

ANDRÁS KOVÁCS

## Jewish Assimilation and Jewish Politics in Modern Hungary

Many signs indicate that the appearance and representation of Jews as a social group, that is, their self-image and the image formed by outsiders, has increasingly taken on a political significance in Hungary today. The term “political significance” is used here in the same special sense as in the literature on modern ethnicity where ethnic group is defined as a group which, taking as its starting point the often obscure tradition of common descent, sets out to create symbols from the surviving or artificially revived elements of this tradition, or from entirely new elements. The purpose is the same: to draw the boundaries separating the in-group from its environment. The aim of the construction of an ethnic group is to achieve certain political goals. Such goals include the abolition of discrimination, the attainment of better positions at the distribution of social goods and, most of all, the maintenance of the group as an important source of social identity. In my opinion, Hungarian Jewry had already stepped on the long road of ethnic self-definition but has not yet arrived at its political consequences, namely, at self-representation in political life. In what follows, I would like to examine whether this is possible at all, since the tradition of independent Jewish politics is non-existent in Hungarian Jewish history.

In the almost one and a half centuries that passed between emancipation and the fall of communism the maxim of participation for the Jews living in Hungary in political life consisted of one basic rule: it was forbidden to appear as a Jew and represent particular Jewish interests in Hungarian politics. This rule is basically a consequence of the “social contract of assimilation”,<sup>1</sup> which was concluded between the liberal Hungarian nobility and the Jewish middle class at the time of emancipation. Both parties expected that if the ghetto walls crumbled, the Jews were accepted as equals in the community of citizens, and the state did not discriminate on the basis of religion, the social isolation of Jews would also cease and all political issues stemming from the separation of the Jews would disappear from Hungarian political life. “In our country, as in other countries, the Jews are trying to amalgamate completely into the community of the given nation, and they wish only to pursue different practices as far as religion is concerned”, wrote Dr Ferenc Mezei, Vice Chairman, later Chairman of the National Israelite Office who was an important figure of contemporary Jewish communal politics in 1917. He succinctly stated that the most important Jewish organizations founded after the emancipation of the Jews were eager to represent as a *political program* the assimilationist expectations of the enlightened supporters of emancipation.

However, these expectations have never been realized. Assimilation did not lead to the total fusion of Jewish and Gentile society, thus the policy based on the desirability and inevitability of a total fusion came increasingly into conflict with the experience that these social groups had of each other.

The process of social assimilation of Hungarian Jews can be readily interpreted within the framework of American sociologist, Milton Gordon’s assimilation theory. Analyzing the assimilation process of North American ethnic groups, Gordon distinguishes seven phases.<sup>2</sup> In the first phase, which he calls *cultural assimilation* or acculturation, the minority learns the language of the majority and gets to know its culture and behavior patterns. According to Gordon, assimilation can stop at this point and it can still be the basis of a well-regulated

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<sup>1</sup> V. Karády, ‘A zsidóság polgárosodásának és modernizációjának főbb tényezői a magyar társadalomtörténetben’, in *Zsidóság, modernizáció, polgárosodás* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi, 1997), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life* (Cambridge–London–New York, Oxford University Press, 1964), ch. 3.

coexistence of majority and minority—as is the case, for example, with several American national, religious or racial minorities.

But if the assimilation process continues beyond the first stage, the second phase called *structural assimilation* will necessarily lead to total assimilation. In the phase of structural assimilation the members of the majority and minority enter into regular interaction on primary group level within the institutions and the civil society networks of a given society. As a consequence, the number of mixed marriages increases and this, in turn, leads to *identificational assimilation*, that is, the feeling and acceptance of belonging to a nation. This is followed by the disappearance of discrimination and prejudices, and in the last stage of the assimilation process all value and power conflicts between the former majority and minority disappear.

The modern studies on the social history of Hungarian Jewish assimilation fit Gordon's theory. In his studies, Viktor Karády showed that the "social distance" between Hungarian Jews and Gentiles, though disrupted by temporary set-backs, continuously decreased, accompanied by economic fluctuation, from the middle of the nineteenth century to the period following 1956. In the framework of Gordon's assimilation theory, the assimilation process of Hungarian Jews, that Karády illustrated with a rich statistical material, could be said to have reached the third or even fourth stage of Gordon's scale of assimilation, that is, identificational assimilation. However, what followed next did not correspond to the expectations of Gordon's theory. As Jacob Katz describes it in his important book entitled *Out of the Ghetto*, post-emancipational Jewry—using the possibilities created by the emancipation and reacting to the pressure to assimilate—has in fact left the ghetto: traditional Jewish society disintegrated and Jews became a part of modern European society but without dissolving in the surrounding society.

