

THE EMERGENCE OF THE HUNGARIAN BOURGEOIS CONCEPT OF "NATION – HOMELAND"

by

ENDRE ARATÓ

In the age feudalism it was generally the nobility which was included into the framework of the 'nation'. According to the nobiliary concept of nation the privileged classes of the non-Hungarian peoples were also included in the *natio hungarica*, in keeping with the multi-national character of the country. As the country was under Turkish and Habsburg rule from the 16th century onwards, the fight for the defence of the privileges of the nobiliary nation and their assertion did not only mean the safeguarding of their rule above the serfs of different nationalities, but also the feudal autonomy of the country under the leadership of the nobility and its struggle for independence.

Besides the nobiliary concept of nation and the ideology of a common homeland elaborated by the ruling class, the idea of the nation and homeland of the depressed classes developed during the struggle against the Turks and the Habsburgs with the liberation from the bondage of serfdom in its centre. The people expected the betterment of their position as a result of these struggles and of their participation in them. During the War of Independence led by Rákóczi, class antagonisms appeared even in the field of national ideology.¹

These two concepts of 'nation' continued to exist during the period after the Peace Treaty of Szatmár and they can be met with at the time when the modern Hungarian national movement was unfolding. – The bourgeois national development was led by the nobility, the new national ideology was moulded by the intellectuals closely associated with the privileged class either by origin or by their way of thinking, or it was evolved directly by the landed nobility. Consequently, the national ideology had a considerable quantity of feudal characteristics and had become "bourgeois" only gradually. This way was followed by the writers of the Hungarian Enlightenment (e.g. György Bessenyei and Ferenc Kazinczy) and in the periodical entitled *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* (Scientific Collection), launched in 1817, an increasing number of articles discussed the criteria of the homeland and nation.² The regular work on the Hungarian national character, genius, the national spirit, language, national culture, the inclu-

sion of the people into the nobiliary nation, which occurred first among the Jacobins, and as its reflection the elevation of its cultural level as a programme, all indicate the spread of bourgeois thinking. Naturally, as the bourgeois features appeared gradually, the continued existence of the feudal concept of the nation can also be observed. Above others this was expressed by the identification of the concept of the nation and the people with that of the nobility, or a special emphasis was given to the formalities among the characteristics of the nation (e.g. the national dance, or garments) or the feudal national past was glorified together with the historical right, justifying the oppression of the non-Hungarian peoples, the objective of maintaining feudalism and opposition to the bourgeois revolution.

The nobiliary concept of the nation becoming bourgeois by its widening and by the inclusion of the people, there are at the same time no traces of a separate popular concept of the nation from the end of the 18th century onwards: peasant movements evolved mainly in the form of open class struggles, independent or rather despite of the national ideology.

The politically most progressive trend of the early Hungarian national movement, the Jacobin plot³ had accepted a great part of the aspirations of the peasantry both in its national ideology, as well as in its other objectives. Thus it amalgamated into its new bourgeois ideology the progressive content of the popular concept of the nation of the feudal period. And though the nation-theory of the other, less progressive trends of Hungarian political life did not and could not adopt this tradition, yet the idea of the nation, showing increasingly bourgeois features, was of progressive nature during the transitory period of the crisis of feudalism and, despite of its inconsistencies due to nobiliary limitations, it served the interest of the whole people as well. It should not be forgotten however, that regressive features existed even at this early phase of development, which mainly served the toning down and thwarting of peasant class struggle. Still, as the ideology of a class also fighting for bourgeois development, its progressive elements performed an important mission.

The inclusion of the Hungarian people into the nobiliary nation had some consequences in a multi-national country. As the non-Hungarian privileged classes were part of the nobiliary *natio hungarica*, the inclusion of the Hungarian people was similarly linked with that of the non-Hungarian peoples into the frame of the Hungarian nation. This was the idea of the so-called single political nation, which recognized only the Hungarians as a nation and regarded the nationalities as Hungarians speaking Serbian, Rumanian, Slovakian, etc. This concept of the nation, which appeared already in the 18th century, but spread mainly in the 1840s, had, besides the bourgeois characteristics, a strong feature rooted in the centuries of feudalism and still surviving in the age under consideration: it was associated with the territory and not with the ethnic elements of a multi-national state.⁴

The concept of nation of the last decade of the 18th, and the first two decades of the 19th centuries shows the most colourful and often contradic-

tory image of the various theoretical constructions, with both bourgeois and feudal elements mixed. Besides the numerous subjective expositions some scholars, politicians, or journalists touched upon several objective criteria of the nation. Almost all of them recognized the importance of the language as a criterion, but it was also characteristic how specifically they stressed its significance not only considering it the decisive means of communication and one of the characteristics of the nation, but as a basic and often exclusive criterion.⁵ It is hardly surprising that, in emphasizing the significance of the language naïve exaggerations also occurred frequently. It was during the emergence of the literature on the primacy of the language, that the struggle for the spread of the Hungarian language unfolded and writings of this kind also served the interest of this struggle. It should not be forgotten either, that linguistic opposition was in the foreground of the political fight as well, the cultivation of the language and its uplift to literary standards were on the agenda and the war among "purists" and "neologians" was going on. Finally it should also be noted that in the course of the struggles of Hungarian national movement several people, mainly those of baronial rank, supported Vienna and this behaviour was mainly expressed in the fact that they not only neglected but even forgot their own language. Such examples were kept in view when statements like "abandoning the language is equal to the death of the nation" were made. Besides the emphasis on the garment, customs, sciences, the constitution, the glory of the national past as features of an independent nation may also be regarded as a general phenomenon. There were some who regarded territory and economy, though in a limited sense, as national criteria. Naturally those, who had touched upon these important objective criteria, had an outlook which was mainly idealistic.⁶

Nation was generally regarded as an eternal category and the monarchs were attributed a great role in the national characteristics and in the slow changes of the national spirit. Loyalty was especially obvious in the glorification of Habsburg rule and in the rejection of the bourgeois revolution which was made timely by the French events.⁷ The idealist interpretation of the national ethos and character was frequent but there were also views which, though rarely, attributed great importance to circumstances in the formation of the national character, or utilized the principle of eternal change in the definition of the concept of nation.⁸

The appearance of bourgeois thought was particularly well reflected by views on the language. Even loyalty, otherwise frequently evident, was generally missing from expositions on the language. The objective of teaching the people in the vernacular was greatly progressive and meant to be the antecedents of the inclusion of the people into the nation.⁹

Similarly some articles of the *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* (Scientific Collection) contain bourgeois elements, as it did not tolerate the disparaging of Hungarian national values and encouraged the honour of the achievements of national culture which was regarded an important criterion of the nation at that time as well, or pointed out causes of the backwardness of Hungary. Authors of the articles called the attention of public opinion

to the importance of national improvement as against hollow nobiliary gallantry.¹⁰

The concepts of homeland and patriotism were also colourful and, though the resounding phrases and generalities are frequent in the definitions, the bourgeois and feudal features can be separated in them.

Patriotism was considered a natural and sacred sentiment by the age and in this mode of thinking bourgeois ideology had definitely found its place. The same was reflected in the harmony of the interests of homeland and individual, in active patriotism and its apparent opposite which saw in patriotism selfless service above all. The followers of the latter idea expressly criticized the nobiliary concept of nation, the rigid adherence to the old constitution and to privileges. In this context the necessity of the criticism of Hungarian national shortcomings also occurred. But general opinion rather disapproved of the exposition of the negative features. The assertion of conscious class interest appeared under the title of patriotism. An important role was attributed to the national past as the incentive of patriotism. The progressive idea which definitely excluded from the characteristics of a true patriot the disdain of other nations expressed itself frequently.

Apart from these progressive features, however, contemporary concepts carried the stamp of the feudal idea of homeland. The defence of the nobiliary constitution and its association to the homeland, again the cult of garment as part of patriotism, all indicate the continued existence of the nobiliary world of ideas. The chain of ecclesiastic, religious motives and feudal patriotism existed as a special form. Thus among the theoretical questions of homeland and nation a typically mediaeval element, religion had preserved its place.¹¹

The modern, bourgeois interpretation of the concepts of nation and homeland appeared for the first time in the works of Széchenyi, Kölcsey, and Wesselényi in the third decade of the 19th century. Bourgeois elements had already become dominant in their concept.

