officiers et les simples soldats devaient se débrouiller avec cet argent : acheter leurs lits, leur vaisselle, etc., et ceci parce que le trésor royal voulait récupérer – au moins en partie – la pension versée aux prisonniers français⁶⁰.

Par conséquent, entre les marchands locaux et les Français, une sorte de contact économique s'est établi et se stabilisait progressivement. Les interventions du Conseil de Guerre le prouvent, car il lançait continuellement des appels aux marchands locaux : pas de crédit aux prisonniers français ! Ils doivent payer comptant, car, en aucun cas, les autorités ne se portent garant, et elles ne payeront pas les dettes des prisonniers français...⁶¹ D'après les témoignages, la population s'intéressait surtout aux tissus et aux vêtements français. Étant donné que les officiers avaient des bagages relativement importants, ils ont répondu à cette demande du marché local en vendant leurs vêtements. À leur tour, les autorités, pour des raisons sanitaires, ont plusieurs fois averti les habitants de la ville de renoncer « aux achats des vêtements français »⁶². Il est à noter également que ces rapports économiques avaient de temps en temps un aspect plutôt politisant : par exemple, sur les boutons des vêtements mis en vente par des officiers français, figuraient les mots « Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité ». Les Français avaient aussi l'habitude de faire cadeau aux habitants de cocardes pour des raisons qui n'étaient certainement pas que commerciales...

Finalement, nous posons la question suivante : quels peuvent être les « apports » de la présence française dans la Hongrie du Sud au XVIII^e siècle ? Nous aimerions souligner quatre facteurs. Premièrement, les colons constituent une main-d'œuvre nombreuse et active, défrichent une grande quantité de terres, contribuent largement à la modernisation de l'agriculture et à l'adaptation des nouvelles formes de culture. Deuxièmement, les ingénieurs militaires déploient d'importantes activités de réorganisation administrative, économique et militaire, modernisent des forteresses et influencent la transformation du paysage. Troisièmement, les voyageurs assurent le transfert des connaissances relatives à la Hongrie fondées sur l'expérience personnelle et offrent au public français une représentation plus nuancée de la Hongrie et des Hongrois. Quatrièmement, la présence des prisonniers de guerre français a contribué à transmettre les nouvelles, l'esprit et les idées de la Révolution dans les structures du quotidien.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 1775/1793 ; 1776/1793 ; 1326/1794.

⁶⁰ BARCSAY-AMANT, *A francia forradalmi háborúk...*, op.cit., pp. 78-83.

⁶¹ Archives départementales du comitat Csongrád, protocole du conseil municipal, 1877/1793 ; 1794/1793 ; 1835/1794.

⁶² Ibid. 1914/1793.

Séparer l'inséparable : l'évaluation de la politique religieuse de la Révolution par Edgar Quinet et Philippe Buchez

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Historiens formés dans la seconde moitié du 20^e siècle, nourris surtout d'interprétations sociales, politiques, économiques, nous devons constater avec un certain étonnement la prépondérance de la perspective religieuse qu'un tas d'historiens actifs dans la première moitié du 19^e siècle adoptent lorsqu'ils traitent de l'histoire française et plus spécifiquement de la Révolution. Même ceux, comme Thierry, Mignet ou Guizot, qui exposent, en anticipant sur Marx, une interprétation prioritairement socio-politique (fondée sur la victoire des classes moyenne sur une aristocratie décadente et sur l'établissement d'un régime libéral sur les ruines de l'absolutisme par la bourgeoisie montante) ne manquent pas de qualifier le processus en question de *providentiel*, entendant par là que « *l'action supérieure se substitue à celle de l'homme et agit toute seule* »¹. En général, l'on peut dire qu'après l'effondrement de l'Empire, nous assistons à un retour en force de la piété : les représentants de la génération romantique, lecteurs avides du *Génie du christianisme* par Chateaubriand, ont rompu avec le matérialisme scientifico-sensualiste des Idéologues et accepté le rôle central que la religiosité joue dans l'éthique et dans la politique. Bien entendu, cette réhabilitation de la spiritualité n'implique pas forcément une conformité avec l'orthodoxie ecclésiastique, au contraire : la foi dans le progrès et la conviction que dans l'histoire, c'est l'absolu qui se révèle, ouvre des chemins qui mènent assez loin de Rome et que quelques grands hétérodoxes (comme par exemple Lamennais) n'hésitent pourtant pas à prendre. Notons enfin que dans le domaine de l'historiographie, il faut procéder avec une très grande prudence lorsqu'on rend compte des renvois fréquents dans le discours à la volonté divine se manifestant dans l'histoire ou bien à la Providence : les historiens, par convenance ou par facilité, nous paraissent souvent prêts à exposer dans un vocabulaire dévot (ou le terme de progrès se voit « baptisé » assez facilement en « providentiel ») un fatalisme en vérité très peu chrétien² ou bien des explications qui relèvent d'une philosophie de l'histoire plus ou moins séculière. Tandis que les Encyclopédistes ont parlé d'un *ordre naturel* auquel les hommes doivent se conformer, Guizot et la plupart des penseurs politiques du 19^e siècle parlent volontiers d'un *ordre divin* – impliquant pratiquement les mêmes obligations.

Le point de départ de mes réflexions exposées ici se trouve dans un chapitre volumineux de l'ouvrage *The Transformation of Modern Political Culture* (édité par François Furet et

¹ La phrase est de Joseph de Maistre, citée par VIALLANEIX, Paul (1989), « Réformation et Révolution », in FURET, F. – OZOUF, M., *The Transformation of Political Culture, 1789-1848*, pp. 359–374. 360.

² C'est l'accusation qu'un certain nombre de critiques portent contre Thiers et Mignet, qui renvoient souvent à « la force des choses » comme explication. Voir CROSSLEY, Ceri (1993), *French Historians and Romanticism*, Routledge, London, p. 31.

par Mona Ozouf) qui réunit des articles extrêmement intéressants consacrés à cette thématique. Je pense tout d'abord à l'article de Pierre Manent, intitulé *Quelques remarques sur la notion de la « sécularisation »*, dans lequel cet illustre historien s'interroge sur un paradoxe apparent : comment s'expliquer que dans la première moitié du 19^e siècle le christianisme, qui dans les deux siècles qui précèdent la Révolution française, a subi une perte de prestige spectaculaire, non seulement revient sur scène, mais devient « *un élément constitutif, positif, nourricier, moteur même* »³ du mouvement historique ? Il s'agit sans doute d'autre chose que le retour du balancier après l'échec de la Révolution « impie » à fonder un régime juste et stable. La réponse que fournit Manent à cette question consiste à souligner le caractère « idéal » de cette « religion du 19^e siècle » : l'on sait que depuis le 17^e siècle au moins, l'ordre politique européen se détache progressivement de toute opinion religieuse et que la religion est violemment arrachée de son inscription politique⁴ – c'est le processus qu'on a l'habitude d'appeler *sécularisation*. Or, certaines convictions d'origine chrétienne, expulsées de force de leur enracinement institutionnel (ecclésiastique), reviennent dans une nouvelle forme, adaptée aux exigences du temps post-révolutionnaire : dépourvu presque complètement de ses composantes dogmatiques et de ses aspirations transcendantes, ce christianisme « renoué » se réduira désormais à un message éthico-politique, nullement éloigné de celui de la Révolution. Comme le dit Manent : tantôt c'est la Révolution et la démocratie qui apparaissent vouloir réaliser dans le monde le « véritable » message évangélique (longtemps corrompue par les Eglises et les théologiens), tantôt c'est le christianisme des époques précédentes qui semble « anticiper » la liberté, l'égalité et la fraternité⁵ – les deux points de vue sont sous-tendus par une vision idéale de la religion, qui se distingue à peine de la « foi humanitaire » chère à Paul Bénichou. Celle-ci se manifeste dans un vocabulaire emprunté à la foi chrétienne et tourne toujours autour de la personne de Jésus-Christ, rédempteur de l'humanité, moins par son statut ontologique de fils de Dieu que par son apport éthico-politique. De toute manière, ce christianisme idéalisé, qui ne vise plus le salut de l'âme dans l'au-delà, n'est plus « *que la tautologie de la démocratie ou de la Révolution* »⁶. A mon sens, nous assistons ici à l'avènement d'un stade important du processus de transformation séculaire, engagé au moins depuis la Renaissance, qui dépouille progressivement le christianisme de ses spécificités théologiques (ou du moins les relativise sans admettre ouvertement leur abandon total), magnifie son contenu éthique (surtout l'affirmation de l'autonomie du sujet moral) et le transforme en une sorte de spiritualité laïque traduisant des revendications politiques. Contrairement à ce que dit Renan, le christianisme n'est pas mort⁷, mais il ne conserve son rôle de moteur ou de boussole qu'au prix de s'adapter à l'esprit du siècle et de se délester d'une partie de ses caractéristiques qui avaient pourtant fait sa richesse. Saint-Simon, figure emblématique de l'époque, adresse

³ MANENT, Pierre (1989), « Quelques remarques sur la notion de sécularisation », in FURET, François – OZOUF, Mona (dir), *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, vol. 3, *The Transformation of Political Culture 1789-1848*, Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp. 351-357. 351.

⁴ Ibid. p. 352.

⁵ Ibid. p. 353.

⁶ Ibid. p. 354.

⁷ Voir WINOCK, Michel (1999), *La France politique*, Paris, p. 168.

son *Nouveau christianisme* à ceux qui ont compris « la supériorité de la morale sur tout le reste de la loi, c'est-à-dire sur le culte et le dogme »⁸.

Il est spectaculaire que dans la première moitié du 19^e siècle, les représentants des orientations politiques les plus variées s'efforcent de souligner la conformité de leurs positions avec l'esprit « véritable » des Évangiles. Les représentants de la droite légitimiste ont, bien entendu, conservé leurs liens avec l'Eglise catholique : leur fidélité à la tradition politico-religieuse de la monarchie de l'Ancien Régime les rend peu ouverts aux innovations dans ce domaine – ce n'est pas eux qui m'intéresseront ici. Quant aux catholiques libéraux, amis de Montalambert, leur position est assez compliquée, comme nous le montre l'excellent étude de Sylvain Milbach. On peut tout de même citer Alfred de Courcy, qui affirme que les principes ayant fondé la Révolution sont par essence bons parce qu'ils s'inscrivent dans le sens de la Révélation⁹. Pour les libéraux, la leçon principale qu'on peut et doit tirer de l'étude des Évangiles n'est autre que l'importance de la liberté individuelle et l'autonomie du sujet moral – comme nous allons voir, Quinet n'est pas très éloigné de cette position. Bien entendu, la gauche radicale – jacobinisant, républicaine et égalitaire – voit d'un autre œil le message de Jésus. Pour s'en assurer, nous n'avons qu'à consulter l'excellent livre de Berenson, qui nous décrit avec brio l'idéologie des « démocs-socs » des années 30 et 40 : leur identification de Jésus avec les pauvres et les prolétaires exploités par le capitalisme *laissez-faire* comporte une critique très amère de l'idéologie libérale et individualiste de la bourgeoisie 'voltairienne' – nous en retrouverons les éléments principaux chez Buchez. Le mérite principal du livre de Berenson est, à mon sens, que son auteur ne se contente pas de la simple présentation de l'attitude des chrétiens égalitaires prônant l'égalité politique et sociale, ainsi que de l'étude de leur rhétorique fondée sur l'identification de la Trinité avec le slogan ternaire de la Révolution (liberté, égalité, fraternité) ou du socialisme avec l'Eden ou la Terre Promise, etc. Berenson montre aussi que cette idéologie, qui s'enracine dans la réalité socio-politique du moment, est une sorte d'intermédiaire culturel permettant de faire l'unité la classe ouvrière urbaine/agricole et les classes moyennes¹⁰.

Je vais continuer ma réflexion en soulignant un autre aspect du contexte intellectuel. Les années de la Restauration et de la monarchie de Juillet sont caractérisées par une quantité d'efforts remarquables visant à comprendre et à interpréter la Révolution française, événement transformateur de la réalité politique et sociale. Reinstaller la Révolution dans

⁸ SAINT-SIMON, Claude Henri Rouvroy de (1825), *Le nouveau christianisme*, Paris, p. IV.

⁹ MILBACH, Sylvain (2010), « Les catholiques libéraux et la Révolution française autour de 1848 », *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, n° 362, pp. 55-78. 70.

¹⁰ BERENSON, Edward (1984), *Populist Religion and Left-Wing Politics in France, 1830-1852*, Princeton University Press, p. 48. Berenson décrit une économie française dans laquelle la petite propriété agricole et l'artisanat urbain jouent un rôle prédominant, ce qui veut dire que la critique morale des rapports interindividuels a encore un sens. Jusqu'à 1850 l'industrie française n'était pas spectaculairement plus concentrée ou mécanisée qu'en 1820 : la croissance dans la production s'explique par une exploitation plus efficace, plus rationnelle de la main d'œuvre, largement disponible. Les producteurs agricoles endettés, ainsi que les artisans fragilisés et prolétarisés avaient beaucoup en commun : exposés à l'arbitraire imprévisible du marché et de la météorologie, étaient logiquement réceptifs à l'idéologie catholico-montagnarde, dans laquelle la compétition et la concurrence (immorales) furent remplacés par la coopération, c'est-à-dire la fraternité.

l'histoire française est d'ailleurs une entreprise qui va, pour ainsi dire, à l'encontre des convictions de la plupart des révolutionnaires, qui se voyaient plutôt comme agents d'une rupture radicale d'avec le passé national. L'enjeu est de pouvoir démontrer que la liberté et l'égalité ne sont pas des idées absolument nouvelles en 1789, mais qu'on peut déjà en détecter au moins les traces au sein de l'Ancien Régime. Bien entendu, ces efforts déployés par des historiens nés, pour la plupart, dans les années 80 et 90, appartenant ainsi à la génération romantique sont influencés par leurs convictions idéologiques et leurs prises de positions politiques. Légitimistes, orléanistes, libéraux, républicains et proto-socialistes jacobinisés s'opposent dans l'arène politique et leurs débats se sont peu à peu transposés du territoire de la philosophie politique à celui de l'histoire. Comme le dit un illustre spécialiste de l'époque : l'histoire est progressivement devenue la langue de la politique¹¹, ce qui veut dire que les aspirations et revendications politiques des uns et des autres ne sont plus formulés en termes philosophiques abstraits¹², mais avec des renvois à tel ou tel épisode ou acteur de l'histoire française et de la Révolution. Les uns pensent découvrir les origines de la liberté et de l'égalité dans la monarchie et dans l'Eglise catholique, d'autres privilégient plutôt la mémoire de la noblesse ou bien des Réformés. Dans mon étude, je tenterai de prendre en considération la perspective religieuse et la perspective historique, pour voir comment deux historiens et penseurs illustres, idéologiquement très éloignés l'un de l'autre, voient le rapport entre le christianisme et la Révolution ainsi que la contribution de l'Eglise catholique et le protestantisme à l'histoire universelle et française, enfin, l'évaluation qu'ils donnent de la politique religieuse et ecclésiastique de la Révolution. Le premier protagoniste de mes réflexions, Edgar Quinet (1803-1875), a toujours été relativement bien connu et aussi apprécié par les dix-neuviémistes (littéraires, historiens ou philosophes), mais grâce aux efforts de François Furet et de l'école furetienne, son prestige a augmenté dans les dernières décennies. L'autre, Philippe Buchez (1796-1865), est un ancien élève de l'école saint-simonienne, converti ultérieurement au catholicisme, qui n'a jamais caché sa vénération pour Robespierre et les jacobins, ce qui explique assez bien pourquoi François Furet (déjà cité) a une opinion très basse de lui.

Pendant sa longue carrière, les idées de Quinet ont subi quelques transformations d'importance, mais un trait permanent de sa pensée est la conviction que l'histoire humaine est potentiellement une histoire sacrée, dans la mesure où en son sein se révèle progressivement une vérité divine. Une main invisible oriente l'histoire vers sa fin ultime, qui n'est autre que la liberté subjective de l'individu. Grâce au progrès, l'homme se verra progressivement libéré des contraintes institutionnelles et idéologiques qui pèsent sur lui¹³. Afin de prouver cette vérité qui tourne autour des notions de la *conscience* et du *moi*, Quinet procède à une reconstruction par époque de l'état de la liberté individuelle. A ses yeux, aux temps les plus reculés, celui des empires antiques orientaux, dominés par une sorte de panthéisme, la liberté subjective ne pouvait nullement se manifester étant donné que l'individu était absorbé dans une nature divinisée. Dans la suite, la liberté se voit reconnue comme

¹¹ La phrase de Stanley Mellon est citée par CROSSLEY, *French Historians and Romanticism*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹² La pensée abstraite et spéculative, conduisant à la perte des libertés concrètes et palpables, est justement ce qu'on reproche souvent aux révolutionnaires. Le sens historique serait ainsi l'antidote du radicalisme et l'instrument de la modération.

¹³ Pour une excellente synthèse diachronique de sa pensée, voir CROSSLEY, *French Historians and Romanticism*, *op. cit.*

valeur importante dans les polis grecques et dans la république romaine, mais dans ce contexte républicain elle est identifiée au bien-être de la communauté, de la cité¹⁴. Enfin, c'est le christianisme qui met en valeur l'intériorité et la subjectivité, impliquant une sorte de libération éthique de l'individu des contraintes extérieures. Il n'y a donc rien dans les intuitions fondamentales des Évangiles qui soit incompatible avec l'esprit de liberté qui se manifeste de manière spectaculaire au 19^e siècle : la liberté individuelle la plus entière est l'aboutissement de la doctrine prônée par Jésus-Christ¹⁵. Mais il importe aussi à Quinet de souligner que la leçon véritable de Jésus ne correspond nullement aux pratiques romaines. Il dénonce la tradition de servitude et de soumission qui caractérise l'Église catholique depuis ses débuts : c'est une institution qui fait subir une déformation inacceptable à la véritable doctrine chrétienne, lorsqu'elle s'affirme comme transmettrice exclusive de la grâce divine et lorsqu'elle se charge de défendre la hiérarchie sociale et les inégalités qui caractérisent l'Ancien Régime. En affirmant que les promesses ne se réaliseront qu'en l'au-delà, L'Église avait toujours réussi à qualifier de « *saintes utopies* »¹⁶ les manifestations de l'esprit de liberté et d'égalité que le passage de Jésus sur terre aurait du produire au sein de la société humaine. Elle a fait oublier aux fidèles que « *les franchises de l'Évangile* » pourraient « *s'établir dans le droit positif* »¹⁷. Quinet n'hésite pas à affirmer que grâce aux machinations de l'Église, le christianisme est pratiquement mort au siècle qui précède la Révolution. L'Église catholique, au moment de la promulgation de la bulle *Unigenitus*, est tout simplement une institution païenne au service de l'absolutisme papal et monarchique¹⁸. Historien de la Révolution, Quinet défend l'œuvre de la Constituante et de la Législative : à ses yeux, la politique religieuse de l'élite révolutionnaire a visé la régénération spirituelle du christianisme, or la protestation du clergé contre la nationalisation des biens ecclésiastiques et contre l'obligation du serment constitutionnel montre que l'Église n'a tout simplement pas compris que les anciennes structures institutionnelles ont perdu leur raison d'être et que la *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* était le nouvel Évangile, adapté aux aspirations et au vocabulaire du temps. La Constitution était « *la démocratie transportée dans l'Église* »¹⁹, il n'est donc pas étonnant que les évêques attachés aux traditions absolutistes de l'institution ne l'aient pas acceptée. L'insurrection vendéenne est la chose la plus naturelle du monde : les partisans de la vieille monarchie et de la vieille Église se retrouvent sous le drapeau blanc de l'armée catholique et royale²⁰.

Cette interprétation subjectiviste, individualiste et profondément anticléricale mérite que je la signale à ce point de mon texte, parce que nous verrons plus tard que nous sommes aux antipodes de ce que dira Buchez, apôtre d'une toute autre explication du sens historique de la foi chrétienne. La question qui me préoccupe ici est celle de savoir quel rôle attribue Quinet à la Réforme protestante dans le processus. Notons tout d'abord qu'il salue l'intention protestante de retourner aux intuitions de l'Église primitive et d'assurer aux

¹⁴ C'est une conception qui se nourrit sans doute de Benjamin Constant et de sa *Liberté des Anciens et des Modernes*.

¹⁵ CROSSLEY, *French Historians and Romanticism*, op. cit., p. 144.

¹⁶ QUINET, Edgar (2015), *Le christianisme et la Révolution Française* (1845), Éditions Ligarán, p. 90.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 36.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 93.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 93.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 99.

fidèles le droit du libre-examen, il est donc évident que pour lui la Réforme est un épisode important du processus d'émancipation de l'individu moderne²¹. Il dit même que les échecs et les épisodes sombres de la Révolution s'expliquent par le fait qu'en France, contrairement à l'Angleterre et les Provinces-Unis, une révolution religieuse de la liberté (d'inspiration protestante) n'a pas précédé, n'a pas préparé la révolution politique : la Terreur est la résurrection de l'Inquisition, la dictature jacobine est un retour aux méthodes de gouvernement absolutistes et même despotiques de l'Ancien Régime, tandis que le culte de l'Etre Suprême est la manifestation tragique d'une volonté de maintenir une religion d'Etat. Bref, la Révolution connaît une reproduction catastrophique des modèles toxiques de l'autorité installés par le catholicisme. Peuple accoutumé à la servitude spirituelle et politique, il n'est pas étonnant que les Français se montrèrent incapables de bien gérer leur liberté politique reconquise.

Pourtant, malgré les nombreux renvois aux correspondances évidentes entre Réforme et liberté, protestantisme et démocratie, il serait faux d'affirmer que Quinet aurait tout simplement cru désirable ou envisageable le remplacement en France du catholicisme par une forme de protestantisme : premièrement parce que c'était trop tard, en second lieu, parce que le biblicisme, l'attachement aveugle des protestants à la lettre de la Bible est également une sorte de servitude, incompatible avec la liberté qui se manifeste par exemple dans la Déclaration, véritable legs spirituel de la Révolution. Cette critique de la bibliolâtrie protestante est très intéressante, dans la mesure où elle semble rapprocher Quinet des spiritualistes radicaux du siècle de la Réforme. Enfin, une dernière remarque qui illustre le caractère problématique de la conception de Quinet : dans ses ouvrages, il ne manque jamais de dénoncer le dogme augustinien de la prédestination, qui consiste à « *refuser la liberté à l'homme* » et à « *établir une égalité irrémédiable* »²² entre les hommes (les élus et les réprouvés). Or, il date la mise en place de cette « *féodalité divine qui fonde une féodalité civile* » au début des temps médiévaux, puis il abandonne entièrement le sujet. Il est remarquable que ce grand pourfendeur de l'anthropologie augustinienne qu'est Quinet n'évoque nullement le même dogme liberticide lorsqu'il s'agit de commenter l'avènement et les bienfaits de la Réforme protestante, dont pourtant l'idée de prédestination est le concept théologique central. On peut donc dire que pour Quinet, les protestants sont, malgré leurs imperfections, dans le camp de la liberté pour ainsi dire : il fait donc semblant d'oublier l'augustinisme de Luther et de Calvin dont le rappel confondrait sans doute ses lecteurs.

Avec Buchez, historien qui affiche, depuis sa conversion dans les années 1820, un catholicisme ostentatoire, nous avons l'impression de changer d'univers. Certes, le sien est un catholicisme très hétérodoxe, assez proche, à mon sens, du *Nouveau christianisme* de Saint-Simon, son maître de jadis. Pour Buchez, l'ennemi à combattre est justement la liberté individuelle défendue par Quinet et les valeurs principales à défendre sont l'égalité et la fraternité. Il n'est donc pas étonnant que Furet voie dans la pensée politique de Buchez la manifestation d'une nostalgie de la communauté perdue, ainsi que la survie anachronique d'une fidélité messianique à l'ordre catholique et unitaire qui avait caractérisé l'Ancien Régime²³. Le défi que Buchez semble vouloir relever est certes très difficile : concilier de

²¹ VIALLANEIX, « Réformation et Révolution », art. cit., pp. 363-365.

²² QUINET, *Le christianisme et la Révolution Française*, op. cit., p. 35.

²³ FURET, François (1980), *La Révolution II. Terminer la Révolution. De Louis XVIII à Jules Ferry, 1814-1880*, Paris, pp. 151-164.

Maistre avec Rousseau, trouver un accord vivable entre le catholicisme producteur de liens organiques et le nouvel ordre social fondé sur l'égalité et la fraternité, promis par la Révolution. Les questions qu'il se pose sont les suivantes : la foi chrétienne – ou plus exactement la religion catholique – peut-elle devenir le fondement d'un nouvel ordre politico-moral ? Peut-on imprégner les nouvelles structures sociales (résultant de l'écroulement de l'Ancien Régime) d'un esprit communautaire d'origine transcendante, éloigné de l'impiété voltairienne qui avait été longtemps caractéristique de la bourgeoisie française ? La position catholico-jacobine de Buchez n'est nullement exceptionnelle pour son époque. Certes, c'est surtout l'aspect critique qui rapproche les jacobins égalitaires et les catholiques légitimistes : les deux camps dénoncent, au nom d'une unité organique souhaitée, le règne de l'égoïsme qui caractérise la société bourgeoise. L'aspiration à l'unité nationale et l'assimilation de toute sorte de pluralisme à la division sont des éléments constants du républicanisme défiant le régime louis-philippin, ce dernier étant caractérisé par des profondes fractures sociales, auxquelles les libéraux industrialistes comme Charles Dunoyer ne proposent aucun antidote sérieux²⁴. Dans la suite, je m'efforcerai de montrer comment Buchez entend utiliser au service de la politique égalitaire et néo-jacobine l'interprétation assez particulière de l'histoire (surtout de l'histoire intellectuelle et religieuse) d'avant la Révolution qu'il propose.

Certes, le fait que la plupart des représentants du socialisme néo-jacobin français des années d'avant 1848 formulent leurs diagnostics des problèmes sociaux et leurs revendications dans un vocabulaire chrétien (voire catholique) est un sujet qui a récemment fait couler beaucoup d'encre. Depuis l'établissement de la III^e République, ces deux aspects paraissent à peine conciliables : l'anticléricalisme et la dénonciation virulente de l'alliance du trône et de l'autel sont presque de mise pour les républicains et socialistes de toutes nuances. Le tournant athée – ou du moins anticlérical – du camp progressif sous le Second Empire rend encore plus intéressant la problématique de ce catholicisme de gauche qui a caractérisé la première moitié du siècle : ce qui me préoccupe surtout ici, c'est la question de la (dis)continuité avec le catholicisme de l'Ancien Régime que l'on peut étudier dans le discours politique parsemé de références à Jésus, porteur d'un message socio-politique émancipateur. Or citons Buchez : « *La dernière époque du christianisme doit être la réalisation de cette égalité dont les premières époques ont proclamé et dogmatisé le principe : égalité, fraternité, tels étaient les premiers mots du christianisme, tels seront encore les derniers.* »²⁵ Il saute aux yeux qu'il s'agit ici d'une foi qui ne se définit ni par aspirations transcendantes visant l'au-delà, ni par fidélité à la dogmatique ou à l'ecclésiologie traditionnelles, ni par respect des autorités établies, mais par des préoccupations socio-politiques égalitaires et clairement subversives par rapport à la réalité des années 1830.

Aux yeux de Buchez, l'individualisme défendu par Quinet n'est que l'autre nom de la *dissolution sociale*, le principe d'un ordre fondé sur la domination des égoïsmes et des intérêts matériels – c'est donc avec une unanimité spectaculaire que les légitimistes catholiques et l'aile gauche des républicains peuvent dénoncer le capitalisme commercial nais-

²⁴ Sur Dunoyer, voir SPITZ, Jean-Fabien (2000), *L'amour de l'égalité – essai sur le critique de l'égalitarisme républicain (1770-1830)*, Vrin, Paris.

²⁵ Cité par BERENSON, Edward (1989), « A New Religion of the Left : Christianity and Social Radicalism in France, 1815-1848 », in FURET – OZOUF (dir.), *The Transformation of Political Culture...*, op. cit., pp. 543-561. 546.

sant comme une anarchie débridée de volontés et mettre en scène Jésus-Christ comme le premier républicain et le frère de tous les prolétaires exploitées. Cette profession de foi égalitaire va souvent de pair avec le rejet du protestantisme, trop individualiste, trop rationaliste et trop aristocratique – cet anti-protestantisme est un sujet qui revient souvent sous la plume des grands écrivains sociaux (Cabot, Leroux, Louis Blanc) des années qui nous intéressent ici.

Notons d'emblée que le catholicisme de Buchez est d'une tonalité assez particulière, difficile à classer, en rupture spectaculaire non seulement avec certains éléments de la tradition dogmatique, mais aussi avec la discipline ecclésiastique. Lorsque, en 1832, l'encyclique *Mirari vos* a condamné le libéralisme de la revue catholique *l'Avenir*, Buchez refuse immédiatement le principe d'un coup d'autorité venu de Rome et le commente avec des expressions d'un sarcasme virulent. Cela n'est nullement étonnant de la part d'un penseur qui, profondément attaché à la tradition gallicane, privilégiait dans ses écrits l'Eglise de France (et le rôle intégrateur qu'elle avait joué au cours des siècles de l'histoire) au dépens du pape, étranger, par la nécessité des choses, aux intérêts nationaux de la France. Notons qu'au 19^e siècle l'opposition traditionnelle, au sein de l'Eglise catholique, entre un courant ultramontain et un courant gallican est aussi vivant qu'au temps de Louis XIV : les rapports entre les deux camps sont étroitement soumis aux transformations (parfois bien rapides) de la situation politique.

Quant aux questions de contenu : Buchez, qui s'intéresse très peu à la dogmatique, me paraît regarder le catholicisme d'une perspective unique, celle de sa capacité à assurer le salut politique de la communauté des fidèles. Il pense aussi que la condition *sine qua non* de l'égalité – vers laquelle doit aspirer tout philosophe digne de ce nom – n'est autre que l'unité politique et idéologique. Pour Buchez, il est évident qu'au cours de l'histoire, les deux moteurs de cette transformation à la fois unitaire et égalitaire du pays avaient été la monarchie et l'Eglise catholique. Certes, il admet que cette dernière a parfois manqué à sa mission égalitaire : sous l'influence de certaines « *doctrines juives de l'Ancien Testament* » (et à cause de la contamination par la philosophie grecque – j'y reviendrai), elle avait tendance à voir dans le servage une nécessité sociale (qu'elle justifiait en le considérant comme une conséquence du péché originel) et elle s'attachait trop à l'idée de la hiérarchie, mais il demeure néanmoins qu'en France, l'Eglise catholique fonctionnait presque toujours comme promotrice efficace de l'égalité des conditions²⁶.

Passons maintenant aux autres composantes d'intérêt du catholicisme très idiosyncrétique de Buchez. Certes, il ne manque pas d'exprimer sa fidélité à une conception providentielle de l'histoire humaine, en affirmant à plusieurs reprises que c'est la volonté divine qui régit son déroulement, mais cette affirmation générale ne doit pas cacher qu'il expose aussi une reconstruction assez compliquée et sans doute très peu orthodoxe des quatre grands âges de l'histoire, qui se divisent chacun en périodes destructrices et organiques – cela le rapproche plus de Saint-Simon que de Bossuet, d'autant plus que selon sa conception, ce n'est point le second avènement de Jésus, mais bien la *fraternité humaine* qui est censée apporter une solution finale à tous les problèmes de l'humanité (conformément peut-être à la volonté de Dieu, mais sans une participation divine active). Il faut souligner en même

²⁶ BUCHEZ, Pierre Joseph Benjamin (1838), *Essai d'un traité complet de philosophie du point de vue du catholicisme et du progrès*, Paris, p.123.

temps que sa reconstruction de ce qu'il appelle la *philosophie chrétienne* a aussi de quoi laisser perplexe le lecteur. Il dénonce le grand écart de Thomas d'Aquin qui essaye de concilier la philosophie aristotélicienne (qui reflète les préjugés de la société esclavagiste grecque) l'héritage politique fondamentalement inégalitaire des Romains et le message « *démocratique et égalitaire* » de l'Écriture Sainte. Cela conduira Thomas à défendre la société d'ordres, l'esclavage, la hiérarchie sociale et en général, l'obéissance due aux supérieurs – « *Il est facile aujourd'hui de reconnaître que ces décisions sont en grande partie contraires à la lettre même de l'Évangile* »²⁷. Ce n'est pas la peine de souligner que nous avons affaire à une interprétation de type millénariste, qui rapproche Buchez de la longue tradition (à laquelle appartiennent les Hussites aussi bien que les représentants actuels de la théologie de la libération) d'un christianisme social. Au total – comme il ressort de ses introductions aux volumes de l'histoire de la Révolution – aux yeux de Buchez, ce sont les élus siégeant dans l'Assemblée Constituante et Législative qui représentent l'esprit véritable des Évangiles et non pas les évêques ou le pape. La Révolution subit des accusations d'impiété fondamentalement injustes. La nationalisation des biens de l'Eglise et l'imposition du serment constitutionnel ne sont point des gestes impies, au contraire : ce sont les ecclésiastiques attachés à leurs privilèges qui trahissent l'Évangile²⁸.

Continuons avec des questions éthico-politiques. L'élément central de la philosophie politique de Buchez est son anti-individualisme inexorable – pour lui, l'homme est fondamentalement un être social. La recherche individuelle du chemin du salut et le pluralisme religieux et confessionnel qui en découle est interprétée par Buchez comme une isolation tragique dont l'homme se rend coupable à l'égard de lui-même. En Europe, depuis le temps médiéval, c'est le catholicisme qui, transcendant la variété des peuples, crée une certaine unité et universalité salutaires, permettant la naissance de la diplomatie, du droit public, de la philosophie, de l'art et de l'architecture. Dans sa reconstruction de l'histoire française et européenne, Buchez juge donc l'Eglise catholique à l'aune de sa capacité de freiner les manifestations de l'égoïsme qui caractérise, presque naturellement, tout individu : la fonction principale de l'Eglise est le rappel des *devoirs sociaux* et la prévention de la dissolution qui menace toute communauté établie²⁹. Il va jusqu'à faire l'éloge d'épisodes qui ne font normalement pas l'unanimité dans le camp progressiste, au contraire : les croisades, la suppression violente des hérésies médiévales et du schisme du 15^e siècle et enfin, la politique anti-protestante de la couronne française – c'est ici que l'abîme qui le sépare de Quinet paraît le plus infranchissable³⁰. Le ton général qu'il adopte à l'égard du protestantisme est celui d'une réprobation multiforme : quelques aspects de sa critique sont circonstanciels, mais d'autres sont généraux, philosophiques pour ainsi dire, par conséquent ancrés dans la longue durée. Commençons par l'aspect 'situationnel'. Etant donné que Buchez voit dans l'histoire française des 16-17^e siècles « *une bataille entre un fédéralisme aristocratique que repoussait l'esprit français* » et les efforts intégrateurs de la monarchie, notre auteur est très sensible au danger politique que les Réformés ont représenté, dans la seconde moitié du 16^e

²⁷ Ibid. p. 71.

²⁸ BUCHEZ, Pierre Joseph Benjamin (1833-1838), *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française*, en 40 volumes, vol. 29, Paris, pp.vii-xii.

²⁹ BUCHEZ, Pierre Joseph Benjamin (1833), *Introduction à la science de l'histoire ou science du développement de l'humanité*, Paris, p. 83.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 92-93.

siècle, pour la fragile unité du pays. Leur imposer une défaite politique et militaire fut donc une nécessité politique : « *Le succès des Huguenots aurait fédéralisé la France, qui serait devenue semblable aux principautés allemandes.* »³¹

Je passe maintenant, pour terminer ma réflexion, à l'aspect philosophique/idéologique de l'antiprotestantisme de Buchez. Il qualifie la théorie sur la grâce de Luther et de Melancthon « *d'aristocratique et d'anti-sociale* », surtout pour leur rejet de toute forme de la recherche communautaire du salut – or ce venin de l'individualisme, pour ainsi dire, se prolonge jusqu'à son temps, étant donné que l'éclectisme des Doctrinaires de son temps (qui est à ses yeux la philosophie officielle de la bourgeoisie libérale) n'est qu'une adaptation de l'intuition principale des Réformés. Buchez établit l'équation sans aucune ambiguïté : « *sous ces noms de philosophie et de religion, il n'y a au fond qu'une même doctrine* »³². Les parallélismes que Buchez établit entre les deux méritent d'être cités en longueur : « *Le protestantisme a dit que la raison était souveraine ; l'éclectisme dit que le moi de chacun est souverain. Le protestantisme dit que Dieu accorde la grâce à certains, et la refusait à d'autres et qu'elle était un don purement gratuit [...] ; l'éclecticisme dit qu'il y avait des hommes plus heureusement organisés que d'autres, les uns destinés à gouverner, les autres à obéir.* »³³ L'éclecticisme, dit Buchez dans un esprit presque weberien, prolonge les intuitions individualistes et méritocratiques du protestantisme, voire, étant un système fondamentalement inégalitaire, il tend à justifier l'existence de la hiérarchie sociale, certes fondée désormais sur les talents des individus et non pas sur la naissance et le rang. Tandis que le contenu et la formulation s'en sont certes laicisés et sécularisés (l'idée horrible de la prédestination perd sa visée transcendante et se transforme en aptitude de se bien débrouiller dans le monde), le message reste au fond le même : l'égalité étant dénoncé comme une chimère, les dons que la nature accorde à chacun font la différence entre les êtres humains, sur lesquels pèse le poids d'une responsabilité individuelle fatalement incontournable. Quoiqu'il se voie contraint de reconnaître que cet individualisme d'origine protestante et les principes libéraux qui en découlent ont constitué une rupture avec l'Ancien Régime, il n'hésite pas à préciser qu'il s'agit seulement de la phase bourgeoise de la Révolution, celle de 1789, que la dictature du salut public a dû nécessairement dépasser.

En guise de conclusion de cette rapide comparaison, nous pouvons constater que les deux auteurs étudiés – Quinet et Buchez – sont d'accord pour attribuer aux facteurs politico-théologiques un rôle de moteur dans le déroulement de la Révolution, ainsi que pour défendre l'élite révolutionnaire de l'accusation d'impiété : à leurs yeux, l'œuvre révolutionnaire doit être considéré comme une tentative héroïque visant l'accomplissement des promesses de l'Evangile. Le concept central de leur pensée est le *progrès*, étant donné qu'ils sont convaincus que la vérité divine se déploie *progressivement* dans l'histoire. C'est justement au sujet du contenu concret de ces promesses qu'un véritable abîme se creuse entre nos deux auteurs. Tandis que pour Quinet, le message principal de Jésus est la libération de l'individu des contraintes institutionnelles qui pèsent sur lui, Buchez et ses amis voient en Jésus le symbole de l'égalité et de la fraternité – un apôtre du socialisme associatif à venir.

³¹ Ibid. p. 136.

³² Ibid. p. 75.

³³ Ibid. p. 76.

A Hungarian Map-Maker in the Mexican-American Boundary Survey

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Abstract

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the U.S-Mexican War of 1846–1848 on February 2, 1848. The two countries agreed to send representatives to survey and mark a new international boundary from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico and create maps of it. The fieldwork lasted from the summer of 1849 to the fall of 1853. Just as the surveyors completed their work, however, a new treaty made parts of their survey irrelevant. The region of present-day southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico was purchased by the United States for 10 million dollars in a treaty signed by James Gadsden, the American ambassador to Mexico at the time, on the 30th of December, 1853. The Gadsden Treaty had again called for the United States and Mexico to appoint surveyors, who carried out the fieldwork from November, 1854 to September, 1855. In the first half of my paper I propose to discuss the activity of the Boundary Commissions and their project of surveying and mapping the nearly two-thousand-mile border. The administrative center for the American Boundary Commission was in Washington D. C. It was directed by the topographical engineers who superintended the production of the boundary maps and the work of civilian clerks, who worked on computations, compilations, and drew all the finished maps. One of the map-makers was Károly László, a Hungarian engineer and surveyor, who drew five maps for the American and several others for the Mexican boundary commission. The second part of the paper will focus on his contribution and the characteristics of his identity.

Keywords: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Gadsden Treaty, U.S.-Mexican War of 1846–1848, Mexican-American Boundary Survey, Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence, 1848–1849, Corps of Topographical Engineers, Károly László, citizenship, identity

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed on February 2, 1848 and concluded the U.S.-Mexican War of 1846–1848.¹ The new boundary dramatically altered the political geography of North America and resulted in a major shift in the power relations of the American

¹ “Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo,” in ISRAEL, Fred L. (ed.), with an Introd. Essay by Toynbee, Arnold J. (1967), *Major Peace Treaties of Modern History, 1648–1967*, Vol. II, New York, Chelsea House Publishers, 733–751; “A Guadalupe Hidalgó-i Szerződés, Guadalupe Hidalgo, 1848. február,” in KÖKÉNY, Andrea (trans. and ed.) (2001), *Békeszerződés az Amerikai Egyesült Államok és a Mexikói Köztársaság között*, Documenta Historica 52, Szeged, JATE Press, 9–25.

continent.² The Republic of Mexico was forced to cede the northern half of the country – a territory of 529,189 square miles – to the United States. Thus the boundary was moved to the southern edges of today's California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. It was an expanse of nearly two thousand miles.³ Some of the land in the borderland region was settled by Mexican ranchers and farmers, but much of the territory was unexplored and to Americans, it was an unknown land.

In the Peace Treaty the two countries agreed to send representatives to survey and mark a new international boundary from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. Article V of the Treaty specified that

“In order to designate the boundary line with due precision, upon authoritative maps, and to establish upon the ground land-marks which shall show the limits of both republics, as described in the present article, the two Governments shall each appoint a commissioner and a surveyor, who, before the expiration of one year from the date of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty shall meet at the port of San Diego, and proceed to run and mark the said boundary in its whole course to the mouth of the Rio Bravo del Norte.”⁴

The ratified copies of the Treaty were exchanged at Querétaro on May 30, 1848, and the fieldwork lasted from the summer of 1849 to the fall of 1853.⁵ Based on primary sources my paper will examine the activity of the Boundary Commissions and their project of surveying and mapping the new border. The administrative center for the American Boundary Commission and the scene of the production of boundary maps was in Washington D. C. One of the map-makers was Károly László, a Hungarian engineer and surveyor, who drew five maps for the American and several others for the Mexican boundary commission. The second part of the paper will discuss his activity and the characteristics of his identity.

When examining the work of the American boundary commission, we can say that their responsibility and power was extensive, as the Treaty pointed out that “the result agreed

² On the content and consequences of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo see, for example: PERRIGO, Lynn I. (1971), *The American Southwest. Its People and Cultures*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 134; CALVERT, Robert A. – DE LEÓN, Arnoldo (1996), *The History of Texas*, 2nd ed. Arlington Heights, Ill., Harlan Davidson, Inc., 103; CONNOR, Seymour V. (1971), *Texas. A History*, Arlington Heights, Ill., AHM Publishing Corporation, 155; CHÁVEZ, Alicia Hernández (2000), *México. Breve historia contemporánea*, México, FCE, 214; VÁZQUEZ, Josefina – MEYER, Lorenzo (1991), *México frente a Estados Unidos (Un ensayo histórico, 1776-1993)*, México, FCE, 61; SALVAT, Juan – ROSAS, José Luis (1986), *Historia de México*, Salvat Editores de México, Tomo 11, 1986, 1806; KÖKÉNY, Békeszerződés, 3–7.

³ ISRAEL, *Major Peace Treaties*, 736–737.

⁴ Ibid. 737.

⁵ GOETZMANN, William H. (1991), *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803–1863*, Austin, Texas, Texas State Historical Association, 153–208; MEINIG, Donald W. (1993), *The Shaping of America. A Geographical Perspective on Five Hundred Years of History. Vol. 2, Continental America, 1800–1867*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 151–152; PLETCHER, David M. (1975), *The Diplomacy of Annexation. Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War*, Columbia, Missouri, University of Missouri Press, 567; WERNE, Joseph Richard (2007), *The Imaginary Line. A History of the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey, 1848–1857*, Fort Worth, Texas, Texas Christian University Press, 15.

upon by them shall be deemed a part of the treaty, and shall have the same force as if it were inserted therein.”⁶ Thus, the members of the boundary commission had to be individuals who possessed not only a thorough knowledge of topographic and surveyor skills, but also diplomatic abilities.

Logic suggested that in the United States the work should be done by the nation’s best-trained and most experienced surveyors, West Point-trained members of the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. Domestic politics and regional interests, however, resulted in the fact that politicians or people with political affiliations were appointed to lead them. 1848 was an election year, and in its last few months in office, the Democratic administration of President James K. Polk filled the position of commissioner and surveyor with people affiliated with the Democratic Party. This eleventh-hour appointment in December 1848 by a lame-duck president infuriated Whigs, who after the election gained majority and controlled the House of Representatives. The new president, Zachary Taylor, was also a Whig, and was eager to dispense patronage to the boundary commission and appoint his own men.⁷

Today Mexicans and Americans crowd up against the border. But back in the middle of the 19th century, beyond a few small Mexican settlements (for example, San Diego, El Paso del Norte, and Matamoros), the border region was mainly the domain of independent Indian tribes who had no reason to recognize lines drawn through their territory by distant diplomats. Even though in the end the threat from Native Americans never put the boundary commission in real danger, distance from settlements and supplies, summer heat, and difficult terrain made the surveyors’ work quite difficult.

Surveying on such a large scale had to take the curvature of the Earth into account and that required geodesic surveying, which depended heavily on astronomy. Plane surveying, used to measure and mark small portions of the Earth’s surface, was not sufficient. In addition, long stretches of the new border followed two rivers, the Gila and the Rio Grande. Along those rivers the surveyors had to find the deepest channels, as required by the Peace Treaty.⁸ Between the Pacific Ocean and the Gila River and between the Gila and the Rio Grande, their task was even harder. No rivers or other geographical features marked the new border. In the absence of landmarks, the surveyors had to mark a line on the ground and erect or place physical markers. They only put up a few, as they supposed that neither Mexicans nor Americans would ever settle in the arid border region in significant numbers.⁹

However difficult the American surveyors found conditions in the field, the greatest impediment to their work came from Washington D.C. In addition, conflict between political

⁶ ISRAEL, *Major Peace Treaties*, 737.

⁷ GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 153–154; REBERT, Paula (2011), “A Civilian Surveyor on the United States-Mexico Boundary: The Case of Arthur Schott,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 155, No. 4, 435; WEBER, David J. and ELDER, Jane Lenz (eds.) (2010), *FIASCO: George Clinton Gardner’s Correspondence from the U.S.-Mexico Boundary Survey, 1849-1854*, Dallas, Texas, Southern Methodist University Press, William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, DeGolyer Library, xix.

⁸ ISRAEL, *Major Peace Treaties*, 736.

⁹ EMORY, William H., Major First Cavalry and United States Commissioner (1858), *Report on the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey Made Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior*, Vol. I, Washington, 5; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, xix.

appointees and topographical engineers began almost immediately, and it plagued the survey to the end.¹⁰

The job of boundary commissioner for the United States was assigned to John B. Weller. He was a lawyer and politician by profession and had previously been a three-term Democratic congressman from Ohio and an unsuccessful candidate for governor of that state. As he was a political appointee of James K. Polk, the new president, Zachary Taylor recalled him in June 1849 and replaced him with John Charles Frémont. The famous explorer, however, declined the commissioner's post and instead ran for the senatorial seat of California – and won. All this caused considerable delay in the work of the surveying party, especially because the new boundary commissioner was only appointed on May 4, 1850. John Russell Bartlett had no surveying, nor diplomatic skills. He was a prominent bibliophile and amateur ethnologist from Providence, Rhode Island, who at the time of his appointment ran a bookstore and publishing house in New York City, which specialized in foreign books and travel accounts. He organized a party of topographical engineers, civilian surveyors, mechanics and field scientists and left New York at the beginning of August, 1850. However, it took him several months to reach El Paso.¹¹

James K. Polk gave the post of surveyor to 29-year-old Andrew Belcher Gray. He was an experienced surveyor who worked for the Republic of Texas on the United States-Texas Sabine River Survey in 1840. However, his civilian status and rudimentary knowledge of astronomy put him at odds with the survey's West-Point-trained topographical engineers.¹²

Appointed as "Chief Astronomer and Commander of the Escort" for the survey party was Major William Hemsley Emory. His qualifications for inclusion on the delegation were exceptional. He had graduated from West Point in 1831 and entered the Corps of Topographical Engineers in 1838 when it was formed under the War Department. By 1849 his considerable experience included two years of surveying the Canadian-U.S. boundary. Moreover, he was the only American scientist to have travelled across the Southwest, from Santa Fe to Los Angeles. When the United States declared war on Mexico in 1846, Emory had been assigned to accompany General Stephen Watts Kearny on an almost two-thousand-mile trek to New Mexico and California – through much of the territory scheduled for survey by the boundary commission. Along the way Emory had mapped the route, and he produced a scientific report upon his return.¹³

Emory's assistants were Lieutenant Edmund L. F. Hardcastle, who had conducted a reconnaissance of the valley of Mexico, and Amiel Weeks Whipple, a young lieutenant from Massachusetts. He was a West Point-graduate and for the previous five years he had been working on the Northeastern Boundary Survey dividing Canada and the United States. Altogether, the total complement of the commission consisted of thirty-nine men directly involved with survey operations, an army escort of a hundred and fifty soldiers, and a varie-

¹⁰ GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 167–195; WERNE, *The Imaginary Line*, 19.

¹¹ EMORY, *Report*, 1; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 163–173; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, xxii.

¹² BAILEY, L. R. (ed.) (1963), *The A. B. Gray Report*, Los Angeles, Westernlore Press, xi–xiii; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 158; REBERT, "A Civilian Surveyor on the United States-Mexico Boundary," 436; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, xx–xxi.

¹³ EMORY, *Report*, 1; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 128–130, 158; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, xix; REBERT, Paula (2001), *La Gran Línea. Mapping the United States-Mexico Boundary, 1849–1857*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 22.

ty of civilian employees, such as a physician, an interpreter, a quartermaster, a laundress, a carpenter, and a draftsman as well as cooks, butchers, tailors, several servants, instrument carriers, target men, chain men, and stone cutters. As the task of the boundary commission was not only surveying and marking the boundary, but also scientific exploration, there were meteorologists, geologists, botanists, and naturalists, magnetic, barometric, and thermometric recorders, mining engineers, and artists in the survey party.¹⁴

Most of them received their appointment in February, 1849 and were supposed to meet the Mexican commissioners in May, 1849 and start the boundary survey from a point specified by the peace treaty south of San Diego Bay. However, not all left for San Diego under similar circumstances. Soon after the group's organization, news reached the East Coast of the discovery of gold in California and caused such congestion of available modes of transportation that it looked as if the boundary survey would have to be delayed. Most of the crew eventually obtained passage on several ships departing from New Orleans for the Isthmus of Panama, where they planned to make connections with steamers leaving for the West Coast.¹⁵

By the middle of March, 1849, most of the commission's major members had arrived in Chagres, Panama.¹⁶ There their progress, however, was impeded by some four thousand gold seekers who anxiously awaited steamers to complete their journey to California. The few vessels that were available quickly began charging such an enormous price for tickets and were so crowded that the survey party soon found itself virtually stranded. Emory did not consider it a waste of time, instead "seeing that there was little probability of our obtaining passage to San Diego before the middle of May, I unpacked the instruments, and set them up for the double purpose of practicing my assistants and making observations at Panama for latitude and longitude, magnetic dip and intensity, and other phenomena."¹⁷ At long last, after a wait of two months during which a cholera epidemic also hit the region, a ship was finally secured to transport some of the commission to San Diego.

They reached California on June 1, much later than they should have. However, they were surprised to discover that the Mexican commission had not arrived yet. Experiencing delays comparable to their American counterparts, they only arrived in the San Diego harbor on July 3. Commissioner General Pedro García Conde was accompanied by surveyor José Salazar Ylarregui, two first class engineers, two second class engineers, and Felipe de Iturbide, a son of the Mexican Emperor, who served as official translator. About a hundred and fifty soldiers also accompanied the Mexicans.¹⁸

The joint Boundary Commission held its first meeting on July 6, 1849.¹⁹ The essential task facing the delegation involved the plotting of the boundary's western terminus in the Pacific, and the exact location of the confluence of the Gila and Colorado rivers. According to the terms of the Treaty,

¹⁴ EMORY, *Report*, 3; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 158; REBERT, "A Civilian Surveyor on the United States-Mexico Boundary," 439; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, xx.

¹⁵ GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 158; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, 2.

¹⁶ EMORY, *Report*, 1; WERNE, *The Imaginary Line*, 22.

¹⁷ EMORY, *Report*, 2.

¹⁸ EMORY, *Report*, 3; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 159–160; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, 47.

¹⁹ EMORY, *Report*, 4; WERNE, *The Imaginary Line*, 28.

The boundary line between the two Republics shall commence in the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, opposite the mouth of the Rio Grande, otherwise called Rio Bravo del Norte, or opposite the mouth of its deepest branch, if it should have more than one branch emptying directly into the sea; from thence up the middle of that river, following the deepest channel, where it has more than one, to the point where it strikes the southern boundary of New Mexico; thence, westwardly, along the whole southern boundary of New Mexico (which runs north of the town called Paso) to its western termination; thence, northward, along the western line of New Mexico, until it intersects the first branch of the river Gila; (or if it should not intersect any branch of that river, then to the point on the said line nearest to such branch, and thence in a direct line to the same); thence down the middle of the said branch and of the said river, until it empties into the Rio Colorado; thence across the Rio Colorado, following the division line between Upper and Lower California, to the Pacific Ocean.

The southern and western limits of New Mexico, mentioned in the article, are those laid down in the map entitled "Map of the United Mexican States, as organized and defined by various acts of the Congress of said republic, and constructed according to the best authorities. Revised edition. Published at New York, in 1847, by J. Disturnell," of which map a copy is added to this treaty, bearing the signatures and seals of the undersigned Plenipotentiaries.²⁰

Major Emory took charge of determining the initial point in the Pacific, while Gray surveyed the port of San Diego. One of Emory's assistants, Whipple, who had recently arrived from Panama, was given the task of charting the junction of the Gila and Colorado. The job of gaining a basic knowledge of some of the topography between these two points was assigned to Lieutenant Hardcastle.²¹ On each of these operations a Mexican engineer was on hand to verify the results by means of his own observations. In fact, the Mexicans, because of their inferior instruments, were forced to depend on the services of the American engineers.

For most of the survey the two commissions worked together, often complementing and always double-checking each other's work. Trouble arose, however, when it came to marking the boundary between El Paso and the Rio Grande. The Peace Treaty said that the boundary should turn west from the river at a point eight miles north of El Paso. But the astronomical readings taken by the surveyors showed that El Paso was in fact half a degree (about thirty-six miles) farther south and about a hundred and thirty miles farther west than the Disturnell map, which was designated in the Peace Treaty as the source showing the points of reference, indicated.²² The disputed area involved a few thousand square miles and the territory had about three thousand inhabitants. The biggest problem was that if the inaccurate map was used in marking the boundary, the United States stood to lose the Mesilla Valley, which appeared to be the only practicable pathway for a southern rail route to the Pacific Ocean. After four months of arguing the American and the Mexican commissioners made a compromise. They agreed that the treaty map would prevail with regard to

²⁰ ISRAEL, *Major Peace Treaties*, 736–737.

²¹ EMORY, *Report*, 4; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 161; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, 49.

²² The Disturnell map was published in New York in 1847. GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 155.

El Paso, so the Mesilla valley would remain part of Mexico, but the boundary would be extended a hundred and twenty miles farther west than the Disturnell map had shown before it turned north toward the Gila River. Emory, Lieutenant Gray, and southern Democrats in Congress, who favored a Texas-New Mexico rail route attacked Commissioner Bartlett for surrendering the Mesilla Valley and Congress blocked further funding of the boundary survey. The Mexican government, on the other hand, welcomed the compromise and made an effort to extend the jurisdiction and administration of the neighboring province, Chihuahua over the Mesilla Valley.²³

In the end, surveying and marking the boundary was carried out according to the Bartlett-Conde compromise, and on December 22, 1852, the American boundary commission was disbanded. Bartlett and Emory left for Washington, where they arrived by February, 1853.²⁴

Between 1849 and 1853 the American and Mexican commissions had performed an enormous task in surveying the border under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, despite difficult circumstances and undependable support from their respective governments. Just as the surveyors completed their work, however, a new treaty made parts of their survey irrelevant. The region of present-day southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico was purchased by the United States for 10 million dollars in a treaty signed by James Gadsden, the American ambassador to Mexico at the time, on the 30th of December, 1853.²⁵ The purchase also included the Mesilla Valley, the debated area during the Mexican-American boundary survey. The lands south of the Gila River and west of the Rio Grande – a region of 29,670 square miles – were the last major territorial acquisition in the contiguous United States, which was thought essential for the construction of a transcontinental railroad along a deep southern route.²⁶

The Treaty had again called for the U.S. and Mexico to appoint boundary commissioners, who would meet in El Paso three months after the exchange of ratifications and begin surveying.²⁷ Once again Maj. William H. Emory won the assignment, but this time he held the positions of commissioner, surveyor, and chief astronomer. He would not have to answer to a civilian political appointee, so he could work much faster. He reached El Paso at the end of November, 1854, and by the end of September the following year he and his Mexican counterpart, once again José Salazar Ylarregui, had finished the fieldwork.²⁸

²³ EMORY, *Report*, 16–19, 20–21; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 173–177, 191; KLUGER, Richard (2007), *Seizing Destiny. How America Grew from Sea to Shining Sea*, New York, Vintage Books, Alfred A. Knopf, 491–492; REINHARTZ, Dennis – SAXON, Gerald D. (eds.) (2005), *Mapping and Empire: Soldier-Engineers on the Southwestern Frontier*, Austin, Texas, University of Texas Press, 163; WEBER and ELDER, *FIASCO*, 162–164.

²⁴ GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 193.

²⁵ “Gadsden Treaty,” Mexico City, December 30, 1853, in ISRAEL, *Major Peace Treaties*, 753–758; “Gadsden Szerződés, Mexico City, 1853. December 30,” I., II., IV. cikkely [Article I., II., IV.], in KÖKÉNY, *Békeszerződés*, 27–29.

²⁶ GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 194–195; KLUGER, *Seizing Destiny*, 499–504; MEINIG, *The Shaping of America*, 152–153.

²⁷ ISRAEL, *Major Peace Treaties*, 754.

²⁸ GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 195–197.

The official *Report on the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey* of the American Boundary Commission was published between 1857 and 1859 in two volumes.²⁹ Major William H. Emory's name appeared on the title page as author, but in fact it was an anthology of reports and studies by many authors. They make up an encyclopedia of the Southwest as the *Report* presents not only the results of the boundary survey, but also the results of the scientific investigations connected with the survey. There are essays on the geography of the region and the Native American communities that inhabited it. There are also articles on geology, paleontology, meteorology, magnetism, minerals, and plants; and vast catalogs of the plants, animals, and fossils that the boundary commission's collectors gathered for study by scientists.

The *Report* is one of the most highly illustrated government publications of the nineteenth century. In addition to the pictures in the natural history chapters of the *Report*, there are also scenes of Native American and frontier society. Views of cities and forts built by Spanish and Anglo settlers further reveal border life. The *Report* contains three maps, including a general map of the West, a geological map, and a map of magnetic observations. Conspicuously absent from the *Report*, however, are any maps of the boundary. Although at least some of the boundary maps were originally planned for publication with the *Report*, the American Congress did not provide funds and they were never published.³⁰

The administrative center for the Boundary Commission was in Washington D. C. It was directed by the topographical engineers, who superintended the production of the boundary maps and the work of civilian clerks, who worked on computations, compilations, and drew all the finished maps. Map-making of the U.S.-Mexico boundary actually began while the survey was in progress. Both the American and Mexican commissions completed the final maps at the boundary office in Washington, D.C. First established in 1850 and finally closed at the end of 1857, the office was the scene of seven years of mapmaking – a lengthier project than the fieldwork. In the end, the official U.S.-Mexico boundary maps were completed in two sets, one made by the American commission and one made by the Mexican commission. Each set consisted of fifty-four sectional sheets showing the boundary line and the territory in the United States and Mexico adjacent to the line. They were numbered from map “No. 1” on the Gulf of Mexico to “No. 54” on the Pacific Coast. Most maps were at a scale of 1:60,000. There were also four index maps of the entire boundary and five maps of islands in the Rio Grande.³¹

Although the boundary office was at all times under the charge of the Corps of Topographical Engineers, the people who drew the boundary maps were hired from various backgrounds – some were artists, some engineers, some engravers – but all were experienced topographers. William Emory appointed George Thom to supervise the boundary office, and when the American Boundary Commission was reorganized under the Gadsden Treaty of 1853, Thom was again appointed to direct it.³² When the office was revitalized, he needed to hire additional drawing staff – including some Hungarians, who arrived in the

²⁹ EMORY, *Report*, Vol. I, Washington, 1858, Vol. II, Washington, 1859.

³⁰ EMORY, *Report*, 2; GOETZMANN, *Army Exploration*, 198; REBERT, “A Civilian Surveyor on the United States-Mexico Boundary,” 449–450.

³¹ REBERT, *La Gran Línea*, 55–58; REBERT, “A Civilian Surveyor on the United States-Mexico Boundary,” 450–451.

³² REBERT, *La Gran Línea*, 46–47.

United States after the revolution of 1848-1849. One of them was Károly László. He drafted seven maps, among them the five sheets that showed the islands in the Rio Grande. The Mexican contingent was too small to fulfill their large share of the office work, so it often happened that individuals who drew maps for the U.S. also drafted maps for the Mexican commission. Károly László did so, too.³³

Who was he? Károly László was a Hungarian engineer who fought in the Hungarian war of independence in 1848-1849. After its failure and the surrender of the Hungarian army in August, 1849, fled to the Ottoman Empire and became the secretary of Lajos Kossuth who was one of the political leaders of the Hungarian fight for freedom. László accompanied Kossuth on his tour in the United States from January to July, 1852 when he tried to gain support for the Hungarian cause. When Kossuth returned to Europe, László and quite a few other Hungarians decided to stay in the U. S. He started to work as an engineer.³⁴ He kept a diary, which gives us an almost daily account of his life in Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and America.³⁵

In connection with the Mexican-American Boundary Survey we learn from his Diary that he was hired by William Emory and received a one-hundred-dollar monthly salary for six hours of work per day starting on January 1, 1856.³⁶ At the beginning of February of the same year a military engineer from the Pacific Railroad Office, where Károly László had also worked before, asked him if he could work for six hours a day on a map of Florida. László accepted the offer and from February 5 on he worked twelve hours every day. From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on maps of the Mexican-American Boundary Commission and from 7 to 9 a.m. and from 4 to 8 p.m. on the map of Florida. In his Diary he acknowledged the fact that a 12-hour working day was strenuous, but he also remarked that the 220 dollars he would earn a month was much more than his one-year salary in Hungary had been. He did not find the work very hard and noted that at the railroad companies he had only earned 65 dollars a month.³⁷

In the middle of May, he finished the Florida map and took another part-time job as a mapmaker at the Pacific Railroad Company and earned 182 dollars in two months. He was so busy that he only had time to continue his Diary when he was done with the part-time

³³ Ibid. 48; REBERT, "A Civilian Surveyor on the United States-Mexico Boundary," 452.

³⁴ PORDÁN, Ildikó (1996), *László Károly, egy Kossuth-emigráns sorsa, írásai tükrében* [The Fate of a Kossuth Refugee, Károly László, as Reflected in his Writings], PhD diss., Szeged: József Attila Tudományegyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 3–4; VENKOVITS, Balázs (2018), „*Mi otthon félre vagyunk vezetve.*” Magyar utazók és kivándorlók Mexikóban a 19. század első felében [„We are misled at home”. Hungarian travellers and emigrants in Mexico in the first half of the 19th century], Debrecen, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 80–82. On Károly László's exile in the Ottoman Empire and on his journey to America and on Kossuth's stay in the United States see LÁSZLÓ, Károly (1887), *Naplo-töredék az 1849-iki menekülteket, internáltakat, különösen Kossuthot és környezetét illetőleg Törökországban és az Amerikai Egyesült-Államokban* [Diary Extracts Concerning the Refugees and the Interned of 1849, in Particular Kossuth and his Circle in the Ottoman Empire and the United States of America], Budapest, Franklin Társulat, Magyar Irod. Intézet és Könyvnyomda.

³⁵ LÁSZLÓ, Károly, *Napló* [Diary], Országos Széchényi Könyvtár Kt. Oct. Hung. 720.

³⁶ Ibid. VIII. 212.

³⁷ Ibid. 212.

job in the middle of July. It was after that that he started to work for the Mexican Boundary Commission, too.³⁸

1856 was the peak year of map production in the Boundary Office. More people worked in the office that year than at any other time, with many new individuals hired to do the drawing. According to the office accounts there were two draftsmen of Hungarian origin who were also employed – Félix Nemegyei and Albert Zeyk, and each of them completed two boundary maps.³⁹ Nemegyei was a military engineer who played an active role in the Hungarian war of independence, fled to the Ottoman Empire and from there travelled to the United States in 1851.⁴⁰ Zeyk originally studied law, then fought in the Hungarian war of independence. He lived in exile in the Ottoman Empire, then in Paris and London, where he studied chemistry and engineering. In 1850 he travelled to South America and worked on the regulation of rivers in Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay. In 1853 he got shipwrecked on the La Plata river and was saved by an American ship that took him to the United States, where he joined the navy.⁴¹ Károly László only mentioned Nemegyei's name in his Diary, who worked with him in the same office as a drafter.⁴²

As the work in the Boundary Office was winding up, Károly László started to look for new opportunities and on January 19, 1857 he signed a contract with topographical engineer John Pope, to draw maps and then accompany him on his explorations of the Great American Desert. Then, at the beginning of April he got another offer to work as an engineer on the construction of the St. Croix – Lake Superior Railroad. He was promised a salary of 1200 dollars per year and full boarding. Károly László accepted the offer, so on May 1 he had to give up his jobs in Washington, D.C. On May 12, 1857 he left for Lake Superior.⁴³

1856 was a busy year for the Boundary Office as well as for Károly László, and it was also a year when his legal status in the United States changed. According to his Diary, he received his Certificate of American citizenship on November 17, 1856. He translated the original text in his Diary.⁴⁴ According to the Certificate he applied for naturalization on February 17, 1853 in the state of New York, where he declared that his place of birth was Hungary and he was a subject of the Hungarian king and the Austrian emperor. He officially applied for naturalization and declared under oath that he voluntarily wanted to become a citizen of the United States, and that “he relinquished his subjugation and oath of allegiance to any Duke, authority, state, or any ruler, and in particular to the king of Hungary and the emperor of Austria, as required by the relevant laws of the American Congress”.⁴⁵

³⁸ Ibid. 213, 220.

³⁹ REBERT, *La Gran Línea*, 51–52, 199, 201.

⁴⁰ BONA, Gábor (2015), *Tábornokok és törzstisztek az 1848/49. évi szabadságharcban*. [Generals and Field Officers in the 1848/49 War of Independence], Miskolc, Miskolci Egyetemi Kiadó, II, 444–445.

⁴¹ VIDA, István Kornél (2011), *Világostól Appomatoxig: magyarok az amerikai polgárháborúban* [From Világos to Appomatox: Hungarians in the American Civil War], Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 209–210.

⁴² LÁSZLÓ, *Napló*, VIII. 217.

⁴³ Ibid. 221.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 217–218.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

He appeared in front of the court again in November, 1856, where Thomas Jekyll, who was his artist-friend who also drew several maps of the boundary survey, testified that Károly László had been residing in the United States for five years during which period he had not left the country. Jekyll also confirmed that László was a man of moral integrity whose conduct was in accordance with the Constitution of the United States of America. Károly László himself needed to take an oath that he would live according to the principles of the Constitution of the United States.⁴⁶

When Károly László explained in his Diary why he wanted American citizenship, his argument was the following. "In the United States of America, an immigrant who does not even want to be a citizen of the country, can still trade, have a job, hold an office (except for government positions), and have property – until his death –, and is treated equally in front of the law. But, he does not have the right to vote (for the representatives of a town, a state, Congress, or for the President); and his legal heirs cannot inherit his property, neither can he pass it on in a will, not even to his wife or children, but it will pass on to the government. And if he goes abroad, the United States cannot defend him, [...] while a citizen, wherever he is, is protected under the banner of the U. States."⁴⁷ Károly László stated in his Diary that it was mostly for the two latter reasons that he decided to apply for citizenship. He bought property in the United States and wanted to keep it, and then leave it for his mother, sister, or close relatives. The other reason, he argued, was that by gaining American citizenship "I would be free to travel home to visit, and if I don't say or don't do anything against the government there, I will be safe under the protection of the banner of the United States of America."⁴⁸

In conclusion we can say that all this indicates that Károly László decided to apply for American citizenship for practical reasons. His character and identity were shaped by the American environment, but I think he only intended to stay in the United States as long as he found economic opportunities, and was ready to move on or move back to Hungary whenever the opportunity arose. We know that after working on the St. Croix – Lake Superior Railroad, in 1857 he moved to Mexico and worked on the survey of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the construction of a railroad there.⁴⁹ He returned to Hungary in 1867 – following the Compromise and the establishment of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy when the political refugees of the 1848-1849 war of independence were granted amnesty.⁵⁰

The way Károly László described his return to Hungary in his Diary tells a lot about his views and identity.

"September 30, 1867. Naturally, everyone would think that after being away and being displaced for 18 years, I was overwhelmed by emotions, kissed the ground and shed tears of joy upon my return when I crossed the border of my mother country. It did not happen. I was happy that I could embrace my dear old mother again and

⁴⁶ Ibid. 218.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 219.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ On Károly László's activity and experience in Mexico see VENKOVITS, "*Mi otthon fèltre vagyunk vezetve*," 88–111; SZENTE-VARGA, Mónika (2000), "Desde una visión húngara: Los escritos de Károly László sobre México, 1857-1865," *Tzintzun. Revista de Estudios Históricos* 72 (2), 9–43.

⁵⁰ PORDÁN, *László Károly*, 4–5.

could support her and I was happy to see my [...] relatives again, but the joy I felt when I saw my motherland again was not ravishing, because the country was not what it had been in 1848. Its ruler is still the same bloodthirsty young emperor [ie. Francis Joseph] and the majority of its parliament is not made up of good patriots, but such people who made a compromise with the Austrian emperor [...] only to serve their personal peace and not of the interests of their country. [...] I was not joyful to see my homeland again, which is not my home any more. It is not, because I am a citizen of the free and great American Republic and will remain so at least up until Hungary becomes an independent kingdom or republic. When I received my American citizenship I swore to relinquish all subjugation and allegiance to the emperor of Austria and I intend to keep my word.”⁵¹

⁵¹ LÁSZLÓ, *Napló*, 1867. szeptember 30. Quoted by PORDÁN, *László Károly*, 78–79.

***Distant Borders Confronted and Met Each Other
Through Different Religious Identities:
The Story of the Holy Crucifix at Ta' Ġiežu Church in Valletta
and the threat of an Ottoman invasion against Malta***

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Borders as an epitome of suffering

In 1742, the Maltese Notary Francesco Dos recorded, in a deed, the history of a crucifix that is still to be found at the church known in Malta as Ta' Ġiežu, standing for Our Lady of Jesus. This church is in the capital Valletta. This crucifix became synonymous with this church and to this day is still known as the Crucifix of *Ta' Ġiežu*. In this deed, Dos stated that this crucifix:

*“was created by the hands of a master and an Italian national, a Reverend Father of the said Order, who happened to be in Malta in the company of another twelve friars of the said Order on their way to the Holy Land. This friar was held in high esteem and was respected by all for being an exemplary holy man.”*¹

The notary does not disclose the name of the artist but relied on the information of an elderly person by the name of Francesco Romero. Romero was one of the old members of the religious confraternity that became the owner of this crucifix. This confraternity was set up for the veneration of the Holy Cross and thus, in Valletta, it came to be known as that of the Holy Crucifix. Romero was born in 1659,² and became a member of the confraternity in 1684, aged 25.³ He was not a contemporary of the period when this crucifix was commissioned. Through the notarial deeds, it is known that this crucifix was commissioned in 1648. Furthermore, the deed reveals the names of the persons who had paid for it as well as Fra Innocenzo da Petralia, the artist involved.

Fra Innocenzo was in Malta around 1648 when he executed this crucifix.⁴ This was not his sole artistic work done during this sojourn on the island. After finishing the first commission, he had to create a second crucifix that had been requested by the bishop. Having fulfilled his commitments, Fra Innocenzo returned to his base in Sicily where he died in an

¹ NAM, Francesco Dos R/237, 9-ix-1742, f. 17r-v.

² AQUILINA, Gorg – MACALUSO, Guido – BUGEJA, Samwel (1986), *Il-Ġimgha l-Kbira tal-Belt*, Malta, 8.

³ Ibid.

⁴ MERCIECA, Simon (2020), “A Saintly Sojourn, Frate Innocenzo da Petralia Stay in Malta,” in AT-TARD, Christian (ed.), *Ta' Ġiežu Crucifix, Faith, History, Iconography Conservation*, Malta, 39–46.

aura of sanctity.⁵ Thus, these crucifixes were probably the last works of this great Sicilian artist whose contribution to the art world is currently being revitalized.



The crucifix of Fra. Innocenzo da Petralia at the Church of the Franciscan Minors in Valletta

By the mid-18th century, the name of this artist had been forgotten. What was recalled was the connection that existed between this crucifix and the city of Jerusalem. Mistakenly, it was thought that the artist was on his way to the Holy Land when he executed this crucifix rather than on his way back home. For sure, these references confirm that Fra Innocenzo stopped twice in Malta. Once on his way to Jerusalem and on his way back from the Holy Land. But why was such a connection remembered? Because by then, borders between Christianity and Islam became the essence of human suffering.

It should be noted that this crucifix belonged to a confraternity that was attached to the Franciscan Minors who till this day remain the custodians of the Holy Land. Their convent in Malta at that time acted as a stepping stone for all those who wished to reach Jerusalem. Fra Innocenzo resorted to make use of the amenities offered by his brethren in Malta to fulfil his dream of visiting the Holy Land. Crossing borders was never an easy task. The problem was not only one of distance linked to the hardship of undertaking a long voyage from the Central Mediterranean to the Levant on a sailing boat. There was also the peril of entering those areas that separated Christians from the Ottoman world. This needed special passes to cross what today can be described as war zones. Therefore, it was no mean feat to undertake a visit to the place where the man, Christians consider the Saviour of humanity, met his death.

Romero knew members within the same confraternity who on learning about the experiences of these brave men were enticed to cross over and visit the Ottoman regions. One cannot exclude that Romero himself must have heard similar tales from friars who had visited the Holy Land. This explains why a visit to the Holy Land that had taken place be-

⁵ Ibid. 42.

fore Romero was born became associated with other visits that had taken place during his life time. What Romero wanted was to recount the oral traditions that he had listened to concerning these long distant voyages made by Franciscan Friars Minor to visit the burial place of their Saviour. Their stories continued to reverberate in the convent at Valletta because these men infringed upon the invisible borders imposed by the ever-perennial war between the Cross and the Crescent. These were events worth remembering because they were about human suffering. Those who undertook these trips trespassed invincible parameters that were zealously protected.



The crucifix is taken out in procession on special occasions. It is still considered miraculous and is still venerated today

Since Francesco Romero recounted this tale when he was 83 years old,⁶ he could have easily mixed up some of the facts and fused different stories into one. It is also possible that Notary Dos may have misunderstood him. What is certain is that Notary Dos was anxious to record what Romero had to say. In fact, Romero died the following year.⁷ The question is why was Dos so anxious? Was Romero beginning to suffer from loss of memory; possibly suffering from what we now know as dementia, and Dos was keen to record what this man knew before it was too late?

If one studies these historical references within the context of their time, one understands why all the inaccuracies and interest in Romero's story. The reason for this confusion is to be found in the history of the crucifix itself and what it represented for believers in the 17th and 18th centuries. It is also to be found in the history of borders and how they impinged on the identities of those crossing them.

⁶ Ibid. 7.

⁷ Ibid. 8. Francesco Romeo died on the 8 May 1743 and was buried in the church of Saint Mary of Jesus in Valletta.

