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“A withered olive branch”? The curious situation of Hungarian Jews during the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire

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University of Vienna**Abstract**

The Habsburg Empire dissolved after World War One. A new world order of nation-states was emerging that acknowledged and distributed civic rights to non-titular nations based on national minority status. How did Jewish communities in the former Kingdom of Hungary respond to the gradual change of sovereignty, the ethnicisation of everyday life and the escalating antisemitic violence? Focusing on the turbulent months between October 1918 and March 1919, this study examines the transformation of loyalty patterns among various Jewish communities at the local, regional, national and international levels. A pivotal aspect of the chaotic transition from empire to nation-state was the intensified nationalism and the growing interest in models accommodating ethno-confessional diversity. Amid the emerging solutions to the minority question in East-Central Europe and worldwide, this paper focuses on the model of non-territorial autonomy within Jewish communities in the territories that became part of Romania and Czechoslovakia.

KEYWORDS

Hungarian Jews, Hungary, minority rights, non-territorial autonomy, the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire, Transylvania

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1 | INTRODUCTION

The end of World War One brought turbulent changes to the former Austro-Hungarian territories. The so-called “Aster Revolution”, led by Count Mihály Károlyi, established the short-lived democratic First Hungarian Republic in October 1918. Károlyi himself was appointed prime minister, and Oszkár Jászi, the head of the Civic Radical Party, became Minister for National Minorities.¹ This change, however, did not bring stability (Egry, 2022; Judson, 2016). Some historians argue that in Central and Eastern Europe, World War One did not end with the armistices. Instead, armed conflicts, rather than democratic referendums, continued to decide citizens' fate (Böhler, 2018; Gerwarth, 2016). As in Hungary the old county administration and the new national and military councils competed to maintain order amid chaos, power became increasingly fragmented (Szeghy-Gayer & Zahorán, 2022). This turbulent period during the Károlyi era—between October 1918 and March 1919—is the core focus of this study. The uncertainty that shrouded Hungary's future fostered an environment that intensified both nationalism and the interest in models aimed at accommodating ethno-confessional diversity. These models encapsulated insights from the dualist era of the monarchy, while also heralding the fundamental elements of the minority discourse that would emerge between the two world wars. Among the array of emerging, at the time, solutions to the minority question, this study primarily focuses on the model of non-territorial autonomy among Jewish communities in Hungary and in the former Habsburg territories subsequently claimed (and occupied) by Romania and Czechoslovakia.²

During the months of political, social and existential uncertainty following the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, people clung to the promise of a new ‘Wilsonian peace’ and the right of nations to self-determination made at the beginning of 1918. The newly proclaimed nation-states quickly defined who belonged and who did not. Within the successor states, various ethno-confessional communities—with Jews as the primary focus of this study—found themselves in a unique and intriguing situation. During this era filled with paradoxes, posters declaring “Jews, go to Palestine!” appeared in the streets recently renamed after President Woodrow Wilson. This forced Jewish communities to re-examine their previous loyalty patterns, regardless of whether they claimed to belong to the dominant, i.e. German or Magyar nation, the Jewish nation or the Jewish religious community. For the Hungarian and German-speaking Jews in the newly formed territories of Romania and Czechoslovakia, reorganising their communities and redefining their loyalties became imperative. The change in governance cut off ties to Jewish central organisations in Budapest and removed religious autonomy, including control over schools. Additionally, aligning with the Romanian nation was difficult due to unclear future borders, uncertain citizenship rights and the language barrier, as Hungarian Jews did not speak Romanian (Sorek, 2020: 207–11).

This paper analyses how Hungarian Jews navigated life as outsiders in a modern society defined by national homogeneity. The new political order granted civic rights to non-titular nationalities based on their minority status. The analysis begins with a brief sketch of typical forms of loyalty among Jewish communities in the late Habsburg Monarchy, with a specific focus on Hungary. It also examines arguments used at the time for and against non-territorial autonomy as a solution to the Jewish question in the region. Next, I demonstrate how, by November 1918, a new discourse in Hungary recognised Jews as both a legal entity and a nation amidst the shifting political landscape of Central and Eastern Europe. The last section follows how Jewish leaders and communities responded to the complex situation following the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy, the ethnicisation of everyday life, changes in sovereignty in seceded territories and escalating antisemitic violence.

My arguments are based on the declarations of institutions representing Jewish communities in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania. The paper reviews press coverage and documents submitted to the Hungarian Ministry of Nationalities from November 1918 to March 1919. Scholarly research has largely overlooked the rationales Hungarian Jewish communities used to redefine their belonging during the chaotic weeks after the end of the Great War. This study addresses this gap. Most scholarly accounts explain the shift of loyalty on the part of Hungarian Jews after World War One from the perspective of Hungarian Jewish and non-Jewish relations. I aim to complement this by using the methodological framework of cultural translation, which broadens the context and introduces a transnational perspective, creating an entangled intellectual history.

2 | “WHAT IS JEWISHNESS, ACTUALLY?”³

2.1 | Emancipation and assimilation

Ever since the *fin de siècle*, scholars have been consistently re-evaluating the connection between modernisation and Jewish self-identification on the former territory of the Habsburg Empire. The legal emancipation, cultural adaptation and social integration of Jews as well as the legal recognition of Judaism in the Habsburg lands coincided with the creation of the nation referred to as the *Verbürgerlichung*, or *embourgeoisement*, in the nineteenth century. Historian János Gyurgyák pointed out that even the concept of emancipation itself was a neologism, marking a new era in the re-negotiation of what Jewishness was (Gyurgyák, 2001: 44). In the case of Hungary, this process started around 1840, when the first law of Jewish emancipation was passed, which was followed by a law of full emancipation in 1867. The law on religious equality came much later, in 1895. Orthodox communities opposed the legal recognition of Judaism to preserve their autonomy. Christians sought to restrict conversions amid rising mixed marriages.⁴ (Gyurgyák, 2001; Katz, 1998) In any case, these laws did not instantly grant full equality to Jews in Hungarian society.

A key concept addressed by the aforementioned scholarship is assimilation, which entails an alien “minority” unidirectionally adopting a “majority culture”, perceived as static and monolithic (Corbett et al., 2021: 2). Sociologist Viktor Karády framed the relation of Jews to modernisation as the “social contract of assimilation,” meaning that in Hungary, Jews were expected to “assimilate” to benefit from equal opportunities (Karády, 2000). Conversely, the historian Dániel Bolgár argued that in Europe and Hungary, the content of the Jewish question changed around 1870. While the Jewish question before 1870 was a win-win game of integration, the Jewish question of the *fin-de-siècle* was a zero-sum game, as it asked whether the success of integrated Jews was a threat to the dominant nation (Bolgár, 2022: 190–6). Extant literature prefers the term “assimilation trap” over “assimilation contract.” (Gyurgyák, 2001: 102–9).