István Széchenyi on nation and homeland

In January, 1826 Széchenyi wrote in his diary that the governing system of Austria had the objective of separating the peasantry from the nobility and of lulling the latter into sleep ever since 1790. But the nobility is about to awaken and fights for the welfare of the peasants by the hard way of polemics and significant struggles. As a consequence these two classes of the nation have never before marched together so closely as they do now – Széchenyi remarked.¹² And though this statement does not lack some exaggeration, it also contains important elements of the inclusion of the peasantry into the nation.

Similarly, one of his early articles, written for the *Felsőmagyarországi Minerva* (Upper-Hungarian Minerva) (June 1828) outlined the modern concept of patriotism. In this writing Széchenyi discarded the external features of patriotism that were in agreement with the nobiliary views and regarded it as identical with nationality, as a burning devotion to the

homeland, the firmest foundation stone of the progress, strength and happiness of the country.

This emotion, he wrote, "does not manifest itself in words, but in deeds". And, if many who hardly know that they have a homeland, started to love it, "our sweet homeland would not be neglected but patriotism could soon contribute to the greatest duty, it could transform sandy plains into fertile fields, the sickly swamps into flowering meadows; could link our country with the sea, Buda with Pest, etc."¹³

These ideas, together with others touching upon the national ideology can be found in his well-known, significant works written in the early thirties. The most important concepts defining 'homeland' and 'nation' could not be left out from *Hitel* (Credit), published in January 1830, which contained the somewhat inconsistent programme of the bourgeois transformation of Hungary. Thus we may meet the criteria of nationality and national characteristics he considered the most important ones, with the criticism of the nobiliary nation, the survey of the features characteristic of a good patriot.

In *Hitel* a separate chapter is devoted to nationality which Széchenyi identified with the love and defence of the homeland. He contrasted patriots with the cosmopolitans who look for their own interest only and choose their homeland accordingly. In Széchenyi's view an important criterion of patriotism is the recognition of the backwardness of Hungary and an activity aiming at change, which particularly reflects the bourgeois nature of his concept. "As if we were seated at the bottom of a well, neither our spiritual, nor physical products have any fame. . . . I advise to search the mistake rather in ourselves as beside all our patriotism we cannot applaud e.g. for the mud in Szeged, the countryside of Hortobágy, the pavement of Pest, the shores of the river Danube, its dirty theatre, its innumerable wayfarers, disgusting beggars. . ." Due to this criticism, as Széchenyi felt it necessary to emphasize, he isn't on the same platform with the cosmopolitans, and he stressed that the country is not lifted by jingling stirrups, frogs and loops without valiancy, pelisse, trimming, heron feathers, Zrinyi-dolman, Attila-hat, etc., but by evoking respect for Hungarian name.¹⁴ Thus a true patriot does not value appearances, he is much more characterized by the exposition of mistakes which he searches primarily in himself. The person who slanders all institutions and believes that the offence of the king is a good patriotic deed, is not a good patriot. This time Széchenyi exposed to criticism that boisterous nobiliary nationalism which regarded the fights of the 1790s as an example to be followed, but in these views his loyalty towards the Habsburg Empire was equally well expressed. He also blamed those who rudely criticized their country without doing anything for the benefit of the homeland. He professed that everybody has to do everything in keeping with his opportunities and abilities for the country.¹⁵

Széchenyi also condemned those Hungarians who believed that patriotism was expressed in unrestricted praise; whatever is excellent, does not require praise, he wrote, the diamond shines by itself. The advantages of the country, but much more the disadvantages have to be discovered for

the sake of progress: „that whatever is lagging behind in the country, should move forward, and not to a side-track by chance, one should show himself a man, and that in the truest sense of the word! Nationality is needed because one can be himself really only if he remains what God had made him to be: the Turk Turk, the English English, the Hungarian Hungarian, etc.” He himself fights against prejudices, misbeliefs, and ignorance, he wrote, because these only hinder the progress and advancement of the nation.

The idea of discovering the mistakes of the country instead of praising it frequently emerges in *Hitel*. In this respect Széchenyi expressed his views several times, definitely and in a heated manner. He is not going to be the “double reed piper” of the ornaments of the nation, he confessed, thinking of those who praise each other with servile compliments and he exclaimed: “My country, so you have reached such baseness, such rotting.”

As an organic part of this concept Széchenyi warned against labelling with unpatriotic conduct those who regard the achievements of foreign countries more valuable than the Hungarian ones. The Italian singer will sing better than our compatriot, he wrote, the English thoroughbred will remain to be a better horse than the Hungarian, the sailor of North America will surpass “our boatmen of Pest and Buda”, agriculture in England and in Belgium is more advanced than ours, the wines of Madeira also outdo those of the Hegyalja, etc. Yet the Hungarian, he continued, would not love his country less, or he would not leave it for good, “because there is something unpronounceable, which links the nobler people to their country with an irresistible force, he that country a barren field, a marsh with groves, or a snowy desert.” Széchenyi called this emotion true patriotism, to which “blind love” is alien.¹⁶

As the chapter on nationality stresses, language is the main concomitant of the nation, “because until it exists the nation is also alive, even though often in a languish — as shown by several examples — but once it becomes mute then the homeland would grow only mourning willows which would let down their despondent foliage to the ground in memory of those who had once existed.”

Apart from this outlook, which had become general earlier, Széchenyi attributed great importance to social life in the development of nationality.¹⁷

The survey of the national characteristics was one of the important ideas of the concept of nation and homeland in the earlier decades. Széchenyi did not neglect it but expressly condemned those who were anxious about these national features and set them against progress saying that innovations endanger these valuable qualities. He condemned those who were opposed to all improvement and convincingly discussed that national characteristics are not eternal categories but are subject to permanent development and change.¹⁸ This argumentation was also meant against the backwardness of nobiliary nationalism.

Elsewhere Széchenyi repeatedly dealt with this important question. He pointed out that the real strength of the nations is based on wildness, fanat-

icism or on perfect culture; there is no middle way. Hungarians have lost their "ancient wildness" and would remain weak until they do not overcome the "half-way of Enlightenment". A new national feature has to be made general and in this context Széchenyi meant the evolution of a national feature closely linked to social progress. He did his best to call attention to the honour of the up-to-date bourgeois qualities as against the nobiliary nationalism stressing a false bravado and the bravery of the descendants of the Scythians. Understandably, however, he could also not entirely give up the nobiliary concept of the glorious feudal past. He considered it a unique luck that in the 19th century it is not bodily strength, unlimited bravery and heated imagination that constitute the valuable and supporting characteristics of nations. "Wild men", he wrote "are neither stronger protection, nor safer shield for the country than the learned and the meek; therefore we should prepare to be equally strong and brave in the battle as our forefathers had been but we should be more cultured, educated, placid, than they used to be."¹⁹

The following idea, inspired by the requirements of bourgeois transformation, was similarly addressed to the nobility: "where there is right, freedom and privileges, there must be duties as well. . . . *Your country has given to you everything but you have never given anything to your country.*" Consequently Széchenyi did not regard those nobles patriots who had as a sole link to the motherland the "punctual delivery of their incomes" and who only mocked at and ridiculed the true patriots, sitting at home with the obligatory pipe and were "living hindrances of all progress, who fatten on the flesh of the country like drones."

Széchenyi did not only attack the nobility with sharp criticism but he appealed to their emotions and intellect, so that they should include the people into the nation. This idea was expressed by Széchenyi in *Hitel*: "*In our country the stomach, head and purse of everybody or at least of the largest possible portion should not be empty* — moreover each one should aim at obtaining more and more of wealth and graciousity — but one should really obtain them after all the pains taken and should also possess them in security."

In this work Széchenyi raised the necessity of the creation of national unity, the cause of that class union which could be based only on the limited liberation of the peasantry but one of its important objectives was the toning down and possible elimination of peasant class struggle. Thus nobody should persecute his compatriot, he wrote, "only because the other one is a count or a baron, and vice versa, and should not despise anybody because that one is a clerk, merchant, burghess, or peasant, and vice versa. The creation of the whole with granite strength equally depends on all. . . ."²⁰

This idea of national unity and internal integration was expressed in the press as well almost at the time of the publication of *Hitel*. In András Thaisz' periodical *Sas* (Eagle) Antal Mindszenty, a merchant with literary interest and later on Judge of the County Court of Komárom county explained that as all nations, the Hungarian also has a special character which can be discovered in its original purity among the nobil-

ity and the "common people". This does not hold true of the magnates and town dwelling burghesses as they have assimilated several habits alien to the Hungarians, due to frequent communications with foreigners.²¹ This peculiar expression of Hungarian nationalism involved in itself the idea of the class alliance of the nobility and of the common people.