One needs to start by establishing that the artist of this crucifix, the Sicilian Friar, Innocenzo da Petralia, was not interested in portraying a realistic image of a crucified man. What Innocenzo da Petralia was seeking was an axiomatic representation of death. This is the main reason why da Petralia goes beyond the historical truth.

From the 14th century onwards, in Italy and this includes Sicily, pictorial and sculptural realism were introduced. In the crucifixion, this realism reached its artistic zenith with a work that is attributed to Michelangelo Buonarroti – even though this is the work of another artist – who depicted a completely naked Christ crucified. But this representation had an impact on the way Christ was henceforth to be depicted on the cross. By the 17th century, this model of human reality was adopted across Italy,⁸ becoming part of the Christian identity. It created a symbiosis between earthly suffering and Christ's agony. There should be no doubt that Fra Innocenzo knew of these artistic expressions but wished to go beyond and depict an extreme reality, nearly anticipating contemporary hyper-realism. This became a form of new identity that linked the sufferings of the 17th and 18th-century Christian with the suffering of the Lord. But to render this representation even more enhanced, it needed to cross physical boundaries. Jerusalem was controlled by what the West considered the enemy of the Christian faith meaning Islam. This political reality increased, rather than defused this sentiment of suffering felt by those Latin Christians who wanted to visit Jerusalem. In order to see with their own eyes, the places where Our Lord met the end of his earthly life, they could only do so by crossing dangerous borders.

Writing about this crucifix, authors were being conditioned by the impact that existing boundaries in the Mediterranean, in the second-half of the 17th century, was having on the identity and the history of the Confraternity of the Holy Cross of Valletta in particular, and the Franciscan Minors, as custodians of the Holy Land, in general. What united these historical narratives was sufferance and the fact that Jesus Christ died on the cross in Jerusalem.

In turn, sufferance was enough to captivate the imagination of 17th century society as it formed part and parcel of a daily reality. Medical knowledge, at the time, had very few remedies for sufferance.⁹ Literally, people had to suffer to die. The last days or hours on earth were times of agony. Thus, it was very easy for people then to relate to the image of an agonizing Christ. The more vivid and disproportionate was the representation of death, the more it struck a chord with the faithful. One just needs to remember that the crucifix was exhibited and given great prominence in places of suffering. For example, a large crucifix overlooked the main ward of the main hospital in Malta known as the *Sacra Infermeria* established by the Knights Hospitaller in Valletta.¹⁰

This presence of the hospital was not the only place where suffering and pain was being publicly exposed. Valletta was the area which had the highest number of sailors, including

⁸ DEBONO, Sandro (2005), *Imago Dei, Sculptured Images of the Crucifix in the Art of Early Modern Malta*, Malta, 37.

⁹ Vide for example, CASSAR, Paul (1964), *Medical History of Malta*, London, 132–133.

¹⁰ An engraving by Filippus Thommasinus (1588) depicts the main hall of the Holy Infirmary. Among others, this engraving records the presence of a big cross over an altar that was placed at the end of this hall. The presence of this altar is recorded by one of the contemporary travellers, the German Count George Albert of Erbach (1617). See. SAVONA-VENTURA, C. (2003), "The Valletta Sacra Infermeria in Travelogues and Art," *Treasures of Malta* 9, 2, 16–17.

corsairs.¹¹ This meant that this locality had also the highest number of residents who had fallen into slavery and were held captive in Ottoman land. The life of these slaves was one of continuous suffering as indeed was the life of all slaves.¹² Sufferance was not only linked to the fact that the poor slave was going to be deprived of his family, but slavery also meant a life of humiliation. Like Christ, the slave was stripped of clothing and exposed naked in the slave markets of Algiers and Tunisia for prospective buyers to personally examine whether their potential acquisition had any physical defects.¹³ Like Christ, a slave can end up being tortured for perceived or real insubordination.



One of the many paintings executed in Early Modern Times depicting Christ scourged. Christ was depicted in a position intended to remind the viewer of the suffering of those Christians who had fallen into slavery. Courtesy Wignacourt Museum, Dun Ġwann Azzopardi

Should a slave stray afar, the whip was resorted to calling him back to discipline and fear.¹⁴ Is not the representation of such excessive bloodshed on this corpse on the crucifix, a mirror of this reality? In this period, pictorial representations of Christ with his back scourged by the whip were also common. These images appealed to society because they reflected this reality. Besides, it became the expression of the agony of Jerusalem. But how?

The commission of this crucifix came at a particular moment in the history of Malta and the Mediterranean. It came at a time when, as a result of war, a number of Christian refu-

¹¹ MERCECA, Simon (2018), "Hidden Echoes of Malta's Maritime Past: Surviving Nineteenth-Century ex-Voto Paintings at the Parish Church of Cospicua," in VASSALLO, Carmel – MERCECA, Simon (eds.), *The Port of Malta*, Malta, 216–217.

¹² AQUILINA, Ġorġ (2011), *Il-Frangiskani Maltin (Ta' Ġiezu)*, Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 255.

¹³ MERCECA, Simon (2011), "I corsari e le loro vittime: l'emergere nel Mediterraneo di un' industria fatta di schiavitù durante la seconda metà del Cinquecento," in CINI, Marco (ed.), *Traffici commerciali sicurezza marittima, guerra di corsa. Il Mediterraneo e l'Ordine di Santo Stefano*, Edizioni ETS, 21–49; BONO, Salvatore (2016), *Schiavi. Una storia mediterranea [XV-XIX secolo]*, Mulino, 108–112.

¹⁴ MUSCAT, Joseph (2006), *Galley Slaves at Work*, Malta, 22, 34–38.

gees were escaping from the Levant to the West.¹⁵ Malta too started to receive her share of migrants, in particular, Greek Christians escaping from the island of Crete.¹⁶ Crete was slowly being conquered by the Ottoman forces until finally succumbing to the Ottomans in 1669.¹⁷ In 1645, a group of Latin Christians escaped from Candia; Crete's main town, which bore the same name as that of the island taking with them a crucifix they considered miraculous and brought it over to Malta.¹⁸ This crucifix was donated to the church of Bormla.¹⁹ Bormla is one of the harbour towns of Malta. Seventeenth-century records speak about pilgrimages from all around Malta going to Bormla's church to venerate this crucifix.²⁰ The final fall of Crete was considered an Ottoman retaliation for what appeared to have been unrestricted activities by Maltese corsairs.²¹

The arrival of this crucifix from Candia triggered a new religious devotion in Malta and increased the interest in the passion of Christ. It was on this basis that the Conventual Chaplain, Fra Marco Rosset, commissioned this crucifix for the Valletta church of the Franciscan Minors. But this Knight Hospitaller stipulated one important condition. He wanted this crucifix to be donated to the Confraternity of the Holy Cross of which he was a member.²² But why was Rosset so adamant that this crucifix had to be given to this church? Perhaps one could be tempted to think that these friars had already begun organizing Lenten celebrations, including those of Holy Week, with processions.²³ This may be an explanation. But there is more to it. The church chosen, where Rosset wanted this crucifix placed in perpetuity,²⁴ was in the hands of the same monastic order that held custody of the holy place where Christ had been crucified. The Valletta convent, as early as the 1630s, held the office of the Custody of the Holy Land.²⁵

¹⁵ MERCIECA, Simon (2002), *Community Life in the Cental Mediterranean. A Socio-Demographic Study of the Maltese Harbour Towns in Early Modern Times, Bormla 1587–1815*, unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, Paris, University of Paris IV- Sorbonne, 235.

¹⁶ Ibid. 249.

¹⁷ MALLIA MILANES, Victor (1992), *Venice and the Hospitaller Malta 1530–1798. Aspects of a Relationship*, Malta, 164.

¹⁸ DEBONO, *Imago Dei*, 19–22.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ MERCIECA, Simon (2011), “Il-Kurċifiss Mirakuluż u l-Vero Ligneo Prezzjuż ta’ Bormla. Tagħrif meħud miż-Żgħajjar Pastoral tal-Isqfijiet Astiria, Molina, Cocco Palmieri u Gori Mancini,” in *Programm tal-Festi tal-Gimgha Mqaddsa fil-Belt ta’ Bormla 2011*, Malta, 6–35; “Il-Kappella tal-Kurċifiss ta’ Kandja u r-Relikwija tas-Salib Mqaddes fiż-Żgħajjar Pastoral tal-Isqof Alpheran de Busan,” in *Programm tal-Festi tal-Gimgha Mqaddsa fil-Belt ta’ Bormla 2012*, Malta, 7–31.

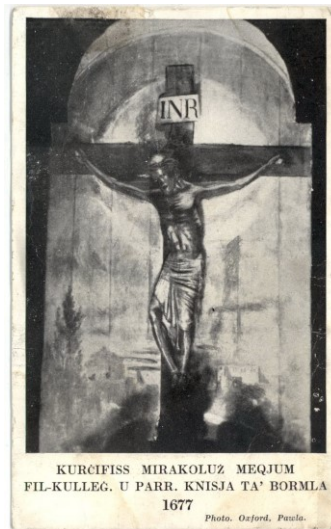
²¹ ROSSI, Ettore (1935), *Storia della marina dell’Ordine di S. Giovanni di Gerusalemme, di Rodi e di Malta*, Rome, 68–76.

²² NAM, R468/4, Notary Andrea Vella, 21 February 1648, ff. 302-304v; AQUILINA, *Il-Frangiskani Maltin*, 502–505.

²³ AQUILINA, *Il-Frangiskani Maltin*, 229.

²⁴ NAM, R468/4, Notary Andrea Vella, 21 February 1648, f. 257v.

²⁵ AQUILINA, *Il-Frangiskani Maltin*, 119–128.



An old Holy Picture showing the crucifix that was brought to Malta from Candia and placed in the Church of Bormla. As this Holy Picture shows, this crucifix was considered miraculous and carries the year 1677. However, local archival sources confirm that it was brought to Malta around three decades previously, i.e. circa 1645

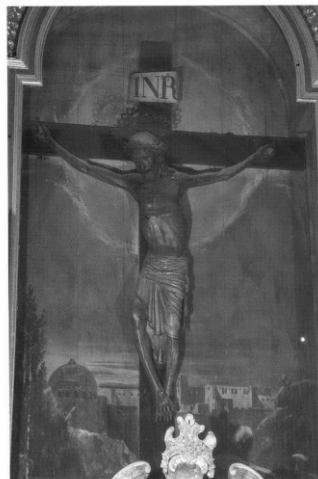


Plate 11. Polychromed Wood Crucifix, Cretan School, Cospicua Collegiate Parish Church, Cospicua.

The Candia Crucifix acquired by Bormla's parish church. It has a backdrop with a view of the city of Jerusalem. The Temple Mount takes centre stage and was executed in the 18th century

The history of this custody in the 17th and 18th centuries is one of suffering and political intrigue.²⁶ The shifting of territorial borders, caused by the gradual loss of Candia, were

²⁶ Ibid. 119–132.

impinging on the Maltese way of life. This crucifix became a *par excellence* representation of the artist's empathy with the sufferance that such political changes were causing to Christians. From the mid-17th century, the procurator responsible for the Custody of the Holy Places, had repeatedly requested the Knights of Malta to guarantee safe passage for western pilgrimages to Jerusalem.²⁷ The procurator was always appointed from the Franciscan Minors.²⁸ In response, the Knights of Saint John stopped cruising in the Levant to prey on Ottoman and Muslim ships,²⁹ but Maltese-licensed corsairs were not always ready to respect these self-imposed restrictions.

In the 17th century, Michele Zammit, a Franciscan Friar Minor, was assigned to the Holy Land where he also served as custodian of the Franciscan mission in Jerusalem. Fr. Zammit was so well-versed in Arabic that he translated sermons from Arabic into Italian and Latin. These sermons were about the life of the saints.³⁰

The second proof of the connection with the Holy Land is to be found during the week the islands of Malta were plagued by insects.³¹ According to Francesco Caruana Dingli, millions of locusts infested the islands and the inhabitants had to go out and about with sticks to shoo them away from their faces. The outcome of this attack was that many Maltese took a vow that if they were spared, they would go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This infestation was viewed as a manifestation of God's anger towards a highly sinful and lustful society. Jerusalem appeared as the ideal place for the redemption of one's sins.³²

There are two other references that inadvertently link the creation of this Holy Crucifix with events in Jerusalem that were taking place around the year 1700. It should be pointed out that at least two historical documents erroneously link the creation of this crucifix around this date.³³ Since the data contained in these documents is not historically correct, these sources were not considered credible. The first one is by the already mentioned erudite priest Francesco Caruana Dingli. In his manuscript of Maltese biographies, he mentions Fra Innocenzo da Petralia. He states that da Petralia was in Malta but then, for an unknown reason his entry carries on with military preparations that took place in Malta in the year 1700 when an Ottoman attack on Malta was feared imminent.³⁴

The second reference is by Notary Francesco Dos himself.³⁵ Dos relied heavily on Francesco Romero (1659-1742), who insisted with him that this crucifix was made in the year 1700. But why was Dos, like Caruana Dingli, so keen to focus on the year 1700? Was it the case that the inhabitants at the time believed that this crucifix had delivered them from an Ottoman attack? And here the issue of borders comes into play once again.

²⁷ AOM 258, ff. 102-102v; AOM 264, f. 187; AOM 505, f. 111.

²⁸ AQUILINA, *Il-Frangiskani Maltin*, 117-119.

²⁹ QUINTANO, Anton (2003), *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship Squadron 1701-1798*, Malta, 226-7.

³⁰ Vatican Archive, 414.

³¹ CAUCHI, Mark – MERECIECA, Simon (2019), *Laudemus Viros Gloriosos Patrijiet Agostinjani li Ghamlu Isem*, Malta, 79.

³² NLM, Lib. 1142, no. 765.

³³ MERECIECA, Simon, "A Saintly Sojourn: The Stay and Works of Frate Innocenzo da Pietralia in Malta". This paper is being published in this same book.

³⁴ NLM, Lib. 1142, no. 1142, no. 624.

³⁵ NAM, R/237, Notary Francesco Dos, 9 September 1742, vol. 9, ff. 16-17v.

Perhaps, one could link these references to what came to be known as the two campaigns in Morea. The first one is known as the War of Morea that took place between 1684 and 1699 and the second one, called the War of Corfù, raged between 1714 and 1718.³⁶ In the second campaign, the Turks started attacking Corfù, which was under Venetian rule. This caused Austria to react and entered the fray. The Ottomans were defeated at the battle of Petrovaradin in 1716. This defeat was followed by the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718. Grand Master Ramon Perellos sent troops in what came to be known as the campaign of Morea in support of Austria and Venice.³⁷ The Order's participation in this war brought on the fear of an Ottoman reprisal against Malta.³⁸

What united these three campaigns is the fact that whenever a war broke out in the East, it generated fear of an imminent Ottoman attack on Malta.³⁹ It should also be noted that the confraternity of the Holy Cross was set up at the church of Saint Mary of Jesus in Valletta a year after war broke out in Candia in 1645. Three years later, as already explained, this holy crucifix was donated to this church of *Ta' Ġiezu* in Valletta. These facts explain why 18th century members of the confraternity linked this crucifix with events in the Levant but confused the war of 1645 with those wars that had taken place between 1684 and 1716!

Frans X. Cassar discovered Arab references related to these events. These documents confirm the fear experienced by early 18th century contemporaries regarding a possible attack on Malta. They also explain why the date when the crucifix was made and why Fra Innocenzo da Pietralia's visit to Malta were ascribed to the beginning of the 18th century rather than to the mid-17th century by both Notary Dos and Francesco Caruana Dingli.

The Situation in Jerusalem

At the turn of the 18th century, Jerusalem was not the best place for a Christian to visit. It was in the hands of the Ottoman Empire and the Maltese were hated for their corsairing activities. The Arab historian and writer, Ibn Kanān (محمد بن عيسى بن محمود بن محمد بن كنان) (1663–1740) wrote about this turbulent relationship caused by the illegal activity of Maltese corsairs who infiltrated the invisible boundaries that were set up in the Levant beyond which the Maltese corsairs were not expected to plunder. Ibn Kanān hailed from Damascus. He wrote about matters that he had personally witnessed and heard. He was the author of

³⁶ MALLIA MILANES, *Venice and the Hospitaller Malta*, 164.

³⁷ ROSSI, *Storia della marina*, 85.

³⁸ QUINTANO, *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship*, 226. Quintano speaks about the general preparations for the Morean campaign in 1718. He focuses on the naval aspect, but it also involved precautionary measurements against the fear of an Ottoman reprisal against Malta. Unpublished history notes by Walter Ganado. These notes are currently being edited, with the help of students following the BA History course for eventual publication.

³⁹ According to Alison Hoppen, the first years of the 18th century “were relatively peaceful” and there was no need of any works of the fortifications, implying that works on the forts were associated with times of military tensions. In fact, in reading through her text, this comment is made because this period was sandwiched between two periods of great tensions and fear for the Order of Saint John because of its naval participation in the wars in Morea. In fact, after 1708, works started in earnest on the fortifications of Sta Margerita and those of the Cottonera, in a clear indication that Malta was again in times of military tension. HOPPEN, Alison (1999), *The Fortifications of Malta by the Order of St. John 1530–1783*, Malta, 138–148.

several books including يوميات شامية 'yawmiyat shamiya' [*Oriental Journal*] wherein he mentions the island of Malta three times.

The crucifix is not mentioned but what is mentioned is the custody of the Holy Land. Due to the Malta's corsairing activities in the Levant, Ibn Kanān speaks about the pressures that Ottomans and Muslims were putting on the Ottoman sultan and the governor of Jerusalem to do something about these corsairing activities. Jerusalem was considered an open city and all its inhabitants were to be protected and not to be attacked by any nation. Each time that this code was broken by Maltese corsairs, the Muslim congregation asked for revenge on – and retribution from – the community of Christians living in the Holy Land. What is even more revealing is that the church of the Holy Sepulchre was targeted by the Muslims each time that a member of the Ottoman community was depredated by Maltese corsairs.

The first reference to Malta regards the bread riots that took place on 28th January 1713 in the city of Jerusalem. These riots were the result of food shortage that hit the region back then. The Arabs still refer to Jerusalem as *Al Quds*, meaning the sacred [city]. An interesting fact in Ibn Kanān's text is that the church of the Holy Sepulchre is called in Arabic, *Al-Qamāma*. Christians called it *Al-Qiyama*, which means the church of the Resurrection. There is here a play on words. In Arabic *Qamāma* means dung. Thus, this church was being referred to as a dunghill. Most probably, the name *Al-Qamāma* was given to this church by Arab Muslims in retaliation for the desecration of the Temple site at the time of the crusades.⁴⁰ In itself, such a negative label exposes the type of identity that Muslims at the time imposed on the fellow Arab and Latin Christians living in Jerusalem.

At the same time, the presence of this Christian church served the Muslim as a good bargaining tool to extract concessions from the Christian rulers in the West. The Arab historian Al-Maqrīzī gives his own version why this Christian church in Jerusalem was never turned into a mosque or a place of prayer for Islam, as was the case with other sacred places in this city, which were sacred to both Jews and Christians, such as the Temple Mount.⁴¹ Al-Maqrīzī's text in part explains why the Arab and Muslim accepted that this place should be in the hands of Christians. Then, it was the Papacy in the Late Middle Ages that decided to favour the Franciscan Minors, after it had been for a short time in the hands of Observants and before them, the Augustinian friars.

“Christian historians mention that Emir Al Muminin ‘Umar Ibn Al Khuttāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, when he conquered the city of Jerusalem, gave protection to Christians, their children, women and property. Their churches were not to be demolished or occupied. He sat right in the centre of the church of Al-Qamāma. When it was time for prayer, he went out and prayed outside the church on the doorstep on his own. Then, he sat and told the Patriarch: ‘had I prayed inside the church, Muslims would afterwards start saying that ‘Umar prayed here.’ He issued a decree, forbidding Muslims to pray there on the threshold, if not one by one and that Muslims were not to gather nor pray inside or on the threshold. Neither could

⁴⁰ Goldein, Shlomo D. (1989), “Jerusalem in the Arab Era,” *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 2.

⁴¹ Al-Maqrīzī, “Al Qamāma,” [المقريري] in [الخطط والآثار] 1273.

the call to prayer be made from there and the patriarch suggested to him to take the site of the rock to be used as a mosque.”⁴²

This explains why the Pasha would use, at the turn of the 18th century, the church of the Holy Sepulchre as a bargaining tool in his diplomatic dealings with the Knights of St. John. During the month of Muharram 1125, that is 28th January 1713, the Pasha met a group of merchants from the city of Jaffa, who had gone to visit him after their ships had been depredated by corsairs flying the flag of Malta. This fact was understood as an act of treachery by the people of Malta as it broke the understanding that was reached by which Maltese corsairs were not to prey in the Levant, in particular on merchants from the city of Jerusalem and the whereabouts. In retaliation, the Pasha went to Jerusalem and ordered that firewood be placed inside the church of the Holy Sepulchre in order to set it on fire. According to Ibn Kanān, the Pasha was recorded saying that, “*My wish is to burn Al-Qamāma and its people*”. However, the reader is informed by Ibn Kanān, that “*the people of Al-Qamāma*”, meaning the Arab and Latin Christians living in Jerusalem came down on him and their leader approached the Pasha as the latter was entering the church of the Holy Sepulchre. This prevented the Pasha from setting fire to the building. Instead the Pasha ordered them to write to Malta with the request that the ship with all its belonging be returned. He also gave them a letter with all the names of the people who were enslaved in that skirmish and insisted that they were to be freed and allowed to return as free individuals to Jerusalem. To pacify him, the Christians had also to pay a hefty sum of money and it was only upon receiving the money, that the Pasha was placated. It was after this event, that the Pasha aired the idea that Malta should be attack. “*We must sail and go to Malta and take it from their hands and give it to the Sultan Ibn al ‘Uthmān*”, he was recorded saying. He even exclaimed, “*How could it be that a country be against Muslims living within the Holy Lands?*” Clearly, he was bluffing about organizing an attack on Malta but was showing his disappointment that individuals living in a city which was sacred to the three main religions suffered from such an unwarranted attack. However, reading Ibn Kanān’s narrative, one forms the impression that the Pasha was more interested in the reparation money than anything else.

The desire to attack and take Malta followed the plundering by Maltese corsairs of Ottoman and Muslim ships belonging to Muslims based in Damascus and Palestine resurfaces again in another part of Ibn Kanān’s text. This time round, the story concerns a rebellion that took place in Al-Karak castle in 1714 – now to be found in present day Jordan.⁴³ Faced

⁴² Ibid. ويذكر علماء الأخبار من النصارى أن أمير المؤمنين عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه، لما فتح مدينة القدس كتب للنصارى أماناً على أنفسهم وأولادهم ونسائهم وأموالهم وجميع كنائسهم لا تهدم ولا تسكن، وأنه جلس في وسط صحن كنيسة القيامة، فلما حان وقت الصلاة خرج وصلى خارج الكنيسة على الدرجة التي على بابها بمفرده، ثم جلس وقال للبطرك: لو صليت داخل الكنيسة لأخذها المسلمون من بعدي، وقالوا هاهنا صلى عمر، وكتب كتاباً يتضمن أنه لا يُصلي أحد من المسلمين على الدرجة إلا واحد واحد، ولا يجتمع المسلمون بها للصلاة فيها، ولا يؤذنون عليها، وأنه أشار عليه البطرك باتخاذ موضع الصخرة مسجداً

⁴³ Kerak Castle (قلعة الكرك) is one of the largest crusader castles in the Levant, not to be confused with Crac de Chevaliers, is a large Crusader Castle located in Al-Karak, Jordan. Construction of the castle over an area of 25,300 square meters and rising about 1000 meters above the sea surface began in the 1140s under Pagan and Fulk the Amir of Jerusalem. The Crusaders called it *Crac des Moabites*, colloquially referred to as *Krak of the Desert*. Salāh Al Din Al Uyūbi was able to wrest it in the aftermath of the battle of Hittin. The rule of the citadel was later transferred to the Mamluks and then the Ottomans.

with this rebellion, the Pasha decided to blockade the fort. After forty days without granting anything to the besieged, the latter were forced to surrender. What made them surrender was the Pasha's decision to put mines underneath the fort's walls. This led the men inside the fort to surrender. Ibn Kanān narrates how the women, the girls and the men came out and the Pasha showed kindness in sparing the lives of the women and children. These were placed in tents next to him, but all the men were killed. After killing the men, some of the women and girls were auctioned to the highest bidder among his men as a reward. The rest were sold in Damascus, except for those who were ransomed by their relatives at a very high price. It was while selling the poor women and children as slaves that the Pasha remembered the plight of Muslim slaves taken by Maltese corsairs. Thus, he renewed his vow to take revenge on the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It seems that the Grand Master of Malta, who at the time was still Ramon Perellos (1697–1720), refused to return the captured slaves and merchandise to the Pasha. Once again, the Arab and Latin Christians of Jerusalem and the surroundings areas had to appease him with money, which Ibn Kanān insisted filled around a hundred pouches.

More importantly, this text shows that by the beginning of the 18th century, the Knights of Malta and the people living on the island of Malta were considered to be one and the same by Muslims, to the extent that the Muslim population that lived within the Karak citadel was compared to and identified with the islanders of Malta. There was a political reason why the Pasha wanted to identify the rebels with the Maltese people. This revolt came about after the bread riots that took place at the same time in the Maghreb and in Syria. This must have been a difficult political period for the Ottoman Sultan. The area was a hive of social unrest. Therefore, the Pasha needed a political scapegoat and proposed once again an attack on Malta to mitigate the situation.⁴⁴ Undoubtedly, the Christian origins of the Karak citadel continued to haunt the Muslim psyche.

It is clear from Ibn Kanān's text, that Muslim chroniclers continued to remember the fact that the Karak citadel had been, many centuries before, in the hands of the Knights of St. John, from where they were expelled in 1271. Even though this event did not mark the end of the presence of the Christian crusaders in the Holy Lands, it helped in creating new borders in the Levant. At the same time, the memory of the presence of the knights in this fort continued amongst the new Muslim occupiers and in the early 18th century, it was still remembered as the place that was once occupied by the Knights. This is why the rebellious inhabitants were compared to the Knights and the people of Malta. It was on the basis of this past and distant victory that Ibn Kanān continued to voice the idea that the Muslims and the Ottomans should capture the island of Malta from the Christians. He continued to expand on this theory and used it as a case study to boost Muslim morale so that they could defeat the Knights of Saint John and expel them from Malta as they had done in the 13th

⁴⁴ *اشة جدة في دمشق*

جمادى الأولى. دخل كبخية ناصيف وهو خليل، باشة جدة، كافلاً لجدة، وبلغ أن النصارى جاؤوا لابن عثمان بمقاتيح القلاع التي وقع الصلح عليها، ودفعوا مال الفكاك ومال الجزية، أما مال الفكاك فهو مقدار ما تكلفه السلطان في هذه السفارة، وبلغ أن المشيخة الإسلامية صارت إلى عطا الله زاده.

محرم الحرام سنة 1125

م 1713-28

الحكومة

وسلطان الممالك الرومية وبعض العربية والعجمية السلطان أحمد بن محمد خان. والقاضي شبيخي زاده. وناصيف كافل دمشق بالحج الشريف. والمفتي محمد أفندي العمادي. والمدرسون والناس على حالهم.

century, when they were expelled from the Karak castle. Always according to Ibn Kanān, it was only the death of the Pasha that spared Malta from being attacked and taken once again. According to Ibn Kanān, the Pasha was killed in the Arab town of Qalansua (قلنسوة), which today is a district in central Israel.

But succeeding pashas and qadis of Jerusalem continued to mount pressure on Malta. Ġorġ Aquilina mentions the fact that on 14th April 1720, a tartana with three Franciscan Minors arrived early in the morning in Malta, captained by Monsù Portali. These friars were coming from Jerusalem and informed Grand Master Perellos that the Sultan demanded the release of 150 slaves in exchange for granting permission to restore the dome of the church of the Holy Sepulchre and the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.⁴⁵

According to Ibn Kanān, the people of Malta were at the time afraid of the Sultan. It seems obvious that the news had reached the Levant that the inhabitants of Valletta were fearing a Turkish attack on their island.

Ibn Kanān's stories appear to be corroborated by an independent English source. In 1774, George Lord Lyttelton published the story of a female slave, that Lyttelton states was the lover of the ruling Grand Master in Malta.⁴⁶ Lyttelton does not give the name of the Grand Master, by the local Maltese historian, Giovanni Bonello, states that she was owned by Grand Master Perellos and became his secret mistress.⁴⁷ According to Lord Lyttelton this lady, by the name of Zoraide, was the sister of Zelis. She hailed originally from Cyprus but married a rich merchant from Aleppo and after marriage went to live in Aleppo, the area, were all these international tensions developed due to corsairing. Zoraide was captured during this period, roughly in 1713, while on a ship, travelling from Aleppo to Cyprus to visit her relatives.

It was within this context that devotion to the Holy Crucifix increased. It was a past society where violence, sex and religion were three basic instincts that formed the identity of man and had a direct impact on borders. At least, Notary Dos inadvertently collocates the increase in the devotion to the Holy Crucifix within this background and fears, circulating between 1684 and 1718, of an attack on Malta. From time to time, desires were harboured in the Levant to attack Malta. Around 1714, these desires were mulled over following the capture of what appeared to have been a prominent lady, whom the Grand Master had no wish to return to her home country in the East due to his close relationship her. This brought about an increased tension in Jerusalem which revolved around the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

These fears or threat of attacks used to reach the island through these Franciscan Friars Minor. On their way to or from Malta, friars stayed at the convent of the Franciscan Minors in Valletta.⁴⁸ These friars were joined by other pilgrims, who too passed through Malta on their way to or from Jerusalem, driven by a desire to redeem their sins of lust and greed. Others were motivated by pious devotion. Thus, distant borders were being bridged. It was

⁴⁵ AQUILINA, *Il-Frangiskani Maltin*, 130.

⁴⁶ *Letter LXXVIII. Seljm to Mirza at Ispahan. From London, Persian Letters. The works of George Lord Lyttelton; Formerly printed separately, and now first collected together: With some other Pieces, never before printed.* Published by George Edward Aysgough Esq., London, 1774.

⁴⁷ BONELLO, Giovanni (2004), *Histories of Malta – Reflections and Rejections*, Vol. 5 (Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti), in particular the article "Knights in Slavery Captivi in manibus infidelium."

⁴⁸ AQUILINA – MACALUSO – BUGEJA, *Il-Gimgha l-Kbira tal-Belt*, 8–9.

within this scenario that the devotion, as attested by Dos, increased and it was because of this fear and what appeared to have been a providential deliverance that in the 18th century, the impression was formed that this crucifix was made around the year 1700 by a holy man, who was part of a group of Franciscan friars on their way to Jerusalem. It was imperative for 17th and 18th-century chroniclers to emphasize that the artist of this crucifix was a holy person to distinguish him from the habitual pilgrim who went to Jerusalem either to redeem a sin or to fulfil a vow.

Borders and Identity in Early Modern Maghreb: Boundary Changes of Algeria and Tunisia, 1529–1881

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Résumé

En 1830, à l'aube de la colonisation du Maghreb, ni le fait, ni l'idée de la frontière n'étaient nouveaux dans la région. Contrairement à la colonisation de l'Afrique sub-saharienne ou au tracé des frontières du Moyen-Orient par les anglo-français, les Français, lors de leur colonisation de la partie côtière nord du Maghreb central, à savoir l'Algérie ottomane (1830) et la Tunisie ottomane (1881), se sont emparés de l'héritage que leur avaient laissé ces États. La fixation et la consolidation de la frontière étaient en grande partie le résultat des politiques coloniales et de protectorat. Cependant, l'existence de la frontière remonte à l'époque de la conquête ottomane, c'est-à-dire au XVI^e siècle. Les Ottomans ont mis fin à la fragmentation politique de la région, qui a conduit au tracé des frontières entre les trois pays du Maghreb occidental, le Maroc, l'Algérie et la Tunisie. Au cours des XVI^e et XIX^e siècles, la triple division géopolitique de la région a été créée, qui existe encore de nos jours.

Mots clés : frontière et identité, Maghreb à l'époque moderne, Empire ottoman, Algérie française, protectorat français de Tunisie, Sahara

Introduction

In 1830, at the dawn of the colonization of the Maghreb, neither the fact nor the idea of the border was new in the region. Unlike the colonization of Sub-Saharan Africa or the drawing of the borders of the Middle East by the Anglo-French,¹ the French, during their coloniza-

¹ The *Berlin Conference* (November 15, 1884 – February 26, 1885) divided the continent of Africa among European powers and it paved the way for its colonization. After 1885, treaties often resulted in straight lines – up to 44 percent of African boundaries contained straight lines – as the mode of delimitations. LEON, Daniel de (1886), “The Conference at Berlin on the West-African Question,” *Political Science Quarterly* 1, no. 1, 103–139; BADEWA, Adeyemi Saheed (2015), “Morocco-Algeria Frontiers and Regional Cooperation in the Maghreb: A Dialectical Dilemma,” *Essays in History* 10, 148. In relation to the Middle East, the *Sykes-Picot Agreement* (May, 1916) led to the division of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine into various French- and British-administered areas. Modern scholars often emphasized that this agreement created “artificial” borders in the Middle East. For example, BALI, Asli (2017), “Symposium on the Many Lives and Legacies of Sykes-Picot – Sykes-Picot and ‘Artificial’ States,” *American Journal of International Law* 110, no. 3, 115–119. On the Anglo-French policies in the Middle East in the early 20th century see FERWAGNER, Péter Ákos

tion of the northern coastal part of Central Maghreb, namely Ottoman Algeria (1830) and Tunisia (1881) took over the inheritance left to them by these states from Ottoman period.

The present essay's aim is to describe the border changes in the northern region of the Maghreb, especially today's Algeria and Tunisia, from 1529 to 1881, and in some point until the first decades of the 20th century.²

The consolidation of the northern borders of the Western and Central Maghreb chronologically preceded the establishment of the borders between the Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa.³ It is a fact that the borders in the southern part of the Central Maghreb, that is the Sahara, were drawn more than one and a half centuries ago according to colonial considerations. However, it is important to emphasize that this did not happen as a result of classic imperialist rivalry,⁴ but was based on the decision of the same colonial power, namely France.⁵

In the northern regions, the existence of the borderline can be traced back to the Middle Ages and to the time of the Ottoman conquest in the 16th century. It was then that the region was divided into the still-existing – Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia – geopolitical divisions.

The integration of Algiers into the Ottoman Empire took place at the expense of *Ifriqiya*,⁶ that is Tunisia in the east and Morocco in the west from 1512 to 1529. In addition, the northern borders of today's Tunisia date back to ancient times, making them one of the oldest in the world. The Tunisian region followed the Ottoman Algiers model with a significant delay in 1574. Lastly, it can be observed that over the course of the 17–19th century, the Ottoman provinces (French Algeria from 1830) were also at war with each other and with Morocco, which resulted in the formation of the borders of the late 19th century.

(2021), *A modern Közel-Kelet születése 1914–1924* [The Birth of the Modern Middle East], Szeged: JATEPress.

² The history of contemporary border struggles in North Africa began in September–October, 1963 with the Algerian-Moroccan conflict or the so-called “Sand War” (1963–1964). FAROUN, Karen – PAUL, Jim (1976), “War in the Sahara: 1963,” *Middle East Research and Information Project, Inc. (MERIP)* no. 45, 13–16. In addition, a recent publication on today's border disputes has also been published. This writing examines the role of border regions in shaping patterns of violence since the end of the 1990s in North and West Africa. OECD/SWAC (2022), *Borders and Conflicts in North and West Africa*, Paris: West African Studies, OECD Publishing, <https://doi.org/10.1787/6da6d21e-en>, Accessed January 11, 2023.

³ CHENNTOUF, Tayeb (2005), “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” in *Des frontières en Afrique du XII^e au XX^e siècle*, 191–206. 197.

⁴ The only exception was the formation of the Libyan borders. In the west, Libya's boundaries with Algeria and Tunisia are the result of early negotiations between French authorities in Algeria and Tunisia and Ottoman authorities in Tripoli. Italy was one of the last European powers to engage in imperial expansion in Africa in 1911. The settlement in the west was finalized through agreements in 1955 and 1956 between Libya and France. ST. JOHN, Ronald Bruce (1998), *Historical Dictionary of Libya*, Lanham, MD-London, Scarecrow Press, 7, 101.

⁵ The French authorities determined the extent of the hinterland of the Sahara for Algeria, through which the conquest began. LACOSTE, Yves (1998), “Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb: Des frontières très anciennes au sein d'un même ensemble culturel,” in GUILLAUD, Dominique – SEYSSET, M. – WALTER, Annie (eds.), *Le voyage inachevé... à Joël Bonnemaison*, Paris, Orstom, 161–167. 161–162.

⁶ The term *Ifriqiya* or *Afriqiyya* is borrowed from the Latin *Africa*. The region included present-day Tunisia, the western part of present-day Libya, and the eastern part of present-day Algeria. TALBI, M. “Ifrikiya,” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 3, 1047–1050.

Caravan routes and Political Centers in Medieval Maghreb

The Moroccan, Tunisian, and Algerian states were formed throughout history in the northern region of the Maghreb and not in the Sahara.⁷ However, it is an undoubted fact that from the 8th until the 14–15th centuries, the trans-Saharan trade and gold routes made the Maghreb states important, in the words of Fernand Braudel, in the „world-economy”⁸ of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.⁹

The trans-Saharan trade and gold routes were economically essential for the North African states.¹⁰ However, for its control, these kingdoms did not have the opportunity to demarcate territories in the Sahara. The collected gold from south of the Sahara (for which salt and various goods were given in return) was brought by caravans to the Maghreb, especially to the large trading markets, for example to the “desert port” of Sijilmasa in southern Morocco and to trading cities such as Marrakesh, Fez, Tlemcen, Constantine, Tunis, Kairouan, and Ghadamès.¹¹

These cities, founded in the Middle Ages not only ensured the transportation of gold to the Middle East and Mediterranean Europe but also formed political centers.¹² Over time, dynasties organized around these cities were established in the Western and Central Maghreb.¹³

⁷ LACOSTE, “Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb,” 162.

⁸ The French historian and leader of the Annales School himself stresses the difference between world economy and world-economy. “*The world economy is an expression applied to the whole world.*” [...] “*A world-economy only concerns a fragment of the world, an economically autonomous section.*” FRANK, Andre Gunder (1993), *World-Economies or [one] World Economy? – A Critical Reading of Braudel’s Perspective of the World*, Revised First Draft, <https://www.rrojasdatabank.info/agfrank/braudel.html>, Accessed December 15, 2022.; BRAUDEL, Fernand (1982), *Civilization and Capitalism 15th–18th Century. Vol. III. The Perspective of the World*, Berkeley, CA, The University of California Press, 20–21.

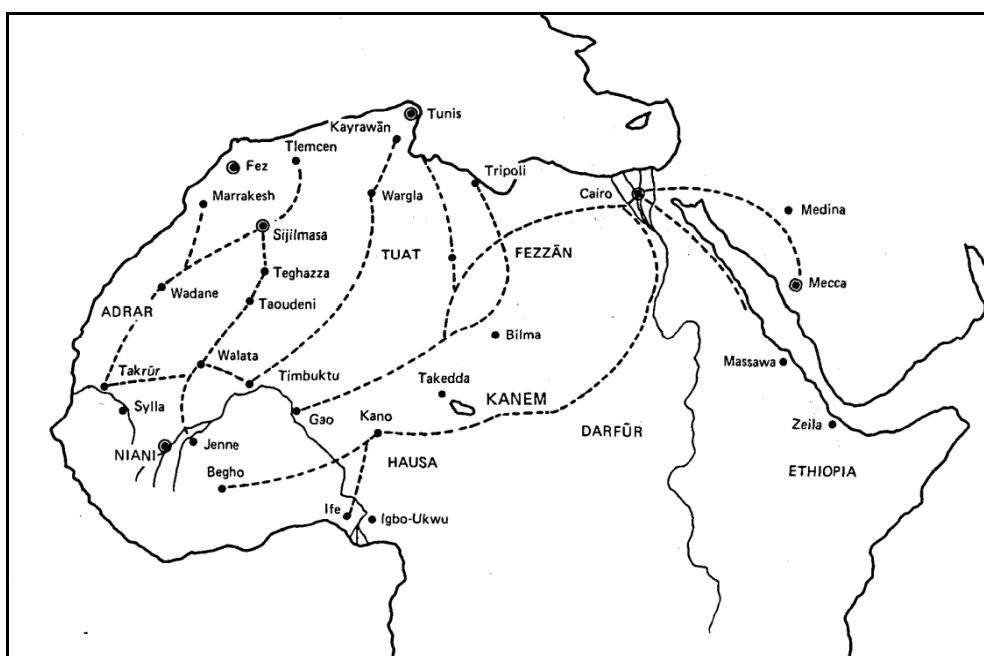
⁹ LACOSTE, “Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb,” 162. On the trans-Saharan trade see DEVISSE, Jean (1988), “Trade and trade routes in West Africa,” in ELFASI, Mohamed (ed.), *General History of Africa. Volume 3: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*, Berkeley, CA, The University of California Press, 367–435; NIANE, D.T. (1984), “Relationships and exchanges among the different regions,” in NIANE, D.T. (ed.), *General History of Africa. Volume 4: Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, Berkeley, CA, The University of California Press, 614–634.

¹⁰ SAIDI, O. (1984), “The unification of the Maghrib under the Almohads,” in, NIANE, *General History of Africa. Volume 4*, 15–56. 52.

¹¹ On Sijilmasa see MESSIER, Ronald – MILLER, James (2015), *The Last Civilized Place: Sijilmasa and its Saharan Destiny*, Austin, TX, University of Texas Press.

¹² The foundation of Constantine even dates back to antiquity. It was founded circa 203 BC, by the Phoenicians, who called it Sewa, and later, according to Livy, Roman historian (59 BC–AD 17) it was renamed Cirta. Later, in 312 AD, Cirta became known as Constantine (*Civitas Constantina Cirtensium*). *Sites & cities that bear the name of Cirta* – <https://www.strabon.io/site/Cirta>, Accessed December 15, 2022.; Bertrand, S. (1994), “Cirta,” in *Encyclopédie berbère*, Vol. 13, 1964–1977.

¹³ JULIEN, Charles André (1970), *History of North Africa. Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco: From the Arab Conquest to 1830*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 37–75.



Main trans-Saharan routes in the 14th century (*General History of Africa*, 4, 155.)

In the 12th century, the Almohads (1041–1230) established the unity of the entire Maghreb and Muslim Andalusia by controlling the gold routes.¹⁴ After the collapse of the Almohad Empire in the 13th century, the borders north of the Sahara were formed, which more or less are the northern borders of the three Maghreb states to this day.¹⁵

The Marinid dynasty (1244–1465), which succeeded the Almohads in Morocco, had a long rivalry with the city of Tlemcen. Eventually, the border which became the western border of the Ottoman Empire was drawn between the two territories in the 16th century. Further east, the Ottomans took over the borders of the Hafsid dynasty which ruled from the 13th to the 16th centuries in Tunis, in order to demarcate their provinces, *ejalets/vilayets* or *sancaks* of Algiers and Tunis.¹⁶

The Ottoman Conquest of the Maghreb and its Influences on the region

During the 1500s, the *Sublime Porte* conquered the Eastern and the Central Maghreb region step by step, first Algiers (1529), then Tripoli (1551), and last Tunis (1574). In addition, in

¹⁴ SAIDI, "The unification of the Maghrib under the Almohads," 15. For the Almohad Empire see JULIEN, *History of North Africa*, 104–135.

¹⁵ LACOSTE, "Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb," 162.

¹⁶ Ibid. 162–163. For the Hafsids see BRUNSCHVIG, Robert (1940, 1947), *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsides: Des origines à la fin du XV^e siècle*, 2 vols, Paris, Adrien-Maisonneuve; JULIEN, *History of North Africa*, 140–161.

the 16th century, the adoption of the Ottoman model (bureaucracy, military and administration, etc.) also can be observed in the Maghreb states.

The central part of the region became a province of the Ottoman Empire in 1529, with Algiers as its capital. Only the region of Tunis remained from the Hafside Kingdom by the late 16th century. This area followed the trajectory of Ottoman Algeria at the beginning of the century with a chronological delay. During that time period, dynastic and succession disputes and Spanish–Ottoman hostilities (1534, 1535, 1569, and 1573) played a significant issue. In 1574, Sinan Pasha/Grand Vizier (1520–1596) led an expedition against La Goletta and Tunis. Before returning to Istanbul, Sinan organized the government of Tunis loyal to the Ottomans.¹⁷



The Ottoman siege of La Goletta fortress in 1574

(National Science Foundation, BRAUN, Georg – HOGENBERG, Franz, "Tunis and Carthage, circa 1574," <http://math.arizona.edu/~dido/sponsors.html> Accessed Marc 1, 2018.)

Of the Western Maghreb states, Morocco was the only one that did not become part of the Ottoman Empire. The sultanate remained independent under the leadership of the Saadian dynasty (1510–1659), which replaced the Marinids, in the 16–17th centuries.¹⁸

From then on, the new states (this is partly also true for Morocco) had new weapons and armies, developed a new type of bureaucratic state apparatus, and had significant financial resources. All Ottoman territories in the Maghreb were governed by the beylerbeys and pashas, appointed from Istanbul. In addition, a new and standing army, namely Janissary

¹⁷ JULIEN, *History of North Africa*, 282–284, 297–301.

¹⁸ In general for the Saadian dynasty see Ibid. 220–242.

Corp appeared in each province.¹⁹ Furthermore, the divan was also established which acted as an advisory body next to the pasha.²⁰

The Ottoman sultans administered the newly conquered region in one unit till 1587. After that, it was divided into three major provinces or regencies.²¹ The final geopolitical *status quo* also took shape gradually. On the one hand, the appearance and settlement of the border disputes can be observed in the 17th century, when Algiers, Tunis, and Fez fought a series of wars with each other. On the other hand, from 1830, following the French annexation and colonization of Ottoman Algeria, the question of the border in a modern sense also appeared in the Maghreb.²²

Borders of Algeria: the Regency of Algiers and French Algeria, 1529–1912

As a result of a long process, the border between Morocco and the Regency of Algiers was stabilized at the end of the 18th century.

In 1553, Salah rais, Pasha of Algiers (1552–1556) responded to successive Moroccan attacks, gathered an army, defeated the Moroccans twice, captured Tlemcen, and advanced all the way to Fez. In addition, he also intervened in the Saadian dynastic disputes – the dethroning of Mohammed al-Mahdi/ash-Shejk I (founder 1554–1557) against Ali Abu Hassun (1549–1554). After the departure of Salah rais, Mohamed I reconquered his kingdom, then besieged Tlemcen. Furthermore, he defeated Ali Abu Hassun's army in the battle of Tadla in 1554. From that year on, the border between the two states, which was the Moulouya river, was respected on both sides for a century.²³

In the middle of the 17th century, the Alawite sultans (1631–) revived their demands towards Tlemcen. Moulay Ismail (1672–1727) managed to briefly take control of the country as far as Tafna. In 1692, Haji Chabane, Dey of Algiers (1688–1695) defeated him in the battle of Moulouya, therefore he was forced to make peace. According to the treaty, the Moroccans and the Algerians once again recognized the Moulouya river as the border between the two states.²⁴

There were continuous Moroccan attacks on Algiers in 1693, 1694, 1696, 1700, 1701, 1703, and 1707. All of these assaults ended with a Moroccan defeat and the area up to the Moulouya river remained again under the rule of Algiers for more than a hundred years.

At the end of the 18th century, Sultan Moulay Sliman/Suleiman (1792–1822) organized an expedition to capture the Algerian city of Oujda. The Bey of Oran did not make any defense preparations and offered no resistance, which led to the fact that Oujda was inte-

¹⁹ Jean Pignon, a French historian estimated that the Tunisian janissary garrison numbered 3000 and 4000 which was divided into units of 100 under junior officers called *deys* between 1590 and 1650. PIGNON, Jean (1956), "La milice des janissaires de Tunis au temps des Deys 1590–1650," *Les Cahiers de Tunisie* 4, 3^{ème} trim, no. 15, 301–326.

²⁰ COLIN, G. S. "Diwan," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2, 332.

²¹ JULIEN, *History of North Africa*, 301–302.

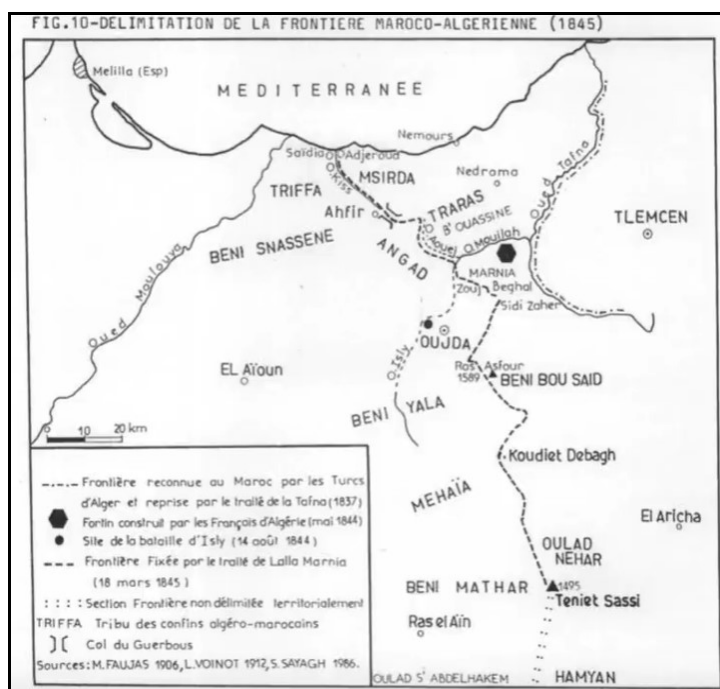
²² CHENNTOUF, "La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb," 196.

²³ *Ibid.* 204.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

grated into the Kingdom of Morocco in 1795. The border was fixed at the Oued Kiss river instead of the Moulouya river.²⁵

The resistance of Emir Abd el-Kader²⁶ (1832–1847) who used the Moroccan territories as a refuge in 1831 after the French annexation of Algeria, indirectly contributed to the Moroccan–French war of August 1844.²⁷ The conflict ended after the battle of Isly (14 August 1844) with the defeat of Morocco and the peace signed on the 10th of September, 1844 in Tangier.²⁸ The treaty was followed by the *Convention of Lalla Maghnia*, signed on the 18th of March 1845.²⁹ This accord was the first colonial treaty in North Africa and it fixed the borders of French Algeria and Morocco.³⁰



Change of borders between Morocco and French Algeria, 1845

²⁵ Ibid. 204–205.

²⁶ Abdelkader, also spelled Abd el-Kader or Abdul-Qadir (1808–1883) was a military and religious leader who founded the Algerian state and led the Algerians in their 19th-century struggle against French domination (1840–1846). BROWER, Benjamin Claude (2011), “The Amīr ‘Abd Al-Qādir and the ‘Good War’ in Algeria, 1832–1847,” *Studia Islamica* 106, no. 2, 169–195.

²⁷ For the Moroccan–French relations after 1830 see BENNISON, Amira (2002), *Jihad and its Interpretations in Pre-Colonial Morocco: State-Society Relations during the French Conquest of Algeria*, London–New York, NY, Routledge, 2002.

²⁸ CLERCQ, M. de (1865), *Recueil des traités de la France. Tome 5: 1843–1849*, Paris, Amyot, 200–203; DELLAL, Abou-el-Kacim (2016), “Tableau géographique de la frontière de l’Algérie,” *Revue académique des études humaines et sociales*, 16–23. 17.

²⁹ CLERCQ, *Recueil des traités*, 271–275.; DELLAL, “Tableau géographique de la frontière de l’Algérie,” 18.

³⁰ CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 197.

Aristide de La Ruë (1795–1872),³¹ a French soldier, politician, and count, strongly emphasized that the convention was not just an agreement about territorial limits. In view of the fact that the contracting powers recognized the right of the French to „pursue Abd el-Kader even into the interior of the Moroccan desert.”³²

In addition, the *Maghnia Convention* and the *Treaty of Tangier* preserved the boundaries of the Regency of Algiers that existed before 1830. “*The boundary between the possessions of His Majesty the Emperor of France and His Majesty the Emperor of Morocco shall remain fixed from Turkish rule in accordance with the situation then recognized by the Government of Morocco. [...] a new agreement can have no other basis than the clause of the Treaty of Tangier, which puts us [French] in the place of the Turks.*”³³

Furthermore, the border made sense only in the case of habitable and cultivable land. Article 4 stated that “*In the Sahara (desert), there is no territorial limit to be established between the two countries, since the land is not plowed and only serves as pasture for the Arabs [Berbers] of the two Empires who come to camp there to find the pastures and waters they need. The two Sovereigns will exercise as they see fit all the plenitude of their rights over their respective subjects in the Sahara.*”³⁴

Article 6 also stated that beyond Teniet Sidi-Sassi „as for the country which is to the south of the kessours [actually Ksour, meaning fortified town, Arabic term for “castle” in the Maghreb] of the two Governments, since there is no water, as it is uninhabitable, and as it is the desert properly so called, the delimitation would be superfluous.”³⁵

Among the deficiencies of the agreement is the fact that the resistance led by Abd el-Kader continued. The concept of the border interpreted as a precise and defined line has not fully developed either.³⁶

From a perspective, it can be said that the *Treaty of 1901* and *1902* recognized the rights of France over the Sahara. Furthermore, on the 21st of May, 1912, the administrative border between Morocco and Algeria, the so-called Varnier Line, from Figuig to Tiberiaine was drawn.³⁷

³¹ Aristide Isidore Jean-Marie de La Ruë entered the service early and owed his rapid advancement mainly to the numerous diplomatic missions with which he was charged in Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia, the Caucasus, Crimea, Constantinople, Morocco, and Algeria. He was Director of Algerian Affairs at the Ministry of War from November 1845 to March 1848. ROBERT Adolphe – COUGNY Gaston – BOURLOTON, Edgar (1891), *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français*, Tome 3. (Fes–Lav), Paris, Bourloton, 610.

³² CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 197.

³³ CLERCQ, *Recueil des traités, Treaty of Tangier*, Article 5, 202; *Convention of Lalla Maghnia*, Article 1, 272.

³⁴ CLERCQ, *Recueil des traités, Convention of Lalla Maghnia*, Article 4, 274.

³⁵ Ibid. 274–275.

³⁶ CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 199.

³⁷ BADEWA, “Morocco-Algeria Frontiers,” 149–150.; PENNELL, C. R. (2000), *Morocco since 1830. A History*, New York, NY, New York University Press, 4–5; DELLAL, “Tableau géographique de la frontière de l’Algérie,” 18–19.

Borders of Tunisia: the Regency of Tunis, 1574–1881

The Algerian–Tunisian and Tunisian–Libyan (the Regency of Tripoli) border posed fewer difficulties than the Algerian–Moroccan border. The establishment of borders was the subject of only two disputes between the Regency of Tunis and Algiers in the 17th century.

The first treaty that defined the border was signed in 1614. The border between the two states was then the Oued el Serrat river.³⁸ Fifteen years later, the agreement was questioned by the bordering Tunisia tribes and their leader, Taib Ben Chenouf of Kef. They invaded the area, and established a military station on the river. War then broke out, during which the Tunisian army was defeated on the 17th of May, 1628. The peace treaty was entirely aimed at demarcating the border.³⁹

According to the agreement of 1628, the border was still the Oued el Serrat in the southern part of the region. Furthermore, the military post that the Tunisians built on the river had to be demolished. In addition, the border was marked by the Oued Mellègue river in the west. Jebel el Ahireche, Keloub el Tiran, and Jebel Hafa became part of the line, all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. Lastly, neither power could refer to their subjects crossing the border anymore. Consequently, they became subjects of the government to which they migrated.⁴⁰

The first delimitation between the Regency of Tunis and French Algeria took place in three stages. In 1835 Louis Philippe I (1830–1848) gave instructions for a peace agreement with Ahmed I Bey of Tunis (1837–1855). Since the negotiations did not lead to an agreement, France unilaterally decided that “*on the seaward side, only Cap Roux and the mountain range descending inland can be the border*”.⁴¹

In 1843 (following the bey’s instruction from 1841), a Joint Delimitation Committee was established. Next, an issue arose regarding fixing the border east or west of Tabarka.

The *Convention of 1852* distinguished the Tellian zone, the Kef zone in El Hammam, the zone between Jebel Ghorra and fīj al Monahed. South of this point, the delimitation became more uncertain because of the desert.⁴²

After the establishment of the French protectorate in Tunisia in 1881, between 1888 and 1898, joint committees managed the settlement of the Mediterranean border. This was ratified by decree in September 1901.⁴³

³⁸ CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 205.; MOALLA, Asma (2005), *The Regency of Tunis and the Ottoman Porte, 1777–1814. Army and Government of a North-African Eyâlet at the End of the Eighteenth Century*, London – New York, NY, Routledge, 18.

³⁹ MOUILLARD, L. (1895), “Etablissement des Turcs en Afrique et en Tunisie,” *Revue Tunisienne* 2, 358–375. 559.; SLIM, Hédi – MAHJOUBI, Ammar – BELKHODJA, Khaled – ENNABLI, Abdelmajid (2003), *Histoire générale de la Tunisie, vol. III, Les Temps modernes*, Tunis, Sud Éditions, 53–54.; FAUCON, Narcisse (1893), *La Tunisie depuis l’occupation française: histoire et colonisation*, Tome I, Paris, A. Challamel, 141.

⁴⁰ MOUILLARD, “Etablissement des Turcs en Afrique et en Tunisie,” 560.; CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 205; FAUCON, *La Tunisie*, 141.; BACHROUCH, Taoufik (1977), *Formation sociale barbaresque et pouvoir à Tunis au XVI^e siècle*, Tunis, Publications de l’Université, 162–163.

⁴¹ CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 200.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

The final Tunisian–Libyan border came into force at the beginning of the 19th century. In the 1794 expedition of Hammuda II, Pasha Bey (1782–1814) annexed Djerba Island to the Regency of Tunis. The border itself was defined in the treaty concluded in 1815.⁴⁴ After that, the frontiers between the three Regencies remained unchanged for the whole of the Ottoman period.⁴⁵ In addition, the south, Yusuf Karamanli, Pasha of Tripoli (1766–1838), also recognized his authority over Ghadamès in 1840.⁴⁶



Hammuda II, Pasha Bey

In 1881, at the beginning of the French protectorate of Tunisia, a neutral zone was established between Libya and Tunisia to avoid contact and conflict between the Ottomans and the French. In 1886 and 1892, a draft was drawn up that specifically demarcated the two areas.⁴⁷ Decisively, the Tunisian–Libyan border was also the main theme of the *Tripoli Agreement/Convention* signed on the 19th of May, 1910, between the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed V (1909–1918) and Muhammad al-Nasir Bey of Tunisia (1906–1922). The border was drawn from Ras Adjedir, located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, to Gharet el

⁴⁴ FAUCON, *La Tunisie*, 8.

⁴⁵ MOALLA, *The Regency of Tunis*, 18, 52.

⁴⁶ CHENNTOUF, “La dynamique de la frontière au Maghreb,” 205.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 200.

Hamel mountain, thirteen kilometers south of Ghadamès. In the south, the border passes at an equal distance between Djeneien–Ghadamès and Naleut–Ghadamès.⁴⁸

The delimitation and consolidation of the Saharan borders took place later. The intention was to create a single block of territories that became legally French.

Borders and Identity in Western and Central Maghreb

How can the relative permanence of the northern borders of the Maghreb, above presented be explained? According to Yves Lacoste, the political and cultural characteristics of this part of the Arab world must be taken into account.

Politically, a significant part of the Maghreb formed the provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the early modern period. In addition, from 1830 France, without any other European rival extended its influence on the region.

On the other hand, in contrast to the eastern Arab countries in the Mashrek region, where various rites and interpretations of Islam still compete with each other (e.g. Shia minorities confronting the Sunni Orthodox), the Maghreb has been characterized by a high degree of religious homogeneity for nearly nine centuries since the Fatimid era (909–1171).⁴⁹

Furthermore, due to the predominance of Arabic, the Mashrek is linguistically absolutely homogeneous, while the Maghreb is characterized by the significant survival of Berber dialects. To this day, we can distinguish Berber-speaking regions, such as the Greater Kabylia and the Aurès regions of Algeria, or most of the mountains and highlands of Morocco. Even in the 19th century, the Berber language was widespread, with the exception of Tunisia, where Arabization was decisive.⁵⁰ However, even in the case of Tunisia, various aspects of Berber traditions – eating habits (couscous), clothing (burnous), and oral literature – form the cultural basis of the entire Maghreb region. It is a fact, that “Arabs”, in the sense of Arabic speakers, are actually more or less Arabized Berbers in the Maghreb and not Arabs from Arabia.⁵¹

Since Berber remained an unwritten language, each new dynasty and ruling class had to have a state apparatus whose officials could of course write in Arabic and later in Ottoman-Turkish. However, each new dynasty – in order to defeat the previous dynasty, take control of the large trading cities, etc. – also had to rely on the fighting potential of the Berber tribes.⁵² Therefore, the Maghreb dynasties formed an Arab–Berber or Ottoman state apparatus: the Berbers performed the military tasks, while the Arabs and Ottomans performed the intellectual and commercial tasks.

⁴⁸ *Convention Tunisie-Lybie 19 mai 1910* – <http://www.habib-bourguiba.net/convention-tunisie-lybie-19-mai-1910/>, Accessed January 11, 2023.

⁴⁹ LACOSTE, “Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb,” 163.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ For the „myth of Arab conquest” see LACOSTE, Yves (2017), *Ibn Khaldun and The Myth of “Arab Invasion”* – <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3293-ibn-khaldun-and-the-myth-of-arab-invasion>, Accessed January 11, 2023.

⁵² LACOSTE, “Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb,” 164. For example, the Fatimids ended the rule of the Aglabids with the help of the Berber tribes in 909.

Large trading cities and political centers, as above presented in connection with the caravan routes, are also very stable elements of the historical geography of the Maghreb. Unlike Europe and many other countries, where the political center took over the material goods (grain, livestock, and minerals) from the countryside, the Maghreb was characterized by an inverted relationship for a long time. The centers of the states were stops on the gold routes, where the wealth provided by international trade was distributed among the allied tribes. These cities continued to survive after the end of the gold routes through the Western Sahara and the Maghreb in the late Middle Ages.⁵³

Conclusion

In conclusion, fixing and consolidating the border of the Western and Central Maghreb was largely the result of French colonial and protectorate policies in the 19th century. However, the existence of the border can be traced back to the Middle Ages and the time of the Ottoman conquest of the 16th century. In addition, the relative stability of the northern borders of the Maghreb can also be explained on the one hand by political and on the other hand by cultural factors.

In relation to the above-presented border disputes and settlements – Morocco–Algeria, Algeria–Tunisia, Tunisia–Libya – three conclusions can be drawn. First, there was no relatively significant border change during early modern times compared to the conditions of the Middle Ages and the 16th century – the geopolitical situation and condition of the region remained substantially unchanged. Furthermore, controversial issues only arose in connection with the northern territories and not with the Saharan region in early times. Finally, major disputes only arose at the frontiers of empires – Morocco–Ottoman Empire, Morocco–French Algeria, French Algeria–Ottoman Empire, French Tunisia–Ottoman Empire – in Early Modern Times.

⁵³ LACOSTE, “Originalité géopolitique du Maghreb,” 164–165.

Frontières intérieures en temps colonial Limites du cosmopolitisme colonial et les chances d'un avenir en partage

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Perçue comme un espace ou comme ligne réelle ou imaginaire, séparant ou joignant deux Etats ou deux territoires, une frontière peut également surgir à l'intérieur d'un Etat ou d'une entité territoriale pour se présenter comme un espace d'épaisseur variable entre les composantes de la société. S'agissant du temps colonial, souvent présenté comme un moment de contact privilégié entre des communautés si différentes au départ : d'un côté les « indigènes » et de l'autre côté, les « communautés européennes », la frontière semble être restée un fait majeur ayant caractérisée les sociétés coloniales. En effet, la pluralité des groupes qui avait marqué la société coloniale et qui était bien réelle, n'a « jamais signifié leur égalité » ni une entière « assimilation » souhaitée par les colonisateurs. Ces sociétés étaient marquées par la présence et la coexistence de groupes donnant lieux à ce que le sociologue anglais John S. Furnivall appelle « sociétés plures », incluant des personnes qui coexistent au travail, parfois dans des mêmes quartiers ou encore dans des institutions tels que les syndicats, associations etc.

Les membres de ces groupes ont pu vivre des moments qui ont favorisé des situations « assimilatrices » où les barrières initiales tendent à s'estomper au fur et à mesure de l'évolution du temps et par l'effet du contact au travail, dans la rue, et l'obéissance à la même autorité. Ces facteurs avaient pu donner lieu à des transformations qui avaient favorisé l'émergence d'un « cosmopolitisme », perdu aujourd'hui, suite aux décolonisations des années cinquante et soixante. Partant du cas tunisien, il s'agit pour nous de montrer, ici, que le temps colonial, tout en favorisant un certain brassage entre les populations vivant dans le pays, cependant, par les inégalités qui l'avaient accompagnées, n'a pas pu mettre fin aux frontières intérieures et le brassage, tant espéré, est resté un fait limité dans le temps et n'a pas pu se maintenir après l'accession à l'indépendance des anciens pays colonisés.

Aux origines des frontières intérieures

Faut-il rappeler que la Régence de Tunis a été définitivement intégrée en 1574 à l'Empire ottoman, les populations qui y résidaient, faisaient toutes, partie de *la oumma* des croyants (nation islamique) dirigée par le Sultan (Calife). Cependant, cette vision globale mérite d'être nuancée. Nous savons que depuis l'époque hafside (XII-XVI^e siècle), les juifs vivaient dans les espaces intra-muros des principales villes de la Régence de Tunis. Dans le cadre de ce statut spécifique, celui de *Dhimmi* (protégés de l'islam), ils étaient astreints au payement du tribut de *Gizya* (impôt particulier, plus élevé que celui payé par les musul-

mans). Par ce « geste », aussi bien le pouvoir politique que la population majoritaire, marquèrent leur considération pour le savoir faire des minoritaires dans un certain nombre d'activités (orfèvrerie, usure, négoce etc.). Toujours dans ce cadre impérial ottoman, profitant des rapports privilégiés entre François 1^{er} et le Sultan Soliman le Magnifique, la France avait bénéficié du système des capitulations qui lui avait permis d'ouvrir des postes consulaires et des comptoirs négoce dans les Echelles d'Orient. C'est ainsi que la France a pu établir des relations diplomatiques avec la Régence de Tunis dès 1577. Cependant, il a fallu attendre presque un siècle plus tard, en 1658, pour que le consul puisse être autorisé à occuper un fondouk abritant aussi bien les négociants, leurs marchandises ainsi que le siège du consulat et une chapelle. Le système des capitulations va être par la suite étendu à d'autres consuls européens qui seront également autorisés à construire des maisons. Une certaine prééminence est accordée par les Beys de Tunis au consul de France, le distinguant par rapport aux représentants des autres puissances européennes. Une faveur qui avait fait de lui le véritable protecteur de tous les chrétiens de la Régence. En effet, l'article 19 du traité établi en 1685 entre la France et le Bey de Tunis stipule que « Les religieux capucins italiens résidant à Tunis seront traités et tenus comme sujets du Roi de France qui les prend sous sa protection ».

Malgré les avancées enregistrées, les traités n'arrivaient pas « à mettre à l'abri » la présence européenne dans la Régence de Tunis, les ressortissants de ces pays vont continuer à subir les effets de la course. Il a fallu attendre l'année 1830, date de la prise d'Alger par la France, qui a eu comme conséquence, en Tunisie, l'obtention de l'interdiction de l'esclavage des blancs. Ainsi, la présence des chrétiens à l'intérieur des frontières de la Régence a eu des conditions plus favorables pour se développer.

A partir des années 1840, au noyau initial formé de négociants, nous allons trouver des milliers d'émigrés européens notamment en provenance des îles du Sud de la Méditerranée : Sicile, Malte, Sardaigne qui sont venus s'établir en Tunisie. Ce courant migratoire est la conséquence de la rapide croissance démographique et de la crise économique qui sévissait à l'époque dans les îles méditerranéennes devenues surpeuplées. Ainsi, à cause de la continuité du régime démographique archaïque qui sévissait encore dans la Régence, se traduisant par la faiblesse de l'augmentation de la population autochtone, le nombre des Européens a connu une nette évolution. Au milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle, la Tunisie comptait environ 7000 Maltais, 4000 Italiens, 250 Grecs et 50 et 60 familles de Français.

La proportion des non-musulmans est plus visible dans une ville comme Tunis où elle peut être estimée au tiers de la population totale de l'ensemble, cependant, nous allons constater la formation de nouvelles frontières formées d'espaces de contacts et de replis. Ainsi, outre *la Hara*, le quartier à majorité juive, c'est le *Quartier franc* qui vient s'ajouter à celui de *la Hara* des juifs pour héberger au bas de la ville, toujours intra-muros, les chrétiens. Ce nouveau quartier va être constitué, au début, de plusieurs fondouks (caravansérails) où résidaient surtout les négociants. Le premier à être construit est celui des Français, sa fondation remonte au XVI^{ème} siècle et auquel vont s'ajouter d'autres habitations semblables qui vont accueillir les autres négociants des autres nations.

Au milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle, avec l'afflux des émigrés en provenance de Malte et des îles italiennes, le quartier franc réservé, jusque-là, aux commerçants européens, n'arrivait plus à les contenir. D'autres espaces vont commencer à voir le jour en dehors des remparts de la ville. C'est en 1856 que la France obtient du Bey le droit de construire une nouvelle

Maison de France en dehors des remparts. Le nouveau siège consulaire est inauguré en 1861. Pour les Maltais et les Siciliens, des quartiers de modestes gens vont voir le jour, toujours en dehors des remparts. Ainsi, les « frontières sociales » vont petit à petit voir le jour séparant les Européens nantis (négociants, drogman etc.), des Européens du bas peuple (maçons, taverniers, transporteurs etc.). Malgré l'abolition en septembre 1857 du statut de *Dhimmi* les faisant accéder au statut de sujet du bey, tout comme leurs compatriotes musulmans, des dizaines d'autochtones, surtout parmi les juifs riches, pensant pouvoir éviter l'arbitraire des Beys, vont chercher à se placer sous la protection des consuls établis dans la régence. Une autre mutation se dessine, cette fois au niveau religieux, puisque la congrégation des Pères blancs fondée en 1869 en Algérie sous la houlette du Cardinal Lavigerie chercha à étendre son influence en Tunisie. En 1875, le cardinal réussit à installer une partie des membres de sa communauté à Carthage. Quelques années plus tard, en 1881, année de de l'établissement du protectorat français, il prend lui-même la direction de l'Eglise catholique, qui sera amenée à jouer un grand rôle dans la gestion des relations entre les communautés au cours de la période coloniale, lorsque les autorités françaises auront les rênes du pouvoir contribuant à mettre en place une forme de cosmopolitisme colonial.

Frontières intérieures et cosmopolitisme colonial

Le 12 mai 1881, la France établit sa protection sur la Tunisie. Même si la cérémonie de la signature s'est déroulée dans un palais encerclé par les troupes françaises, on veilla au respect des formes. L'acte légitimant la domination est présenté comme une convention internationale. C'est un traité de protection signé par le Bey de Tunis et un représentant de la République française. La nouvelle situation tend objectivement à favoriser la petite « nation française de Tunisie » qui ne comptait à peine 700 âmes en 1881. Cependant l'avancée juridique de la France ne lui permet sur le terrain une supériorité démographique, l'effectif des Français restera longtemps moins nombreux que celui des Italiens, mais leur poids politique et économique en fera d'eux « une minorité dominante ».

En 1921, quarante ans après l'établissement du protectorat français sur la Tunisie, le premier recensement général de la population révèle encore une fois de plus, l'infériorité numérique des Français par rapport à celle des Italiens (54.000 contre 84.000). Ces chiffres, notamment ceux des Italiens, ne peuvent être acceptés sans critiques. Déjà d'après une statistique datant de 1910 qui avait porté uniquement sur le nombre des étrangers établis en Tunisie, on avait avancé le chiffre de 102.885 pour les Italiens, contre 34.610 pour les Français et 12.162 pour les Anglo-maltais.

Il est clair que les chiffres de ce premier dénombrement général de la population ont été bien contrôlés par les autorités qui voulaient éviter de montrer un écart important entre surtout le nombre des Français et celui des Italiens. Le déficit démographique qu'avait connu la France en cette période d'après-guerre empêcha les autorités coloniales de compter sur un apport humain supplémentaire en provenance de la métropole. C'est par un recours aux procédés juridiques qu'elles vont tenter d'augmenter l'élément français au sein de la société coloniale. Le 20 décembre 1923, une nouvelle loi est promulguée facilitant l'acquisition à titre individuel de la nationalité française, elle sera appliquée aux membres des différentes communautés qui résidaient en Tunisie contribuant ainsi à augmenter le nombre des Français.

Il est évident que cet appel comportait des éléments de chantage puisque l'accession à la nationalité française était perçue comme un facteur favorisant l'intégration à la fonction publique et aux autres avantages que pourrait accorder la France à ses ressortissants. Ce mouvement portera ses fruits au bout de dix ans. Par l'application du droit du sol, la naturalisation était devenue presque automatique pour les Maltais de Tunisie, sauf pour ceux qui la déclinaient explicitement cette offre, préférant garder une identité « anglo-maltaise ». Les Tunisiens musulmans et juifs, mais aussi les Grecs, les Russes établis en Tunisie, furent invités à présenter des dossiers individuels. Ainsi, la communauté française réussit à dépasser légèrement sa rivale italienne, atteignant en 1931, le chiffre de 91.427 contre 91.178 pour les Italiens.

Les changements ne vont pas se limiter aux chiffres des communautés respectives, l'acquisition de la nationalité française, même si elle était un phénomène individuel, avait eu des retombées dans chaque groupe. Elle va donner lieu à des fractures intérieures et déclencher parfois des tensions au sein de chaque communauté.

Chez les Tunisiens musulmans, la naturalisation est considérée comme une forme de « conversion » au christianisme entraînant des appels pour le refus de l'inhumation des morts « naturalisés » dans les cimetières musulmans. Ce marquage identitaire se creuse parfois et tend à devenir un support complémentaire pour donner lieu à des revendications nationalistes se basant sur des références religieuses.

Le même phénomène s'observe chez les Grecs ou les demandes de naturalisations, avaient concernés, entre 1924 et 1935, le tiers de la petite communauté. Là aussi, on constate également des tensions identitaires qui aboutirent au cours des années trente à scinder les Grecs en deux groupes distincts et hostiles l'un à l'autre. Des dissensions virent le jour lors du renouvellement des structures communautaires, des appels sont lancés pour que les Grecs naturalisés ne soient plus admis à se porter candidats au bureau de gestion de la communauté. Ces luttes sont habilement mises à profit par les autorités coloniales qui veulent toujours apparaître comme seule garante de la pérennité de l'ordre et de la coexistence entre les communautés, d'une part et entre les membres de chaque communauté, d'autre part.

Le même phénomène fut observé dans le cas de communauté russe de Tunisie. Il s'agit d'un groupement qui s'est formé des anciens marins de la flotte de la Mer noire et de leurs familles. De ce groupe estimé au départ à 5000 personnes en 1920, il ne reste, à partir de 1925, qu'une petite communauté de 800 âmes concentrée principalement dans les villes de Tunis et de Bizerte. Si le facteur religieux contribue grandement à cimenter l'identité du groupe resté fortement attaché au projet de retour à la Grande Russie acceptant les privations que dicte le maintien du statut d'apatride. Cependant, les aléas du temps et les difficultés du quotidien ont imposé à un nombre important au sein de la communauté russe de suivre la voie du pragmatisme et du réalisme, impliquant l'acceptation de l'acquisition de la nationalité française. Mais il arrive que la nouvelle identité ne se fige pas dans un contour définitif, elle peut connaître elle-même des mutations. Ainsi, les exploits de l'armée soviétique au cours de la Seconde Guerre mondiale ont fait naître au sein de cette communauté un courant de sympathie et de fierté nationale donnant lieu à une nouvelle identité où les anciennes frontières s'estompent.