Reflecting the liberal ideology of the time, non-Jewish opinion leaders sought the linguistic and “emotional” adaptation of Jews to Magyariness alongside their emancipation. This view also gained popularity among the “progressive” leaders of Jewish opinion. Ferenc Mezey, Vice President of the Israelite Office responded to the question posed by the journal *Huszadik Század* [Twentieth Century] on the “Jewish question” in 1917⁵: “The vast majority in our country rejects any Jewish national ambitions on their own, because it disrupts their integration with the nation they cherish and are willing to sacrifice for.”⁶ Amid unresolved tensions, many “Magyar Jews” chose to become “Jewish Magyars,” that is Magyars of Israelite faith (Barany, 1974; Konrád, 2019; Lendvai, 2004; Löw, 1898) The non-Jewish population expected Jews to reconcile differences by reducing their “otherness,” especially religious differences (Konrád, 2020). Consequently, the era of dualism saw both the extension of rights and systemic discrimination – in the words of the writer Lajos Bíró, “undignified antisemitic pinpricks (I could not even call them dagger thrusts)” against acculturating Jews.⁷ In Hungary too, the “Jewish question” reflected the uncertainties surrounding the definition of the nation and the structural changes in society generated by modernisation (Bauman, 2017; Lässig, 2004; Volkov, 2001).

The Jews of Hungary were a culturally, linguistically and denominationally heterogenous community. The main line of division was between the “believers of the old and the new,” the “Progressive” and the Orthodox (Katz, 1998: 97). Influenced by the Napoleonic model of the emancipation compromise, the Hungarian political elite expected that Jews would reform their religion along with gaining civil equality. A Hungarian Jewish Congress convened in 1868–69 to lay the groundwork for a national Jewish organisation which would ensure self-government, organise Jewish community life and education and enable state supervision.⁸ The differences between the “Progressive” and Orthodox groups, each already internally diverse, led to the institutional separation between them. Following the congress, three Jewish congregations organised independently: Orthodox, Neologue and Status Quo Ante, the latter two being specific to Hungary. Their names inadvertently indicated their stance on modernisation and assimilation. Acculturation and social mobility characterised the Neologue Jews, who represented a moderate form

of Reform Judaism, while Orthodox communities remained loyal to the Torah and kept traditional social structures (Karády, 1997). The *Status Quo* group fell somewhere in between and was also considerably smaller in size than the other two factions.⁹ (Katz, 1998) Both the Neologue community's collective memory and most scholarly literature view the Congress and the resulting schism rather negatively (Turán, 2020).

All over the Habsburg lands, Jews were organised as religious communities. Israelites constituted about 9% of Vienna's population and 23% of the population of Budapest.¹⁰ (Beller, 1989; Magos & Yehuda, 1983) A burning question of the time was whether the Jewish religion possessed a national character in the modern sense. In Hungary, the Neologue community firmly saw Hungarian Jewry as part of the Hungarian nation. However, antisemites, opponents of assimilation, some members of the Orthodox community, and the Zionists questioned the civic unity and shared destiny between Hungarians and Jews – each for their own reasons (Gyurgyák, 2001: 229–43). Whether Jews constituted a nationality also preoccupied the prominent Austro-Marxist Otto Bauer, who in 1907 devoted a book section to that issue (Bauer, 2000 [1907]). While most nineteenth-century thinkers disputed the Jews' nationality because they did not have their own territory, Bauer famously argued otherwise in his work on the nationality question. Living dispersed all over the world, one might assume that Jews were a national community *par excellence*, for which non-territorial autonomy was designed. Bauer nevertheless dismissed the idea that Jews were entitled to it—at least in Austria-Hungary. He, like many contemporaries, contended that Jews did not fulfil the legal requirements of a nationality. Even if they did, he believed national autonomy would not serve their best interests. The Austro-Marxist believed that Jewish assimilation was in accordance with modern times and it was in the interest of the Jews not to segregate their children by sending them to Jewish schools that non-territorial autonomy would guarantee them (Bauer, 2000 [1907]).

“Will the twentieth century now also bring the Jewish nation the possibility of a new, independent cultural development?” Bauer wondered (Bauer, 2000 [1907]: 297). While Bauer's answer was negative, ten years later, Henrik Guttman, the correspondent of the Hungarian Marxist journal *Világ* (World), came to a different conclusion starting from the same premises. Guttman differentiated between the meaning of the “Jewish question” for the bourgeoisie and the lower classes. According to him, for the bourgeois Jews, there was a place in the “upper class” of the Hungarian society to assimilate—if they renounced their specific cultural needs. Since assimilation was not a viable path for the working-class Jews, Guttman continued, the proletarian Jews should translate their cultural needs into a political struggle for national existence. Guttman concluded that the goal of this struggle would be the “cultural, nationalist (*nacionalisztikus*) autonomy conceived by Renner.”¹¹ Even though Guttman's observation did not entirely apply to Jewish industrial labourers, it is interesting that he recognised that Jewish nationalism was situational and that its proponent was not necessarily the urban Jewish intelligentsia.

2.2 | Diaspora nationalism and Zionism

Alongside the emancipation and assimilation discourse in Habsburg lands, a set of ideas had emerged that questioned the exclusive religious interpretation of Jewishness. Historians identify two main ideologies: Diaspora nationalism and Zionism. In the multinational Austrian provinces of Galicia and Bukovina, as well as in the Russian Empire, Renner's and Bauer's theories influenced numerous Jewish political thinkers, albeit in a manner that perhaps diverged from the authors' original intentions (Kuzmany, 2024). In the Russian Empire, the General Jewish Labour *Bund*, a socialist party, advocated for non-territorial autonomy rights both within the social democratic movement and on the level of state policy (Gechtman, 2013). The Austro-Marxists did not convince Jewish nation-builders that cultural autonomy for Jews was futile—many of them still believed it was the best solution for the Jewish diaspora. The most important political thinker who conceptualised a spiritual-historical Jewish nation was the Jewish-Russian historian Simon Dubnow (Laqueur, 2003: 415). Dubnow rejected both assimilationism and political Zionism (Hilbrenner, 2007). Instead, he proposed collective autonomy based on the traditions of Judaism in the Jewish diaspora, within the existing political structure of Eastern Europe (Vital, 1999: 521–3). Diaspora nationalism

concentrated largely on community work, youth organisation and education. Communities favouring national-cultural solutions largely spoke Yiddish, making them linguistically distinct from the rest of the population.