Count József Dessewffy published his *Taglalal* (Discussion) a year after Széchenyi's work appeared, criticizing the system of economic and social reforms expounded in *Hitel* from the aspect of national independence. Despite his nobiliary attitude Dessewffy enriched the Hungarian national ideology with several bourgeois ideas. Doubtlessly he touched upon the limitations of Széchenyi's reform system in the necessity of the compromise with the Habsburg Empire, and the policy of the Austrian Court which was one of the significant hindrances of bourgeois development in Hungary. At the same time Dessewffy considered one-sidedly the lack of national self-determination the *only* cause of the backwardness of the country.²² This attitude, differing from Széchenyi's concept as it aimed at the maintenance of the inner system of feudalism practically without change, shows a close relationship to the nobiliary movement of 1790 and of the nationalism of the first two decades of the 19th century.

Putting the independence of the country into the foreground was aimed also at diverting attention from class struggle. The old-fashioned attitude of Dessewffy was also expressed by reassuring the people that their position is not disfavoured and that they should make peace with their destiny. The landlords, he continued, did not take away land from the people by force(!), moreover, part of it is used by the peasantry itself, for which socage and other services in return are justified. Addressing the peasants he called their attention not to listen to "those people with water in the brain", who say "that the work performed on the land itself gives the benefit in keeping with the work, because if it had been so, in almost the greater part of the country the farm hands of valuers would be the possessors of the land cultivated by them."

The main cause of the trouble, of the backwardness of the country, is not to be sought in the relationship between the landlords and the valuers. "Let internal and external trade flourish in the country, the latter one mainly depending on the reign", then the fate of landlords as well as serfs would improve. Development is possible, he stated, with the increase of the population and of enlightenment, "but great push" to the progress of nations cannot be given by anything but "a well-arranged system of internal and external trade for the benefit of the country, and the unchangeableness of the real or decided value of the money."²³

Dessewffy did not only reject Széchenyi's statement that the greatest barriers in front of the progress of the homeland are the wealthier landlords, but he went out to protect the magnates. They did not hinder development, he argued, because they "screwed the people", but because they do not look after their estates and spend their incomes for their own purposes and not for objectives that are useful for the country. As against Széchenyi's views Dessewffy tried to prove that the "great ones

of the country", the aristocrats have a marked influence on the development and progress of the nation. "I only mention these", he wrote, "that I may turn the Count's attention to that dangerous idea of his, in which he states that always everything only depends on the nation regarding the improvement of its condition." It should not be forgotten that Széchenyi considered also the oppressed peasantry part of the nation and this is exactly that evoked Dessewffy's criticism. As a consequence he did not accept the bourgeois principle of including the people into the nation.²⁴

An important pillar of Dessewffy's system is that he attributed an exaggerated importance to such external circumstances of nations against the internal and manageable development, that are independent of the will and influence of the nations but, in his view, have a decisive role in the survival and progress of nations, the Hungarian included. Here it is easy to trace the affinity to the basic idea: in the place of the agrarian question the primacy of trade is emphasized, and attention is diverted from the absolutely necessary internal changes to external factors.

Closely connected with these ideas is Dessewffy's argument, opposed to Széchenyi's view: national characteristics are not categories subject to change, as nations develop exactly on the basis of the national ethos and characteristics. Whereas we, he wrote, "have quite degenerated and degraded with the course of time and as our becoming foreigners did not always and in everything follow the natural course of our spirit and characteristics, so that in consequence (so far at least) we have not always and in everything borrowed the good from the new things abroad but frequently that part which could not be praised there either, only tolerated but here these are really harmful, and cause damage to our national ethos and characteristics." Thus there is no interaction between the national ethos and external borrowing but the former is absolute, without change and of fundamental significance. "Character has a haphazard influence on the development of nation" he argued, „but the greatness and happiness of all nations derive from the national character." And if we add that among the criteria of the nation Dessewffy attributed great importance to appearances as well, the well-known concept of nobiliary nationalism has completely unfolded itself.²⁵

Keeping in view Dessewffy's attitude it is not surprising that he was opposed to Széchenyi's sharply critical tone, the characteristic feature of true patriotism aiming at discovering the mistakes with the intention of improvement and progress. He did not want to appreciate this behaviour meagre in praise, and the adaptation of foreign achievements that would facilitate bourgeois progress, the acknowledgement of all that was better abroad than in Hungary. With a touch of oversensitiveness he repudiated the criticism of the nobility, its gallantry, and its challenge. Here it should be noted that Dessewffy accepted several important statements of the chapter entitled "Nationality" of *Hitel* and it indicates that there were common points in the very field of national ideology.²⁶

Széchenyi answered to Dessewffy in minute detail in the same year of the publication of *Taglalat* (1831) in his work entitled *Világ* (World).

Not only was this a powerful treatise, but a new summary of the author's political concept, though in a looser structure. In this work Széchenyi particularly stressed the disunity of Hungary and the necessity of internal national integration. "Our country", he wrote, "is odiously divided by partisans, creeds, separate nations and by our municipal constitution. The partisans tear our homeland into five parts, creeds perhaps into six, the separate nations into about ten and our municipal constitution into 52, altogether into 73 separate parts not counting the districts of the Jazygians, Cumanians, etc., the royal towns, etc.". Subsequently he surveyed the classes and layers of the society and found the condition of the country rather grave. The peers do not care about the homeland, the nobility does not know about foreign countries and has a backward way of thinking, they overestimate the values of the country, the bourgeoisie is alien, the peasantry belongs to several nationalities, and among them the Slovaks, the Germans, and the Rumanians "multiply like mushrooms in the forest" pressing into the background the most valuable population, "the original Hungarians."

What should then be done? The Hungarian is "a young people full of energy, that can elevate itself into marvellous heights and can become everything if it perfectly unfolds public intelligence and nationality" and if it recognizes its two enemies, i.e. prejudice (nobiliary privileges, the maintenance of serfdom) and conceitedness which are the main hindrances before progress. Under public intelligence Széchenyi meant the accumulation of wealth, economic and social development, cultural progress, and under nationality he meant the creation of national unity, reinstating the Hungarian language into its rights and deepening patriotism. In this connection he assigned a rather important role to Hungarianization for which primarily the Hungarians themselves have to become suitable, as he said: "Thus first of all Hungarians have to be cleaned from all their dirt so that in the course of time they may become even worthy to be followed." As a consequence of national intelligence the country would be raised and with it not only the court would become stronger but "the hut of the tiller of the soil" would be more handsome "and the heart of the largest possible part would be contented and would praise their lucky circumstances."²⁷

These ideas of Széchenyi, referring also to the major features of the nation reflect the complexity of Hungarian nationalism: the creation of unity, which was one of the most important demands of modern national movements, was closely intertwined with the neglect of the objectives of the non-Hungarian national movements of the country. Even though several features of tolerance can be observed in Széchenyi's concept, similarly to the Hungarian ruling class in general, he could not imagine national unity otherwise than by the amalgamation of the peoples of multi-national Hungary under the supremacy of the Hungarians.

By further analysing the bourgeois components of Széchenyi's concept, it may be stated that, as against the conservative arguments of Dessewffy, he more frequently and more definitely stresses the idea of the

inclusion of the people into the nation in *Világ* than in *Hitel*. The homeland remains weak, he explained, till peasantry bears the burdens alone. "If the nobility descends to the peasantry", he continued, "it is yet insufficient; but it has to lift the latter to some extent as the homeland would be happy and strong only in this manner — its various inhabitants would be talented and the royal throne would be set on such a rock which cannot be shaken either by external force or by the hazards of time."

He returned to public intelligence, mentioned in connection with nationality, also in regard to the inclusion of the people into the nation and he stated that public intelligence can effectively develop only if "the largest possible portion", i.e. the people get into a situation where time is available for reading and culture and if many among them can travel not only in the country but abroad as well with the view of obtaining experience. But the largest possible part can get into such a position only by "the infallible laws of eternal nature" one of which is the following: "Return whatever is not yours and fulfil for whatever you have obliged and devoted yourself."

He would long for the situation when the Hungarian nation could be called a truly free nation, he wrote, and from among Hungarians a Josuah would emerge but not for stopping the sun for the sake of human bloodshed, "but in view of the better human life to accelerate the passage of the innumerable days we have to spend yet in the imaginary world of our poor privileges and one-sided freedom!"²⁸

The idea of the creation of national unity among the classes, based on common interest and the introduction of a liberal constitution, occurs in *Világ* as well. Just as every individual, the nations also strive for the improvement of their position. And the person who is oppressed by slavery, or who is looked after by others, is similar to a nation where there is autocracy at large, or where only the government acts in the place of the nation. Only the independent and free person can truly develop his inner strength, and a liberal constitution, an "agreement" based on "common interest" would be in harmony with it in Hungary.