De nouveaux espaces de démarcation traduisant la naissance de nouvelles frontières au sein même de chaque communauté. Les frontières intérieures ne présentent pas seulement

comme des espaces étanches, elles sont aussi des terrains de contacts d'échanges et d'acculturations, elles ont donné lieu à des influences réciproques.

Il apparaît clairement que le contexte colonial donne lieu aussi à de nouveaux positionnements par rapport au quotidien (différence entre la vie dans la rue et chez soi), et par rapport aux différents groupes vivant en Tunisie. Les langues utilisées ont connu, elles aussi, des emprunts pouvant donner lieu à la naissance de « sabirs », un dialecte formé d'emprunts, née du contact entre des locuteurs parlant des langues maternelles différentes placés devant la nécessité de communiquer. C'est le cas du dialecte des pêcheurs, certes, dominé par le sicilien, mais où se mêlaient également arabe, maltais, français, amazigh etc. La rue, le stade, le syndicat, l'école ont été eux aussi des lieux de mixité entre Tunisiens, Maghrébins et Européens, donnant lieu à des amitiés qui peuvent naître entre jeunes de la même génération.

Mais toutes ces nouvelles réalités ayant composé le monde colonial avec ses ambivalences, ses mixités, ses déchirements qui semblent avoir été emportées par les guerres d'indépendances, connaissent aujourd'hui des formes de regain d'intérêts et semblent devenir un objet de désir de reconstitution mémorielles, d'études historiques et aussi objet de nostalgie.

Le cosmopolitisme colonial : entre nostalgie et histoire apaisée

Malgré les mutations et les évolutions connues par les sociétés coloniales, les politiques françaises n'arrivent pas à enrayer la poussée des pays du Maghreb vers la revendication d'indépendance devenue inéluctable à partir du milieu des années cinquante du XX^{ème} siècle. En fait, le système colonial s'est avéré incapable de pouvoir résoudre les contradictions dont il a été la source. Il s'était trouvé dans l'incapacité de pouvoir trouver des solutions dans le cadre qu'il avait mis en place. Le colonialisme arrivant à ses limites, il s'avère un système fondé sur une politique de domination, d'exclusion et de répression des autochtones à chaque fois que ces derniers avaient exprimé un désir de se libérer et devenir acteurs de leur histoire. Les indépendances et la fin de la colonisation présentées comme un moment historique marquant un coup d'arrêt d'un processus commandé de l'extérieur qui n'avait tenu compte que de l'intérêt des colonisateurs, sauront-elles être le prélude de la mise en place de nouvelles frontières basées sur l'égalité et la recherche d'intérêts communs ?

Aujourd'hui, plus d'un demi-siècle nous sépare du moment des indépendances, les pays anciennement colonisés, comme la Tunisie, n'arrivent pas encore à se détacher entièrement de ce passé. De temps à autres, le temps colonial s'invite au débat et refait surface pour être évoqué sous des formes tantôt mélancoliques, tantôt nostalgiques. Certes, l'historien pourrait vite fermer le dossier et se dire qu'il n'y a rien à regretter ou de s'attendre d'une période basée sur la conquête, et durant laquelle la mixité entre les deux peuples n'a pu aboutir ou donner lieu à une nouvelle synthèse sociale. Cependant, il ne peut opposer une attitude de déni par rapport aux questions mémorielles dans les sociétés. Le passé s'invite constamment par le souvenir et par l'oubli. Les événements récents en Tunisie ou en France l'illustrent tout à fait – tout comme l'apport de la mémoire en tant que source du passé.

La démarche historique doit résolument se placer sur le terrain de ce que peut offrir l'Histoire comme outils de recherche et critique du passé. Elle se doit de comprendre et

d'expliquer les ressorts et mécanismes de la situation coloniale, d'en transmettre la connaissance par le biais d'ouvrages érudits ou plus « grand public ».

Une écriture partagée et apaisée de ce douloureux moment, portée par des historiennes et des historiens des deux rives de la Méditerranée est, nous semble-t-il, la condition nécessaire pour bâtir un savoir, une mémoire et avenir communs entre des peuples que l'histoire a parfois dressés les contre les autres. C'est la seule garantie pour que les frontières ne se transforment pas en des blocs étanches d'incompréhensions et de méfiances, pour qu'elle restent également des espaces de contacts, d'enrichissement et d'échanges de valeurs entre les composantes d'une même Humanité plurielle, diversifiée, mais toujours unie.

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Arabie du Sud pendant la Grande Guerre

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Abstract

The southern part of the Arabian Peninsula was a low-intensity conflict zone, one of the secondary theatres of the First World War. Even compared to other fronts in the Middle East (Caucasus, Dardanelles, Mesopotamia, Palestine/Syria), its importance was minimal. Nevertheless, the fighting here was not insignificant. What was at stake in these struggles was mainly whether the British or the Ottomans controlled the trade routes through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. In the end, the British emerged victorious from the struggle, bringing virtually all of South Arabia under their control. The only exception was Yemen, which managed to preserve its independence, although it was accompanied by the continuation of extremely archaic conditions.

Keywords: World War I, Southern Arabia, Great Britain, India, Yemen, Ottoman Empire, Aden, Aden Protectorate, Oman

La partie sud de la péninsule arabique a été une zone de conflit de faible intensité, l'un des théâtres secondaires de la Première Guerre mondiale. Même comparé aux autres fronts du Moyen-Orient (le Caucase, les Dardanelles, la Mésopotamie, la Palestine/Syrie), son importance était minime. Néanmoins, les combats ici n'étaient pas insignifiants. Les enjeux de ces luttes étaient principalement de savoir si les Britanniques ou les Ottomans contrôlaient les routes commerciales à travers la mer Rouge et l'océan Indien.

L'ensemble de l'Arabie du Sud n'est jamais passé sous contrôle ottoman. Depuis le début du XIX^e siècle, une partie importante de la côte méridionale était considérée comme un intérêt britannique et les soi-disant États de la Trêve (*Trucial States*) étaient liés à Londres par divers traités. En même temps, le Yémen et l'Asir¹, qui formaient un vilayet distinct, étaient sous l'autorité formelle d'Istanbul, et en raison de son emplacement, le premier en particulier avait une grande importance stratégique.

Dans l'Antiquité, le Yémen était appelé *Arabia Felix*, « l'Arabie heureuse » en raison de son climat plus humide et de ses conditions plus favorables que les régions intérieures. Ses habitants vivant dans le cadre tribal suivaient aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles principalement la tendance zaydite de l'islam chiite, mais le nombre de musulmans sunnites et même de juifs était important. Ce coin reculé de l'Empire ottoman a toujours été considéré comme une

¹ L'Asir est une province du sud de l'actuelle Arabie saoudite, à la frontière du Yémen. Voir son histoire en hongrois : BAQAIS, Ahmed Mohamed (1998), *'Asír története 1837-1934* [Histoire de l'Asir], Thèse de doctorat, Budapest.

zone périphérique, où le pouvoir des sultans ne pouvait avoir qu'une importance théorique. En 1871, Istanbul a envoyé des troupes au Yémen pour subjuguier efficacement les villes côtières et les zones montagneuses de l'intérieur. Ici la suprématie aurait pu être difficile à maintenir militairement en raison des distances, ce n'est pas par hasard que le Yémen était appelé « le cimetière des armées ottomanes » avant la Première Guerre mondiale², où le contrôle des fréquentes émeutes (1882, 1898, 1904-1905, 1910-1911) nécessitait chaque année des centaines, voire des milliers de victimes turques³. C'est en partie pourquoi les Turcs ont décidé de construire le chemin de fer du Hedjaz, qui est également devenu une source de conflits entre les grandes puissances. En 1906, le sultan voulait faire construire un branchement à Aqaba, sur la côte de la mer Rouge, car de cette manière il aurait pu acheminer plus rapidement ses troupes vers le Yémen insoumis, et de plus, il n'aurait pas dépendu de l'autorisation des Britanniques, propriétaires du canal de Suez⁴.

Il semble qu'au tournant du siècle, en Arabie du Sud la Sublime Porte se soit comportée comme les puissances coloniales européennes : elle voulait assujettir la population locale, et voulait y parvenir avec les méthodes de colonisation. Cependant, l'idéologie de la supériorité raciale était totalement absente de ce comportement, mais la version ottomane de la « mission civilisatrice » s'y trouvait⁵. Les officiers ottomans « civilisés », habitués aux lois, au paiement régulier des impôts et au service militaire, ont été choqués de constater le retard et le tribalisme omniprésent, ainsi que la férocité des zaydites chiites et leur opposition à l'islam sunnite. Bien sûr, le renforcement du pouvoir central, avec tous ses accessoires réformistes et modernisateurs, ne s'est pas fait uniquement pour des raisons philanthropiques. Elle a également servi à empêcher les efforts d'influence des puissances européennes qui ont établi de nouvelles colonies de l'autre côté de la mer Rouge, dans la Corne de l'Afrique⁶.

L'Italie faisait partie de ceux qui essayaient d'acquérir des colonies dans la région. La compagnie maritime Rubattino a pris pied dans la mer Rouge dès 1869, et des explorateurs et commerçants italiens sont apparus dans la péninsule arabique dans les années 1880, établissant des relations commerciales. Après avoir réussi à renforcer militairement leur position en Erythrée en Afrique de l'Est (1890), l'attention des dirigeants italiens s'est tournée vers l'Arabie. Lors de la guerre italo-turque de 1911-12, cet intérêt était déjà si vif que le résident politique britannique à Aden avertit ses supérieurs : « L'objectif du gouvernement italien est d'établir une colonie et un protectorat yéménites dans cette province très riche et

² FISHER, Sydney Nettleton (1960), *The Middle East. A History*, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London, p. 346.

³ BALDRY, John (1976), « Al-Yaman and the Turkish Occupation 1849-1914 », *Arabica*, 2, pp. 156-196.

⁴ EZZERELLI, Kaïs (2005), « Le pèlerinage à La Mecque au temps du chemin de fer du Hedjaz (1908-1914) », in CHIFFOLEAU, Sylvia – MADŒUF, Anna (dir.), *Les pèlerinages au Maghreb et au Moyen-Orient. Espaces publics, espaces du public*, IFPO, Beyrouth, pp. 167-191.

⁵ KÜHN, Thomas (2003), « An Imperial Borderland as Colony : Knowledge Production and the Elaboration of Difference in Ottoman Yemen, 1872-1914 », *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 3, pp. 4-16.

https://dome.mit.edu/bitstream/handle/1721.3/177972/MITEJMES_Vol_3_Spring2003.pdf?sequence=1 (05/04/2021)

⁶ GINGERAS, Ryan (2016), *Fall of the Sultanate. The Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 69.

fertile, ce qui entraînera sûrement des complications et des opérations futures », et si les Italiens continuent ainsi, « tout le commerce arabe nous sera enlevé, nos revenus ici seront perdus et Aden sera réduite à une simple station de chargement de charbon »⁷.

Pour contrer ces tentatives, la Sublime Porte a tenté de développer le Yémen. Istanbul a essayé de moderniser le pays principalement dans le domaine de l'éducation ; dans cet esprit, on a fondé des écoles où on a enseigné des matières modernes en plus des études islamiques. Cependant, le niveau de formation restait bas et le tableau d'ensemble ne s'améliorait guère du fait que les enfants des familles les plus distinguées pouvaient poursuivre leurs études à Constantinople. Avant la guerre mondiale, le dirigeant du Yémen, l'imam Yahya Mohammed Hamid ed-Din, a tenté de devenir indépendant d'Istanbul, de sorte que le gouvernement des Jeunes Turcs a lancé des expéditions militaires infructueuses contre lui. Voyant l'échec, on a préféré s'entendre avec lui et le seigneur voisin d'Asir, Muhammad ibn al-Idrisi. Ils ont obtenu une autonomie locale importante et ont également reçu un soutien généreux⁸.



Yahya, imam des zaydites du Yémen (1904-1948)

Avant la Première Guerre mondiale, des rébellions ont éclaté de nouveau au Yémen et en Asir. Dans le premier, l'imam Yahya a voulu renforcer la légitimité de son pouvoir contre le califat en prônant des réformes, auxquelles il a réussi en 1911 après les sanglantes batailles de 1905. Dans la traité de Daan, Istanbul a reconnu son règne sur les Zaydites, une secte de l'islam chiite, et sur la partie nord du Yémen⁹.

⁷ FIORE (2010), Massimiliano, *Anglo-Italian Relations in the Middle East, 1922-1940*, Ashgate, Farnham, p. 12.

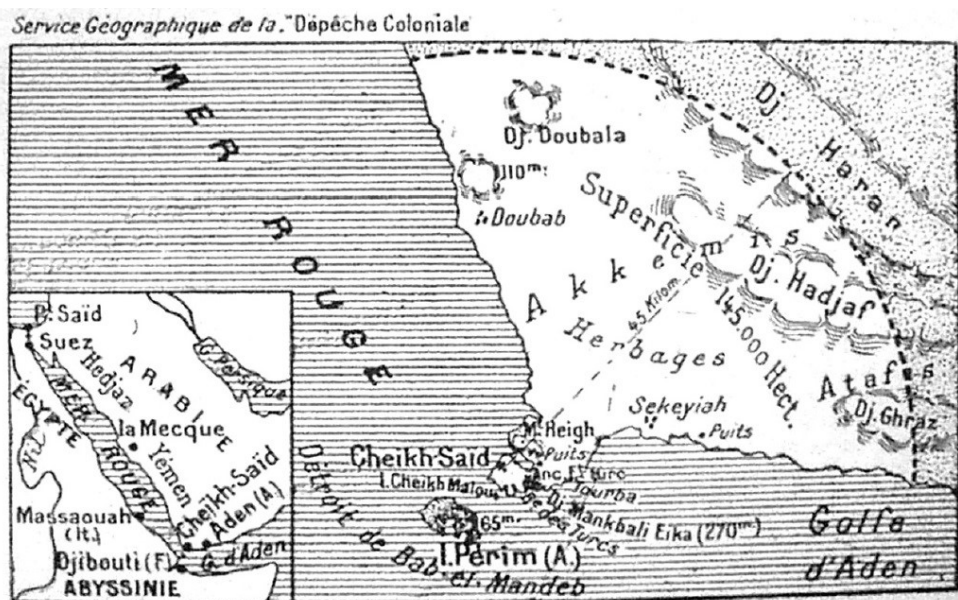
⁸ FARAH, Caesar E. (2002), *The Sultan's Yemen. Nineteenth-Century Challenges to Ottoman Rule*, I.B. Tauris, London, pp. 212-271.

⁹ BOUQUET, Olivier – PETRIAT, Philippe – VERMEREN, Pierre (2016), *Histoire du Moyen-Orient de l'Empire ottoman à nos jours au delà de la question d'Orient*, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris, pp. 175-176.



Des vapeurs dans le port de Périm, 1910

Pendant la guerre mondiale, les troupes de l'empire stationnées au Yémen posèrent un sérieux problème de communication et de logistique à la Sublime Porte, mais malgré les distances et toutes les difficultés, la liaison fut longtemps maintenue. Cela devait être le cas, car lorsque l'empire est entré en guerre en octobre 1914, les Britanniques ont immédiatement ordonné des renforts à Aden depuis l'Inde. Aden était une minuscule colonie que les Britanniques occupèrent en 1839 et annexèrent à leurs possessions indiennes. La Royal Navy utilisait à l'origine le port comme base pour les opérations contre la piraterie, mais après l'ouverture du canal de Suez en 1869, il devint une station de chargement de charbon idéale. Comme Hong-Kong, Aden est devenue une base indispensable de la puissance maritime britannique et un important centre de trafic et de commerce. Dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle, l'Angleterre a conclu une série de traités avec les tribus environnantes, créant ainsi sa sphère d'influence connue sous le nom de Protectorat d'Aden. Bordant la province ottomane du Yémen, le protectorat de 23 000 km² se composait de neuf mini-États, chacun dirigé par un souverain indépendant. Entre 1902 et 1905, un comité d'établissement de frontière anglo-turque a marqué la frontière entre les deux zones, qui, lorsque l'Empire ottoman est entré en guerre, avec la Mésopotamie méridionale, est automatiquement devenue une ligne de front entre les parties. La frontière entre le Yémen et le Protectorat d'Aden se terminait au détroit de Bab-el-Mandeb, à la sortie de la mer Rouge. Ici se trouvait le point le plus méridional du territoire ottoman, Cheikh Saïd, où les Turcs essayaient de garder le passage maritime sous leur contrôle au moyen de forteresses construites sur des hauteurs et chargées de canons. Les Britanniques, quant à eux, possédaient la petite île de Périm de 13 km² en face de Cheikh Saïd, dans le détroit, à environ 160 km à l'ouest d'Aden.



Île de Périm dans le détroit de Bab-el-Mandeb, en face de Cheikh Saïd

En novembre 1914, les services de renseignement britanniques rapportèrent que les Turcs avaient envoyé des troupes à Cheikh Saïd, d'où ils conclurent qu'ils voulaient lancer une attaque contre le Protectorat d'Aden ou Périm. Considérant l'importance de Bab-el-Mandeb pour l'Empire britannique déchiré par la guerre (des troupes de Nouvelle-Zélande, d'Australie et d'Inde y ont navigué sans exception en route vers l'Égypte et l'Europe), les stratèges anglais en Inde ont décidé d'éliminer la menace de Cheikh Saïd. C'est ainsi que des forces fraîches arrivent à Aden début novembre. Le 10, des navires partant de Périm ouvrent le feu sur les positions turques, puis débarquent des soldats, qui occupent les hauteurs presque sans encombre, à mesure que les défenseurs sont partis. De l'équipement laissé derrière, on a estimé qu'il y avait cinq cents. Les Indiens ont détruit les fortifications puis ont également quitté le site¹⁰.

Bien que l'opération lancée à Cheikh Saïd ait réussi, elle a causé un problème politique qui a tourmenté les Britanniques à Aden jusqu'à la fin de la guerre. L'entourage du vice-roi de l'Inde a fait des plans militaires sans consulter au préalable les autorités d'Aden, qui faisaient le maximum pour isoler les Ottomans yéménites par des négociations. Cette diplomatie s'est concentrée principalement sur le chef du pays, l'imam Yahya, vénéré comme un « héros national » pour son combat contre les Ottomans, le chef de la communauté zaydite, qui a installé son quartier général sur les plateaux au nord de Sanaa. L'imam a conclu une trêve avec la Porte en 1911, et en 1913, ils ont convenu de gouverner ensemble la province du Yémen. Bien que Yahya ne soit pas en mesure de rompre avec les Turcs, il veille

¹⁰ ROGAN, Eugene (2015), *The Fall of the Ottomans. The Great War in the Middle East, 1914-1920*, Penguin Books, London, pp. 88-89, 224-225.

également à rester en bons termes avec les Britanniques¹¹. D'autre part, le bombardement de Cheikh Saïd a provoqué la colère de l'imam et a monté la population yéménite contre l'Angleterre. En février 1915, Yahya a dit au colonel Harold Jacob, le résident adjoint britannique à Aden, que sa loyauté envers l'Empire ottoman, et par conséquent son hostilité envers la Grande-Bretagne, était ininterrompue. En d'autres termes, au lieu de stabiliser les positions britanniques en Arabie du Sud, elles sont devenues plus vulnérables. La défense du Protectorat d'Aden a causé un casse-tête parce que 14 000 soldats ottomans étaient stationnés au Yémen, qui pourraient également être rejoints par les partisans de l'imam¹². En février 1915, les Turcs, avec le soutien des hommes de Yahya, ont poussé sur le territoire du Protectorat d'Aden, ce que les Britanniques n'ont pas pris au sérieux au début. Cependant, alors que les forces ottomanes au Yémen grandissaient et que leurs agents recrutaient de plus en plus de tribus à leurs côtés, les autorités d'Aden s'inquiétaient. Leur intelligence en juin signifiait que six bataillons ottomans les surveillaient déjà, ce qui dépassait de loin la force des Britanniques. Afin d'améliorer leur situation, fin avril, ils entourèrent le seigneur d'Asir, l'émir Idrisi, pour se rebeller contre Yahya, en retour ils lui promirent deux mille livres par mois et la reconnaissance de son indépendance (le traité à ce sujet fut conclu le 30)¹³.

En juin 1915, les Turcs ont tenté d'occuper l'île de Périm, mais les Britanniques ont repoussé l'attaque et ont même acquis l'île de Kamaran, précédemment évacuée par les Turcs, qui servait auparavant de station de quarantaine importante pour les pèlerins musulmans venant à La Mecque de l'Asie du Sud¹⁴. Les Ottomans se retournent alors contre Aden, vitale pour les Britanniques. Le 1^{er} juillet, ils ont attaqué l'un des principaux alliés de Londres, la ville de Lahej, située à seulement 50 km d'Aden, dont le sultan, Ali al-Abdali, était l'un des dirigeants semi-indépendants et pro-anglais du protectorat. Malgré la chaleur insupportable, le résident britannique y envoya immédiatement sa petite garnison indienne inexpérimentée pour aider à repousser les Turcs. Ils ont réussi à les surprendre et à capturer leur commandant, mais dans le combat nocturne qui s'est déroulé, l'un des conscrits indiens a cru le sultan un ennemi et l'a abattu... Les Britanniques, en infériorité numérique, ont été contraints de partir précipitamment et de se traîner à Aden, mais leur perte de 50 hommes a encore été augmentée par les 30 soldats qui sont morts d'un coup de chaleur pendant la retraite. En plus, ils ont été contraints de laisser toutes leurs mitrailleuses, deux canons mobiles, des munitions et la plupart de leur équipement à Lahej.

¹¹ BURY, G. Wyman (1915), *Arabia Infelix or the Turks in Yamen*, Macmillan and Co., London, pp. 15-17.

¹² JACOB, Harold F. (1923), *Kings of Arabia. The Rise and Set of the Turkish Sovranty in the Arabian Peninsula*, Mills & Boon Ltd, London, pp. 158-161.

¹³ KOSTINER, Joseph (1993), *The Making of Saudi Arabia 1916-1936. From Chieftancy to Monarchical State*, Oxford University Press, New York – Oxford, pp. 8-9.

¹⁴ BALDRY, John (1978), « British Naval Operations against Turkish Yaman 1914-1919 », *Arabica*, 2, pp. 148-197.

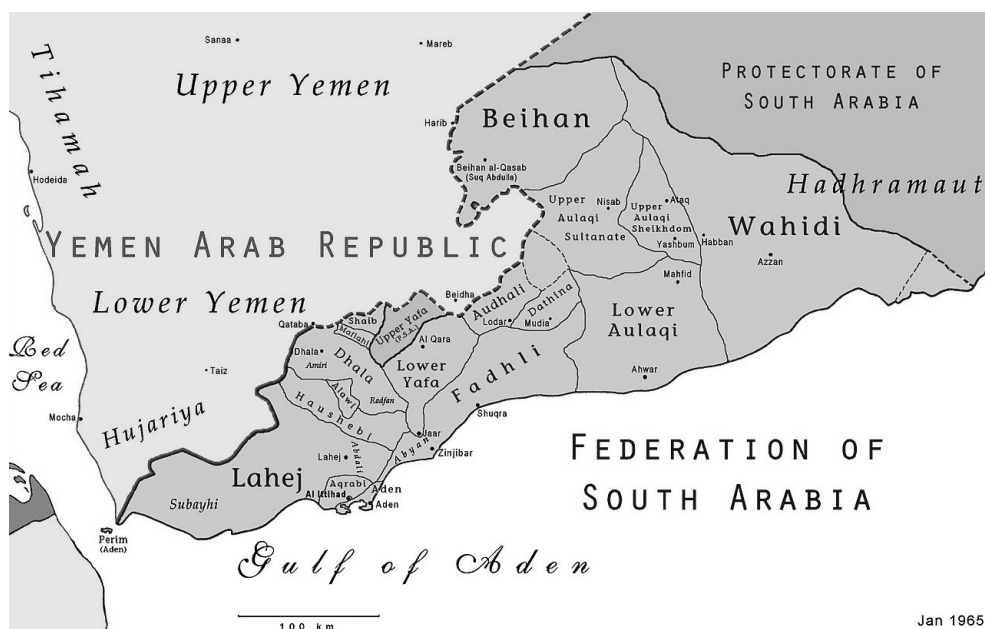


Le marché de Lahej au début du XX^e siècle

La voie d'Aden était ouverte aux Turcs, et ils occupèrent le village de Cheikh Othman de l'autre côté du golfe d'Aden, d'où leur artillerie pouvait atteindre les installations portuaires, les navires et le bureau du résident, et de plus, ils occupaient également les puits et les sources d'eau. Dans cette situation critique, le vice-roi de l'Inde a fait venir des troupes d'Égypte, qui ont débarqué le 21 juillet et ont repoussé les Turcs à Lahej avec une attaque-surprise avec peu de pertes, tout en capturant des centaines de prisonniers¹⁵. Bien que les Britanniques aient consolidé leur position à Aden, ils ne pouvaient pas songer à lancer de nouvelles opérations offensives pour le moment, car ils la jugeaient trop risquée en raison de la chaleur et des conditions désertiques. Le rapport de force ne les favorise pas non plus : quatre mille Ottomans sont encore stationnés à Lahej, alors que seuls 1400 Britanniques à Aden, et ce jusqu'à la fin de la guerre. Certes le soulèvement arabe du Hedjaz en 1916 eut de graves conséquences pour les forces turques au Yémen, puisqu'il rendit leur isolement complet (les deux divisions turques de 15 000 hommes bloquées au Yémen ne purent s'approvisionner pour le reste de la guerre). Ils étaient toujours capables de tenir le front et les Britanniques étaient incapables de défendre les souverains du protectorat. Le seul point positif pour les Anglais aurait pu être qu'il n'y avait plus de menace sérieuse pour la navigation indienne et la capacité opérationnelle de la Royal Navy¹⁶.

¹⁵ CONNELLY, Mark (2005), « The British Campaign in Aden, 1914-1918 », *Journal of the Centre for First World War Studies*, 1, pp. 65-96.

¹⁶ ROGAN, *The Fall of the Ottomans...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-227 ; MOTTE, Martin (2004), « La seconde Iliade : blocus et contre-blocus au Moyen-Orient, 1914-1918 », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, n° 214, pp. 39-53.



Après la défaite de l'Empire ottoman en 1918, le Yémen a acquis sa souveraineté, mais il était considéré comme l'un des pays les plus arriérés du monde. Il suffit de se référer à l'absence totale de soins médicaux. Bien que les Ottomans aient créé des hôpitaux, ils ne servaient que les militaires d'occupation et les responsables turcs, et n'accueillaient pas la population arabe locale. Lorsque les Ottomans sont partis, ils ont emporté avec eux du matériel, des fournitures et du personnel médical. Seul un petit hôpital italien fondé en 1912 a perduré. Le Yémen doit son indépendance au fait qu'aucune grande puissance n'était intéressée à le coloniser après la Première Guerre mondiale. L'imam Yahya a consolidé son pouvoir, mais cela signifiait aussi la survie de structures internes infiniment archaïques et la poursuite d'une politique étrangère recluse. Il a concentré le pouvoir législatif et exécutif entre ses mains d'une manière absolument dominatrice et a contrôlé l'administration par ailleurs limitée. Les réformes gouvernementales et la mise en place d'un cabinet n'ont eu lieu qu'au début des années 1930. À partir de l'automne 1918, l'attention de Yahya se concentra sur la destruction de la résistance des tribus, car sa politique de centralisation provoqua de sérieuses protestations parmi les tribus qui jouissaient d'une autonomie importante sous la domination ottomane. L'une des tribus sunnites a même créé son propre État en 1918, dont la reconnaissance a ensuite été demandée par la Société des Nations. L'imam a également dû utiliser la force armée pour chasser l'émir Idrisi, le seigneur d'Asir déjà mentionné, qui avait envahi une partie du pays¹⁷. Le départ des Ottomans et la faible influence britannique ont finalement permis à Yahya d'étendre son règne en direction de Tihama et al-Hodeïda.

¹⁷ PRANTNER, Zoltán (2009), *Jemen és a szocialista országok 1955-1970* [Le Yémen et les pays socialistes], Szegedi Egyetemi Kiadó – JATEPress, Szeged, pp. 9-49.

Après la Grande Guerre, la relation de Yahya avec la Grande-Bretagne restait problématique, car l'imam revendiquait Aden pour lui-même et ne reconnaissait aucun droit à Londres d'intervenir dans les événements au Yémen. Voyant les difficultés, le gouvernement britannique a tenté de parvenir à un compromis, et à cet effet une proposition a été faite, selon laquelle l'imam recevrait un soutien mensuel de mille livres, en échange il ne dérangerait pas Aden, d'où les troupes pourraient être retiré (même après la guerre, les Britanniques y ont stationné sept mille soldats¹⁸), et il expulserait les étrangers des zones sous son contrôle. En même temps, les Britanniques ont également prévu qu'ils soutiendraient les adversaires et rivaux de l'imam, faisant ainsi pression sur lui¹⁹.

La tension était également accrue par le fait que les frontières n'étaient jamais précisées, ce qui provoquait parfois des conflits. Au milieu des années 1920, la relation s'était détériorée, c'est pourquoi l'imam Yahya s'est d'abord tourné vers les États-Unis, puis vers l'Italie, qui était présente dans la région depuis longtemps, pour obtenir de l'aide. En 1927, il parvient à conclure un traité de commerce et d'amitié avec Rome, mais celui-ci ne répond pas à ses espoirs, ainsi le premier contact est donc établi avec l'Union soviétique, qui aboutit au traité de commerce et d'amitié signé en automne 1928. Il s'agissait du premier traité de ce type entre l'État soviétique et un pays arabe²⁰. Sa conclusion était clairement motivée par l'anglophilie des deux côtés. Cependant, tout cela ne s'est pas avéré fructueux sur le long terme, la coopération s'est progressivement éteinte et entre les deux guerres mondiales, le Yémen est resté un pays pour ainsi dire fermé.

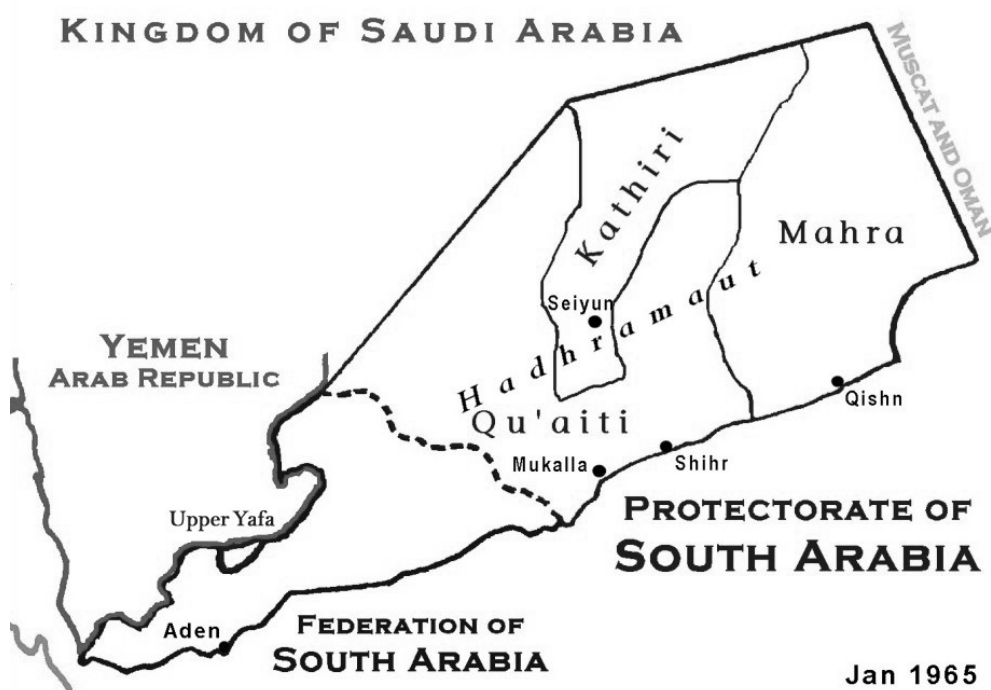
Le cas de l'Hadramaout, situé dans la partie sud-est de l'actuel Yémen, est typique, où les acteurs locaux ont voulu profiter de la guerre mondiale pour renforcer leur position. Au milieu du XIX^e siècle, deux émirats ont été établis dans la région, qui sont devenus plus tard des sultanats. La famille Kathiri s'est installée dans les zones intérieures, tandis que les Qu'aitis se sont installés sur la côte. Ces derniers sont venus ici parce que les fils d'un officier d'origine noble, Umar ibn Awadh al-Qu'aiti, qui a effectué en Inde son service militaire dans l'entourage du souverain d'Hyderabad, le Nizam, ont mis les pieds dans la zone côtière de l'Arabie du Sud dans les années 1850, puis occupèrent les villes d'Ash-Shihr et de Mukalla, célèbres pour leur commerce d'encens. En 1888, ils ont conclu un traité de défense avec les Britanniques, et en 1902, un sultanat unifié a été établi, qui est devenu une partie du Protectorat d'Aden. Les Kathiris, qui leur étaient hostiles, cherchaient également des protecteurs, ils se rapprochaient de l'imam Yahya et des Ottomans, condamnaient les relations avec les « infidèles » britanniques et soulignaient l'importance de la solidarité panislamique. Dans ce conflit, les Kathiris ne pouvaient pas gagner : la population hésitait à soutenir les Ottomans car elle craignait que les Qu'aitis pro-britanniques ne leur permettent pas d'atteindre les ports, les coupant ainsi du commerce extérieur vital. Les Ottomans n'ont pas pu envoyer d'argent et de troupes dans cette région lointaine contre les Qu'aitis, et

¹⁸ Télégramme chiffré de Winston Churchill envoyé le 15 mars 1921 du Caire au Ministère des Colonies à Londres, Churchill Archive Center (CHAR), Cambridge, 17/18.

¹⁹ Télégramme de Churchill envoyé le 20 mars 1921 au Premier ministre, in *Conference on Middle Eastern Affairs summoned to meet in Cairo during March 1921, by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Telegraphic correspondence regarding policy in Mesopotamia, Palestine and Trans-Jordan, and Arabia*, p. 8. CHAR 17/18.

²⁰ YODFAT, Aryeh Y. (1983), *The Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula. Soviet Policy Towards the Persian Gulf and Arabia*, Routledge, London, pp. 1-2.

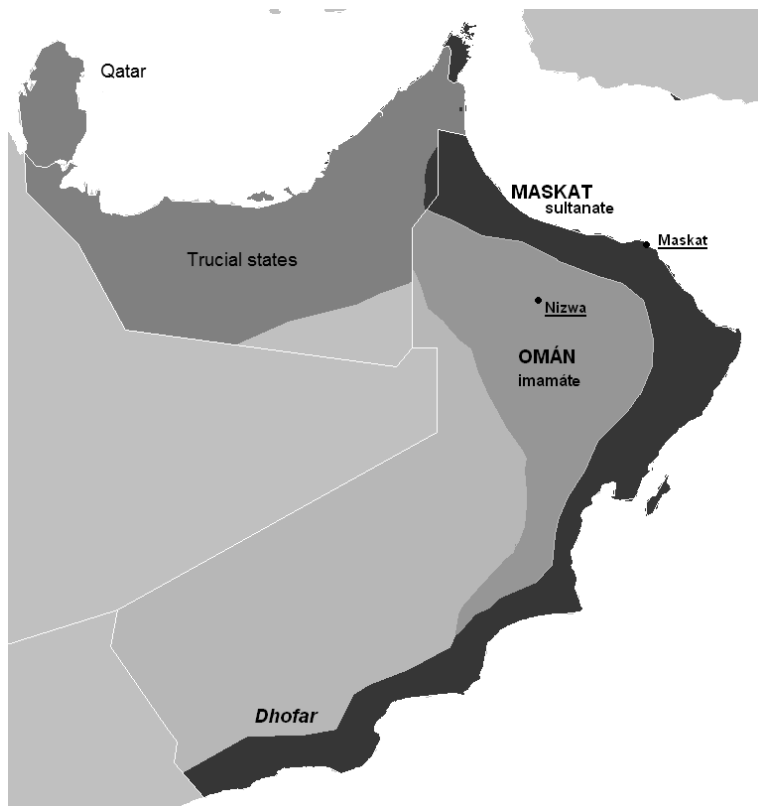
Londres a utilisé divers moyens administratifs pour faire pression sur les Kathiris, en particulier sur leurs sujets vivant à Singapour et entretenant des relations commerciales avec eux. Dans ces circonstances, en 1918, les Britanniques réussirent à persuader les Kathiris de reconnaître dans un traité le sultan Qu'aiti comme le seigneur de tout l'Hadramaout, au sein duquel ils pouvaient en même temps contrôler librement leur propre territoire. Bien que l'accord n'ait pas réglé le conflit une fois pour toutes, il a marqué une étape importante dans le développement de l'hégémonie Qu'aiti. En raison de la guerre, les parties ont pu attirer l'attention des grandes puissances, et en raison de la possession du littoral stratégiquement important et de leur relation étroite avec l'un des vainqueurs, les Qu'aitis ont pu l'emporter²¹.



Les changements n'ont pas non plus épargné Oman, plus à l'est. Pendant longtemps, ses marchands ont joué un rôle décisif dans le commerce maritime entre Zanzibar, l'Inde et l'Arabie. Cependant, la conquête britannique de l'Inde au XIX^e siècle a porté un coup sévère à ce commerce, il n'est donc pas surprenant que l'élite intellectuelle et politique omanaise se soit opposée au colonialisme et ait participé au renouveau de la pensée religieuse et

²¹ BOXBERGER, Linda (2002), *On the Edge of Empire. Hadhramawt, Emigration, and the Indian Ocean, 1880s-1930s*, State University of New York Press, Albany, pp. 183-210 ; FREITAG, Ulrike (2003), *Indian Ocean Migrants and State Formation in Hadhramaut. Reforming the Homeland*, Brill, Leiden, pp. 174-185.

politique musulmane (*nahda*)²². Au début de la guerre mondiale, il y a eu un grave conflit entre les zones intérieures contrôlées par l'imam ibadite²³ et la côte gouvernée par le sultan sunnite pro-britannique, qui s'est transformé en une véritable guerre civile entre 1915 et 1920. Le sultan n'a pu conserver son pouvoir que parce qu'il était soutenu par les troupes indiennes qui étaient à Mascate depuis 1913, et à la fin de 1914, les Britanniques ont envoyé six compagnies d'infanterie dans le pays. Cependant, tout cela n'a pas changé le fait que les sultans d'Oman étaient endettés auprès des créanciers britanniques, ce qui a finalement contraint le pays à la dépendance. Le traité de Sib conclu près de Mascate en 1920 mit fin aux hostilités et préserva la division politique entre l'intérieur et la côte sous tutelle britannique²⁴.



²² JONES, Jeremy – RIDOUT, Nicholas (2015), *A History of Modern Oman*, Cambridge University Press, New York, pp. 64-65, 71-85.

²³ L'ibadisme est une école minoritaire modérée de l'islam répandue à Oman, du nom d'Abdallah ibn Ibad at-Tamimi, un érudit religieux décédé au début du VIII^e siècle. Héritier des kharijites, à l'origine de la première scission de l'islam, sa théologie diffère de l'orthodoxie sunnite et chiite sur de nombreux points. Ses partisans se trouvent dans plusieurs régions d'Afrique du Nord et de l'Est.

²⁴ PETERSON, J. E. (1976), « The Revival of the Ibāḍi Imāmate in Oman and the Treat to Muscat, 1913-20 », in SERJEANT, R. B. – BIDWELL, R. L. (dir.), *Arabian Studies III*, C. Hurst & Company, London, pp. 165-188.

Identité sans frontières

Le mythe et l'esprit de corps de la Légion étrangère

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Introduction

Grâce à son passé colonial et à son rôle (changeant) dans la politique mondiale, la France a une expérience considérable de la manière de faire valoir ses intérêts de la manière la plus efficace, même dans des régions éloignées de son propre centre de pouvoir européen. Cette défense a des composantes politiques, économiques, culturelles et militaires. Il existe de nombreuses formes de ces actions armées éventuelles, mais dans ces cas, la France fait généralement appel à la Légion étrangère, qui a été un défenseur fiable des intérêts français partout depuis sa création.

Toutes les grandes unités militaires ont une histoire et un mythe qui naissent et développent avec l'activité de ces corps sur les champs de bataille. Dans le cas de la Légion étrangère, deux mythes se confrontent : celui noir et négatif (une diabolisation) et celui clair et positif (une canonisation). Tous les deux sont basés sur la vérité ce qu'ils exagèrent, amplifient, sélectionnent selon leurs objectifs. Le rôle de la Légion est essentiel dans la construction de ce mythe d'une part par ses actions, d'autre part, par son intervention au processus à sa propre faveur. Cette construction implique trois agents (mémoire, histoire, présent) et la Légion a su gérer les interactions, encadrer l'évolution du mythe en conservant les structures et en diffusant une image en faveur d'une *légiomanie* contre une *légiophobie*. L'esprit de corps contribue à cette activité de propagande réussie, ainsi sa « politique intérieure » (commémorations, rites, traditions) soutient sa « politique extérieure » (relations publiques, documentaires, etc.).

Dans la présente étude, on essaye de présenter la brève histoire de cette unité mondialement connue et réputée. En basant sur cet arrière-plan historique, on fait connaissance avec l'évolution des mythes qui l'entourent ainsi que son esprit de corps particulier qui exerce une influence également sur son image.

L'histoire de la Légion étrangère

La Légion étrangère, créée principalement pour participer aux opérations coloniales, a joué un rôle prépondérant dans l'expansion et la défense de l'empire colonial français sur plusieurs continents. Bien qu'elle n'ait pas été initialement destinée à réaliser un tel parcours, elle a été appelée à représenter les intérêts français sur les champs de bataille européens à plusieurs reprises au cours de son existence. Dans les années 1830, elle a été déployée dans

la guerre civile espagnole¹, dans les années 1850, elle a participé à la guerre de Crimée², à la deuxième guerre d'indépendance italienne³, en 1870-71 à la guerre franco-prussienne⁴ et à la Première Guerre mondiale en France ainsi que dans les Balkans⁵.

La participation à cette dernière a coûté particulièrement cher. La Légion étrangère ne comptait que 8 800 membres avant le début de la Grande Guerre⁶, mais ce nombre a augmenté rapidement lorsque les autorités françaises ont autorisé les étrangers vivant dans le pays à s'engager pour la durée de la guerre en 1914. Ainsi, des volontaires de diverses nationalités se présentent en masse dans les bureaux de recrutement et, à la fin de la guerre, 42 883 d'entre eux (32 000 avant le 1^{er} mai 1915) ont passé la visite médicale et peuvent commencer leur service militaire⁷. Cependant, les pertes subies sur le terrain sont si graves que les quatre régiments de marcheurs formés au début de la guerre et déployés en France sont fusionnés le 11 novembre 1915 en un seul corps. Celui-ci est resté au combat jusqu'à la fin de la guerre, ses pertes étant remplacées en permanence par de nouvelles recrues⁸. Et les pertes ont été bien lourdes : à la fin du conflit, la Légion étrangère a perdu quelque 35 000 hommes, dont 11 000 tués et 1 200 disparus⁹. Toutefois, le corps d'armée n'a pas seulement fait des sacrifices mais a également obtenu des résultats décisifs au combat, qui ont été récompensés par de nombreuses citations du commandement. En conséquence, à la fin de la guerre, le bataillon de marche de la Légion étrangère était la deuxième unité la plus décorée des forces armées françaises, un exploit exceptionnel compte tenu du nombre d'unités dans l'armée française¹⁰.

Cette attitude a également contribué au fait que, après le conflit, l'état-major français a accordé à la Légion étrangère un devoir plus considérable qu'auparavant dans les conflits coloniaux. Malgré le grand nombre d'unités dans les forces coloniales françaises, les performances de la Légion pendant la guerre l'ont amenée à rechercher un déploiement plus large. La première condition était d'augmenter le nombre d'unités. Ainsi, en plus des unités permanentes existantes (1^{er} et 2^e régiments d'infanterie de la Légion), le 3^e régiment d'infanterie a été formé au Maroc en 1920 à partir des membres du régiment de marche qui avait combattu en France pendant la guerre mondiale, et en 1922¹¹, en s'appuyant sur le 1^{er} bataillon du 1^{er} régiment d'infanterie et complété par le grand nombre de volontaires, le 4^e régiment d'infanterie a été créé¹². En 1930, le 5^e régiment d'infanterie a été établi en Indo-

¹ BLOND, Georges (2008), *Histoire de la Légion étrangère*, Perrin, Paris, pp. 43-52.

² DE GMELINE, Patrick (2016), *Nouvelle histoire de la Légion étrangère*, Perrin, Paris, pp. 105-113.

³ BERGOT, Erwan (1972), *La Légion*, Balland, Paris, pp. 69-71.

⁴ MAHUAULT, Jean-Paul (2013), *Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre (E.V.D.G.) 1870-71, 1914-18, 1939-45*, Grancher, Paris, pp. 17-70.

⁵ PORCH, Douglas (1994), *La Légion étrangère 1831-1962*, Librairie Arthème Fayard, Paris, pp. 395-446.

⁶ COMOR, André-Paul (2013), *La Légion Etrangère. Histoire et dictionnaire*, Robert Laffont – Ministère de la Défense, Paris, p. 323.

⁷ BERGOT, Erwan (1984), *Régiment de marche de la Légion*, Presses de la Cité, Paris, p. 13.

⁸ Service Historique de la Défense (SHD), GR 26 N 862/2. 2^e régiment de marche du 2^e régiment étranger : J.M.O. Le 1^{er} janvier 1915 – le 11 novembre.

⁹ PORCH, *La Légion étrangère...*, op. cit., p. 444.

¹⁰ BERGOT, *Régiment de marche de la Légion*, op. cit., p. 98.

¹¹ MONTAGNON, Pierre (1999), *La Légion étrangère. De 1831 à nos jours*, Pygmalion, Paris, p. 182.

¹² SHD GR 12 P 81. Dossier 1. 4^e Demi-Brigade de la Légion Étrangère. Historique, p. 6.

chine française, en Asie du Sud-Est, par la fusion de bataillons précédemment autonomes¹³, ainsi qu'en 1939, le 6^e régiment d'infanterie de la Légion a été créé en Syrie¹⁴.

La Légion étrangère a incontestablement terminé la guerre du côté des vainqueurs. Néanmoins, la route vers le camp des vainqueurs a été cahoteuse, marquée par de nombreuses défaites et de lourdes pertes. Ces derniers étaient très élevés non seulement pendant la campagne de France en 1940, mais aussi pendant les batailles victorieuses en France et en Allemagne en 1944-45, ce qui signifie que la Légion ne pouvait accomplir ses tâches qu'à grands frais, quelle que soit la situation stratégique. Les raisons de cette situation semblaient résider dans les déficiences de l'entraînement, les tactiques dépassées et une expérience différente du champ de bataille, c'est-à-dire que la Légion, entraînée sur des théâtres de guerre coloniaux, n'était tout simplement pas préparée aux défis d'une guerre moderne contre les forces régulières d'une grande puissance européenne¹⁵.

Au lendemain de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, l'administration coloniale française a été confrontée à une crise très grave en Indochine. En 1945, le gouvernement français avait l'intention de rétablir son autorité en Indochine. Cet incident a provoqué une insurrection à Hanoi le 19 décembre, dirigée par Ho Chi Minh. En conséquence, la guerre a éclaté contre la souveraineté française, le Viet Minh ayant attaqué les troupes françaises¹⁶. Le Haut Commandement français s'est efforcé de réorienter toutes ses unités mobilisables vers le théâtre d'opérations lointain, par conséquent la plupart des unités légionnaires ont été déployées dans le conflit¹⁷. Malgré le fait que les légionnaires soient numériquement faibles dans le corps expéditionnaire français (environ 15 % des effectifs), la Légion étrangère était le véritable fer de lance des forces françaises qui a été utilisée dans des situations difficiles¹⁸. Par la suite, la Légion est contrainte de participer à la guerre d'indépendance algérienne, qui se solde par un échec cuisant. Elle a ensuite pris part à des opérations de maintien de la paix dans d'anciens territoires coloniaux en Afrique, au Moyen-Orient et ailleurs. Corps régulier de l'armée française, elle est actuellement basée à Aubagne et assure désormais également la sécurité dans les régions d'outre-mer (Guyane, Mayotte, etc.)¹⁹.

L'origine et l'effectif des légionnaires

Aujourd'hui, elle compte 156 nationalités dans ses rangs. Avec la possibilité de recruter jusqu'à l'âge de quarante ans, la Légion peut également engager du personnel très expérimenté. Cette large capacité de recrutement permet naturellement une sélection de qualité. Actuellement, on estime que sur huit candidats postulant à une position de la Légion étrangère, seul un volontaire sera finalement retenu à l'issue des épreuves de sélection. En bénéficiant d'un recrutement de qualité, la Légion est une troupe à l'efficacité largement recon-

¹³ THOUMELIN, Pierre (2013), *L'ennemi utile. 1946-1954. Des vétérans de la Wehrmacht et de la Waffen-SS dans les rangs de la Légion étrangère en Indochine*, Schneider Text, Zwickau, p. 75.

¹⁴ SHD GR 4 H 257/3. Dossier 3 : Groupement de légion étrangère, devenu 6^e régiment étranger.

¹⁵ PORCH, *La Légion étrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 575-577.

¹⁶ BONNECARRERE, Paul (2006), *Par le sang versé. La Légion étrangère en Indochine*, Perrin, Paris, p. 57.

¹⁷ MONTAGNON, *La Légion étrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 309-312.

¹⁸ CADEAU, Ivan – COCHET, François – PORTE, Rémy (2021), *La guerre d'Indochine. Dictionnaire*, Perrin – Ministère des Armées, Paris, pp. 573-574.

¹⁹ Voir BLOND, *Histoire de la Légion...*, op. cit.

nue. Par conséquent, elle est régulièrement utilisée dans des missions militaires partout dans le monde²⁰.

Le nombre de volontaires qui ont signé un contrat pour s'engager dans la Légion a dépassé 600 000 en 1962. Les recrues provenaient généralement de régions touchées par des problèmes politiques et économiques. Elles étaient principalement européennes, mais comprenaient également des Turcs, des Nord-Africains et des Asiatiques. Jusqu'à la Première Guerre mondiale, les hommes venaient principalement des territoires européens limitrophes de la France à l'est et au sud. La situation politique de l'entre-deux-guerres a entraîné l'arrivée de volontaires d'Europe centrale et orientale, qui a augmenté après la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Durant cette période, le nombre de volontaires d'Europe centrale était très élevé. Ensuite, les taux ont changé selon l'évolution de la situation politique dans les différentes régions du monde. Les volontaires les plus nombreux selon nationalité : Allemands (210 000), Italiens (60 000), Belges (50 000), Français (50 000), Espagnols (40 000), Suisses (30 000), Polonais (10 000), Russes (6 000) Autrichiens (5 000), Grecs (4 000), Hongrois (4 000), Tchèques (4 000) et Yougoslaves (3 000)²¹.

On ne peut pas oublier que le recrutement de la Légion évolue selon les besoins du haut commandement de l'armée française. L'unité garde des effectifs relativement élevés pendant les III^e et IV^e Républiques. D'une manière intéressante, les sources ne donnent pas de chiffres tout à fait précis en raison des nombreuses lacunes dans les enregistrements. En même temps, les recherches effectuées dans le domaine permettent d'établir une image fiable sur l'évolution des effectifs de la Légion à partir de sa naissance jusqu'à nos jours. Jusqu'en 1914, le nombre moyen des légionnaires varie entre 5 000 et 11 500 (un record atteint en 1900). Pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, on facilite le recrutement des volontaires étrangers pour augmenter le nombre des soldats déployables sur les différents théâtres d'opérations, ainsi plus de 20 000 hommes servent sous les drapeaux de la Légion. Les opérations au Maroc et au Levant augmentent les besoins de soldats des unités légionnaires pendant l'entre-deux-guerres, dont le résultat est un effectif jamais vu auparavant : 33 000 soldats. Cette période guerrière est suivie par une certaine accalmie entre 1933 et 1939 qui est caractérisée par la réduction des dépenses de l'État et la diminution des effectifs au 20 000. L'éclatement de la Seconde Guerre mondiale marque un tournant, car le recrutement intense des volontaires étrangers permet d'obtenir des chiffres très élevés : 49 000 hommes en 1940. Ensuite, les pertes humaines de la campagne de France, les conventions d'armistice et la libération des engagés volontaires pour la durée de guerre provoquent la chute des effectifs, ainsi moins de 15 000 servent pendant les années de la guerre dans les rangs de l'unité. Après le conflit, le recrutement s'intensifie pour alimenter les formations légionnaires luttant sur le nouveau théâtre d'opérations d'Extrême-Orient contre les troupes du Viet-Minh en Indochine, ainsi l'effectif de la Légion dépasse 36 000 en 1953. Pendant les guerres de décolonisation (Indochine et Algérie), ce chiffre se maintient à un niveau élevé pour commencer à décroître à partir du début des années 1960²². La Légion dispose

²⁰ O'MAHONEY, Thibault (2010), « La Légion aujourd'hui », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, n° 60, pp. 104-105.

²¹ COMOR, *La Légion Étrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 645-647.

²² HALLO, Jean (2007), *Monsieur Légionnaire*, Lavauzelle, Paris, pp. 145-169.

des effectifs constants basés sur un recrutement de qualité, par conséquent, le nombre des légionnaires oscille entre 8 et 9 000 pendant les dernières décennies²³.

On peut constater que cette unité particulière des forces armées françaises a connu de grands changements pendant son existence de presque deux siècles, cependant, elle a réussi à forger une réputation mondiale entourée par des légendes et des mythes. Ces derniers, très variés et contradictoires, méritent d'être mieux connus, ainsi, on les présente sommairement sur les pages suivantes.

Les mythes sur la Légion

La réalité historique laisse sa trace dans la mémoire collective et se transforme en mythe. Les faits, les personnages et les institutions s'accompagnent d'une auréole de gloire et de légende. Cependant, ce mythe peut être l'essentiel de la vérité mais également une illusion créée par des mythomanes ou des adversaires. Dans le cas de la Légion étrangère, tous les deux sont présents et influencent l'image de l'unité même aujourd'hui. Lors de l'histoire, plusieurs unités militaires ont sa propre légende : la légion romaine, la chevalerie médiévale, les marines américains, etc. La légende de la Légion étrangère naît également au fil du temps et entre en concurrence avec celles des autres unités antérieures et contemporaines. Elle vit sa propre vie, s'intensifie et s'affaiblit de temps en temps. Elle est présente dans des œuvres littéraires et cinématographiques et connaît des modifications par celles-ci ainsi que par les faits réalisés sous l'influence de la légende elle-même²⁴.

Pendant le 19^e siècle, la Légion reste une troupe relativement mal connue, ainsi son mythe apparaît et évolue sans contrôle et sans raison d'une manière plus ou moins spontanée. Au début, c'est l'homme de guerre et ses actions par lesquelles il effectue ses missions militaires qui intéressent le public français. Ensuite, à partir des années 1870 marquées par l'arrivée des Alsaciens-Lorrains à la Légion, c'est l'être humain avec sa personnalité et ses origines qui se trouve au centre de l'intérêt du grand public en France. La légende de la Légion est appuyée par certains éléments : une demande accrue d'héroïsme (romantisme), l'impérialisme colonial, l'hostilité franco-allemande, l'apparition d'intellectuels médiateurs, l'essor de la presse. Un nombre de textes et images sont publiés sur la Légion par des observateurs extérieurs. Par conséquent, le grand public peut faire connaissance avec l'unité à partir de la deuxième moitié du 19^e siècle d'une manière plus directe²⁵.

Concernant la Légion étrangère, deux mythes s'opposent : le mythe noir et négatif (une certaine diabolisation) et le mythe clair et positif (une sorte de canonisation). Au fond, ils sont basés sur la vérité, néanmoins, ils les exagèrent, amplifient et sélectionnent selon leurs propres intérêts. Le premier est présent depuis 1837 et s'amplifie régulièrement – surtout dans la presse et dans la littérature. Ces travaux accentuent surtout les éléments négatifs de la Légion, comme les personnalités sauvages, les conditions de vie difficiles, les punitions cruelles, etc. On y trouve également la canonisation voire l'angélisation de la Légion. Dans le cadre de celle-ci, on accentue les vertus légionnaires, les qualités militaires, les qualités humaines, les activités positives (par exemple la construction), la communauté légionnaire

²³ O'MAHONEY, *La Légion...*, op. cit., p. 106.

²⁴ COMOR, *La Légion Etrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 633-634.

²⁵ LARROUMET, Marie (2004), *Mythe et images de la Légion étrangère*, L'Harmattan, Paris, pp. 37-47.

présentée comme « un ordre militaire laïc », la reconversion des volontaires lors de l'instruction et le service vers une meilleure vie après ses fautes commises antérieurement. La formation militaire était capable d'encadrer l'évolution du mythe en gardant les structures originales et en répartissant une vision en faveur d'une *légionmanie* au lieu d'une *légionphobie*²⁶.

Ce changement commence pendant l'entre-deux-guerres quand le général Paul-Frédéric Rollet, le premier inspecteur de la Légion étrangère entre 1931 et 1934, surnommé « père de la Légion », entame l'organisation du centenaire de la Légion, créée en 1831, et l'établissement des traditions qui favorise un certain romantisme légionnaire. L'officier travaille sur cet événement remarquable pendant trois ans pour commémorer l'activité de l'unité et créer des traditions solides. Le centenaire a plusieurs éléments remarquables qui laissent leur trace sur la Légion. Avant tout, on édifie un monument aux morts à la gloire de l'unité. C'est une pyramide irrégulière en onyx supportant un globe terrestre orné de guirlandes en bronze reposant sur une base figurant des palmes et encadrés par quatre légionnaires de différentes époques. Le monument de 9 mètres de haut est financé par une souscription auprès des légionnaires. D'une manière curieuse, il est inauguré le 30 avril 1931, anniversaire de Camerone, et pas le 9 mars, jour anniversaire de la création de la Légion. Des inscriptions en lettres dorées se trouvent sur l'édifice : « La Légion à ses morts » et « Honneur et Fidélité ». On publie également un livre d'or qui présente l'histoire de l'unité, ses drapeaux, ses uniformes et la bibliographie complète des ouvrages consacrés à la Légion. Il voit le jour en 1931 et sera réédité en 1958, 1976 et 1981. Lors des préparations de l'anniversaire, Rollet regroupe les nombreuses amicales d'anciens légionnaires pour fonder l'Union des Sociétés d'Anciens Légionnaires de France, des Colonies et de l'Etranger dont le successeur (Fédération des Sociétés d'Anciens de la Légion Étrangère) existe même aujourd'hui. Les détachements présents de la Légion défilent pendant la festivité et c'est la première fois que les sapeurs légionnaires participent à une telle parade en tablier de cuir, hache sur l'épaule et tous barbus qui devient une tradition très forte et durable. Le même jour, Rollet a été nommé inspecteur de la Légion étrangère, poste créé pour lui, ainsi supprimé en 1934 avec sa retraite et recréé en 1948 sous le nom d'inspecteur technique de la Légion étrangère pour être remplacé l'actuel Commandement de la Légion étrangère en 1984²⁷.

Le « père de la Légion » fait des efforts pour renforcer l'esprit de corps au sein de l'unité et pour diffuser une image positive, attrayante et romantique en faveur du grand public. Cette vision est bien accueillie par ce dernier qui est de plus en plus intéressé par le personnage des légionnaires. La Légion est souvent présentée comme un endroit idéal pour les individus ayant fui leur pays pour diverses raisons pour venir chercher une nouvelle raison de vivre et racheter les erreurs du passé. Les soldats de différentes nationalités y vivent en harmonie, nouent des amitiés solides et sont soutenus par leurs officiers. Une discipline de fer règne dans la Légion qui contribue à la victoire dans la guerre menée contre des peuples barbares qui menacent la civilisation occidentale. Le légionnaire est normalement un homme solitaire qui attire l'affection féminine. De plus, il est généreux et prêt à porter assistance aux faibles. En même temps, il est loin d'être parfait, car il boit

²⁶ COMOR, *La Légion Etrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 636-638.

²⁷ DE GMELINE, *Nouvelle histoire...*, op. cit., pp. 320-324.

beaucoup d'alcool et de temps en temps le désespoir ou le cafard le poussent vers des actions spontanées peu justifiables : désertion ou suicide. Ce comportement anormal s'explique par son passé ce qu'il veut oublier, ainsi ce n'est pas sa faute²⁸. On mentionne régulièrement le fait que le légionnaire est un pacificateur qui pousse les pays lointains vers la civilisation autant par les armes que par la pioche, ainsi il n'est pas seulement combattant, mais également un bâtisseur²⁹.

Pendant l'entre-deux-guerres, un certain nombre de campagnes sont lancées contre la Légion de la part des pays dont les citoyens s'engagent en masse dans l'unité. Parmi ces États, l'Allemagne est la plus active étant donné que les Allemands représentent environ la moitié des volontaires de la Légion entre 1924 et 1937³⁰. Cet afflux provoque une réticence croissante auprès des autorités allemandes qui essaient de créer une image négative sur la Légion pour décourager leurs citoyens et empêcher leur engagement³¹. Ces campagnes de propagande « anti-Légion » sont réalisées par la presse, la littérature, l'affiche et le cinéma. Les légionnaires sont présentés comme des hommes mal nourris, brutalisés, vivant sous une discipline féroce qui subissent des pertes énormes pendant leur service sous le drapeau français. D'une manière paradoxale, cette activité contribue à la popularisation de la Légion, car elle devient plus connue et la vie des légionnaires semble mouvementée, exotique, disciplinée et consacrée au service de la France³².

Cette image particulière des légionnaires s'intensifie pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale ainsi que lors des grandes guerres de décolonisation en Indochine et en Algérie à partir de 1939 jusqu'aux années 1970. Elle se distingue particulièrement dans les rangs des Forces françaises libres par les actions de la 13^e Demi-brigade de la Légion étrangère dans le conflit mondial³³. Sa participation est primordiale dans la guerre d'Indochine et celle d'Algérie où les troupes légionnaires jouent un rôle essentiel dans toutes les opérations d'envergure et subissent des pertes très importantes³⁴.

Ce monde légionnaire correspond à un univers héroïque dans lequel le légionnaire est un exemple type de héros. Sa vraie existence comme héros commence avec son arrivée à la Légion où l'individu renaît avec son engagement dans l'unité. Il laisse son passé derrière lui et reçoit une possibilité de racheter ses peines commises auparavant, car la Légion est le lieu de la réhabilitation. Lors de son service, il est obligé de surmonter des épreuves physiques, notamment des combats acharnés dans les quatre coins du monde, ainsi il subit un entraînement très sévère. Ce dernier lui permet de devenir un soldat endurant et compétents, un militaire professionnel. Grâce à ces compétences, il s'illustre lors des combats (par exemple les batailles de Bir Hakeim, Diên Biên Phu et surtout celle de Camerone) et contribue à la gloire de France. De temps en temps, le légionnaire intervient pour sauver la vie

²⁸ LARROUMET, *Mythe et images...*, op. cit., pp. 55-71.

²⁹ MAHUAULT, Jean-Paul (2013), *Légionnaires et bâtisseurs. « Le grand 5 » (1883-2000)*, L'Harmattan, Paris, pp. 9-10.

³⁰ PORCH, *La Légion étrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 496-501.

³¹ Voir NEVIASKI, Alexis (2012), *Képi blanc, casque d'acier et croix gammée. Subversion au cœur de la Légion étrangère*, Fayard, Paris.

³² COMOR, *La Légion Etrangère...*, op. cit., p. 531.

³³ Voir COMOR, André-Paul (1988), *L'épopée de la 13^e Demi-brigade de la Légion étrangère (1940-1945)*, Nouvelles Éditions Latines, Paris.

³⁴ MONTAGNON, *La Légion étrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 307-385.

des innocents même s'il est obligé de s'opposer à ses supérieurs hiérarchiques dont le comportement est inhumain. Cette vie difficile et pleine de dangers lui permet d'obtenir la rédemption, car il devient un homme honorable pendant son service. En portant son uniforme traditionnel toujours impeccable lors des défilés, le légionnaire est très élégant et a l'air aventurier et romanesque. Il a une forte personnalité avec des sentiments outranciers, ainsi il est capable du meilleur comme du pire. Pendant cette période, grâce à leur réputation professionnelle et à leur éloignement de la vie ordinaire, les Français sont attirés par les légionnaires. Épaulé par une certaine méconnaissance de la réalité de la Légion étrangère, le grand public a une vision positive sur les légionnaires ce qui est le « mythe romanesque »³⁵.

Parallèlement, il y a une représentation négative qui se renforce pendant la même époque dans certains rangs de la société en raison de plusieurs faits comme l'incorporation des Allemands, la participation de la Légion dans les guerres de décolonisation et les difficultés d'adaptation des légionnaires après leur retour en métropole. Ce sentiment est indissociable des sentiments négatifs liés à la guerre d'Algérie dont la réputation est très mauvaise. De plus, la Légion s'implique dans le putsch de 1961 qui lui vaut d'être menacée de dissolution (finalement, seulement un contingent, le 1^{er} régiment étranger de parachutistes subit ce sort)³⁶.

Selon cette approche, les légionnaires ont une origine douteuse pendant cette période d'après-guerre, car dans la majorité des cas, ils arrivent de l'Allemagne et de l'Italie, des pays ennemis tournés vers le fascisme. En réalité, le nombre des anciens SS ou criminels de guerre est très limité dans les rangs de la Légion étrangère, mais la propagande française de gauche gonfle l'importance de leur participation et l'utilise pour nuire le prestige de l'unité. En même temps, cette présence allemande numériquement importante agace les autorités allemandes qui lancent également une campagne pour discréditer la Légion, voire pousser les légionnaires d'origine allemande à désertir³⁷. On reproche également à la formation militaire d'accepter des mineurs dans ses rangs. Ce sont surtout les gouvernements belge, suisse et allemand qui mènent une campagne en raison de cette pratique dont la véracité ne peut pas être confirmée. On évoque souvent que les membres de la Légion sont des criminels dont le comportement est scandaleux et néfaste. Par conséquent, les légionnaires sont présentés comme des monstres qui se comportent d'une manière brutale avec la population civile. Cette image noire devient encore plus négative après le putsch de 1961 quand les légionnaires sont traités par certains organes comme une menace pour l'intégrité du territoire de France. Avec la fin de la guerre d'Algérie, la Légion s'installe sur le territoire de la métropole qui suscite un grand intérêt, néanmoins, ce rapatriement est très critiqué par la gauche qui voit un grand danger dans l'arrivée des légionnaires pour les Français. Selon les représentants de ce groupe politique, le comportement « colonial » (c'est-à-dire violent) des soldats empêche leur intégration à la société française de coutumes différentes, même si les faits ne justifient pas cette crainte³⁸.

Le commandement de la Légion reconnaît l'importance du renforcement de l'image positive de la formation. Pour y réaliser, on a besoin d'une troupe dont le comportement et la

³⁵ LARROUMET, *Mythe et images...*, op. cit., pp. 111-145.

³⁶ DE GMELINE, *Nouvelle histoire...*, op. cit., pp. 507-516.

³⁷ THOUMELIN, *L'ennemi utile...*, op. cit., pp. 73-138.

³⁸ LARROUMET, *Mythe et images...*, op. cit., pp. 155-200.

performance peuvent éveiller l'intérêt et la reconnaissance du grand public. L'outil le plus efficace de la construction de ce mythe positif est l'esprit de corps.

L'esprit de corps de l'unité

Ce sentiment spécial connu sous le nom de l'esprit de corps se manifeste tant à l'extérieur qu'à l'intérieur de l'unité par de tels signes de reconnaissance comme les uniformes, les emblèmes et les fanions, les chants, également par des actes quotidiens comme le comportement quotidien régulier ou par les fêtes liées à l'historique de la troupe³⁹.

Le *Code d'honneur du légionnaire*, établi dans les années 1980, a été créé pour synthétiser les règles et les valeurs de la Légion étrangère donnant un guide pour les engagés venant de cultures différentes. Ce document contient des valeurs éthiques et esthétiques, il sert de référence à tous les légionnaires qui doivent l'apprendre par cœur. Son importance est marquée par le fait que l'Armée de Terre française a créé son *Code d'honneur du soldat Français* de 11 articles en inspirant du document des légionnaires. Ses 7 articles sont les suivants :

Article 1 *Légionnaire, tu es un volontaire servant la France avec honneur et fidélité.*

Article 2 *Chaque légionnaire est ton frère d'arme, quelle que soit sa nationalité, sa race, sa religion. Tu lui manifestes toujours la solidarité étroite qui doit unir les membres d'une même famille.*

Article 3 *Respectueux des traditions, attaché à tes chefs, la discipline et la camaraderie sont ta force, le courage et la loyauté tes vertus.*

Article 4 *Fier de ton état de légionnaire, tu le montres dans ta tenue toujours élégante, ton comportement toujours digne mais modeste, ton casernement toujours net.*

Article 5 *Soldat d'élite, tu t'entraînes avec rigueur, tu entretiens ton arme comme ton bien le plus précieux, tu as le souci constant de ta forme physique.*

Article 6 *La mission est sacrée, tu l'exécutes jusqu'au bout et, s'il le faut, en opérations, au péril de ta vie.*

Article 7 *Au combat tu agis sans passion et sans haine, tu respectes les ennemis vaincus, tu n'abandonnes jamais ni tes morts, ni tes blessés, ni tes armes⁴⁰.*

La devise portée sur les drapeaux de la Légion était au début *Valeur et Discipline* qui a été remplacé en 1920 par celle *Honneur et Fidélité* (au lieu de la devise traditionnelle *Honneur et Patrie*) liée au fait que les engagés ne se trouvent pas dans l'armée de leur patrie d'origine, en revanche, ils appartiennent à la formation militaire qu'ils doivent servir avec loyauté. En même temps, les régiments légionnaires ont leurs propres devises qui désignent une certaine caractéristique p. ex., la 13^e Demi-brigade de la Légion étrangère a comme devise l'expression *More Majorum* qui veut dire *À la manière de nos Anciens*. Cette appartenance spéciale et contradictoire s'exprime par l'autre devise : *Legio Patria Nostra* (*La Légion est notre patrie*). La Légion est un lieu de refuge des volontaires qui ont été obligés de fuir leur patrie (comme les Alsaciens-Lorrains après 1871). En même temps, les légion-

³⁹ COMOR, *La Légion Etrangère...*, op. cit., p. 354.

⁴⁰ <https://www.legion-etrangere.com/mdl/page.php?id=92> (Consulté le 17 janvier 2023.)

naires ne doivent pas répudier leur patrie, car ils sont parfaitement libres de conserver leur nationalité et leur accord est demandé pour pouvoir être envoyés combattre contre leur pays d'origine⁴¹.

La Légion a deux couleurs de tradition : le vert et le rouge (écarlate) qui remarquent les couleurs des épaulettes sur l'uniforme des légionnaires. Elles sont officialisées en 1915 et figurent sur les fanions et les insignes de la Légion. La présence du vert s'accroît dans les tenues, car il devient la couleur de la cravate puis celle du béret, des chaussettes et des gilets des cavaliers légionnaires. Une particularité de la tenue légionnaire est la ceinture bleue qui devient une marque distinctive de l'uniforme de parade du légionnaire. Le symbole de la grenade à sept flammes se trouve sur les fanions, ainsi que sur les épaulettes des uniformes ou sur les insignes des bérets. Il a été officialisé dans les années 1870, sa forme a connu une certaine évolution au fil du temps, et il est très présent dans la Légion même de nos jours. En même temps, la particularité la plus caractéristique de la tenue des légionnaires est le képi blanc qui est porté par plusieurs unités militaires depuis les 1850. Cependant, au début du 20^e siècle, ce couvre-képi blanc est porté presque exclusivement par les légionnaires. On essaye de passer au brun le blanc du képi pour que les soldats soient des cibles moins visibles, en revanche, l'esprit de baroudeur des légionnaires impose le képi blanc qui sera finalement officialisé en 1933. La remise du képi blanc aux jeunes recrues en fin d'instruction est une cérémonie importante pour marquer l'entrée dans la société légionnaire⁴².

Il faut également mentionner le chant qui est un élément essentiel de l'identité légionnaire. Il a plusieurs rôles : cohésion, moyen d'expression, protocole, soutien dans l'effort, détente, apprentissage du français. En même temps, on peut l'utiliser pour promouvoir l'image de la Légion. Le plus ancien chant légionnaire, *Le Chant de la Légion étrangère en Espagne*, date de 1835 quand l'unité est intervenue au pays ibérique pendant les guerres carlistes. Le chant le plus connu de la Légion, *Le Boudin*, apparaît vers 1870. Le répertoire est très riche dont certains éléments n'ont pas été conservés malgré la publication des recueils de chants légionnaires. La Légion est fière de ses chants qu'elle prouve volontiers dont l'exemple le plus illustre est le défilé où les légionnaires marchent avec une cadence spéciale, plus lente que dans les autres unités de l'armée française, notamment, 80 à 85 pas par minute, précisée par le chant⁴³.

Les fêtes ont une importance particulière dans la vie des légionnaires. Le plus important est la célébration de l'anniversaire de la bataille de Camerone tous les ans le 30 avril. Ce combat a eu lieu lors de l'expédition du Mexique en 1863 qui a opposé 65 hommes de la Légion à 2 000 soldats mexicains. Les légionnaires luttent jusqu'à leur dernier souffle en infligeant des pertes importantes aux troupes mexicaines. Cet esprit légionnaire illustre bien la détermination, la bravoure, l'honneur, la dignité et le respect de l'adversaire de la Légion qui est célébrée solennellement chaque année depuis 1906⁴⁴. Noël est l'une des principales fêtes de tradition de la Légion à partir de la fin du 19^e siècle, puisqu'il permet aux légionnaires de trouver les rites et l'esprit d'une convivialité familiale. C'est un moment de solidarité, d'esprit de corps et de l'ambiance fraternelle qui donnent une véritable famille pour

⁴¹ <https://www.legion-etrangere.com/mdl/page.php?id=413&block=1> (Consulté le 18 janvier 2023.)

⁴² HALLO, *Monsieur Légionnaire...*, op. cit., pp. 198-201.

⁴³ COMOR, *La Légion Etrangère...*, op. cit., pp. 219-224.

⁴⁴ DE GMELINE, *Nouvelle histoire...*, op. cit., pp. 133-158.

les légionnaires. La Légion se rassemble, les officiers et les légionnaires partagent ce moment magique de l'année pour fuir la nostalgie en participant à des messes célébrées par des aumôniers⁴⁵.

Conclusion

La Légion étrangère fait partie de l'armée française depuis 1831 et défend les intérêts français sur cinq continents dans des missions de nature différente (colonisation, guerre régulière, maintien de la paix, etc.) jusqu'à nos jours. Une de ses particularités la plus connue est que ses membres représentent presque toutes les nationalités du monde et servent sous le drapeau français avec loyauté.

On peut constater que sa réputation mondiale est basée avant tout sur des mythes contradictoires, négatif et positif. Ces derniers, basés sur des faits réels, ont évolué lors des siècles et ont connu des modifications considérables dans un contexte historique toujours se transformant. En reconnaissant l'importance de ces mythes, la Légion a commencé à fournir des énormes efforts pour alimenter le mythe positif pouvant contribuer à l'amélioration de la réputation de la Légion. Le commandement a construit un esprit de corps particulièrement solide autour des traditions qui sont les piliers de l'identité légionnaire.

Ce processus a été entamé il y a un siècle et ses résultats sont spectaculaires, car l'image de la Légion, malgré la présence du mythe négatif, est essentiellement positive de nos jours. A priori, elle est considérée comme une unité d'élite composée de volontaires de haute qualité sélectionnés d'un grand nombre de candidats attirés par la légende de la Légion. Cette troupe propose une instruction militaire spéciale, des déploiements armés partout dans le monde, une solde élevée et l'obtention de la citoyenneté française, par conséquent, elle est très convoitée auprès des jeunes hommes venant de presque 160 pays.

Pour conclure, il faut remarquer que l'esprit de corps singulier de la Légion est le ciment de son prestige, ainsi son allure médiatisée d'une manière efficace est l'élément le plus important du mythe positif de l'unité.