Cultural Zionism, akin to diaspora nationalism, gained traction primarily in the Russian Empire and multinational regions of Austria-Hungary like Bukovina and Galicia, and partly in Upper Hungary and Transylvania. Advocates within Austrian Jewish nationalist movements argued that Jews met the criteria for nationality (*Volksstamm*) under Article 19 of the 1867 Imperial Austrian Constitution (Staatsgrundgesetz vom 21. December, 1867). This recognition would have granted Jews rights enjoyed by other nationalities (Stourzh, 2007b). Efforts like the Bukovina Compromise of 1909–10 aimed to include Jews in provincial electoral representation but faced opposition from the Ministry of the Interior, Viennese Jewish associations and proponents of the German cause, thwarting attempts to form a separate Jewish national curia. Similar resistance met legal scholar Max Diamant's 1909 advocacy for Yiddish equality and recognition of the Jewish *Volksstamm* in Bukovina (Kuzmany, 2016; Osterkamp, 2020; Rachamimov, 1996; Stourzh, 2007a).

In Hungary, Zionism found fertile soil in the multi-ethnic countryside (*nemzetiségi vidékek*) or regions that, after 1918, became part of the new successor states (Avineri, 1981, 1992). It gained popularity mainly in the regions with a majority Orthodox population, seen as a potential Orthodox response to the challenges of modernisation and assimilation (Katz, 1987; Sorek, 2020). After the 1897 Zionist Congress in Basel, Zionist organisations began forming in cities, with the organisational work mostly carried out by the Orthodox—occasionally also by Neologue—rabbis. The most important centres emerged in the early 1900s in Pressburg/Pozsony/Bratislava (present-day Slovakia), Klausenburg/Kolozsvár/Cluj and Temeswar/Temesvár/Timişoara (present-day Romania) (Bitton, 1968; Haber, 2001). In Nagyvárad/Oradea, the movement faced resistance from the Neologue community. Conversely, in Máramarossziget/Sighet, the opposition came from the Hasidim. In other cities, Jewish organisations were established but often dissolved shortly thereafter (Olosz, 2019). The first Zionist institutions were primarily invested in local Jewish and Hebrew “self-consciousness,” culture and education, which contemporaries referred to as *Gegenwartsarbeit* or *golus*-politics (Rybak, 2021). The new category of Jewish nationality in the offing synthesised a large variety of late nineteenth-century models (Klein-Pejšová, 2015). The Zionists trod a careful balance between the ideals of the “good citizen” and the “good Jew.”¹²

To what extent did Neologue Jews embrace ideas of Jewishness as a national community, and how significant were these ideas to them? The contemporary Hungarian press shows public interest in debates on Jewish nationhood. The Jewish press in Hungary sympathised with the search for a home for Jews who lacked individual civic rights and were persecuted in Eastern European countries. Yet, most articles contested any opinion that considered Jewry a nation, asserting that religious institutions adequately met Jewish needs.¹³ These Neologue newspapers used the shorthand “Zionist” for any idea that considered Jewishness a nationality, including diaspora nationalism. Moreover, Zionism rarely referred to Herzlian political Zionism, largely unpopular in Hungary.¹⁴

For Hungarian Jews, who after October 1918 experienced a change in state sovereignty, the previous self-identification as Magyars of Mosaic faith or even Hungarian citizens of Jewish nationality became problematic. Given the novel circumstances, if Jews were to establish themselves as a nation—and consequently, a legitimate minority—what foundation would they use to advocate for their national status? Non-territorial autonomy, which was a rejected and unpopular idea before the end of World War One in the Hungarian imperial context, seemingly became a suitable solution to the minority question during the transitional period from an empire to a nation-state. In what follows, I aim to show that when certain Hungarian Jewish communities—like other emerging “small nations” after World War One—claimed minority rights, some Hungarian Jewish activists favoured non-territorial autonomy while others did not, and why.

3 | HUNGARIAN JEWS AND THEIR “GREAT HISTORICAL TASK”¹⁵

On 6 November 1918, the general assembly of the Hungarian Jewish people ended in a scandal, the journal of the Neologue Jews, *Egyenlőség* [Equality] reported. The Hungarian Jewish community had convoked a nationwide

assembly (*országos naggyűlés*) to set up a Jewish rights and self-defence organisation in the face of growing antisemitism at the end of the Great War. The Hungarian Republic was only one week old, and one of its main priorities was the protection of the state's territorial integrity.¹⁶ The new situation prompted the assembled Jews to officially declare their adherence to the Magyar nation following the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination. During the drafting of the resolution that called for the help of their fellow believers worldwide to preserve the territorial integrity of Hungary, which “at all times” respected the rights of Jews, Zionist youths disrupted the meeting, shouting, “We do not belong to the Magyar nation! We belong to the Jewish nation! Long live the Jewish nation! We are Jews!”¹⁷ The day before the meeting, the Zionist youth, including soldiers returning from the front, had asked for 100 tickets to the meeting, a request that the organisers refused. “Then we will attend without tickets,” they declared and kept their word. The Orthodox Jews, who were invited, declined to participate.¹⁸

To the surprise of the editor of *Egyenlőség*, the minister of agriculture, Barna Buza, representing the new and independent Hungarian Government, started his speech with the slogan “Long live the Jewish nation!” The minister, indeed, was not questioning the right of any nation to exist: “We want to and are able to live together not only with Hungarian Jews but also with Jews belonging to the Jewish nation. Just as we can live together with Romanians, Slovaks, Serbs.”¹⁹ The Neologue Jews interrupted the minister's speech: “We do not want to be a nationality!”,²⁰ hinting at their successful integration into the Magyar nation. The minister eventually found common ground with both the Neologue and Zionist representatives, as neither wished to secede from Hungary.²¹

But for Buza, the real purpose of the general meeting was not to debate the question of Jewish nationality but to invite Jews to do what they could to save their homeland through their international ties. Someone from the audience interjected “Magyars are exterminating the Jews!”, pointing out the initial reason for convoking the assembly. Ironically, while the Hungarian government was asking the Jews to help save their country, Jews in the multi-ethnic countryside were subjected to what the historian Michael Miller called “the forgotten pogroms” of 1918. They were forgotten because the subsequent events, like the White Terror (1919–1921) and the Shoah, have since overshadowed them (Miller, 2019). “This is now the great historic task of Hungarian Jewry [to help their country],” the minister continued.²² If the Jewish community fulfils this task, it would also contribute to reducing the hatred against Jews due to “misunderstandings” by Hungarians of other faiths, the minister concluded. Thus, the old logic of assimilation, which recognised Jews as equals in return for their services to Hungary, was present alongside the support for Jewish national aspirations. As the Zionists and Neologues engaged in a discussion about the Jewish national identity following the minister's departure, tensions escalated, ultimately prompting the Neologues to exit the assembly hall. When emotions had settled down, they returned to discuss the “atrocities against the Jews.” The meeting concluded with the creation of the Jewish Self-Defence League, the name of which was eventually changed to the more neutral Central Association of Hungarian Jews.