Jews entered new European society without becoming absorbed in it. Instead, they became a new and unique social entity, a changed but recognizable version of the traditional Jewish community. In terms of its internal structure and appearance, this version differed fundamentally from what the supporters of the integration of Jews imagined. Instead of becoming a new religious community integrated into the surrounding society, they became a new social subgroup.<sup>3</sup>

This situation did not change even after the period of emancipation and assimilation ending with the First World War. Although the factors—such as, says Katz, the attitude of the Jewry towards religious tradition, their concentration in certain occupations, endogamy and the network of relations extending beyond national borders—that led to the formation of the Jewry as a social subgroup even after the emancipation diminished in importance, new and equally significant factors appeared: state-supported political anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and its consequences—among them, the special attitude of Jews towards the communist regime—on the one hand, and Zionism and the formation of the State of Israel on the other.

Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust in Hungary did not lead to the reversal of the assimilation process and to a gradual dissimilation that would have destroyed the results of the cultural and structural assimilation, nor did it lead to an increase in endogamous marriages (in 1948 in Budapest approximately 30 per cent of all marriages involving Jews were mixed marriages, while—according to a recent survey—they reached approximately 50 percentage in the 1990s). The results of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust can be seen more in processes taking place outside the framework of traditional assimilation which maintained—or rather redefined—group boundaries in this sphere. I have described these processes in detail elsewhere<sup>4</sup> and here I would like to give only two examples of mechanisms used to create

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<sup>3</sup> J. Katz, *Out of the Ghetto. The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 216–17.

<sup>4</sup> A. Kovács, 'A zsidókérdés a mai magyar társadalomban', in *Zsidóság az 1945 utáni Magyarországon*, Magyar

group boundaries which have nothing to do with assimilation.

The first is the relationship of Jews to communism. It is true, of course, that from a Jewish point of view, statistics that show that many of the communist leaders were of Jewish origin are irrelevant, since these leaders had left the community or turned against it. However, from a sociological point of view, it is not at all irrelevant that, to cite Péter Kende, “people of Jewish origins . . . could easily identify themselves with the new regime”.<sup>5</sup> This means that Jews or people of Jewish origin who accepted communist ideals and entered the communist party or simply did not reject the communist regime may have had special motives that Gentiles did not have. And these motives could have helped them to preserve a certain feeling of group identity both in their identification with communist ideals and in their disillusionment.

The second mechanism to create group identity was a consequence of anti-Semitism. There are many Jews in Hungary who consider themselves Jewish only when faced with anti-Semitism. They feel that the boundaries separating them from others are externally defined. This defines Jewish identity as a stigma that infiltrates their thinking and behavior. Stigmatized individuals—even if they think that their stigmatization has no real foundations—try to develop behavior patterns and communicational rules that make it easier to live with the stigma. As a result, they also draw, often involuntarily, boundaries between their own group and others. They are afraid—and in this respect, it is unimportant whether with good reason or not—of social conflicts, political phenomena and rhetoric that do not invoke fear in others at all. They use different behavior and communicational strategies and assign different meaning to certain gestures, words and behavior within the group and outside it. However, it is easy for both members of the group and outsiders to identify this behavior developed to help coping with the stigma.

Thus, despite the progress and completion of what we usually call assimilation, Jews and non-Jews see themselves and are seen by others as reference groups in social interaction even nowadays. There is no anti-Jewish discrimination in Hungary today but according to a nationally representative survey that I conducted in 1995, 24 per cent of the Hungarian population “would prefer” if the percentage of Jews was lower among politicians and this “*numerus clausus*” opinion appears in connection with other professions as well (22 per cent think this about business executives, 21 per cent about bank managers, 20 per cent about journalists). 54 per cent of the population agrees with the statement that “Jews should have only as much say in national matters as corresponds to their percentage in the population” and 10 per cent is of the opinion that “it would be better if Jews did not participate in Hungarian politics at all”. The data above show that many prejudices and a readiness to discriminate are present in Hungarian public opinion and there are value and interest conflicts that are experienced by both sides as Jewish–Gentile conflicts.