⁴⁵ <https://legion-etrangere.fr/mdl/imprime.php?id=649> (Consulté le 18 janvier 2023.)

La guerre de libération nationale algérienne Révolution ou une « simple » guerre ?

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Pourquoi cette question ? Les historiens utilisent la guerre de libération nationale, ou la guerre d'indépendance. Dans les discours officiels c'est plutôt la Révolution qui apparaît. Est-ce qu'il y aurait une divergence entre les utilisateurs de ces deux termes ? Non, pas du tout. Les deux termes ne se contredisent pas.

On peut poser la question d'une autre manière aussi à propos de la guerre de libération nationale algérienne : quelle identité a-t-elle formée ? Nationale – bien naturellement ! Mais exclusivement ? Ou bien de coloration sociale forte ?

Pour une colonie accès à l'indépendance vaut un événement révolutionnaire, une véritable révolution. Surtout si elle y est arrivée au prix lourd de lutte armée de huit ans. C'est le cas de l'Algérie : colonisation brutale de 132 ans, intégration totale à la France comme « groupe de départements français d'outre-mer ». « *La guerre de libération impulsée par le FLN [Front de libération nationale] et ALN [Armée de libération nationale] est bien une révolution car elle est renversement de l'ordre établi dans la société... c'est la révolution puisque c'est bien l'ordre colonial qu'il condamne et se propose d'abattre. Mais la guerre populaire n'est pas encore révolution. Le peuple est déclaré uni dans le combat libérateur. Mais pour l'après, c'est le grand silence.* »¹ On est d'accord avec l'éminent historien Gilbert Meynier, sauf la dernière phrase. En tout cas, il faut la nuancer. L'essentiel, les caractéristiques fondamentales de « l'après » (la société à construire) sont présentes dans les documents du FLN en guerre comme dans les débats au sein de ses institutions, et même dans la conscience non seulement des combattants mais dans celle de toute la population.

Le régime colonial en Algérie est très violent dans tous les domaines, juridique, économique, culturel, visant la dépersonnalisation totale des Algériens. Algérie déclarée « terre française » où il y a neuf millions Algériens, « sujet français », dominés – ou plutôt opprimés par un million Européens de citoyenneté française. Mais justement cet état colonisé brutal, violent et long qui rend le nationalisme algérien extrêmement fort et particulièrement social. Les représentants des partis du mouvement national algérien ne veulent pas simplement un drapeau, un hymne national et un siège à l'ONU, mais ils s'engagent à détruire la société coloniale et construire une société juste et égalitaire la mieux possible. Pour réaliser cet objectif n'est pas possible par un seul acte, même qu'il soit déterminant, fondamental, mais il sera de longue durée, un long processus ayant des hauts et des bas. Le fondement solide de ce processus s'est forgé au cours de la guerre de libération nationale. Comment s'est formé ce processus ayant de plein droit de le qualifier *révolutionnaire* ?

¹ MEYNIER, Gilbert (2002), *Histoire intérieure du FLN 1954-1962*, Fayard, Paris, pp. 158-159.

Dans les programmes des diverses formations du mouvement de libération nationale algérienne le composant social est toujours présent, même avant le déclenchement de la guerre de libération nationale. Cet élément social – Algérie étant un pays agraire – concerne en premier lieu la paysannerie. Les premiers sont les communistes qui préparent un programme de réforme agraire en 1925². Le problème de la terre est aussi un point important des Revendications algériennes présentées par Messali Hadj, dirigeant de l'Étoile nord-africaine constituée en 1926 à Paris avec le soutien du Parti communiste français et rassemblant les travailleurs maghrébins, au congrès antiimpérialiste de Bruxelles en 1927 : « *La confiscation des grandes propriétés agricoles occupées par les féodaux, agents de l'impérialisme, les colons et les sociétés capitalistes privées et la remise de la terre confisquée aux paysans qui en ont été frustrés, respect de la petite et moyenne propriété* »³.

Après la deuxième guerre mondiale, tous les partis du mouvement national (UDMA, MTLD, PCA) mènent le combat pour une Algérie indépendante : une *République démocratique et sociale* sans vouloir la rupture totale et définitive avec la France. En même temps, chacun de ces partis veut la rupture totale avec la société laissée par la France, la colonisatrice. Ils veulent la détruire et bâtir une autre sur les bases solides non seulement nationales, mais sociales aussi. Ils ont rejeté la domination française tout en assimilant les idées françaises : liberté, égalité, fraternité.

Le FLN, dirigeant politique de la guerre, réaffirme cette position exprimée dans sa proclamation du premier novembre 1954 indiquant l'objectif principal de la lutte pour la construction d'« *un État algérien souverain, démocratique et social dans le cadre des principes islamique* ».

La question agraire se trouve au centre des préoccupations du FLN et s'exprime dans les résolutions du Congrès du Soummam (août 1956) : « *La véritable réforme agraire, solution patriotique de la misère des campagnes, est inséparable de la destruction totale du régime colonial* »⁴.

Au fur et à mesure que la guerre devient plus brutale et de plus en plus de paysans rejoignent l'Armée de libération nationale (ALN), le contenu social du combat se renforce nettement. Surtout après l'arrivée au pouvoir de Charles de Gaulle en 1958. Le Général lance un vaste programme de développement économique et social (construction des logements, distribution des terres, scolarisation des enfants algériens, etc.) en Algérie (1958-1961) élaboré par le gouvernement français annoncé publiquement devant la préfecture de Constantine le 3 octobre 1958. Le but du plan est l'affaiblissement du FLN, améliorer sensiblement les conditions matérielles des Algériens pour qu'ils « *choisissent librement d'appartenir à l'ensemble français* »⁵.

Dans son excellent livre Slimane Chikh montre qu'à partir de 1959, avec les critiques du plan de Constantine le FLN commence à préciser le contenu social de l'indépendance.

² *Lutte sociale*, le 22 mars 1925.

³ Cette même revendication est reprise dans le programme de 1933 de l'ENA.

⁴ *El Moudjahid*, Numéro spécial, n° 4, 1956.

⁵ « Plan de Constantine et politique », *Le Monde*, le 30 juillet 1959.

L'échec du plan de Constantine prouve que l'Algérie indépendante devra chercher d'autres modèles que le modèle capitaliste⁶.

Je pense la raison plus importante qui pousse le FLN à approfondir ses réflexions sur le contenu social de l'Algérie indépendante est la négociation avec la France. Dès le début, il devait être vigilant pour que les négociations n'aboutissent à privilégier une seule couche sociale mais tout le peuple, d'une part. Et être vigilant pour écarter la possibilité de l'instauration d'un système néocolonialiste issue des négociations d'autre part. Et tout ça pour rester fidèle à son engagement politique pris et définis dès le déclenchement de la guerre de libération nationale. Ce sera la source des divergences entre les « civils » et « militaires », entre le Gouvernement Provisoire de la Révolution Algérienne (GPRA) constitué en septembre 1958 et l'ALN. Et c'est qui se trouve à l'origine du remaniement du GPRA à la réunion du Conseil National de la Révolution Algérienne (CNRA), organe le plus haut, le « parlement » du FLN, de Tripoli du 9 au 27 août 1961. Le communiqué final du CNRA est clair : « *Le CNRA a précisé le contenu démocratique et social de la lutte du peuple algérien dont les aspirations sont exprimées par le FLN, guide de la nation. Ces aspirations tendent à édifier une nation moderne, une économie au service du peuple et une renaissance culturelle.* »⁷ L'éditorial de ce même numéro de l'organe central du FLN donne une explication brève du communiqué final : « *Jusqu'à ce jour, l'image que nous nous faisons de l'Algérie de demain a influé sur notre action. Elle continuera à déterminer de plus en plus notre ligne de conduite. C'est ce que le CNRA a pleinement confirmé, donnant une place plus grande aux questions fondamentales du contenu social de notre lutte et de l'installation d'un régime s'inspirant effectivement du principe "La Révolution par le peuple et pour le peuple". Cette formule ne doit pas rester à l'état de vœu, elle doit s'inscrire dans les faits en jouant un rôle primordial dans notre combat antiimpérialiste.* »⁸

L'éditorial *Préparer l'avenir* du n° 85 d'*El Moudjahid* (octobre 1961) est plus explicite et plus concrète : « *L'Algérie combattante et héroïque, ce sont tout d'abord les masses paysannes... constituent le moteur principal de l'action révolutionnaire armée... La République algérienne démocratique et sociale est en train de se réaliser dans le cœur, la pensée et l'action de chaque Algérien... le peuple algérien se fixe comme objectif l'instauration d'une démocratie réelle (souligné par nous – L.J.N) où le peuple sera maître de ses destinées... Le peuple algérien a soif de justice sociale (souligné par nous – L.J.N)... La réforme agraire qui a toujours constitué un objectif fondamental de la Révolution algérienne sera réalisée et constituera un acte de progrès et de justice sociale pour la paysannerie qui a le plus souffert de l'exploitation coloniale et de la guerre... L'Algérie indépendante ne permettra pas l'installation dans le pays de structure néocolonialistes qui portent toujours en elles des limitations à la souveraineté et au libre développement économique de la nation (souligné par nous – L.J.N).* »

Dans le débat sur l'avenir du pays, de la société de l'Algérie indépendante les représentants de l'ALN sont particulièrement radicaux. Pourquoi ? Parce qu'ils sont eux-mêmes paysans, toute ALN est une armée de paysans, enracinée profondément dans la société

⁶ CHIKH, Slimane (2006), *L'Algérie en guerre ou le temps des certitudes*, Casbah Editions, Alger (2^e édition corrigée et augmentée), p. 347. et « Le fiasco du libéralisme en Algérie », *El Moudjahid*, n° 72 (novembre 1960).

⁷ *El Moudjahid*, n° 89, août 1961.

⁸ Pour l'accomplissement de notre mission historique (éditorial). Ibid.

algérienne, et après l'accès à l'indépendance transformée en ANP (Armée Nationale Populaire) professionnalisée reste toujours populaire et *non académique* (souligné par nous – L.J.N.). L'ANP est la seule armée arabe ayant un rôle politique qui était formée au sein du peuple dans la lutte pour l'indépendance nationale, et non formée dans les Académies militaires fondées et entretenues dans la plupart des cas par les anciens colonisateurs. Elle avait et garde toujours une mission politique révolutionnaire et non profession militaire ! *El Moudjahid* exprime nettement cette tâche nationale de l'ALN qui veut être – sans le dire ou sans en avoir pleine conscience : « *L'ALN, armée révolutionnaire porte en elle aussi les cadres de l'Algérie libre. Nos combattants ne sont pas des "militaires". Ils ne font pas la guerre pour la guerre. Ce sont des patriotes, des militants qui ont pris les armes pour libérer le peuple.* »⁹

L'autre facteur important qui pousse le FLN à approfondir le contenu social de son programme c'est « l'expérience des pays qui ont lutté pour leur libération »¹⁰. Ces pays sans être nommés concrètement peuvent être identifiés facilement après la consultation des numéros d'*El Moudjahid* : ils sont la Chine populaire, la Yougoslavie, mais surtout le Cuba arrivé tout récemment à son réelle indépendance après s'être débarrassé par la lutte armée du régime fantoche de Batista, fervent serviteur des États-Unis.

C'est la politique ferme de Fidel Castro et son équipe menée pour la défense de la souveraineté nationale de Cuba qui suscite l'admiration et l'enthousiasme du FLN. Tout en menant ce combat, les dirigeants cubains introduisent des réformes radicales bouleversant totalement la structure économique et sociale du pays et justement pour élargir les bases sociales de l'indépendance et par là consolider la souveraineté du pays. Donc les facteurs national et social se renforcent mutuellement. Et cette « rencontre » du national et du social qui frappent l'imagination et l'admiration du FLN. *El Moudjahid* suit de près les événements de Cuba. Sont les faits significatifs et révélateurs les titres des sept longues articles publiés entre juillet 1960 et mars 1962 dans l'organe central du FLN sur le pays antillais : *Cuba face à l'impérialisme américain* (n° 67, juillet 1960.) ; *Cuba : plus qu'une révolution, un exemple* (n° 68, août 1960) ; *Cuba : un front syndical de solidarité à l'Algérie* (n° 72, novembre 1960) ; *Connaissance de la révolution cubaine* (n° 77, janvier 1961) ; *Cuba – une longue lutte contre l'impérialisme* (n° 80, mai 1961) ; *Cuba : an III de la révolution* (n° 83, juillet 1961) ; *Cuba : an IV de la Réforme agraire* (n° 90, mars 1962).

Le FLN voit la réalisation de son but dans la révolution cubaine. Elle n'est pas « *un simple changement politique, mais une véritable révolution nationale : cette révolution est exclusivement cubaine, ou mieux encore latino-américaine. Politiquement on pourrait définir Fidel et son Mouvement comme nationaliste-révolutionnaire* » (déclaration de Guevara au journaliste Moretti)¹¹. Son but est extrêmement claire et simple : Cuba aux Cubains ! Amérique latine aux Latino-américains !

Che Guevara a bien qualifié les révolutions radicales du tiers-monde des années 1960. Au fond elles étaient des révolutions nationalistes, elles visaient à construire un *État-nation souverain* entravée par le système colonialo-impérialiste. Leur idéologie était le nationalisme (patriotisme) inclusive ayant un contenu social très fort, elles ne voulaient privilégier

⁹ ALN armée révolutionnaire *El Moudjahid*, n° 90, 1^{er} octobre 1961.

¹⁰ L'éditorial d'*El Moudjahid* d'août 1961.

¹¹ *El Moudjahid*, n° 77, janvier 1961.

aucune couche ou classe de la société. Une tâche immense ! Au cours de ce processus révolutionnaire les partisans de la construction socialiste, en l'occurrence les partis communistes, ayant des expériences pratiques et de la culture politico-théorique profonde, peuvent jouer un rôle positif, mais à condition qu'ils soient en phase avec les nationalistes. Par contre, « *tous les mouvements qui ne s'efforcent pas avancer ensemble avec le nationalisme arabe souverainiste et antiimpérialiste – seule idéologie dominante dans maintes pays arabes – ils sont voués à l'échec* » – explique et analyse Houari Boumedien, Président de l'Algérie, ce problème hautement compliqué lors de l'entretien privé avec Pál Losonczi, chef d'État hongrois en visite officielle en Algérie en décembre 1971¹².

Ma réponse à la question posée à la tête du texte est la suivante : la guerre de libération nationale a formé une identité algérienne à double composant, national et social.

D'après les expériences vécues des décennies, il peut paraître certain que le processus nationaliste-révolutionnaire débouche sur l'échec, souvent tragique (Irak 1963, Indonésie 1965 et Soudan 1971), si la révolution sociale veut « sauter » l'étape nationale. L'équilibre entre national et social est très fragile, cette situation comporte toujours des risques de déviation – de gauche ou de droite – extrémiste.

¹² Feljegyzés Losonczi Pál elvtárs és Houari Boumedien elnök magánbeszélgetéséről. (Notes sur l'entretien privé des chefs d'État hongrois Pál Losonczi et algérien Houari Boumedien), le 2 décembre 1971, MNL OL (Archives nationales hongroises) XIX-J-1-j Afrika 1971. carton 107. doc. 001061/107/1971.

L'évolution du nationalisme corse depuis les années 1970

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« Seize attentats par explosif ont été commis en Corse dans la nuit du 4 au 5 mai [...]. Tous les plasticages ont été revendiqués par le Front national de libération dans un communiqué adressé au correspondant de l'A.F.P. à Bastia. Il précise : "Une étape décisive dans la lutte de libération nationale de notre peuple est franchie. Les nationalistes ont décidé de s'unir en créant le F.N.L., dernière étape de dix années de lutte." »

Ce fut par ces lignes que, le 6 mai 1976, le journal *Le Monde* annonça la création d'une nouvelle structure clandestine indépendantiste qui devait, sous différentes formes, occuper le devant de la scène politique insulaire pendant près d'une quarantaine d'années : *U Fronte di Liberazione Nazionale di a Corsica*, le FLNC, plus simplement dénommé « le Front » par ses partisans.

La création d'un mouvement indépendantiste uni et clandestin achevait presque « logiquement » le processus enclenché, en août 1975, par les événements d'Aleria et de Bastia et, au-delà, par les profondes – et souvent brutales – mutations subies par la Corse depuis quasiment une vingtaine d'années. Les affrontements meurtriers, entre les militants autonomistes et les forces de l'ordre dans la cave Depeille, puis sur la place Saint-Nicolas quelques jours après, ne constituaient que la phase ultime d'un processus de radicalisation dû tout autant à la dynamique interne du mouvement autonomiste, à la vigueur des tensions socio-politiques locales qu'aux incohérences et aux dénis de justice d'un « État indélicat » (Xavier Crettiez). Paraissant encore maîtrisable à la fin des années 1960, la situation générale sur l'île connut une brusque accélération en l'espace de trois années seulement (1971-1973) qui la rendit bientôt dangereuse.

Le 7 janvier 1973, la plupart des responsables régionalistes lançaient le mot d'ordre d'autonomie lors de *A Chjama di u Castellare* ; depuis 1943, aucun parti n'avait osé le faire. Il y avait plus grave encore avec l'apparition de groupes armés nationalistes. Dans la nuit du 8 au 9 octobre 1973, trois attentats à l'explosif furent revendiqués par un groupe clandestin le *Fronte Paesanu Corsu di Liberazione* (FPCL). La répression contre les autonomistes redoubla alors de vigueur, mais comme pour démontrer l'inefficacité de cette politique, le 22 mars 1974 naissait un second mouvement clandestin *Ghjustizia Paolina* (GP). Le 20 mai suivant, dans son Manifeste de la Pentecôte, influencé par celui des « Fils de la Toussaint », *Ghjustizia Paolina* annonçait qu'elle se battrait désormais jusqu'à l'indépendance de la Corse. Il s'agissait d'une authentique rupture politique, sans aucun rapport avec les pseudos vellétés du mouvement se réclamant de l'indépendance né dans les derniers soubresauts de la Guerre d'Algérie, ou de l'épisode de « Corse Libre » ; cette fois-ci les militants se réclamaient des luttes d'émancipation des peuples colonisés et en-

tendaient bien, comme l'affirmait le FPCL, lutter pour la reconnaissance de la Corse « en tant que nation selon les critères définis par l'ONU ». Sur le bord des routes, sur les murs apparaissaient de-ci de-là des « bombages » d'un nouveau genre, impensables quelques années auparavant : IFF (*I Francesi Fora*) ; ils disaient assez les mutations en cours que confirmait la brusque augmentation des plasticages : 13 en 1972, 40 en 1973 et déjà 116 en 1974.

Au début de 1974, l'État tenta de reprendre la main, par l'intermédiaire de « L'impossible mission Libert Bou » (Pierre Dottelonde), elle ne fut qu'une ultime tentative du pouvoir pour tenter de conjurer le « péril autonomiste », sans remettre en question le développement à caractère exogène. Dans le même temps, la multiplication de scandales liés à la viticulture (*a vinaccia*) où se trouvaient impliqués des rapatriés, le refus de l'État de créer une SAFER et d'assainir la situation détériorait dangereusement le climat social et économique. Du côté du monde politique, des blocages se faisaient sentir et le rejet par les élus de la notion de « Peuple corse » inscrite dans le projet de Charte de Libert Bou, montrait symboliquement que les limites au-delà desquelles le système clientélo-claniste ne pouvait s'engager venaient d'être atteintes. Quant à l'Action régionaliste corse (ARC) – jusque-là fer de lance de la contestation –, elle se trouvait pressée par sa base jeune et décidée à la rupture, fut-elle violente. Elle se trouvait dès lors aculée à l'action sous peine de perdre définitivement son emprise sur la frange la plus jeune et la plus active de la contestation autonomiste. Dès lors, la route d'Aleria était ouverte.

Le 21 août 1975, une douzaine de militants autonomistes, ayant à leur tête Edmond Simoneoni, investirent la cave vinicole d'un rapatrié afin de dénoncer des fraudes financières et, plus globalement, la politique jugée inique de l'État. Le gouvernement réagit brutalement, envoyant dans l'île plusieurs centaines de CRS et de gendarmes appuyés par des véhicules blindés. Le lendemain, après de vaines négociations, l'affrontement entre autonomistes et forces de l'ordre fit deux morts parmi ces dernières et un blessé chez les premiers ; quelques jours plus tard, alors que le gouvernement annonçait la dissolution de l'ARC, le sang devait de nouveau couler à Bastia au cours d'une nuit d'émeute où un CRS trouva la mort (27-28 août). Une frange des autonomistes pensait que l'heure de la lutte armée avait sonné, aussi, « plusieurs dizaines de militants prirent le maquis, persuadés qu'ils ne tarderaient pas à recevoir de la direction de l'ancien mouvement la consigne de passer à l'action directe » (Pierre Dottelonde) ; en vain. Il n'empêche, la dissolution de l'ARC laissait dans « la nature » des dizaines d'hommes désormais disponibles pour la lutte armée. À compter de septembre 1975, une série d'attentats dus au FPCL et à GP secouait la Corse, alors que l'existence d'une myriade de groupes clandestins éphémères marquait la période post-Aleria. Néanmoins, le 5 mai 1976 naissait le FLNC affirmant vouloir se battre pour l'indépendance de la Corse. Il était issu de l'union des deux principaux groupes clandestins (FPCL et GP), des membres du *Partitu Corsu per u Sucialisimu* (PCS) et de militants convaincus de la nécessité de la lutte armée.

Un an plus tard, le 6 mai 1977, le FLNC présentait son programme, contenu dans le Livre vert – à cause de la couleur de sa couverture – lors d'une conférence de presse clandestine ; en 1979, le Livre blanc réactualisait la doctrine des clandestins, d'autres suivront dans les années à venir au grès de son évolution. En fait, au-delà des grands mots d'ordre de *Nazione Corsa* (ou *Corsica Nazione*) et d'*Indipendenza*, la doctrine demeura toujours très floue. Selon les périodes, les programmes du FLNC contenaient des références aux grands

courants émancipateurs du moment – des luttes tiers-mondistes aux combats écologiques en passant par une forme d'altermondialisation – qui se traduisirent, par exemple, dans le Livre vert, par l'exigence de la saisie des biens des colons et la mise en place d'une réforme agraire de type socialiste. Cependant, ils ne précisèrent jamais réellement les concepts avancés, tel, entre autres, celui de « socialisme original » des années 1980-1990. Il faut dire que, comme le précisait justement Andria Fazi, il y avait bien peu de cohérence idéologique entre des militants aux options politiques disparates, lorsqu'ils s'en souciaient : *Unipochi èranu à manca, d'altri èranu cunservatori, è parechji ùn n'avianu tantu primura. D'altronde, almenu in un primu tempu, sta capacità à adunisce ghjente assai diverse hè stata una di e forze maiò di l'organizzazione*. À cela, les clandestins ajoutèrent les principaux outils intellectuels forgés dans le courant de la décennie soixante par les régionalistes et le *Riacquistu* – notamment le mythe paolien en lieu et place du mythe napoléonien –, les réadaptant à la logique d'une *nation building*, sans rechigner, parfois, à s'inspirer du nationalisme français. Car tout était à faire dans ce domaine, le nationalisme français justement, son idéologie et sa mystique ayant depuis longtemps déjà non seulement supplanté et remplacé son homologue insulaire du milieu du XVIII^e siècle, mais également façonné profondément la manière des Corses d'être Français ; même si une conscience ethnique s'était maintenue, mais très longtemps sans contradiction avec l'appartenance à l'ensemble français. Largement diffusé pendant des décennies dans l'espace social par d'autres canaux que ceux de la clandestinité, les thématiques de ce nouveau nationalisme corse – qui ne furent pas l'apanage des clandestins – ont fini par devenir une réalité solidement enracinée dans une grande partie de la société insulaire¹.

Pratiquement dès les premières séries d'attentats nocturnes, la presse utilisa l'expression de « nuits bleues » qui fit florès. Le terme était emprunté à la Guerre d'Algérie, avec laquelle les rapprochements – plus ou moins justifiés – furent monnaie courante, du moins dans les premières années de la contestation armée, et pas seulement de la part des journalistes. En effet, on l'a dit, les militants de ce « premier FLNC » – du moins une partie d'entre eux –, voulaient s'inscrire résolument dans les luttes émancipatrices du Tiers-monde, sans toujours beaucoup de discernement, ainsi que le rappelait Léo Battesti :

L'Algérie avait été une colonie, il fallait suivre l'exemple pour se libérer du même joug français [...]. La base idéologique de ce combat était le Livre vert. Un an auparavant un autre Livre vert, aux couleurs de l'islam, avait été publié. Son auteur était Mouammar Kadhafi [...] inspiré d'un ouvrage d'une autre couleur, rouge cette fois-ci, écrit par Mao Zedong [...]. Les initiateurs [du Livre vert] méritent le respect pour un engagement forcément risqué. Mais ils balbutiaient, à l'évidence, et cette prétention guerrière à mimer la stratégie algérienne en constituait une pathétique illustration.

Jean-Pierre Santini signalait, dans un ouvrage autobiographique, que, en 1977, à l'initiative du PCS des contacts auraient été pris avec le gouvernement algérien :

¹ Au début des années 2020, nier l'existence de ce nationalisme, pour n'y voir qu'une forme de verbiage creux, et ne pas le prendre en compte constituerait au mieux, un non-sens, au pire, une grave erreur politique.

En ce qui concerne le contact avec l'Algérie, une délégation s'y rendit et reçut un excellent accueil. Le gouvernement algérien de l'époque était prêt à mettre éventuellement un « bureau » à la disposition du FLNC pour assurer un meilleur travail dans les relations internationales. Malheureusement, ce sont deux « militants » qui n'étaient pas du PCS [...] qui furent envoyés à Alger. Lorsque, après avoir lu le texte que nous avions préparé, leur interlocuteur leur demanda ce qu'ils souhaitaient, nos bons émissaires réclamèrent... 200 000 F !!! Inutile de dire l'effet que cela a pu produire...

Le décalage entre la radicalité du discours et la réalité de la pratique fut grand au cours des premières années d'existence de la structure clandestine. Un bon exemple en était fourni par les projets d'attentats et d'utilisation du spectacle sportif au profit de la lutte de libération nationale en 1978.

Malgré le désintérêt total, voire la prévention, des militants clandestins pour l'objet sportif, un certain nombre d'entre eux réussit un temps à intéresser la direction du FLNC à une action en relation avec le football. Une occasion exceptionnelle se présenta, en avril 1978, dans le cadre de la finale aller de la Coupe d'Europe de l'UEFA, devant opposer Bastia aux Hollandais d'Eindhoven. Au cours de l'une des réunions du « Front », un texte d'environ trois pages fut rédigé et intitulé : « Réflexion et propositions sur l'internationalisation de la Corse à travers le sport et notre volonté internationale ».

Tirant les leçons de la récupération par les médias « français » du parcours européen des Bastiais, du danger de « dérive sportive » et de l'image « négative » que laisserait la Corse en pareil cas, les clandestins estimèrent que le temps était venu de passer à l'action pour éviter une telle erreur politique. Il fut donc décidé d'agir le jour de la finale aller disputée à Furiani, fixée au 26 avril 1978, et qui offrait une couverture médiatique inespérée : « Action militaire proposée : attaque des cars de GM [Gardes mobiles] au stade (modalités à définir). Attaque simultanée du camp de CRS ». De plus une telle action cadrerait parfaitement avec les objectifs définis par la direction de l'organisation, dont l'internationalisation du problème corse constituait un des axes majeurs. L'opération devait pouvoir donner lieu à une exploitation politique parfaite, d'où la décision de n'agir qu'à la fin de la partie, pour ne pas léser des spectateurs issus en grande majorité des classes sociales les plus défavorisées et qui avaient consenti un lourd sacrifice financier pour assister à la rencontre. Il fallait également éviter une possible accusation de destructeur de l'économie insulaire. Cette précaution ne peut manquer de surprendre, surtout à la lecture de la suite du document, mais il s'agissait, pour une telle opération, de ne prêter le flanc à aucune critique ; la classe politique traditionnelle accusant la violence clandestine de faire fuir les touristes et de porter ainsi un mauvais coup au tissu économique local. Car on attendait beaucoup de ces actions, sans exclure la possibilité d'un bain de sang consécutif à la réaction des forces de l'ordre, qui offrirait la possibilité de renouer avec la situation d'août 1975, mais à une toute autre échelle :

La répression : si elle s'engage immédiatement elle frappera les quelques 15 000 personnes qui voudront manifester leur joie. Et nul ne peut présumer de ce qui pourrait suivre : peut-être une nouvelle nuit de Bastia et une étape de plus dans la popularisation de la lutte armée.

Il y avait là la possibilité de rattraper une occasion perdue d'enclencher un processus révolutionnaire. Dans la perspective d'une répression plus « douce », on envisageait de renouveler ce type d'action. Dans tous les cas, il fallait « montrer à nos militants, aux sympathisants et au peuple même à contre-courant, que notre détermination est totale », y compris par un « acte fort ». Malgré les affirmations du FLNC : « Mais chaque étape a son importance et celle-ci est unique par les conditions qui nous sont offertes et QU'IL FAUT ABSOLUMENT EXPLOITER », il ne se passa rien au soir du 26 avril 1978. Certains militants reculèrent devant l'éventualité d'un massacre, renonçant à franchir le pas vers une possible dérive que n'avaient pas évitée leurs homologues basques et nord-irlandais.

Ce texte ne peut manquer de surprendre par son caractère extrémiste lorsque l'on connaît les précautions prises par les clandestins, du moins ceux de cette période, pour éviter tout risque de dérapage mortel. En fait, il traduisait, à sa manière, le décalage persistant entre un discours qui se voulait révolutionnaire, notamment, on l'a dit, calqué sur le modèle algérien, avec la possibilité de véritables actions de guérilla ou de terrorisme, et la réalité socioculturelle insulaire qu'aucun des membres ne pouvait ignorer, réalité qui rendait toute action « aveugle » ingérable politiquement et humainement, qui ne pouvait comprendre une action de type révolutionnaire, que d'ailleurs, malgré leurs discours, bien peu étaient prêts à assumer. D'où, en fin de compte, l'abandon du projet. Il existe, d'ailleurs, de nombreux autres textes de ce type dans la documentation saisie lors des arrestations de 1978 et présentée devant la Cour de Sureté de l'État, c'est-à-dire préconisant autant d'actions de « rupture », comme l'élimination physique de hauts fonctionnaires continentaux ou des principaux élus insulaires ; sans oublier la préparation d'un projet de prise de pouvoir par la force, en 1978, à Bastia (Pantaléon Alessandri). Aucune ne reçut jamais le moindre commencement d'exécution, évitant ainsi au mouvement nationaliste le basculement dans la violence aveugle. Dans les années suivantes ce risque ne pourra, ou ne voudra, plus être évité, entraînant par là-même le mouvement clandestin dans une spirale meurtrière et auto-destructrice.

Les vagues d'arrestations de 1978 et de 1979 démantelèrent presque totalement la structure clandestine qui eut beaucoup de mal à s'en remettre. Elles mirent également au grand jour la composition sociologique des « troupes » du FLNC. Il s'agissait, pour la plupart, d'hommes jeunes âgés en moyenne de 28 ans, représentant toutes les couches sociales, avec des parcours très divers ; ainsi, lors du procès de juin-juillet 1979 devant la CSE, se côtoyaient, entre autres, dans le box des accusés aussi bien un CRS, un agriculteur, un étudiant qu'un maçon. Néanmoins, la plupart des personnes interpellées apparaissaient issues principalement de la catégorie des petits employés d'origine rurale. Tous étaient bien insérés dans la société. Au contact des réalités d'une époque en pleine transformation, ils percevaient que la Corse en demeurait exclue, ou, du moins, dont elle ne profitait pas réellement à cause des choix gouvernementaux d'un développement exogène et des conséquences des *capipartiti*. Dans les années 1990, autant que l'on peut en juger à travers les portraits dressés dans la presse lors de leurs arrestations, il semble bien que les militants aient été plus jeunes et, selon Pierre Poggioli, plus dépolitisés. Il s'agissait d'un phénomène assez classique auquel se trouve, à un moment ou à un autre, confrontée toute structure clandestine car la fascination de la violence, et une certaine impunité – ou ressentie comme telle –, fascinaient et séduisaient une frange de la société, sans s'encombrer d'idéologie.

Après ces arrestations, de nouveaux militants prirent progressivement la relève et, en 1980, le FLNC se dota d'une vitrine légale : la *Cunsulta di i Cumitati Naziunalisti* (CCN). En avril 1981, le « Front » décrétait une trêve dans la perspective des élections présidentielles et législatives, prévues pour les mois de mai-juin, espérant l'arrivée au pouvoir de la Gauche et la victoire de François Mitterrand ; ce dernier s'étant engagé à faire voter une loi d'amnistie et à doter la Corse d'un statut particulier ; ce qui, effectivement, se produisit. La CCN refusa néanmoins de participer aux premières élections à l'Assemblée de Corse, en août 1982, dénonçant un statut colonial, une véritable *Trappula* (piège), ainsi que l'indiquaient des milliers d'affiches placardées dans tout l'île. Les attentats reprirent et, symboliquement, près d'une centaine eurent lieu rien que dans la nuit du 19 au 20 août, précédant l'élection du premier président de la nouvelle assemblée. Un cap avait été franchi quelques mois auparavant, le 25 février 1982, lorsqu'un militaire fut abattu dans un camp de repos de la Légion étrangère à Sorbu Ocagnanu.

Débûtèrent alors les « années de braise » (1983-1988), au rythme plus ou moins échevelé des attentats nocturnes, avec une moyenne de 300 par an, dont pratiquement 600 rien que pour l'année 1982. Ainsi, au jour le jour, la semaine du 26 mars au 1^{er} avril 1984 par exemple, voyait-elle se dérouler une manifestation de soutien aux militants gardés-à-vue dans la gendarmerie de Montesoru (26/03), l'arrestation de 11 nationalistes en Balagna (27/03), des incidents entre forces de l'ordre et manifestants à Montesoru (28/03), 9 attentats et l'inculpation de 18 nationalistes dont 16 furent écroués (29/03), l'inculpation de 3 militants à Bastia (30/03), enfin une manifestation nationaliste à Bastia ainsi que 25 attentats (31/03). Le FLNC mena plusieurs campagnes d'attentats ciblés contre les forces de gendarmerie, contre les résidences de tourisme, contre les villas secondaires, contre les « enseignants français », contre « la colonisation de peuplement » avec la campagne IFF (*I Francesi Fora*), etc. Les violences étaient quasi-quotidiennes, les attentats devinrent monnaie courante, les perquisitions et les arrestations dans les milieux nationalistes se multiplièrent sur fond de manifestations et soirées de soutien aux militants incarcérés. Le sang, jusque-là peu répandu, devait également couler et des militants clandestins trouvèrent la mort. Parmi ces derniers figuraient, notamment, Stefanu Cardi (1984) et Jean-Baptiste Acquaviva (1987) ainsi que Guy Orsoni, le frère d'Alain, ce dernier militant de premier plan de la CCN et du « Front ». Le 17 juin 1983, il fut enlevé et assassiné par des truands dont certains furent arrêtés et incarcérés à la prison d'Ajaccio. Le 8 juin 1984, un commando du FLNC pénétra dans la maison d'arrêt et les exécuta ; quelques mois auparavant, le 13 septembre 1983, Pierre-Jean Massimi, secrétaire-général du conseil général de la Haute-Corse, accusé par les clandestins d'être le commanditaire du meurtre de Guy Orsoni, avait été abattu par un autre commando. Plus globalement, jusqu'en 1997, une cinquantaine de personnes trouvèrent la mort du fait de la violence clandestine : une personne en tentant de désamorcer une bombe, trois autres refusant le racket du FLNC, neuf membres des forces de l'ordre, neuf militants antinationalistes, onze personnes appartenant au milieu et dix-huit militants nationalistes, ces derniers majoritairement tués par d'anciens frères d'armes. Pour tragique qu'il soit, ce bilan apparaissait cependant sans commune mesure avec les « hécatombes » basques et surtout nord-irlandaises, où les victimes se comptaient par milliers, sur un laps de temps plus long il est vrai. Cette violence, on le voit, était donc tout à la fois constante, malgré tout mesurée, tout autant que ciblée et située, pour reprendre les catégories établies justement par Xavier Crettiez. Malgré le discours, la revendication d'indépendance

ne constituait pas tant la fin que le moyen du combat clandestin. Il s'agissait, en fait, par ce biais, de s'insérer dans le pouvoir local, jusque-là totalement verrouillé par le système clientélo-claniste, en se posant comme interlocuteur de l'État par l'intermédiaire de la violence, afin de faire évoluer le statut de l'île et de redéfinir les contours de la redistribution des subsides gouvernementaux vers des secteurs économiques et sociaux modernisateurs, ou considérés comme tels. Dès lors, en plus de l'action clandestine, le FLNC entreprit également d'agir sur le terrain public par la création de ce qu'il nomma les « contre-pouvoirs ». Il s'agissait d'investir le terrain culturel, social et syndical de manière à diffuser les principes de la lutte de libération nationale à tous les échelons de la société corse ; ainsi naquirent le *Sindicatu di i Travagliadori Corsi*, le *Sindicatu Corsu di l'Insignamentu*, la *Federazione Corsa di i Cumercianti e di l'Artigiani* mais également la société de transports de fonds *Bastia Securit * etc. De m me, convenait-il d'internationaliser la question corse, de manière   trouver des appuis ext rieurs qui participeraient   renforcer la cr dibilit  du mouvement. Outre le d placement de certains de ses membres au Pays basque et en Irlande du Nord, le FLNC,   travers la CCN et ses successeurs, instaura les *Ghjurnate Internazionale di Corti*, dont les premi res se tinrent   l' t  1981, en recevant des d l gations des peuples en lutte de par le monde.

En septembre 1983, pour la premi re fois, les forces antinationalistes s'organis rent et donn rent naissance   un mouvement populaire : l'Association pour la Corse fran aise et r publicaine (CFR) qui re ut l'appui des hommes politiques en place. Les moyens d'information (presse  crite, parl e et audiovisuelle) furent, avec l'universit , les cibles favorites de la CFR et des  lus traditionnels ; sans oublier les interdictions de se produire faites par plusieurs municipalit s proches de la CFR,   l'encontre des groupes culturels (*I Muvrini*, *Canta u Populu Corsu* etc.). Plus classique apparaissait la formation de groupes clandestins inspir s des m thodes de « contre-terrorisme » – et l'on vit ressortir   ce propos les m thodes et le vocabulaire (barbouzes) de la Guerre d'Alg rie, toutes choses  tant  gales par ailleurs. Jusqu'en 1981, ces groupes, unifi s en avril 1977 sous l'acronyme de FRANCIA (Front d'action nouvelle contre l'ind pendance et l'autonomie),  taient en liaisons avec des officines d' tat tel le Service d'action civique (SAC), les deux se confondant souvent. Ils s'illustr rent par des actions violentes et des tentatives d'assassinat contre des militants nationalistes, comme   Bastelica, en janvier 1980, tentant ainsi de faire contrepoids aux men es du « Front » ; en vain. Apr s 1981, des actions eurent lieu presque sur le m me mod le et le Mouvement antis paratiste corse (MASC) fut le plus actif. Selon L o Battesti, il s'agissait « de vrais professionnels, et pour cause... tous sont des gendarmes de la brigade de Montesoru ! Exc d s de subir des attentats, ils avaient d cid  de r pliquer en constituant ce MASC ». Finalement sans succ s. L'existence de ces groupes traduisait,   sa mani re, les incoh rences de l' tat, menant tour   tour et parfois simultan ment, n gociations et r pression. Le pr fet de police Robert Broussard, envoy  dans l' le, en 1983, afin de mettre fin aux activit s du FLNC, constatait, m dus , cette situation intenable et ce double langage : « la situation devenait si d lirante que j'envisageais s rieusement de demander mon retour sur le continent » (cit  par Andria Fazi). Le rapport Glavany-Paul, publi  en 1998, suite   l'assassinat du pr fet, dressa sans concession la liste des incoh rences de l' tat, sans pour autant proposer de v ritables solutions, hormis des succ dan s ou des adaptations de celles men es dans les d cennies pr c dentes. Comme si aucun gouverne-

ment ne s'était avéré – et ne s'aurait – capable de prendre réellement la mesure de la Question corse.

Cependant, si la période avait démontré toute la détermination des clandestins, leur attirant même une réelle sympathie dans l'opinion publique pour certaines de leurs actions, notamment après l'affaire de la prison d'Ajaccio, et à cause d'une répression sans discernement et d'une justice parfois inconséquente, elle révéla aussi au grand jour des dérives inquiétantes. Parmi ces dernières, le prélèvement de « l'impôt révolutionnaire » depuis 1983, et les conflits qui naquirent bientôt concernant son partage entre les différents secteurs de la structure clandestine ; sans oublier la décision de certains de lever leurs propres subsides, sans en référer à personne, avec toutes les conséquences que cela impliquait, notamment celle du glissement pur et simple vers des activités relevant du droit commun. Le tout conduisit rapidement à des situations tragiques. La première de toutes éclata au grand jour, le 10 février 1983, avec l'assassinat d'un coiffeur ajaccien, André Schoch, qui avait refusé le racket auquel il était soumis de la part d'« un groupe de personnes qui n'avaient pas obéi aux injonctions de la coordination régionale d'Ajaccio du FLNC » (Pierre Poggioli). Deux ans et demi plus tard, le 28 octobre 1985, l'organisation clandestine annonçait le déclenchement d'une campagne anti-drogue aux accents démagogiques, et aux méthodes empruntées à leurs homologues basques et nord-irlandais. Elle aboutit notamment, le 2 janvier 1986, à l'exécution de deux travailleurs tunisiens, Sediri Mosbah et Sgatni Mohamed Salah, présentés comme des trafiquants. Ce crime souleva une vague d'indignation, y compris parmi certains militants nationalistes ; preuve d'un malaise certain, le « Front » mit 11 jours pour revendiquer cette action dans le cadre de sa « campagne anti-drogue ». Cette dernière, abandonnée pour un temps, devait reprendre de manière différente, en 1992, à l'initiative de la structure légale. Enfin, le 17 juin 1987, à Ajaccio, il y eut l'assassinat du docteur Jean-Paul Lafay, président de l'Association d'aide aux victimes du terrorisme, proche de la CFR. En 1983, ce dernier avait déjà eu maille à partir avec les clandestins et avait été blessé. Bien que ce meurtre ne fut jamais revendiqué, et même démenti par le FLNC, tout en étant condamné par la structure légale, la *Cunclota Naziunalista* (CN), il n'empêchait pas de se poser des questions face à ce qui ressemblait à une exécution cette fois-ci réussie.

L'année 1988 vit l'instauration d'une trêve et la reprise du dialogue avec l'État, consécutivement au retour de la Gauche aux affaires suite aux élections présidentielles et législatives d'avril-mai. Comme en 1981, le pouvoir envisageait de doter la Corse d'un nouveau statut, mission confiée à Pierre Joxe, le ministre de l'Intérieur, mais surtout, pour la première fois, l'État proposait d'y associer les nationalistes par le biais d'un véritable dialogue avec les clandestins. Le FLNC publia alors son « Projet de société », dont le volet économique fut mis en débat public et confronté à d'autres projets, notamment celui de l'Assemblée de Corse, lors d'un colloque organisé à Paris, le 24 mars 1990. Ce qui aurait pu être le début d'une décrispation générale de la situation insulaire bascula, au contraire, dans la confusion. En l'espace d'un an, entre la fin de l'année 1989 et celle de 1990, le camp nationaliste vola en éclat et le FLNC se divisa en plusieurs branches rivales et bientôt ennemies, ouvrant la voie à près d'une décennie d'affrontements meurtriers, sur fonds de négociations confuses avec l'État, entrecoupées de périodes de fortes tensions répressives.

Il y avait plusieurs années déjà que des tensions empoisonnaient le fonctionnement de la structure clandestine et seule la répression avait permis, jusque-là, de continuer à offrir le visage rassurant de l'unité. On ne saurait sous-estimer, dans ces dissensions, la question de

« l'impôt révolutionnaire » et des accointances qu'il entraîna, notamment entre des clandestins, des promoteurs immobiliers et/ou des entreprises continentales. Ainsi, Jean-Michel Rossi confiait à un journaliste que, en « Balagne, où le secteur FLNC prélève 150 000 francs chaque année au Club olympique, un affreux tas de baraques sur la plage, dépendant du groupe Filipacchi. La mairie de Calvi fait tout pour le détruire, mais le Front s'y oppose puisqu'ils paient ». Des accusations fusèrent aussi contre certains militants, accusés de se servir du racket à des fins strictement personnelles. Xavier Crettiez citait les propos d'un ancien dirigeant de la CN qui confiait clairement que, au début des années 1990, « on ne pensait qu'à une chose : s'armer et s'enrichir ». Il est vrai que, bientôt, pour certains, la « reconversion » pure et simple dans la spéculation immobilière et/ou le banditisme deviendrait une réalité. Outre la question de « l'impôt révolutionnaire » et de ses dérivés, il y avait, entre autres, le rejet d'une direction jugée autoritaire par un nombre croissant de clandestins, un questionnement sur le rôle et la place à venir d'une branche armée, à un moment où la nouvelle politique de l'État en Corse laissait entrevoir des perspectives nouvelles. Alors que, depuis 1976, il était entendu que le FLNC gardait la haute main sur la conduite de la lutte et continuait de bénéficier du soutien inconditionnel de la structure légale, désormais certaines voix s'élevaient, au contraire, pour réclamer une subordination du militaire aux structures politiques légales et pour un soutien critique aux clandestins, voire, à terme, la disparition de la branche armée du nationalisme. Cette dernière option était surtout sensible dans la mouvance que l'on qualifierait bientôt de « droite », plus impliquée économiquement que le reste du mouvement et dont des membres occupaient à présent des positions économiques et/ou politiques légales ; parmi eux, des clandestins de la première heure et parfois même d'ex-dirigeants du FLNC. Ils recherchaient désormais une sorte de « paix des braves » avec le pouvoir, à un moment où celui-ci semblait prêt à l'accepter. Devenir l'interlocuteur privilégié de Paris représentait alors un enjeu considérable. Sans oublier des questions conjoncturelles, telles que des différences d'appréciation sur la conduite à tenir face à la grande grève des syndicats de la fonction publique (février-mai 1989). Enfin, des querelles de personnes, parfois anciennes et qui ne saurait être négligées, envenimaient un peu plus la situation.

À la fin de l'année 1989, les dissensions clandestines se traduisirent par l'exclusion de Pierre Poggioli – ou sa démission², ce qui revenait au même – du fait de la coalition entre les secteurs de François Santoni et celui d'Alain Orsoni. Il y eut des répercussions dans le champ de la légalité avec la création, par Poggioli, d'un nouveau parti nationaliste, *l'Accolta Naziunali Corsa* (ANC) ; peu de temps après, l'ANC se dota de son bras armé, *Resistenza*. Malgré le fait d'être dirigé par un membre historique du nationalisme, l'ANC ne parvint pas à s'imposer. Cette première scission se révéla beaucoup moins préjudiciable au mouvement légal et clandestin qu'on ne le crut au départ. Autrement importante fut la rupture qui intervint un an plus tard avec le départ d'Alain Orsoni, membre historique de la lutte, lui aussi ancien dirigeant du « Front », dont la majorité des membres lui était encore favorable. Peut-être trop confiant dans ses propres forces, il fut mis en minorité lors de l'assemblée générale de la CN et décida alors de démissionner. Il fonda, à la fin de 1990, le *Muvimentu Cor-*

² C'est la version que donne Pierre Poggioli, dans son ouvrage autobiographique, *Journal de bord d'un nationaliste corse*, en revanche, dans leurs livres, Léo Battesti et François Santoni affirmaient qu'il avait été exclu du FLNC.

su per l'Autodeterminazione (MPA), entraînant à sa suite de nombreux militants clandestins, comme des membres de la CN, et conserva son bras armé qui prit le nom de FLNC Canal-habituel. Alain Orsoni semblait devoir l'emporter car, « à ce moment-là, le nouveau MPA et sa branche armée [...] sont les interlocuteurs de Pierre Joxe, ministre de l'Intérieur du gouvernement Rocard » (José Martinetti). En revanche, certains militants de la première heure, à l'image d'Yves Stella ou de Léo Battesti, après avoir fait un bout de chemin avec le MPA, quittèrent définitivement les structures légales et clandestines, dénonçant « des risques de gangstérisation du mouvement » (Xavier Crettiez). Ainsi, à l'orée de l'année 1991, trois mouvements clandestins se partageaient l'espace politique nationaliste, disposant chacun de leur appendice légal : le FLNC Canal-historique avec la CN, le FLNC Canal-habituel avec le MPA et *Resistenza* avec l'ANC. Les acteurs étaient en place pour le drame final.

Le 15 juin 1993 au matin, Robert Sozzi, militant du Canal-historique et employé de *Bastia Securit *,  tait abattu devant son domicile. Rapidement, il apparut que la victime avait  t  choisie en raison de son opposition irr ductible   la protection, par le FLNC, de l'ex-pr sident du Sporting club de Bastia (SCB), en grande partie responsable de la catastrophe du stade de Furiani (5 mai 1992), ainsi que de certaines d rives de l'organisation. Son assassinat fut revendiqu , le 8 ao t, par ses anciens compagnons d'armes sous un pr texte fallacieux dont personne n' tait dupe. Six mois plus tard, l'ancien capitaine du SCB, Pierre Bianconi, dispara ssait, sans que l'on n'e t jamais retrouv  sa trace, action   l' vidence de certains membres du Canal-historique contre ce militant du MPA devenu incontr lable. Le 26 d cembre 1994,   quelques jours de l'ouverture du proc s de Furiani, Jean-Fran ois Filippi  tait assassin    son tour, suivi deux jours plus tard, visiblement   titre de repr sailles, d'un ami de Robert Sozzi, Fran ck Muzy. Les dissensions entre les deux principales factions devinrent ing rables. Une v ritable « guerre » s'engagea alors entre le Canal-habituel/MPA et le Canal-historique/CN, marqu e par la mort de quinze personnes entre f vrier 1995 et juillet 1996, mais onze assassinats entre le 13 juillet et le 31 ao t 1995. Dans l'intervalle, le Canal-historique marqua un point d cisif en s'imposant comme le seul interlocuteur du pouvoir, ainsi que le d montra la mise en sc ne d'environ 600 hommes arm s,   Tralonca, dans la nuit du 11 au 12 janvier 1996. De cet affrontement, le Canal-habituel/MPA sortit profond ment affaibli, ayant perdu souvent les meilleurs de ses  l ments. D s son congr s de mars 1996, le MPA volait en  clat, victime d'une scission et de la cr ation de *Corsica Viva* (3 mars 1996). Quelques mois plus tard, le Canal-habituel annon ait sa dissolution (29 janvier 1997) avant que le MPA ne dispar t officiellement le 15 juin 1999, son ex-leader ayant d j  pris depuis un certain temps le chemin de l'Am rique centrale. Quant   *Resistenza*/ANC, les coups qui lui furent port s par le Canal-historique/CN la r duisirent   un groupuscule et firent dispara tre sa structure clandestine, Pierre Poggioni  chappant de peu   la mort. Le Canal-historique l'emportait, alors codirig  par Fran ois Santoni et Charles Pieri. Suite au d part du premier, en 1998, le second s'imposait.

Entre-temps, un groupe de nationalistes agissant de son propre chef, assassinait le pr fet de la Corse, le 6 f vrier 1998 ; la CN condamna aussit t le meurtre et Fran ois Santoni, alors incarc r , d clarait quelques mois plus tard   un journaliste : « Ce n'est pas un acte d'h ro sme. Le commando Erignac, ce ne sont que des hommes de mains qui se prennent pour des id ologues ». Le crime plongeait la Corse enti re dans la stupeur et d stabilisait un peu plus, si besoin  tait, un monde nationaliste – l gal et clandestin – traumatis  par ses

lutttes intestines, en pleine recomposition, assailli de doutes au point que, en 1999, Xavier Crettiez pouvait écrire : « l'avenir du nationalisme corse est incertain. Contesté par la société civile, hostile à son évolution affairiste et lasse de sa violence ».

La structure clandestine implosa et l'on assista à l'arrivée de nouveaux mouvements, certains cherchant, attitude typique en période de profond désarroi, à renouer avec la « pureté des origines », d'autres, en affichant des positions démagogiques confinant au racisme, telle *Resistenza Corsa*, affirmant se battre « contre le trafic de drogue en Corse et l'immigration clandestine » (*Corse Matin* du 2 juin 2008), amalgamant de cette manière les deux phénomènes. Ainsi, outre le Canal-historique, exista-t-il, un temps, le groupe *Clan-destinu*, le *Fronte Ribellu*, le FLNC du 5-Mai (héritier du Canal-habituel) et *Resistenza Corsa* – pour ne rien dire des groupes à l'existence éphémère, tel *Sampieru* –, avant de les voir se réunir dans un FLNC-Union des combattants. Sans oublier, en 1999, une *Armata Corsa*, dirigée par François Santoni et Jean-Michel Rossi, tous les deux assassinés entre août 2000 et août 2001, et dont les membres firent l'objet d'un véritable massacre.

Les actions de ces groupes ne pouvaient en rien se comparer à l'intensité de celles des années 1980. Les mutations du champ politique insulaire, la montée en puissance du nouvel autonomisme – avec lequel toute alliance politique s'avérait impossible du fait de la condamnation ferme de la violence clandestine par ces derniers –, l'affaiblissement structurel et logistique face à une répression efficace, le soutien faible de la population vis-à-vis d'actions devenues incompréhensibles, les effets désastreux des dérives et les « liaisons dangereuses » des uns et des autres rendaient la continuation de la lutte armée clandestine inutile et contre-productive. Aussi, le 24 juin 2014, le FLNC-Union des combattants annonçait qu'il déposait les armes « sans préalable et sans équivoque aucune [engageant] un processus de dé-militarisation et une sortie progressive de la clandestinité » (*Le Monde* du 25 juin 2014).

Pour autant, le risque de l'action clandestine n'était pas tout à fait écarté. Demeuraient les irréductibles du FLNC du 22 octobre, créé en 2002 ; il se manifesta, notamment, le 28 juillet 2016, par une mise en garde adressée aux islamistes radicaux, leur promettant une « réponse déterminée » en cas d'attentat en Corse (*Le Figaro* du 28 juillet 2016). À l'été 2017, un second groupe faisait parler de lui, revendiquant une dizaine d'attentats à l'explosif perpétrés contre des banques depuis la fin de l'année précédente, mais demeurant dans le flou quant à la suite de ses actions, voire de son nom même : « dans ce contexte, la création d'un mouvement clandestin clairement identifié ne semble pas nécessaire pour le moment » (*Corse Matin* du 23 juin 2017).

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Jewish Community in Egypt (1952–1970) Additional Glimpses to the Present

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Abstract

There is no doubt that Jewish people have been a part of Egyptian culture for more than 2,000 years, living through many important historical eras of the rich and diverse history of the Arab state. The drastic turning point in their relation was triggered by the foundation of Israel in 1948. In our joint work, we are going to portray the Jews of Egypt in the 20th century with special focus on their entity and activities during the the Nasser regime, between 1954–1970. On one hand, some members of the Jewish community had a profound influence of Egyptian culture, society, economy and politics. On the other hand, we witnessed fundamentals, criminals and terrorists within this unique ethnic group. We are also going to reveal the controversial issues regarding the Egyptian Jews in the present era.

Jewish Presence and Emigration to Egypt

The Egyptian Jewish community was one of the largest and most influential communities in the Arab world. It was open and involved in various fields within modern Egyptian society. They established the oldest Jewish community throughout history, as their presence in Egypt dates back to the beginning of the first Jewish family, the family of Yaqub ibn Ishaaq.¹

Janna Al-Sayed Al-Tarouty, an Egyptian archeologist and historian, confirmed that “if we talk about the beginning of the Jewish presence in Egypt, we may find that many Jews came during the reign of King Wahibre Haaibre ‘Apries’² and settled in Philae, where he found a colony for them after the Babylonian king seized Jerusalem, so they could settle in

¹ He is acknowledged as a patriarch of Islam. Muslims believe that he preached the same monotheistic faith as his forefathers did: Abraham, Ismael and Isaac.

https://www.marefa.org/%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AE_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF_%D9%81%D9%8A_%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1/simplified
(Accessed: 12 October 2022)

² A pharaoh of Egypt (589 BC – 570 BC), the fourth monarch (counting from Psamtik I) of the twenty-sixth dynasty of Egypt. He reigned for 19 years.

the island in order to defend the borders against the Ethiopian attacks, yet they remained under the rule of the Persian kings until Egypt was liberated during the rule of the twenty-eighth dynasty.”³

Egypt was the first homeland where Judaism emerged, in other words, the Jewish presence in Egypt is the oldest in the world, even compared to Palestine, as the Ten Commandments (The Decalogue, The Ten Words),⁴ which represent the actual beginning of Judaism, were revealed in the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt.⁵

After the exodus from Egypt led by Moses and Aaron, some Jews returned in the Hellenistic Age. Jewish communities of varying sizes existed in Egypt during Byzantine rule, the Arab conquest of 641, and the subsequent medieval Islamic dynasties. The rich intellectual and lively community life described in the Geniza material declined only after the beginning of the Mamluks and Ottoman rule.⁶

Mohamed Abul-Ghar, a well-known Egyptian researcher and politician, confirmed that “Jews played an important role in modern Egypt. The French campaign of 1798 could be considered the starting point. Napoleon’s request to the Jews to help him, in turn, sympathized with the idea of granting them a homeland, which was the first will from such a major European power, and this idea existed long before the related Zionist activities.”⁷ During the rule of Muhammad Ali Pasha, Egypt greatly welcomed Europeans, Armenians and other foreign nationalities, including Jews from all over the world. The Jewish community began to hold important positions. The most influential among these Jews was Jacob, the founder of the famous Cataui family. He was the head of the Sarafis, the “tax collector”, currently equivalent to the Minister of Treasury. The number of Jews increased in the following two decades because of the emigration from the Ottoman Empire to Egypt.⁸

Large numbers of Jews immigrated to Egypt during the era of Khedive Ismail when he tried to modernize Egypt and when foreigners of various nationalities were welcomed for investment and trade, especially after the opening of the Suez Canal. Moreover, the Mixed Courts allowed foreigners to become much more powerful than Egyptians. Jewish mort-

³ Akhbarelyom, “The Jewish History in Egypt”, 11 January, 2021. For more details: <https://akhbarelyom.com/news/newdetails/3223917/1/%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%81-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AE-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-> (Accessed: 20 October 2022)

⁴ It is a set of Biblical principles relating to ethics and worship in Judaism and Christianity.

⁵ <https://www.marefa.org/>

⁶ OPPENHEIM, Jean-Marc Ran (2002), “Egypt and the Sudan,” in: SIMON, Reeva Spector – LASKIER, Michael Menachem – REGUER, Sara (eds.), *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, New York, Columbia University Press, 412.

⁷ “Egyptian Jews. Were they forced to leave?”, *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 21 August 2022. See:

<https://aawsat.com/home/article/3139981/%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%87%D9%84-%D8%A3%D9%8F%D8%AC%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D9%84%D8%9F> (Accessed: 21 October 2022)

⁸ Ibid.

gage banks as well as factories and large companies took control of Egypt's economy and blocked the emerging national economy.⁹

The vast majority of Egyptian Jews settled in Egypt by the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most members of this community worked as laborers and were mostly poor. Many lacked the possibility of continuous work. Some of them depended on help from wealthy Jews or charities. Neither in their language nor in their appearance did they differ from the Egyptian public. Most of them lived in the Jewish quarter, but it was by no means a separate “ghetto” such as those in Europe.

In the middle of the 19th century, the Jewish community in Egypt numbered 6,000–7,000 people, who had been living there for centuries. Their number increased to 25,000 by 1897, and after World War I to more than 60,000. Reliable estimates put their actual number at 75,000–80,000 between the two world wars, which represents the peak of Egypt's Jewish population. About 30% were Egyptian citizens, 25% were foreign nationals or had foreign protection, and the remaining 45–50% were stateless and thus not protected by the capitulations.¹⁰ Sephardic migration from Italy, Southern Europe, the Ottoman Empire and Corfu to Egypt began at the beginning of the 19th century and continued until the 1920s. Sephardic and North African Jews came to Egypt mainly between the 1890s and 1907, when the Egyptian stock market collapsed. They settled mainly in Cairo and the larger delta cities. Between 1900 and 1914, Jews from Yemen and Aden, who ran out of money on the way to Palestine, also settled in Cairo and along the Suez Canal cities. Ashkenazi Jews from Russia, Romania, and Poland arrived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and settled primarily in Cairo. During 1914 and 1915, more than eleven thousand Ashkenazis expelled from Palestine by the Ottoman authorities arrived in Alexandria, Cairo and the Canal Zone. Most returned to Palestine or Eastern Europe after World War I ended, although many remained in Egypt and became active in the local Zionist movement.¹¹

Several historical sources say that among the Jews who lived in Egypt in the 1930s and 1940s, 20,000 emigrated after 1948 and 40,000–50,000 more after the Suez War (Tripartite Aggression against Egypt) in 1956. The nearest Jewish group to the Egyptian people was the Karaite and Rabbinic.¹² A significant percentage of them had Egyptian citizenship, which the others did not claim for unknown reasons.¹³

In the census of 1948, it became clear that there were 10,000 Jews with Egyptian citizenship, 30,000 Jews with foreign citizenship, and about 40,000 Jews without any nationality, which prompted Haim Nahum, the Chief Rabbi of Egypt, to require stateless Jews to apply for Egyptian citizenship.¹⁴ At the same time, Egyptian Jewry was also markedly Eu-

⁹ ATTA, Zubeida Mohamed (2009), *The Egyptian Jews – The Political History* (Yahoud Misr – Al-Tarikh Al-Siassy), Cairo, Dar Ein for Human and Social Studies, 6.

¹⁰ OPPENHEIM, “Egypt and the Sudan,” 412.

¹¹ <https://www.marefa.org/>; OPPENHEIM, “Egypt and the Sudan,” 412–413.

¹² Rabbinic Judaism or Rabbinism has been the mainstream form of Judaism since the 6th century CE, after the codification of the Babylonian Talmud. Rabbinism has its roots in Pharisaic Judaism and is based on the belief that Moses at Mount Sinai received both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah from God.

¹³ “Egyptian Jews. Were they forced to leave?”

¹⁴ Al-Wafd: “The rest of the Jewish Community,” 19 July 2012. See:

ropean in cultural orientation, which was evident in the fact that, in addition to Arabic and French, many Jews also spoke Greek, Italian and/or English. This religious, linguistic, social and cultural diversity was in fact the reason why, after their arrival in Israel, they did not form a distinct group within local society.¹⁵

The nationalizations of 1961 and 1962 were a severe blow for the community, which led to another wave of emigration. After the 1967 war, the rest of the Jews also left. In addition to emigration, restrictions on marriage have contributed significantly to the further decline in the remaining Jewish community in Egypt. Indeed, many Jewish women converted to Islam in order to marry Egyptian Muslim men. However, while in their case the conversion was essentially voluntary, the Quran excluded even the possibility in principle of a non-Muslim man marrying a Muslim woman, but it makes an allowance for Muslim men to marry women of the People of Book.¹⁶ As a result, the Israelite community lost many of its male members who, after converting, were listed as Muslims in official documents. In the 1980s, there were fewer than 1,000 Jews in Egypt, most of whom were elderly. By the end of the 2000s, only a few Egyptian Jews lived in the country.¹⁷

In the most recent statistics, in 2004, the Jewish population in Egypt was estimated at less than 100 people. In 2009, their number did not even exceed 30 people. Now there are only a few of them who live in a Jewish quarter near the Ataba area in Towndown.¹⁸

In 2016, the number of the Jewish community was reduced to be only six women, after the death of Lucy Saul, announced through the personal Facebook page of the then head of the Jewish community in Egypt, Magda Tania.¹⁹

The webpage of the Jewish community in Egypt and the websites of “Israel in Arabic” as well as the Al-Jazeera TV published the death of Marcel Simon at dawn of 6 July 2019. Condolences were accepted on her at the Jewish Synagogue in Cairo on 7 July. With the death of Simon,²⁰ the Jewish community lost a new individual, and its number was reduced

<https://alwafd.news/%D9%85%D9%84%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9/242073-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D9%82%D9%89-%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1> (Accessed: 20 October 2022)

¹⁵ BEININ, Joel (1998), *The Dispersion of Egyptian Jewry*, Los Angeles, University of California Press.

¹⁶ Jewish, Christian and Sabanian women.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Alarabiya, “The most famous Jewish families and artists of Egypt,” 7 September, 2016. See: <https://www.alarabiya.net/culture-and-art/2016/09/07/%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%81-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A3%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%88%D9%81%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1> (Accessed: 20 October 2022)

¹⁹ She was famous for her love and interest in cinema. She used to attend film shows, festivals and exhibitions of fine arts. She spoke fluently Arabic, French, English and Italian. She was loving, giving, educated and light-hearted. Almasryalyoum, “The number of the Jewish community in Egypt was reduced to be only 6 women,” 29 July 2016. For more details:

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/1161131> (Accessed: 1 October 2022)

²⁰ Mother of Magda Haroun, head of the Jewish community.

to only five elderly women.²¹ They used to neglect mentioning Albert Arieḥ,²² one of the few remaining Jews in Cairo, who passed away on 13 April 2021 at the age of 91.²³ Such sad departure remembered the story of a man who was proud of his patriotism. Arieḥ has been associated with the Egyptian national movement throughout its extended history.²⁴



Lucy Saul



Albert Arieḥ

It should be noted here that Magda Haroun's statements about the size of the community vary depending on who she talks to. When she speaks to Israeli websites and media, she

²¹ <https://mubasher.aljazeera.net/news/reports/2019/7/6/%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%84%D8%B5-%D8%A3%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

²² He is one of the left-wing activists of the era of President Gamal Abdel Nasser. He was imprisoned for about 11 years with his colleagues active in the leftist movement in Cairo. He opposed President Anwar Sadat, especially during his rapprochement with Israel. He also founded the Jewish Anti-Zionism Association. The man considered himself a pure Egyptian who saw no contradiction between being an Egyptian and belonging to the Jewish community. According to Dr. Muhammad Abul-Ghar, Arieḥ was born a Jew, but he was a pure Egyptian, who remained a lover of Egypt, and a follower of its political convictions. After Albert Arieḥ was released from prison, he distanced himself from politics and refused to emigrate from Egypt. Then he was engaged in exporting vegetables to Europe, but he continued to deal with public affairs and sought to increase Egyptian culture.

²³ The fact that Albert Arieḥ converted to Islam, married an Egyptian woman and was buried as a Muslim certainly played a role in the omission of the news of his death. ADERET, Ofer, "The Egyptian Man Who Was Persecuted as a Jew, Buried as a Muslim," *Haaretz*, October 26 2021. <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/2021-10-26/ty-article/.premium/the-oldest-jew-left-in-cairo-was-an-anti-zionist-and-communist/0000017f-e189-d9aa-afff-f9d98f1f0000> (Accessed: 10 November 2022)

²⁴ <https://www.skynewsarabia.com/varieties/1430096-%D8%A7%D9%93%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%93%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%B6-%D9%87%D9%8E%D8%AC%D9%92%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%B4-%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B9%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%86%D9%87%D8%A7> (Accessed: 2022. October 18)

says that there are between 40–60 members,²⁵ while for the Egyptian and Arabic newspapers she used to say that there were only 6–7, and sometimes a maximum of 11 members.

Reasons for exodus

The factors of the increasing number of Jews in Egypt are due only to immigration, while the factors of decreasing their number are due to the general population deterioration, the nature of the Jewish small families, emigration outside Egypt, conversion to Islam.²⁶

Many Western political analysts and researchers tend to believe that Abdel-Nasser expelled the Jews from Egypt, and usurped their money, comparing him to Hitler. What is the accurate story supported by evidence and historical events?

The Egyptian historian Yunan Labib Rizk says:

“The Egyptian Jews were able to achieve great economic benefits, which reached their maximum when the global economy was in recession due to the circumstances of World War II. They were the wealthiest Jewish community in the Middle East. They were not affected by the abolition of foreign privileges in 1937, nor by the decrease in immigration rates to Egypt, or even by Company Law No. 138, which was issued in July 1947 to regulate joint-stock companies. However, the establishment of Israel in 1948 and the outbreak of the war between Jews and Arabs had an effect on the relative decline of the role of the Egyptian Jewish community. In addition, many of them left Egypt after the January 1952 fire in Cairo (The Black Saturday), which many believed was a plot by the Muslim Brotherhood against the Jewish property. After the revolution of July 1952, the situation became increasingly confused between the Jewish families and the new leadership of the Egyptian authority, so most of them liquidated their business to emigrate to Europe, America and Israel.”²⁷

In addition, many Jews sought to leave Egypt after the Lavon Affair of 1954,²⁸ when the Israeli Mossad attempted to damage the relationship between Egypt and foreign countries, demonstrating the authority's inability to protect foreign facilities and interests. Most Jews left after the Socialist Laws were issued in 1961,²⁹ while the rest insisted that Egypt was their motherland and never left it at all.³⁰

²⁵ According to the newly elected Magda Haroun, the current head of the Jewish community in Egypt, there are about 40 Egyptian Jews left in Egypt who live between Cairo and Alexandria. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/egyptian-jews-pick-new-leader/> (Accessed: 6 October 2022.)

²⁶ QASSEM, Qassem Abdou (1993), *Al-Yahoud fi Misr* (The Jews in Egypt), Dar Al-Shrouk, 9.

²⁷ “Jews in Egypt,” *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 23 July 2002, 6.

²⁸ The Lavon Affair was an unsuccessful covert Israeli operation – codename Operation Susannah – executed on Egyptian field. As part of the failed operation, Egyptian Jews recruited by the Aman planted bombs inside Egyptian-, American-, and British-owned civilian targets with the aim of creating a climate internal instability to induce the British government to retain its occupying troops in Egypt's Suez Canal zone. The bombs detonated several hours after closing times; thereby the explosions did not cause casualties among the civil population. However, the four Jewish operatives of the action lost their lives following their arrest.

²⁹ Decrees & laws issued to implement the U.A.R.'s socialist policy in the economic & social spheres (July-December 1961).

³⁰ <https://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=414237> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

However, it is important to emphasize that the exodus of the Jews from Egypt already began during World War II. The Jews were afraid of the German victory in the war and that the Nazi massacres would be repeated upon their arrival in Egypt, so they fled to South Africa. After the establishment of the State of Israel, emigration became common for the following reasons: following the families who emigrated earlier; starting new economic projects before the other rivals; the consequences of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the 1952 Egyptian national revolution; the anti-Egyptian activities of Israeli intelligence agencies; the rise of anti-Semitism in the Egyptian public after the 1956 Suez War, or the nationalization of Jewish-owned companies, banks, and major factories. Tensions are further increased by the Egyptian Jewish community's support for the construction of settlements and the purchase of land for Palestinian Jews. In addition to all this, many Egyptian Jews also identified with the Zionist ideology. To make matters worse, the Mossad greatly encouraged immigration to Israel by participating in the opening of numerous travel agencies and tourism companies that specialized in transporting Egyptian Jews to Italian, Greek, and ports, and then directly to Israel. All of these reasons combined to eventually incite hatred among the Egyptians and make the relations of the Jews with the majority population tumultuous.³¹

Thus, the simplistic statement that Abdel-Nasser expelled the Jews from Egypt seems unfounded. Beyond all these, in the Jewish public mind, one of the reasons for leaving Egypt was the reluctance of the great powers to provide assistance to Egypt, either in dam-construction, in the purchase of weapons, or in the establishment of factories, when the leadership of the revolution, ignoring the weak economic situation of the country, strives to achieve grandiose modernization goals.³² At the same time, it must be treated as a fact that during the 1967 war, many Jews were abused and imprisoned, and their property was seized and confiscated.³³

The increasingly hostile position of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Young Egyptians Party towards the Egyptian Jews at that time cannot be ignored either, in which the Palestinian question was also clearly visible in the foreground.³⁴

Jewish economy in Egypt

In Egypt, the most populous Arab country, the Jews formed a strong community even though they lived in small numbers compared to the total population. They controlled large areas of the economy, cinema, and trade, and included artists, writers, bankers, and businesspersons.³⁵

Jewish economic activity in Egypt showed an exceptional boom in the second half of the 20th century, especially in the world of banks, moneylending, and currency exchange, which eventually transformed into modern private banks. Great families such as the

³¹ ATTA, *The Egyptian Jews*, 7.

³² <https://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=414237> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

³³ For more details: <https://www.hsje.org/SecondExodus/Nevertoreturn.html> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

³⁴ ATTA, *The Egyptian Jews*, 10.

³⁵ Alarabiya, "The most famous Jewish families and artists of Egypt."

Cataui,³⁶ Musiri, de Menasce,³⁷ Soares,³⁸ and Rollo³⁹ had humble beginnings. Most of them lived in the Jewish quarter at first until years later they became very wealthy. Among them, the most famous families in this regard included the Shamla, Hannaux,⁴⁰ and Cicurel families,⁴¹ as well as one of the founders of Banque Misr, Talaat Harb^{42, 43}

The contribution of Jews to the operation of companies and various economic sectors since the end of the 19th century can best be estimated through their membership in the boards of directors of joint stock companies that dominate Egypt's most important business sectors. According to some statistics, in 1943 Jews held 15.4% of leadership positions and 16% of administrative positions. This proportion decreased to 12.7% and 12.6% in 1947 and 1948, and to 8.9% and 9.6% in 1950 and 1951. According to other statistics, the proportion of Jews on the boards of directors of joint-stock companies was 18% in 1951. In fact, these rates are still extremely high, especially when compared to the percentage of Jews in the total population, which was only 0.4% in 1950.⁴⁴

³⁶ The founder of the dynasty, Yacoub Cattai Bey (1800–1883), was a senior administrator of the Egyptian government and a confidant of viceroys and khedives.

³⁷ This is a Sephardic family that came to Egypt in the 18th century. Its leading member in the 19th century was Yaqub Levi (1807–1887).

³⁸ Raphael Soares (1846–1902) and his brothers Joseph (1837–1900) and Felix (1844–1906) came from a Sephardic Jewish family that emigrated from Livorno, Italy and settled in Egypt in the first half of the 19th century. Together with his brothers, he founded the Soares Foundation in 1875. In the year 1880, Raphael founded the Egyptian Land Bank with French capital and the Rollo and Cataui companies. In 1898, he founded the National Bank of Egypt in cooperation with the British Sir Ernest Joseph Cassel, and financed the construction of the Aswan Dam (1898–1902).

³⁹ Rollo was the name of a Sephardic Jewish family that came to Egypt in the first half of the 19th century, where they retained their British citizenship. As for Robert Rollo (1869–?), he achieved an important position in the economic and social life of Egypt. He studied law in Paris and later served as chairperson of the board of directors of several companies. He was the legal advisor to King Fouad I of Egypt, acting as an intermediary between the palace and the home of the British High Commissioner. He received the title “Sir” in 1938.

⁴⁰ The Hannaux stores were founded in 1882 by the French Jew Hannaux as a children's toy store in Al-Mosky Street. It soon expanded to include a large clothing and fabric department, and then opened a huge branch in Alexandria, Mansheya Square, in front of the Abate Hotel.

⁴¹ Italian-originated Moreno Cicurel was the founder of Egyptian Cicurel, who immigrated to Egypt from Izmir (Ottoman Empire) in the 19th century. He was the chairman of the board of directors of Cicurel Department Stores, founded in 1887, which was one of the largest and most famous department stores in Egypt. The company, which had a capital of 500,000 Egyptian pounds, employed 485 foreigners and 142 Egyptians.

⁴² Talaat Harb Pacha (1867–1941) was the founder of Banque Misr in May 1920, the first true Egyptian bank owned by Egyptian shareholders and operated by Egyptian nationals.

⁴³ “Egyptian Jews. Were they forced to leave?” *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 21 August 2022. See: <https://aawsat.com/home/article/3139981/%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%87%D9%84-%D8%A3%D9%8F%D8%AC%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D9%84%D8%9F> (Accessed: 21 October 2022.)

⁴⁴ EL-MESIRI, Abdel-Wahhab (1999), *Encyclopedia of Jews, Judaism and Zionism*, Cairo, Dar Al-Shrouk, Volume 6, 378.