Buza, akin to numerous other East-Central European politicians, held the hope that due to the connections of Hungarian Jews with international Jewish organisations, they could effectively champion the Hungarian cause within international institutions. The narrative of the Hungarian Jewish press of the following years suggests that it was precisely while carrying out this “historic task” that Hungarian Jews established connections with the Zionist and international Jewish organisations and acquainted themselves with their line of argument pertaining to minority rights. Thus, this interaction was not solely an avenue to advance the Hungarian cause; it also served as a means of acquiring a set of arguments for Jewish national minority rights.²³ In late 1918, some influential Jewish leaders of Hungarian origin, such as the co-founder of the Zionist organisation Max Nordau and Mór Grosz, the Chief Rabbi of Palestine, showed their readiness to represent the interests of Hungarian Jews at the Paris Peace Conference.²⁴

Reports in the Hungarian press on international Jewish congresses, where Hungarian Jews were represented, show that protecting Jewish communities across Europe was central to these gatherings. These meetings discussed the plight of Jews in Romania and atrocities in Czechoslovakia.²⁵ Today, it is clear that arguments from these congresses significantly influenced the interwar legal framework for protecting national minorities. The World Conference of Jewish-Orthodox Organisations held in Zürich in February 1919 included “cultural and religious autonomy” on its agenda.²⁶ (Morgenstern, 2002: 80–1) The Conference put forward a draft resolution “for the recognition of

the civil rights and national autonomy of the Jews.”²⁷ Although several Hungarian Orthodox rabbis from multi-ethnic areas supported Zionism, it was not common for them to specifically endorse and advocate for the Austro-Marxist model of national autonomy (Sorek, 2020). Meanwhile, as noted by the delegate from Hungary, Adolf Frankl, president of the Orthodox Jewish Community of Budapest, national autonomy was primarily intended for Eastern European communities that actively asserted their demand for such.²⁸

Hungarian Jewish leaders did not fully embrace the idea of Jewish national autonomy; as Rabbi Frankl noted, it suited Romania, Russia and Bukovina better. They were introduced to this concept through international gatherings they attended. Legal historian Rotem Giladi has also pointed to the organic relationship between the competing models of Jewish emancipation and the history of the emergence of international law, especially international minority law. International law became an arena where various answers to the Jewish question circulated — an “extension of Jewish politics.” (Giladi, 2021: 32) Erwin Viefhaus went even further in saying that the 1919 minority treaties resulted from the political activism of American and Eastern European Jewry to provide a legal framework for the political and cultural development of Central and Eastern European Jewry (Viefhaus, 1960: 49). By 1919, Jews had formed a stance on the issue of minority protection, which they would stand for at the Peace Congress.

All in all, the representatives of various interest groups at the general assembly of Hungarian Jews, such as the Neologues, the Zionists and the new Hungarian government, used current political idioms in order to negotiate their position in the new political situation (Fuchs, 2009). This allowed them to communicate effectively and make sense of each other's perspectives. The most obvious reference point was the “principle of national self-determination,” which each party interpreted differently. The Neologues wanted to maintain their status within the Jewish community whilst also seeing themselves as members of the dominant nation, rather than a national minority. The Zionists wanted to enjoy the benefits of separate cultural institutions granted to national minorities, a strategy also supported by the Committee of Jewish Delegations. The new Hungarian government prioritised maintaining territorial integrity and showed its commitment to ensuring legal protection for minorities to achieve this goal. Buza correctly pointed out that all parties present at the Jewish people's assembly wanted to negotiate their status within the newly independent and democratic Hungarian state. They all sought to be part of the Hungarian political community, while representatives of the Romanian, Serb and Slovak nationalities chose to align with their new kin states.

4 | MINORITIES WITHIN “SMALL NATIONS”

The Jewish communities residing in present-day Slovakia and the Hungarian territories that later became part of Romania were heterogenous. Harry Gell, the representative of the Joint Distribution Committee in Europe, reported that “The Zionists will not sit with the Orthodox. The Orthodox will not sit with the Neologues, etc.” (Jelinek & Magocsi, 2007; Klein-Pejšová, 2015: 26) In the region known among the Jewish population at the time as the “Unterland” (historically also known as [Sub]Carpathian Ruthenia and encompassing present-day eastern Slovakia and Zakarpattia Oblast in Ukraine) and north-western Transylvania, which roughly corresponds to the county of Máramaros/Maramureş in present-day Romania, predominantly rural communities were situated.²⁹ These communities originated from migrations across the border from Galicia after 1782, maintaining cultural ties with their former homeland. While in 1772, only 890 Jews inhabited the region, by 1910, Subcarpathian Ruthenia was home to around 120,000 Jews — 15.2% of the region's population (Konrád, 2013). The 1921 Czechoslovak census, excluding Máramaros/Maramureş, recorded 80,000 Jews (14%).³⁰ Most Jews lived in rural areas, with fewer than 20% residing in urban centres, compared to the national average of 50% in the Kingdom of Hungary. They worked as artisans, traders and agricultural labourers, similar to the Christian population around them (Csíki, 2013; Konrád, 2013). The Jewish population was affiliated with the Orthodox or Hassidic denominations (Mislovics, 2013). They spoke the Galician dialect of Yiddish, although over time they—especially women—started to incorporate Hungarian in their interactions (Komoróczy, 2013). In the “Oberland” (roughly the territories of Western Slovakia and the Burgenland in today's Austria), there were many Magyarised Jews. Although Orthodoxy was strong, many Jews declared

themselves as Magyars in the census and adopted the Hungarian language, as well as in some cases Magyarising their names, and frequently intermarrying (Klein-Pejšová, 2015).

In the counties of Eastern Hungary, which were later annexed to Romania, the Israelite population in 1910 was around 182,000 (3.5%). In Transylvania, the rate of Hungarian-speaking Jews was lower than the Hungarian average, with 73% of the Jewish population (about 132,000 people) speaking Hungarian. Regional differences were significant. In Bihar/Bihor (present-day Romania), 97.2% of Jews were Hungarian speakers, while in Máramaros/Maramureş, where Jews comprised 18.4% of the population, only 17% spoke Hungarian (Gidó, 2021; Konrád, 2013). The 1930 Romanian census recorded that 98% of Máramaros/Maramureş Jews were Yiddish speakers, and 99.2% identified their nationality as Jewish (Gidó, 2013). As Máramaros/Maramureş was previously part of the “Unterland,” which mostly became part of Czechoslovakia, Jews in this region faced different challenges from those in other regions annexed to Romania.