But there is no real nation in Hungary, it may be found in *Világ* as here nation "is nothing else but a pompous phrase, which has no real meaning. . . ." One can only speak about nation in the country if everybody is contented, if the abode of the people means a "friendly shelter", if laws equally protect virtue and property of all and equally condemn crime. "Only such laws", he confessed, "*could elevate the people to the status of nation*, only such laws promise national light, a strong, happy and long life, as only these can realize that not only a relatively small denomination may desire and wish the unchangeableness of the country's power, but the wide public, and not by mystification or promises, or due to some illusion, but should be ready by natural desire and *con amore* to shed his blood *pro aris et focis* in reality" (italics mine — E. A.). Széchenyi also referred to a foreign example and elucidated how in England "the people had finally formed a nation". In the closing passage of his book he

clearly and definitely stated: Hungary cannot become a happy and advanced nation until "we do not lift the people into the ranks of the nation, i.e. until from what are privileged provinces eternally dissected by interests Hungary does not become a free country eternally united by interest. . . ." ²⁹

Ideas similar to those of Széchenyi did emerge in some counties as well. The county of Nógrád stated the following in a declaration dated May 31, 1831: "The further uplift of the glorious Hungarian nation cannot be achieved more effectively by anything else than by the rights that are made proportionate to the duties and by purposeful education people are perfected into nationhood. . . and even the smallest members are included under the protection of the *Partis Primae Titulus* nine, to which every human being has a birthright as to the inviolable law of nature." The reference made here is to Part One, paragraph 9 of Werbőczy's "Tripartite" which summarizes the privileges of the nobility. Thus the resolution of Nógrád, to which similar ones were passed by other counties as well, demanded the extension of the nobiliary rights to the people, i.e. the realization of bourgeois equality before the law. ³⁰

Széchenyi dealt with the significance of patriotism in *Világ* as well, and here he defined this emotion in the same manner as in his earlier works: patriotism "is the angel of the possible highest uplift of the nation, the divine protection of its strength, the source of the most beautiful and immortal virtues", the lack of which cannot be perfectly overcome by anything else. And it is only too natural that in his debate with Dessewffy he took a position against feudal patriotism, against the 'national' ethos. By criticizing the nobility, Széchenyi stated that they "either mix up with the old, deep-rooted, rusted customs the true ethos of the national genius and do not place the manifestation of the latter into what is inspired by the mind free of prejudices", but into something that has gradually become their way of life though earlier it was not more Hungarian than the forms that should be adopted in this century. At true patriotism that demands real sacrifices and the cultivation of the Hungarian language those with the "longest mustaches" have turned their back "because we do not perform the recruiting dance with double reed pipe and bagpipe, with the smell of mildewed customs, cabbages and smoke". ³¹

His important statements on the language should also be referred to at this point. First of all Széchenyi emphasized the practical and decisive consequences of the language from the point of emerging nationhood. The perfectness of the word, he wrote, is not in its pleasant music for the ear, but that it should best express whatever exists in thoughts. Therefore the philisophy of the word or language is not in the "elimination of a suffix, such as *-nak* or *-nek*, or in the heated protection of a *y* or *j*, *o* or *u* and other superficial trifles." In this case Széchenyi condemned the heated if sometimes more pedantic than expedient linguistic debates. It should not be forgotten, however, that the linguistic polemic in general had greatly promoted the evolution of unified norms so much necessary to the bourgeois development of the nation.

One of his other important observations was the demand of the rights of the living language as against the dead one. Széchenyi branded and regarded "deserving curse" those Hungarians who impede "the most precious treasure of the homeland", the development and enrichment of Hungarian language.

It was in relation to this attitude that Széchenyi greatly appreciated the language spoken by the peasants "because it was practically only they (i.e. — the peasantry — E. A.) who were the exponent and representative of the domestic Hungarian idiom for centuries" Thus he regarded more natural the addressing form of thou and its variants than the "euphuistic addresses" by which the "higher born" honoured each other.

Finally, he criticized those who complained of not understanding Hungarian. Such people, he wrote, do not regard their mother tongue unintelligible because it has advanced, but because they have stopped. This idea was further expounded in his address to the national assembly in February, 1833: the opponents of Hungarian language are backward and in England also there was an upheaval similar to that in Hungary, when the English language was introduced in the place of Latin. There also it was said that the English would cease to be English once they cease to pass the Bills in Latin. But since they use the mother tongue, the national greatness of the English has been on the increase.³²

Returning to *Világ* it should be mentioned that Széchenyi reproached Dessewffy for misinterpreting his statements on true patriots and he also protested against the falsifications of his adversary related to the problems of nationality. Thus he regarded Dessewffy's statement according to which he does not want the Hungarians to remain Hungarians a falsification.³³

Soon after the publication of World Széchenyi began writing *Stádium* (Stage). Between these two dates a peasant rising of great importance took place in Northern Hungary, which had a decisive impact on the development of the Hungarian reform movement. The local publication of *Stádium* was prevented by the censor, thus it was brought out in 1833 in Leipzig. Széchenyi did not only criticize Hungarian feudalism in it but offered practical suggestions to the solution of the most important question, i.e. the alteration of the relationship of the nobility and the serfs. Széchenyi proposed the change of the feudal conditions by 12 Bills, the adjustment of the constitution to the spirit of the times. Modification without any outburst, the necessity of the introduction of reform proposals is apparent in the whole work. The programme items grouped around the 12 Bills remained to be the basic demands of the Hungarian reform movement in the subsequent decades as well.

This work also referred to the national integration of classes and to the inclusion of the people into the nation, but in comparison to the earlier expositions it contained several new details. Already in the preface he outlined the most important aim, the establishment of national unity. "Young and ancient, noble and not noble, Catholic and non-Catholic shake hands now and do not sacrifice the only benefit but even the very

existence of your country for your petty skirmishes." Citizen's existence should be granted to every inhabitant of Hungary, he confessed. "The establishment of every inhabitant of our country as member of the nation would definitely spread life; but the further exclusion of nine millions from it would inevitably bring death to our land. This is my true confession!" The nine millions, he expounded, are not only faithful serfs, soldiers and patient bearers of all burdens, but they are the "last pledge, hope and support of the Hungarians."

In this work he was more definite than in *Világ* in saying that one cannot speak about nation where a minority is in a privileged position and the majority has no rights. In these countries the primary task is the "creation of the nation, i.e. the accession of every inhabitant to the common properties of humanity, which is the political existence of everybody." It is in the interest of the nobility, that "the largest part" should have its political rights, this would increase internal consumption, strengthen trade, etc. One of Széchenyi's arguments for the inclusion of the people into the nation was that in the wide masses there was an "inexhaustible noble sentiment". The task, the realization of bourgeois transformation is such a huge work that "it can be done only by the awakened *national ethos and will*." In this manner Széchenyi linked bourgeois transformation to the national idea.³⁴

Széchenyi wrote his work entitled *Hunnia* between 1834 and 1835 which may be regarded the continuation of *Stádium* so far as he expounded in greater detail nine of the 12 Bills mentioned in the latter and he intended to elaborate the other three later. But only one, the 10th was detailed, in which he expounded the necessity of the introduction of the Hungarian language. *Hunnia* was written but not published at that time.

The paper first of all refuted the already mentioned nobiliary attitude that if "Latin is abolished Hungary ceases to exist." Széchenyi's other objective was to prove that the non-Hungarian peoples would not suffer disadvantages if the Hungarian language obtains its due place in the life of the country. All this, he emphasized, would result in remarkable advantages for the court and thus he pleaded the King to allow the widespread use of the Hungarian language. And if the acceptance of the Hungarian language is in the centre of the work, its analysis offered an opportunity for several important theoretical conclusions in connection with the nation.

Thus the author studied the relationship between external and internal values and the evolution of the Hungarian national characteristics in connection with the impact of Latin on the latter ones. Hungarians, he wrote, have already got rid of their Asian origin and have adopted new habits but we have not sensed, that "our beautification evolves by mortally hurting our originality and characteristics." And all is caused by Latin which has hindered the development of Hungarian culture. These inhuman fetters have kept apart the Hungarians from "the development of their God-given national originality and mother

tongue", and these shackles have isolated the Hungarians from the other living nations and have kept them "under the yoke of dead beautification... This heartless tyrant has cut into two the public interest of the nation and has thrown the tiller of the soil to the innocently despised ranks of Hungarians, while it has lifted the nobles to the primacy of Latin of stolen merit: thus while it has murdered the sweetest sentiments of sympathy which could have long united the interests of the nobility and the peasantry, it has been instilling the curse of separation into the innermost veins of the nation during the centuries." And this dead one still sucks the nation like a vampire and turns into mourning the rare flowers of striving nationality.