Thus, Hungarian Jews did not assimilate completely into the non-Jewish environment as nineteenth-century liberals believed they would but integrated into Hungarian society as a social subgroup with historically changing boundaries. This resulted in a peculiar tension between Jewish politics and the social status of Jews in Hungary in the past century.

In the 120 years following emancipation Jewish politics always respected the limits and the framework laid down in the “contract of assimilation”. In the decades following emancipation the most respected Jewish politicians participating in political life, among them the leaders of the community, as for example Mór Wahrmann, Chairman of the Israelite Community in Budapest, who was also an MP between 1869 and 1892, or Mór Mezei,

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Füzetek, ed. P. Kende (Paris, 1984), pp. 1–36; A. Kovács, ‘Asszimiláció és identitáskeresés. Hozzászólás Kende Péter “A zsidó Magyarország” c. tanulmányához’, *Kritika*, 1997/11. pp. 7–8; A. Kovács, *A különbség köztünk van. A antiszemitizmus és a fiatal elit.* (Budapest, 1997).

<sup>5</sup> P. Kende, ‘Zsidó Magyarország’, in *Az én Magyarországom* (Budapest, 1997), p. 117.

Chairman of the National Israelite Office who was an MP between 1893 and 1901, were active in the parties of the liberal nobility which passed the law of emancipation. During the period of crisis of Hungarian liberalism and after its fall following the First World War, Jewish politicians appeared on the stage of politics in the liberal parties that had lost their former importance, as well as in the marginal radical democratic parties of the urban intellectuals and in the social democratic party and the communist movements and parties. All this indicates that the terrain of Jewish participation in politics was to be found in secular political organizations representing universalistic ideologies. And independent of the fundamental ideological differences that separated these parties, all of them shared a common commitment to the nineteenth-century assimilation paradigm.

Thus, even though the Jews continued to be a “social subgroup” after emancipation, leading Jewish organizations set out from the premises that they should not be represented as a separate entity in politics, since there are no political issues in which they had particular interests as a collective entity. If such interests, however, emerged they interpreted them as gradually disappearing remnants of the former ghetto existence or results of the activities of the enemies of emancipation. They believed that these interests would automatically disappear in the realization of the program of political forces committed to the fulfillment of the universal ideals of the Enlightenment. The tension between Jewish politics and the social status of the Jews in the whole post-emancipatory history arose from the fact that Jewish politicians refused to represent the specific Jewish problems as specifically Jewish. They either expected their solution from the political forces committed to emancipation or tried to solve them through participating in such political groupings rather than as autonomous political subjects. This pattern was already followed in the struggles for a consistent realization of emancipation from the reforms of Joseph II to the emancipation laws of the nineteenth century; in the fight for the emancipation of the Jewish religious community and for state measures against political anti-Semitism. The same policy was adopted in issues such as the fight against anti-Semitic legislation and politics that aimed at infringing on the political rights of the Jews and at limiting their participation in the economy between the two world wars; the administration of the property of the deported and the survivors and the question of restitution after the Second World War; the political attitude towards Israel after 1948; restitution and community reconstruction after 1990; and state policies relating to anti-Semitism. This tension accounts for the fact that the most powerful political response to the special political problems of the Jewry was given by Zionism, a political movement that regarded the abandonment of assimilation as the first step towards the solution of these problems.

The specific factor in the Hungarian Jewish history is, however, that Zionist organizations could never really grow strong in Hungary. In fact, it was above all the attitude towards Zionism—which represented a conflict within Hungarian Jewry—that reflected the dedicated insistence on the emancipation paradigm: before the outbreak of the First World War, for example, due to the intervention of the National Israelite Office, the Ministry of Interior refused to accept the statutes of the Hungarian Zionist Association. The Association could begin functioning as a registered association with proper statutes only after 1927 and it was opposed even then by Mór Mezei, Chairman of the National Israelite Office, who regarded it as endangering assimilation, as well as by the Orthodox Adolf Frankl because of the movement’s opposition to the precepts of the Jewish religion.<sup>6</sup>

This political behavior is reflected in the fact that between the two world wars Jewish organizations, even though they had the opportunity, refused to put pressure through the League of Nations on the Hungarian government to abolish the *numerus clausus* law.<sup>7</sup> It is

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<sup>6</sup> L. Gonda, *A zsidóság Magyarországon 1526–1945* (Budapest, 1992), p. 206.