Some of the most influential Jews in Egypt



Youssef Aslan Cataui
businessman, minister



Yacoub Sannou (Abu Naddara)
producer, director



Togo Mezrahy
film director



Negma Ibrahim
actress



Laila Mourad
singer



Nagwa Salem
dancer, actress



Raqia Ibrahim
dancer, actress



Kitty
dancer, actress



Daoud Hosni
composer, musician

Controversial issues about Egyptian Jews

The tolerance and freedom that reigned in royal Egypt was embodied in the flourishing of the Jewish community after it spread, along with Muslim, Coptic, Greek, Italian, Armenian, and other Levantine communities, around Cairo, Alexandria, and most of Egypt's major cities. Nothing discriminated against them. Benjamin D. Gordon, in his book *New Judea: Jewish life in modern Palestine and Egypt*, spoke of the tolerance and prosperity enjoyed by the Jews of Egypt: "The political and the economic condition of the Jews in Cairo is very satisfactory. They are not under any restrictions. Among them are the wealthiest people of Cairo, bankers, manufacturers and merchants. Their stores are the finest in the old Bazaar and they are considered the most reliable by the general population as well as by tourists."⁴⁵ According to Abdou Arafa, a famous Egyptian journalist and researcher specializing in Jewish history,

"I would have liked the Zionist historians to tell us about the Egyptian Jews who deported to [the Jewish State]. We have not heard of any of them who proved capable of continuing their rise in business, economics, politics and fame as they had previously done in Egypt as representatives of the elite of Egyptian society. None of them had anything to do with the leaders of Israeli society. They lost political and economic their influence, even though they were – according to Haim Cohen's description – the richest and most stable Jewish community in the Middle East. They fled there with their money, where they then lived worthless: as if they were slaves of European and American Jews!"⁴⁶

Arafa further expressed his amazement:

"Israeli historians still say that the Jews were slaves in Egypt. How can a (oppressed) religious community create such a *civilization*, even one of the greatest human civilizations, claiming that they (the builders of the pyramids)? How can this (oppressed) sect make the modern civilization of Egypt? How can the victims of (anti-Semitic persecution) achieve the political, economic, and social advancement that they achieved in royal Egypt? The tolerant official and popular position encouraged them to rise and prosper in all areas. At the same time, it is also obvious that they are suffering (from memory lapses)!"⁴⁷

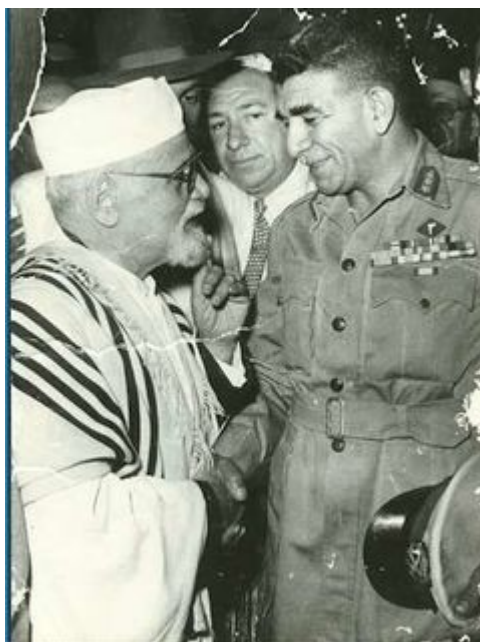
The majority say that the revolution of 1952 had a negative effect on the Jews of Egypt and created a dislike for them in the leadership at the time, which is not true. At the beginning of the revolution, we saw positive signs of the relationship between the two sides.

⁴⁵ GORDON, Benjamin Lee (1919), *Jewish life in modern Palestine and Egypt*, Philadelphia, J. H. Greenstone, 21.

⁴⁶ Albayan, "The Jews of Egypt and the memory," 25 February 2020. See <https://www.albayan.co.uk/MGZarticle2.aspx?id=10020> (Accessed: 22 October 2022.)

⁴⁷ Ibid.

President Mohamed Naguib visited the synagogue of the “Karaites”⁴⁸ on October 25, 1952 to congratulate the Egyptian Jews on the occasion of “Yom Kippur”.⁴⁹



Mohamed Neguib, President of Egypt congratulates the head of the Jewish community on the occasion of Yom Kippur (25 October 1952)

Magda Haroun, the current leader of the Egyptian Jewish community, in some interviews revealed some untrue issues regarding the Jews in Egypt. Among other things, she insisted that the community had not witnessed its members hiding under Islamic names during the reign of the late Gamal Abdel-Nasser, saying: “There are Egyptian Jews who converted to Islam out of conviction, not out of fear or to evade the law. There was a Jew who converted to Islam to marry a Muslim girl whom he loved, and so on.”⁵⁰

Regarding the current situation of Egyptian Jews, Haroun said that: “There are only a few Jews remained in Egypt, all of whom are women, because the majority of Egyptian Jews emigrated from Egypt during the Nasser era. I am very happy that the Egyptian constitution mentioned Judaism for the first time among the Abrahamic religions,⁵¹ and that the

⁴⁸ Karaism is a Jewish religious movement that recognizes the written Torah alone as the supreme authority of religious law and theology.

⁴⁹ Al-Wafd, “What remains from the Jews,” July 19 2012. For more details:

<https://alwafd.news/%D9%85%D9%84%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9/242073-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D9%82%D9%89-%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1> (Accessed: 23 October 2022.)

⁵⁰ Almasryalyoum, “The number of the Jewish community in Egypt was reduced to be only 6 women.”

⁵¹ Islam, Christianity and Judaism are the three main Abrahamic religions.

state is interested in restoring the most important Jewish synagogue in Alexandria, which is also the second largest synagogue in Egypt. This was indeed a good move. Now, there is no suspicion against us. This is the reality and not a misleading rumor.”⁵²



The Egyptian revolutionaries in 1919 carry the Egyptian flag with the crescent, cross and star of David on it

Magda Haroun also said that

“The image of Jews improved after the TV-series ‘The Jewish Quarter’ and the series ‘Muslim Brotherhood’, part of which was filmed in the Ben Ezra Synagogue.⁵³ [...] In the past, Jews were shown to be shy, whose financial dealings were linked to usury, so people began to fear them. Now, when I go into a government office where they see on my ID that I am Jewish, they are surprised. They say it is the first time they have seen any of us. [...] People have forgotten that we still live here. Some people do not even know that there were Egyptian Jews. People who lived in Egypt and contributed to all areas of life, including medicine, art, music, and economics. [...] Salah al-Din’s had a Jewish physician named Musa ibn Maymun (Maimonides).⁵⁴ [...] There is a lot of confusion between Judaism and Zionism. When people talk about Zionism, they often mean Jews. I hope that one day we will

⁵² Almasryalyoum, “The number of Jews in Egypt is only 6, and I am the only one who walks on my feet,” July 17 2017. For more details: <https://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/details/1161131> (Accessed: 10 October 2022.)

⁵³ Sometimes referred to as the El-Geniza Synagogue, it is located in Fustat part of Old Cairo. It was in the synagogue's storerooms that forgotten Hebrew, Aramaic and Jewish-Arabic secular and sacred manuscripts were discovered in the 19th century.

⁵⁴ Renowned Jewish philosopher, theologian, and physician. He was born in Qurtuba (Cordova) in 1153, where he was educated in various sciences, including theology. He later moved to Pas in Morocco and then to Acre in Palestine. Finally, he settled in Cairo, Egypt, where he became a physician to the court of Sultan Salah al-Din and leader of the Jewish community in Cairo. For more information about him, see: RADDAWI, Hareth M. (2006), “Moses Maimonides (Musa ibn Maymun), a Jewish Philosopher, Theologian and Physician: His Life and Works, an Islamic Perspective,” *Journal of the Islamic Medical Association of North America* 38 (1).

be rehabilitated, and people will see us as Egyptians even though we are Jews. [...]”⁵⁵

Many media outlets and magazines have claimed that Egypt does not allow Jews to visit their monuments and temples. However, this is not true, and we can only mention the following situation here as an example. The leader of the Egyptian Jewish community, Magda Haroun, explained that during one of his visits to Egyptian synagogues, she accompanied Israel’s ambassador to Cairo, David Govrin, because “she allowed the visit. [The ambassador] insisted that she be present on the first visit, as he considered her the ‘owner of the house’ and not himself. The visits, either to the synagogue of Ben Ezra or Musa Bin Maimonides, were both at the ambassador’s request. The ambassador also requested permission from the Egyptian authorities to visit the synagogues. Before allowing the visit, the authorities called me to ask my opinion. I expressed my consent, and after the Israeli embassy called me to arrange the date of the visit.”⁵⁶

In addition to the above-mentioned cases, we can also refer to the news of the Reuters press agency, according to which on Thursday, April 18, 2013, the small Egyptian Jewish community hold a rare public ceremony to pay tribute to its leader, Carmen Weinstein.⁵⁷ Diplomats from the United States and Israel also took part in the funeral ceremony.⁵⁸



Carmen Weinstein, leader of Egypt’s dwindling and aging Jewish community, who died Saturday, April 13, 2013 at the age of 82 (photo credit: AP/Samir W. Raafat)⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Almasryalyoum, “Magda Haroun: I allowed the visit for ‘cutting Zionist tongues’,” August 25 2016. For more details: <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/999437> (Accessed: 11 October 2022.)

⁵⁷ Carmen was the Community’s leader for nearly a decade, she had worked quietly but persistently to preserve Jewish sites in Egypt. She was able to push officials to restore a handful of Egyptian synagogues and the yeshiva where the 12th-century Jewish philosopher Maimonides taught.

⁵⁸ Reuters, “Death of the Head of the Jewish Community in Egypt,” 18 April 2013. See: <https://www.reuters.com/article/oegtp-egy-jews-mm6-idARACAE9B26UX20130418> (Accessed: 5 October 2022.)

⁵⁹ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/egyptian-jewish-leader-buried-in-cemetery-she-tirelessly-tried-to-restore/> (Accessed: 5 October 2022.)

Furthermore, Jews can also organize conferences and cultural events in Egypt with complete freedom. Here, it is worth mentioning the International Conference of Egyptian Jews, which was held from May 25–29, 2015, at the famous Marriott Hotel in Cairo, with the support of the Egypt–Israel Friendship Association, the Israel Academic Center in Cairo, and the Embassy of Israel. The event was attended by 320 guests. Jews of Egyptian origin were present from 15 countries, as well as representatives from the United States, England, France, Austria, Canada, and Brazil.⁶⁰

The majority say that the Salafists are clearly against Jewish existence in Egypt and hate them. This is also not true. Salafist preacher Osama al-Qusi, for example, called for Magda Haroun, the leader of the Egyptian Jewish community, to be appointed to the Egyptian parliament, and believed that “Christians and Muslims are proud that she also belongs to Egypt.” The Salafist preacher explained that there is a difference between Judaism and Zionism. He pointed out that the latter based on racism, confirming that he considers Zionism in the Jewish religion and so-called political Islam in Islam to be reprehensible images of human traffickers.⁶¹

At the fifty-second Cairo International Book Fair, 12 novels and books for Egyptian Jews were already featured, which testified to the renewed interest in Jews from a historical and fictional point of view. This phenomenon has given rise to much debate about the connotations and causes of timing. New attempts to paint a different history of Egyptian Jews, both literary and historical, contradict the images formed in the minds of the Egyptians around them, according to which they are greedy money-grubbers whose goal is to control money by any means. According to novelist and translator Mostafa Obeid, the interest in rewriting the history of the Jews is no accident. Most publishers are now asking for any books about them, given that there is clearly a hunger and a real passion for reading books about Jews in Egypt or the Arab world. What is interesting about the number of publications about Jews at the book fair was the change in the image of Jews in Arab drama.⁶²

Magda Haroun said in her previous television interview with the American Al-Hurra channel that her two daughters are Muslim. She was first married to a Muslim man, and her second husband was a Catholic. She added “I taught my daughters to respect human beings for who they are. We celebrate all the religious occasions. We celebrate Jewish occasions with my mother. We attend the prayers at the church on December 24, the Christmas Eve, and we celebrate Ramadan as well.”⁶³

⁶⁰ Albayan, “The Jews of Egypt and the memory,” 25 February 2020. See: <https://www.albayan.co.uk/MGZarticle2.aspx?id=10020> (Accessed: 22 October 2022.)

⁶¹ Almasryalyoum, “Salafi preacher calls for the appointment of the head of the Jewish community in the Egyptian parliament,” December 7 2015. For more details: <https://www.almasyalyoum.com/news/details/1161131> (Accessed: 10 October 2022.)

⁶² <https://masr.masr360.net/%d8%ab%d9%82%d8%a7%d9%81%d8%a9-%d9%88%d9%81%d9%86%d9%88%d9%86/%d9%85%d8%b9%d8%b1%d8%b6-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%83%d8%aa%d8%a7%d8%a8-12-%d8%b1%d9%88%d8%a7%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d9%88%d9%83%d8%aa%d8%a7%d8%a8%d8%a7-%d9%8a%d9%86%d9%82%d8%a8-%d9%81%d9%8a-%d8%aa%d8%a7%d8%b1%d9%8a/> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

⁶³ [https://mubasher.aljazeera.net/news/reports/2019/7/6/%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A-](https://mubasher.aljazeera.net/news/reports/2019/7/6/%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A-%)



Some books' cover dealing with the Jewish issue

We can confidently say that Egyptian Jews are a special and exceptional case within Israel. It is perhaps the only religious community whose members are united by an overwhelming nostalgia for their homeland. They still protect Egypt, for which they affirm their love and worship. Here, the fate of an entire community should not be linked to one person or even to a few perverse figures accused of hostile activities.⁶⁴

So complicated question

However, the Egyptian point of view regarding the Jews is not entirely positive. The young director Amir Ramses, the author of the 2013 documentary film “Jews of Egypt,” reacts to the opinions about this and says that “it is a very complex issue.” He adds that the issue of talking about the Jews of Egypt “has been on the taboo list for a long time.” Although the film directed by Ramses was relatively well received by the public, it could only be released after a long struggle with the censors, who threatened to refuse the screening. In the end, Ramses obtained the necessary permission to show the film, but the Ministry of Cul-

%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%84%D8%B5-%D8%A3%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

⁶⁴ https://www.hsje.org/mystory/Rami_Mangoubi/YahMasr122205.htm (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

ture demanded that the film be prefaced with a message saying, “this work is imaginative creation of the author and director.”⁶⁵

Jewish heritage in Egypt

Today, Egypt’s Jewish heritage includes about 12 synagogues and countless religious relics, but they have been abandoned for a long time. Like other Egyptian antiquities, the Jewish ones need restoration, for which the government has managed to obtain funding. The Egyptian government does not officially distinguish between Pharaonic, Islamic, Coptic, and Jewish heritage. The Egyptian Minister of Antiquities at the time, Khaled al-Anani, told AFP that he had set up a commission in early 2016 to find “all Jewish antiquities and all groups of Jewish (monuments) found in synagogues.”⁶⁶

Egypt is now witnessing a change in the nature of the relationship with the Jews. This change prompted numbers of Egyptian Jews and their families who left the country about 70 years ago to return to the motherland, at least for the purpose of visiting. The restoration of the “Eliyahu Hanbi”⁶⁷ cost about 70 million Egyptian pounds, which was entirely covered by the Egyptian government, which rejected donations offered by foreign institutions and countries.⁶⁸

According to Magda Haroun, there are several Jewish synagogues and tombs, historical copies of the Bible, as well as three libraries filled with hundreds of rare books written in Hebrew and Arabic, and five schools in Egypt. In addition to all this, more than 200,000 documents were found in the “Geniza of the Ben Ezra Synagogue,” the oldest of which dates back to the 11th century AD. These documents range from marriage and divorce contracts to births to manuscripts documenting the life of Egyptian Jews since the Fatimid Caliphate, the Ayyubid state, and the Mamluk era. Magda describes these documents as “the Facebook of Jews in the Middle Ages.” Magda’s calls for the protection of Jewish heritage appear to have been officially echoed, as Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi has spoken on more than one occasion that he welcomes the “return of Egyptian Jews.” He also promised to clean cemeteries and protect heritage. This attitude caused outrage and various interpretations at the time. Some considered it as an attempt of rapprochement to the United States through Israel, others associated it with an attempt to get closer to Israel

⁶⁵ <https://www.mc-doualiya.com/articles/20170327-%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AB-%D9%83%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A2%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ It is one of the oldest religious sites in Alexandria, built in 1354. An ancient text of the Holy Scriptures from the Torah, attributed to the scribe Ezra, was preserved there. It was destroyed during the French campaign against Egypt led by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798. The temple stood in ruins until 1850, when it was rebuilt under the reign of Khedive Ismail, then ruler of Egypt. It was then demolished and rebuilt in 1881. The building has wooden pews with a capacity of 700 people.

⁶⁸ BBC Arabic, “Protection of the Jewish Heritage in Egypt,” 13 March 2020. See: <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-51865114> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

itself, and others put it in the context of emphasizing the “tolerant” image of Egypt. In the same context, in April 2018, the Ministry of Antiquities created a committee for the “inventory and registration of Jewish antiquities,” which completed the registration of a group of Jewish cemeteries in Alexandria and southern Cairo. According to Magda Haroun, her appeals for the protection of Jewish heritage also resonated with the public:

“Egyptian youth started asking me how they could help. That is why I thought of adding a new goal to the *Drop of Milk Association*, which was dedicated a hundred years ago to help the poor and orphan Jews, to protect and preserve Jewish heritage, and integrate Egyptian youth to help in this role.” Since 2016, the association has been dealing with the protection and preservation of Jewish heritage, with the help of a volunteer team of 30 young men and women, both Muslims and Christians. Magda asserts: “I am the only Jew in the association. The others are all Muslims and Christians who believe in the necessity of preserving heritage as human heritage.”⁶⁹

Magda Haroun manages Jewish properties, represented by 12 synagogues, 4 cemeteries, 3 clubs and 5 schools without students throughout Egypt. The most famous establishment among them is the Jewish synagogue on Adly Street in Cairo. Synagogues in Egypt have become tourist destinations due to the absence of Jews. Magda says that there are about 12 synagogues in Cairo and Alexandria left without maintenance. She added that “the majority were closed because there is no one left to pray there.”⁷⁰



Members of the Drop of Milk Association

⁶⁹ Ibid.

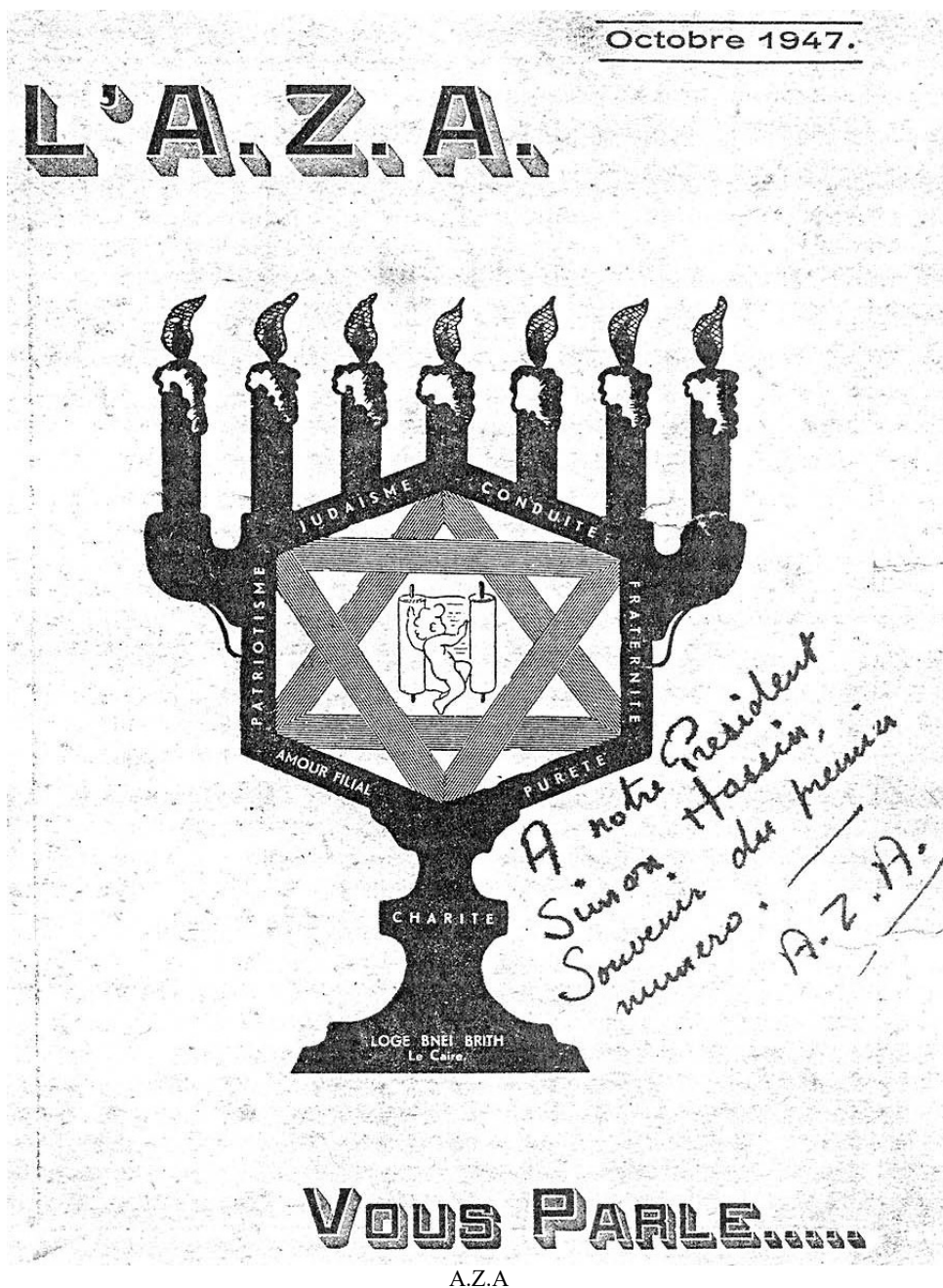
⁷⁰ <https://mubasher.aljazeera.net/news/reports/2019/7/6/%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%84%D8%B5-%D8%A3%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AF> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)



Unusual friendship: a Palestinian working on restoring the Jewish heritage in Egypt⁷¹

⁷¹ <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-51865114> (Accessed: 20 October 2022.)

Jewish Community Clubs in Egypt





Hashomer Hatzair, 1949



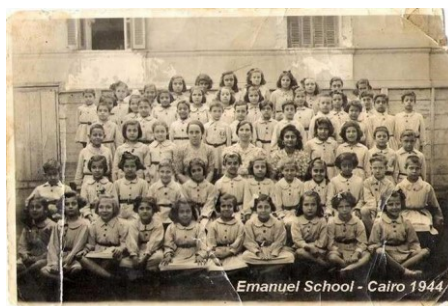
Boy-scouts Maccabi Cairo - visit to school "Farouk the first" - 11.2.1943

Maccabi, 1942–1953

Jewish Schools in Egypt



École Menasce, 1948



Emanuel School, 1944



Enfants heureux (Happy children), 1959



La Goutte de Lait (Drop of Milk Association), 1957



Cattaoui Pacha, 1936



The Consequences of the Six Day War for the Jewish Communities of Arab countries from Hungarian Perspective

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Abstract

Jews living in Arab countries faced discrimination even before 1967, namely after the establishment of a territorial Jewish State in 1948. However, the Six-Day War brought them further suffering, which often had a serious impact on the existence of Israelite communities dating back to ancient times. The significant reduction in the size of some Jewish communities in the Arab world depended largely on the policies of their 'mother state'. Thus, Jewish emigration was less decisive in Maghreb countries, where governments sought to protect their Jewish citizens from atrocities fuelled by anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic sentiments.¹ The situation was quite different in the Middle Eastern states, where governments themselves were often responsible for some incidents against Jews. The Hungarian Foreign Ministry also tried to follow all these events, but due to the political and interstate relations of the time, it did not always manage to form a realistic image of them.

Keywords: Six-Day War, Jewish diaspora, exodus, Middle East, North Africa, Arab world

Introduction

Israel's victory in the Third Arab Israeli War had extremely serious consequences for members of the Jewish communities living in Arab countries, who were often regarded by some governments as agents of the State of Israel and therefore as a security threat. As a result, there was hardly any Arab state where demonstrations and anti-Jewish riots did not take place. In Egypt, Yemen, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Morocco angry mobs spontaneously attacked Jewish neighbourhoods in the wake of the victory of the State of Israel. In addition to the destruction of material assets, the riots claimed a particularly high number of deaths in Libya, where survivors were virtually gathered in internment and concentration camps. Further to the popular anger, however, members of the Jewish diaspora have also had to face discriminatory measures by governments which, along with the distinctive decrees

¹ In most Arabic-Islamic eyes, there's no difference between anti-Judaism and antisemitism.

enacted, have deprived hundreds of them of their freedom for short or long periods, fined them or confiscated their property. As a result, members of the Jewish diaspora fled *en masse* from Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, while they were effectively held hostage in Syria and Iraq.

The process did not escape the attention of Hungarian foreign affairs, especially due to Israeli protests and international pressure on the “friendly” socialist states. However, due to the nature and dynamics of the Hungarian foreign relations system at the time – i.e. the importance of the Arab states in Hungarian foreign policy and the intensity of diplomatic relations – the information received was rather selective – or even absent – while the picture created from the case was not always accurate. The present study is therefore to offer an in-depth insight into how the consequences of the 1967 Arab Israeli war on the local Jewish community were perceived and evaluated in Hungarian diplomatic missions, in addition to the articles published in the international literature on the relevant events.

Iraq

The Iraqi government, in line with the political leadership of the other Arab states, consistently refused to recognise the existence of the State of Israel after its proclamation, the destruction of which was openly and repeatedly advocated by state propaganda until the June 1967 war.² Despite this, Iraqi governments did not pursue a policy of overt discrimination against Iraqi Jews in the 1950s,³ who lived in relative peace during Abd al-Karim Qasim’s presidency.⁴ The tacit agreement with the central authorities, based on the “live and let live” principle, ended with the rise to power of Abd al-Salam Arif and the Ba’ath Party in 1963. The new leadership not only reinstated the discriminatory restrictions imposed on them before the Qasim era, but also, from early July 1964, introduced further wide-ranging restrictions, mainly economic ones, and a ban on their departure from the country. Despite the severe restrictions, few families emigrated illegally, while the majority stayed in place and waited for their fortunes to improve. However, the Six Day War dashed their hopes.

² The Iraqi government and propaganda tried to justify its extremist position on Israel with Tel Aviv’s pro-Western foreign policy and rejection of the UN resolution on the establishment of a Jewish state. At the same time, the extremist messages lacked anti-Semitic or racist ideas, as there were no social and/or political bodies in the country that promoted anti-Semitic views with the open or even tacit support of the government. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/1968. (90. box) “*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*,” January 16, 1968.

³ Despite the lack of overt stigmatisation, Iraqi Jews were subjected to a number of discriminatory practices, such as being banned from holding public office or being excluded from public life. However, measures taken mainly under the Nuri Said government were used by Israel to increase the willingness of Iraqi Jews to emigrate, resulting in between 120,000 and 130,000 people being resettled by air to Israel during Operation Ezra and Nehemiah between 1951 and 1952. Barely 6,000 of the members of the original community decided to stay, the vast majority of whom were wealthy merchants and landowners. PASACHOFF, Naomi E. – LITTMAN, Robert J. (2005), “*Operation Magic Carpet*” and “*Operation Ezra and Nehemiah*”. *A Concise History of the Jewish People*, Rowman & Littlefield, 301.

⁴ Abd al-Karim Qasim Muhammad Bakr al-Fadhli al-Zubaidi (1914–1963) Iraqi military officer, prime minister and politician.

Although the Iraqi government essentially distanced itself from any anti-Semitic ideas and voices in the period following the Israeli attack, the situation of Iraqi Jews clearly deteriorated. In vain did Chief Rabbi Sasson, on behalf of himself and his religious community, assure the Iraqi state of his loyalty on Baghdad television, and openly distance himself from Israel and Zionism. Neither these declarations nor the Jewish donations to the Iraqi army had done much to dampen anti-Jewish public sentiment. Instead, their situation was further exacerbated by the anti-Jewish propaganda that was constantly pouring out of the Iraqi press and Baghdad television.⁵ According to recollections, some 3,500 Jews in Baghdad, fearing reprisals, virtually isolated themselves in their homes from the outside world from 6 June, when they closed their shops, rationed their food and kept their children out of school after Iraqi media reported that Israel had killed 400 Arab soldiers on the first day of the war.⁶ However, this did not protect them from retaliation. During the series of Israeli attacks, the Iraqi government imposed extensive official controls on them, largely for reasons of state security. As part of the latter, some 70 Jews were deported on trumped-up charges such as collecting money for Israel or spying for an imperialist state. At the same time, Jews who avoided detention were required to report regularly to the police, their household telephone lines were cut, their bank accounts were frozen, their club memberships were cancelled, and their trade licences were revoked. At the same time, policy makers branded Jewish citizens as Zionist and imperialist agents in their statements on radio and television, and called on loyal Muslim citizens to boycott their trade and to completely sever social relations with them. Finally, the Ministry of State Security added 3,000 plain-clothed secret police to its staff to keep a constant watch on Baghdad's Jewry.⁷

The anti-Jewish terror campaign did not lose its power even months after the war. By early October, the number of imprisoned Jews had risen to about 100, while the rest of the working-age men either were effectively under house arrest or became unemployed, with the exception of doctors.⁸ Although Jewish students at higher education institutions were not excluded, applications from new entrants were already collectively rejected. At the same time, according to Hungarian foreign affairs reports, in the weeks following the 1967 Israeli attack, the Iraqi press published numerous articles on the history and development of Zionism and its alleged role in serving Western interests.⁹ These writings identified Zion-

⁵ The Jewish community, for example, was repeatedly referred to by Baghdad television as the "fifth column" and warned Muslim Iraqis that contact with them would make them guilty. KARLIKOW, Abraham S. (1968), *The American Jewish Year Book*, American Jewish Committee – Springer, Vol. 69, 141.

⁶ SAWDAYEE, Max (1974), *All Waiting be to Hanged: Iraq Post-Six-Day War Diary*, Tel-Aviv, Levanda Press Ltd, 26–27.

⁷ BENJAMIN, Marina (2007), *Last Days in Babylon: The Story of the Jews of Baghdad*, London, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 254–255.; MORAD, Tamar – SHASHA, Dennis (eds.) (2008), *Iraq's Last Jews. Stories of Daily Life, Upheaval, and Escape from Modern Babylon*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 141.

⁸ Under a law promulgated on 28 June 1967, Jews were officially deprived of all sources of income. BENSOUSSAN, Georges (2019), *Jews in Arab Countries. The Great Uprooting*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 451.

⁹ In the 17 June issue of *Sawt al Arab*, for example, one extremist article made the survival of the Iraqi state dependent on the close control of the Iraqi Jewish community in the short term, and its abolition in the long term. In this context, the author stated that "The Iraqi Jewish cancer is a serious

ism as the first concept of race theory, when they unilaterally emphasized the consciousness of ‘chosenness’ central to the Jewish religion. In several respects, they also pointed out that anti-Zionism is not the same as anti-Semitism, and that a clear distinction between the two concepts is definitely justified.¹⁰

The Hungarian foreign affairs’ reports also blamed the Arab countries, with the exception of Egypt, for not only lacking a clear position on Zionism and anti-Semitism, but also of conducting a completely misguided propaganda campaign against the Jewish state. Paradoxically, this idea – as a kind of self-reflection – also appeared over time in the Iraqi press, which published in detail the Egyptian articles that disapproved of the Arab states’ anti-Israeli propaganda before the war. As an unspoken justification of the Iraqi government’s policy and a condemnation of the Arab countries’ media products, it was pointed out that the official position of the Cairo government was contradicted in many respects by statements that were out of touch with reality. The latter only served to give Tel-Aviv the opportunity to accuse Arabs of anti-Semitism. They also emphasized that certain Arab politicians, notably Ahmad Shukeiri, the Chairman of the PLO who was deposed in December 1967, made irresponsible statements about the annihilation of the Jewish people, which Israel then used to justify its preventive war policy and to influence international public opinion. The authors therefore saw them as the real culprits of the war defeat, since they could not clearly distinguish between anti-Israel political positions and real politics. Therefore, it was considered of primary importance that, instead of populist and generalizing statements, the State of Israel should be clearly distinguished from Judaism, because “efforts to overcome the consequences of aggression are not directed against the Israeli people.”¹¹

This did not, of course, mean that anti-Jewish manifestations were completely absent. One of the latter was the meeting of representatives of Muslim religious leaders who called for the declaration of a large-scale holy war to destroy the State of Israel and expel the Jewish population from the region. Although this meeting was televised – and its message was thus broadcast to the wider Iraqi masses – the Iraqi government remained officially aloof.¹²

threat to our struggle for existence and to the future of our country. Even if interests, circumstances and the law demand that we do not harm them at present, we have at least an obligation to place them under strict control and freeze their activities.” *Sawt al-Arab*, June 17, 1967.

¹⁰ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/1968. (90. box) “*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*,” January 16, 1968.

¹¹ The authors of the article, on the other hand, fell into the very generalisation they were trying to avoid, when they emphasised that the Arab peoples were not enemies of the Jews, ignoring the background and the real political situation of the time in many respects. In this context, the Hungarian foreign representative aptly pointed out, for example, the contradiction between the officially announced foreign policy directive and the practice followed in Syria. Indeed, the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs made several unofficial comments and remarks on the Jewish members of the approximately 200-strong Czechoslovak expert group working in the Arab state, as a kind of diplomatic warning of their unwanted presence. The Hungarian Ambassador considered unacceptable such discrimination by the Syrian authorities against the delegates on the basis of religion and/or origin, as it was clearly not motivated by Zionism or the declared fight against Israel. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/3/1968. (90. box) “*Csehszlovák zsidó származású szakértők problémái*,” March 3, 1968.

¹² The meeting was evaluated by several Iraqi press articles as saying that the local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood called for its convening with the support of the West, basically to attack the

However, this restraint also disappeared after the bloodless coup of July 1968, when the new Baghdad leadership used anti-Semitic sentiment to marginalise domestic political problems and unite the divided country under the slogan of fighting the “Zionist threat.” Thus, for example, Iraqi television broadcast live President al-Bakr’s speech in December 1968, who, referring to a military incident earlier in the month,¹³ pledged, among other things, that “we will strike down the exploiters of imperialism and Zionism ... with the steel fist, without mercy,” to which his angry audience of thousands demanded “death to the spies (Jews)! Execute all spies immediately!”¹⁴ Following the heightening of mass psychosis, nine Jews accused of espionage were tried and executed in Baghdad in January 1969.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the financial exploitation of Jewish families under constant psychological pressure continued unabated, most of whom eventually fled to Israel during the rare and brief periods in the 1970s when their restrictions were temporarily eased with the intervention of the international community.

Syria

According to figures published by the Syrian Ministry of Information,¹⁶ the number of Israelis in Syria in June 1967 was only 5,870, of whom 2,500 lived in Damascus, 3,000 in Aleppo and 360 in Qamishli, near the Turkish-Syrian border.¹⁷ Even by Arab standards, their situation was unfavourable after the dissolution of the United Arab Republic¹⁸ in Sep-

government’s policy and to cause confusion. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/1968. (90. box) “Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete,” January 16, 1968.

¹³ On December 4, 1968, the Israeli Air Force bombed Iraqi troop positions in the Mafraq area, as well as Jordanian positions and densely populated villages in northern Jordan, in retaliation for earlier mortar attacks on Israeli villages. On the Iraqi side, six soldiers were killed in air strikes. OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION, *Yearbook of the United Nations 1968*, Vol. 22, New York, United Nations. <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-207913/> (Downloaded: December 28, 2022.)

¹⁴ MAKIYA, Kanan (1989), *Republic of Fear: The Politics of Modern Iraq*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 50.

¹⁵ In addition to the nine people executed in Baghdad on 27 January 1969, the victims included seven other Jewish men who died of torture while in custody, and two others who were hanged in Basra at the same time as the Baghdad events. The bodies were later put on public display with a plaque around their necks, which were viewed by one million Iraqis, and filmed by Iraqi television. For the purpose of propaganda, they also interviewed Chief Rabbi Sasson Khaddouri, who declared about the full religious freedom of Iraqi Jews and condemned anti-Iraqi criticism and foreign pressure attempts, in exchange for the release of his imprisoned and tortured son. Just three months later, another nine Jews accused of espionage lost their lives as a result of torture, and on August 25, two more Jews were executed. BASRI, Carole (2022), “The Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries: An Examination of Legal Rights – A Case Study of the Human Rights Violations of Iraqi Jews,” *Fordham International Law Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 688–690.; BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 461–462.

¹⁶ One of the most influential authorities in Syria, and it is responsible for media, press and informations.

¹⁷ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/003933/1/1968. (90. box) “A Szíriában élő zsidók helyzete,” December 15, 1967.

¹⁸ It was a sovereign state and an union between Egypt and Syria from 1958 until 1961.

tember 1961¹⁹ and the military-backed Ba'ath Party came to power in 1963, and became particularly hostile after the exposure of Israeli spy Eli Cohen in 1965 and the successful military coup of the radical left wing of the Ba'ath Party in 1966.²⁰ Draconian measures were imposed on them, such as a ban on buying property, the need to obtain a special permit to leave their place of residence for more than three miles, and the fact that they could only prove their identity by means of a special document issued specifically for Jews.²¹ Moreover, members of the army and the public sector were prohibited from trading with Jewish businesses, and the Jewish community living in the Qamishli military border zone was under constant and extremely strict control. After all this, the only reason Syrian Jewish families did not leave the Arab country was that the government also banned them from emigrating.²²

In the days following the outbreak of the 1967 Blitzkrieg, the government deployed troops around the ghettos of the two main cities, which Jewish residents were only allowed to leave for shopping for a short period of time. Paradoxically, however, the threat to the Syrian Jews was not reduced by the withdrawal of the troops, but rather increased exponentially. The properties left behind by Jewish families who had emigrated in the early 1950s were taken over by Palestinian Arab refugees, who became the majority in Jewish neighbourhoods by the time of the Six-Day War. As a result, they were already a constant threat to the local Jews, and with the departure of the soldiers, it was almost certain that the desperate Arabs would take revenge on them for the crushing defeat they had suffered in 1967. Furthermore, the government reportedly armed rather than restrained the crowds on the streets. The mob then regularly rioted in Jewish neighbourhoods, where they could loot and assault defenceless Israelites with impunity.²³ According to some sources, the pogrom eventually claimed the lives of 57 Jews in Qamishli alone. However, the situation of the Jews did not improve even after the tempers subsided. Members of the military and their families were forbidden to associate with them, boycotts of merchants' products were announced, and many Jewish workers were fired, leaving their families without income. In July, the Jewish teaching staff of their community schools were dismissed and replaced by Muslim teachers, all financial transactions involving Jewish property were banned, and the collection of their debts was not only suspended, but Muslim debtors were legally empowered to refuse to repay them. At first, the community tried to support the needy with dona-

¹⁹ It is worth mentioning that Egypt continued to be known officially as the United Arab Republic until 1971.

²⁰ LASKIER, Michael M. (2014), "The Emigration of the Jews from the Arab World," in: MEDDEB, Abdelwahab – STORA, Benjamin (eds.), *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 427.

²¹ On their identity cards, the word 'Musawi' was highlighted in red, indicating their Israelite religion. The term also appeared on their bank accounts, guild membership documents and driving licences. LASKIER, Michael M. (2002), "Syria and Lebanon," in: SIMON – LASKIER – REGUER (eds.), *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 329.

²² KARLIKOW, *The American Jewish Year Book*, 142.

²³ The hooligans were mostly Palestinian Arabs and the local residents they instigated. It is important to note, however, that Sunni and minority groups in Syria were surprisingly tolerant of Jews. LASKIER, "The Emigration of the Jews from the Arab World," 427.

tions until the government confiscated the collected money. Their economic conditions then deteriorated to the point where many literally starved to death.²⁴

However, none of this did not reach the wider public, as the Interior Ministry placed them under house arrest in Damascus, Aleppo and Qamishli. They were held hostage for about eight months, and those who broke the ban were taken by the police to the dreaded Mezzeh prison if caught. Besides, in order to avoid interference from outside states, the political leadership in Damascus regularly published false reports and statements claiming that the situation of Syrian Jewry was satisfactory.²⁵ A special meeting was also organised between representatives of the local Jewish community and members of the Russell Commission²⁶, who visited Syria in September 1967. During the consultation, the Jews declared full respect for their rights in the presence and pressure of the Syrian authorities.²⁷

The disinformation campaign proved so successful that even the responsible Hungarian diplomatic mission fully believed its claims. Hungarian foreign affairs reports – completely misinterpreting the real situation – reported that, contrary to the assumptions of certain Western newspapers, there were no anti-Semitic demonstrations or state-level measures against local Jews after the Arab-Israeli war. However, the Hungarian Chargé d'affaires went even further in his report, almost praising certain manifestations of Syrian propaganda. He credited the merit of Syrian mass communication, which he also considered extremist in many respects, with the fact that it only made accusations about Israel and Zionism, while not attacking the local Jewish community at all. To justify the full respect for the human rights of Syrian Jews, he also cited a four-page article about the living conditions of local Israelites from the *Syrian Life* newspaper, which happened to be the official journal of the Syrian Ministry of Information.²⁸

²⁴ The French Embassy estimated that in July 1969, 90% of the Syrian Jewish community was unemployed and 75% had no source of income at all. BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 451.

²⁵ The Syrian embassy in Paris, for example, reacting to the contents of an anonymous letter from a reader published on 27 December 1967, declared in the newspaper *Le Monde* on 3 January 1968 that the accusations were mere fantasy. It categorically denied the imposition of a curfew or that any anti-Jewish incidents or manifestations had taken place anywhere in Syria between Palestinian refugees and their Jewish neighbours. It also claimed that Jewish persons were not excluded from public offices, and quoted the statement of the International Red Cross representative in Damascus on the eve of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war that Jews had not suffered any rights violations. “La situation des juifs en Syrie, » *Le Monde*, 3 janvier 1968. https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/1968/01/03/la-situation-des-juifs-en-syrie_2512670_1819218.html (Downloaded: October 28, 2022.)

²⁶ The Russell Tribunal, also known as the International War Crimes Tribunal, the Russell-Sartre Tribunal or the Stockholm Tribunal, was a privately initiated people's court organised by Bertrand Russell in 1966.

²⁷ KARLIKOW, *The American Jewish Year Book*, 142.

²⁸ The Syrian articles included the opinions of many Jewish merchants and intellectuals, including the 95-year-old Chief Rabbi. The interviewees, in line with the official Syrian position and presumably under various pressures, were unanimous in stating that they had not suffered any harm, nor had they been hindered in any way in the exercise of their religious beliefs, movement, housing, education or holding office. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/003933/1/1968. (90. box) “A Szíriában élő zsidók helyzete,” December 15, 1967.

Egypt

The number of Israelites in Egypt was estimated at about 2,500 in May 1967,²⁹ of whom about 1,400 lived in Cairo, 900 in Alexandria and 200 – mostly Karaites – in other cities. As the international crisis deepened in the spring of 1967, the tone of the state media became increasingly hostile towards them, gradually increasing fear among them of possible public and government reprisals. However, concerns about Egyptian public opinion proved unfounded, as apart from a few minor incidents, Jewish families were not harassed by their Arab neighbours.

However, the situation was completely different for the Egyptian authorities, who kept accurate records of them. First, Jewish persons connected to or working for public institutions were dismissed from their jobs and their accounts were frozen in early May. After that, almost all the men between the ages of 16 and 60, with the exception of about 50 person, were systematically arrested after the outbreak of the war in their homes, shops, synagogues or even offices, where they could still work.³⁰ Of the at least 425 persons captured in this way, about 75 Jewish foreign nationals were transported to Alexandria with the intervention of their country of origin under military guard within a week, where they were put on a ship with other Western nationals and deported.³¹ The other detainees were transferred from the police stations to the notorious Abou-Za'abal prison,³² where they were held for weeks in extremely poor conditions in overcrowded prison cells, and were regularly humiliated and severely beaten by prison guards.³³ In addition, in the absence of Israeli prisoners of war, the Egyptian authorities paraded some 200 Alexandrian Jews in front of

²⁹ According to Arab sources and estimates, 6000 Jews lived in the Arab state until the outbreak of the 1967 war.

<https://raseef22.net/article/102139-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D8%AE%D8%B1-%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%B6%D9%88%D8%A7-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%88%D8%A7> (Downloaded: January 4, 2023.)

³⁰ The wave of arrests also included the imprisonment of Alexandria Rabbi Jacques Nefussi and the house arrest of Cairo Chief Rabbi Hayyim Douek. Even people of Jewish origin who had converted to Muslim or Christianity years earlier were detained. KIMCHE, Ruth (2017), "Israel and the Death Knell of Egyptian Jewry, 1967–1970," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 218.; LASKIER, Michael M. (1986), "From war to war: The Jews of Egypt from 1948 to 1970," *Studies in Zionism*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 143. doi:10.1080/13531048608575895

³¹ Until 19 September 1968, Jews who avoided arrest were allowed to leave Egypt with their families. In return, however, they had to renounce their citizenship, leave behind all their possessions, and promise never to return to the country. LASKIER, Michael M. (1995), "Egyptian Jewry under the Nasser regime, 1956–70," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3, 610. doi:10.1080/00263209508701070

³² A town about 22 kilometres north of Cairo, which houses one of the country's best-known and largest prisons.

³³ BERTO FARHI, Ibrahim (1967), "Les Juifs de Nasser," *L'Express*, December 25–31, 1967.; GAZZAR, Brenda (2007), "Egypt – Exodus II," *The Jerusalem Post*, May 31, 2007. <https://www.jpost.com/magazine/features/the-six-day-war-exodus-ii> (Downloaded: December 16, 2022); KIMCHE, "Israel and the Death Knell of Egyptian Jewry," 219–220.; MEITAL, Yoram (2017), "A Jew in Cairo: the defiance of Chehata Haroun," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 2, 190.

the angry crowd in Cairo, which continuously shouted and pelted them during the spectacle.³⁴

The situation of the prisoners only improved somewhat from mid-August. Thanks to the intervention of foreign governments and international organisations, they were able to receive cash and a package of food, medicine, clothing and toiletries from their families, and some 15 people were released by the end of the month.³⁵ However, many of those freed in this way could not be happy for long, as the Egyptian authorities forced them and their families to leave the country permanently a few weeks or months later.³⁶ Only Jewish men who converted to Muslim faith and Jewish women who married a Muslim man were exempt. Others were only allowed to take five Egyptian pounds and a few personal belongings with them when they were deported.³⁷ In addition to the radical decrease in the number of Egyptian Jews, another consequence of the June war was the virtual merger of the Sephardic community with the much smaller Ashkenazi and Karaite groups.

However, little or none of this was made public thanks to effective Egyptian propaganda, which vehemently denied all accusations of persecution of Egyptian Jews and repeatedly emphasised the exceptional religious freedom that prevailed in the country. Minister of Interior Shaarawi Gomaa,³⁸ in an interview with *Al-Ahram* on 22 December 1967, acknowledged only 257 arrests of Egyptian Jews, far fewer than the actual number. He also stated that by the time of the interview, “the circumstances that necessitated their internment had lost their relevance,” and that they were therefore exploring the possibility of “freeing” those still in detention, and had begun to dismantle the internment camps on the orders of President Nasser.³⁹ However, contrary to the promises, the stateless had to wait almost two years and the prisoners with Egyptian citizenship about three years for their release, after which they were deported almost immediately.⁴⁰

³⁴ KHEDR, Marc, “My life in Abu Zaabal and Tora,” *Historical Society of Jews from Egypt*, https://www.hsje.org/mystory/marc_kheder/mylife.html (Downloaded: December 16, 2022); MANGOUBI, Rami, “Egypt – My longest 10 minutes,” *Historical Society of Jews from Egypt*, https://www.hsje.org/mystory/Rami_Mangoubi/egypt_my_longest_10_minutes.html (Downloaded: December 16, 2022)

³⁵ KIMCHE, “Israel and the Death Knell of Egyptian Jewry,” 220.

³⁶ The fate of the majority of the 224 Jewish prisoners released by the end of December 1967 was similar in the end. Only 12 of them – less than 5% – were allowed to remain in Egypt. The others were made to sign a declaration with the Egyptian Passport Service renouncing their Egyptian citizenship and were then deported. LASKIER, “From war to war,” 144.

³⁷ Of the displaced, 615 families, or about 1,500 people, were allowed to leave Egypt between June 1967 and 1969 through the intervention of Spanish Ambassador Angel Sagaz. In addition, France received 1,719 Egyptian Jews until the end of June 1970. KIMCHE, “Israel and the Death Knell of Egyptian Jewry,” 222–224.

³⁸ Shaarawi Gomaa (1920–1988) was an Egyptian military officer and politician. From 1966 to 1971, he served as Minister of the Interior.

³⁹ *Al-Ahram*, December 22, 1967.

⁴⁰ For more on the background to the release of imprisoned Egyptian Jews and the secret Israeli-Egyptian diplomacy on the issue, see: MUALEM, Yitzhak (2020), “Quiet Diplomacy: The Exodus of Egyptian Jews between the Six-Day War and the War of Attrition,” *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, Vol. 31, No. 1/2, 124–145.

But even these were not mentioned in Hungarian foreign affairs reports. They also gave only a brief, concise description of the situation of the Sudanese Israelite community. All that emerges from these reports is that there were no significant numbers of Jews living in the country at the time of the events. During the Six Day War of 1967 and the period that followed, the authorities did not take any discriminatory measures against them, and the merchants (including a bar owner of Hungarian origin) and intellectuals, who numbered less than ten in total, were not harmed in any way.⁴¹

Lebanon

Although the Lebanese Israelites were perhaps the least affected by the consequences of the Six Day War among the Jewish communities of the Arab states, they too experienced a rise in anti-Jewish sentiment and an increase in incidents as the crisis leading up to the war deepened. Some Muslim merchants took advantage of the situation to refuse to repay their loans to Jewish creditors. As conditions became more unfavourable, the Jews of Beirut asked for official protection, and army troops happened to take control of their neighbourhood on the morning of 5 June. This measure, unlike in many Arab states, was in fact intended to protect the residents and not to hermetically seal them off from the outside world. Thanks to their involvement and the support of Christians, the sporadic spontaneous demonstrations that broke out soon died out.⁴² Lebanese President Charles Helou also clearly defended them while doing his utmost to keep the Lebanese armed forces out of the war and the armies of foreign Arab states out of Lebanese territory. The authorities only prohibited Jews from entering South Lebanon, which borders Israel, but did not impose any other restrictions on them. Jewish community institutions were also allowed to operate freely, and financial investments and deposits remained accessible, providing sufficient financial reserves to finance expenses and to help those in need.

Despite all this, there was a significant emigration in the second half of 1967, not least due to the propaganda of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which had already established itself in Lebanon at the time, and the rapid increase in the number of Palestinian Arab refugees. The political activism of the latter, the increasing number of guerrilla attacks against Israeli targets, and the presence of armed, uniformed Palestinian fedayeen fighters⁴³ in Lebanon have created growing fear in the Jewish community. Due to the psychological pressure, the various incidents during the spring, as well as the adverse economic consequences for them and the deterioration of business conditions, the number of Lebanese Jews shrunk by half, when from a community of 5-6,000 people in June, barely 3,000 person remained by the end of the year.⁴⁴

⁴¹ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/1/1968. (90. box) “Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete,” December 18, 1967.

⁴² However, during the riots, the mobs vandalised the British and US embassies in Beirut and blew up vehicles of American personnel. SHARNOFF, Michael (2017), *Nasser's Peace. Egypt's Response to the 1967 War with Israel*, New York, Transaction Publishers, 28.

⁴³ It is an Arabic word, and it refers to various military groups willing to sacrifice themselves.

⁴⁴ SCHULZE, Kirsten E. (2001), *The Jews of Lebanon. Between Coexistence and Conflict*, Brighton-Portland, Sussex Academic Press, 111.

Although the Lebanese state did not restrict the ability of its Jewish citizens to leave the country with all their possessions,⁴⁵ their emigration was not without problems despite this and the relatively calm public atmosphere. Within the religious community, there was a significant proportion of those who did not have citizenship, because they or their ancestors had moved from a Middle Eastern state only a few decades earlier to escape discrimination there. Their disputed status has led to suspicions in the Lebanese press in the weeks following the war that their mass exodus may be motivated by support for Israel, while the government expressed its reservations about settling their debts and paying their tax obligations. For this reason, the authorities made it difficult to obtain the necessary travel documents. The official papers were then issued only at the request of the Jewish community, which gave guarantees that the emigrants would meet all their financial obligations, while those who left gave a written commitment never to return to the country.⁴⁶ However, with their departure, Jewish capital also left Lebanon, which had a very negative impact on trade and played a major role in the waves of bankruptcy at a time when sectarian divisions were deepening and control was gradually being taken out of the hands of the state and the security forces.

Algeria

There were around 35,000 Jews living in the Arab state in the early 1900s, rising to more than 150,000 by the time independent Algeria was established in 1962. One of the main reasons for this considerable increase in numbers was that they were granted French citizenship under the so-called Crémieux law of 1871. The latter, as a sign of voluntary assimilation, led to a large number of members of the community marrying the population of French origin. In terms of their occupation, most of them earned their living from trade, while a smaller number of them took up posts in the local administration. They were not discriminated against, which was an attraction for members of the Jewish community living in other Arab states, particularly in neighbouring ones, especially after the establishment of the State of Israel.

The first noticeable, marked change in their circumstances occurred in November 1954, when the National Liberation Front launched an armed struggle against French colonial rule. In addition to the French military and administrative installations, Jewish communities were increasingly targeted, while the more wealthy and influential members were forced by the NLF from 1956 onwards, by threat and violence, to support their uprising financially. Their situation was made worse rather than helped when, in response, Mossad-trained local cells carried out retaliatory actions against Muslim-owned cafes and shops. The civil war was further complicated by the far-right Organisation Armée Secrète, which rejected any Franco-Algerian agreement. Following its formation in February 1961, a wave of violence spread throughout the country, resulting in many Jewish deaths.⁴⁷ After all this, local Jews

⁴⁵ Lebanon's liberal emigration policy, which was considered exceptional among Arab countries, was also considered remarkable by the Israeli press and praised with appreciation. "Kivándorol a libanoni zsidóság. Az ötezer főnyi közösség nagyrésze elhagyja az országot," *Új Kelet*, Vol. 48, No. 5759, 1967. július 2. 7.

⁴⁶ KARLIKOW, *The American Jewish Year Book*, 142–143.

⁴⁷ LASKIER, "The Emigration of the Jews from the Arab World," 425.

were seriously afraid of retribution and insecurity from the new Arab leadership due to their religious differences and their close ties with the French colonial administration. They therefore decided to emigrate en masse in several waves after the Evian Accords of March 1962.⁴⁸ Most of them already left with the former colonizers,⁴⁹ and the majority of them settled in France, while the rest – barely 10% of the emigrants – started a new life in Israel.⁵⁰ They were followed by a new wave of emigration from 1964, when advocates of liberal economic policy left the country in large numbers because of nationalisations and the institutionalisation of the socialist-type planned economy.⁵¹

According to the Hungarian foreign documents, the fears and reservations of the Jewish community were unfounded, as neither the Algerian authorities nor the local population had discriminated against them or any other nationality on the basis of race.⁵² However, this was not entirely true, as it forgot the clearly anti-Semitic acts of certain extremist elements, such as the looting of the Great Synagogue in Algiers on 12 December 1960, the painting of swastikas and “Death to Jews” on the walls of the Kashbah, the desecration of the Jewish cemetery in Oran in September 1961, or the violent incidents between Jews and Muslims because of religious differences.⁵³

Despite all these warning signs, the Hungarian embassy did not experience any anti-Semitism during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, although Algeria played a prominent role in the crisis and some of the official statements were clearly violent in tone. However, when analyzing the causes, they overlooked the fact that by that time the Jewish quarters of Oran and Algiers, which could have become the main targets of the unrests, no longer existed. Nor was there any mention of the fact that Paris had taken steps to protect Jews who were also French citizens.⁵⁴ Instead, it was pointed out that Houari Boumédiène’s⁵⁵ speeches have always made it clear that, although his country condemned Zionism in the strongest terms,

⁴⁸ STORA, Benjamin (2012), “Juifs d’Algérie. Les choix du départ. Réflexions sur les vagues de départ des juifs d’Algérie en direction de la France (1958-1968),” in: ABECASSIS, Frédéric – DIRECHE, Karima – AOUAD, Rita (eds.), *La bienvenue et l’adieu. Migrants juifs et musulmans au Maghreb (XV^e-XX^e siècle)*, Vol. II, Ruptures et recompositions, Casablanca, Karthala, La Croisée des chemins, pp. 109–117.

⁴⁹ According statistics, 85% of the non-Muslim population left Algeria within a few months. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) “Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete,” February 23, 1968.

⁵⁰ DOMONITZ, Yehuda (2000), “Immigration and Absorption of Jews from Arab Countries,” in: SHULEWITZ, Malka Hillel (ed.), *The Forgotten Millions. The Modern Jewish Exodus from Arab Lands*, London – New York, Continuum, 164.

⁵¹ COHEN, David (2002), Algeria. in: SIMON – LASKIER – REGUER (eds.), *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, 470.

⁵² HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) “Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete,” February 23, 1968.

⁵³ In addition to the insults directed at them personally, members of the Jewish community also had serious problems identifying with the national motto of independent Algeria, which stated that “*Algeria is my country, Arabic is my language, Islam is my religion.*” BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 459.

⁵⁴ LASKIER, Michael M. (1994), *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century. The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria*, New York & London, New York University Press, 343–344.

⁵⁵ He was an Algerian politician and officer who served as Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Algeria between 1965 and 1976. Also, he was the second President of Algeria until his death in 1978.

it was not against the Jewish people.⁵⁶ In reality, however, extremist youths openly wore Nazi insignia and drew swastikas, while the radio broadcast anti-Semitic programmes. They also assaulted Chief Rabbi Simon Zini of Oran and expelled six Jews from the country. Also, the authorities banned the screening of any film in the country whose creators or actors appeared on the list of 'Zionist enemies'. Eventually, the term 'Zionist' became such a dirty word in the country that if it was associated with someone, it was a clear signal to them that they should leave Algeria as soon as possible. As a result, the 25,000 people of Jewish origin who remained behind in the summer of 1962 were reduced to just a few thousand by the end of 1967.⁵⁷

Tunisia

Tunisia's Jewish community grew slightly in the first half of the 20th century, increasing from 50,000 in 1921 to 58,000 by the time the country gained independence in 1956. However, after the withdrawal of French colonial power, their numbers here also declined considerably, falling to just under half that number, to around 25,000, by 1964. From the mid-1960s, this sudden wave of emigration was considerably moderated by the tolerant policy of the Tunisian government, which was officially based on full equality of rights between Muslim and Jewish citizens. The latter not only prevented the introduction of unfavourable regulations for Jews, but also enabled most of them to acquire Tunisian citizenship and even hold public office.⁵⁸ This was largely the reason why only 10% of the religious community left the Arab country in the second half of the decade. However, their number was still estimated at around 22,000.⁵⁹

Already on the day of the outbreak of the Six-Day War, intense anti-Semitic demonstrations broke out, which the foreign missions of the socialist states, in line with the press coverage in the French press, attributed to the Tunisian authorities.⁶⁰ During a few days of

⁵⁶ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) "*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*," February 23, 1968.

⁵⁷ BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 459.; LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 344.

⁵⁸ According to information from the foreign embassies of socialist countries, many Tunisian Jews managed to find employment in various commercial bodies and financial institutions. In ministries, on the other hand, they were generally not employed, with the exception of the Ministry of Economy. However, due to the lack of a more nuanced analysis and knowledge of the domestic political processes in Algeria, no mention was made of the fact that only irreplaceable Jewish persons were allowed to remain in key positions, while the others were gradually replaced. They also overlooked the fact that they had little representation in important administrative posts and bodies, few of them were affiliated with the Neo-Destour party, and Jewish traders sometimes found it extremely challenging to obtain the necessary official permits to do business. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) "*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*," February 23, 1968.; LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 423.

⁵⁹ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) "*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*," February 23, 1968.

⁶⁰ Referring to the opinion of the "friendly embassies," which can hardly be considered unbiased, the Hungarian diplomatic mission accredited in Tunis reported that the Tunisian state apparatus considered the local Jewish community as a kind of lightning rod to defuse social anger in the given political

rioting, protesters vandalized dozens of vehicles, assaulted and beat young Jews, looted Jewish shops, and invaded the Great Synagogue in Tunis, assaulting the rabbi, desecrating and burning Torah scrolls, and smashing part of the equipment. Although there were no fatalities, the Bokobza winery and Boukha⁶¹ factory, an unleavened bread factory and kosher butchers' shops on the outskirts of Tunis were destroyed.⁶² Despite the extensive damage caused, it was found that the destruction was carried out mainly by young hooligans and marginalised groups of the population prone to violence and extremism. Their rampage was facilitated by the initial reluctance of the authorities to take action to contain them, and public order was not restored until late afternoon, when army units were deployed.⁶³

At the same time, the wave of violence caused serious resentment in the wider society. The Arab families often took in Jewish people seeking refuge from possible violence until tempers calmed down.⁶⁴ However, neither this nor President Habib Bourguiba,⁶⁵ who made radio and television speeches strongly condemning the riots and urging calm, could alleviate the despair of the Jewish community. The government's promise to punish the perpetrators and compensate the victims proved futile in allaying fears.⁶⁶ The official apology to the Chief Rabbi Nessim Cohen, the manifesto signed by Tunisian intellectuals expressing solidarity with their fellow Jews, and the dismissal of the Interior Minister and the Tunisian Police Chief following the events also had little effect.⁶⁷ Despite the reopening of Jewish shops and the restoration of public security, it was reported that the rioters, many of whom were Algerians and Egyptians, had chosen their targets based on a blacklist that distinguished Jews from other Tunisian citizens.⁶⁸ Desperate people left their shops and homes

situation. According to some socialist countries, this was the reason why the interior authorities deliberately incited the demonstrations, while others believed that they "just" passively observed the anti-Jewish demonstrations, as they seriously feared that the discontent of the masses could easily turn into anti-government demonstrations. Ibid.

⁶¹ It is a distilled beverage produced from figs.

⁶² The events, however, had not only an anti-Jewish dimension, but also a strong anti-Western one, as the protesters also invaded the American and British embassies, where they caused considerable destruction to the equipment found there. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) "*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*," February 23, 1968.; "Zsidóellenes atrocitások az arab világban," *Új Kelet*, Vol. 48, No. 5764, July 9, 1967. 4.

⁶³ According to the recollections of eyewitnesses, at the time of the burning of the Great Synagogue, the police were involved in directing traffic instead of calming and dispersing the crowd. BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 459.

⁶⁴ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) "*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*", February 23, 1968.

⁶⁵ He was a Tunisian nationalist leader and statesman who led the Kingdom of Tunisia between 1956 and 1957 as prime minister, then as the first president of Tunisia (1957–87).

⁶⁶ The government later made the students the scapegoats when it placed sole responsibility on them for what happened. Forty-five participants of the riots were arrested and brought to trial. However, the Hungarian foreign service reports did not indicate whether the accused persons were acquitted or found guilty at the end of the proceedings, and if convicted, what sentence was imposed on them by the Tunisian judiciary. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) "*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*," February 23, 1968.

⁶⁷ LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 306–307.

⁶⁸ LASKIER, "The Emigration of the Jews from the Arab World," 424.

behind in droves. Two-thirds of them fled to France and less than a year later the Tunisian Jewish community dwindled to between 7,000 and 8,000.

Morocco

Of the Maghreb countries,⁶⁹ Morocco had the highest number of Jews, reaching 225,000 in 1952.⁷⁰ The emigration was mainly to Israel, which the authorities initially tried to curb after the country's independence, until a secret agreement was reached between King Hassan II and representatives of Israel in July 1961.⁷¹

However, the escalation of tension between Arabs and Israel also affected Morocco, where local Jews lived in panic for weeks following the outbreak of the war in June 1967. At the same time, the government and the palace protected the community, preventing a catastrophe. The latter gave the opportunity for left-wing political forces – such as the UNFP and its backed UMT – and the nationalist Istiqlal⁷² to accuse the king of turning his back on the Arab cause and sympathising with the Jews. The right-wing conservative Islamist Istiqlal, popular among the more anti-Zionist-sympathetic rural Muslim population, also stepped up its anti-Jewish activities, taking advantage of the defeat of the Arab states and Israel's territorial gains. The latter was reflected, for example, in the distribution of classic anti-Semitic literature and calls for the blacklisting of Jewish-owned businesses. At the same time, UNFP and UMT supporters also took to the streets on a regular basis. Like the followers of the Istiqlal, they chanted anti-Israel and anti-Western slogans at their mass meeting at Casablanca during the first week of the 1967 war, while their leaders tried unsuccessfully to get a statement condemning Israel and Zionism from the Jewish community. This was accompanied by extremist manifestations in the Moroccan press and an economic boycott of traders' goods, which, despite its partial success, was particularly injurious to Moroccan Jewry.⁷³

King Hassan II has done his utmost to calm the flare-ups, and the government has taken preventive measures to avoid possible incidents. Nevertheless, here too, the unfavourable public mood and insecurity led middle-class Jewish families to leave the country in droves, and only 35,000 of them were still living there by 1971. The emigrants, like their Tunisian compatriots, settled mainly in France, Spain and North America, with only a minority choosing Israel as their new home.

⁶⁹ The region includes Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia.

⁷⁰ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) “*Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete*,” February 23, 1968.

⁷¹ Despite the ban, 17,994 Moroccan Jews emigrated to Israel at the risk of their lives between 1957 and mid-1961. This was followed by the Israeli-led Operation Yakhin between 26 November 1961 and June 1963, which saw the emigration of 60,028 Jews, representing 36.6% of the Moroccan Israelite community at the time. In exchange for those leaving, Morocco received an advance of \$500,000 as well as compensation of \$100 per person for the first 50,000 Jews, and \$250 per person for the others. LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 218–243.; MORENO, Aviad (2020), “Beyond the Nation-State: a Network Analysis of Jewish Emigration from Northern Morocco to Israel,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 1, 8.

⁷² It is an Arabic word, which means independence.

⁷³ LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 246–248.

Lybia

The most brutal anti-Semitic rallies took place in Libya, where the Jewish community of around 4,500 people suffered the most hardship and suffering in the region.⁷⁴ The escalation of anti-Israel public sentiment was already clearly visible in May and early June in government publications and articles in extremist Libyan newspapers such as *Ar Raid* and *At Tally*. At the same time, the PLO's Libyan offices became centres of anti-Jewish propaganda, while anti-Semitic pamphlets from Syria and Egypt were also increasingly appeared.⁷⁵ In mosques, imams were already calling for a holy war against the Jews on 2 June, when Muslim worshippers gathered for Friday prayers. Their speeches, which were broadcast on Libyan radio, consistently focused on the conflicts between the Prophet Muhammad and the Jews.⁷⁶ In addition, the week of 5-12 June was declared a period of solidarity with the Palestinian Arab cause and a fundraising campaign was organised, which was to be given greater emphasis by holding demonstrations.⁷⁷ In the increasingly unfavourable climate, the Libyan Jewish community sent a telegram of solidarity to King Idris, stressing their neutral position and loyalty to the ruler.⁷⁸

At 9am on 5 June, when the first news of the outbreak of war broke, the mass demonstrations announced for "Palestine Week," which had been under police control until then, turned into a frenzy of destruction and rampage under the control of Syrian and Egyptian migrant workers in the country. One of the most credible accounts of the anti-Semitic riots here came from a Hungarian trade representative in the Arab country, who witnessed the pogroms against a Jewish community, mostly of Italian and to a lesser extent French nationality. During the latter, several people were killed in the open streets of the ghetto.⁷⁹ In addition, the Beit El Synagogue and the Sla Dar Serussi Talmud Torah were destroyed, along with hundreds of holy books, including many ancient ones, and the Jewish shops,

⁷⁴ Already after independence, anti-Jewish sentiment increased significantly for reasons such as personal and political rivalry between influential families close to the king, the lack of a clear political stance on the Jewish population, Libya's accession to the Arab League, the – less successful – Arab boycott against Jews, the rise of Arab nationalism, and the anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist campaign in local dailies and weeklies. Despite all this, however, there was a sense of calm and prosperity in the Libyan Jewish community between 1962 and 1967, largely due to government communications. ROUMANI, Maurice (2007), "The Final Exodus of the Libyan Jews in 1967," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 19, No. 3/4, 78–79.

⁷⁵ One of the pamphlets distributed was "The Jews in the Koran," which included several excerpts from *Mein Kampf*. DE FELICE, Renzo (1985), *Jews in an Arab Land. Libya, 1835–1970*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 274.

⁷⁶ BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 458.

⁷⁷ ROUMANI, "The Final Exodus of the Libyan Jews in 1967," 86.

⁷⁸ DE FELICE, *Jews in an Arab Land. Libya*, 274.

⁷⁹ We can consider the later accounts of the expelled Jews as realistic, according to which 15 Jews – two individuals and two families, a total of 13 people – lost their lives during the riots. Press reports that, for example, "20 victims were burnt at the stake or stoned to death by the mobs" are therefore clearly exaggerated. However, the Libyan government has only officially acknowledged the deaths of two people killed in the streets. "Evidence given by Lillo Arbid, former President of the Jewish communities of Tripolitania (Libya)," in: SHULEWITZ, *The Forgotten Millions*, 219.; "Zsidóellenes atrocitások az arab világban," 4.

mostly on Tripoli's main street, were looted and set on fire.⁸⁰ The latter in particular has led to the suggestion that the wealthy Muslim middle class was behind the events here, and that, as well as stirring up mass anger, it also used the occasion to drive out of the country Jews, who were seen as competitors, mainly in the commercial sector.⁸¹

The public anger against the Jews, which was also artificially fomented, achieved its unspoken objective, as some 300 people fled the country during the events and in the days following the war alone. The rest were rounded up by the Libyan authorities and housed in barracks outside the cities. However, the situation remained chaotic until 9 June, with members of families in protective custody often living apart and in constant fear. It was only in mid-June that their conditions improved, especially after the Libyan government changed its position on the ban on emigration at the request of the Jewish community in Tripoli. Following the issuance of the necessary travel documents, their mass departure became possible from 28 June. Even then, they were escorted to the airport with military guard, from where they left, mainly for Italy – and many from there to Israel – or Canada, with their personal luggage and just 20 Libyan pounds.⁸²

The remaining 220 persons or so were still kept by the government authorities in the so-called “assembly camps” guarded by the armed forces, “for their own protection.” Only a few of those who emigrated later returned to the country, mainly to settle their pending business and financial affairs. However, the liquidation of their interests in Libya mostly proved to be ineffective due to the discriminatory provisions introduced in the meantime, by which the government made it practically impossible for Jewish goods and capital to leave the country.⁸³ The process culminated in the rise to power of Colonel Gaddafi in 1969, after which the 1951 constitution, which guaranteed, among other things, freedom of conscience and religion and equality before the law regardless of religious belief, was repealed.⁸⁴ In addition, the remaining property of the Jews was confiscated, official documents relating to their ownership were destroyed, and debts owed to them were cancelled. To erase them from collective memory, in addition to their remaining synagogues, even their cemeteries were demolished and, in time, incorporated.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ LASKIER, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century*, 418.; ROUMANI, “The Final Exodus of the Libyan Jews in 1967,” 87–88.

⁸¹ HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) “Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete,” February 23, 1968.

⁸² KARLIKOW, *The American Jewish Year Book*, 139.

⁸³ After the anti-Jewish riots of 1967, for example, insurance companies no longer took out life and property insurance with Jewish people. In addition, banks refused to open accounts for them, while regulations were issued to prevent foreigners from taking their assets out of the country. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-Arab országok-1968-202-27/001010/2/1968. (90. box) “Az arab országokban élő zsidók helyzete,” February 23, 1968.

⁸⁴ ZARRUGH, Samuel (2022), “Restoring Libya’s Ancient Jewish Community,” *The Algemeiner*, August 10, 2022. <https://www.algemeiner.com/2022/08/10/restoring-libyas-ancient-jewish-community/> (Downloaded: December 16, 2022.)

⁸⁵ Evidence given by Lillo Arbid, former President of the Jewish communities of Tripolitania (Libya) in: SHULEWITZ, *The Forgotten Millions*, 219–220.

Aden

The territory of the Aden Protectorate, which was under British control until November 1967, was home to some 9,000 Jews before 1948, whose number reduced to just 138 by June 1967, mainly as a result of the October 1965 riots. Their schools had been closed by then and their religious relics and community archives were taken abroad. However, the existence of this small religious community was also made impossible by the rapid deterioration of economic conditions and the political climate, the imminent withdrawal of Britain from Aden, the regular strikes and demonstrations against the colonial power, the strengthening of various local Arab nationalist groups and the intensification of their ongoing armed struggle for power, and the outbreak of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.⁸⁶ The latter, in particular, further increased the already considerable anti-British sentiment among the Muslim population, and the public mood towards Jews became particularly hostile. The low point came on 12 June, when a mob of mainly Arab refugees attacked the Jewish quarter in the Crater district, looting Jewish shops and beating an elderly man to death. A week after the incident, British colonial authorities imposed a curfew in Aden. During the latter period, all Jewish men, women and children were rounded up and taken by bus to the airport, with the exception of two persons. From there they were evacuated in a separate plane chartered by the Jewish community, partly to London and partly to Israel.⁸⁷ This meant the complete disappearance of the Jewish community in Aden, and with the departure of the British and the establishment of the People's Republic of Yemen at the end of November the route that had until then provided the only possibility for members of the Jewish community in North Yemen to emigrate to Israel was effectively closed.

Conclusion

As a result of the June War, the rejection of the Jews within the Arab world was manifested with elemental force as a result of the Arab defeat. The incidents in each Arab state show marked differences in terms of the involvement of the local Jewish community, the intensity and scale of the incidents, the identity of the perpetrators and the involvement of the national government. Nevertheless, a common point of reference is the meeting of the World Islamic Congress in Amman on 22 September 1967, where the retaliatory campaign of the Arab governments gained clear legitimacy. The declaration, adopted in a spirit of solidarity to justify the atrocities and further deprivation of rights, stated that

“the Congress is convinced that Jews living in Arab countries do not appreciate the kindness and protection that Muslims have granted them over the centuries. The Congress proclaims that the Jews who live in the Arab states and who have contact with Zionist circles or the state of Israel do not deserve the protection and kindness that Islam grants to non-Muslim citizens living freely in Islamic countries.”⁸⁸

⁸⁶ AHRONI, Reuben (2001), *Jewish Emigration from the Yemen, 1951–98: Carpet Without Magic*, Richmond, Curzon Press, 79–81.

⁸⁷ FISCHBACH, Michael R. (2008), *Jewish Property Claims against Arab Countries*, New York, Columbia University Press, 51.; KARLIKOW, *The American Jewish Year Book*, 143–144.

⁸⁸ BENSOUSSAN, *Jews in Arab Countries*, 461.

Emphasising the principle of collective responsibility, they declared Jews in Arab countries to be “*mortal enemies*” and called on Muslim – and not only Arab – governments to treat them accordingly. This, coupled with repressive measures in some states, led to further mass Jewish emigration, which continued into the 1970s. As a result, less than three decades after the establishment of the State of Israel, most of the ancient Jewish communities in North Africa were virtually depopulated. Morocco with about 2000, and Tunisia with about 1000 Jewish inhabitants were the only two Arab countries, where Jewish people continued to live in significant numbers.

Listening to the urban islanders: oral histories of resilience from Tuti island, Khartoum, Sudan

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Aims of the research

The main purpose of this research was to contribute to scientific knowledge to tackle consequences of climate and environmental changes in urban areas of the Global South. The project aimed at strengthening applied studies on urban sustainable development according to the Sustainable Development Goal 11, also known as the Urban SDG (USDG).¹ This project therefore explored urban community resilience initiatives that are participatory and inclusive and help mitigate climate change and adapt to increasingly challenging conditions in urban areas. In order to face environmental threats, at the roots of growing inequalities, there is a scholarly need to better understand the proactive or reactive acts of resilience that urban communities develop themselves. Dealing with the Sustainable Development Goal 10 and 13, this project also highlighted the ways communities in a specific urban neighbourhood contribute to enhance a sustainable climate action and strengthen efforts to reduce inequalities.