After Czechoslovakia was established in October 1918 and Transylvania declared its union with Romania in December 1918, Jews in regions now under Czech and Romanian control encountered new challenges asserting their Magyar identity. The newly established authorities were hesitant in acknowledging the rights of either Magyars or Jews. Yet, the Jewish press in Budapest still interpreted the question of Magyar Jews through the lens of the old assimilationist paradigm, which showed little understanding of the new situation of Magyar Jews in Romania or Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, the Jewish press in Budapest continued to view Magyar Jews through the outdated assimilationist lens, which did not grasp the altered circumstances in Romania and Czechoslovakia. For instance, in February 1919, *Egyenlőség* ridiculed the emerging trend among Jews to prioritise their Jewish nationality and advocate for non-territorial autonomy: “In every village where there are one or two Jews, should these one or two Jews organise themselves on a national basis and should these one or two Jews form a separate body, or what do I know? Well, that would be against common sense.”³¹ The cultural Zionist journal *Múlt és Jövő* [Past and Future] empathised with the changed situation of Jews in the territories of Romania and Czechoslovakia. As early as in 1919, the journal addressed the situation of Jews residing in the multi-ethnic territories. Criticising the assimilationist stance that urged Jews to define themselves solely as a religious community, the journal argued that this approach was unsustainable. It emphasised that Hungary could negotiate more effectively in peace talks if it established a Jewish national registry and provided for Jewish national cultural autonomy.³²

The World Conference of Jewish-Orthodox Organisations held in Zürich in early 1919 involving the participation of Jews from nations that had previously been at war with each other, also discussed the issue of Jewish loyalty in the territories occupied by Romania and Czechoslovakia.³³ Romania had a notorious history of denying equal rights and citizenship to Jews. Jewish emancipation, promised in the Berlin Congress resolution of 1878, was indefinitely delayed, stalling civil and political progress. Considering that in Romania, Jews “suffered the harshest repression,” while in Hungary Jews “enjoyed the widest freedom,” Transylvanian Jews initially believed they could argue for inclusion in Hungary under the Wilsonian principle of self-determination.³⁴ Even the representative of Romanian Jewry supported this view. However, there was less agreement regarding the Jews of Upper Hungary (mostly present-day Slovakia).

4.1 | Czechoslovakia: organising Jews as a national minority

In Czechoslovakia, the first minister with plenipotentiary power for the administration of Slovakia, Vavro Šrobár, followed an antisemitic policy. Many Slovaks resented Jews for their perceived role in Magyarisation during the Dualist period and subscribed to stereotypes portraying Jews as morally corrupt exploiters, war profiteers, usurers and innkeepers. During the *Prevrat*, i.e. the phase of incorporation of the territory of today's Slovakia into Czechoslovakia, licences for pubs and shops, alcohol, tobacco and cinema were taken out of Jewish hands (Szabó, 2019: 77). Vigilante actions, particularly by returning soldiers, were common, and the Catholic clergy fuelled antisemitic pogroms.³⁵ Miller argued that anti-Jewish violence aimed at demarcating the exclusive criteria of membership in the

successor states (Miller, 2019: 651). Despite this, the new Czechoslovak state needed Jewish loyalty to maintain its international reputation as a democratic republic, especially since the American Jewish community supported Masaryk's state-building ambitions during and after World War One (Klein-Pejšová, 2015: 23).

Besides the state itself, several groups sought the loyalty of the Jewish community in Slovakia. First, the Neologue community in Budapest, through its newspapers, urged Jews to uphold their loyalty to Hungary. Second, Jewish nationalists from Prague (*Nationaljuden*) aimed to organise Jews in Slovakia, combining Herzlian and Dubnowian ideas and rallying around the Jewish National Council to represent Jews in Czechoslovakia (Rozenblit, 2004). Their programme is closely aligned with national cultural autonomy, as we will see below. Third, Zionists competed for loyalty by establishing Hebrew language schools in "Subcarpathian Ruthenia." Fourth, local Hassidic leaders who criticised the Zionists' Hebrew schools sought the support of Jews in Slovakia. Fifth, assimilationist Czech Jews, critics of Zionism, also agitated on the territory of Slovakia, trying to convince the Jewish population there to integrate into the Czechoslovak nation. Finally, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which carried out humanitarian activities in the Subcarpathian region, also showed interest in organising the Jews of Slovakia as a viable community (Klein-Pejšová, 2015: 26).

The treaty concluded between the Allied Powers and Czechoslovakia on 10 September 1919 provided general minority rights but did not include Jewish provisions similar to clauses 10 and 11 of the treaty with Poland. Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš wanted to avoid taking a stance on disputes within the Jewish communities in Czechoslovakia (Čapková, 2012: 31). An explanatory memorandum to Article 128 of the 1920 Constitution of Czechoslovakia, which affirmed equal rights irrespective of race, language or religion, referred not just to the Jewish religion, but also to the Jewish nationality.³⁶ After the violence of the immediate post-war period, there came calmer years that favoured a rapprochement between the Jews and the new state (Kovács, 2002: 204). Jewish communities from Slovakia shifted their economic and political loyalty to the Czechoslovak state and learned the state language to some degree, albeit not fully integrating into the Slovak ethnocultural community. Jewish loyalties within the Slovak territories continued to develop in three main directions. The first was a kind of national indifference, the preferred choice of the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities. The second direction was self-organisation as a national minority, inspired by cultural Zionism and claiming that only national politics could protect Jewish people in the Czechoslovak state (Rozenblit, 2004: 144). Third, the relegation of loyalty to Judaism to the spiritual, private sphere, as formulated by the Jewish-Magyar writer Aladár Komlós under the pseudonym of Álmos Koral: "... I do not want Jewish schools or a Hebrew language administration! I do not seek anything to bolster my national sentiments; I simply want to ignite it within myself!"³⁷

In interwar Czechoslovakia, there were attempts to organise the Jews into a single, national organisation, such as the *Jüdische Bürgerverein* [Jewish Civil Society], the Jewish Party in Prague and around the Zionist newspaper, the *Jüdische Volkszeitung* [Jewish People's Daily]. However, these initiatives were short-lived and achieved little success (Kovács, 2004: 97–100). Ultimately, the idea of an overarching non-territorial cultural community was not widely embraced by Jews in Slovakia, primarily because of their denominational and ideological diversity, as well as their lack of internal organisation. Additionally, their previous integration into the institutional life of Budapest or Vienna further compounded this situation.