<sup>7</sup> M Kovács, ‘A kisebbségek nemzetközi jogvédelmének politikai csapdája’, in *The Holocaust in Hungary. Fifty*

also apparent in the political representation of Jewish affairs after the Second World War when, to quote István Bibó,

Many persecuted Jews, Jewish organizations and those with Jewish interests have had bitter or at least rather bitter experiences in connection with their moderate, reasonable or obvious demands about how unwilling those of Jewish origin who occupy important positions are to identify with their cases as Jewish ones at times when these Jewish matters have nothing in common with the political guidelines and objectives of the political leadership, even though they are not opposing them.<sup>8</sup>

This is not surprising since the precept of the new assimilation paradigm offered by the communist ideology was that being a Jew must not serve as a basis for solidarity among the Jews in power and those outside it, as the condition of becoming part of the new elite was to renounce every kind of Jewish identity.

The attitude of official politics and the officially recognized Jewish organizations did not change after 1956. As before, official Jewish representative bodies functioned strictly as religious associations within a general framework of state-sponsored churches. These organizations eagerly fulfilled state instructions: in their statements made at home and abroad, officials of these organizations publicly proclaimed their unshakable loyalty to the communist state, denounced Zionism, consistently distanced themselves from the politics of the State of Israel, and certain officials repeatedly informed, in secret records to the communist authorities, on what they considered Zionist activities, phenomena and individuals.<sup>9</sup>

The officially sanctioned rules of the game were perhaps best summarized by György Száraz, a leading journalist of the Kádár-regime in a book-length essay on the fate of the Hungarian Jews and on Hungarian anti-Semitism which, because of the tabooisation of the subject, attracted a lot of attention. He characterized anti-Semitism and the refusal of assimilation as having identical consequences for the Jews and claimed that those who question the possibility of reconciliation between the Hungarians and the Jews after the Holocaust and refuse to amalgamate “justify Hitler and the gas chambers with their principles”.<sup>10</sup>

In the course of the Kádár regime, a leading reform communist, Imre Pozsgay, Minister of Culture made the most significant attempt to reformulate the assimilation paradigm and its consequences. In this new interpretation universal emancipation that eliminates all particularities—this was the great promise of communism—is not mentioned any more. “Those who choose assimilation, choose a nation for themselves. They will become sons of the Hungarian nation in Hungary because they accept its political system and identify with its history and program.”<sup>11</sup> Hungarian Jews not only have no alternative to assimilation today, but it is also in their interest as, “it is a historical fact that the majority of the Jewry in Hungary has chosen this road, and they follow this road of their own free will, so that nobody has the right to use the pronouns ‘we’ and ‘they’ in connection with them anymore”.<sup>12</sup> The offer is unambiguous: assimilation and identification with the nation means identification with a given political system and its program, and its acceptance makes the Jews eligible for protection against anti-Semitism.

The first article in decades that challenged this offer which fitted into the more than one-hundred-year-old political tradition followed by Hungarian Jews appeared in an illegal

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*Years Later*, ed. R. L. Braham and A. Pók (New York, 1997), pp. 141–43.

<sup>8</sup> I. Bibó, ‘A zsidókérdés Magyarországon 1944 után’, in *Válogatott tanulmányok* Vol. 2 (Budapest, 1986), p. 790.

<sup>9</sup> See L. Csorba, ‘Izraelita felekezeti élet Magyarországon a vészorkorszaktól a nyolcvanas évekig’, in *Hét évtized a magyar zsidóság életében*, ed. L. F. Lendvai, A. Sohár and P. Horváth (Budapest, 1990), pp. 144–61.

<sup>10</sup> Gy. Száraz, *Egy előítélet nyomában* (Budapest, 1976), p. 265.