In order to study the effects of climate change and environmental issues in urban areas, the researcher conducted a temporal analysis focused on Tuti island in Greater Khartoum. Tuti is an island located at the heart of Greater Khartoum, Sudan, and is known for its vulnerability to environmental and climate change. The aim was to explore environmental challenges as well as the societal responses that are developed by the community through the use of participatory historical methods and, in particular, oral history.

One main research question informed this study:

To what extent is social memory of key environmental events present in society at large, and how does social memory contribute to resilience against flooding?

This interdisciplinary project will result in the co-creation of environmental oral histories that utilize local knowledge holders for promoting a sustainable future in Tuti. The project will therefore involve collaboration between local knowledge holders and researchers in Sudan and Sweden, and combine environmental sciences, humanities and social sciences to explore memories of environmental events in Tuti island as a unique case study of urban areas under human-induced environmental stress.

¹ KLOPP, Jacqueline M. and PETRETTA D.L. (2017), "The urban sustainable development goal: Indicators, complexity and the politics of measuring cities," *Cities* 63.

Background

Sudan is severely affected by upcoming climate change with projections of rising temperatures by over 3 degrees Celsius in 2060. Climate change in Sudan has a diverse range of effects: (1) environmental (desertification, reduction of agricultural land, extreme flooding, industrial pollution and deforestation), (2) social (migration and immigration), (3) political (mismanagement of existing resources like water).²

The capital region of Khartoum is a conurbation of three urban centers: Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman. This conglomerate is the largest urban area in Sudan, one of the largest in Africa, and as many other African mega-cities it has experienced an uncontrolled urbanization process over the last few decades, in tandem with rapid population growth. Currently Greater Khartoum is “host” to a population of multi-ethnic Internally Displaced People (IDPs) from the Darfur and Kordofan provinces, migrants from South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq and the latest arrivals of war refugees from Syria.³

Tuti island lies at the very center of Greater Khartoum. It is bordered by the Blue Nile to the East and the White Nile to the West, and it is on the island’s Northern tip that the two rivers merge and give birth to the Nile (Figure 1 and 2). Surrounded and modelled by water, Tuti has gained the title of “green eye” of the capital because of its rich vegetation, fertile soil and agricultural production.⁴ Tuti is inhabited by a small community of approximately 18,000 people,⁵ whose origins can be found in the migration of the Nubian Mahas tribe to the South in the 16th century, both in search for fertile soil and for Islamization purposes.⁶ Other Nubian groups, non-Nubians, and Western Sudanese are also present in the island and “are integrated into everyday life to different degrees”.⁷

Tuti suffers from severe flooding in the East. Tuti has a long history of flooding due to its peculiar location. According to the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), during the 2020 Sudanese floods “the Nile river and tributaries reached their

² ZAKIELDEEN, Sumaya (2009), “Adaptation to Climate Change: A Vulnerability Assessment for Sudan,” *Gatekeeper Series* 142. <https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/14586IIED.pdf>; WARNER, Koko and ZAKIELDEEN, S. (2011), “Loss and Damage Due to Climate Change: An Overview of the UNFCCC Negotiations,” *European Capacity Building Initiative (ECBI) Background Papers*; UNEP (2020), *Sudan. First State Environment and Outlook Report 2020. Environment for Peace and Sustainable Development* (2020). <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/sudan-first-state-environment-outlook-report-2020>

³ SALIH, Zeinab Mohammed (2016), *Shared Language and Religion in Sudan. A Long Way from Home, Syrians in Unexpected Places*, The New Humanitarian, 31 May 2016.

⁴ DAVIES, H.R.J. (1994), “A Rural Eye in the capital: Tuti Island, Khartoum, Sudan,” *Geojournal* 33. <https://oxfordclimatepolicy.org/publications/documents/LossandDamage.pdf>

⁵ UNDDR (2015), *Local Knowledge Saves Nile Islanders*. <https://www.undrr.org/news/local-knowledge-saves-nile-islanders>

⁶ LOBBAN, Richard A. (1981), “The law of elephants and the justice of monkeys: Two cases of anti-colonialism in the Sudan,” *Africa today* 28, 2.

⁷ ARANGO, Luisa (2015), “Some Theoretical Models, Methods and Concepts of Urban Anthropology in Sudan: The Case of Tuti Island Revisited,” *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue canadienne des études africaines* 49, 1.

highest levels in 100 years.”⁸ Three distinct types of flooding occur in Greater Khartoum and Tuti alike: from the rivers, from local streams, and from urban runoff. Regular flooding occurs every year between July and September when the Blue Nile reaches its peak in the rainy season, but extreme floods are becoming more common because of climate change.⁹ Blue Nile floods extending outside the normally flooded areas result from intense and highly localized downpours when prolonged heavy rain occurs in Blue Nile’s headwater in the Ethiopian Highlands.¹⁰ Infrastructural issues such as reduced infiltration, poor drainage and the presence of local streams subject to flooding emerge every time rainfall is prolonged.¹¹ Blue Nile floods are particularly devastating in East Tuti as people and properties are mostly concentrated in the proximity of Tuti’s Eastern banks. Furthermore, Blue Nile floods are causing a process of erosion, which has resulted in the receding of Tuti’s South-Eastern riverbanks.¹²

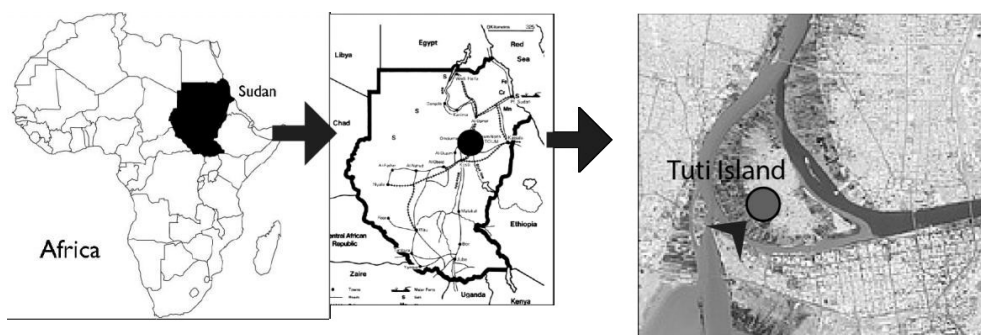


Figure 1. Tuti island. Source: I.Z. Barehldin

Theory

The material turn

The project is theoretically rooted in the framework of the “material turn”, which contests the classical separation between scientific knowledge and vernacular knowledge, and, more specifically, the traditional idea of a top-down knowledge transfer from so-called “experts”

⁸ NASA (2020), *Record Flooding in Sudan*, <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/147288/record-flooding-in-sudan>

⁹ ZERBONI, Alberto – BRANDOLINI, F. – MARIANI, G.S. – PEREGO, A. – SALVATORI, S. – USAI, D. – PELFINI, M. and WILLIAMS, M.A.J. (2020), “The Khartoum-Omdurman conurbation: a growing megacity at the confluence of the Blue and White Nile Rivers,” *Journal of Maps*, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17445647.2020.1758810>

¹⁰ WILLIAMS, Martin (2019), *The Nile basin: Quaternary geology, geomorphology and prehistoric environments*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

¹¹ MAHMOUD, Wifag Hassam – ELAĞIB, N.A. – GAESE, H. and HEINRICH, J. (2014), “Rainfall conditions and rainwater harvesting potential in the urban area of Khartoum,” *Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 91.

¹² ZERBONI – BRANDOLINI – MARIANI – PEREGO – SALVATORI – USAI – PELFINI and WILLIAMS, “The Khartoum-Omdurman conurbation.”

(e.g scientists) to indigenous communities.¹³ The "material turn" prioritizes materiality over discursivity and therefore encourages to look at those objects that are generated locally and contribute to the production of environmental knowledge such as maps, flora and fauna inventories, know-how, traditional knowledge, tales, legends, songs, etc.¹⁴ The "material turn" values the role of creativity, culture and tradition, and it invites us to place center-stage the expertise of local experts, thus contributing to the democratization of environmental knowledge.¹⁵ Taking the "material turn" as a theoretical framework offers scholars in African studies the opportunity to focus on the understanding, production and circulation of grassroots environmental knowledge.



Figure 2. Satellite image of Tuti island. Source: Google Earth

Social memory

Social memory is a key factor to understand and inform social resilience processes. Social memory is a concept utilized to indicate the connection between social identity and history, and its definition can vary according to the disciplinary perspective.¹⁶ Adger, Folke et al. define social memory as "the reservoirs of practices, knowledge, values and worldviews" institutions and individuals mobilize to cope with change.¹⁷ Wilson argues that social memory in human systems facilitates "learning and adjustment based on past experience" as any human system "carries with it the memory – or, in a more negative sense, the 'baggage' – of previous decision-making trajectories."¹⁸ He points out three components of social memory that are relevant for developing social resilience: community learning, tradi-

¹³ BICKER, Alan – ROY, E. and PARKES P. (ed.) (2000), *Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and its Transformations. Critical Anthropological Perspectives*, Amsterdam, Overseas Publisher Association.

¹⁴ LATOUR, Bruno (1987), "Les 'Vues' de l'esprit," *Réseaux. Communication – Technologie – Société* 27.

¹⁵ LEACH, Melissa and FAIRHEAD, J. (2002), "Modes de contestation: le 'savoir indigène' et la 'science des citoyens' en Afrique de l'Ouest et dans les Caraïbes," *Revue internationale des sciences sociales* 173.

¹⁶ FRENCH, Scot A., "What is Social Memory?" *Southern Cultures* 2, 1 (1995).

¹⁷ ADGER, Neil – HUGHES, T.P. – FOLKE, C. – CARPENTER, S.R. and ROCKSTROM, J. (2005), "Social-Ecological Resilience to Coastal Disasters," *Science* 309; WILSON, Geoff (2015), "Community Resilience and Social Memory," *Environmental Values* 24, 2.

¹⁸ WILSON, "Community Resilience and Social Memory."

tion, and networking.¹⁹ Learning involves observation and processing of information and experiences as well as engagement in discussion and practice at the community level. It is connected to place attachment and therefore it is incentivized by a genuine interest in preserving the community and its surrounding environment. Tradition refers to the environmental beliefs and customs handed down from generation to generation by cultural transmission. It is also linked to place attachment, especially in communities that have lived in a specific location over several generations.²⁰ Lastly, networking is a crucial factor in the mobilization of social memory against change. Indeed, social memory effectively contributes to resilience when it involves most community members.

This emphasis on social memory as a repository of knowledge, practices, values, and worldviews draws attention to its composite nature. On the one hand, traditional knowledge and practices are important aspects of social memory and are therefore central to social resilience. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), “traditional knowledge concerns knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities around the world.”²¹ It consists of knowledge and know-how accumulated across generations.²²

On the other hand, values and worldviews constitute important elements of social memory. Worldview refers to “the fundamental cognitive orientation of a person or group regarding the world and life,” and reveals how people interact and make sense of physical nature.²³ A worldview encompasses a set of values that “influences such things as how we see ourselves as individuals, how we interpret our role in society, how we deal with social issues, and what we regard as truth.”²⁴

Values can provide attributes and inclinations that contribute to develop resilience and overcome change. Such meanings and values not only act as mechanisms of path dependence in processes of adaptation, but they also “form the cognitive and institutional frame-

¹⁹ Ibid.; WILSON, Geoff – KELLY, C.L. – BRIASSOULIS, H. – FERRARA, A. – QUARANTA, G. – SALVIA, R. – DETSIS, V. – CURFS, M. – CERDA, A. – EL-AICH, A. – LIU, H. – KOSMAS, K. – ALADOS, C. – IMESON, A. – LANDGREBE-TRINKUNAITE, R. – SALVATI, L. – NAUMANN, S. – DANWEN, H. – IOSIFIDES, T. – KIZOS, T. – MANCINO, G. – JIANG, M. and ZHANG, P. (2017), “Social Memory and the Resilience of Communities Affected by Land Degradation,” *Land Degradation & Development* 28, 2.

²⁰ Stump, Daryl (2010), “Ancient and Backward or Long-Lived and Sustainable?” The Role of the Past in Debates Concerning Rural Livelihoods and Resource Conservation in Eastern Africa,” *World Development* 38, 9.

²¹ UNESCO (2007), *Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), Article 8(j): Traditional Knowledge and the Convention on Biological Diversity*, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/traditional-knowledge>

²² BERKES, Fikret – COLDING, J. and FOLKE, C. (2000), “Rediscovery of Traditional Ecological Knowledge as Adaptive Management,” *Ecological Applications* 10, 5, 125.

²³ CHUANG, Frank – MANLEY, E. and PETERSEN, A. (2020), “The Role of Worldviews in the Governance of Sustainable Mobility,” *Proceedings of the National Academic of Sciences of the United States of America* (PNAS) 117, 8.

²⁴ PARK, Chris and ALLABY, M. (2017), *Oxford Dictionary of Environment and Conservation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

works through which resilience, or lack thereof, is experienced and socially defined.”²⁵ Culture shapes specific values or qualities that are intrinsically ideal to develop effective response to climate change.²⁶

Method

Oral history, and the information and meanings it carries, is an effective tool to study social memory and therefore resilience at community level. Oral history, long used by scholars in the social sciences and the humanities, draws on the unique perspectives of individuals reflecting upon their past and how it intertwines with the present. Paul Thompson, Alessandro Portelli, Michael Frisch, and Valerie Raleigh Yow are prominent names in a long tradition of oral historians devoted to the promotion of an “history from below.”²⁷ Born to give voice to the “unheard” in society and to contest dominant narratives of the past, oral history has become a valuable tool in several fields of study, and a larger use has been advocated in the field of environmental studies.²⁸

The value of oral history for the study of flood events and flood memories has been discussed in the scientific literature for nearly four decades. Drawing primarily on Berkes’ work, Williams and Riley have recently assessed the use of oral history in environmental history and identified three main areas of contribution: knowledge, practices, and power.²⁹ First, oral history provides unique empirical material on events and phenomena that cannot be captured otherwise. Hence it can document the “very stuff that rarely gets into any kind of public record.”³⁰ Second, oral histories can give detailed insights into people’s practices, namely how people interact with the surrounding environment. Within this framework, oral history can be used as a tool to understand how people make sense of the environment and attribute meaning to it. This aspect is, according to Portelli, what distinguishes oral history from other disciplines: “the first thing that makes oral history different, therefore, is that it tells us less about events than about their meaning.”³¹ Last, oral narratives have the potential to contest dominant narratives of the environment and human ecology found in colonial archives and scientific documents.

In line with the participatory approach that guides the RUS project, data collection involved synergistic relations among local research participants from Tuti, Sudanese researchers, and a Sudanese institutional partner – the Institute for Environmental Studies

²⁵ O’BRIEN, Karen (2009), “Climate Change and Values: Do Changing Values Define the Limits to Successful Adaptation?” in ADGER, Neil W. – LORENZONI, Irene and O’BRIEN, Karen (eds.) (2009), *Adapting to Climate Change: Thresholds, Values, Governance*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

²⁶ ADGER Neil – BARNETT, J. – BROWN, K. – MARSHALL, N. and O’BRIEN, K. (2013), “Cultural Dimensions of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation,” *Nature Climate Change* 3.

²⁷ PERKS, Robert and THOMPSON, A. (2016), *The Oral History Reader*, London, Routledge.

²⁸ WILLIAMS, Brian and RILEY, M. (2018), “The Challenge of Oral History to Environmental History,” *Environment and History* 26, 2.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ RALEIGH YOW, Valerie (2005), *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Lanham, MD, Altamirra Press.

³¹ PORTELLI, Alessandro (2016), “What Makes Oral History Different,” in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, London, Routledge.

(IES) at Khartoum University. This research drew on ten oral histories co-created by Tuti islanders (narrators) in collaboration with two Sudanese graduates from Khartoum University, Aya Altom and Elizabeth Achu Jervase (interviewers). Visual material complemented oral sources and helped elicit co-creation of oral histories. It consisted of maps drawn by some of the research participants in collaboration with Altom as well as photographs and videos of the 2020 floods provided by Sudanese researchers affiliated to the RUS team.³² Vittorio Felci, an historian by training based at Malmö University, planned the fieldwork together with IES, Altom, and Jervase during a preliminary fieldtrip in Tuti, which occurred in January-February 2020. He later took primary responsibility for oral history training workshops for Altom and Jervase; co-formulation of the interview guide; supervision of oral history co-creation. These activities were conducted via Zoom due to the Covid-19 pandemic. IES facilitated community entry in Tuti by introducing the project to key community members. Altom and Jervase took responsibility to identify key research participants. Snowball sampling (in which participants assist researchers in finding other participants) was also utilized to reach the desired number of participants. Eight elderly men and two elderly women took part in this study. Prioritization of elderly people resulted from their life-long experience in flood management. The patriarchal structure of Tuti's society is reflected in the flood management system and explains the higher number of male research participants. All research participants belong to the dominant ethnic group, the Mahas. Altom and Jervase provided participants with a detailed consent form prior to oral history co-creation. Participation in the research is therefore voluntary. All research participants have agreed to use their real names except one, who has been anonymized. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the need for follow-up interviews, fieldwork was conducted over an extended period, between February 2020 and April 2021. Data analysis was jointly conducted over the same period by Felci, Altom and Jervase in collaboration with key research participants. Dissemination has consisted so far in an article for *Études sur la région méditerranéenne*, "Resilience in Urban Sudan (RUS): a Temporal Analysis of Social Cohesion and Resilience to Tackle the Consequences of Climate and Environmental Change in Urban Khartoum,"³³ the ArcGIS StoryMap "We Are Proud of Them": The Role of the Past in Tuti's Resilience against flooding,"³⁴ and an article in the *International Journal of African Historical Studies* titled "An Oral History Study of Social Memory and Flood Resilience in Tuti Island, Greater Khartoum, Sudan."³⁵

³² Yassir Abdallah Mohammed Elhassan, Malik Adam Alldoum Adam, and Mohamed Abdallah Ishag Mohamed, students at IES and members of the RUS team, provided photographs and videos of the 2020 floods in Tuti.

³³ FELCI, Vittorio (2020), "A Temporal Analysis of Social Cohesion and Resilience to Tackle the Consequences of Climate and Environmental Change in Urban Sudan," *Études sur la région méditerranéenne* 24, 1.

³⁴ FELCI, Vittorio – ALTOM, A. – JERVASE, E. – KAIS, K. I. A. A. – ABDEL-RAHIM, K. A. – ABBAS, M. A. – MUDAWI, M. H. – OSMAN, M. – MODAWI, A. M. A. – ABDULLAH, H. M. and IDRIS, M. A. (2022), "We are proud of them: the role of the past in Tuti's resilience. Against flooding," *ArcGIS StoryMap*, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1a53f4f846db4c9b8da980e13911537b>

³⁵ FELCI, Vittorio and ALTOM, A. (2022), "An Oral History Study of Social Memory and Flood Resilience in Tuti Island, Greater Khartoum, Sudan," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 55, 3.

Results

Elevating the concept of social memory as the conceptual framework for analysis, oral history revealed the presence of memories that connect the people of Tuti to past floods and provide lay expertise for present and future resilience needs. Due to the lack of a permanent infrastructure to protect the island from recurrent flooding, the Tuti community has resorted to vernacular knowledge and available resources to mitigate floods since 1946. This is reflected in the system of *tayas*, a grassroots initiative consisting of river monitoring (Figure 3) and construction of sandbag dams to block the flow of water (Figure 4). Both activities depend on a profound knowledge of the behavior of the three rivers as well as the territory of the island, in particular those areas that are most vulnerable to flood events during the rainy season. A scientific assessment of the mitigation impact of these measures is difficult to make in such a qualitative study. However, according to the UNDRR, the people of Tuti have succeeded in saving lives and containing damage, which explains the election of Tuti as Champion of Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015.

Social memory is not only about knowledge and practices. It is also about those values, worldviews, and meanings that provide ideal qualities for communities to develop effective resilience strategies. Tuti's history, both written and oral, highlighted the role of values in shaping community response to past adversities, be they human-induced or nature-induced. "Unity," "cooperation," and "collective efforts" emerged as key terms in oral accounts of past floods and echoed Lobban's emphasis on the cohesion and "strong community spirit" that characterized the island.³⁶ The research participants tended to associate the power of collective action and the underlying cultural values behind it to a Sudanese initiative, *nafeer*. *Nafeer* revolves around the idea of mutual support in case of need or danger and finds application both in everyday life and extraordinary circumstances. According to the research participants, *nafeer* is closely associated to the work of *tayas* (Figure 5). *Nafeer* incentivizes collective efforts for protecting people and properties against flood as well as post-disturbance intervention such as humanitarian assistance and reconstruction. While *nafeer* and its underlying values are important components of social memory, place attachment is closely correlated to it. Place attachment is a necessary precondition to develop strong social memory. It contributes to social resilience as it inspires protective-place behaviour. Place attachment in Tuti depends on long-term residence and embeddedness. Socio-economic and religious factors are also of importance for the research participants, whose ancestors have inhabited the island since the sixteenth century.

Although men are primarily responsible for *tayas*, the system is collectively owned and driven by mobilization at the community level. From the elderly to the young (Figure 6), from men to women, and from old residents to newly arrived, everyone seems to have a role to play. The construction of the bridge and the slow emergence of a more heterogeneous society has not, according to the research participants, affected the collective nature of Tuti's response to flooding. Oral histories as well as visual material produced during the 2020 Sudanese floods showed a set of highly coordinated activities that one of the research participants described, in a celebratory manner, as "the superior harmony," namely a disci-

³⁶ Lobban, Richard A. (1975), "Alienation, Urbanisation, and Social Networks in the Sudan," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 13, 3.

plined division of competences and roles in accordance with local social norms. It is this capacity to coordinate collective action that led, according to the participants, to Tuti's election as Champion of Disaster Risk Reduction. The award and the international recognition that followed the election have reinforced the diffuse sense of pride and belonging that characterizes the island, and this event is likely to provide a motivational factor for coping with new floods in the future.



Figure 3. Tents in al Tawoon, Tuti island. Source: RUS team



Figure 4. Newly-built dams. Source: RUS team



Figure 5. A human chain is created to transport sandbags to the site selected for the new dam.
Source: RUS Team



Figure 6. Children filling up bags with sand. Source: RUS team

Conclusion

This study highlighted the analytical value of oral history as an interdisciplinary tool to study human-nature interaction, in this case flood resilience at community level. Not only can oral history provide us with novel details on events, phenomena and practices whose knowledge is non-existent or limited. Oral history can also stimulate reflections about meanings and interpretations that the narrators associate to these events and phenomena.

Recognizing the contribution of oral history to *knowledge* and *practice* as advocated by Williams and Riley (2018), this interdisciplinary study has given voice to local experts to produce and circulate novel knowledge about the environment in Tuti as well as the underresearched traditional practice of *tayas*. Most importantly, oral history allowed us to look beyond the traditional practice of *tayas* and disclose the importance of collective action for the research participants. This is an invaluable aspect of this study as it suggests the function of *tayas* as an agent of social cohesion, thus providing an excellent example of how traditional systems and their preservation can contribute to build a peaceful and sustainable future.

This study is preliminary and cannot draw indisputable conclusions. It presents two major limitations. Firstly, while the exclusive participation of elderly people guarantees invaluable insights into Tuti's social memory in all its components, it may also contribute to a myopic vision of Tuti's past and present. Secondly, the ethnic affiliation of the research participants must be also considered. Tuti's society has never been a monolithic, homogeneous entity based on the Mahas only, and changes in the demography of the island have been steady, especially after the construction of the bridge in 2009. The risk involved in such a circumscribed pool of research participants is the romanticization of Tuti's past to the detriment of an unbiased analysis of the present that could scale down not only the real impact of *tayas* in flood mitigation but also the spirit of unity and cooperation that is said to characterize the system. Further research is therefore needed to give voice to the new generations as well as the non-Mahas groups in the island.

Raspad Monarhije i Mađarski nacionalni odbor u Nađbečkerek, novembar 1918

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„Velika istorija“ o promenama posle Prvog svetskog rata danas je prilično dobro poznata u mađarskoj istoriografiji, ali su događaji u regionima udaljenim od centra moći, uz nekoliko izuzetaka, mnogo manje razrađeni. Mađarska istoriografija koja prikazuje istoriju južnog regiona između 1918. i 1920. godine, uključujući i moja lična istraživanja, usredsređuje se na proces promene mađarske i jugoslovenske vlasti, a težnje tadašnjih lokalnih društava samo su dotaknute.¹ Istoriografija na srpskom jeziku 1918. godini pristupa isključivo iz aspekta „južnoslovenskog narodnog prisajedinjenja“, pravednog ispunjenja južnoslovenskih nacionalnih težnji, a vojno zauzimanje Južne oblasti vidi kao oslobođenje.² Čini se da postoje međusobno teški periodi mađarske i srpske istorije u 20. veku.

Kako se stari svet, obeležen Austrougarskom monarhijom, urušio na periferijama daleko od prestonice, kakvi su pokušaji u svakom gradu i selu bili da se stvori novi, posleratni svet, i kakve su se snage suprotstavljale tim nastojanjima? Kako su promene povezane sa evropskim dešavanjima, zasnovane na uzvišenoj ideji nacionalnog principa i demokratije, uticale na nacionalno podeljenu mikrozajednicu posle rata? Kakva je bila „vrtoglavica istorije“? U svojoj studiji, pokušaću da predstavim aktivnosti Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nađbečkerek³. Odbor je predviđao da će takav demokratski preobražaj tek rođene Mađarske, krajem oktobra 1918. godine, usklađen s ciljevima centralnog Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Budimpešti, biti u graničnim okvirima istorijske Mađarske. O događajima koji se povezuju sa imenom Mihalja Karoljija vode se beskrajne rasprave ne samo u našoj istoriografiji, već i u politici prisećanja. Ne želim da analiziram ove sporove, a još manje da zauzmem stav o njima, nego koristim davno poznatu metodu istoriografije:

¹ A. ŠAJTI, Enikő (2004), *Impériumváltások, revízió, kisebbség. Magyarok a Délvidéken 1918–1947*, Budapest, 11–152.; A. ŠAJTI, Enikő (2010), *Büntudat és győztes fölény. Magyarország, Jugoszlávia és a délvidéki magyarok*, Szeged, 11–64.; HORNYÁK, Árpád (2010), „Bácska-Baranya térsége az I. világháború után – a szerb megszállás“, in HORNYÁK, Árpád, *Találkozások – ütközések*, Pécs, 7–21.; HORNYÁK, Árpád (2018), „A Délvidék délszláv birtokbavétele Marko Protić szerb ortodox esperes emlékei az 1918 novemberi, szabadkai impériumváltásról“, in KUNT, Gergely et al. (ur.), *Trianon arcai. Naplók, visszaemlékezések, levelek*, Budapest, 300–314.; MÉSZÁROS, Zoltán (2012), „Szabadka és környéke 1918-as megszállása“, *Híd*, 3., 102–114.; DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2014), *Új partok felé. Kisebbségi kiütkezés, szellemi és politikai irányzatok a Délvidéken és a Magyar Párt megalakulása (1918–1923)*, Zenta.

² U vezi s Vojvodinom kao najnovije videti NJEGOVAN, Drago (2004), *Prisajedinjenje Vojvodine Srbiji: prilog političkoj istoriji Srba u Vojvodini do 1921. godine*, Novi Sad (ćirilica).

³ Veliki Bečkerek, danas Zrenjanin.

pozivam se na savremene izvore i pokušavam da se prisetim događaja u njihovim okvirima, u „istorijskoj sadašnjosti“ tog vremena.

Dana 16. oktobra 1918. godine, Karl I od Austrije najavio je da će se Austrija transformisati u saveznu državu, u kojoj će svaka etnička grupa formirati posebnu državnu zajednicu na svojoj teritoriji, a pozvao je nacionalne zajednice da formiraju svoje nacionalne odbore. Dakle, slomu dualističke Ugarske je prethodio slom carskog centra u Beču. Istog dana, premijer Šandor Vekerle je u parlamentu saopštio da su, zbog federalne transformacije austrijske polovine Monarhije, Mađarska i Austrija povezane još samo personalnom unijom. Kao odgovor na premijerov govor, Mihalj Karolji je predložio pismeni podnesak, u kojem je „s poštovanjem“ zamolio Karla I od Austrije da uspostavi politički, vojno i ekonomski nezavisnu Mađarsku, pored toga predložio je uvođenje demokratskih sloboda i zemljišnu reformu. Dan nakon proglašenja carske proklamacije, bivši premijer Istvan Tisa, u dramatičnom parlamentarnom govoru, priznao je ratni poraz. „Ja se ne želim igrati nikakvog zavaravanja rečima. Priznajem ono što je juče rekao časni poslanik, grof Mihalj Karolji, da smo izgubili ovaj rat [...] izgubili smo ga ne u tom smislu da ga ne bismo mogli nastaviti i pružati čvrstu i herojsku odbranu; da konačna pobjeda bude još skuplja za neprijatelja, ali smo ga izgubili u tom smislu da se zbog promene odnosa snaga više ne možemo nadati pobjedi u ratu i da kao rezultat toga moramo tražiti mir pod uslovima koje će naši neprijatelji prihvatiti u datim okolnostima.“⁴ Govor je imao poguban i ozbiljno demoralisajući efekat, kako u zaleđu, tako i među jedinicama koje su se još borile na frontu. Suočen s bezizlaznom situacijom i osećajem nemoći pred događajima, premijer Šandor Vekerle podneo je ostavku 23. oktobra, na poslednjoj sednici parlamenta.

Potom su se 27. i 30. oktobra „duše koje su bile izmorene od rata“ u prestonici ujedinile u ogroman masovni pokret,⁵ a 24. oktobra osnovan je Nacionalni odbor. Istorijaska Mađarska propala je 31. oktobra 1918 – grof Mihalj Karolji položio je premijersku zakletvu pred nadvojvodom Jožefom, kao homo regius (kraljev punovlastan predstavnik), u Budimskom zamku. Njegova vlada je već položila zakletvu u Nacionalnom odboru. Uveče, 25. oktobra, od parlamentarnih zastupnika stranke Nezavisnost i Stranke 48 koju je predvodio Mihalj Karolji, od Građanske radikalne stranke koju predvodi Oskar Jasí i od Socijaldemokratske partije Mađarske koju predvode Erne Garami i Žigmond Kunfi, odnosno od dva parlamentarna i od jedne vanparlamentarne stranke (socijaldemokrate), formiran je Mađarski nacionalni odbor, kojem je predsedavao Mihalj Karolji. Predsednik Nacionalnog odbora je kasnije postao Janoš Hok, duhovni pastir, član Karoljijeve stranke.⁶ U svom

⁴ *Képviseelőházi Napló*, 17. oktobar 1918, 292. U septembru 1918. godine, u okupiranom Beogradu otvorena je velika likovna izložba u znaku mađarske kulturne prevlasti. A Istvan Tisa, koji je tada još bio na funkciju premijera, posetio je 21. septembra Sarajevo, gde je saopštio srpsko-bošnjačko-hrvatskoj delegaciji, koja je došla da ga poseti i koja je u vojoj peticiji otvoreno izrazila podršku principu južnoslovenskog jedinstva i samoopredeljenja, da je on odbacio tu primedbu i da je „Mađarska dovoljno jaka da satre svoje neprijatelje pre nego što i sama pogine.“ Posle ovog, delegacija je ostavila mađarskog premijera, okrenula se i otišla uz reč: „Hajdemo“. HATOS, Pál (2018), *Az elátkozott köztársaság. Az 1918-as összeomlás és forradalom története*, Budapest, 87.

⁵ Laslo Edenburg, osamnaestogodišnji student, bio je jedini koji je bio lakše ranjen u demonstracijama u Budimpešti, od policijskog mača je dobio udarac po glavi. *Torontál*, 31. oktobar 1918.

⁶ Zbog prostornih ograničenja, o malo poznatim likovima tog doba u biografiju upisujem samo one bitne podatke koje su trenutno dostupni. Janoš Hok (1859–1936), katolički sveštenik, političar, pisac,

manifestu od 12 tačaka, koji su objavili sledećeg dana, oni su sebe proglasili opozicionom vladom i formulisali zadatke koji predstoje: tražili su hitan završetak rata, opoziv vojnika, prekid savezništva s Nemačkom konfederacijom, uspostavljanje potpune nezavisnosti zemlje, raspuštanje Predstavničkog doma; tražili su i nove opšte izbore, po principu prava tajnog glasa. Kada je reč o nacionalnosti, obećali su da će implementirati Vilsonove principe bez ugrožavanja teritorijalnog integriteta zemlje. Kao što možemo pročitati u manifestu: „Nemađarskim narodima u zemlji mora se garantovati pravo na samoopredeljenje na osnovu Vilsonovih principa. Nadamo se da teritorijalni integritet Mađarske neće biti ugrožen ovim principima i da će biti postavljen na sigurnijim temeljima.“⁷ Uz to, dodali su i reformu socijalne politike, a najavljena je i obimna reforma imovinske i socijalne politike. Pitanje oblika vladavine (republike) nije bilo postavljeno u manifestu Narodnog odbora, njegovi članovi još nisu razmišljali o republici, bili su spremni da spasu tron Karla I od Austrije. Proglas i u njemu navedeni ciljevi, u znatnom delu mađarskog stanovništva bili su primljeni sa oduševljenjem. Proglašenje Narodne republike bilo je tek 16. novembra 1918. godine u kupolnoj sali Parlamenta.

Nacionalni odbor bio je nosilac glavne državne vlasti, a stvarnu vlast je poverio vladi, ali je zadržao pravo kontrole.⁸ Shodno tome, saslušao je izveštaj premijera i članova vlade i zadužio ih da izrade zakone. Kancelarija Nacionalnog odbora obavljala je praktične, administrativne poslove, održavala kontakte s regionalnim nacionalnim odborima, sastavljala dnevni red sednica Nacionalnog odbora i koordinirala kontakte između članica i regionalnih organizacija. Delatnost Narodnog odbora i narodne vlade zamenili su specijalizovani odbori umesto parlamentarnih odbora. Postojalo je osam takvih odbora: za agrarnu reformu, za pravosuđe, za javnu upravu, za saobraćajnu politiku, za javno obrazovanje, za javno zdravlje, za finansije i za socijalnu politiku.⁹

Takozvani Veliki nacionalni odbor sazvan je 16. novembra. Razne organizacije slale su svoje delegate, a ujedno su sami sebe proglasili narodnom skupštinom. Istog dana, Predstavnički dom Parlamenta objavio je raspuštanje, a Donji dom proglasio je da je javna sednica završena. Tako je Veliki nacionalni odbor, koji je delovao kao Narodna skupština, postao vrhovni organ glavne vlasti pod nazivom Narodni odbor Mađarske, a potom je usvajanjem Prve narodne rezolucije iz 1918. proglasio da je „Mađarska nezavisna i samostalna narodna republika“. Nadalje, odredio je i to da će, do odluke Ustavotvorne nacionalne skupštine koja će biti sazvana u budućnosti, glavna vlast biti prenet na narodnu vladu kojoj je predsedavao Mihalj Karolji, a tu dužnost je on obavljao uz podršku upravnog odbora

predsednik Nacionalnog odbora. Liberal, tada poslanik u parlamentu s nacionalnom programom, član stranke Just, zatim pristalica Mihalja Karoljija. Poznat po svojoj elokvenciji, igrao je značajnu ulogu u parlamentarnim borbama za opšte pravo glasa i politici i u parlamentarnim borbama protiv politike Istvana Tise. Kasnije je emigrirao a zatim se vratio kući u Mađarsku. Osuđen je na godinu dana zatvora zbog svojih članaka u izgnanstvu, u kojima je napadao kontrarevolucionarni sistem. Autor je više teoloških i religioznih istorijskih dela.

⁷ *Népszava*, 26. oktobar 1918. *Torontal* nije objavio tekst manifesta, ali je u broju od 26. oktobra pisao o osnivanju Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora i o sadržaju deklaracije.

⁸ *Torontál*, 4. novembar 1918. *Megállapodás a kormány és a Nemzeti Tanács között* [*Sporazum između vlade i Nacionalnog odbora*].

⁹ SZABÓ, Pál Csaba (ur.) (2006), *A magyar állam története 1711–2006*, Bölcsész Konzorcium, Budapest, 145. mek.oszk.hu 04800/04807/04807.pdf (24.09.2022.)

Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora. Nakon ove odluke – kojom je Nacionalni odbor takođe ovlastio vladu da izradi određene zakone – Nacionalni odbor više nisu sazivali.¹⁰

Slom starog sveta u Nadbečkereku odvijao se uporedo s dešavanjima u prestonici; 31. oktobra dogodile su se velike demonstracije u gradu, gde su „demonstranti zauzeli stav u korist programa Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, a takođe su doneli odluku i o tome da formiraju nacionalne odbore okruga Nadbečkerek i županije Torontal. I vojska i civilno stanovništvo sa oduševljenjem su demonstrirali u korist nezavisne mađarske vojske i duha vremena da se omogući demokratski razvoj“. Demonstracijama je grad pokazao da „želi mir, potpuni mir“.¹¹ Torontalske novine su izvestile o atmosferi demonstracija na sledeći način: „Protestne grupe šetaju gradom i pevaju patriotske pesme. Ispred statue nekadašnjeg ministra odbrane, generala Erna Kiša, čovek sa železničkom kapom na klarinetu svira slatke mađarske note, iz mase ljudi diže se više hiljada uzdaha ka nebu, koje je već od jutra sunčano: ovo je mađarska sloboda, prvo, lepo i sunčano prepodne samostalne, nezavisne Mađarske. Na ulici vidimo vojnike, civile, ruske zarobljenike kako se grle na ulici,¹² onaj drugi ima trobojnu crveno-belu-zelenu kokardu na kapi.“¹³ Posle mnogo decenija, Košut je i dalje bio u pravu.

Dan ranije, 1. novembra, Mađarski nacionalni odbor je telegrafski obavestio „sve činovnike“ Nadbečkereka da su preuzeli vlast u Budimpešti. Kako su pisali: „nijedna kap mađarske krvi nije prolivena – kralj je imenovao grofa Mihalja Karoljija za premijera – Nacionalni odbor se prekonstituisao u vladu. – [...] Nacionalni odbor poziva narod Mađarske da [nečitko – E.Š.] sačuva red, jer je zaštita lične bezbednosti najveći interes – nalaže Nacionalni odbor, zarad otadžbine, njene nezavisnosti i svetog interesa mira – da svi, narod i vojska, u najvećem redu i spokoju sačekaju uputstva odbora“. Tražili su objavljivanje onog što piše u telegramu, a na kraju je svima naloženo da formiraju nacionalne odbore.¹⁴ Komunikaciju centra i sela, u tim danima, prilično je otežavala činjenica da je telefonska veza s prestonicom bila prekinuta, a i to što je železnički saobraćaj bio obustavljen. Dana 31. oktobra, na inicijativu radnika i činovnika u Fabrici ulja, Mlinu „Hungaria“ i Domaćem mlinu, održan je pripremni sastanak u hotelu u ulici Međehaz. Sastanak je otvorio činovnik Fabrike ulja Hugo Deneš. Pojavio se tu i kapetan Rihter iz 12. udruženog pešadijskog puka,

¹⁰ ERÉNYI, Tibor (1990), „A Magyar Köztársaság 1918–1919-ben“, in PÖLÖSKEI, Ferenc (ur.), *A köztársasági eszme és mozgalom Magyarországon*, Budapest, 27–43. http://polhist.hu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/erenyi_koztarsasag_1918_1919.pdf (20.09.2022.)

¹¹ *Torontál*, 1. novembar 1918. Megalakult a népkormány [*Uspostavljena je narodna vlast*].

¹² U trenutku sloma, prema danas prihvaćenim podacima, na teritoriji Monarhije bilo je 1,3 miliona ruskih ratnih zarobljenika, od kojih je približno 425.000 bilo u Mađarskoj. Monarhija je sklopila Ugovor o ratnim zarobljenicima s Rusijom 3. jula 1918. godine. U sklopu toga, 1.565 oficira i 111.841 vojnika zarobljenika prevezeno je kući do 1. novembra. FÓRIS, Ákos (2017), „Orosz hadifoglyok Magyarországon 1918 végén“, in KRAUSZ, Tamás – KATKÓ, Márton Áron – MÉSZÁROS, Zsófia (ur.), *Világháború, világforradalom, világbéke*, Budapest, 58–59.

¹³ *Torontál*, 2. novembar 1918. Lobogódíszben a város [*Grad okičen zastavama*].

¹⁴ Várady Arhiv, telegram Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora od 1. novembra 1918. u Budimpešti, bez broja.

stacioniranog u Nadbečkereku, sa oficirima koji su bili oduševljeni zbog trenutka izbijanja mađarskih osećanja, a koji su dočekani „glasnim klicanjem“. Svrhu sastanka je objasnio advokat Imre Varadi. U svom govoru, on je izrazio osećanja većine kada je rekao: „Razlika koja je odvajala građanina od građanina i podela koja je odvajala građane ove zemlje od građana koji su govorili drugim jezicima, i sve njih od radničke klase, to je sada nestalo. [...] Vojska i građanstvo su se danas spojili.“ Pošto Karoljijeva stranka u to vreme nije postojala u gradu, pozvao je na njeno formiranje. Temišvarski oficir obavestio je prisutne o dešavanjima u Temišvaru, o formiranju vojnog odbora i nacionalnog odbora, a potom je okupljeni narod otpevao državnu himnu. U ovom oduševljenom raspoloženju, poručnik po imenu Jenő Gomori „izvukao je mač i zakleo se nacionalnom odboru“. Na to su prisutni oficiri skinuli hrizanteme sa svojih kapa i stavili kokarde.¹⁵

Osnivački sastanak nacionalnog odbora u Nadbečkereku održan je 3. novembra, u zgradi gradskog Kasina. U međuvremenu se saznalo i to da je i Agošton Janko, podžupan,¹⁶ kao načelnik županije Torontal,¹⁷ takođe zauzeo stav u korist Nacionalnog odbora, iako je želeo da formiranje nacionalnog odbora poveri starim članovima županijske zakonodavne vlasti, što je skupština odbacila. Ovog puta, Varadi je održao govor pun istorijskih paralela. On je ta vremena upoređio s mohačkom katastrofom, u tom smislu što je Ugarska i tada imala mladog kralja, „koji je imao malo iskustva i bio pod uticajem loših savetnika. I sada je isto – nastavio je – ali na sreću, naš mladi kralj u poslednji čas, doduše sa zakašnjenjem, popustio je narodnoj želji i imenovao vladu koja će stvoriti novu Ugarsku“.¹⁸ Trideset članova i dvadeset zamenika izabrano je u Nacionalni odbor. Prisutni su aklamacijom izabrali Imre Varadija za predsednika Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nadbečkereku. Potpredsednici su bili Šamu Kardos i Erno Sekelj, službenici su bili advokati Arpad Kartal i Nandor Levai, a blagajnik Aurel Majer.¹⁹

Varadi je započeo svoju aktivnu političku karijeru za vreme Monarhije, kao opozicionar. Bio je prvi opozicioni član Odbora za zakonodavstvo županije Torontal, a između 1905. i 1910. godine biran je za poslanika u parlamentu u ime Stranke nezavisnosti i Stranke 48. Njegovo političko poreklo, političko delovanje u opozicionoj Nezavišničkoj i četrdesetosmaškoj stranci njegov zahtev za reformu izbornog zakona i zahtev za podelu crkvene imovine, koji nosi ideale napretka i ljudske besprekornosti, kao i njegova prošlost

¹⁵ *Torontál*, 1. novembar 1918. Nagybecskerek csatlakozása a nemzeti tanácsokhoz [*Prijem Nadbečke- reka u nacionalne odbore*].

¹⁶ Agošton Janko (1856–?) pravnik i direktor Društva za zaštitu protiv poplava Gornjeg Torontala. Bio je poverenik lokalnih vlasti u 19. veku za kolonizaciju okoline Pančeva sa sikulima. Svoju županijsku službu je počeo 1881. godine u Torontalske županiji, a između 1903. i 1920. bio je pod- župan Torontalske županije. Posle srpske okupacije, nasilno je uklonjen iz službe, uhapšen i potom proteran. Godine 1921. bio je zamenik župana župe Čonka–Torontal, a između 1923. i 1931. bio je glavni župan župe Tolna.

¹⁷ Podžupan je bio načelnik županijske javne uprave i činovničke službe. Imao je pravo da preduzme potrebne mere u svim slučajevima koji nisu bili u nadležnosti odbora ili drugih službi. Ova pozicija je ukinuta Zakonom o odborima iz 1950. godine.

¹⁸ *Torontál*, 4. novembar 1918. Megalakult a Nagybecskereki Nemzeti Tanács [*Osnovan je Nacionalni odbor Nadbečkereka*].

¹⁹ DR. LÖBL, Árpád (1967): „A Nagybecskereki Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei. 1918. november 3.“ in *Godišnjak Filozofskog fakulteta u Novom Sadu*. Knjiga X. [A Novi Sad-i Bölcsészeti Kar évkönyve, X. évfolyam], Különnymat, Novi Sad, 421–422.

povezana s pomenutim idealima napretka, njegovo verovanje u univerzalne ljudske vrednosti (bio je mason²⁰), njegovo angažovanje u nacionalnoj i gradskoj politici i stečeno praktično iskustvo i na kraju, ali ne i najmanje važno, osobine njegovog tolerantnog karaktera – učinile su ga pogodnim za ovaj zadatak.²¹ Njegovi pogledi na budućnost istorijske Mađarske slagali su se ne samo s težnjama Karolijjeve vlade, nego – bez preterivanja možemo reći – i sa stavovima mađarske inteligencije tog vremena, pa čak i celokupnog mađarskog stanovništva. On je zamišljao da će narodnosti živeti zajedno s Mađarima u „snažnoj i mirnoj i srdačnoj saradnji“ u granicama istorijske Mađarske.²² Kako je naveo u pismu koje je 16. decembra napisao Aurelu Lazaru, članu Rumunske nacionalne partije i Rumunskog nacionalnog odbora, gradonačelniku Oradea: „Danas nam je potrebna *poštena i otvorena* izjava da mi – Rumuni, Srbi, Švabe, Saksonci i Ukrajinci – mislimo da naše srećno i zadovoljno postojanje na teritoriji ove zemlje jeste povezano s našim pravičnim odnosom s Mađarima, da nas zajednički interes povezuje i stoga želimo da živimo zajedno s Mađarima u snažnoj, mirnoj i srdačnoj saradnji.“²³

To se ne pominje u zapisniku, ali je i Torontal u svom tekstu o formiranju Nacionalnog odbora napisao da su Srbi na inauguracionoj sednici saopštili da „za sada ne učestvuju ni u jednom političkom pokretu, sa simpatijom prate i podržavaju s najvećom spremnošću sve napore koji imaju za cilj zaštitu lične i imovinske bezbednosti građana i u tome će učestvovati punom snagom“.²⁴

Srbi iz Nadbečkereka su u to vreme sa izrazitom pažnjom pratili napredovanje srpske vojske, posebno posmatrajući Zagreb i Beograd. Jedan od veoma cenjenih vođa Srba u Nadbečkereku, Emil Gavrilu,²⁵ advokat koji je ubrzo postao počasni predsednik gradskog Srpskog nacionalnog odbora, još je bio u internaciji. Po izbijanju rata u Monarhiji, zabran-

²⁰ Pal Hatoš pruža nijansiranu analizu odnosa između masona i revolucije „jesenjih ruža“. HATOS, *Az elátkozott köztársaság*, 153–163. Hatoš se suočava s mnogim mitovima koji su i danas živi i skreće pažnju na činjenicu da su mnogi konzervativni mađarski političari bili i masoni u to vreme. Na primer, Đula Andraši, Šandor Vekerle ili Istvan Fridrih, koji se posle pada revolucije okrenuo prema antirevolucionarnom hrišćanskom kursu. Pored brojnih naučnika, intelektualaca i pisaca, jedan od najvećih trofeja masona bio je pesnik Endre Adi. „Masonski internacionalizam se kremirao u plamenu svetskog rata“, kaže autor u svojoj knjizi (isto, 154).

²¹ Za Varadijev život i aktivnosti videti VÁRADY, Lóránd (2005), „Dr. Várady Imre“, *Létünk* 35, 4, 82–94. i A. SAJTI, Enikő (2016), *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés. Várady Imre (1867–1959) bánáti magyar politikus iratai*, Újvidék (za Varadijev istoriju kao masona videti posebno str. 40–42). Kratka biografija na srpskom jeziku nalazi se u VÁRADY, „Dr. Várady Imre“ és A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés* (u pogledu prošlosti, vidi posebno stranice 40–42.). Kratku biografiju možete pogledati u leksikonu *Senatori Kraljevine Jugoslavije* (2016), Biografski leksikon, Beograd, 315–316.

²² A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 45.

²³ Dokument broj 11. Pismo Imrea Varadija Aurelu Lazáru (Lázár Aurél), 16. oktobar 1918. U.: A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 112.

²⁴ *Torontál*, 4. novembar 1918. Megalakult a nagybecskereki Nemzeti Tanács. [Osnovan je Nacionalni odbor Nadbečkereka].

²⁵ Emil Gavrilu (1861–1933), advokat, srpski političar, zastupnik u mađarskom parlamentu, posle jugoslovenski senator. Urednik *Glasa*, prve srpske novine u Nadbečkereku, posle urednik novosadskog lista *Zastava* na srpskom jeziku. Između 1914. i 1918. godine, zbog optužbe da je bio učesnik u sarajevskom atentatu, zajedno sa suprugom je bio interniran u Kiškunhalaš. Prvi je srpski glavni župan županije Torontal–Temeš pod okupacijom Srba.

jene su bile sve nacionalne organizacije, stranke i nacionalna štampa, a njihovi lideri bili su internirani. Ove mere su ukinute za vreme Karoljijeve vlade, a internirani srpski političari i intelektualci stigli su kući tokom oktobra i novembra. Odlučili su potom da formiraju nacionalnu gardu. Na sastanku je gradonačelnik Zoltan Perišitš²⁶ obrazložio relevantni dekret ministra unutrašnjih poslova Tivadara Bathanjija, koji je bio upućen u telegramu. Po uredbi, narodnu gardu je morao da organizuje načelnik gradske policije, o trošku državne kase.²⁷ Posada nije mogla da bude veća od pet procenata gradskog stanovništva, i na svakih deset vojnika trebalo je da bude jedan oficir. Na ovom sastanku, na predlog Šamua Kardoša, Nacionalni odbor je zatražio da se umesto gradonačelnika Bele Botka,²⁸ koji je – kako čitamo u zapisniku – „izneverio grad“, u funkciju glavnog župana vrati Đerđ Stajer,²⁹ „u koga ne samo gradska javnost, već i celokupno stanovništvo županije Torontal ima puno poverenje i kome su svi naklonjeni“.³⁰

Predsednik Varadi je sutradan, u telegramu, obavestio ministra unutrašnjih poslova o formiranju Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora i obavestio centralu da se Mađarski nacionalni odbor (MNO) „u svemu pridružuje i potčinjava volji Državnog nacionalnog odbora“. Tada je, po njihovoj odluci, zatražio smenu Botke i imenovanje Štajera. On je njihov zahtev obrazložio rečima da je „Botka u ovim teškim vremenima stalno daleko od našeg grada, a ova velika županija je ugrožena bez političkog lidera, jer je od inauguracije Botka³¹ bio među nama samo dan-dva, i u ovim kriznim vremenima nigde ne možemo da ga pronademo“. Drugi, možda još ozbiljniji, razlog za njihovu simpatiju, nije pomenuo – Štajer je bio pacifist, zbog čega je smenjen, a s druge strane, bila je poznata i njegova osetljivost na socijalne probleme. Međutim, nisu uspeali da postave Štajera, vlada je smenila Botku, ali ga je zamenila podžupanom Agoštonom Jankom, koji je postavljen za glavnog župana, pa je on bio poslednji mađarski glavni župan istorijske županije Torontal.

Mađarski nacionalni odbor u cirkularnom pismu³² odredio je delokrug i nadležnost lokalnih nacionalnih odbora. Njihov zadatak bio je da podržavaju lokalne organe izvršne vlasti na nivou županije, grada i sela, ali nisu smeli da se umešaju u njihov rad, bilo im je zabranjeno da uvode nove poreze i da vrše rekviraciju. Zaduženi su bili za održavanje reda, za očuvanje imovine i za javnu bezbednost, i to je bio isto tako deo njihovih dužnosti, kao i prijem vojnika povratnika i briga o njima. Od njih se zahtevalo i učešće u konsolidaciji

²⁶ Zoltan Perišitš (1862–1946), pravnik, gradonačelnik Nađbečkereka.

²⁷ U to doba, policijski načelnik grada je bio Vidor Deak.

²⁸ Bela Botka (1861–1923) glavni sudija (Srez Banloc), glavni notar županije Torontal, posle poslanik Parlamenta. Dva puta, između 1906. i 1910, a i 1918. bio je glavni župan županije Torontal.

²⁹ Đerđ Steuer (1875–1943) pravnik, političar, 1917–1918. godine glavni župan županije Torontal. Između 1919. i 1922. državni sekretar za manjine, posle vladin poverenik za nemačku nacionalnu manjinu, član Parlamenta. Predsednik Južnog privrednog udruženja poljoprivrednika, organizator poljoprivrednih radničkih zadruga, piše o socijalnoj politici. Posle pripajanja južnih krajeva Jugoslaviji i prilikom aneksije teritorije 1941. godine, u brojnim podnescima, skrenuo je pažnju aktuelne vlade na atrocitete od strane vlasti i na nepravde prema narodnostima.

³⁰ Zapisnik Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora br. 1, novembar 1918. U. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskerek Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 422.

³¹ Botka je malo ranije, 14. oktobra 1918 stupio u službu *Torontál*, 14. oktobar 1918. Beiktatták Botka Bélát [*Inauguracija Bele Botke*].

³² Akt broj 14. Cirkularno pismo ministra unutrašnjih poslova o delokrugu i nadležnosti nacionalnih odbora, 1. decembar 1918. U.: A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 118–119.

republičkog oblika vlasti, mada treba napomenuti i to da je narodna republika proglašena tek kasnije, 16. decembra.

Mađarski nacionalni odbor u Nadbečkereku započeo je svoje delovanje u tom duhu. Jedan od prvih zadataka bio je primanje i razoružavanje vojnika i ratnih zarobljenika koji se vraćaju, a istovremeno i osnivanje narodne garde. U ime nacionalnog odbora, Torontal je ohrabrio ljude da se prijave u nacionalnu gardu: „Ne smemo tolerisati da nam krov nad glavom bukne [...]. Ne smemo prepustiti živote svojih najmilijih i svoje, ili poštene plodove teškog rada hiljada ljudi – da budu plen odbeglih vojnika, skitnica s puškama i noževima.“³³

Vojnike koji su se vraćali kućama dočekivali su na železničkoj stanici s toplom hranom, „da ih glad ne podstakne na nasilje“, oduzimali su im oružje, a ratne zarobljenike stavljali su odmah na prvi voz koji je išao u njihovom pravcu; u nekim slučajevima, na stanici su bili članovi ženskog odbora za prijem.³⁴

Vojnici Narodne garde dobijali su po 30 kruna dnevno, oficiri po 40 kruna (poređenja radi: 7. novembra, u gradu, pet jaja su davali za četiri krune, cena svinjetine je porasla s dve krune na 13 kruna, dimljena slanina sa 1,7 kruna na 15 kruna, crni hleb sa 27 kruna na 78 kruna.³⁵ 8. novembra bilo je već sto članova garde, a 11. novembra – 665.³⁶ Njihov znak bila je bela traka oko ruke, s natpisom „nacionalna garda“. Njihove jedinice branile su železničku stanicu, javne objekte, električnu centralu i vojnu bolnicu koja je bila smeštena u zgradi trgovačke škole; organizovali su patrole, kontrolisali su radno vreme javnih ustanova i mesta, jer je nacionalni odbor odredio da ih u devet časova uveče moraju zatvarati, a odredili su i da se krčme zatvaraju.³⁷

U vezi s tačnim datumom formiranja Srpske nacionalne garde i Srpskog nacionalnog odbora iz Nadbečkereka, imamo kontroverzne podatke. U pogledu narodne straže, u srpskoj stručnoj literaturi imamo dva datuma, prema nekim tvrdnjama formirali su je 1. novembra, a negde je označeno da je to bilo 31. oktobra. Najnovija stručna literatura na srpskom jeziku, koja se poziva na sećanja predsednika Srpskog nacionalnog odbora Slavka Županskog, navodi da je datum osnivanja Srpske narodne straže i Srpskog narodnog odbora bio 31. oktobar 1918. godine.³⁸ Međutim, ti opisi se slažu u tome da je načelnik Srpske narodne straže bio austrijski potpukovnik u penziji Mihajlo (Miša) Vejnović.³⁹ S druge strane, u zapisniku Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora od 4. novembra možemo pročitati da „srpsko stanovništvo našeg grada želi da organizuje zasebnu civilnu gardu“.⁴⁰ Ova formula-

³³ *Torontál*, 5. novembar 1918. Védjük meg a várost [*Branimo svoj grad*].

³⁴ *Torontál*, 5. novembar 1918. Nyugalomra int a Nemzeti Tanács [*Nacionalni odbor poziva na smirenost*].

³⁵ BOTOS, János (2017), „A fizetőeszköz inflációja az első világháború alatt és után 1914–1924“, *Múltunk* 1, 95.

³⁶ Zapisnici br. 3 i broj 8. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nadbečkereku 5. novembar i 11. novembar 1918. U. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskereki Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 424, 433.

³⁷ Zapisnik br. 2 Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nadbečkereku, 4. novembar 1918. Isti izvor, 423.

³⁸ NEMET, Ferenc – MICIĆ, Milan (2019), *Banat – novembar 1918. godine*, Novo Miloševo – Pančevo – Sirig, 51.

³⁹ NJEGOVAN, *Prisajedinjenje Vojvodine Srbiji*, 215–216; NEMET – MICIĆ, *Banat – novembar 1918. godine*, 51.

⁴⁰ Zapisnik br. 2 Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nadbečkereku, 4. novembar 1918. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskereki Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 423.

cija ukazuje na to da su oni tako znali da srpska nacionalna garda još nije konstituisana. Samo posle nekoliko dana, list *Torontal* 8. novembra izveštava o tome da su konstituisali nacionalnu gardu i dodaje da se zapovedništvo nalazi u dvorišnoj zgradi srpske crkve, a da se centar za Mađare nalazi u staroj zgradi suda. Međutim, u listu nismo našli nikakvo izveštavanje o osnivanju Srpskog nacionalnog odbora, ali su redovno objavljivane informacije o delovanju Srpske narodne garde. Prema pisanju lista, potpukovnik Vejnović je, na primer, „na časnu reč“ naveo da je Garda formirana isključivo radi zaštite života i imovine stanovnika grada. Stoga je, na zahtev Srpske narodne garde, Mađarski nacionalni odbor dozvolio isticanje i srpske zastave pored mađarske zastave na Gradskoj kući; takođe, na njihov zahtev stavljeno im je na raspolaganje naoružanje u „umerenoj količini“.

Varadi je više puta razgovarao sa starim kolegom, advokatom Županskim, i „prijateljski“ je pokušao da ga ubedi u to da lokalni Srbi daju podršku radu Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora. Ali Županski, kako je izveštavao Varadijev odbor, izvukao se s time da je im je „novosadski centar direktno zabranio da politički nastupaju“.⁴¹ Župan tokom razgovora nije napomenuo da je zabrana isključivo važila za saradnju s mađarskim organima vlasti. Srpska manjina je već okrenula leđa Budimpešti i gledala prema Beogradu. U prvim nedeljama oktobra se još činilo da će Srbi u Mađarskoj biti zadovoljni i sa širom autonomijom u granicama Mađarske i da nemaju težnju otepljenja. U tom smislu, Kosta Hadži iz Srpske radikalne stranke dao je izjavu za novine *Nepsava* 13. oktobra.⁴² Ali situacija se ubrzo promenila i – paralelno s raspadom Monarhije – Srbi u južnim krajevima održali su više tajnih sastanaka na kojim su prihvatili da iz državno-pravnog aspekta treba raskinuti s Mađarskom i da treba prihvatiti jugoslovensku koncepciju spajanja.⁴³ Ovu tajnovitost Hadži je kasnije objasnio kao njihov strah od odmazde, te su u međuvremenu održavali bliski kontakt sa uspostavljenim Nacionalnim odborom u Zagrebu.

I dok je srpsko stanovništvo grada bilo veoma aktivno u formiranju sopstvenih, srpskih oružanih snaga, Nemci su pokazali malo entuzijazma za pridruživanje narodnoj gardi. Kako je rekao potpukovnik Tibor Vogel, komandant Mađarske narodne garde: „Doživio sam veći stepen ravnodušnosti od strane Nemaca.“⁴⁴

Prema literaturi na srpskom jeziku, Srpski nacionalni odbor u Nađbečkereku osnovan je nekoliko dana pre Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, 31. oktobra, i bio je to prvi srpski nacionalni odbor u Mađarskoj. Srpski nacionalni odbor u Bečkereku, prema rečima Slavka Županskog, osnovan je „spontano“ 31. oktobra, u zgradi srpske crkve, u užem krugu, uz učešće devetoro ljudi. Za predsednika je izabran advokat Andrija Vasić, a za počasnog predsednika Emil Gavrilu, koji je tada još bio u internaciji. Jedan od potpredsednika bio je Županski, koji je kasnije postao predsednik odbora.⁴⁵ Izgleda da su uspeali da sakriju svoje

⁴¹ Zapisnik br. 4 Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nađbečkereku, 7. novembar 1918. Isti izvor, 427. Varadi i još sedam kolega jamčili su za pouzdanost Županskog posle sarajevskog atentata, tako je izbegavao internaciju. U.: A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 44.

⁴² Hadžiju je Karolji ponudio ministarski portfelj, ali on nije prihvatio. RAKIĆ, Lazar (1986), *Jaša Tomić (1856–1922)*, Novi Sad, 285.

⁴³ KONČAR, Ranko (2008), „Vasa Stajić és a Vajdaság Szerbiához csatlóása 1918-ban“, *Létünk* 38, 3, 18–24. 21.

⁴⁴ Zapisnik br. 6 Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nađbečkereku, 8. novembar 1918. U.: DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskerek Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 430.

⁴⁵ Opširno vidi ĐUKANOV, Milan (2010), *Prvi Srpski narodni odbor 1918*, Zrenjanin – Beograd.

osnivanje od Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora i mađarske javnosti grada, jer vest o njihovom osnivanju nije izašla u gradskim novinama. Tajnovitost je svakako bila povezana s činjenicom da je Srpski nacionalni odbor, koje je u međuvremenu osnovano u Novom Sadu, izdalo direktivu novoformiranim srpskim nacionalnim odborima da Srpski narodni odbor samo njih slušaju.⁴⁶

Mađarski nacionalni odbor je za svet izjavljivao da je saradnja između mađarske i srpske narodne garde „najskladnija“. Kako bi izbegavali eventualni sukob, označili su onu graničnu liniju gde dve narodne garde mogu patrolirati. Do ulaska srpske vojske u vlast u gradu, red su održavale dve paralelne oružane garde i dva nacionalna odbora.

Srpska narodna garda nije položila zakletvu Mađarskom nacionalnom odboru, nego u međuvremenu osnovanom Srpskom nacionalnom odboru. Srpska narodna garda, čiji je broj dostigao 400, već prvog dana je morala da reši ozbiljan zadatak, jer je trebalo da zavede red među pljačkašima jednog rekonvalescentnog odreda koji je bio u gradu na oporavku, od kojih su 16 vojnika uhapsili. Imali su i akciju zbog zablude: kod drvarnice nazvane Kurlender greškom su pomislili za prevoznike koji su prevozili već plaćeno drvo da su pljačkaši.⁴⁷ Između srpske i mađarske nacionalne garde prvih dana su uspešno izbegli ozbiljnije nesuglasice, mada nije bilo ni ozbiljnije saradnje među njima. U praksi međutim, paralelno delovanje starih i novih institucija, podela novih organa vlasti po mađarskim i srpskim nacionalnim principima, suzdržani odnos nemačkog i rumunskog stanovništva u gradu u vezi s novim promenama, povlačenje 15. udruženog pešadijskog puka i nemačkih vojnih jedinica, drastično smanjenje broja žandarmerije i policije (u ovoj kriznoj situaciji, na primer, načelnik gradske policije Vidor Deak otišao je na produženi odmor!), ni snabdevanje grada nije bilo obezbeđeno, niti su bile obezbeđene gradske javne usluge. Neizvesna budućnost stavila je Mađarski nacionalni odbor u Bečkereku pred ozbiljan zadatak i na proveru snaga, a krhak mir između mađarske i srpske narodne garde i između dva nacionalna odbora bio je na ozbiljnom testu.

U Bečkereku nije bilo većih pljački ili ustanaka. Ali nije bilo tako u selima. Zbog pljačke i pobune Nacionalni odbor u Budimpešt, 2. novembra proglasio statarium za celu državu, a Banatski nacionalni odbor u Temišvaru 6. novembra proglasio je statarium i za tri županije.⁴⁸ U celoj državi ljudi su se ponašali bečarski, obračuni, razbojništvo i pljačke su zagorčavali život imućnijih ljudi, kao i život starijih činovnika koji su bili predstavnici stare vlasti, a naročito su zagorčavali život javnih beležnika. Njih su pogotovo mrzeli vojnici koji su se vratili iz rata, jer su za vreme rata beležnici delili papire za oslobađanje od vojne obaveze, delili ratnu novčanu pomoć, imali su ozbiljnu ulogu u javnom snabdevanju i tako dalje. U celoj zemlji, jednu trećinu beležnika oterali su iz službe, mnogi su platili životom u ovom neredu.⁴⁹ Na primer u naselju Dobrici gde su u većini živeli Srbi, vojnici povratnici su bili naoružani oružjem koje su uzeli od žandarmerije i zajedno s meštanima su otišli pred opštinsku kuću, razbili su prozore, pljačkali i hteli da uhvate Dušana Jankovića, glavnog

⁴⁶ RAKIĆ, *Jaša Tomić (1856–1922)*, 291.

⁴⁷ *Torontál*, 8. novembar 1918. Védjűk meg a várost [*Zaštitiimo grad*]. Fabrika ulja u Nađbečkereku posebno je organizovala civilnu gardu od 80 članova. U okviru narodne garde organizovali su i jedan đački odred.

⁴⁸ *Torontál*, 6. novembar 1918. Erélyes jogszabályok Torontál megyében [*Stroge odredbe u županiji Torontál*].

⁴⁹ HATOS, *Az elétkozott köztársaság*, 180–181.

beležnika, jer su ga optužili da njihovim porodicama nije isplatio ratnu novčanu pomoć. Glavnom beležniku koji se skrivao sa svojim sinom, lokalni Romi su ponudili svoju pomoć, naravno za malu „novčanu nagradu“. Polovina od traženih hiljadu kruna je isplaćena, u ono vreme to je bio pozamašan iznos (skoro pola plate zamenika beležnika). Janković je to i isplatio, ali nije mu bilo spasa. Na stanici su ga vojnici sustigli i jedan od njih ga je na smrt ubo bajonetom.⁵⁰

U Starom Bečeju, gde je mađarsko-srpsko mešovito stanovništvo živelo, Srbi su dobošarski proglasili da mađarski Jevreji više ne mogu stupiti na tlo grada.⁵¹ Pozorišni ansambl Lasla Brukner Betlena, dok su putovali od Nadbečkereka do Sombora, opljačkali su u vozu. U Melencima, na primer, streljali su dvadeset, a u Novom Bečeju 18 pljačkaša. U Kumanu je bio još veći broj pogubljenih bandita – izveštava Torontál.⁵²

U Nadbečkereku, i Mađarski nacionalni odbor bio je primoran da se bavi tim problemom. Predsednik Varadi, na sednici 5. novembra, obavestio je odbor da su prema njegovom saznanju „svugde u županiji pljačke“. Ovi tužni događaji još nemaju nacionalni karakter, jer su u većini slučajeva izvršeni protiv beležnika u naseljima, zato što se protiv njih probudio pravedan ili nepravedan bes naroda. Navodi se primer slučaja Crepaje, gde je Srpski nacionalni odbor oterao beležnika; izjavili su da koriste pravo za samoopredeljenje naroda i da žele da se priključe Srbiji.⁵³

Zapisnici sa sastanka Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora potvrđuju da je MNO smatrao da su njegovi glavni zadaci održavanje reda, organizacija nacionalne garde i organizacija javnog snabdevanja. Vlada je pitanje javnog snabdevanja stavila u nadležnost podžupana, a nacionalni odbor, posredstvom svog pododbora, nastojao je da gradu obezbedi i reši pitanje snabdevanja. Pripazili su na to da za ovaj zadatak zadužuju one pojedince „koji su bili popularni u zajednici“, naročito je bilo to važno „kada se dogodilo da je brašno koje su delili bilo lošeg kvaliteta, gorko i crno“.⁵⁴ Da to pitanje reše, formirali su odbor za društvenu ishranu. Prema zapisnicima, deficitarnu robu su pokušali iz raznih i neverovatnih mesta da nabave, na primer, od nemačkih jedinica koje su prolazile kroz grad, kupili su žitarice i automobile za nacionalnu gardu. Važan zadatak je bio i podela petroleja.⁵⁵ Mađarski nacionalni odbor je hteo da uvodi nove poreze i pored toga što im je to Budimpešta izričito zabranila, ali ovo se nije desilo „s obzirom na promenu situacije“, srpske trupe bile su već blizu i predmet je skinut s dnevnog reda.⁵⁶

Kada su srpske trupe već bile u Pančevu, 10. novembra, ali dok se još nije potpisalo beogradsko primirje, dakle dok su dve zemlje formalno još bile u ratnom stanju, Mađarski nacionalni odbor strahovao je da će između nemačkih jedinica koja su bile u povlačenju i srpske vojske doći do sukoba i da će se ceo grad tako pretvoriti u bojno polje. Dogovorili su se sa Srpskim nacionalnim odborom i doneli odluku da pošalje zaseban voz s belom

⁵⁰ *Torontál*, 7. novembar 1918. Mi történt Kevedobrán? [Šta se dogodilo u Dobrici?]

⁵¹ HATOS, *Az elátkozott köztársaság*, 183.

⁵² *Torontál*, 6. novembar 1918. Erélyes rendszabályok Torontál megyében [Stroge mere u Županiji Torontál].

⁵³ Zapisnik broj 3. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora 5. novembar 1918. U. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskereki Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 423–424.

⁵⁴ Zapisnik broj 6. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora 8. novembar 1918. U. isto, 430.

⁵⁵ Zapisnik broj 5. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora 7. novembar 1918. U. isto, 427–429.

⁵⁶ Zapisnik broj 6. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora 10. novembar 1918. U. isto, 432.

zastavom u Pančevo, s pregovaračima i predlogom da srpska okupatorska vojska uspori svoj pohod kako bi se izbegli eventualni sukobi. Zadatak je pripao Aleksiću, glavnom arhivaru, a u ime Srba za Pančevo je otputovao Slavko Županski. Aleksićev izveštaj ne nalazimo u zapisniku, samo smo saznali da su po njega išli autom, pošto su nemačke trupe u povratku rasklopile železničke šine. Varadi je podneo izveštaj o informacijama koje je dobio od Županskog, gde stoji da kod pančevačkih srpskih jedinica komandant održava propisani red i njegov cilj je da i u Nađbečkereku bude red i mir. Plan je bio da će preuzeti gradsku administrativnu službu, ali su želeli da izbegnu konfrontaciju, jer ugledni Srbi ljubomorno kontrolišu situaciju, kako se svečani ulazak srpske vojske ispred lokalnih Srba ne bi pokvario narušavanjem reda.⁵⁷ *Torontal* je pomno pratio pregovore Karoljijeve vlade u Beogradu. Kao što je poznato, ona nije uspeła da potpiše poseban mirovni ugovor sa Antantom, već je potpisana samo vojna konvencija. To je značilo da nisu uspeli da postignu da novu mađarsku vladu tretiraju kao predstavnike nezavisne, demokratske Mađarske, koji nisu odgovorni za rat, a raspršila se njihova nada da će kao rezultat pregovora teritorijalni integritet Mađarske biti očuvan. Tokom pregovora, mađarska delegacija morala je da se suočava s ponižavajućim scenama,⁵⁸ a nacrt konvencije koji im je dostavljen sadržao je takve odredbe koje su predviđale rasparčavanje Ugarske. Karolji je saopštio generalu Franšeu d'Espereju, glavnom zapovedniku Istočnih snaga Antante, koji je vodio pregovore: „Ako ovo potpišemo, obesice nas u Pešti čim se vratimo“.⁵⁹ Nisu ni potpisali, nego su otputovali kući. Ali barem su postigli to da je Franše d'Esperej prosledio u Pariz njihov telegram, u kojem su molili da Antanta barem do sklapanja mirovnog sporazuma obezbedi teritorijalni integritet Mađarske prema Češkoj, prema Jugoslaviji i prema Rumuniji. Zauzvrat, Karolji je obećao da će se do tada „bratski“ raspodeliti na teritorijama gde žive manjine s tamošnjim nacionalnim odborima. Rezultat ovih pregovaranja bio je da su u sporazumu, gde su već bili označili južnu demarkacionu liniju, i pored oštrog protivljenja Srba upisani i oni često spominjani pasusi da na budućim okupiranim teritorijama ostaje mađarska administracija. Tačan tekst sporazuma glasi: „Trupe mađarske vlade povlače svoju vojsku prema severu od Velikog Samoša, Gornji tok – Bistrica – Moriš (selo) – a tok Moriša do ušća Tise – Subotica – Baja – Pečuj (u ovim gradovima nema mađarskih jedinica) – do toka Drave i granice Slavonije i Hrvatske. Evakuacija se izvršava u roku od osam dana. [...] Administrativna vlast za građane ostaje u nadležnosti sadašnjih vlasti.“⁶⁰ Beogradska vojna konvencija ne odnosi se na Prekomurje i na Međimurje. Situacija u Banatu bila je komplikovana, jer tamo su se sukobili rumunski i srpski zahtevi. Sporazum od 13. novembra s mađarske strane na kraju je potpisao Bela Linder, smenjeni ministar odbrane, tada političar bez portfelja, sa srpske strane vojvoda Živojin Mišić, načelnik generalštaba, a sa strane Antante – Pol Prosper Henris, general.

U pismu koje je napisao 12. novembra američkom ministru inostranih poslova Robertu Lansingu, Karolji je strastveno protestovao protiv raskrinkavanja države: „a rana koja krvari,

⁵⁷ Zapisnik br. 9. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora 12. novembar 1918. U. isto, 433–434.

⁵⁸ Sletanje delegacije u Beograd, iz kojeg su se nemačke trupe evakuisale s belom zastavom, Srbi su dočekali velikim ovacijama, ali se Franše d'Esperej s njima nije ni rukovao, niti ih je pozvao na večeru. HATOS, *Az elátkozott köztársaság*, 274–275.

⁵⁹ HATOS, *Az elátkozott köztársaság*, 275.

⁶⁰ Tekst Beogradske konvencije objavljen je u ÁDÁM, Magda – ORMOS, Mária (ur.) (1999), *Francia diplomáciai iratok a Kárpát-medence történetéről 1918–1919*, Budapest, 16–18.

što ste namenili Mađarskoj kao kaznu, nikada više neće zarasti, i mir u regiji večno će biti u grozničavom stanju“.⁶¹ Karoljijeve iluzije u vezi sa Antantom bile su se raspršile.