4.2 | Transylvania: "Against common sense"

The Romanian National Council also expressed its expectations concerning how Hungarian citizens, who included a significant number of individuals identifying with the Magyar nation, should define themselves in the post-war context. In November 1918, the Romanian National Committee of Kisküküllő/Târnava-Mică county (present-day Romania) wrote a letter to the "members of Jewish origin" on the Hungarian National Council of the county, urging them to be transparent in their loyalties. The Romanian Committee inquired whether they represented the "free Jewish nation" or were "private individuals."³⁸ The Romanian Committee stated that they had already declared Jews

a free nation, like other nationalities. On this occasion, they welcomed the Jews of Kisküküllő/Târnava-Mică among “the free nations.”³⁹ The Romanian Committee would negotiate with the Jews as such, it was said, if only they knew how the Jewish members of the Hungarian Council identified themselves. The document was a clear invitation to the Jewish people of Transylvania to become one of the constituent nationalities of the nascent Romania. Transylvania’s unification with Romania was proclaimed ten days after the letter, on 1 December 1918. The Romanian National Council negotiated in a similar way with the Transylvanian Saxons, who accepted its offer in January 1919 (Pál, 2018; Roth, 1993: 37–46).

The Jewish members of the Hungarian National Council were not yet ready to accept the invitation and discussed the question with the Hungarian Ministry of Nationalities. Perhaps because the Transylvanian Jews still hoped for Hungarian rule in Transylvania should a referendum be held, they drafted a highly diplomatic answer: “The members belonging to the Jewish nation, namely Dr Erdős, Révész, Dr Ligeti, Werner, and Marton partake in the organisation of the National Council as the delegates of the Radical and Social Democratic parties. They aim to realise the international ideals and the programmes of their respective parties, regardless of being Jewish or not.”⁴⁰ The response acknowledged the respective members’ Jewish nationality, while at the same time testifying to the Hungarian government’s pro-Entente stance in referring to international principles. The Jewish members also demonstrated their loyalty toward the Magyar nation by committing themselves to the political programme of parties from Hungary in their reply. A month later, in December, the newly launched Zionist newspaper *Új Kelet* [New East] condemned this hesitation, despite an overlap between the membership of the Kisküküllő Committee and the newspaper’s editors.⁴¹

In November 1918, when national councils all over Hungary were constituted, the Máramaros/Maramureş Zionist Illés Blank asked, in a note addressed to the Hungarian minister for nationality affairs, Oszkár Jászi, if there were any obstacles to establishing a Jewish National Council.⁴² This would have implied the de facto recognition of the Jewish nation. In his response, Jászi officially acknowledged the Jews’ entitlement to their own national council. Transylvanian Jews who came to think about themselves in national terms often referred back to Minister Buza’s speech at the Jewish assembly of November 1918—presented in detail above—as if the government had recognised, and even celebrated, the Jewish nation. The precise context and the actual message of Buza’s statement gradually faded in these references. In their view, Buza’s statement was put on par with Wilson’s principles and the Balfour Declaration that supported the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. Buza’s speech was to serve as a legal foundation for the Jewish nation in Hungary – such was the interpretation of the Transylvanian Jewish nationalist journal, “*Új Kelet* in December 1918.”⁴³

On 20 November 1918, the *Erdélyi Zsidó Nemzeti Szövetség* [Transylvanian Jewish National Alliance] was founded in Klausenburg/Kolozsvár/Cluj. The inaugural meeting was marked by a hesitation between the protection of Jewish minority rights and the – at the time seemingly illusory – work in Palestine. In its activity, the Alliance combined religious, cultural, economic and Zionist political endeavours, and it soon developed its local organisations all over Transylvania. Their declaration “What do we want?” was issued on 19 December. In this declaration, the Alliance had clearly committed itself to belonging to the Jewish nation. The Romanian state’s desire to separate the Jews from the Hungarian community made the choice obvious (Sorek, 2020: 210–211; Olosz, 2021: 46). The declaration commenced with acknowledging the new era of national and human rights after the end of the Great War. The Balfour Declaration and the subsequent formal resolutions solidified the legitimacy of Jewish national aspirations and affirmed their status as a national minority with guaranteed rights. Transylvanian Jews thus avowed themselves as part of the fourteen million Jewish people that, in their view, the “governments of the Western states” had accepted as a nation spread over the entire world. Since Palestine could be home to only four million Jews, the declaration argued, ten million would continue living as a national minority.

The Alliance admitted that the Jewish national idea was new to them, and that their resolution to join the universal Jewish movement came almost too late. While foreign Jewry had been actively pursuing the realisation of universal Jewish aspirations, the declaration said, the majority of Hungarian Jews were like a “withered olive branch” on a tree which the storms of 2,000 years could not uproot,” unaware of their Jewish nationality until the demands

for national rights and for the establishment of an independent Jewish state prompted their awakening (Gidó, 2009: 112). This train of thought shows how naturally the authors combined the organic view of the nation, as expressed in the olive tree metaphor, with the modern idea of national awakening and the post-war concept of national self-determination. The text also demonstrates that Hungarian Jews were aware of the Jewish national movements abroad but their majority had not adopted these ideas until recently. The Transylvanian Declaration refuted the arguments denying Jewish nationhood by highlighting that in a democratic republic, religion was separated from the state. Moreover, the long survival of the Jews attested to their national existence, thus deserving rights as a distinct national community, its authors argued.

The line of argument in the declaration of the Jewish National Alliance of Transylvania shared many similarities with the Memorandum of the Jewish National Council in Prague, issued in German on 28 October 1918. At the same time, it differed from the narrative used by the Magyar Jewish organisations based in Budapest and Slovakia. The Prague Memorandum also argued that the project of a home for Jews in Palestine and the protection of the rights of the Jewish minority in the diaspora were complementary.⁴⁴ Both declarations underlined that Jewish minority rights would in no way mean creating a new ghetto. They suggested, instead, that Jewish communities, ready to be loyal to the new state powers, should officially be recognised. Apart from a quick reference to international pronouncements, the Prague Declaration did not elaborate on the justification for recognising the Jews as a nation. The declaration claimed that Jews were a constituent nation of Czechoslovakia. Knowing Masaryk's familiarity with the Jewish cause, Bohemian Jews formulated their claims in a language that spoke to him. They asked for national minority rights as a "small nationality," a concept that Masaryk himself conceived and popularised during his stay in the United States during the Great War (Kieval, 2010: 110). The last third of the Prague Council's statement addressed antisemitism. This latter aspect was less prominent in the Transylvanian declaration, which, however, also mentioned the pogroms and the violation of the human rights of Jewish citizens.