<sup>11</sup> I. Pozsgay, ‘Bevezetés’ in *Zsidókérdés, asszimiláció, antiszemitizmus*, ed. P. Hanák (Budapest, 1984), p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> I. Pozsgay, ‘Bevezetés’, p. 11.

samisdat journal published by the democratic opposition to the communist regime.<sup>13</sup> An open letter signed “Shalom—Hungarian Jews’ Independent Peace Group” turned, in virtually all of its significant points, against this renewed “assimilationist contract”. The “open letter” rejected the definition of Jews as merely a religious group and argued that Jews should, in addition to their religion, be defined in terms of historic, cultural and ethnic factors. It emphasized that Jews must be integrated, and not assimilated into Hungarian society, and that this integration should include the adoption and cultivation of old and modern Jewish traditions and an acceptance of Jewish contributions to Hungarian history and culture. Shalom’s “open letter” declared ethnically conscious Jews’ loyalty to the Hungarian nation, but also emphasized that such loyalty does not necessarily imply loyalty to prevailing political systems or governments. Finally, Shalom declared the official communist political line toward Israel (equally held by official communist-affiliated Jewish institutions) to be unacceptable, and emphasized that Jews living in Diaspora have the natural right and moral duty to declare solidarity with Israel and to stand against the anti-Semitism veiled in anti-Zionist rhetoric—no matter what differences in opinion exist among Jews as to Israeli politics. Similarly, the State of Israel also has the legitimate right and moral obligation to raise its voice against wrongs suffered by Jews anywhere in the world. In essence, the Shalom group offered a new contract to replace the old assimilationist model, an “integration contract” between two autonomous entities, that is, between Hungarian Jews and Gentiles.

The open letter of the Shalom group already formulates the elements of an ethnic consciousness and politics based on it. These are the following: group identity not based on religion, the need for symbolic self-differentiation (“Jewish tradition and accomplishment”), special relationship with the “motherland” and the principle of voluntariness in the collective acceptance of the political loyalty towards the state. This sounded a new note in Hungarian Jewish politics, moreover, one that has not been surpassed even by the renewal movements of the 1990s.

The search for a new Jewish identity has intensified since 1990, especially among young Jews. The main motive has been the desire to throw off the stigmatized identity of the older generation. Identity based on stigma is often a painful and burdensome identity. For the young generation of Jews who can live without the restrictions placed upon their parents such identity is not simply unattractive but absolutely unbearable. This explains why so many of them search for a positive self-definition as Jews which they can openly admit. In fact, the open declaration of Jewish identity is part of the identity formation process.

This identity, however, is not or only rarely given a political expression. Today, the process of identity formation is only at the stage of self-confirmation and self-reproduction and finds symbolic expression on soccer games, school events and cultural events.

It is often said that the revival movement is very superficial. Well, the open assumption of Jewish identity in Hungary today rarely entails a return to or revival of tradition. However, the symbols adopted by North American blacks to express their ethnic awakening and militancy—such as the famous black leather gloves—had very little to do with African traditions, still they could be used to symbolically express their belonging to a particular group. Between many religious, ethnic or regional groups there are in general many differences in celebrations, family roles, the organization of the household, child rearing practices, foodways, dressing, giving names, etc. but the selection of one or the other as having symbolic significance in a given moment, that is, as being a marker of belonging to the group is more or less accidental. In this sense, the ethnic identity created by revival movements is in fact superficial, however, it still fulfils its function: the group defined by this identity becomes a political entity. A group the cohesion of which is created by revived

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<sup>13</sup> Salom Független Békecsoport, ‘Nyílt levél a magyar társadalomhoz és a magyar zsidósághoz’ *AB Hírmondó*, No. 6–7 (May–June 1984), pp. 23–37.

elements of the tradition used as symbols or by symbolically used newly constructed markers cannot be considered a minority group kept alive by historical and social continuity of its traditions, a group which, consequently, can be defined in terms of its relation to the majority and described by indicating its degree of assimilation (or non-assimilation). These groups have their specific political goals—e.g. to put an end to discrimination, to achieve a more favorable distribution of social goods, to ensure political representation, etc.—and it is these goals and not their “unassimilatedness” that distinguish them from other social groups.