Széchenyi accepted the argument that Latin had its significance in its time as it had lifted the Hungarians from their once coarse state. But is the nurse useful if she keeps the baby in childhood beyond its time, or the physician if he constantly gives medicines to the healthy? It is obvious, he stated, that in these cases both the nurse and the physician are not useful but a curse. In this argument Széchenyi, in the bitter struggle against Latin had attributed an exaggerated significance to the language, and another already mentioned view of his on the eternal nature of national originality and characteristics was in connection with this. Further on he expounded that only a few peoples have "turned into nations", but the spark that is the necessary initiative of all development generally exists in the peoples.

His well-known bourgeois view was expressed in the idea that Latin used by the nobles, which differs from the living Hungarian language of the peasants, has been a hindrance in the establishment of national unity. In his struggle against Latin Széchenyi particularly attacked those Hungarians who had turned against the Hungarian language. Falsehearted ones and traitors can always be found in every nation, he wrote, but persons who have abandoned their mother tongue may only be found in Hungary. Naturally this is also an exaggeration as among the oppressed East-European peoples and the national minorities of Hungary the number of such "traitors" was legion, but Széchenyi kept primarily the leading nations in mind and in the case of the oppressed ones he did not regard this dissimulation treason. The implementation of different measurements is a typical example of the Hungarian nationalism of the period.

Széchenyi blamed the educated layer of Hungarians for the eclipse of the mother tongue. This layer has branded it with the "seal of lowliness", he wrote. "Thus it has fallen down to anterooms and stables, to the huts and the circles of the tillers of the soil; and for centuries the language of the land had lain forgotten and without purification, not honoured by men and not understood by the fair sex." Hungarians themselves despise their language, so what values may be attributed to it by others if not even the Hungarians respect it? A nation that is unable to fight for its most sacred interests, does not deserve even pity. Under such circumstances the aura of the Hungarian nation will vanish and the world's judgement on the privileged class will be that it degenerated and

effeminated, forgot its national duty and a "greater merit" of the Hungarians can be found among the "common people".

In connection with the problem of the language Széchenyi repeatedly sharply attacked "the Hungarian faults", self-love, vanity and pride. He called attention to self-examination, to a giving-up of the illusions and to the moral misery of the country.³⁵ But these faults were hardly Hungarian characteristics and Széchenyi was right as far as he kept in mind the feudal Hungarian ruling class living in crisis, but in general this was characteristic of the ruling classes of peoples living under similar conditions.

When studying the assertion of the Hungarian language the theoretical questions of the relationship with the non-Hungarian peoples were to be treated as well. Széchenyi first of all suggested that if the cause of the mother tongue did not enjoy great respect some time ago even among the Hungarians, then the non-Hungarians cannot come to respect and honour it soon. This was one of the reasons why he condemned forced Hungarianization, pressure and too early action, "work with fire and sword, and autodafés in many places." Pressure bears counter-pressure, effort bears effort, action bears reaction, he confessed. By a few characteristic strokes he drew an excellent image of the general methods of Hungarianization. Here the Rumanians listen to Hungarian sermons, he wrote, there a Hungarian master sweats away at German apprentices. From another part there is lamentation, because "the shirt was not inside the trousers or did not even extend to them in the Hungarian style, but was left loose." Elsewhere the company enjoys the entertainment mutely because only Hungarian speech is permitted, but the majority does not understand the language. "From here the heaviest curses bang against everything that is not original Hungarian." Here the Hungarian's garment is ready for the reception of the magistrate, etc. "And there is no denying that these childish constraints of the spread of our nationality occur everywhere." But this is nothing, he continued, as those who are involved are extremely irritated by this "soft headed and dull" effort which does not only hinder the spread of the Hungarian language, but makes it hateful and even may push it into ultimate danger.³⁶

Széchenyi rightly referred to the non-Hungarians who also wanted to develop their nationality and he regarded the just defence of the Slovaks, the beginnings of the linguistic struggle³⁷ as a retribution against forced Hungarianization, which had also reflected the fact that the non-Hungarian peoples of the country fight for the same national rights as the Hungarians. Thus Széchenyi, while recognizing the justness of the movements of national minorities, yet in their actual appearance he primarily saw the flames of vengeance. Similarly, when the Croats and Slovaks justly criticized the concept of 'one political nation' by mainly clearly distinguishing between the Hungarian nation and Hungary, the country of the common homeland, Széchenyi branded it as irascibility and petulence.

This contradiction in itself shows that Széchenyi supported Hungarianization. How should then this be done according to the author? He concisely and clearly summarized these methods: "We should improve our customs in unchallengeable unity, we should broaden our intellect, clarify our constitution from its feudal dirt, cultivate and embellish our mother tongue, in other words if we achieve sympathy by the sobriety of our cause." If Hungarians can make their language useful then it will spread by itself, he confessed.³⁸

In these tolerant methods there was definitely something positive, particularly if we remember that he considered the introduction of bourgeois reforms as the central component of this popularization. In the meantime the inner contradiction of the concept which made the programme unrealistic and impracticable is obvious. As we could see, Széchenyi himself acknowledged the right of the national movements of the non-Hungarian peoples; i.e. essentially that immanent law that had driven the development of all the peoples of Hungary towards bourgeois-national transformation. Under such circumstances the 'popularization' of the Hungarian nation appears to be a theoretical construction. Voluntary assimilation is hardly possible in the case of such movements the central interest of which are the national cause and the development of national identity. These methods of Hungarianization, disregarding reality, should also be criticized because they, though with refined methods, wanted to direct the non-Hungarian peoples towards giving up their nationality, i.e. into a direction which Széchenyi considered inconceivable for the Hungarians.

The homeland of the non-Hungarian peoples is outside the borders of the country in contrast to the Hungarians, Széchenyi went on arguing. Thus, we may read, if they become Hungarians their nation would not perish as their homeland would support it outside the borders of Hungary. This concept neglected the developing and deepening contacts of the nationalities of Hungary with their ethnic brothers living in the bordering countries, which was one of the important means of establishing national unity.³⁹ And efforts towards national integrity constitute an essential part of national movements and giving up these efforts is just as much inconceivable as the abandoning of the cultivation of the language or of the mother tongue.

Széchenyi's way of thinking did not take into consideration Herder's related views either, which spread widely among the national movements of non-Hungarians and regarded the language and not the country as the most important feature of the nation. A further contradiction is reflected by the fact that Széchenyi also had a view emphasizing the language as the decisive criterion of the nation, and he even stressed this in connection with the Hungarians: "what a terrible danger surrounds the handful of Hungarian people who could never stand on their feet and who have always been dependent, among their neighbours; and how much more their inevitable ruin is sure if, deprived of their language, they would be condemned to eternal silence?" Fear of the neighbours is

a constantly recurring idea with Széchenyi and he went as far as contradicting to his earlier views stating that the non-Hungarian peoples would have merged long ago had "their external focuses not constantly heated and kept them alive." This concept can hardly be accepted if we remember that in the case of the Serbians and Rumanians, due to the immeasurable weight of the Turkish rule, the situation of their compatriots living in Hungary was incomparably easier and their national consciousness consequently also stronger.

The author's idea presented here, in connection with the non-Hungarians and their nations living in the neighbourhood, led him to the conclusion that the Hungarian is the only nation which is not permitted to use its mother tongue and thus it cannot live with this unalienable right of everybody. The language of the Rumanians, he wrote, is an official language in the Rumanian principalities, the Slav language in Russia and in Serbia, Greek in new Hellas, and the German language in several countries.