As a legitimate minority, what did Prague and Transylvanian Jews ask for? The Prague declaration interpreted self-determination as the right to administer education, social welfare and maintain relations with the Jewish national homeland in Palestine. The Memorandum asked for the democratisation and secularisation of the current *Kultusgemeinden* (religious communities). Furthermore, they asked for the right to impose taxes on the members of the *Kultusgemeinden*, a democratically-elected joint representation of these communities seated in Prague, and the same financial support for Jewish cultural institutions as for any other cultural endeavour. Historian Marsha Rozenblit remarked that the council did not ask for full-blown national autonomy, such as Jewish voting curiae and delegations (Rozenblit, 2004: 114). Although the Transylvanian Alliance had been only formed recently, its demands went further than those of the Prague organisation. It interpreted Jewish national self-determination as "personal autonomy, i.e., the constitutional endowment of national minorities with rights in political and economic life, education, and the cultivation of their national culture." (Gidó, 2009: 114) It is worth noting that while the Prague declaration was addressed to the Government of the Czechoslovak State (*Národní Východ*), the declaration of the Hungarian Jews of Transylvania had no specific addressee.

The reason the Transylvanian Jews asked for non-territorial autonomy might be that the First Hungarian Republic with Oszkár Jászi serving as the Minister of National Minorities, supported non-territorial autonomy for minorities. Jászi, in both his 1912 and 1918 books, promoted a resolution to the nationality question encompassing elements of non-territorial autonomy.⁴⁵ The government's minority policy was evident not only in the marginal notes of documents produced by Jászi's ministry but also in concrete policy initiatives, such as Jászi's proposal during negotiations with the Romanian National Committee in Arad, as well as the autonomy granted to Ruthenians, which also encompassed non-territorial elements and his endorsement of Jewish National Councils.⁴⁶ At the same time, neither the Hungarian government nor the Jewish community had any direct previous experience of cultural autonomy.

Much like the German-speaking Jews in Prague, Transylvanian Jews realised that they literally needed to re-determine themselves in the changed situation. Hungarian Jewish intellectuals of Transylvania gradually opted for the solution that *Egyenlőség* had ridiculed as going "against common sense" just a few weeks before. They started orienting themselves towards cultural autonomy and asserting their rights not as a Magyar, but as a Jewish national

minority. The Jewish National Alliance of Transylvania defined their own national self-determination as personal autonomy (Gidó, 2009: 114). The principle of national self-determination provided a sufficient legal basis to formulate a minority agenda parallel to the growing international promise of a political centre for the Jewish culture in Palestine that would support the diaspora. Under the name *Új Kelet*, a Hungarian-language Zionist newspaper popularised the Jewish national idea. In its inaugural editions, the significance of an international organisation of “Jews standing on a national basis” and the representation of Hungarian Jews in the peace negotiations were expounded upon.⁴⁷ Mór Glasner, the Chief Rabbi of Klausenburg/Kolozsvár/Cluj, contributed an article discussing the harmony between the Jewish national idea and Orthodoxy.⁴⁸ The issue reported on municipalities where the Jewish community had united with the Alliance. In these localities, nationalist Jews progressively supplanted assimilationists in leadership roles. The Jewish national movement, *Új Kelet* reported, “dormant for two millennia”, was awakened.⁴⁹ In the period between the two world wars, the Alliance mainly carried out its cultural, social and political activities through local organisations.

5 | CONCLUSION

This paper has traced the origins of the arguments that were used in the first months after the end of World War One by those Hungarian-speaking Jews who identified themselves as a nation or national minority and relied on this self-definition to secure their rights both as individuals and as a group. The analysis above suggests that before the war, Hungarian Jews were no supporters of, yet also no strangers to, Jewish national ideas, among them the idea of non-territorial autonomy. The definition of Jewry as a cultural national community did not seem timely for Hungarian Jews prior to 1918, and for some communities, not even afterwards. As this article demonstrates, Hungarian-Jewish nationhood was rooted in a broad range of late nineteenth-century autonomist ideas, while both “national minority” and “Jewish nationality” were new legal concepts born after World War One. The language of the emerging international legal system after the war started to conceptually enable the participation of non-state actors on the condition that they formulate their demands in this new idiom: as a national minority (Adorjani & Bari, 2019; Wheatley, 2017). The late Habsburg experiments with codifying belonging and the empowerment of minority nationalities became the cornerstones of the interwar “minority question.” The international Jewish meetings that Hungarian Jews attended sought to incorporate the tradition of Jewish autonomism and Zionism into the language of international law in the making. Some Hungarian Jews who had, previously, primarily identified as Magyars of Mosaic faith—such as some members of the Jewish National Alliance of Transylvania—began to acquaint themselves with, and show empathy toward, these nationalist ideologies. It beautifully captures the essence of the time that Hungarian Jews simultaneously embraced the Jewish national idea while advocating for Hungary's territorial integrity through international Jewish organisations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Oszkár Jászi was a Hungarian sociologist and politician, expert on the nationality question. Jászi emigrated from Hungary in 1919.
- ² I use the term Jewish communities to refer to the heterogenous peoples of the Israelite confession belonging to various national, linguistic and (Jewish) denominational groups. (Catalan, 2016).
- ³ F., G. 1908. ‘Oroszországi levél: belső forrongás az orosz zsidóságban’, *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* [Hungarian Jewish Review], 25, 2: 195–211.
- ⁴ For an in-depth analysis of the contentious Jewish emancipation process from 1840 to 1868, see: (Prepuk, 1994; Gyurgyák, 2001: 44–64; Konrád, 2020).