O pregovorima je list *Torontal* detaljno izveštavao: čitaoci su saznali i to da su u vreme beogradskih pregovora, ali pre potpisivanja, Česi već na severu krenuli u napad, Rumuni u Transilvaniji, srpske trupe su i dalje napredovale i 9. novembra su ušle u Petrovaradin i u Novi Sad. List citira Karoljiju, koji je već otputovao kući s pregovora, i u ovoj opasnoj situaciji je tražio od Nacionalnog odbora odobrenje za potpisivanje ponižavajućeg beogradskog sporazuma, jer „preti nam opasnost da će se teritorija Mađarske pretvoriti u poprište ratnog dejstva“, ili kako je rekao – na osnovu potpisanog dokumenta možemo protestovati protiv nasilja, „obračujući se kulturnim zemljama“.⁶²

Suprotno slučaju Čeha i njihovom ulasku na teritoriju Slovačke i slučaju ulaska Rumuna na teritoriju Transilvanije, jedino su okupaciju južnih teritorija Mađarske regulisali. Istina, nisu to rešili željenim primirjem, već samo vojnom konvencijom koju je prilikom sklapanja samo mađarska vlada shvatila ozbiljno. Sporazum je i dan-danas tema žustrih diskusija u mađarskoj historiografiji. Beogradska vojna konvencija u očima Antante već prilikom potpisivanja bila je devalvirana, a srpske trupe su nastavile napredovanje na ugarsku teritoriju, i ne pored protesta francuskog vrhovnog komandanta koji je potpisao Beogradski sporazum, već uz njegovo odobrenje.⁶³ Okupirali su one teritorije na koje su tokom mirovnih pregovora položile svoj zahtev.

Slično Karoljijevoj vladi, i Nacionalni odbor Nađbečkereka imao je iluzije u vezi sa Antantom, a u skladu s direktnim uputstvima vlade, nisu mogli a da ne naglase da srpske trupe ne dolaze kao osvajači, već s „miroljubivim namerama“. Kada su Srbi, 11. novembra, već osvojili i Pančevo, protiv onih koji su širili lažne vesti, i koji su već videli sebe na telegrafskim žicama ili u kamenolomu u Srbiji ili u Albaniji, *Torontal* je u dugačkom članku objasnio da Srbi nemaju nameru da odvedu u rudnike olova sinove onog naroda koji je već položio oružje. „Ove kukavice“, pisao je list ogorčeno, „neka nose dalje svoje prnje, jer mi smo iza njih i javno ćemo žigosati ove podmukle pacove“.⁶⁴ Uzbuna koja je izbila u gradu podstakla je poručnika Agoštona Janka da pošalje kapetana žandarmerije Lajoša Nađa u Pančevo. Na njegovo izrazito insistiranje, lokalni komandant srpskih trupa rekao mu je i to je poručio i preplašenim stanovnicima Nađbečkereka, da su došli preko Dunava da „mirno zauzmu deo okruga“. Kako su kazali, funkcionere su ostavili na svojim mestima na okupiranim teritorijama, „samo su im pridodali svoje ljude od poverenja“.⁶⁵ Tog dana, u Nađbečkereku, u *Klubu Mozgo*, imali su na programu mađarski film Hazugság (Laži), u „provetреноj prostoriji“, i s „muzikom prve klase“.

⁶¹ Károlyi, a magyar népkormány miniszterelnöke Lansing amerikai külügyminiszterhez, 1918. november 12. [*Pismo Karoljija, premijera mađarske narodne vlade, američkom ministru spoljnih poslova Lansingu, 18. novembar 1918. g.*]

⁶² *Torontál*, 11. novembar 1918. A Nemzeti Tanács támgatja a kormányt [*Nacionalni odbor podržava vladu*].

⁶³ U vezi sa sporazumom, postoji bogat materijal, a ukazujem samo na dva članka: Maria Ormoš (ORMOS, Mária [1979], „A belgrádi katonai konvencióról“, *Történelmi Szemle* 1, 12–38) i Arpad Hornjak (HORNÁK, Árpád [2000], „A belgrádi katonai konvenció“, *Világtörténet* 2, 74–84).

⁶⁴ *Torontál*, 11. novembar 1918. Gyávák, kishitűek [*Kukavice, malodušnici*].

⁶⁵ *Torontál*, 11. novembar 1918. A szerbek Pancsován [*Srbi u Pančevu*].

Posle dva dana, 13. novembra, činovnici županije Torontal položili su zakletvu za Károljijevu vladu i za nezavisnu Mađarsku. Istog dana, Imre Varadi, predsednik Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, objavio je duži članak u *Torontalu*, u kojem je odgovorio u ime Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora na poziv budimpeštanskog Nacionalnog odbora, da se izjasne u vezi s republičkom državnom formom. Kako je on pisao: „U našim očima može postojati samo jedan interes: samo i isključivo interes Mađarske. A interes naše zemlje može se adekvatno obezbediti samo ako se volja države može izraziti u obliku ustava, koji odgovara sadašnjem duhu sveta.“ Stoga se Mađarski nacionalni odbor Nađbečkerek odlučio za republički oblik vlasti „nakon duboke, ozbiljne rasprave“. U svom telegramu Nacionalnom odboru u Budimpešti, oni su napisali da su „sa neograničenim entuzijazmom, sa demonstrativnom jednoglasnošću“ izjavili kako će budući oblik vladavine Mađarske biti republika.⁶⁶ Zapisnik sa sednice Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora od 12. novembra zaista dokazuje da su se svi saradnici „bez zadržke“ zauzeli za republiku. Postavljalo se kao pitanje da li – s obzirom na to što Mađarski nacionalni odbor ne predstavlja sve građane grada – prilikom odluke treba pozvati i Srpski nacionalni odbor. Na to je Varadi rekao: „Više puta smo pokušavali da sarađujemo sa Srpskim nacionalnim odborom, ali svaki put smo dobijali negativan odgovor sa izjavom da Srpski odbor ne učestvuje ni u kakvom političkom radu.“⁶⁷

Sledeći sastanak Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora održan je 13. novembra, u senci zlobočnih vesti – predsednik Varadi je najavio da se sutra očekuje ulazak srpskih trupa. Srpski nacionalni odbor je već pripremio njihov doček, kasarna je bila rezervisana za vojnike, a oficiri su planirali da se smeste kod srpskih porodica. Čini se da približavanje srpskih trupa nije izazvalo strah samo kod građana grada, već su ga se plašili i članovi odbora. Prema navodima iz zapisnika, jedan od članova njihovog saveza izrazio je nadu da će „komandant okupatorske vojske pokazati liberalniji postupak prema Odboru“. Plašili su se i da bi usled okupacije veza između članova odbora mogla da bude prekinuta, pa su između sebe izabrali šestočlanu komisiju „radi opreznosti“.⁶⁸

Mađarski nacionalni odbor se sastao i 15. novembra, dan uoči srpske okupacije grada. Gradonačelnik Perišitš je istog dana u gradskim novinama objavio poziv u kojem od građana traži da „srpsku okupatorsku vojsku prihvate mirno, da pokažu ljubazan i prijateljski odnos prema njima, da izbegavaju bilo kakve sukobe i otpore i da se ne protive razoružanju“.⁶⁹ Iz zapisnika se vidi da nisu želeli da se taj događaj desi spontano, nego su se mađarski i srpski nacionalni odbori dogovorili da umesto bolesnog gradonačelnika „umarširanje“ primi Bela Štros, glavni beležnik i zamenik gradonačelnika, a zatim će nastaviti put do Skupštine, u salu za sastanke gde će srpskog komandanta primiti članovi Mađarskog i Srpskog narodnog odbora, a dva predsednika, Varadi i Županski, održaću govore.

Zamoliće srpske trupe da održavaju red u gradu i da obezbede sigurnost imovine.

U međuvremenu, srpska garda je već stupila u akciju a da se nije dogovorila s Mađarskim nacionalnom odborom. Već dva dana pre zauzimanja grada, 15. novembra, zauzeli su

⁶⁶ *Torontál*, 12. novembar 1918. A Nagybecskerek Nemzeti Tanács határozata [*Odluka Nacionalnog odbora u Nađbečkerek*].

⁶⁷ Zapisnik br. 9. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, Nađbečkerek 12. novembar 1918. U.: DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskerek Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 43.

⁶⁸ Zapisnik br. 10. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, Nađbečkerek 12. novembar 1918. Isto mesto.

⁶⁹ *Torontál*, 15. novembar 1918. Ma jönnek a szerb előrsök [*Danas dolaze srpski izvidnici*].

telegrafsku centralu, „tamo je iza svake gospođice stao naoružani vojnik, a za to vreme jedan oficir cenzurisao je tekstove telegrama koji su poslati ili koji su tek imali da budu poslani, i on je određivao koji telegram može da ide a koji ne. [...] administracija je napustila zgradu pošte i nisu hteli da rade sve dok vojska ne ode.“ Na ovu vest, javila se i ona ideja da bi trebalo razoružati srpsku gardu, to jest, bilo je i takvih mišljenja da „se lek protiv nasilja sopstvenih sunarodnika mora tražiti od komandanta okupatorske armije“. Na to je reagovao Varadi i u suštini opravdao korake Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, rekavši da je „odbor kada bi nešto preduzeo, uvek bio pod uticajem događaja. Osvrćući se na ono što se već dogodilo, danas bi to moglo da se uradi na osnovu drugačije odluke, međutim mora se konstatovati da je Nacionalni odbor već postigao to da do danas nije bilo kontradiktornosti između celokupnog stanovništva grada, tj. u gradu je mir, pljačke do sada nisu počele.“ Potom je dodao kako i on smatra da će se žalba na nasilje morati uputiti komandantu okupatorske vojske, međutim, preporučuje da odluka zavisi od daljeg razvoja događaja.⁷⁰ Kasniji događaji su pokazali da se to moralo činiti prilično često.

Srpske trupe su u nedelju, 17. novembra, zauzele grad. Osam stotina „prilično dobro naoružanih srpskih vojnika“, jedinica Moravske divizije, stiglo je železnicom s pukovnikom Dragutinom Ristićem, komandantom brigade.⁷¹ Među oficirima su bili jedan francuski i jedan italijanski oficir. Zoltan Perišitš, gradonačelnik, primio ih je na železničkoj stanici u fabričkoj zoni i u svom govoru koji je održao na srpskom jeziku, zamolio ih je da održavaju red u gradu. Posle toga, u ime Srpskog nacionalnog odbora, pozdravio ih je Slavko Županski nakon čega je pevao srpski hor, a jedna dama je u ime srpskih žena predala cveće Ristiću. Pukovnik je u svom odgovoru naglasio „da će se red održavati, jer nisu došli s neprijateljskim namerama, nego da odbrane opšte narodno oslobođenje“. Svečana ceremonija prijema dalje je protekla u duhu sporazuma Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora i Srpskog nacionalnog odbora. Ristić i komisija za prijem otišli su u veliku salu županije, a kako je naglasio *Torontal*, podžupan je „iz učtivosti“ prepustio svečani prijem.⁷² Ove je podžupan Agošton Janko sledećim rečima pozdravio pukovnika: „Vaša Ekselencija i njegove hrabre trupe došli su u županiju Torontal da zauzmu ove oblasti na osnovu uslova primirja kako bi osigurali prekid neprijateljstva. Dakle, ne vidimo vas kao neprijatelja, već kao dobrog prijatelja.“⁷³ Posle je Varadi ustao i održao govor u kojem je objasnio komandantu svrhu osnivanja Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora. Odbor je osnovan, kako je rekao, „da bi proveravao stalnu vladavinu mađarskih zakona i da obezbedi živote i imovinu naših građana. Koliko mi je poznato – nastavio je on – sada zaključeni uslovi primirja obezbeđuju i dalje

⁷⁰ Zapisnik br. 11. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, Nadbečkerek 15. novembar 1918. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskerek Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 437.

⁷¹ Dragutin J. Ristić (1872–1959), srpski profesionalni vojnik. U prvom svetskom ratu pukovnik, 1923. divizijski general. Godine 1927. je penzionisan.

⁷² Predaja velike Županijske sale izazvala je burnu raspravu u Mađarskom nacionalnom odboru. Predlog poslanika izglasan je u odnosu 16:14, a Srpskom narodnom odboru je poslat sledeći tekst odluke: pošto je poslanik već „načelno“ odlučio da dozvoli korišćenje sale za prijem, Mađarski nacionalni odbor „ne može da se suprotstavi podređenoj odredbi donetoj pod njegovom nadležnošću, ali naglašava da se iz ove čisto učtive činjenice ne mogu izvući politički zaključci“. Zapisnik br. 12. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nadbečkereku, 16. novembar 1918. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskerek Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 439.

⁷³ *Torontal*, 18. novembar 1918. Nagybecskerek megszállása [Okupacija Nadbečkereka].

funkcionisanje mađarske javne uprave i na okupiranoj teritoriji Mađarske“. Zatim je, kao „vođu neneprijateljske invazione sile, s punom verom u njegovo viteštvo“, zamolio Ristića da „ljubazno uzme celo stanovništvo grada pod svoje pokroviteljstvo“ radi zaštite života i imovine. Za to je ponudio pomoć Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora. Pukovnik je odgovorio: „Već poznajem dr Varadija, znam da je on uvek bio pravi prijatelj Srba, pa treba da sarađujemo i da se ujedinito i da održimo red“. Posle se Ristić s balkona županije kratko obratio okupljenom narodu, većinom su to bili srpski građani i vojnici.

Ovu scenu je zabeležio i jedan fotograf iz tog doba. Opsada grada protekla je bez sukoba, ali su zbog pozdravnog pucnja tri građanina bila povređena.⁷⁴

Kao što smo videli, u govorima mađarske strane pogrešno su nazivali beogradsku vojnu konvenciju prekidom vatre, a kao i Karoljijeva vlada, i gradonačelnik i predsednik Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora uljuljkali su se u uverenju da će okupacija biti privremena i da će beogradska vojna konvencija biti ispoštovana u za njih najvažnijem pasusu, odnosno „da će ostati pravni poredak zasnovan na mađarskim zakonima“ a javna uprava će ostati u rukama mađarskih organa u skladu s propisima. Međutim, morali su pretrpeti teško razočarenje – sve nade su nestale. Posle okupacije, za dva dana, 19. novembra (na oglasu je datum po starom računanju vremena 4. novembar, znači pravi datum donošenja odluke je 17. novembar), na ulicama grada su se pojavila obaveštenja na srpskom jeziku s potpisom pukovnika Ristića, u kojima je uveo skraćenu presudu u ime okupatorskih srpskih trupa, naredio obaveznu predaju oružja i municije od neprijateljskih trupa, garantovao ličnu i imovinsku bezbednost građana ako se pridržavaju srpskih zakona; propisao je obavezu javljanja srpskim vlastima – austrijskim, nemačkim i mađarskim oficirima i sva ovlašćenja prenetu su na Srpski nacionalni odbor.⁷⁵

Mađarski nacionalni odbor ponovo je zasedao 25. novembra, u razmaku od samo nekoliko dana, zbog „paralizujućeg dejstva događaja koji su se odigrali“. Ovde je Varadi obavestio članove odbora da je „zbog nekih zloupotreba srpske garde“ proteklih dana nekoliko puta protestovao kod Ristića, koji ga je obavestio da mu nije poznato da u gradu deluje Mađarski nacionalni odbor, pa je čekao njihovo javljanje. Tada je Varadi, zajedno sa članovima veća i nekim uglednim građanima grada, posetio pukovnika i kolektivno su protestovali protiv prenošenja vlasti na Srpski nacionalni odbor i – kako stoji u zapisniku – „oni su pomoću oružanih snaga preuzeli vlast i gradsku kuću i županiju, oružjem su zauzeli celu administraciju i isterali službenike, i na taj način paralizovali administrativni rad“. Nakon što je izgovorio ove reči, Varadi je zamolio pukovnika da „vrati sve službe, da svi službenici – koji su zajedno sa svojim porodicama izloženi nemaštini u ovom sve oštrijem zimskom vremenu – budu vraćeni na posao; zatražio je i obnovu pošte i telegrafa kao i železničkog saobraćaja i pošto se sve više nereda dešava pod imenom Srpske građanske garde, zatražio je da se ona razoruža i zameni organizacijom gradske policije, a u organizaciji treba voditi računa i o nacionalnom sastavu stanovništva“.⁷⁶

Ristić se ovoga puta branio time da „iako je u gradu već sedam dana, ovo veće ga nije posetilo, jer bi inače izdao pomenutu naredbu tako da se vlast prenese srpskom i mađarskom

⁷⁴ Isto mesto. *Torontál*, 18. novembar 1918. Három sebesültje van a tegnapi lövöldözésnek [*Tri građanina ozleđena u jučerašnjoj pucnjavi*].

⁷⁵ Naredba O. Br. 225. Veliki Bečkerek, 4. novembra 1918. god. Arhiv Varadi, bez broja (ćirilica).

⁷⁶ Zapisnik br. 13. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, 25. novembar 1918. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskereki Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 440.

nacionalnom odboru“. On je potom, uz svoje objašnjenje koje je bilo daleko od istine, dodao i to da je „formulacija manifesta pogrešna, jer je shvatio da je nadležnost Srpskog narodnog odbora potrebna kako bi on raspolagao nad samim sobom, imajući u vidu da je to bio jedini odbor koji se je uz dostavljen spisak članova sâm prijavio kod njega“. Nakon ovih Ristićevih reči, Varadi je podsetio pukovnika na to da se on na svečanom prijemu, priređenom povodom njihovog ulaska u grad, predstavio kao predsednik Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora i citirao svoj tadašnji govor, a potom zatražio protivmere zbog ekscesa koji su sve izraženiji u gradu. Ristić je tada obećao da će istog dana organizovati sastanak na kojem će se razgovarati o problemima, na koji će pozvati podžupana, direktora finansija i predsednike oba nacionalna odbora. Ristić je pokušao da se izvuče iz mreže sopstvenih laži, priznajući da je pogrešio: „zato se izvinjava, ali oni ne mogu da se mešaju u stvari koje su se dešavale, jer on ne može da interveniše zbog unutrašnjih stvari grada; o njima treba razgovarati sa Srpskim nacionalnim odborom“. Prihvatio je Varadijev predlog da predsednici oba nacionalna odbora, u njegovom prisustvu, razgovaraju o problemima. Varadi je govorio i o potrebi da više ne bude cenzure (na primer, *Torontal* se posle okupacije danima pojavljivao s praznim mestima na listovima i bio je cenzurisan), ali tu nije postigao uspeh. Sastanak koji je bio obećan takođe nije bio organizovan.⁷⁷ Gorecitirano Ristićevo objašnjenje Varadi je na sledećoj sednici Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora suzdržano nazvao „debelom prevarom“.⁷⁸ O pukovniku i o Mađarskom nacionalnom odboru detaljno je pisao i *Torontal* od 25. novembra 1918.⁷⁹

Odbor je na kraju prihvatio predlog da se o ekcesima napravi zapisnik i da ga pošalju pukovniku Ristiću, Otu Rotu – vladinom povereniku u Temišvaru,⁸⁰ vojnom komandantu Temišvara, mađarskoj vladi i da plakatima obaveste gradsko stanovništvo da se ne pridržavaju protivzakonitih odluka Srpskog nacionalnog odbora. Sumorna atmosfera sastanka tek je donekle razbijena kada je Varadi saopštio da je nakon „dugog ishodovanja“ postigao to da dva službenika Uprave za finansije mogu otputovati u Budimpeštu da donesu plate za administraciju.⁸¹

Sledećeg dana, na sastanku održanom 26. novembra, Mikloš Hohštraser, predsednik Nemačkog nacionalnog odbora, saopštio je na narodnom zboru, na kojem je učestvovalo oko 800 ljudi, da je Nemački nacionalni odbor osnovan i da ima 41 člana.⁸² Bilo je to veoma značajno u to vreme, jer su hteli da dokažu komandantu srpskih okupatorskih snaga da Srpski narodni odbor ne predstavlja većinu građana grada, jer većinu čine Mađari i

⁷⁷ Zapisnik br. 13. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, 25. novembar 1918. Isto.

⁷⁸ Zapisnik br. 13. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, 26. novembar 1918. Isto, 442.

⁷⁹ *Torontál*, 25. novembra 1918. A Magyar Nemzeti Tanács Risztics ezredesnél [*Mađarski nacionalni odbor u Nadbečkereku kod pukovnika Ristića*].

⁸⁰ Oto Rot (1884–1956), advokat, socijaldemokratski političar, predsednik Banatske republike. Istorijat Banatske republike vidi u: KÓKAI, Sándor (2009), „Illúziók és csalódások: a Bánsági Köztársaság“, *Közép-Európai Közlemények* 2 (2–3), 63–74.

⁸¹ Zapisnik br. 13. Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, 25. novembar 1918. U. DR. LÖBL, „A Nagybecskerek Magyar Nemzeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei“, 441.

⁸² Za županiju Torontal, Rumunski nacionalni odbor osnovan je 2. decembra 1918. u Nadbečkereku, pod vođstvom advokata Demetera Čiroija, a istog dana su izabrali i svoje izvršno veće. O tom, prepiska u Arhivu Varadija, bez broja.

Nemci.⁸³ Odlučili su i to da će zajednički protestovati protiv ekscesa Srpskog narodnog odbora: tražili su otvaranje javnih ustanova i vraćanje smenjenih činovnika na posao.⁸⁴ Zahtevali su razoružanje i raspuštanje srpske garde i takvu organizaciju gradske policije u kojoj se uzima u obzir i nacionalni sastav stanovništva, a tražili su i vraćanje mađarske nacionalne zastave na gradsku kuću i ukidanje cenzure. Povukli su svoju odluku od prethodnog dana – da pozovu stanovnike grada na nepolušnost u vezi s merama Srpskog nacionalnog odbora. Članovi odbora su se informisali i o krađama što su se dogodile poslednjih dana i o ostalim zloupotrebama Srpskog nacionalnog veća. Na primer, Srpski nacionalni odbor zaplenio je gotov novac i imovinu Austrijsko-mađarske banke i pritom su ukrali i zaplenili i privatnu imovinu koja se nalazila u banci, jer su zanatlije i trgovci grada u toj banci držali svoju ušteđevinu. Usred belog dana su opljačkali stan finansijskog direktora, a otkriveni su tragovi krađe i u drugim službenim prostorijama. Počinioci su – rečeno je oprezno na sednici – „verovatno bili srpski članovi nacionalne garde čija je dužnost bila da čuvaju prostorije zgrade“.⁸⁵ Posle se ispostavilo da je to bilo baš tako.

Protestno pismo sastavio je Imre Varadi u ime Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora. On je u ovom dopisu od 27. novembra sumirao njihove žalbe na osnovu onoga što je rečeno na sastanku. Pre svega, istakao je da je pukovnik – kako je i sâm priznao – „u zabludi“ preneo vlast na Srpski nacionalni odbor, koji ionako nije predstavljao većinu stanovništva grada. Srpska narodna garda je razoružala Mađarsku narodnu gardu, srpske vojne jedinice su zajedno sa Srpskom narodnom gardom „nasilno udaljile sve službenike javne uprave sa svojih funkcija i time nasilno paralisale rad organa javne vlasti“. On je nagovestio da će to imati „nepredviđene ozbiljne, boljševističke posledice“. Napomenuo je i to da je srpska garda, plaćena javnim novcem, opljačkala stan finansijskog direktora (sada bez modifikatora „verovatno“) i kancelarijske prostorije, usred bela dana, a zatim napustila stražarsko mesto i ostavila oružje.

Naposletku, u ime Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, zatražio je vraćanje državnih službenika na njihove funkcije, momentalno razoružanje i raspuštanje „pobunjene“ Srpske narodne garde, vraćanje mađarske zastave na Županijsku kuću i ukidanje cenzure novina.⁸⁶

⁸³ Prema mađarskom popisu iz 1910. godine, Nadbečkerek je imao 26006 stanovnika, od toga 9148 Mađara, 8934 Srba, 6811 Nemaca, 456 Slovaka, 336 Rumuna (*Nadbečkerek*). U vezi sa etničkim sastavom Banata, vidi KÓKAI, Sándor (2013), „Etnicitás és kulturalizmus a Bánságban (1910)“, *Közép-Európai Közlemények* 6, 1–2, 180–199.

⁸⁴ Iako je službenicima gradske policije prvobitno bilo dozvoljeno da ostanu na svom mestu, novi načelnik je imenovan već 22. novembra. Smenjen je i šef matične službe, a na njegovo mesto postavljen je srpski paroh. Nije dobio pravo venčanja, mladence je samo upisivao u matične knjige. *Torontal* je takođe izvestio da je paroh odbio da venča verenike iz Gornje Mužlje bez matičnog venčanja, jer bi to predstavljalo kršenje mađarskih zakona. *Torontál*, 22. novembar i 29. novembar 1918. *Házasságok esketések nélkül [Brakovi bez matičnog venčanja]*. Narodna uprava je 18. decembra 1918. godine ponovo uspostavila obavezni građanski brak pre crkvenog venčanja i naložila naknadnu registraciju brakova sklopljenih bez prethodnog građanskog venčanja. *Baranya Vármegye Hivatalos Lapja* [Službeni list Baranjske županije] 20. 1. 3. 1919.

⁸⁵ *Torontál*, 27. novembar 1918. Betörők a pénzügyigazgató lakásán [*Provalnici u stanu finansijskog direktora*].

⁸⁶ Dokument br.13. Pismo Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora pukovniku Dragutinu Ristiću, 27. novembar 1918. U. A. ŠAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 114–116. Posle devet godina, u

Čini se da je i srpskoj okupatorskoj komandi već bilo prekipelo kada je reč o delovanju Srpske narodne garde koja je neprestano ugrožavala mir grada, te je 30. novembra razoružala i rasformirala ovo telo od oko 300 ljudi i organizovala novu, stočlanu žandarmeriju „isključivo od pouzdanih ljudi“.⁸⁷

Poslednji zapisnici Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nađbečkereku, za koje znam, datiraju od 26. novembra 1918. godine. Međutim, drugi izvori ukazuju na to da je savet nastavio da radi i nakon toga. *Torontal* je još 4. decembra objavio vest da su pod vođstvom Imrea Varadija, predsednika Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, vlasnici idustrijske zone, direktori banaka i predstavnici radnika održali još u decembru sastanak o pitanjima nezaposlenosti. Znamo i to – iz nekih izvora – za dokument koji je Imre Varadi potpisao 10. decembra, kao predsednik Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora, a pismo je on lično sastavio. Protestno pismo je adresirano na Slavka Županskog, novog glavnog župana Županije Torontal, koga je ustoličila nova vojvođanska regionalna vlada (Narodna uprava za Banat, Bačku i Baranju) 6. decembra.⁸⁸ U tom pismu, saopštavaju glavnom županu odluke narodne skupštine koja je bila održana 10. decembra. Saopštavaju da narodna skupština ne priznaje „Novosadsku srpsku vladu“ tj. Narodnu upravu za Banat, Bačku i Baranju, dakle ne priznaje i tvrdi da je nezakonito i imenovanje glavnog župana. Zato su mađarski stanovnici Nađbečkereka – nastavlja se u odluci – upućeni na uredbe glavnog župana i na liniji su pasivne rezistencije.⁸⁹ Nadalje, obrazlažu zašto je Mađarski nacionalni odbor doneo takav zaključak. S jedne strane, zato što su po ulasku srpske vojske, Srbi – koji su bili u manjini u gradu, ali i u celoj županiji – na „nelegitiman“ način prigrabili vlast, pa je čak i komandant koji zauzeo grad priznao da je „greškom“ predao vlast Srpskom narodnom odboru. Pogrešno tumače i primenjuju princip narodnog samoopredeljenja, pa su stoga i organizovani „ilegalno“, te stanovništvo grada, koje se pridržava mađarskih zakona, imenovanje novog glavnog župana smatra „ništavim“. Takođe, njegovo inaugurisanje je i dalje nezakonito, nastavlja se u pismu uz zakonsku preciznost, pošto su „uslovi primirja“, odnosno Beogradska vojna konvencija, ipak prepustili upravu na okupiranim teritorijama Mađarima.⁹⁰ Varadijeva nepokolebljiva vera u pravni poredak i zakon ogleda se u sledećoj rečenici pisma: „Efektivno funkcionisanje javnog života i poredak državnog života zasnovani su na istini i na zakonu, a nasilje i teror će srušiti samostvorenu vlast.“⁹¹ Međutim, prema Torontalovom izveštavanju o inauguraciji, koje je objavljeno samo u malim vestima, novi gradonačelnik je preuzeo svoju novu funkciju s „demokratskim principima“, a povodom svoje inauguracije, brojnoj srpskoj publici u velikoj sali Županije rekao je: „građanima svih nacionalnosti – bez obzira na veroispovest – ravnopravnost, slobodu i bratstvo doneće oslobođeni srpski narod“.⁹²

januaru 1939. kada je Varadija kralj Jugoslavije Petar II proglasio je za senatora, Ristić koji je tada već bio u penziji u telegramu je čestitao Varadiju. VÁRADY, „Dr. Várady Imre“, 91.

⁸⁷ *Torontál*, 30. novembar 1918. Feloszlott a szerb Nemzeti Gárda [*Raspuštena je srpska nacionalna garda*].

⁸⁸ Dokument br. 15. Pismo Imrea Varadija Slavku Županskom, 10. decembar 1918. U. A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 123–124.

⁸⁹ Dokument br. 15. Pismo Imrea Varadija Slavku Županskom, 10. decembar 1918. Isto, 124.

⁹⁰ Dokument br. 15. Pismo Imrea Varadija Slavku Županskom, 10. decembar 1918. Isto, 123–124.

⁹¹ Dokument br. 15. Pismo Imrea Varadija Slavku Županskom, 10. decembar 1918. Isto.

⁹² *Torontál*, 6. decembar 1918. Zsupanszky Szlavko dr. kinevezéséről [*O imenovanju dr Slavka Županskog*].

Nakon toga, međutim, nema ni traga o izveštajima štampe o Mađarskom nacionalnom odboru i o drugim izvorima u vezi s njegovom delatnošću. Ne može se utvrditi kada su tačno bili primorani da prestanu s radom. Verujemo da se njegov prestanak postojanja, čak i u nedostatku tačnog datuma, može povezati s političkim promenama i promenama moći koje se dešavaju u Južnom regionu. Od prvog trenutka okupacije, srpske trupe su se osećale kao da su već unutar poseda, te su vojnu okupaciju transformisale u vlast i u političku asimilaciju. O ovim događajima, sada samo kao naznaka: već 3. novembra, dakle pre ulaska srpskih trupa, na inicijativu Jaše Tomića iz Radikalne stranke, u Novom Sadu, na narodnom saboru, formirali su Srpsku narodnu gardu i Srpski nacionalni odbor, čiji je predsednik bio Jaša Tomić.⁹³ Srpski nacionalni odbor deklariseo se kao protivteža postojećoj mađarskoj administraciji; 24. novembra, parlament formiran od Zagrebačkog nacionalnog odbora konstituiše Državu Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba i objavljuje u ime Vojvodine ujedinjenje sa Srbijom i Crnom Gorom.

Velika narodna skupština u Novom Sadu (u drugom prevodu – Veliki narodni zbor), nakon što su južnonoslovenski političari iz Vojvodine tajno vodili pregovore s Narodnim većom u Zagrebu i vladom u Beogradu, proglasila je 25. novembra prisajedinjenje Bačke, Banata i Baranje Kraljevini Srbiji, uz dodatak da „treba učiniti sve da se ostvari jedinstvena država Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca pod vođstvom kralja Petra i njegove dinastije“.⁹⁴

Na inicijativu Vase Stajića, koji je ujedinjenje zamislio prisajedinjenjem jugoslovenskoj državi, koje je već bilo proglašeno u Zagrebu,⁹⁵ na predlog Jaše Tomića upisali su stav koji su kasnije toliko pominjali manjinski Mađari, ali ga je nova vlast ubrzo zaboravila. „Nesrbima i neslavenima koji ostaju u našim granicama obezbeđujemo sva prava, preko kojih žele da sačuvaju i razviju svoju nacionalnu egzistenciju kao manjina...“⁹⁶ Nacionalni odbor, koji je bio izabran na sednici, formirao je svoje izvršno telo – Nacionalnu direkciju Bačke, Banata i Baranje, koja deluje kao regionalna vlada. Za predsednika su izabrali Jocu (Jovan) Laloševića.⁹⁷ Nacionalna direkcija je 4. decembra preuzela sve upravne administrativne zadatke na teritorijama pod okupacijom srpske armije. Jedanaest „ministarskih portfelja“ (obrazovanje, unutrašnji poslovi, zdrastvo itd.) obavljali su takozvani poverenici, u drugom prevodu – komesari.

Narodna uprava za BBB 13. januara izdala je uredbu o zabrani nacionalnih odbora 1919. i o preispitivanju ranijeg rada, bez obzira na njihov nacionalni karakter. Dakle, uredbu su izdali nakon što je već prestalo delovanje Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora u Nadbeč-

⁹³ Pre toga, Srbi u Mađarskoj imali su samo jednu legalnu humanitarnu organizaciju, koja se bavila smeštajem dece – Centralni komitet za prihvatanje bosanske djece. Iz te organizacije nastao je novosadski Srpski nacionalni odbor.

⁹⁴ *Spomenica oslobođenja Vojvodine 1918*, Novi Sad, 1929, 56–157.

⁹⁵ O načinu prisajedinjenja i o unutrašnjim debatama postoji bogata literatura. Vidi: RAKIĆ, *Jaša Tomić (1856–1922)*, 288–298; KONČAR, Ranko – MARKOVIĆ, Saša (2009), „Vojvodina između srpske i jugoslovenske opcije u vreme stvaranja Kraljevine SHS“, in BALKOVEC, Bojan (ur.), *Jugoslavija v času. Devetdeset let od nastanka prve jugoslovenske države*, Ljubljana, 93–104; KONČAR „Vasa Stajić és a Vajdaság Szerbiához csatolása 1918-ban“, 18–24.

⁹⁶ Ceo tekst odluke objavio PETRANOVIĆ, Branko – ZEČEVIĆ, Momčilo (1985), *Jugoslavija 1918–1984*, Beograd, 112.

⁹⁷ Jovan Lalošević (1870–1935), somborski advokat, srpski političar Radikalne partije. Pravo je završio u Budimpešti. Bio je predsednik somborskog Srpsko-bunjevačkog nacionalnog odbora, direktor Nacionalne narodne uprave za Banat, Bačku i Baranju.

kereku. Prema uredbi: „U prvim danima mađarske revolucije formirani su nacionalni komiteti, odbori itd. i druge slične organizacije koje su pomagale da se uspostavi mir i red. Međutim, neke od ovih organizacija su prekoračile svoja ovlašćenja i donele i sprovele odluke koje su protivne interesima zemlje.“

Prilikom razmatranja, nastavlja se u uredbi, posebna pažnja se mora obratiti na to „da li je i kako je povređen ili oštećen javni ili nacionalni interes“. Takođe, posebna pažnja mora se obratiti na kontrolu finansiranja nacionalnih odbora (oporezivanje, prikupljanje sredstava), o čemu su bivši predsednici nacionalnih odbora bili dužni da u roku od tri dana pripreme izveštaj za Nacionalnu direkciju, tačnije za poresku upravu.⁹⁸ Nažalost, nismo uspjeli da pronađemo izveštaj Mađarskog nacionalnog odbora Bečkerek. Narodna uprava za BBB je postavljala nove glavne župane to jest načelnike; propisivala tekst zakletve koja se polaže pred novom vlašću, smenjivala i postavljala činovnike, organizovala novu policiju uz pomoć vojske i tako dalje. Delatnost Narodne uprave nije priznala srpska vlada, a posle uspostavljanja prve jugoslovenske vlade (20. decembra 1918) njihovo delovanje je zabranjeno u ime centralizacije vlasti. Uprkos tome, Narodna uprava je nastavila da radi do 11. marta.⁹⁹ Tako je u Nađbečkereku imenovan pomenuti novi srpski gradonačelnik, koji je potom u svom delokrugu imenovao novog gradonačelnika grada Jovana Miljkovića i novog glavnog beležnika Đerđa Berberskog, koji je predstavnik stare administrativne garniture. U broju Torontala od 11. decembra 1918. godine detaljno je objavljen kompletan spisak novoinmenovanih županijskih, gradskih i okružnih službenika, što je takođe značilo da su javne službe u gradu, sada pod okriljem nove vlasti, ponovo počele da rade.¹⁰⁰ Međutim, socijalni mir u gradu bilo je teško obnoviti. Pukovnik Ristić je u gradu pogubio devet ljudi zbog pacifističke agitacije među srpskim vojnicima. Kao što možemo pročitati u njegovom dekretu s tim u vezi: u poslednje vreme, među srpskim vojnicima dele se leci „podsticanja na izdaju“, koji pozivaju „hrabre i nepobedive srpske vojnike“ da bace oružje i prekrše zakletvu. Stoga su zarobljeni agitatori izvedeni pred vojni sud, osuđeni na smrt i streljani.¹⁰¹

Prva sednica Gradskog veća, pod rukovodstvom novog srpskog gradonačelnika, održana je 24. decembra. Početak rada novih županijskih i gradskih upravnih organa u suštini je značio likvidaciju dosadašnje mađarske javne uprave, pa je mesec dana nakon osnivanja i Mađarski nacionalni odbor bio prinuđen da prekine s radom. U mesecu kada je u gradu prestala zaraza razornog španskog gripa.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ *Baranya Vármegye Hivatalos Lapja* [Službeni list Baranjske županije], XXII. godište, broj 6–9. 1. mart 1919. 19.

⁹⁹ *Baranya Vármegye Hivatalos Lapja*, XXII. godište, broj 3. aprila 1919. S potpisom Laloševića, saopštenje u kojem se oglasio predsednik Narodne uprave za Banat, Bačku i Baranju sa objavom da ih je beogradska vlada razrešila i njihove resore pripojila beogradskim ministarstvima. Lalošević je pohvalio delovanje Narodne uprave i napisao da se otvorilo nova doba, sa slobodnijim životom i boljom budućnošću. „Ostvarilo se ono o čemu smo dugo maštali i dugo samo sanjali. Konačno smo ujedinjeni sa svojom braćom preko Save, u velikoj, slobodnoj zemlji.“ U vezi s delovanjem Narodne uprave. A. SAJTI, *Impériumváltások, revízió, kisebbség*, 18–19.

¹⁰⁰ *Torontál*, 11. decembar 1918. A közhivatalok újra megkezdik működésüket [Ponovo će početi da rade javne službe].

¹⁰¹ *Torontál*, 12. decembar 1918. A Torontál megyei szerb megszálló csapatok Parancsnokának Op. 4826. sz. rendelete [Ukaz komandanta srpskih okupatorskih trupa Torontalske županije, op. 4826].

¹⁰² *Torontál*, 21. decembar 1918. Megszűnt a spanyolnátha [Prestao je španski grip]; *Torontál*, 24. decembar 1918. Hírek. Tanácsülés [Vesti. Sastanak veća].

Ukratko, možemo zaključiti da je Mađarski nacionalni odbor u Nadbečkereku počeo da radi usred sloma rata, u teškoj ekonomskoj situaciji, u trenutku raspada istorijske Mađarske, u sve užem međunarodnom prostoru moći, s velikim nadama i s još više iluzija. Vojni sporazum u Beogradu, kao i Karolijeva vlada, viđeni su kao sigurnosna mreža koja će spasti grad od oružanog sukoba između nemačkih trupa u povlačenju i napredujućih srpskih trupa, spasće ga od toga da postane bojno polje. Oni su takođe naivno verovali da će konvencija obezbediti nastavak rada mađarskih vlasti. Za manje od mesec dana njenog delovanja mogli su samo da izgrade prilično nestabilan odnos sa Srpskom narodnom gardom u Bečkereku. Iako su u gradskim novinama *Torontal* nastojali da istaknu pozitivnu stranu svog odnosa, kao što smo videli, delovanje Srpske narodne garde bilo je prilično kontroverzno, njeni pripadnici su često učestvovali u otimačini, pljačkama i samovoljnim merama koje su uveli, što je na kraju dovelo do njihovog raspuštanja. Srpski nacionalni odbor se, pak, čvrsto uzdržao od saradnje. Razlog za to moramo da vidimo pre svega u činjenici da su Srbi Novog Sada i Beograda od početka imali podršku Beograda, i na kraju, ali ne i najmanje važno, invazione srpske vojske.

Na gradskom nivou, Srpski nacionalni odbor u Nadbečkereku ponašao se kao francuska vlada u odnosu na Karolija, kada je glavnom komandantu snage Antante na Balkanu tokom pregovora u Beogradu sugerisao da nema potrebe da razgovara s Karolijem. Međutim, Karolji je verovao Francuskoj „kao što izgubljeni sin veruje svom dobrom ocu...“.¹⁰³ U sličnoj situaciji bio je i Varadi kada je otkrio da se njegov stari kolega, advokat i dobar prijatelj Slavko Županski suzdržavao od bilo kakve političke saradnje na osnovu instrukcija koje je dobio. Međutim, saradnja između dva nacionalna odbora ipak je postojala u nekim oblastima – u veoma neizvesnim danima okupacije i smene vlasti, uspeali su da očuvaju život i imovinu žiteljima grada i za razliku od sela – uspeali su da spreče veću društvenu buru. U tome je, ako ne i bez problema, učestvovala i okupatorska srpska vojska. Naravno, pored svih javnih izjava, srpska vojska nije došla u Nadbečkerak samo s tim ciljem. Zauzimanje Banata bio je glavni cilj vojske; prema ličnim uputstvima srpskog premijera Nikole Pašića, zadatak je bio da spreče ostvarivanje opcije Rumunije u vezi s Banatom i da do početka mirovnih pregovora obezbede za sebe posed teritorije do prisajedinjenja sa Srbijom.

Do decembra 1918. godine postalo je jasno da se srpska vojna okupacija, koja je nastala kao rezultat ratnog poraza Austrougarske monarhije, nije zaustavila na „dopunjavanju“ ugarskih državnih službenika sopstvenim sledbenicima, već da su oni težili ka potpunij promeni vlasti i politike još pre mirovnih pregovora. Mađarski nacionalni odbor i Varadi lično, razočarali su se i izgubili su iluzije o tome da je srpska vojska došla u oblast Banata samo „da brani opštu slobodu naroda“. Susedi Mađarske, uključujući Srbiju, uspeali su da iskoriste ratnu pobedu i da realizuju svoje dugo željene nacionalne ciljeve. Međutim, poražena Mađarska, koja je paradoksalno povratila državnu nezavisnost u Trianonu, ovaj trenutak je doživela kao nacionalnu tragediju. Počela je manjinska istorija Nadbečkereka i južnih Mađara.

¹⁰³ HATOS, *Az elátkozott köztársaság*, 281.

A portrait of a controversial minority politician Iván Nagy (1904–1972)

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I.

This study presents a brief biography of the controversial minority Hungarian politician Iván Nagy based on my research conducted in his personal papers in recent years.¹

The political career of Iván Nagy, born in Bács (now Bač in Serbia) in 1904 began in the mid-1920s, when the Hungarian Party of Yugoslavia, personified by Imre Várady,² Leó Deák³ and Dénes Strelitzky,⁴ was in crisis due to the attacks of the Belgrade authorities and the power struggle that broke out in the party.⁵

¹ See: DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2020), “Nagy Iván (1904–1972) magyar országgyűlési képviselő, emigráns magyar politikus iratai (1948–1948),” *Lymbus Magyarságtudományi Forrásközlemények* 18, 831–903; DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2021), *Klikkharcok az emigrációban. Nagy Iván (1904–1972) délvidéki emigráns magyar politikus válogatott iratai (1949–1954)*, Budapest, Lymbus Kötetek 4, 2021.

² Imre Várady (Katalinfalva, March 11, 1867 – Nagybecskerek, March 6, 1959) He studied law in Budapest, then opened a law firm in Becskerek. From 1905, he was a parliamentary representative of the opposition Independence Party. During this time, he established a good relationship with the Serbs in Vojvodina. In 1914 he provided legal protection for the arrested and interned Serbs. After 1918/1920 he was one of the founders of the Hungarian Party, its most influential, moderate politician. He was a member of the Yugoslav parliament from 1927 and a Yugoslav senator in 1939. He did not engage in political activity during the Second World War, and in 1945, after a short term in office, he permanently retired from public life.

³ Leó Deák (Kúla/Kula, January 14, 1888 – Újvidék/Novi Sad, after November 16, 1945) obtained a law degree in Budapest and then opened a law firm in Zombor/Sombor. One of the founders of the Hungarian Party, and its secretary. Together with Imre Várady and Dénes Strelitzky, he was a member of the trio who personally went to Belgrade in the twenties, but especially in the thirties, to solve issues important to Hungarians. He was a member of the provincial assembly since 1927. He wrote regularly for contemporary newspapers, financially supported the launch of the *Vajdasági Írás* (Vojvodina Writing) magazine, and later was an employee of the influential paper, *Kalanga*. After Hungary reoccupied the territory in 1941, he was appointed chief government commissioner (főispán) of Bács-Bodrog County as a moderate politician. He was one of the first to demand an end to the 1942 Újvidék raid and an investigation into what had happened. He was removed from office after the Nazi occupation of Hungary, and on November 1, 1945, the new Yugoslav authorities sentenced him to death as a war criminal, and the sentence was executed after November 16, 1945. Although there is growing evidence that he was sentenced to death in a show trial, nonetheless his lawsuit has not been retried to date, so his rehabilitation has not taken place.

⁴ Dénes Strelitzky (Baja, July 3, 1888 – Szabadka/Subotica, January 21, 1953) studied law in Budapest, after which he practiced law in Szabadka. In addition to the member of the board of the Hungar-

As a result, from 1926, both the right and left wings of the political spectrum of the Hungarian minority appeared, which abandoned the traditional bourgeois centrist politics of that time, which tried to include all political orientations of the Hungarian community, and which covered ideological and religious differences.

These new currents were launched by the generation that grew up in the new, Yugoslav state and was socialized there, free from the spirit of the world before 1918, its burdensome heritage, and the resulting ideological and personal rivalry. As a result, at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, a new generation appeared and demanded a place for itself alongside the “old people” fighting among themselves. This new generation not only almost immediately launched a frontal attack against the conventional world of thought and perception of the previous period, but also engaged in serious ideological infighting within its own ranks.

This was the suffocating atmosphere in which Iván Nagy, a law student⁶ at the University of Zagreb, became the leader of the Catholic student association of Vojvodina. The formation of Iván Nagy’s political thinking was greatly influenced by the Croatian independence political movement, which fought serious battles with Belgrade, and his ideal was the pro-republican Croatian Peasant Party led by Stjepan Radić, which for him embodied the successful political struggle against Belgrade. As a result, he rejected the search for compromise with the Serbian political elite, and formulated the program of the Hungarian national resistance and the Zagreb political orientation. He included in his program the issue of autonomy for Vojvodina, which had been rejected by the Hungarian Party for tactical reasons.⁷ He combined Christian socialist doctrines on the model of Croatian nationalism with ideas moving in the direction of German racial and *völkisch* ideology, and he believed in solving the land question with right-wing, radical means.⁸

Iván Nagy entered politics in 1932–1933 as a member of the Croatian Peasant Party. With his program, he managed to win the support of the Catholic Hungarian priests who had a great influence on the Hungarian masses relatively quickly – including Elemér Korányi,⁹ who would later be part of his closest circle of friends for decades. With the support

ian Party, Imre Várady and Leó Deák, he is one of the outgoing politicians of the party, the head of the party’s legal protection office, and at the same time the editor-in-chief of *Hírlap*. The moderate politician did not take on a political role after the feedback, after 1945 he was one of the district vice-presidents of the People’s Front of Szabadka, and a member of the board of the Hungarian Public Cultural Community.

⁵ See: DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2018), “Viharban. A Magyar Párt története a Délvidéken 1923–1925,” *Aetas* 33, 2, 40–54; DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2020), “A jog erejével, az igazság fegyverével – Jogászok a délvidéki magyar kisebbségi közösség megszervezésében (1918–1941),” in VÁRADY, Tibor (ed.), *Délvidéki (Vajdasági) magyar jogászok*, Újvidék, Vajdasági Magyar Jogász Egylet, 61–113.

⁶ “Meghalt dr. Nádý Iván.” *Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja*, 3 December, 1972, 6.

⁷ Regarding the movement of Iván Nagy, see also: CSUKA, János (1995), *A délvidéki magyarság története 1918–1941*, Budapest, Püski Kiadó, 494–499.

⁸ A. SAJTI, Enikő (2016), *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés. Várady Imre (1867–1959) bánati magyar politikus iratai*, Újvidék, Forum, 56.

⁹ Elemér Korányi (Szilberek, March 13, 1888 – Innsbruck, July 25, 1957.) He completed his theological studies in Kalocsa. In the First World War, he was the chief chaplain of the 68th infantry regiment. After the war, he was a religion teacher at the Zombor high school, and in 1924 he was a parish priest in Újvidék. In 1925, he obtained a doctorate in canon law in Szeged. He was the head of the foreign policy section of the *Délbácska* daily in Újvidék (Novi Sad) and then of *Reggeli Újság*. As the vice-

of this influential and strong financial background and the strongly right-wing Hungarian political and economic elite, Iván Nagy founded the weekly newspaper *Nép* (The People) on December 8, 1935. This media background, the direct cooperation with the Croatian Peasant Party led by Vladimir Maček and the alliance with the opposition Vojvodina Movement,¹⁰ linked to the Serbian intelligentsia in Bácska (Bačka), gave Iván Nagy such a significant room for maneuver in a political sense. Thus, he was able to quickly and with great success reach almost all social strata of Hungarian society.¹¹

Since the authorities still did not allow the Hungarian Party to function again – in connection with the elections – on February 25, 1935, Imre Várady invited the representatives of Hungarian public life to Újvidék to coordinate the Hungarian strategy to be followed. Although the government still did not allow the resumption of the Hungarian Party, the majority of the participants finally assured the government of the loyalty of Hungarians, requesting that the government recognize and support their cultural and economic interests. Iván Nagy was also present at this meeting, and spoke against this decision.¹²

However, Belgrade still did not allow the Hungarian Party to function again. This gave Iván Nagy, who participated in the 1935 elections together with the Vojvodina Movement on the list of the United Opposition led by Maček, a situational advantage. Although he won the necessary number of votes, due to the manipulations of the authorities – the falsification of the number of votes – and the violence accompanying the voting, he did not get a mandate.¹³

Already in the first half of the 1930s, Iván Nagy attempted to gain influence over the Népkör/Magyar Olvasókör of Szabadka (Subotica), which was directly under the control of Várady's loyal ally, Dénes Strelitzky. The control over the Népkör (People's Circle), which control large masses and therefore had a great influence on the Hungarian minority, was considered a key political issue from the perspective of the entire the Vojvodina Hungarian minority, but especially from the perspective of Szabadka.¹⁴ The power struggles that unfolded in this way ultimately resulted in the ideological and political fragmentation of the Vojvodina Hungarians as a whole.

In December 1938, new elections were held in the country. The leaders of the former Hungarian Party called on Hungarians to boycott it, primarily because the government did

president of the Yugoslav Hungarian Public Culture Association (Jugoszláviai Magyar Közművelődési Szövetség), which was founded just before the Second World War, he is the actual leader of the organization. Between 1942 and 1944, member of the Hungarian Parliament, head of the Southland Hungarian Public Culture Association. In 1944, the Yugoslav partisan authorities declared him a war criminal, in 1945 the Yugoslav secret service, OZNA, investigated him in Hungary. After the war, he emigrated to Austria and became a close colleague and friend of Iván Nagy.

¹⁰ The Vojvodina Movement was founded in 1925 by Serbian intellectuals from Vojvodina who were dissatisfied with the central power in Belgrade. It was led by Dušan Bošković, Žarko Jakšić, and Eugen Jocić. Initially, they demanded an independent administrative unit for Vojvodina, and after 1934 the possibility of its separation from the South Slavic state was also formulated.

¹¹ DÉVAVÁRI, *Klikkharok az emigrációban*, 15.

¹² A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 361–366.

¹³ DÉVAVÁRI, *Klikkharok az emigrációban*, 21.

¹⁴ For a full story, see: DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2014), “Árkádia útján. Indulás és útkeresés. A *Hid* eszmé- és politikatörténete (1934–1941),” in FARAGÓ, Kornélia (ed), *Mozgalom, kultúraformálás, irodalmi gondolkodás*, Újvidék – Zenta, Forum, 13–77.

not allow the party to operate. Iván Nagy, on the other hand, did not support this decision, and by agitating for the United Opposition, he even placed himself on its list.¹⁵ After the elections of December 11, 1938, the Yugoslav government, in connection with the strengthening of the improving Hungarian-Hungarian relations, appointed Imre Várady, who followed the Belgrade orientation, as a senator in January 1939. Várady's appointment resulted in Iván Nagy's relegation and isolation.¹⁶

Created by the Serb-Croat agreement (Sporazum) on August 26, 1939, the Croatian Banovina was granted legislative, administrative and judicial autonomy, thus Zagreb became a real center of power. And all of this had a significant impact on the Hungarian power space in Vojvodina. In fact, Zagreb soon used Iván Nagy and his movement in its own power games, mainly for the purpose of weakening Belgrade.¹⁷ All this resulted in the growth of Nagy's influence and weight.

In the meantime, in connection with the new shifts in power relations, the flames of power struggles flared up with renewed force in the Népkör in Szabadka. In the end, the various committees which were setting up to deal with the tensions were unable to reconcile the opposing camps, so the negotiations have been interrupted in April 1939. Iván Nagy, taking advantage of his renewed strength, finally emerged victorious from the struggles taking place in the Népkör.¹⁸

In the first days of September 1939, Deák Leó and Nagy met in Zombor, where they discussed reconciliation and the establishment of Hungarian unity. However, the positions did not converge. At that point, Nagy essentially requested the retirement of Deák, Strelitzky and Várady from public life.¹⁹

In order to bring the various Hungarian political factions on a single platform, the Council of Five of the Yugoslav Hungarian Public Culture Association (Jugoszláviai Magyar Közművelődési Szövetség Ötös Tanácsa) was established on March 24, 1941, by bringing together the opposing parties. Its members were Várady, Deák, Nagy, Sándor Pummer, and Ernő Bissingen, a landowner from Temesvajkóc (Vlajovac). In principle, the Council of Five, its meeting taking place every two weeks, would have been responsible for the political, cultural, economic and community management of the Hungarian ethnic group in Yugoslavia.²⁰

However, no meaningful work was carried out. In April 1941, with the recapture of the Bácska, an entirely new situation arrived, and thus a new era in the history of the Hungarians from Vojvodina and Ivan Nagy began.

II.

Although after the collapse of the first Yugoslav state on April 10, 1941, Iván Nagy also aspired to the position of the rejoined Bácska's government commissioner, in the end it was

¹⁵ A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 530.

¹⁶ Ibid. 565.

¹⁷ CSUKA, *A délvidéki magyarság története*, 467–468, 472–473.

¹⁸ DÉVAVÁRI, "Árkádia útján," 61, 65.

¹⁹ A. SAJTI, *Kisebbségpolitika és társadalomszervezés*, 596–603.

²⁰ Ibid. 724–725, 726–727.

won by Leó Deák, who was considered his greatest political opponent and enjoyed the trust of the Minister of the Interior Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer.²¹

At that time, it seemed that Deák, who belonged to the centrist trend, emerged victorious from the duel. However, a delicate balance of power was created between the two rivals, which temporarily took into account the actual power relations, in which, as time progressed, Deák's influence steadily eroded, while Nagy's grew. As a result, by the summer of 1941, Iván Nagy had become one of the key actors of the Hungarian state in Bácska, and concentrated great power and influence in his hand. His influence extended to the power of the security forces and law enforcement, partly to the justice system, as well as to agriculture in Bácska and the economic and cultural life.²²

After the tragic events in Újvidék on February 9, 1942,²³ the members of Bácska were invited to the Hungarian Parliament, on whose behalf Iván Nagy gave the ceremonial speech.²⁴ It was then that Nagy reached the peak of his influence: as a member of parliament, the gates of national affairs were also opened to him. On February 11, 1942, Iván Nagy joined the board of directors of the National Land Credit Institute (Országos Földhitelintézet) headed by Béla Imrédy,²⁵ and in March 1942 he became a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament.²⁶

Here we must mention that the writing of Iván Nagy's biography is made very difficult by the fact that in the era, two dr. Iván Nagy were active in Hungarian public life. In the given era, the exact identification of the two persons is also made difficult by the fact that their interests and political activities show eerie similarities and coincidences at many points.

The other Iván Nagy was a member of the Hungarian Parliament since 1935 and a ministerial advisor to the Minister of Religion and Public Education.²⁷ From 1943, in parallel, he was the head of the cultural department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from 1941 to 1944, he was a private teacher at the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the Hungarian Royal Elizabeth University in Pécs. As a result of their namesakes, similar life paths and, in many cases, inextricable coincidences, the life paths of the two persons merge at many points from 1941.

After the German occupation on March 19, 1944 and the removal of Leó Deák from the position of government commissioner, Franz Ham, the leader of the local Volksbund, recommended Iván Nagy from Bács (Bač) to the German Foreign Ministry to fill the vacant

²¹ A. SAJTI, Enikő (2004), *Impériumváltások, revízió, kisebbség – Magyarok a Délvidéken 1918–1947*, Budapest, Napvilág Kiadó, 239.

²² DÉVAVÁRI, *Klikkharcok az emigrációban*, 28–30.

²³ In January 1942, besides the restoration of domestic and public security, the Hungarian security forces held a raid in the southern areas of Bácska. The so-called Razzia demanded the lives of innocent civilian victims. In Újvidék, the Razzia began on January 20, 1942 and culminated on January 23. Most of the victims – 2578 people, came from Serbian ethnicity, but because of the 1068 Jews who lost their lives during the killings, it also had a particularly anti-Semitic edge.

²⁴ "Az országgyűlés képviselőházának 214. ülése 1942. február 9-én, hétfőn," *Képviselőházi napló*, Vol. XIII, 30–32.

²⁵ "Az Országos Földhitelintézet közgyűlése," *Új Magyarország*, 12 February, 1942, 9.

²⁶ "A miniszterelnök ma mutatkozik be a kormánypártban. Újjáalakították a Ház bizottságait," *8 órai Újság*, 12 March, 1942, 6.

²⁷ "Olasz kitüntetések az olasz kultúra magyarországi terjesztéséért," *Esti Újság*, 20 April, 1943, 4.

position. In the end, this did not happen, as the Sztójay government appointed József Piu-kovich under German pressure.²⁸

On June 28, 1944, the new leadership of the ruling party (Hungarian Life Party, Magyar Élet Pártja, MÉP) was elected in the presence of Prime Minister Döme Sztójay and Iván Nagy also joined the narrowest leadership of the party, the presidency.²⁹ One day before the Arrow Cross Party took power in a coup, Iván Nagy had been elected to the committee of the National Association of Legislators (on October 14, 1944).³⁰ As a member of National Association of Legislators,³¹ he followed the Arrow government to Sopron, too.

III.

Iván Nagy experienced the collapse of the war in Austria, in the city of Rum. He again became politically active at the beginning of 1948. In September that year, he assured his support for the establishment of the émigré Hungarian National Commission under the leadership of Catholic priest Béla Varga.³²

Iván Nagy had already formulated serious ambitions to be a member of the leading body of the Hungarian National Committee, the Executive Committee. Although he was unsuccessful, his goal was represent the interests of those ethnic Hungarians who lived in Yugoslavia. In the second half of 1948, together with Count Béla Teleki,³³ he set about forming an émigré organization called the Hungarian Christian Democratic Union (Magyar Kereszt-

²⁸ A. SAJTI, *Impériumváltások, revízió, kisebbség*, 313.

²⁹ "A leghatározottabb jobboldali politikát hirdette Sztójay miniszterelnök a MÉP értekezletén. Új vezetőséget választott a part," *Magyarország*, 3 June, 1944, 3–4; "Sztójay Döme miniszterelnök: Nekem és a kormánynak a leghőbb vágya, hogy a kívánatos egység mielőbb létrejöjjön. Új vezetőséget választott a MÉP," *Új Nemzedék*, 30 June, 1944, 3; "Új vezetőséget választott a MÉP. Vitéz Sztójay miniszterelnök beszéde," *Magyar Élet*, 1 July, 1944, 3; "Vitéz Sztójay Döme miniszterelnök az egységes nemzeti szempontok szolgálatáról beszél a MÉP értekezletén," *Pesti Hírlap* 1 July, 1944, 3.

³⁰ "A törvényhozók nemzeti szövetségének felhívása a nemzeti társadalomhoz," *Új Magyarország*, 15 October, 1944, 3.

³¹ The National Association of Legislators was established on October 9, 1944 by 120–130 right-wing and far-right members of the House of Representatives. It was chaired by Lajos Szász, co-chaired by Andor Jaross, vice-chaired by Jenő Szöllösi, and executive vice-chaired by Ferenc Rajniss. On October 30, 1944, its sister organization, the National Association of Members of the Upper House, was founded under the leadership of Archduke József. Members of these two organizations took part in the truncated National Assembly installed in Sopron in the last stages of the war.

³² DÉVAVÁRI, "Nagy Iván (1904–1972) magyar országgyűlési képviselő," 843–844.

³³ Count Béla Teleki (Kozsvár, May 16, 1899 – New York, February 7, 1990) Transylvanian landowner, completed his legal studies at the Ferenc József University of Kolozsvár (Cluj). He was the vice president of the Transylvanian Hungarian Economic Association (Erdélyi Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület) in 1936. He was a member of the Hungarian Parliament between 1940 and 1944, and the founder and then president of the Transylvanian Party (Erdélyi Párt). In 1944, he was one of the initiators of the Hungarian Council in Kolozsvár. The Soviets arrested him and handed him over to the Hungarian political police. He was released in October 1945 and emigrated in 1947. He lived in the United States of America and until his death he dealt with the issues of Hungarians living under the new empires.

énydemokrata Unió), which brought together Christian-based politicians.³⁴ The Hungarian Christian Democratic Union was not created as an alternative, rival organization of the National Commission, but basically as an advocacy organization of the conservative legislators of 1939. However, the Catholic and at the same time legitimist, Union had a serious challenger in the Christian People's Movement (Keresztény Népmozgalom) led by József Közi Horváth,³⁵ a Catholic priest.³⁶

Iván Nagy was one of the leaders of the series of secret Hungarian-Serbian negotiations in Paris in the first half of 1949, which were aimed at the radical transformation of the political map of Central Europe and the creation of a kind of a federal state along the Danube. Due to the contradictions and diametrically opposed interests within the South Slavic and Hungarian emigration, the negotiations eventually stalled and were broken off in the summer of 1949.³⁷

In the first half of 1951, Iván Nagy settled in the United States of America, in San Francisco. However, there was still no meaningful progress in the National Commission regarding the admission of Hungarian representatives who had split into the minority, but relations were also burdened by the fact that the reprisals committed by the successor states against the Hungarian minorities were still considered taboo. All this resulted in new conflicts. In this context, from 1952, the Hungarians from Transylvania and Slovakia (Felvidék) successively formed their own emigration organizations. However, Nagy, together with several other politicians, did not initially support the creation of these Hungarian organizations, because they believed that it would result in the weakening of the unified representation of Hungarian interests, and they were still of the position that the Hungarian National Commission should undertake the representation of all Hungarians.

Nevertheless, in September 1952, on the initiative of Elemér Homonnay,³⁸ who lived in Cleveland, an emigration organization called the Southland Association (Délvidéki Szövetség) was formed. However, Iván Nagy and the former parliamentarians from Bácska op-

³⁴ Gyula Borbándi mentions all of this in connection with the Group of Legislators Based on the Historical Hungarian Constitution formed at the beginning of 1949. See: BORBÁNDI, Gyula (1985), *A magyar emigráció életrajza 1945–1985*, München, Európai Protestáns Magyar Szabadegyetem, 33.

³⁵ József Közi-Horváth (Agyagos, September 25, 1903 – Oberhaching, May 26, 1988) was ordained a priest in 1927, and in 1929 he obtained his doctorate in theology at the Faculty of Religious Studies of the Royal Hungarian Pázmány Péter University. In 1935, the Archbishop of Esztergom, Jusztinián Serédi, appointed him the general secretary of the Hungarian organization of Actio Catholica. In 1938, he was one of the organizers of the World Eucharistic Congress in Budapest. He was a member of the Hungarian Parliament between 1939 and 1944. He left Hungary in 1948. He founded the Hungarian Christian People's Movement (Magyar Keresztény Népmozgalom) in Paris and was a member of the executive committee of the Hungarian National Committee.

³⁶ See more: DÉVAVÁRI, *Klikkharcok az emigrációban*, 50–51.

³⁷ Ibid. 49–50; 105–115.

³⁸ Elemér Homonnay (Isaszeg, November 11, 1910 – Cleveland, November 1986) studied at Budapest and Munich, then worked as a physics teacher. After the Second World War, he emigrated to Paris, then to the United States of America, where he settled down in Cleveland. He worked as an engineer at General Electric. He was a regular author of Western émigré magazines, and he dealt with the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia and in Czechoslovakia in many of his articles. He was one of the founders and leader of the Southern Hungarian Liberation Council (Délmagyarországi Felszabadító Tanács) in October 1954.

posed the support of Homonnay's initiative due to its personal composition and political considerations. They believed that the "legitimate" former parliamentarians were called to lead the new emigrant organization.

In April 1954, Tibor Eckhardt unexpectedly resigned from the Executive Committee of the Hungarian National Commission due to internal conflicts. Thanks to the turn in the National Commission, for a short time it seemed that the way would be opened for Iván Nagy to fulfill his old ambition and join its Executive Committee by co-opting him. He was supported not only by the membership of the Union, but also by the social democrat Károly Peyer, who was ideologically on the opposite side. However, as former prime minister Miklós Kállay took a firm stand against Nagy, Peyer recanted. Kállay's rejection completely isolated Iván Nagy, and with that, the door was basically closed to all his personal ambitions related to the Hungarian National Committee.³⁹

The creation of Hungarian National Commission for Yugoslavia (Jugoszláviai Magyar Nemzeti Bizottmány) also failed, as Homonnay bypassed the former parliamentarians and founded the Southern Hungarian Liberation Council (Délmagyarország Felszabadító Tanácsa, DFT) on October 17, 1954.⁴⁰

It is known from several documents that Iván Nagy had a heart attack around that time and needed long-term hospital rehabilitation, as a result of which he also lost his job. Iván Nagy used the rehabilitation period to study and successfully passed the exam of accounting. Nagy, who spoke six languages – Hungarian, Croatian, Serbian, German, French and English –, took a job at the finance department of the California State University, founded in 1899, after his recovery, and worked there until his death.

However, his further public career can only partially be reconstructed as his personal papers only scarcely refer to the period after 1955. The available documents suggest that Iván Nagy did not completely withdraw from public life in the following period either. In the early sixties, he met Otto Habsburg in San Francisco. It is also known that he actively participated in Hungarian public life in California.

On October 23, 1972, Iván Nagy took part in the commemoration of the 1956 revolution and freedom struggle in San Francisco. He became ill that night and was taken straight from the ceremony to the local hospital. He died five days later, on October 28, 1972.⁴¹

³⁹ See more: DÉVAVÁRI, *Klikkharok az emigrációban*, 58, 163–164.

⁴⁰ For a full story, see: DÉVAVÁRI, Zoltán (2022), "Egy elvetélt kísérlet. A Jugoszláviai Magyar Nemzeti Bizottmány szervezésének kudarca az emigrációban (1952–1955)," *Tanulmányok/Studije/Studies*, Újvidéki Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar, Hungarológia Tanszak, Magyar Nyelv és Irodalom Tanszék, 57–97.

⁴¹ "Meghalt dr. Nagy Iván," *New Yorki Magyar Élet*, 2 December, 1972, 9; "Meghalt dr. Nádý Iván," *Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja*, 3 December, 1972, 6; "Halálálhírek," *Californiai Magyarság*, 8 December, 1972, 4; "Dr. Nagy Iván – Megemlékezés," *Katolikus Magyarok Vasárnapja*, 7 January, 1973, 3.

Yugoslav-Hungarian Border 1948–1953

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The border between Yugoslavia and Hungary came about as the result of WWI. It was set by the Peace Treaty of Trianon, but neither party was satisfied with it: the Yugoslav powers that be regretted that it did not extend so far as to include the Baranya coal-mines and most of the Southern Slavs in Hungary, whereas the Hungarian authorities wanted to abolish it altogether, i.e. push it back to the South where it had been until 1918. Like most European borders it was the fruit of a war and not of a friendly agreement between the two countries. It was also one of those European borders that did not correspond with the ethnic make-up of the local population, i.e. it left sizable minorities on both sides. In that respect it could have been more equitable, leaving less people on the wrong side of the border, but due to great mixture of people of various nationality, there could never have been a clear-cut ethnic border.¹ Historical enmity sharpened by the war, nationalist appetites and intolerance, economic and strategic considerations led to opposed political goals of the two neighbouring countries, making the border question one of the most disputed. It epitomized the bilateral relations: life on this or that side of the border was construed as the ideal worth striving for, or as national and social dungeon. This latter view was held particularly by members of national minorities. At the same time, disobedient or pesky members of national minorities were shoved off across the border into the country of their origin if their documents were not in order.² Thus, for some border was the gateway to paradise, and from some the dreaded entrance into banishment.

Most members of the newly created Hungarian national minority in Yugoslavia, but considerably fewer members of Yugoslav minorities in Hungary did not like the Trianon border that separated them from their fellow-nationals, relatives, national culture and past. Although Hungary's revisionist goals were aimed primarily against Romania and Czechoslovakia, Hungarian elites were not averse to revising the border with Yugoslavia too. The opportunity presented itself in April 1941 when Germany and Italy attacked Yugoslavia.

¹ MITROVIĆ, Andrej (1975), *Razgraničenje Jugoslavije sa Mađarskom i Rumunijom 1919-1920*, Prilog proučavanju Jugoslavije na konferenciji mira u Parizu, Novi Sad; SZARKA, László (2011), "Hungary at the Peace Talks in Paris," in BÁRDI, Nándor – FEDINEC, Csilla – SZARKA, László (eds.), *Minority Hungarian Communities in the Twentieth Century*, New York, 43–51.

² JANJETOVIĆ, Zoran (2005), *Deca careva, pastorićad kraljeva. Nacionalne manjine u Jugoslaviji 1918-1941*, Beograd, 2005, 226; A. SAJTI, Enikő (2003), *Hungarians in the Vojvodina 1918–1947*, Boulder, Col., 20; MESAROŠ, Šandor (1981), *Položaj Mađara u Vojvodini 1918-1929*, Novi Sad, 88, 93–94; VINAVER, Vuk (1971), *Jugoslavija i Mađarska 1918-1933*, Beograd, 274; A. MOCSY, István (1995), "Partition of Hungary and the Origins of the Refugee Problem," in KIRÁLY, Béla K. – VESZPRÉMY, László (ur.), *Trianon and East Central Europe. Antecedents and Repercussions*, New York, 242.

Although prime minister Teleki committed suicide over Hungary's participation in the aggression,³ the Hungarian regent Horthy, foreign minister Bárdossy and other top-brass, did not let the opportunity for border revision slip by: the more since in their eyes revision of the border was not just rectification of the unsatisfactory border, but also restoration of the glorious past. Hungarian troops entered Yugoslav parts of Baranya and Backa as well as Međimurje, and after a period of military rule, the territory was annexed to Hungary in December of that year.⁴ However, just as the wheel of history could not be turned backwards, the redrawing of the border was only temporary. By October 1944 German power was on the wane and the Hungarian boat was sinking together with the German ship to which it was tied. With the help from the Red Army Yugoslav partisans re-conquered the Vojvodina and other lost territories, and even started making incursions into the pre-war Hungarian territory. It is clear that these were the expression of the new rulers' wish to acquire the territories Yugoslavia was denied in 1920. They even intervened in Moscow so as to get the Soviet go-ahead.⁵

However, the old border was re-established at the end of the war. The concerned parties could probably influence the political facts even less than after WWI: Yugoslavia was a faithful satellite of the USSR who needed Soviet help in securing its borders in the West and its economic recovery and development, whereas Hungary was the defeated country under allied control on its way to becoming a Soviet satellite. When it came to the mutual border it remained unchanged but the new international situation worked toward easing tensions – both countries being part of the informal Soviet empire.

However, despite the tendency that pointed in that direction, at the beginning the border was very palpable indeed. Undesirable Hungarians (wartime settlers, officials etc.) and Ethnic-Germans were shoved across the border into Hungary.⁶ It was felt most keenly by the Volksdeutsche refugees who were trying to return to Yugoslavia after the end of the war.⁷ They were taken off trains, or their carriages were derailed and sent back. If they

³ TILKOVSKY, Loránt (1974), *Pál Teleki (1879-1941). A Biographical Sketch*, Budapest, 59–60.

⁴ UNGVÁRY, Krisztián (2021), "Die Rückgliederung der Batscska und des Baranya-Dreiecks unter ungarischer Herrschaft 1941-1944," in ARENS, Meinolf – BITUNJAC, Martina (eds.), *Massengewalt in Südosteuropa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Motive, Abläufe und Auswirkungen*, Berlin, 189–192; A. SAJTI, *Hungarians in the Vojvodina*, 205–227, 298–305; KASAŠ, Aleksandar (1996), *Mađari u Vojvodini 1941-1946*, Novi Sad, 33–65, 82.

⁵ A. SAJTI, *Hungarians in the Vojvodina*, 458–459; PETRANOVIĆ, Branko (1991), *Balkanska federacija 1943-1948*, Brograd, 116; HORNJAK, Arpad (2016), "Pitanje granica i Jugosloveni u Mađarskoj u mađarsko-jugoslovenskim odnosima posle Drugog svetskog rata," in HORNJAK, Arpad – JANJETOVIĆ, Zoran – BIRO Laslo (eds.), *Mađari i Srbi sa dve strane promenjive granice. Tematski zbornik radova*, Budimpešta, 294–297.

⁶ A. SAJTI, *Hungarians in the Vojvodina*, 435–439. Part of these started leaving already in October 1944 as the partisans and the Red Army approached. Ibid. 393–394.

⁷ The Yugoslav government decided on May 22, 1945 to deny the escaped Volksdeutsche permission to return. "Ministarstvo socijalne politike Predsedništvu Ministarskog saveta i Ministarstvu inostranih poslova," Beograd, August 14, 1945, AJ, F. 642, 10/33; "Ministarstvo socijalne politike Ministarstvu inostranih poslova," Beograd, September 25, 1945, AJ, F. 642, 10/33; DIZDAR, Zdravko – GEIGER, Vladimir – POJIĆ, Milan – RUPIĆ, Mate (eds.) (2005), *Partizanska i komunistička represija i zločini u Hrvatskoj 1944–1946. Dokumenti*, Slavonski Brod – Zagreb, 156–157; GEIGER, Vladimir (2003), "Heimkehr. Povratak slavonskih Nijemaca nakon Drugog svetskog rata iz izbjeglištva/prognaništa u

came on their wagons, they were stopped by Yugoslav border guards and sent back into Hungary. On the Hungarian side of the border, they were refused admittance into the country, so it often happened that Ethnic-German refugees wandered for weeks on no-man's land looking for an opportunity to slip into Hungary – either to continue their journey to the West, or to stay with relatives and fellow-Germans in Hungary.⁸ At first Hungarian refugees who wanted to return to Yugoslavia were treated no better by the Yugoslav authorities. Unlike the return of ethnic-Yugoslav POWs, concentration camp inmates and overseas emigrants from the inter-war period, return of Ethnic-Hungarians was not encouraged.⁹ Eventually, due to policy of integration of the Hungarian national minority return was allowed, but on condition that the returnees were sifted through and suspect war criminals and other political undesirables separated and detained.¹⁰

The border remained closed for the Volksdeutsche still remaining in Yugoslavia, most of whom were put to concentration camps by mid-1945. The aim of the Yugoslav authorities was to “resettle” (i.e. expel) them to Germany, but the Allies would not allow it.¹¹ In order to get rid of the members of the national minority that was collectively declared treasonous, the Yugoslav authorities tolerated or even organized escapes from concentration camps into Hungary and Romania. Several tens of thousands of Ethnic-Germans left the country in that way. However, while coming to the border was comparatively easy, crossing into Hungary was not. Again groups of people often roamed the border area for days or even weeks before grabbing the opportunity to slip into Hungary and then, further West.¹²

zavičaj i njihova sudbina,” *Scrinia slavonsica* 3, 522, 525; KARAKAŠ OBRADOV, Marica (2014), *Novi mozaici nacija u “novim poredcima”*. Migracije stanovništva na hrvatskom području tijekom Drugog svjetskog rata i poraća, Zagreb, 295.