We have seen that the Count had even envisaged the destruction of Hungarians. The disappearance of any nation is a loss for humanity and it is particularly so in the case of Hungarians because, he emphasized, they possess a great treasure, i.e. a free constitution and in this respect the Hungarians take advantage of all the neighbouring nations. Széchenyi expounded upon the opportunities and apparent qualities of free and slave peoples and subsequently concluded that the existence of a free constitution is in vain if the nation may not use its own language, because in this case it is farther away "from the opportunity of development than the most savage people who can freely use their mother tongue." It is worth noting that in this case Széchenyi, unlike in *Hitel* and *Stádium*, in connection with the relationship with the nationalities, was speaking about the feudal constitution as a free one, mainly because this codex of nobiliary rights had definitely guaranteed certain privileges to the Hungarian ruling class against the non-Hungarian peoples. Thus in this context certain elements of nobiliary nationalism can be observed in Széchenyi's concept as well. At the same time it cannot be forgotten either that he maintained the necessity of the inclusion of the *misera plebs* irrespective of nationality into the constitution and he stated: "national greatness cannot be achieved with folded arms, lazily, smoking a pipe or with vain dreaming and proud, clumsy knowledge".⁴⁰

A great part of the ideas expounded in *Hunnia* was expressed by Széchenyi in the debates of the Diet on the Hungarian language, i.e. *Hunnia* was being written in the same period of the speeches. If these expressions are collated it would appear that though in the speeches he did turn definitely against Latin, yet they were not so sharp as *Hunnia*, he was more tolerant and understanding with his criticism against the nobiliary concept in defence of Latin at the Diet.⁴¹

The concept of Ferenc Kölcsey

The excellent poet, politician and critic was particularly interested in the problem of the national traditions. He was the first to deal with this important theoretical question in two works in 1826. In one of them, a speech never delivered, entitled "Mohács", he argued that, as in the life of every human being, so in the life of nations there are fortunate and unfortunate days that are never forgotten. Fortunate events may bring about the blossoming forth of the nation but one can learn from the blows of fate as well. Therefore the past of the nation is similar to the life of the beloved father of which he speaks much to his children when he grows old. These reminiscences link the generations together. "National antiquity and history is so welding, so much promotes the urge of unity." One should learn about the past, "the smallest national glory" would ignite flames in the late descendants. For all nations their traditions have a great significance, and a nation that "reduces the memory of its past ages to nothing, kills its own national existence. . . . nations filled with spirit did not stick to their traditions in vain; they did not respect the history of past centuries in vain."⁴²

Kölcsey's other work already carries this important criterion of bourgeois national development in the title. In the centre of the paper on aesthetics emphasising the significance of national traditions the idea appears that Hungarian poetry would become national if it returned to popular poetry and drew strength from there. It is not difficult to realize that both the former and the latter have their childhood, youth and manhood, followed by the decay of old age. The youth of nations is a semi-savage state and this is exactly the period that gives originality to the nations. This national, heroic age leaves behind and moulds the national traditions which are in close contact with the national poetry. Where there is no ancient tradition there is no national poetry either.

Along his literary analysis Kölcsey inevitably touched upon the criteria of nation and pointed out the close connection between national character and national language with the help of examples taken from universal history. He found that the Hungarian national traditions are considerably mutilated and he was not satisfied with the mere statement but was trying to find the causes of impoverishment as well. Were there no outstanding deeds of Hungarians? But this possibility he immediately dropped and referred to the originality and antiquity of the Hungarian language, to the glorious fact of the Conquest. Did the 'nation' not think of transmitting its deeds to the successors? — he continued. This cannot be said either, he emphasized, as the activities of the bards and all those songs are known which praise the old deeds of the 'nation'. It is possible then, that the long distance in time, the "storms upsetting the status" may have pushed the traces of the heroic age into oblivion, but it may be attributed to "the sinful estrangement of the grandchildren towards the memories of antiquity, nationality, and patriotism." It is difficult to decide, he continued, but it is a positive fact that lately the Hungarians

do not pay homage to the memory of the heroic past. Does not all this show, the author asked "that we lack national enthusiasm and the traditions of the heroic age of the nation have found their grave in the sinful estrangement of our bosom?"

In connection with the Hungarian national tradition, Kölcsey dealt with the 'melancholy' national character of Hungarians and he stressed that this may not only be the result of slavery but also of the depth of emotions. It is difficult to classify whether this melancholy character is an ancient feature of Hungarians or is of later origin. In Kölcsey's writings the poor Hungarian outlaw and the concept of the glorious nation are frequently linked together: "Compare the two, pass through the alternating centuries of glory and ill fate in your soul and you will see what light and darkness embrace painfully in our national sentiment. Who would not see that such a mixture cannot bear but sentimentalism?" This sentimentalism essentially differs from the romantic, amorous character. And with this Kölcsey expressed his *ars poetica*, his lyric poetry also reflected this patriotic sentimentalism.

It is worth noting that by analysing the Hungarian character Kölcsey stressed that Christianity, politics and sciences have brought the Hungarians much closer to their European neighbours, but their constitution, language and customs also greatly distinguish the Hungarians from the others. "Thus it happened that they have adopted several European colours while retaining several non-European ones, but these latter ones were far more obvious only half a century ago, than now..." the poet acknowledged with some pain.

Thus Kölcsey reached his main message: one should turn towards the songs of the people which have retained their originality and the "original spark of true national poetry" should be sought in them.⁴³ The author's pain felt about the disappearance of the ancient characteristics shows some relationship with nobiliary nationalism. But there is also a fundamental difference between the two concepts: while Kölcsey was seeking the ancient characteristics of the nation in the songs of the people, feudal nationalism was strengthening the backwardness and conservatism of the nobility with the ancient traditions. And even though there were ideas in Kölcsey's essay that did not pass the test of time (on national character, on the age of nations) even these digressions had strengthened the emerging bourgeois national ideology. While the study of national traditions present Kölcsey as a supporter of bourgeois ideas, it should not be forgotten either that some typical features and arguments of nobiliary nationalism occasionally appear in his works. In his fragment on the history of philosophy entitled "Magyar" (Hungarian) he spoke about "popular peculiarities" that had evolved at the time of the Conquest and which are the "fountain of nationality". In his poem entitled "Tisztújítás" (Re-election of Officials) written in September 1832, he commemorated the nobility electing the officials of the country as the "free people". One year later, in October 1833 he sent a letter of thanks to the Estates of Szatmár county and here similarly he mentioned the nobility as the

"free nation". Or, in September 1837 in his speech delivered at the session of Szatmár county he regarded the freedom of speech of the nobles as a "national right" deriving from the nobiliary constitution, which was offended by the Government in Bars county.⁴⁴

Similarly to Széchenyi, Kölcsey, as a deputy of the Diet, frequently dealt with the matter of the Hungarian language, and he also raised some theoretical problems of the language as the decisive criterion of the nation. On the 40th anniversary of the reign of Francis I he stated that the Hungarians had learned during those decades "that in our language we possess not only sounds that differ from other languages but also strength, that is the sole support of our existence."

The following lines were noted down in his diary of the Diet on January 22, 1833, when the Hungarian peers rejected the demand of the petition and bill written in Hungarian. An Englishman passing through Pozsony at the time of the Diet of 1825 said with consternation: "Sirs, your freedom is a ridicule. You fight that you may express yourselves by your own words! And what savage people are not given this right by nature itself? And what is it that is denied this right?" Thus Kölcsey, attributing it to an Englishman, expressed Herder's idea which was generally accepted among the non-Hungarian peoples as well.

In those days Kölcsey worded several messages of the Lower House addressed to the Upper House and in them he referred to the ancient features of the Hungarian language and to the glorious past in order to persuade the magnates to accept the rights of the language. He did not only use arguments typical of feudal nationalism but he utilized the well known bourgeois ideas as well. Thus he referred to that Herderian view, according to which the soul is only in a living body and this holds true for the language as well.

A similar bourgeois argument can be found in his speech of early March 1833, in which he, answering to the peers, stressed the democratic element in the demand for the Hungarian language. The peers want to make such a "sacred language" of Latin, he said, "which would separate them from the crowds. Or, are they afraid of democracy if the mother-tongue is lifted?" With this he practically challenged the right of the small number of peers of vetoing the resolutions of the Lower House representing the majority of the nobility.