Hungarian Jewish supporters of an ethnic self-definition have had to face two counter-arguments. The first is that if minority status were introduced, even if it only concerned those who opted for it, it may bring about a whole series of unacceptable situations even for those who do not wish to join the ethnic movement: they will be qualified as Jews in situations where they would consider it irrelevant whereas they will remain “bad Jews” in the eyes of others even though they openly declare their Jewishness in many respects. The second counter-argument is that the constitution of the Jewry as a minority group gives an advantage to the anti-Semites: if the Jews themselves admit that they constitute a national minority in Diaspora, it is justified to admonish them for self-restriction in their ambitions to fill certain important positions and in expressing their opinion about certain questions. The most spectacular step as yet of the supporters of the ethnic movement—namely, their demand for the recognition of the Jews as a national minority—proved to be a spectacular failure: a significant and respectable part of the Jewish public opinion turned against it. “Minority status”, as one of the opponents put it, “may bring not rank, but stigma—even to those who have never wanted, and do not now want legal differentiation. . . . and it would be a burden that all Hungarian Jews would have to carry. . . .”<sup>14</sup> The majority of Hungarian Jews seem to follow the century-old political strategy of supporting political forces that they believe to be heirs to the universalistic ideas of the Enlightenment and as such able to protect them from the real and imagined threats of anti-Semitism. This attitude was identified by several authors as the reason of why a section of Jewish intelligentsia strongly supported the creation of the “unnatural” government coalition of the former communists and their former liberal opposition in 1994.<sup>15</sup>

What could in fact be the aims of ethnic politics? The interpretation of ethnicity as a modern phenomenon departs from situations in which different ethnic groups are competing with each other. In such situations, the dominant group tries to draw the boundaries between “us” and “them” (that is, the Alien) to ensure that those on the other side of the boundary would fall, according to the dominant system of values, in the domain labeled as that of negative values. Although this negative labeling does not necessarily entail political discrimination, it represents a stigmatized status that those concerned try to eliminate. The simplest way out seems to be individual assimilation which means crossing over to the other side of the border. Ethnic politics follow a different road, aiming either at replacing the existing basis for comparison by a more favorable one or at changing the system of values that classifies the results of the comparison into positive and negative value domains—see the slogan, “black is beautiful”—or at both objectives at once. The success of the efforts to find a system of comparison more favorable for the minority depends on political creativity; however, the most important question is whether ethnic politics succeed in legitimizing the new dimensions and values of the comparison. This is what determines the success of ethnic politics.

When Hungarian Jews followed the rules of the nineteenth-century liberal emancipation–assimilation paradigm in politics, they did not aim at changing the evaluations

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<sup>14</sup> A. Földes, ‘Vallomás a Duna és a Vörös-tenger partján’, *Hitel*, No. 4 (February 1989), p. 62.

<sup>15</sup> F. Kőszeg, ‘Kormányzásra ítélve’ *Beszélő*, May 26, 1994. A. Körösenyi, ‘Kényszerkoalíció vagy természetes szövetség’, in *Kérdőjelek: a magyar kormány 1994-1995*, ed. Cs. Gombár et al. (Budapest, 1995), p. 263.

concerning the boundaries of the group but at crossing over to the other side of the border, which meant that they did not go beyond what the emancipation–assimilation paradigm offered. In return, they expected the liberal supporters of emancipation to fight the anti-Semites who were still unwilling to accept them. Now, however, when a significant minority of Jews follows the symbolic and institutional path of ethnic group formation and announces the program of group integration as opposed to individual assimilation, this minority cannot delegate its political allies to fight for the acceptance of the new politics but has to fight itself. This development, if it really takes shape, will provoke many conflicts in Hungarian society, above all because the majority of Jews and Gentiles today view the relationship of Jews and non-Jews in the conceptual framework of assimilation. It is beyond doubt that the spreading of the multicultural and ethnopluralist approach contributes to ethnic revival movements. Among the non-anti-Semitic university students in Hungary more than one-fourth agrees that Jews should be treated as a national minority. But to give a more balanced view of the matter, a significantly higher number of anti-Semitic students agree with the above statement.<sup>16</sup>

Unless a strong wave of emigration occurs, the presence of Jews as a social subgroup in Hungarian society will create further tensions and conflicts in Hungarian politics. Tensions if Hungarian Jews continue to refuse to articulate the interests and viewpoints deriving from their special status and conflicts if they are willing to articulate them. If such conflicts develop, they will be centered around the legitimacy of the appearance of Jews as an ethnic group in political life and will put the new Hungarian democracy to the test.

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<sup>16</sup> A. Kovács, *A különbség köztünk van. Az antiszemitizmus és a fiatal elit* (Budapest, 1997), p. 108.