⁸ GEIGER, “Heimkehr,” 522–523, 528–530, 536, 543; GEIGER, Vladimir (2001), *Nijemci u Đakovu i Đakovštini*, Zagreb, 173–174; KARAKAŠ OBRADOV, *Novi mozaici*, 297–301; SCHIEDER, Theodor (ed.), *Das Schicksal der Deutschen in Jugoslawien*, Augsburg, 177, 179, 190; *Leidensweg der Deutschen im kommunistischen Jugoslawien*, II, München, Sindelfingen, 1991, 279; TONE, Ferenc (1998), “‘Nemci’ na Slovenskem med drugo svetovno vojno,” in NEČAK, Dušan (ed.), “‘Nemci’ na Slovenskem 1941–1955,” Ljubljana, 130; REPE, Božo (1998), “‘Nemci’ na Slovenskem po drugi svetovni vojni,” in NEČAK, “‘Nemci’ na Slovenskem,” 166; RILL, Helena (2017), “Podunavski Nemci – Istorijski pregled od kraja Drugog svjetskog rata,” in RILL, Helena – STOJČIĆ, Marijana (eds.), *Na tragu Podunavskih Nemaca u Vojvodini*, Beograd – Sarajevo, 62–63, 71; AJ, F. 97, 3/35; F. 110, 2, dok. 450.

⁹ Nevertheless, majority of Ethnic-Hungarians who had served in Hungarian armed forces eventually returned home to Yugoslavia. Mađarska nacionalna manjina, I, Bileća, February 1, 1954, DAS, BIA, VIII/13; Mađari 1918–1955, DAS, BIA, VIII/9.

¹⁰ A. SAJTI, *Hungarians in the Vojvodina*, 437–438; KARAKAŠ OBRADOV, *Novi mozaici*, 348–350; DIZDAR – GEIGER – POJIĆ – RUPIC, *Partizanska i komunistička represija*, 156; PORTMANN, Michael (2008), *Die kommunistische Revolution in der Vojvodina 1944–1952. Politik, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft, Kultur*, Wien, 273.

¹¹ *Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers* 1945, II, Washington, 1967, 1323; *Bilten MIP*, 1, January 20, 1946, 6–7; *Ibid.*, 7, June 4, 1946, 13; KARAKAŠ OBRADOV, *Novi mozaici*, 298–299; DIZDAR – GEIGER – POJIĆ – RUPIC, *Partizanska i komunistička represija*, 311; REPE, “‘Nemci’ na Slovenskem,” 167; RILL, “Podunavski Nemci,” 53–55, 61; PORTMANN, *Die kommunistische Revolution*, 263–265; GEIGER, “Heimkehr,” 524, 532–533; JANJETOVIĆ, Zoran (2005), *Between Hitler and Tito. The Disappearance of the Vojvodina Germans*, Belgrade, (2nd ed.), 287–289.

¹² [Aleksandar] Ranković [Karl] Mrazoviću, May 14, 1947, AJ, 507, II D/278; PORTMANN, *Die kommunistische Revolution*, 265–266; JANJETOVIĆ, *Between Hitler and Tito*, 278–281; NEČAK,

However, for normal travel and commerce the border remained fairly permeable. It seems it was also the case with illegal crossings of smugglers and people who had plots of land across the border.¹³ The same went for would-be emigrants. According to the data of the Yugoslav police 2.384 Ethnic-Hungarians escaped from the Vojvodina into Hungary from the end of WWII until the resolution of the Cominform. The police regarded 562 of these emigrants as political, which would imply that the majority emigrated for professional, economic, family and other non-political private reasons.¹⁴ During the first post-war years, this was normal for all Yugoslav borders with the countries within the Soviet sphere of influence.¹⁵ The major attention was devoted to borders with the capitalist countries outside of it, especially Italy with which territorial dispute was raging.¹⁶

By the time split between Tito and Stalin occurred in mid-1948, the Yugoslav-Hungarian border was not even 30 years old but it had a lively history of changes. The one that set in after the Cominform resolution condemning Yugoslavia was passed on June 28, 1948 would be one of the greatest – not because of the changes of the borderline itself, but because of the changes in practical life in a wider border area. Ostensibly a conflict between communist parties, it affected not only population living in the concerned countries or in the frontier area, but had much wider social, political and military repercussions – as far as the world stage.

To be sure, most of the consequences were felt most acutely exactly by the local populations. Once again, just as during the tense Yugoslav-Hungarian relations of the inter-war period, the border was closed swiftly and tightly.¹⁷ Consequently, the number of illegal crossings increased, but now this became a much more serious offence than previously.

Among the first to cross were political emigrants – usually communists who accepted the Cominform resolution.¹⁸ Most of them were not Ethnic-Magyars but Yugoslavs, which means they just crossed the closest border available. For the Ethnic-Hungarians national reasons played important part in the decision where to flee – as can be seen from the number of escapes into other countries.¹⁹ Furthermore, the members of the Magyar national

"Nemci" na Slovenskem, 224–225; RILL, "Podunavski Nemci," 57. The total number of the Volksdeutsche who left the country is not known, but by mid-May 1947 it was around 11.000.

¹³ Posleratni razvitak nacionalnih manjina: Mađari, Rumuni, Bugari i Šiptari, 1957, AJ, 507, XVIII-k. 5/1-43.

¹⁴ Mađari 1918-1955, DAS, BIA, III/9; SABO, Ida [Godišnji izveštaj o delatnosti i stanju partijskih organizacija u toku 1947. godine, Senta, December 30, 1947], DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 114.

¹⁵ TASIĆ, DMITAR (2021), *Korpus narodne odbrane Jugoslavije (KNOJ) 1944-1953*, Beograd, 241, 245. The number of illegal crossings was the higher on border with Hungary – presumably because the terrain was flat.

¹⁶ Cf. MILKIĆ, Miljan (2012), *Tršćanska kriza u vojno-političkim odnosima Jugoslavije sa velikim silama 1943-1947*, Beograd, 49–185.

¹⁷ HORNJAK, "Pitanje granica," 308–311.

¹⁸ On them cf. VUKMAN, Peter (2016), "Jugoslovenski politički emigranti u Mađarskoj (1948-1949)," in HORNJAK – JANJETOVIĆ – BIRO (eds.), *Mađari i Srbi*.

¹⁹ According to analysis in a police document, most members of national minorities emigrated for national, economic or family reasons, and not for political ones. (IB emigracija, [1957], HAD, 1561, SDS RSUP SRH, šifra 1, 10/1.) Some reasons were paltry indeed, and it seems only 25% of emi-

minority were not very active in politics. The number of Hungarians in the Yugoslav communist party was not high because it was perceived as predominantly Slav affair, because of retribution by the partisans at the end of WWII and religious influence among the Hungarians.²⁰ On the other hand, it seems the Magyars made up larger part of smugglers or people with property on the other side of the border. Under new conditions these followed not only their economic interests, but became also bearers of political propaganda – not so much for ideological, but rather for nationalist reasons.²¹

When it comes to propaganda materials, Hungary was one of the leading countries in terms of quantity. Probably two reasons were decisive for this: on one hand, the population in the Vojvodina (Magyar and non-Magyar) at which the propaganda was aimed had one of the highest literacy rates in Yugoslavia. On the other hand, the flat terrain facilitated crossing the border with larger quantities of print matters. The fact that there were Hungarians on both side of the border enabled the Cominform and Hungarian institutions to use many Ethnic-Magyars for transportation of propaganda materials. The Yugoslav authorities estimated the results of Hungarian propaganda were poor, due to its detachment from reality.²² The propaganda by letters or by people who spread it by word of mouth was more convincing than officially approved publications that Yugoslav authorities could refute, because oral propaganda was often spontaneous barren of ideological coating and addressing national feelings that already existed.²³

Together with disseminators of propaganda, the border was crossed illegally also by a number of spies. According to the Yugoslav data, during 1948 and 1949 the largest number of secret agents came from Hungary.²⁴ They met with friendly reception on part of the bulk

grants had political motives. FNRJ, DSUP, UDB I odeljenje, Jugoslovenska emigracija u IB zemljama 1952-1953. godine, Beograd [after 1952], HDA, 1561, SDS RSUP SRH, šifra 1, 10/33.

²⁰ Problemi ideološko-političkog i kulturno-prosvetnog rada kod nacionalnih manjina u Vojvodini, [1949], DAS, Đ2, Agitprop komisija, k. 10; Izvodi iz godišnjih izveštaja o nacionalnim manjinama, [1952?], DAS, Đ2, Komisija za nacionalne manjine CK KPS, k. 1; Stjepan Krtanjek, Milan Martinović, Godišnji izveštaj MK KPS za Suboticu 1949, Subotica, January 3, 1950, DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 195.

²¹ Mađarska nacionalna manjina, [1953], DAS, Đ2, Komisija za nacionalne manjine CK KPS, k. 1.

²² Posleratni razvitak nacionalnih manjina: Mađari, Rumuni, Bugari i Šiptari, 1957, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 5/ 1-43; Problemi ideološko-političkog i kulturno-prosvetnog rada kod nacionalnih manjina u Vojvodini, [1949], DAS, Đ2, Agitprop komisija, k. 10; Milan Martinović, Stjepan Krtaljek, Godišnji izveštaj Mesnog komiteta KPS za Suboticu 1949, Subotica, January 3, 1950, DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 195.

²³ Milan Martinović, Stjepan Krtaljek, Godišnji izveštaj za 1948 godinu Mesnog komiteta KPS za Suboticu, Subotica, December 2, 1948, DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 116. Even Hungarian intellectuals blinded by wishful thinking were prone to accept the most unrealistic rumors. Bilten o pojavama istupanja članova KP na liniji rezolucije IB u toku meseca aprila 1951 godine i o držanju i radu ranije isključenih članova Komunističke partije, DAS, Đ2, Kontrolna komisija IB, k. 14.

²⁴ TASIĆ, *Korpus narodne*, 288. Since early 1950s the number of agents who came from Hungary was lower than that of spies coming from other neighboring countries. In 1953 Hungary was only on the third place, after Bulgaria and Albania. FNRJ, DSUP, UDB I odeljenje, Jugoslovenska emigracija u IB zemljama 1952-1953. godine, Beograd [after 1952], HDA, 1561, SDS RSUP SRH, šifra 1, 10/33.) By mid-1950s the number of agents coming from Hungary was 11 times lower than that from Bulgar-

of the Hungarian minority.²⁵ Many of the agents of the Hungarian secret service also belonged to the Hungarian national minority and relied on their family and friendly connections. However, this was the game two could play at: the Yugoslav authorities also sent numerous spies across the border into Hungary – the majority of them being Ethnic-Hungarians from Yugoslavia.²⁶ One can presume that in both cases people with roots in the frontier zone were preferred, but this remains to be explored.

Tense relations between Yugoslavia and the Cominform countries made lives of ordinary people along the border more difficult in a number of ways. It was not only that crossing the border became increasingly more difficult. The whole frontier area became militarized.²⁷ This did not only mean increased military presence on both sides of the border, together with anti-tank trenches, bunkers, barbed-wire fences and other physical obstacles. The number of troops on both sides was increased and they did not sit idle: border incidents were quite frequent and they comprised exchange of fire, illegal crossings of military personnel or over-flights.²⁸ Yugoslav border organs also complained of unusual way of disturbance applied by Hungarian military: pointing search-lights into the depth of Yugoslav territory.²⁹ Such incidents made life stressful not only for soldiers, but for civilians too.

Apart from inability to cross the border in order to till the land across the border, buy or sell products, lives of ordinary civilians were affected on more general economic level. Tensions with the Cominform countries made a war with them a distinct possibility. Shooting incidents on the border seemed to warrant that Stalin really had developed plans for an armed aggression in cooperation with his Eastern European vassals.³⁰ Fear of possible conflict spurred Yugoslav powers-that-be to dismantle part of industrial facilities in those parts of the country deemed endangered. Northern Bačka was an obvious place for such a measure. A number of factories was dismantled and removed deeper inland. The workers had the option of moving together with factories, or remaining at home, but without jobs. Such development hit members of the Hungarian national minority harder than members of other nationalities, since they made up larger proportion of industrial workers.³¹ Due to poor knowledge of Serbo-Croat and different living conditions in other parts of the country they were not inclined to pick up sticks and leave.

ia (327:30). MITROVIĆ, Momčilo – SELINIĆ, Slobodan (2009), "Jugoslovenska informbiroovska emigracija u istočnoevropskim zemljama 1948-1964," *Tokovi istorije* 1–2, 45.

²⁵ Mađarska nacionalna manjina, I, KPD Bileća, February 1, 1954, DAS, BIA, VIII/13.

²⁶ Mađarska nacionalna manjina, [1953], DAS, Đ2, Komisija za nacionalne manjine CK KPS, k. 1; VUKMAN, "Jugoslovenski politički emigranti," 378.

²⁷ HORNJAK, "Pitanje granica," 308–311.

²⁸ This was the case with all Yugoslavia's borders with socialist countries. Between 1948 and 1953 there were allegedly 7.724 incidents on these borders in which 17 Yugoslav border guards were killed. ŽIVOTIĆ, Aleksandar (2011), *Jugoslavija, Albanija i velike sile (1945-1961)*, Beograd, 349.

²⁹ It seems the purpose of this was to blind Yugoslav border guards so that Hungarian agents could cross the border-line unobserved elsewhere. HORNJAK, "Pitanje granica," 311.

³⁰ TASIĆ, *Korpus narodne*, 280–281.

³¹ Ekonomska problematika područja u NR Srbiji na kojima žive nacionalne manjine, Beograd, October 24, 1959, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 11/1-34; Neke pojave i problemi u vezi sa odnosima nacionalnosti koje žive u našem srezu, Subotica, January 28, 1958, DAS, Đ2, Organizaciono-instruktorsko odeljenje, k. 170; Stenografske beleške sa sastanka Komisije za nacionalne manjine, Beograd, October 29, 1959, DAS, Đ2, Komisija za nacionalne manjine CK SKS, k. 1.

Danger of military conflict also discouraged the government from investing in frontier zones. This had a bad long-term effects on the Vojvodina whose industry was already lagging behind: most of the factories had old machines (sometimes from before 1918). New facilities with more modern equipment were built in less developed parts of the country (so that they catch up with the more developed ones) and now even those old factories in the Vojvodina were dismantled and evacuated.³² As for agriculture, communist powers-that-be had always kept it on the back burner. It was constantly under-funded and overexploited: good to supply towns with food and industry with raw materials, but not nearly so important as heavy industry, mining or energy sector.³³ Together with heavy industry, working class was built, whereas peasants were considered intrinsically conservative, religious, bulwarks of private property and opposed to socialism. The combination of such place of agriculture in minds of economic planners with threatened security in bordering regions, brought about even smaller investments. For this reason the areas alongside Yugoslav-Hungarian border suffered economically even more than some other, even those less developed areas on borders with countries such as Bulgaria or Albania where agriculture was underdeveloped, industry practically non-existent and population used to much lower living standards.³⁴

Thanks to help from the West the Yugoslav regime managed to survive the pressure from the East. Stalin's death in early 1953 opened the possibility to normalize relations with the Cominform countries. This held true for Hungary too. It was not the first, but also not the last country to normalize relations with Yugoslavia. It was a great boon for population living along both sides of the border: people with plots in the other country were able to till them, small trade could be resumed, relatives visited after a long time and pressure on members of national minorities subsided.³⁵ Soon after the normalization, the border would once again come to play an important role in relations between Yugoslavia and Hungary. After the unsuccessful uprising against the communist regime and the Soviet military intervention, a spate of refugees spilled out of Hungary. Although most of them crossed directly to Austria, when that border was closed, some 20,000 crossed into Yugoslavia and sought the first refuge there. This time the border did not prove so impermeable.³⁶ The Yugoslav

³² Stenografske beleške sa sastanka Komisije za nacionalne manjine, Beograd, October 29, 1959, DAS, Đ2, Komisija za nacionalne manjine CK SKS, k. 1.

³³ Ekonomska problematika područja u NR Srbiji na kojima žive nacionalne manjine, Beograd, October 24, 1959, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 11/1-34; POPOV, Čedomir – POPOV, Jelena (2000), *Autonomija Vojvodine – srpsko pitanje*, Sremski Karlovci (2nd ed.), 100–101; KONČAR, Ranko – BOAROV, Dimetrije – DORONJSKI, Stevan (2011), *Odbrana autonomije Vojvodine*, Novi Sad, 242.

³⁴ Unlike the Ethnic-Hungarians or Albanians, members of the Bulgarian minority attended universities in larger number and also migrated for work more often. Elaborat o bugarskoj nacionalnoj manjini, April 1, 1956, DAS, BIA, III/74; Aktuelni problemi nacionalnih manjina u Srbiji, March 25, 1959, AJ, 507, XVIII – k. 3 /1-36; SUP Pirot, Bugarska nacionalna manjina, [1959?], DAS, BIA, III/81; [No title], March 15, 1956, DAS, BIA, III/ 81. Military considerations discouraged industrial investments in Kosovo too. Cf. Ströhle, Isabel (2016), *Aus den Ruinen der alten erschaffen wir die neue Welt! Herrschaftspraxis und Loyalitäten in Kosovo (1944-1974)*, München, 85–86.

³⁵ HORNJAK, "Pitanje granica," 312–313.

³⁶ KOVAČEVIĆ, Katarina (2003), "Mađarske izbeglice u Jugoslaviji 1956-1957," *Tokovi Istorije* 1–2, 98–117; KOVÁCS, Attila (2007), "Mađarski eksodus leta 1956-1957 s posebnim poudarkom na be-

authorities condemned the Soviet intervention and feared it could spill over into their country. At the same time, they felt compunction for talking Imre Nagy and his followers into leaving the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest and, while not wanting to disgruntle the Soviets too much, they wanted to seem principled and remain in the good books of the Western powers. For that reason the border was open and Hungarian refugees met with cordial reception in Yugoslavia.³⁷

All that was said in this paper goes to show just how important role borders play in international affairs and relations between countries. They can be, and often are, source of disputes and tensions. They can also serve as barriers when relations are bad, but also as bridges when relations are good or if one of the bordering countries finds its interest in keeping its border permeable. The Yugoslav-Hungarian border showed all these features within the space of just few decades. The ups and downs in inter-state relations were felt most keenly by the population of different nationalities living on both side of the border.

guncih ki so zbežali v Jugoslavijo oziroma v Slovenijo," *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 1, 173–181. However, the first refugees – civil servants and secret policemen – were turned down.

³⁷ JANJETOVIĆ, Zoran (2011), "Jugoslawien und Aufstand in Ungarn 1956," in GRÄF, Rudolf – VOLKMER Gerald (eds.), *Zwischen Tauwettersozialismus und Neostalinismus. Deutsche und andere Minderheiten in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa 1953-1964*, München, 209–219.

Border, identity, everyday life
The South Slavs of Gara in state security documents
(1945–1956)*

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Abstract

The Baja Triangle, also known as Northern Bácska, geographically roughly included the area between Baja (in Hungary), Subotica and Sombor (in Serbia). It has been a multiethnic region for centuries, inhabited by Hungarians, Germans, and South Slavs. The physical proximity of the border and its separating function had a fundamental impact on the daily lives of the Hungarians and South Slavs living here, especially after 1948, when, because of the escalation of the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict, Hungarian-Yugoslav relations also became frosty. In my paper, I will examine how the fluctuating Hungarian-Yugoslav relations following World War Two affected the South Slavs living there in connection with Gara, a multiethnic village close to the Hungarian-Yugoslav border, how it affected their everyday life, their ideas about the border, their identity and their relationship with other nationalities.

Keywords: Hungarian-Yugoslav relations, 1945–1956, South Slavic minorities in Hungary 1945–1956, state security and minorities, everyday life in Hungary in the 1940s and 1950s

Introduction

Geographically, the region known as the Baja Triangle (also known as Northern Bácska) roughly encompassed the triangle area between Baja, Subotica and Sombor (or those Northern parts of the former Bács-Bodrog County that remained in Hungary after World War One). For centuries, it was an ethnically diverse area that was inhabited by Hungarians, Germans and South Slavs; its economic, transport, geographic, social and historical unity was disrupted by the change of borders after the First World War. The physical proximity and separating function of the border had a profound impact on the daily lives of Hungarians and South Slavs living there, especially after 1948, when the escalation of the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict also led to a rapid and sharp deterioration in Hungarian-Yugoslav relations. In my study, I examine the impact of the fluctuations in Hungarian-Yugoslav

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relations after World War Two on the South Slavs living in Gara, in one of the multi-ethnic settlements of the Baja Triangle, their everyday life, their perceptions of the border, their identity and their relations with other nationalities.

My conclusions are based on the state security documents kept in the Historical Archives of the former State Security Services (Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára, ÁBTTL, Budapest). My research was greatly aided by the fact that the so-called object files (*objektum dossziék*) opened in the early 1950s for the villages of the Baja Triangle have survived almost intact, thus providing insights into local conditions at the time, the problems caused by economic and social transformation, ethnic tensions and cross-border activities (e. g. smuggling of goods and people, propaganda and espionage). At the same time, the documents constitute a special group of sources. In many cases, the files and reports of the informants and secret agents were subject to pressure from above, from their officers, and, moreover, the agents often had a desire for ideological identification, which led to distortions of reality or in emphasis. The state security documents were influenced by national processes and individual motivations, too, and they also reflected the expectations coming from the superiors of the state security apparatus and the Communist party rather than the reality. The finished version of the text itself often underwent several transformations, too.¹ Therefore, we can only describe how individuals and small communities, influenced by national processes and their individual motivations, were seen by the secret service apparatus. However, I am sure that the reports of mood (*hangulatjelentések*) and summaries of the local agents and informants provide us an insight into the everyday lives, activities, fears and hopes of a certain minority community in an ethnically mixed border region between Hungary and Yugoslavia, the local processes and the activities of a particular person or community. From a methodological point of view, this paper will thus also allow me to examine what the open object files are good for and what they are not. This article is also related to my ongoing research (“Power politics and everyday life, Hungarians and South Slavs in the Baja Triangle, 1945–1956”) financially supported by the János Bolyai Research Fellowship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and it provides the first results of my research.

Ethnic composition of Gara in the 1940s

According to census data, Gara, located two and a half kilometres from the present-day Hungarian–Serbian border, had a population of 4,087 in 1910, 4,473 in 1941 and 4,540 in 1949. At the beginning of the 20th century, Germans were still in a majority of nearly two thirds, followed by the South Slavs. In 1910, 2,749 people declared themselves German based on their mother tongue, 1,207 Bunjevci (a distinct South Slavic ethnic group that nowadays identifies itself with the Croats) and 122 Hungarians.² In 1941, a total of 4,473

¹ GYARMATI, György (2008), “Nem mind arany, ami... A szocialista rendszer állambiztonsági iratainak történeti forrásértéke,” in MAJTÉNYI, György – SZABÓ, Gabriella (eds.), *Rendszerváltás és Kádár-korszak*, ÁBTTL – Kossuth Kiadó, Budapest, 127–139; GYARMATI, György (2012), “Mire jók az állambiztonsági ügynökiratok és mire nem?” *Kommentár* 7, 6, 64–78.

² *A magyar Szent Korona országainak 1910. évi népszámlálása. I. rész: A népesség főbb adatai községek és népesebb puszták, telepek szerint*, Budapest, 1912. 176–177. Available:

inhabitants lived in Gara, among them 2,709 Germans, 1,042 Bunjevci, 5 Croats and 716 Hungarians based on their mother tongue. In the 1941 census, the census takers also asked about nationality, and in Gara, in a significant departure from the use of mother tongue, the enumerators registered only 91 people as Bunjevci.³

After World War Two, between 1945 and 1949, there were several national or regional censuses that included or specifically targeted the South Slavs living in the Baja Triangle. According to the report of the deputy county governor of Bács-Bodrog County in 1945, the number of Bunjevci was 1,320 out of 3,779 local inhabitants in Gara.⁴ Compared to the 1941 census, the total population of the settlement decreased by about 700, while the number of those who declared themselves as Bunjevci or Croats (considering their mother tongue) increased by nearly 300 people. In the spring of 1946, a Hungarian–Yugoslav joint committee conducted a separate census of the South Slavs living in the Baja Triangle;⁵ unfortunately I have no available information on the results of the census broken down by settlements at this stage of my ongoing research. However, it is well known that the Yugoslav diplomats, together with local minority leaders, were already protesting the results of the ongoing census because the South Slavs of the region were claiming themselves to be Hungarian, even though they had defined Serbo-Croatian as their mother tongue.⁶ In 1949, during the first national census after World War Two, the census enumerators counted 4,450 inhabitants in the settlement, of whom 4,031 declared themselves Hungarian by nationality and 3,236 by mother tongue, while the number of those declaring themselves German and South Slavs decreased significantly: 6 Germans were counted by nationality and 383 by mother tongue, and 475 Bunjevci by nationality and 894 by mother tongue. Slightly more than 20 people identified themselves as Croats or Serbs.⁷

Several factors could have resulted to this significant demographic change. After World War Two, most of the Germans were deported from the village and replaced by Hungarians – as a result of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian population exchange agreement, resettlement from Czechoslovakia and other parts of Hungary (mainly from Karcag, Gyoma and Rákamaz).⁸ 105 families from Gyoma (now part of Gyomaendrőd in Békés County) arrived in Gara in July 1945,⁹ and in July 1946 another 73 families were moved from Karcag, Rákamaz and other villages of Szatmár County.¹⁰ At the same time, Székely (or Szekler) settlers, who originated from Bukovina but were settled in the former Yugoslav part of Bácska after

https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/NEDA_1910_01/?pg=243&layout=s, downloaded: January 24, 2023.

³ FEHÉR, Mária (1998), “A Bács-Bodrog megyei délszlávok alsó fokú oktatásának történetéhez 1945–1948,” *Bács-Kiskun megye múltjából* 5, 1, 539; TÓTH, Ágnes (1998), “Adatok az 1946-os magyarországi délszláv összeírás történetéhez,” *Bács-Kiskun megye múltjából* 14, 1, 334 and 336.

⁴ FEHÉR, “A Bács-Bodrog megyei délszlávok,” 540.

⁵ For this see: TÓTH, Ágnes (2016), “A ‘nagypolitika’ erőterében. Délszlávok Magyarországon, 1945–1948,” in HORNYÁK, Árpád – BÍRÓ, László (eds.): *Magyarok és szerbek a változó határ két oldalán, 1941–1948. Történelem és emlékezet*, Budapest, 358–363.

⁶ TÓTH, “Adatok az 1946-os magyarországi délszláv összeírás történetéhez,” 301–303 and 308–310.

⁷ Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára (henceforth: ÁBTL) 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 3. rész, 15.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ TÓTH, Ágnes (1987), “Telepítések Csátalja, Gara és Vaskút községekben 1945–1949 között,” *Aetas* 3, 1, 40.

¹⁰ Ibid. 46.

1941 and who had to flee or were forced to flee from there at the end of the world war, also arrived in the area: the first settlers appeared in January 1945 in Gara and the surrounding villages. According to a decree of the Minister of the Interior in January 1945, 500 people were to be resettled from the internment camp near Bačka Topola to Gara, but the decree was not implemented.¹¹ Based on another decree of the Ministry of Interior, 654 people were accommodated in Gara by the end of March (824 in Csátalja and 322 in Vaskút).¹² According to a state security report dated November 13, 1950, 60 families of Szekler settlers who had moved from Yugoslavia were living in the village,¹³ and based on a list of names from December 1952, another 22 Yugoslav citizens found a new home in the village between 1945 and 1947.¹⁴ (Although the list did not specify their ethnicity, I suspect that they were mostly Germans who had been deported from Yugoslavia.) After the arrival of Soviet troops in the region, the Swabians (ethnic Germans) in the Baja triangle were interned and deported to labour camps, as early as autumn 1944. This trend intensified in January–February 1945, when 400 able-bodied men and women of German nationality were deported from Gara to the Soviet Union. The arrangements of deportations of the local Swabian population in Gara and neighbouring villages began in the summer of 1946, lasting for 6 months in case of Gara, and the deportations themselves finally took place on 8 November and 22 November 1946. A total of 990 people were resettled to Germany in the two transports.¹⁵

Based on the above, the decline in the number of self-declared South Slavs was not only due to advanced assimilation, but also to the above-mentioned population movements, the fluctuation of contemporary Hungarian–Yugoslav relations from normality to animosity, and the fears and tensions they generated. By 1949, the Hungarian–Yugoslav “cold war” was in full swing, and the South Slavs well remembered that the expulsion of local Swabians had been preceded by a census in 1941.¹⁶ Ágnes Tóth also draws attention to the fact that the census of the southern Slavs of the Baja Triangle, which took place between 16 and 23 March 1946, coincided with the expulsion of the Germans, so the local South Slavs could easily have linked the two parallel events, which could justifiably have aroused fear among them.¹⁷ In June 1949, exactly a year after the Soviet–Yugoslav conflict became public, the South Slavs in Gara, fearing resettlement in Yugoslavia, noted that “there was already the Jewish question and the Swabian question, and now the Slavic question will follow.”¹⁸

¹¹ The Székely (Szekler) settlers expelled by the Yugoslav authorities in February 1945 fled to Bácsalmás, Bácsborsód and Katymár. *Ibid.* 36.

¹² FEHÉR, “A Bács-Bodrog megyei délszlávok,” 545.

¹³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556 3.1.5. 2. rész, 6/8.

¹⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 105.

¹⁵ TÓTH, “Telepitések,” 35, 42 and 46.

¹⁶ TÓTH, “Adatok,” 309.

¹⁷ TÓTH, “A ‘nagypolitika’ erőterében,” 358–359.

¹⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 163.

South Slavs and everyday life in Gara between 1945 and 1948

Gara was mostly spared by the Second World War, it did not cause any real damage. Approximately 280–300 local people served in the army, 21 of them died and 26 were captured by the Soviets, 12 of the latter never returned. The Red Army reached the village on 20 October 1944.¹⁹ The following months proved to be a rather turbulent period. The Yugoslav military entered the villages of the region, and people's liberation committees and armed militias formed from local South Slavs took over power in several places.²⁰ Their leaders in Gara were South Slavic folk writer Antun Karagity and Iván Sokác.²¹ The sources also seem to indicate that the situation in Gara was particularly tense. Several people paraded in the village and the surrounding settlements with machine guns to demonstrate their strength and power, beating and scaring the local Hungarians.²² Although Yugoslavia did not officially announce its territorial claim to the region, the possibility of a Hungarian–Yugoslav border adjustment was raised from time to time even at the highest levels of government in Belgrade, and active propaganda activities in this direction were carried out among the South Slavs in Hungary.²³ Part of these processes, a South Slavic delegation led by the already mentioned Karagity personally visited Tito on January 10, 1945 and asked for the Triangle to be annexed to Yugoslavia.²⁴ It is also worth knowing that several of the local South Slavs were partisans (a 1953 census mentions 28 people by name), and at least 14 people from Gara took part as volunteers in the construction of socialist Yugoslavia (for example in the construction of the Belgrade–Zagreb highway and the Samač railway line) during 1946–1947.²⁵

After the armistice agreement signed on January 20, 1945, the local militias gradually ceased their activities, but this by no means meant the complete cessation of tensions in the region. The South Slavs of Gara acquired the agricultural machinery of the displaced Swabian farmers (immediately turning their eventual recovery into a nationality issue),²⁶ they primarily benefited from the land taken from the Germans during the land distribution²⁷ and actively intervened in the operation of the local public administration. In August 1945,

¹⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 3. rész, 16.

²⁰ FEHÉR, "A Bács-Bodrog megyei délszlávok," 542–543.

²¹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 132–134.

²² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 157. and 212.

²³ BAGARIĆ, Petar (2012), "The Croatian Contribution to Plans for Revision of the Yugoslav–Hungarian Border in 1945–1946," *Review of Croatian History* 8, 1, 151–182; HORNYÁK, Árpád (2015), "Határkérdés és kisebbségek a második világháborút követő magyar–jugoszláv államközi kapcsolatokban, 1944–1946," *Kisebbségkutatás* 24, 2. 142–158 and HORNYÁK, Árpád (2016), "Határkijelölés, határsáv és a magyarországi délszlávok. Vítás kérdések a magyar–jugoszláv kapcsolatokban a második világháború után," in HORNYÁK, Árpád – BÍRÓ, László (eds.): *Magyarok és szerbek a változó határ két oldalán, 1941–1948*, Történelem és emlékezet, Budapest, 315–335.

²⁴ A. SAJTI, Enikő (2012), "Tito 1947-es magyarországi látogatásának előzményei," in BARÁTH, Magdolna – MOLNÁR, Antal (eds.), *A történettudomány szolgálatában. Tanulmányok a 70 éves Gecsenyi Lajos tiszteletére*, Budapest – Győr, 590–591; ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 215. and V-9556/2. 195–196.

²⁵ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 123. and 125.

²⁶ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 145. and V-9556/1. 212.

²⁷ FEHÉR, "A Bács-Bodrog megyei délszlávok," 545.

for example, they prevented the election of Ferenc Tury, an old and well-respected judge as a village judge. Armed with sticks and led by Márton Csatalinác, the local secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party (Magyar Kommunista Párt, MKP), the South Slavic crowd assaulted the local presidents of the Social Democratic Party (Szociáldemokrata Párt, SZDP) and the Independent Smallholders' Party, too.²⁸ Like in Hercegszántó, the bulk of the local membership of the MKP in Gara was made up of South Slavs. According to a report dated March 1949, the Hungarian Working People's Party (Magyar Dolgozók Pártja, MDP), which was formed in June 1948 by the merger of the MKP and the SZDP, had 520 members in the settlement, and its leadership and most of its membership still consisted of South Slavs.²⁹ However, this did not mean that all of them were influenced by the left-wing ideology, it rather spoke to the prestige of Josip Broz Tito and the Yugoslav partisans (and with it Yugoslavia) who were victorious in the World War and liberated their country almost exclusively by their own strength. Contemporaries were also aware of this, as the Social Democratic deputy prefect of Bács-Bodrog County made a clear reference to in his report dated May 15, 1946: "Most of the Slavs are members of the Communist Party. However, they spend their activities there not so much on expounding communist ideas, but rather on achieving their nationalistic, one might say chauvinistic goals."³⁰

Their victorious superiority can also be seen in the act against the local Hungarians. Referring to the power relations within the village, Miksa Dujmov, a partisan who returned home in 1946, for example, declared with the confidence of a World War Two hero: "you crappy Hungarians, we are the masters here and not you, because the Slavs won the war"³¹; "you Hungarians, we'll come and deal with you" and "I don't want to hear a Hungarian word, I've had enough of this harsh gobbledegook language"³². If we are to believe the informant reports of 1953, Mátyás Ostrogonác, also a partisan, said something similar: "don't let him hear you talking to the Bunjevci girls in Hungarian, because we partisans are the masters here and [everything] will be here the way we want it to be."³³ József Osztrogonác insisted to Antal Csatár, a local fellow who returned from the internment camp in 1945: "Enough of the Hungarian speech, the Hungarians have nothing to do here. [...] I don't want to hear any more Hungarian words here."³⁴

The effect of the Soviet–Yugoslav conflict after 1948

However, the superiority of the South Slavs of Gara disappeared within a few years. As a result of the intensifying superpower confrontation, Stalin demanded a clear alignment from the leadership of the countries in his sphere of interest. Since Yugoslavia was considered mostly "autonomous", it must have been Tito and the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia the first who had to be taught how to behave. Stalin therefore opened a

²⁸ Tóth, "A 'nagypolitika' erőterében," 353.

²⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 60.

³⁰ Cited by: Tóth, Ágnes (1993), "A magyarországi délszlávok helyzete és törekvései 1945–1948 (Dokumentumok)," *Bács-Kiskun megye múltjából* 12, 1, 363.

³¹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 71.

³² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 185.

³³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 275.

³⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 114.

new, “minor Cold War” front against Yugoslavia.³⁵ As a result, Hungarian–Yugoslav relations, which had been on the rise until the spring of 1948, became frosty again. Following the decision of the Information Bureau of the Communist Parties (Cominform) in Bucharest (June 28, 1948), South Slavic minority organizations and their leaders were immediately put under pressure in Hungary. The only South Slavic member of parliament, Rob Antun, was stripped of his parliamentary mandate, and the operation of the Democratic Union of South Slavs in Hungary (Magyarországi Délszlávok Demokratikus Szövetsége, MDDSZ) was suspended. Statements by the local communities of South Slavs stigmatizing the policies of Tito and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Komunistička partija Jugoslavije, KPJ) appeared in the press, the Congress of the MDDSZ on August 10 supported the Cominform resolution affirmatively and elected a new leadership that remained loyal to the Hungarian government.³⁶

However, all this did not go so smoothly. What’s more, the surviving object files at the Historical Archives confirm my suspicion that Gara took fierce stands for Tito. The officers at the State Protection Authorities was also forced to admit that 95 percent of the South Slavs of the Baja district saw Rob’s dismissal as a violation of national self-determination, and in the first days of July, delegates from the MDP’s organizational department were trying to convince the local South Slavs to support the Cominform resolution, while Milán Ognienovics, member of the leadership of the suspended MDDSZ who would later be convicted in the Rajk trial, was persuading the locals to stand by Rob and Tito. At their meeting in Gara and Katymár, they also decided to send a telegram to Prime Minister Lajos Dinnyés emanding that Rob’s parliamentary mandate be returned.³⁷ Moreover, at the national congress of the MDDSZ, the 17 delegates from Gara wanted to submit a proposal supporting Tito and the Yugoslav leadership.³⁸ The local officers of the State Protection Authority (Államvédelmi Hatóság, ÁVH) were also forced to acknowledge the seriousness of the situation: “In the area of our authority, [the situation] in Yugoslavia undoubtedly caused a serious problem, both politically and economically. The Bunjevci big landowners, who until now were not openly but covertly anti-Titoist and anti-democratic, are now focusing all their efforts on sharpening the contradictions related to nationality issues with the chauvinistic slogans of the previously left-leaning persons. These persons are trying to oppose the Slavs to the Hungarian state and nation by emphasizing Tito’s greatness.”³⁹ Therefore, it seems that in the wake of the smear campaign against Yugoslavia, the existing

³⁵ For a good summary on the origin of Soviet–Yugoslav conflict: GIBIANSKI, Leonid (1994), “The 1948 Soviet–Yugoslav Conflict and the Formation of the ‘Socialist Camp’ Model,” in WESTAD, Odd Arne – HOLTSMARK, Sven G. – NEUMANN, Iver B. (eds.), *The Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, 1945–89*, New York, 26–46 and RAJAK, Svetozar (2010), “The Cold War in the Balkans, 1945–1956,” in LEFFLER, Melvin P. – WESTAD, Odd Arne (eds.): *History of the Cold War. Vol. I*, Cambridge, 198–220.

³⁶ For the consequences of the Soviet–Yugoslav conflict in Hungarian–Yugoslav relations without entirety: VUKMAN, Péter (2016), “Barátból ellenség – ellenségből barát (?): A magyar–jugoszláv párt- és államközi kapcsolatok (1945–1956),” in MOLNÁR, Tibor (ed.), *Fejezetek a titói Jugoszlávia korai szakaszából*, Zenta, 45–79 and VUKMAN, Péter (2017), “„A fordulat évei”. Magyar–jugoszláv kapcsolatok (1948–1949),” *Acta Historica Szegediensis*, Tomus 141, 179–194

³⁷ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 124–126.

³⁸ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (The National Archives of Hungary, Budapest), MNL OL M-KS 276. f. 67. cs. 127. ő. e. 32–34.

³⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 125.

conflicts among the local South Slavs became secondary: "This event [e.g. the Soviet–Yugoslav conflict] to a certain extent eliminated the different political and worldviews among the Bunjevci."⁴⁰

At the same time, the South Slavs of Gara also demanded additional rights: That they could fill the official positions in accordance with their proportion in the local populace (according to the opposing opinions, almost all the power was already in their hands), and after this was rejected, they demanded the post of local clerk for themselves. On September 15, an inter-party meeting was convened on the issue, which resulted in a heated debate. While the MDP supported the proposal, the Smallholders and the National Peasant Party delegates opposed it. I must again note here that almost all the members of the MDP were South Slavs. János Molnár, the president of the local organization, even feared that the South Slavs were slowly pushing out all the members of ethnic Hungarian origin and they were holding special meetings to which the ethnic Hungarian party members were not even invited.⁴¹

However, this inflammation subsided over time, and the period between 1949 and 1952 could be described from the point of view of the local South Slavs with these three terms: *passivity*, *fear*, and the *search for illusions*. The reports of the ÁVH regularly mentioned that South Slavs had become passive, they did not attend the meetings of MDP and MDDSZ, they did not pay membership fees, they only made friends among themselves, they did not seek relations with ethnic Hungarians and they did not voice their political opinions in front of strangers.⁴² On February 12, 1949, Milán Ognjenovics and the former employee of the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest, Ozren Krisztonosity, who emigrated in October 1948 and became a leading member of the Cominformist emigrants in Hungary, were received with complete indifference, their rally was not announced in advance, and they had to wait for two hours to gather a larger audience. The locals received their presentations that stigmatized the "terrorist methods of the Tito clique" with complete passivity: "Even when the names of Rákosi and Sztálin were mentioned, there was no expression of approval, only the board members sitting on the lectern applauded and one or two attendees clapped their hands. There was no cheering at all."⁴³ However, it is also true that there was no disturbance, either. According to the state security report on the assembly, "it could be stated that the security of the delegates was not taken kindly by the local Slavs and soldiers of the home-defense guard who wanted to listen to the assembly were advised against it."⁴⁴ In my opinion, the appearance of the national guardsmen served much more to keep the participants under control than to their interest in current political topics. Incidentally, even in 1951 and 1952, the passivity of the South Slavs appeared as a recurring element in the state security reports.⁴⁵ On March 20, 1951, for example, at the meeting held by the local South Slavic association, those who attended excused they did not go to meetings because

⁴⁰ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 126.

⁴¹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 140.

⁴² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 137., 143–144., 187–188., 202., V-9556/2. 186. and 190.

⁴³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 156.

⁴⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 156.

⁴⁵ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 95. and V-9556/2. 277.

they were afraid: the police had often beaten them, and they had been often labeled as Titoists because of their nationality.⁴⁶

There was also a general atmosphere of fear. There were rumors as early as September 1948 that the former South Slav partisans would be interned. Fears related to resettlement grew especially when a larger number of border guards arrived in the village, conducted raids in search of illegal border crossers or spies, but locals also anxiously awaited the consequences of national events (such as an election). Before the parliamentary elections on May 15, 1949, rumours had already spread that after the elections the ÁVH would intern the leaders of the South Slavs – the South Slavs therefore did not want to vote for the candidates of the Hungarian Independent People's Front (Függetlenségi Népfront), an umbrella organization of loyal political parties dominated by the MDP. It was also common knowledge that the ÁVH knew everything what was happening in the village and had informers among the South Slavs, too.⁴⁷ A month later, in connection with the strengthening of the border zone, the rumours spread that the South Slavs would be resettled in Yugoslavia. The locals feared that in this case they would have been thrown out of the frying pan, into the fire: "Therefore they say that they do not dare to oppose Tito's policies, because if Tito's friends are resettled there [e.g. in Yugoslavia], they will tell [the Yugoslav authorities] who were anti-Tito here in Hungary and then they will be imprisoned."⁴⁸ The nightmare of deportation reappeared among the South Slavs in the autumn, in connection with the Rajk trial. Moreover, as in the summer, a parallel was drawn with the evacuation of the Swabians in 1946.⁴⁹

The fear of deportation of the South Slavs living in the Baja triangle was not completely unfounded. As it is well known, the Secretariat of the MDP decided on the establishment of the southern border zone at its meeting on January 18, 1950, and the 24-point plan of related measures was presented at the meeting on April 12. As Gara was located within the 15 km border zone, from July 1, residents from other parts of the country could only stay in the village with a special permit, and permanent residents were provided with a card entitling them to permanent residence. By July 1, the ÁVH prepared its proposal for the resettlement of hostile social groups living in the border zone, including dual landowners, those who emigrated from Yugoslavia after 1945, were of South Slavic origin, including the South Slavic teachers, Orthodox priests, and those with relatives or friends in Yugoslavia. The evacuation of 2,446 persons deemed the most dangerous from the border zone was ordered on June 22; deportations from Bács-Kiskun County began in Hercegszántó. Other waves of deportations took place on the night of November 21 to 22, 1951, and then on December 19, 1951. Between 1950 and 1952, a total of 3,456 people over the age of 16 (according to other data, approximately 4,000 people) were deported from the border zone, 510 of them from Bács-Kiskun County.⁵⁰ Although this did not affect the large masses of South Slavs, it proved to be excellent for instilling fear in them.⁵¹

⁴⁶ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 277.

⁴⁷ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 159.

⁴⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 163.

⁴⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 148.

⁵⁰ ORGOVÁNYI, István (2001), "A déli határsáv 1948 és 1956 között," *Bács-Kiskun megye múltjából* 17, 1, 256–264.

⁵¹ HORNYÁK, "Határkijelölés, határsáv és a magyarországi délszlávok," 334.

At the current stage of my research, I do not yet have specific data on how many South Slavs were evicted from Gara, but it is clear from the reports of the ÁVH that fears among the South Slavs intensified especially around the above dates. In August 1950, fear was widespread among the South Slavs, many of them referred to the list of South Slavs to be deported that they happened to see in the building of the village hall or the office of the local agricultural cooperatives.⁵² It is no wonder that wealthy landowner Jakab Dujmov distributed his valuables to his acquaintances; and in December 1951, Péter Osztrogonác said the following to the informant of the ÁVH: “now all the South Slavs will be deported from the border, because none of them are reliable, and that’s why I’m buying warm winter clothes for myself.”⁵³ At the turn of 1951–1952, many people packed their valuables out of fear or hid them at friends and acquaintances. The wife of János Sibalin regularly woke up at night when a car passed through the village, but the locals’ worries were also heightened in mid-January when rumours spread that the South Slavs from Gara would be taken away in the wagons stationed at the Katymár station.⁵⁴

István Orgoványi rightly draws attention to the fact that the acceleration of collectivization of the agriculture proceeded parallel to the construction of the border zone.⁵⁵ Several reports of the ÁVH seem to confirm the connection between the collectivization, the construction of the border zone and the fear of displacement. In September 1950, for example, the Collective Red Star (Vörös Csillag Termelőszövetkezet) was founded in the village, with predominantly Bunjevci members.⁵⁶ A report dated August 23, 1950, mentions in connection with the deportations that the South Slavs were reluctant to join cooperatives,⁵⁷ and in the turn of 1951–1952 the process of collectivization only further increased the fears of deportation among the wealthy South Slav land owners.⁵⁸

In addition to the fear of deportation, the fear of war could also be observed throughout the period, especially in September and October 1948 and between July and August 1949. Rumours spread as early as August 1948 that an unusually large number of Yugoslav soldiers were stationed in Bački Breg, tanks were seen in Sombor,⁵⁹ and travel permits (passports) for Hungary were no longer issued in Novi Sad.⁶⁰ A year later, in the summer of 1949, there were rumours that British soldiers from the colonies had been seen in Senta and Novi Sad, Tito ordered a general mobilization, while King Petar was also on his way from Greece to unite with Tito’s troops and advance as far as Kalocsa.⁶¹

In addition to fears, hope and wishful thinking could also be observed among South Slavs: Tito would prove himself right,⁶² Tito would liberate us, South Slavs, the triangle of

⁵² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 61–62., 182. and 187–188.

⁵³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 210.

⁵⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 319., 323. and 326.

⁵⁵ ORGOVÁNYI, “A déli határsáv 1948 és 1956 között,” 260.

⁵⁶ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 3. rész, 18. and 25.

⁵⁷ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 187–188.

⁵⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 323.

⁵⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 133–134.

⁶⁰ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 147.

⁶¹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 165. and V-9556/2. 262.

⁶² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 190.

Baja would belong to Yugoslavia and Tito would put an end to this communist system.⁶³ Already in September 1948, János Zegnál explained in a pub: "You will see, Tito will soon occupy Hungary and there is no doubt that Gara will be annexed to Yugoslavia."⁶⁴ At the beginning of 1952, the daughter of István Sokacz said hopefully: "Dirty communists rule Hungary, but then Tito will come and woe to the communists."⁶⁵ Her comment also highlights that many locals (both South Slavs and Hungarians) contrasted Hungarian and Yugoslav relations, and personally Mátyás Rákosi and Tito, the latter not even being considered a communist. Wealthy landowner Ádám Klanács is said to have already declared during the 1947 elections: "That headstrong Rákosi is always making big remarks, but he doesn't know what he is saying. It would be better if he also listened to Tito."⁶⁶ And in 1951, Ferenc Sibalin contrasted the Hungarian and Yugoslav living standards: "here in Hungary they joke that the Tito has nothing, while [in reality] here in Hungary there is nothing."⁶⁷

As different stories spread, locals tried to interpret all the major political events that had such profound impact on their daily lives in their own way. In the meantime, Tito transformed into a kind of folk hero. It was noted in November 1948 that Tito had in fact been murdered already in 1943, and his fake substitute was not recognized by his mother (the birthmark was missing under his right tit). Tito was Lenin's most trusted colleague, whom Stalin therefore sent first to the Spanish Civil War and then to the Balkans in 1941. Because of his popularity, the jealous Stalin wanted him to implement a course that would have led Yugoslavia to decline, but "Tito, realizing this, and wanting the good of his people, refused the instructions of the Cominform and Stalin."⁶⁸

The tense atmosphere has often escalated in violent inter-ethnic quarrels or confrontations. Balls and dance parties often ended in fights, for which it was enough to quarrel over whether the band should play South Slavic or Hungarian tunes.⁶⁹ Some of the South Slavs took every opportunity to express their national grievances (according to the wife of Alajos Babity, for example, she was not allowed to smoke cigarettes in the cinema during the film screening because of her ethnicity⁷⁰), but the ethnic Hungarians and Germans who remained in the village also made threatening remarks. In March 1951, the local secretary of National Association of Working Peasants and Land Workers (Dolgozó Parasztok és Földmunkások Országos Szövetsége, DÉFOSZ) stated that he himself would do everything for that the South Slavs be interned within a few months: "you will not be here for long, for one or two months, you will all be interned. I will also do everything to take you away",⁷¹ and the German János Véber attacked the South Slavs with an ax a month later: "you will not work the Swabian lands for long, go to Tito, your land is there!"⁷²

⁶³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 262.

⁶⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 169–170.

⁶⁵ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 325.

⁶⁶ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 268–269.

⁶⁷ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 310–311.

⁶⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 186–187.

⁶⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 215.

⁷⁰ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 275.

⁷¹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 277.

⁷² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 280–281.

It is worth noting that for a short time in September 1948, anti-Semitism intensified among the local South Slavs. I have not experienced anything similar during my research so far in other villages of the Baja triangle inhabited by South Slavs (except for one reference in Bácszentgyörgy). Several of the South Slavs in Gara blamed the Jews for the surplus appropriation and they supposed that the wheat was going to be transported to Palestine to feed the Jewish army. At the same time, several people feared that, realizing their “harmful activity”, the Yugoslavs would deport the remaining Jews to Hungary in a mass scale, all of whom would be replaced in leadership positions.⁷³ According to the ÁVH, these rumors were also spread by Hungarians resettled from Czechoslovakia,⁷⁴ but it originated from Iván Raics, the local secretary of the MDP of South Slavic origin, who, returning from the congress of MDDSZ in Budapest, declared: “I’ve been to Pest and the whole line [e.g. the leadership of the MDP] is Jewish.” Pál Vaity added the following: “Hungarians don’t come to their senses and don’t see that here the entire state leadership is in the hands of the Jews and how different it is in Yugoslavia, because Tito doesn’t tolerate a single Jew by his side.”⁷⁵

It must be also mentioned that the ÁVH was primarily interested in tension-causing information like the above-mentioned ones, which could have been magnified by informants and agents, while the fact that most of the population lived their daily lives in peace had no news value. Thus, the above tensions may be overrepresented but certainly existed.

However, it is certain that in the paranoid atmosphere of the era, the ÁVH’s desire to see Tito’s potential fifth military column in the South Slavs was not conducive to the easing of tensions. After the outbreak of the Soviet–Yugoslav conflict, some fled to Yugoslavia, including the local secretary and clerk of the MDDSZ.⁷⁶ In all cases, the ÁVH regarded them as intelligence agents, and their relatives and acquaintances became suspicious. Antun Karagity, Alajos Babity and Pál Vujity, who had previously played decisive roles among the South Slavs and enjoyed authority among the locals, were arrested in 1950. From August 1952, the ÁVH monitored the activities of about twenty South Slavs, most of them former partisans, for almost a year, but apart from the fact that they often met, they could not prove anything worthwhile.⁷⁷

The effect of normalization between Hungary and Yugoslavia after 1953

In the summer of 1953, however, other winds started to blow from Moscow to Belgrade. With Stalin’s death, a process of normalization began, but the agents could not be retuned overnight: the singing of Titoist songs was still intended to spread the chauvinist spirit.⁷⁸ Hope also began to spread among the South Slavs of Gara that it would be possible to cross freely into Yugoslavia, the road between Gara and Regőce would be finally asphalted, dual land ownership cards (*kettősbirtokos igazolvány*) would be valid again, and relatives would

⁷³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 137. and 143–144.

⁷⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556. 143–144.

⁷⁵ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 192.

⁷⁶ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 237.

⁷⁷ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 90., 93., 102., 113., 209–210. and 222–223.

⁷⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/1. 318.

be able to visit each other freely.⁷⁹ In June 1955, some ethnic South Slav teachers hoped that they would finally be able to vacation at the Adriatic Sea.⁸⁰ The locals continued to regard the border question with both longing and fear: the ethnic Hungarians allegedly wanted to acquire territory up to Bezdán (according to other opinions, Novi Sad) while the Yugoslavs wanted to acquire territory up to Kalocsa.⁸¹ In connection with the alleged change of the border and the territorial demands of Yugoslavia, in July 1954, rumours spread again about the deportation of Germans and South Slavs,⁸² and similar concerns were recorded by state security informants even in August 1955: "In short, it will come to the point that the Swabians will be deported and then the [deportation of the] Bunjevci will follow".⁸³

All this also indicates that local ethnic tensions did not disappear overnight. Sometimes local Hungarians made remarks on the "dirty Bunjevci", just as on December 20, 1954, when some people wanted to stop the playing of South Slavic tunes at the local dance party, and a few weeks earlier others made the following threatening remark: "the South Slavs should go to Tito, and the Germans to Germany".⁸⁴ Mátyás Erős told South Slav teacher Márk Zegnál on November 4, 1955, referring to the privileged position of South Slavs after 1945 (and perhaps fearing its repetition): "there is not 1945–46 now, when you could listen to South Slavic music and dance South Slavic dances."⁸⁵ However, tensions were not only observable in Hungarian–South Slavic relations, but in some cases also in German–South Slavic relations. Some feared that the position of the Germans would strengthen in the village, at least this was the conclusion Antal Dujmov drew from the meeting in Geneva: "Just look at it in Gara's context. The Swabians rush for every function."⁸⁶ And in January 1956, when the possibility of border adjustment spread again, according to Mária Sibalin, the local Swabians were the most afraid that they would be displaced when the Baja triangle became part of Yugoslavia.⁸⁷

The mood of the time is perhaps best reflected in the following two quotes. In May 1954, Miksa Dujmov and the wife of Alajos Babity talked like this: "the situation is somewhat better [now], because two years ago the ÁVH people took people away and one had to be afraid every day ... now the ÁVH people also have their hands tied, because now they can only hold the person until an investigation, after which they must be released."⁸⁸ A year later, upon the news that the interned Alajos Babity had returned home, János Knipf resignedly asked the question: "Why did Babity sit? Because at that time he was in favor of Tito. What? That's why he had to lose 5 years of his life. And now they lick [the butt of] Tito again..."⁸⁹

⁷⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 64–65.

⁸⁰ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 315.

⁸¹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 36. and 431.

⁸² ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 105–106.

⁸³ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 352–353.

⁸⁴ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 156.

⁸⁵ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 382.

⁸⁶ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 345.

⁸⁷ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 421.

⁸⁸ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 91.

⁸⁹ ÁBTL 3.1.5. V-9556/2. 181–182.

At the end of this article, let me have a few remarks on what the object files remain silent about. I found it surprising that the dossiers do not contain information about smuggling, illegal border crossing and the distribution of propaganda material at all, or only tangentially, while in the case of other villages we find plenty of examples of this.⁹⁰ The local ethnic communities (Hungarians, Germans and South Slavs) also appear to be quite homogeneous, while this was by no means necessarily as we can see in the case of neighbouring Hercegszántó, where dividing lines can be observed based on wealth or geographical location, in relation to native residents and settlers.⁹¹ It should not be forgotten that significant economic, social and political transformations took place during this period, which in itself had a fundamental impact on the life of a micro-community, generating many local conflicts – and giving me a new research framework. All this should encourage me for further research.

⁹⁰ VUKMAN, Péter (2022), “A magyar-jugoszláv államhatár és a bajai háromszögben élők mindennapjai (1945–1956): csempészet, határképzet és a Jugoszláviáról alkotott kép,” in KISS, Zsuzsanna – SZILÁGYI, Zsolt (eds.), *Határ, határhelyzet, határátlépés: a határok fizikai és mentális működése, változása és emlékezete*, Szeged – Eger, 335–346.

⁹¹ For this: VUKMAN, Péter (2020), “Living in the Vicinity of the Yugoslav-Hungarian border (1945–1960): Breaks and Continuities. A Case Study of Hercegszántó (Santovo),” *History in Flux* 2, 1, 9–27.

The Population and Transportation Infrastructure of Slovakia during the Second Republic in the years 1938–1939*

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Abstract

The main article's goal is to analyze the impacts of territorial changes dated in 1938 (the Munich Agreement, the Vienna Award, and the Polish territorial claim) on the population and transportation infrastructure of Slovakia. In the area of transportation infrastructure, we focused on four key areas: railways, roads, river and air transportation. According to our own research, we can state that the territorial changes affected the Second Republic viability. As a result thereof, the state lost total 30% of its territory, where approximately one-third of the population lived. In relation to transportation infrastructure, many main routes and roads crossed the new state borders. In this way, the surrounding countries were able to restrict transfer through their territories and thus paralyze inland transportation.

Keywords: population, transportation infrastructure, the Munich Agreement, the Vienna Award, interwar Czechoslovakia

The main goal of the presented study was to analyze the impacts of territorial changes dated in 1938 (the Munich Agreement, the Vienna Award, and the Polish territorial claim)) on the population and transportation infrastructure of the then Slovakia. These territorial changes caused interior political crisis that resulted in the declaration of the Slovak autonomy and, last but not least, they represented a radical intervention in the economic and national structure, and in the territorial integrity of the Republic. In the area of transportation infrastructure we almost exclusively focused on the research of consequences of the state border changes on four key areas: railways, roads, river and air transportation. According to our opinion, these areas were the most important for the state functioning during the period in question. Calculated values of reduction of territory, population decrease, railway routes, road network, etc. in Slovakia are usually compared in the study to the data of the stated losses in the Czech territories, or in the whole Republic, respectively.

In relation to the time period, in the study we deal with a rather short time period from September 29, 1938 till March 14, 1939, since it closely correlated to the territorial changes

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that had occurred before cessation of so called Second Republic (that existed from November 22, 1938 till March 15, 1939). Some sources mention earlier period, or other sources were used with outreach to the period of the Slovak State.

Territorial changes and decrease of population

Before the state borders change, overall territorial area of Czechoslovakia referred to 140,493 km², thereof the Czech territory covered 52,062 km², the territory of Moravia and Silesia covered total 26,808 km², Slovak territory covered 49,006 km², and the territory of Ruthenia covered 12,617 km². As of December 01, 1930, total headcount of the population of all nationalities in the state reached 14,729,536. As of the above date, population in the territory of Czechia reached 7,109,376, the population of Moravia and Silesia reached 3,565,010, the population in the territory of Slovakia reached 3,329,793, and in the territory of Ruthenia it was total 725,357 citizens.¹

As a result of cession of the territory to Germany, the Republic lost the territory of total 28,639 km² where total 3,635,970 citizens lived.² Hungary was ceded total territorial area of 11,840.24 km² with 1,027,117 citizens after the Vienna Award held on November 02, 1938 and, following the negotiations with Poland, total territorial area of 816,27 km² with 228,763 citizens was ceded. Thus, the Czechoslovak Republic lost total territorial area of 41,295.51 km², where total 4,891,850 citizens lived at the time according to a census dated December 01, 1930.³ Having compared the status in 1930 to post-cession status, we can say that Czechoslovakia lost 29.39% of its territory in total, with 33.21% citizens registered therein. We should stress that total percentage of the population loss was lower since a part of these persons from separated territory returned back to the Republic.

Determination of new state borders based on ethnic approach was problematic. Negotiators representing Czechoslovakia required application of the population data from 1930. Finally, the international committee enforced the statistical data from 1910 that expressed definitely less exact data than the statistical data from 1930. In the example using the Czech territories, the magazine *Statistický zpravodaj* [Statistical Journal] dated 1939 stated that the lost territories increased by the area of 3,725 km² with approx. 498,000 citizens as a result of applied outdated data from 1910. Upon the return of mainly Czech state employees with families from the ceded territory, the figure decreased approximately to 350,000 persons.⁴ Referring to the Hungarian and Polish cession, a similar situation occurred also in the re-

¹ *Sčítání lidu v Republice československé ze dne 1. prosince 1930. Díl I. Růst, koncentrace a hustota obyvatelstva, pohlaví, věkové rozvrstvení, rodinný stav, státní příslušnost, národnost, náboženské vyznání* [Census in the Czechoslovak Republic dated December 01, 1930. Part I. Growth, Concentration and Density of Population, Gender, Age Structure, Marital Status, Citizenship, Nationality, Religion], Praha, The Státní úřad statistický [State Statistical Office], 1934. 27–28. Caused by almost 8-years passed between the last complex census and territorial interventions that occurred in 1938, the resulting census data are incorrect.

² "Obyvatelstvo. Naše nové hranice" [Population. Our New Borders], *Statistický zpravodaj*, 1939, vol. I., No. 11–12, 348.

³ Ibid.; "Obyvatelstvo. Naše nové hranice II" [Population. Our New Borders II], *Statistický zpravodaj*, 1939, vol. II., No. 1–2, 1–4.

⁴ "Obyvatelstvo. Naše nové hranice," 348.

Rozbitie Československa v rokoch 1938–1939

Mierka: 1 : 5 000 000
1 cm = 50 km
0 50 100 km

● Hlavné mesto štátu
 ○ Hlavné mesto autonómnej krajiny
 ○ Iné významné mestá, krajiny
 — hranica Československa do r. 1938
 — územia odstúpené Nemecku po Münchovskej dohode 1.-10. 10. 1938
 — územia odstúpené Poľsku 1. 10.-30. 11. 1938
 — územia odstúpené Maďarsku po Viedenskej zmluve 5.-10. 11. 1938
 — hranica Česko-Slovenska 1. 12. 1938–13. 3. 1939
 — územie Slovenského štátu 14. 3. 1939
 — územie okupované Nemeckom 15. 3. 1939 – Protektorát Čechy a Morava
 — smery postupu nemeckých vojsk 14.-15. 1939

■ územie okupované Maďarskom 15.-21. 3. 1939
 ■ územie Slovenska dobyté Maďarskom v „Majovej vojne“ 23.-31. 3. 1939
 — smery útokov nemeckých vojsk v marci 1939
 ■ bunkovú obranu nemeckých leteckých zbraní 23. 3. 1939
 ■ nemeckú ochrannú zónu podľa zmluvy 12. 3. 1939
 ■ územie získané Slovenským štátom po dobytí Poľska v septembri 1939
 — hranica Slovenského štátu od konca r. 1939
 ■ súseďné štáty Československa (stav v r. 1938)
 ■ územné zmeny v okolitých štátoch v r. 1938-1939

Declaration of the Munich Agreement was of significant importance for Slovakia. The Agreement stated that it was necessary to resolve the problem of Hungarian and Polish minorities in the state within three months. It should have been resolved among the parties involved (Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland) and, had it failed within the determined deadline, the four countries governments' heads should have met and discussed, similar to the discussions dated September 29, 1938.⁶ The purpose of the mentioned additional declaration was fulfilled in the form of cession of the Czechoslovak territory to Hungary and Poland (representatives of these countries).

⁵ GURŇÁK, Daniel (2006), *Dejepisný atlas. Štáty v premenách storočí* [Atlas of History. States in the Century Transformations], Modra, MAP Slovakia Plus, 35.

⁷ "Obyvatelstvo. Naše nové hranice II," 2–3.

43 km² with 15,500 citizens as of December 01, 1930.⁸ Thus, Slovakia lost the territory of total area of 10,575.44 km² with total 878,762 persons living there. Within this cession, Hungary received the largest area of 10,317 km² and 853,884 citizens, while Poland got „only“ 215.44 km² with 9,378 citizens.⁹ In this way, Slovakia remained with the curtailed territory of total area of 38,430.56 km² at the end of 1918, and total 2,451,031 citizens (referring to the data from 1930). Expressed in percentage, it referred to 21.6% loss of total territory of Slovakia and 26.4% loss of the Slovak population.

Transportation Infrastructure

Railway Network

Transportation infrastructure represented another area that was affected by the changes at the state border. Within it, railway, road, river and air transportation was seriously impaired. Total length of the railway network in Slovakia and Ruthenia reached 3,969 km during the period before the Vienna Arbitration. Following the territorial changes, 1 110 km of total railway route length was lost, corresponding to 28% loss compared to the original status.¹⁰ Slovakia itself lost approx. 930 km of railway tracks.¹¹ Summary of the whole-country losses represented 4,758 km, which corresponds to 35.1% of total railway network length.¹²

Almost all major railroad tracks were broken and some of them were completely ceded. Catastrophic situation was reported within two most important railway tracks in Czechoslovakia. The main railway line Praha [Prague] – Žilina – Jasini [Yasinia] passed eight times through the ceded territories and the railroad line between the Czechoslovak capital city and Slovak capital city passed nine times through other country territory. In this way, the surrounding countries were holding in the Republic, being able to restrict railway transportation through their territories.¹³

Mutual connectivity between particular regions of Slovakia was interrupted as a result of lost railway tracks, for example Lučenec – Plešivec – Rožňava, Čeklis – Nové Zámky – Levice or Kostol'any nad Hornádom – Slanec, which, among other problems, caused also serious economic damages. Many industrial factories encountered problems in the form of significantly impaired railway network with Ruthenia.¹⁴ Complicated access to the east-

⁸ ZEMKO, Milan et al. (2012), *Slovensko v 20. storočí. V medzivojnovom Československu 1918–1945* [Slovakia in 20th Century. In the interwar Czechoslovakia 1918–1945], Bratislava, VEDA, 482.

⁹ „Obyvatelstvo. Naše nové hranice II,“ 2–3.

¹⁰ *Slovenský priemysel roku 1939* [Slovak Industry in 1939], Turčiansky sv. Martin, Ústredné združenie slovenského priemyslu [Central Association of Slovak Industry], 1940, 99.

¹¹ FALTUS, Jozef – PRŮCHA, Václav (1969), *Prehľad hospodárskeho vývoja na Slovensku 1918–1945* [Overview of Economic Development in Slovakia 1918–1945], Bratislava, Vydavateľstvo politickej literatúry [Political literature publishing agency], 314.

¹² OLŠOVŠKÝ, Rudolf et al. (1963), *Prehľad hospodárskeho vývoje Československa v letech 1918–1945* [Overview of Economic Development in Czechoslovakia 1918–1945], Praha, Státní nakladatelství politické literatury [The state political literature publishing agency], 491.

¹³ FALTUS – PRŮCHA, *Prehľad hospodárskeho vývoja*, 314; OLŠOVŠKÝ, *Prehľad hospodárskeho vývoje*, 491.

¹⁴ *Slovenský priemysel roku 1939*, 100.

ernmost part of the Republic caused problems to chemical company Firma Lučobný priemysel Dr. Blasberg at Likier, which was getting its basic raw material (wood) mainly from the Ruthenia forests. Following the railway interruption, the company lost its supplying area and had to address the competent authorities with request for support.¹⁵ It was not the only case; majority of factories were affected in this way.

Not only the railway tracks were affected by losses, since the state had to leave 154 engine-driven and 887 steam locomotives to Germany, together with 29 thousand railway wagons. Hungary acquired total 282 locomotives, 51 motor-driven machines and 5 thousand railway wagons.¹⁶

We should also mention the changes at railway transportation of goods and materials of various types. While January 1937 with 64 thousand loaded railway wagons was the weakest month on the Slovak and Ruthenia railway tracks from the beginning of 1937 till the end of September 1938, gradual decrease started after the cession of the territories and only 32 thousand railway wagons loaded with goods or raw materials were dispatched in December 1938. It corresponded to year-to-year minimum value drop by 50%.¹⁷

The Czechoslovak State Railways were making effort to immediately replace the impaired railway transportation with strengthened freight transportation and passenger bus transportation. So-called Toll Agreements¹⁸ represented an important tool of restoration of railway transportation of connection with factories and inhabitants in isolated regions. Such agreements were very hard to conclude and especially agreements with Hungary were of critical importance for Slovakia. For example, negotiations on the paid transportation (toll) via important railway hub Košice were successfully accomplished at the beginning of 1939 after some delays. Transportation through Košice started in February of the same year.¹⁹

Road transportation

Significant road transportation routes connecting Bratislava with Brno, Žilina with Ostrava and Trnava with Nitra were also impaired. Along with the roads, significant transportation

¹⁵ Slovenský národný archív v Bratislave [Slovak national archive in Bratislava], fund Ministerstvo hospodárstva [Ministry of Economy], carton 230, without inventory No., doc No. 91, Dr. Blasberg a spol., Lúčobný priemysel, kom. spol., Likier – predaj paliva [Blasberg et al., Radial Industry, limited partnership, Likier – sale of fuels], Oct 29, 1938 – Feb 12, 1939.

¹⁶ OLŠOVSKÝ, *Přehled hospodářského vývoje*, 491.

¹⁷ Slovenský priemysel roku 1939, 98. Nominal unit “railway wagon” is an equivalent of 10,000 kilograms.

¹⁸ SABOL, Miroslav (2004), “Dopad Viedenskej arbitráže na poľnohospodárstvo, priemysel a infraštruktúru na južnom Slovensku” [Impact of Vienna Arbitration on Agriculture, Industry and Infrastructure in Southern Slovakia], in MITÁČ, Ján (ed.), *Juh Slovenska po Viedenskej arbitráži 1938–1945* [South of Slovakia after Vienna Arbitration 1938 – 1945], Bratislava, Ústav pamäti národa [The Nation’s Memory Institute], 228. Toll transportation is “transportation between two points on the territory of one country where certain road section (railway track) is situated in the territory of another country.” See ŠALING, Samo et al. (2005), *Slovník cudzích slov* [Dictionary of adopted foreign words], Prešov, SAMO, 493.

¹⁹ SABOL, “Dopad Viedenskej arbitráže,” 228–229.

hubs appeared behind the state border line, for example Košice and Uzhhorod, which were of vital importance for the eastern region.²⁰

Concurrently, Czechoslovakia lost 30.9 % of all motor vehicles. As of August 31, 1938, total 223,673 motor vehicles were registered in the Republic and the loss referred to 69,222 vehicles after all annexation cases in 1938. Of total 23,768 motor vehicles, Slovakia lost 6,763 vehicles, corresponding to decrease by 28.4%.²¹

Efforts for implementation of road construction plans from before 1938 was a response of the representatives of the autonomous government and later also of the Slovak State government, which they managed to do only partly because of lack of finances. For example, total 280 km of new roads were constructed between years 1939 and 1943 at building cost of SK 0.805 bn. Despite of all problems, the territorial changes positively influenced the bus transportation development. In 1942, total 8.3 million of passengers were transported in Slovakia in this way, corresponding to the increase by almost 6 million of passengers compared to 1938.²²

River transportation

Also the river transportation experienced the new situation, especially at transloading of goods on the river Danube. Important transshipment docks at Komárno were ceded and the largest transshipment point in Bratislava reported temporary decrease of goods transloading in 1938 by total 109,000 tons in aggregate, i.e. by 12.3% less than in 1937 when total transloaded quantity reached 886,000 tons. Such decrease in the transloading goods quantity was caused by failed trade activities in the river port during the mobilization, and later also because of citizens' evacuation from the ceded territories. As soon as in 1939, record increase in the transloading goods quantity was reported in Bratislava compared to 1938 by approx. 30.2% to 1,012,000 tons, which resulted from relocation of large extent of capacities from Komárno, but mainly from increased intensity of the goods flow on the river Danube from the Balkan region to the Nazi Germany.²³

The river port in Bratislava should play an important role in the import of various commodities in the economic plans of the Nazi "empire." Especially the ships loaded with crop from Hungary and the Balkan region had passed through the port before the end of 1938, but afterwards the share of transported mineral oils by tankers from Romania has increased from total 84,000 tons in the stated year to 140,000 tons in 1939. Preferring the raw materials transport on the river Danube was a logical solution, taking in account insufficiently developed railway and road network in the Balkan region.²⁴

²⁰ FALTUS – PRŮCHA, *Prehľad hospodárskeho vývoja*, 314; OLŠOVŠKÝ, *Přehled hospodářského vývoje*, 491.

²¹ Decrease is described in detail according to vehicle types in the table named: "Stav motorových vozidiel k 31. VIII. 1938" [Status of Motor Vehicles as of Aug 31, 1938], *Statistický zpravodaj*, 1939, vol. II., No. 3, 59.

²² SABOL, Miroslav (2015), *Dejiny dopravy na Slovensku 1938–1948 (1950)* [History of Transportation in Slovakia 1938–1948 (1950)], Bratislava, VEDA, 229.

²³ *Slovenský priemysel roku 1939*, 98.

²⁴ SABOL, *Dejiny dopravy na Slovensku*, 185 and 210.

Air transportation

Aviation represented the “youngest” segment in the transportation system that was significantly affected by the events dated 1938. Following the changes at the state borders, international airports in Košice and Uzhhorod were ceded, as well as Czech airports in Karlovy Vary, Liberec and Mariánské Lázně. Building of airport stations at Slatinské Doly and Spišská Nová Ves represented an immediate response thereto.²⁵

March 15, 1939 represented another milestone when passenger air transportation was completely suspended and German representatives ordered closure of airspace above the territory of the Protectorate of Czechia and Moravia, and above Slovakia on April 26, 1939. As soon as the order was lifted, passenger transportation was allowed to perform at the airports of the former Republic only by aircrafts of the airlines Deutsche Lufthansa. Huge drop is apparent from total data in the passenger transportation. While total 9,091 passengers were dispatched at the Slovak airports in 1937 with aggregate mileage corresponding to 564,430 km, two years later it was only 204 passengers with mileage of 19,060 km. Following the Republic cessation, the new maximum was reached in 1943, referring to 911 passengers and total mileage of 42,797 km. Passenger air transportation was completely suspended again in 1944.²⁶

Conclusion

Finally, we should point out that the change at the state borders dated in 1938 significantly affected the economy of Slovakia and the whole Republic. As a result thereof, the state lost total 30% of its territory where approximately one-third of the population lived.

On the other hand, the total population decrease was probably lower since a part of the persons from the separated territory returned back to Slovakia. Especially the arbitration decision made in Vienna on November 02, 1938 was of the most significant importance for Slovakia. Resulting from cession of the territory to Hungary, the state lost mainly the fertile agricultural areas in the south and southeast of Slovakia, i.e. the territory where almost 880,000 citizens lived. In relation to transportation infrastructure, many main routes and roads crossed the new state borders. In this way the surrounding countries were able to restrict transfer through their territories and thus hold the Republic in.

²⁵ Ibid. 222–223. “*Slatinské Doly*” historical name of current settlement Solotvyno situated at the Ukrainian–Romanian state border. Total 10 airports of all kinds were ceded to the abroad. See MIČKO, Peter (2008), “Hospodárske problémy a podnikové špecifiká vybraných regiónov stredného Slovenska v rokoch 1918–1938 [Economic Problems and Corporate Specifics of Selected Central Slovakia Regions during 1918–1938], in MIČKO, Peter et al. (ed.), *Historické špecifiká stredného Slovenska v rokoch 1918–1939* [Historical Specifics of Central Slovakia During Years 1918–1939], Banská Bystrica, Ústav vedy a výskumu UMB v Banskej Bystrici [Institute of Science and Research UMB in Banská Bystrica], 161.

²⁶ SABOL, *Dejiny dopravy na Slovensku*, 224 and 230.