The message in answer to the peers was also written in those days. In this justification of the spread of Hungarian language and the necessity of its use, natural and historical rights jointly appear. "Availing ourselves of the unlimited use of the language of the country" Kölcsey wrote, "thus one of the most important natural rights is at stake; and to aim at it, to follow it constantly with not averted glance, is an indispensable requirement of patriotism and nationalism." One can drive away the nation from its land, he continued, but settling down in another country it still remains a nation. A nation deprived of its language, however, ceases to live. The ancestors of Hungarians, having left their earlier

homeland "had created a new home here because bringing with them the language they had brought with it the country and the nation." The language is a great treasure and it is dear twice as it was threatened during the reign of Joseph II, thus it is only natural that the nation is attached to this treasure with deep love "on the heritage of its forefathers, which has been preserved from the storms of centuries by miraculous divine providence!"⁴⁵

Apart from the language Kőlcsey also dealt with the concept and definition of the homeland and patriotism several times. In "Mohács" he expounded against cosmopolitanism saying that even animals search a place for themselves where they retire after their daily wanderings; "would the gravest curse of destiny only lie with man: that he has to be a wanderer all over the hiding star and be everywhere, only to remain an alien everywhere?" The person who does not feel happier "in the narrow circle of his household" than elsewhere, cannot be attracted towards humanity with pure, sacred sentiment. And the homeland is nothing else than a big household. "All such households are kept together or separated by their own language, habits, ancestors, traditions, good and ill luck." An important feature of the homeland is the common past which is either neglected faithlessly by the late descendants or "a richly flourishing national life" develops from it.

As God created one chest for the heart, continued Kőlcsey in his exposition on the homeland, similarly He has given one country to a man. Nobody can be strong who has no objective, therefore everybody has to work for his own country, has to concentrate all his love and strength on the country. A single person cannot die for the whole world and humanity, he can sacrifice his life only for the people of his household, of his country as a mortal heart cannot endure a greater one. And the homeland may be tiny, but the devotion to it cannot depend on its size. In Kőlcsey's patriotism there was the love of that home, country, and land which was sprinkled with the blood of heroes. Later, on the basis of the experience of sympathy and support for the Polish rising of 1830-1831, Hungarian patriotism was given international dimensions.

Active patriotism was an important part of Széchenyi's concept and it occurred frequently in Kőlcsey's writings as well. In his diary of the Diet he raised the question for himself on December, 13, 1832: does he do everything for the country, does he have the courage to face obstacles, would he be able to bear ingratitude and lack of understanding which he has to take into account in the service of the country? To this active patriotism he could repeatedly draw strength from the example of such heroes like Hunyadi, Szondi and the Zrinyis. A few days later, on the 27th he wrote in his diary that patriotism had always been linked to ideal images with him and his disillusionment was particularly great when he participated in the district sessions of the Diet. "And days pass", we may read, "...and you still require of me to stand here enthusiastic and deliver inflammatory speeches to you until you surround me with icy cold, waiting for your turn?"

The image of the homeland appeared to him later on as well, and if his struggles at the Diet are kept in mind, it is not surprising that he also expressed himself in a tone of despair. The homeland, he wrote, "is a crumbling castle above another shore! Anytime, but not now! — Homeland and you crumbling walls, when will you stand sound and whole?" All this, however, had driven him to action.

These ideas, deep patriotism and the necessity of action were linked in his poems as well. He wrote the following into a keepsake album:

"My message is of four words, remember them well and pass them on to your son when you expire: **THE HOMELAND COMES FIRST.**"

In another writing of his of epigrammatic nature we may read the following:

"All careers are glorious if they shed light on your homeland.

Learn to struggle and win. You have to struggle and win for your homeland."*

It is only natural that patriotism based on this deep sentiment and active behaviour could not neglect the criteria of nobiliary nationalism manifested in formalities. And in reality there are several comments in his diary of the Diet on the topic.⁴⁶

Kölcsey's manifestations on the country so far discussed do not always reveal whether under the term *patria* he meant the nobiliary homeland, and under *nation* the feudal only, or he included the working people into the concept of the homeland and nation. The unambiguous answer is given by his diary of the Diet. On December 20, 1832 he described with sympathy Széchenyi's 'liberal' ideas, which were not understood by many who had an aversion from them. "Széchenyi", "had said many nice things about the good consequences of propriety, of the extension of the constitution to the whole people."⁴⁷

From that time onwards this bourgeois idea can be frequently found in his diary of the Diet, which was no more a piece of information but reflected his passionate attitude. On January 11, 1833 he again dealt with patriotism and the idea was raised in connection with the event that the royal proposals presented to the Diet had altered the already accepted agenda and placed before commerce the matter of statute labour**, i.e. the agricultural problem. This greatly surprised the lower House and even the opposition. This change did not suit the nationalism of Hungarian nobility. One should remember Dessewffy's *Taglalat*, the concept of which, in contrast to that of Széchenyi was that the basic issue was the development of commerce and not the solution of the problem of serfdom. The deputies, and in the beginning even the opposition did not see what the plans were behind this alteration. Actually the Court expected to

* close prose rendering of the verses (the transl.)

** The author uses a latinized Hungarian word, i.e. *urbarium*, which is a typically feudal term, meaning the regulation of the duties of serfs. In the English rendering the narrower term "statute labour" is used for convenience's sake. (the transl.)

turn the people against the nobility with this change because the nobility, in accordance with its nationalist concept, would stick to the original order and because of the heated debates that would ensue around the problems of trade, the bill standing on the second place, in statute labour would not be passed either. In this case the people might be convinced that it is just the Hungarian nobility in opposition to the Court which hinders the improvement of the position of the peasantry. The policy of contrasting the nobility and the peasantry, i.e. *divide et impera*, had been a well working method of the Court and was duly corresponding to its policy on the national minorities. The Austrian Government followed the same pattern later on as well, when it could claim the bloodiest 'success' in 1846, at the time of the Galician rising.

The majority of the opposition fell into the trap at first and the district session had passed the resolution that the discussion of the matter on statute labour should be preceded by the debate on commerce. But the liberal deputies under the leadership of Wesselényi decided for the primacy of the bill on statute labour at the national session on January 12, and after a heated debate the bill on statute labour got to the first place with a marginal majority of one or two votes.⁴⁸

After this necessary deviation Kőlcsey's entry in his diary on patriotism can be understood. Patriotism, he confessed, if it is nothing else, but opposition to the government, i.e. if the agricultural question cannot be separated from it, in that case patriots stand by commerce. But if patriotism is synonymous with the "straight, pure, warm attraction" towards the homeland and its sons, then patriots stand by the agricultural question. "To settle the subject of the statute labour in a manner," he wrote, "that at last the masses of working people should enter into the bourgeois constitution and by which the constitution should win, instead of seven hundred thousand souls debased by poverty and effemination, ten millions capable of ascending: this is such an idea that could occur only in a person who dearly loves his country." And the poet added quite justly that many had voted for the primacy of the matter of statute labour because this order was proposed by the Court and these deputies represented the view: render unto Caesar that is due to Caesar.

One day later the matter of patriotism again occupied Kőlcsey's mind in connection with the same question. And now he firmly turned against that nobiliary nationalist view which linked patriotism to opposition by all means. "This is an infallible compass, my dear friends! According to it we may always know — he said with justified irony — what should be denied? And as patriotism being a negation, we should never lose that way." Thus, those who voted for the primacy of the agricultural question are not patriots, but followers of the Court; and those who think in this manner make a great mistake! Kőlcsey pointed out how significant is the difference between the attitude of the Government and of the constitution, as the latter ones are the true patriots: "Because by the matter of statute labour the Government wants statute labour, whereas Wesselényi and the others want a nation by it..."

Kölcsey also reported the nature of the debate and voting on the question of protecting the tax-paying serf against the arbitrariness of the powerful ones. The conservatives saw the burial of the constitution in the partial victory of the liberals. In this context the author wrote in his diary the following on June 21, 1833: why should the constitution be lost "because the privileged few thousands cannot anymore beat 24 on the unprivileged millions. It must be stated that this is a great deterioration of the constitution if the constitution only consists of the right of beating. As far as I am concerned I have to declare with all the simplicity of my soul that I am no friend to the constitution of the stick, neither to the constitution of the prison."

In his speech delivered on November 10, 1834 on the matter of voluntary manumission compensation Kölcsey expressed again the bourgeois idea of including the people into the nation. What are the landlords protected by from the fury of the peasantry, is that perhaps the executioner's sword and rope? All this is only miserable means, the true link is joint interest which links the members of the nation to the country with equal strength "and this interest consists of two words: *freedom and property*." All this is needed because all the burdens are carried by the people and they have to defend the country as well "though he has no homeland, he is not linked to the country by any interest, because we do not allow him to have property."

In his farewell address to the Diet Kölcsey effectively summarized his activities on February 9, 1835: "Our slogans have been: *homeland and progress*. Those who want stillness instead of progress should think it over as the word stillness has several meanings. The up-to-date progress means survival and motionlessness brings about decay."