- ⁵ The journal *Huszadik Század* [Twentieth Century], edited by Oszkár Jászi, conducted a 1917 survey on the Jewish question, interviewing Jewish and Christian intellectuals in response to an antisemitic monograph. The survey sparked significant social debate. (Bihari, 2008: 196–201; Gyurgyák, 2001; Vörös, 2010).
- ⁶ *Huszadik Század*. 1917. 'A zsidókérdés Magyarországon. Körkérdés.' 18, 36: 24.
- ⁷ *Huszadik Század*. 1917. 'A zsidókérdés Magyarországon. Körkérdés.' 18, 36: 55.
- ⁸ In his book on the schism, Jacob Katz thoroughly examines the congress's background and the internal divisions that caused the split. (Katz, 1998)
- ⁹ Regarding the connection between Hungarian Jews and the German *Haskala* movement (Jewish Enlightenment) and the contribution of *Yeshivas* (Talmudic schools) in promoting secular education within Jewish communities see: Silber, 2006.
- ¹⁰ In this paper, I primarily reference data from the 1910 census, the last conducted during Hungary's dualist era (excluding Croatia and Slavonia). Information about Jews is sourced from records of religious affiliation.
- ¹¹ *Huszadik Század*. 1917. 'A zsidókérdés Magyarországon. Körkérdés.' 18, 36: 87–9.
- ¹² Rónai, J. 1897. 'Zion und Ungarn.' Balázsfalva. *Huszadik Század* 1917.
- ¹³ [K.S.] 1905. 'Új zsidókérdés', *Egyenlőség* [Equality], 24: 2–3.
- ¹⁴ Recent literature emphasises that political Zionism is not exclusively linked to Theodor Herzl. Although Herzl's 1896 pamphlet „The Jewish State” is well-known, the *Hibbat Zion* (Love of Zion) movement, associated with activist Leon Pinsker and centered in the Pale of Settlement, predates Herzl's efforts. However, *Hibbat Zion* had a lesser political focus compared to Herzl's approach. (Vital, 1999: 440).
- ¹⁵ *Egyenlőség*. 1918. 'A magyar zsidóság országos nagygyűlése' 9 November 1918: 4.
- ¹⁶ For further details, see: Adorjáni, 2023.
- ¹⁷ *Egyenlőség*. 1918. 'A magyar zsidóság országos nagygyűlése' 9 November 1918: 2.
- ¹⁸ *Zsidó Szemle* [Jewish Review]. 1918 'Az országos nagygyűlés' 8 November 1918: 10–13.
- ¹⁹ *Egyenlőség*. 1918. 'A magyar zsidóság országos nagygyűlése' 9 November 1918: 2–4.
- ²⁰ *Egyenlőség*. 1918. 'A magyar zsidóság országos nagygyűlése' 9 November 1918: 2.
- ²¹ *Zsidó Szemle*. 1918. 'A Magyar Nemzeti Tanácshoz' 8 November 1918: 6.
- ²² *Egyenlőség*. 1918. 'A magyar zsidóság országos nagygyűlése' 9 November 1918: 4.
- ²³ *Új Kelet* [New East]. 1919. 'A Tagespost szenzációja' 4 September 1919: 3–4.
- ²⁴ Szilassy, [Gyula] "[Nemzetközi Izraelita Kongresszus Zürichben]" (Bern, October 3, 1919), V/704/1/54/71–72, Politikátörténeti Intézet Levéltára [Archives of the Institute of Political History], Budapest, Hungary.
- ²⁵ *Egyenlőség*. 1919. 'Tiltakozás Jeruzsálemből az északmagyarországi cseh erőszakoskodások ellen.' 11 January 1919: 2.
- ²⁶ In Hungarian sources the event is also referred to as *Nemzetközi Izraelita Kongresszus* (International Israelite Congress), *Izraelita Egyesületek Nemzetközi Kongresszusa* (International Congress of Israelite Associations) or *A Konzervatív Zsidóság Világkongresszusa* (The World Congress of Conservative Jews).
- ²⁷ *Egyenlőség*. 1919. 'Zsidó meeting Zürichben.' 4 May 1919: 10.; *Pesti Hírlap* [Pest Newspaper]. 1919. 'A csehek kegyetlenkedései a zsidókkal' 27 February 1919: 5.
- ²⁸ Frankl, A. 1919. 'A konzervatív zsidóság világkongresszusa', *Egyenlőség*, 38, 10: 4–5.
- ²⁹ "Subcarpathian Ruthenia" roughly coincides with the counties of Bereg, Ung, Ugocsa, and Zemplén, the region referred to as Podkarpatská Rus in the Treaty of St. Germain when it was incorporated in Czechoslovakia.
- ³⁰ The 1921 and 1930 censuses in Czechoslovakia and the 1930 census in Romania were conducted based on group membership, treating Jews as a nationality.
- ³¹ Paál, J. (1919) 'Vass János miniszter nyilatkozik az Egyenlőség munkatársának a zsidóság aktuális kérdéseiről', *Egyenlőség*, 38, 5: 7–8.
- ³² *Múlt és Jövő*. 1919. 'Memorandum' 1 January 1919: 34.
- ³³ Frankl 1919; *Pesti Hírlap* 1919: 5; *Egyenlőség* 1919: 10.
- ³⁴ Szilassy 1919.
- ³⁵ "Pék Dezső újságíró bizalmas jelentései a Liptó megyei eseményekről" (Budapest, November 16, 1918), K40–1918-VII-217, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár – Országos Levéltár, MNL OL (National Archives of Hungary).
- ³⁶ For a detailed exploration of Jewish rights provided by the treaty concluded between the Allied Powers and Czechoslovakia and the 1920 Constitution of Czechoslovakia see (Čapková, 2012).

- ³⁷ Koral Álmos [pseud. Komlós Aladár], 1920. Zsidók a választáson. Minerva, Presov.
- ³⁸ "Beregi Ármin javaslata a zsidók önrendelkezési jogáról," November 20, 1918, K40-1918-XVIII-239, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár – Országos Levéltár, MNL OL (National Archives of Hungary).
- ³⁹ Beregi 1918.
- ⁴⁰ Beregi 1918.
- ⁴¹ Kit képviselnek a Magyar Nemzeti Tanácsok zsidó tagjai? 1918. *Új Kelet* 1, 1: 3.
- ⁴² "Dr. Blank Illés, a máramarosszigeti Zionegylet ügyvezető alelnöke táviratilag kérdezi, hogy zsidó nemzeti tanács megalakításának van-e akadálya," n.d., K40-1918-XVIII-408., Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár – Országos Levéltár, MNL OL (National Archives of Hungary).
- ⁴³ *Új Kelet*. 1918. 'Jászi miniszter és a zsidó nemzeti mozgalom' 19 December 1918: 5–6; Bató, J. (1955) 'Dr. Blank Illés halálára,' *Új Kelet*, 7 June 1955: 2.
- ⁴⁴ *Österreichisches Wochenblatt*. 1918 'Das Memorandum des Jüdischen Nationalrates an den Národní Výbor' 15 November 1918: 727–728.
- ⁴⁵ Jászi, O. 1912. *A nemzeti államok kialakulása és a nemzetiségi kérdés*. Budapest: Grill Károly. Jászi, O. 1918. *Magyarország jövője és a Dunai Egyesült Államok*. 2nd edn. Új Magyarország Részevénrtársaság.
- ⁴⁶ Domokos, L. 1919. *Ruszkra-Krajna a népek itélőszéke előtt*. Budapest: Ráth Mór.
- ⁴⁷ *Új Kelet*. 1918. 'Marmorek professzor a kelet- és délmagyarországi zsidóság külföldi képviselője' 19 December 1918: 2–3.
- ⁴⁸ Glasner, M., 1918. Az orthodoxia és a zsidó nemzeti gondolat. *Új Kelet* 1, 3–4.
- ⁴⁹ *Új Kelet*. 1918 'A zsidó nemzeti mozgalom Erdélyben' 19 December 1918: 5.

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