A few years later, in the poem written in 1838 and antititled "Rebellis vers" (Rebel's poem) he expressed more sharply the closely knit concept of homeland and progress, of national independence and bourgeois transformation, than previously at the Diet:

"Zrínyi's blood washed Vienna
Yet no one took revenge:
Rákóczi fought for our land,
And met his death with the Turks.
Paris promised us freedom
But you did not take it,
You deserve yokes, coward people
And curses of what's remaining."^{49*}

The demand of establishing national integration was based on the inclusion of the people into the nation in the case of Kölcsey as well, which, as we have seen in Széchenyi's ideas, meant the leading role of the nobility: people should be made interested in matters of the country

* Rough translation (the transl.)

by giving equal rights to them, by lifting and bringing them behind the trenches of the constitution. The union of interests, as an order of history, had undoubtedly carried in itself some realistic possibilities of the temporary alliance between the nobility growing bourgeois and the peasantry.

In the speech already referred to and entitled "Mohács", the poet argued for the country common for the peasant and the master with common historical past, which naturally meant pushing the class interests of the peasants into the background. What else could link the Hungarians together, he wrote, than the common days of joy and sorrow of the ancestors, "because where the ancestor of the master of the palaces was victorious or died, there the ancestor of the inhabitants of huts was also victorious or died. Such memory has universal appeal to all hearts. Rank and property are owned by some; but everybody shares the name of the nation and the country." This was expressed in a poetic form by him in the following line (1833):

"The aim is national light. To achieve it, Hungarian people, unite."

In this year he wrote in his diary of the Diet (January 11) that 'castes' and separating walls should be pulled down within the nation and instead of separation the strength of the nation should be sought in unity.

It is known from the diary of the Diet that at that time Kőlcsey was also preoccupied with the theoretical problems of the unity of interests. And all this was related to the problem set for the Diet, i.e. the matter of statute labour. On January, 21 he wrote, that in Hungary "under the title of popular interest" at least three different interests exist, "on which we cannot as yet reach a compromise or merge the three into one and we do not really want to do so, they are the interests of the nobility, the bourgeoisie and the peasantry." The first, he wrote, struggles with the Court for its constitutional rights and suppresses the second while it "keeps below itself the third". The second, i.e. the bourgeoisie "bows its head in front of the Court and wrangles with the nobility." The third, i.e. the interests of the peasantry have not yet been worded in their totality. And until the nobility "does not take the serf as a brother to fight together with, instead of patronizing him", the Court, in accordance with its well-known policy, can pretend to be the guardian of peasant interests. This, explained Kőlcsey, would attract some humanistic nobles to the side of the Court who should link the interests of the nation with that of the peasantry instead.

In his entry of January 30 the author analysed the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry and first of all raised the following question: what is the reason that while liberalism and the opposition in Europe "lives in town", with us this layer comes from the non-baronial group of the nobility. And as the bourgeoisie saw that its place was taken by the nobility in the Diet and they had no common interest with the nobles as a "privileged class", it timidly stepped back and began to look towards the Court in its difficult position." The situation of the bourgeoisie elsewhere — and here Kőlcsey again thought of Western

Europe — differs from the one in Hungary that there it had found the nobility in the upper House and in alliance with the Court and thus the bourgeoisie represented the opposition and liberalism.⁵⁰

Kölcsey's present analysis on the characteristics of the conditions here was surprisingly adequate (the weakness of Hungarian bourgeoisie, the significant role of the lesser nobility). But he neglected the number of common interests of the nobility taking to bourgeois ways and of the weak Hungarian bourgeoisie. It is because Kölcsey turned his attention towards the patrician bourgeoisie and forgot about the majority of the German and Jewish bourgeoisie in Hungary which did not support the Court but the Hungarian national movement.

The views of Miklós Wesselényi in his 'Balítéletekről' (On Prejudices)

This work was already complete in 1831 but it was published only two years later and outside the borders of the country. As the title of the work itself shows, the author's objective was the criticism of the attitude of the nobility. One can serve the country best, he explained, if the 'wrong ideas and faulty views' are refuted. These prejudices cover the whole of economic and political life, of the relationship with the serfs and of social contact. A whole series of prejudices separate the various layers, classes and peoples of Hungary, he explained. To despise other nations is also a characteristic prejudice. Several wrong notions can be found in connection with the ancient traditions as well. It is worth noting that Wesselényi was anxious about the Hungarian constitution because of the Court and the loyal aristocrats and this anxiety was not unjustified. Such an exposition of the country served the purpose of making his moderate bourgeois-national proposals acceptable for the lesser nobility. These 'prejudices against the homeland' touching upon the constitution were summarized by him in five items. It is said, he wrote, that the Hungarian constitution has no guarantee, that it is not in the liberal spirit, it does not meet the demands of the age, that it cannot be improved as any alteration would upset the whole and finally it is because of the resolutions of the constitution that industry and commerce do not develop, there is neither money, nor credit. No doubt these views of the author indicate traces of nobiliary nationalism with him as well, as he saw in the constitution, and not without any basis, one of the safeguards of Hungarian independence, which in this respect can be filled with bourgeois content.

At the same time Wesselényi's sharp criticism should not be forgotten either, in which he sided with the peasantry against several institutions of serfdom codified in the nobiliary constitution (corporal punishment, house tax, the arbitrariness of the officials of the counties, etc.). He condemned with harsh words that the serfs were bound to the soil and considered it a "loathsome monstrosity" of humanity, "which is a miserable dirt of the history of the race, lasting for several centuries among us to the greatest disgrace of the best moral and Christian emotions."

Thus Wesselényi, when he protected the nobiliary constitution he expressly stated that its greatest shame is the condification of the lack of all rights of the peasantry "and I consider it just as dangerous", he wrote, "as it hurts the truly cultured and meek human sentiment."

The liberal politician, in his intention to improve the constitution, considered necessary and justified the role of the opposition, but he also expressed his loyalty towards the monarch, though mainly because of tactical reasons. The relationship of his reform programme with the constitution was summarized by him in the following: "I deem necessary and strongly desire eminent improvement in keeping with the spirit of time and with our situation, but only by lawful way, building the new always on the magnificent foundations of our ancient constitution."⁵¹

Wesselényi also attributed importance to the presentation of the shortcomings of the nation even though it is criticized by many. It is better if the Hungarians themselves speak about their faults because foreigners are often led by 'angry soul', the consequence of which is abuse and vituperation. The baron was against flattery and a phenomenon related to it: saving the nation from the frank disclosure of its faults. At the same time Wesselényi expounded that "the Hungarian nation is the hard offspring of strong parents" who had outstanding national characteristics but ill fate had thrown it into adversity, "had given to it coarse and tricky step-parents who, together with external damage and internal disease hindered its development; it had been suffering under these burdens and frequently appeared in the shape of old age though it has not yet reached the age of strong youth."

These ideas show several similarities to Széchenyi's views. The direct impact of *Hitel* may be taken into account, but primarily the close and warm friendship between Széchenyi and Wesselényi and their common travels abroad should be kept in mind. Due to this close relationship the regular discussion of the problems preoccupying both of them can also be inferred. Thus the similar ideas could be the products of discussion.

The nationalist attitude of blind love for the country and contempt of the achievements of other peoples occur in Széchenyi's as well as Wesselényi's writings. And in this respect passages of almost entirely similar wording can be found e.g. in the condemnation of the concept of 'Extra Hungariam...'. In Wesselényi's writings a new element is the analysis of the remarks despising the virtues of other nations. These, he explained, mainly derive from ignorance and an unfamiliarity with the life of other peoples. At the same time he also condemned those who imitate things foreign, no matter whether good or bad.

In connection with the contempt of other nations Wesselényi sharply attacked Hungarian bias when judging the national characteristics. He considered it a prejudice, that in Hungary many regarded only the Hungarians decent, honest and brave. "Just as among us, alas! there are quite a lot of deceitful and double-hearted people, so among the other nations one could find people who are virtuous and deserve respect." Wesselényi emphasized that the Hungarians should utilize better their aptitudes and

opportunities in the fields of physical skill, sciences, crafts and arts in order to overcome their backwardness.

Wesselényi found his way easily among these frequently occurring questions. We may completely agree with his attitude that "the characterization of nations e.g. that the Spanish are proud, the English are grave, the French are heedless, etc. "is too much simplified. "These spiritual features" he wrote, are also misleading. "There is no such nation which would consist only of proud, grave, heedless, or good and brave people; there are people from this sort or the opposite everywhere, I have seen so lazy and sluggish French that it was difficult for the earth to carry them; — but I have seen rather heedless Englishmen also."⁵²

Wesselényi was also preoccupied by the question of what makes the nations rich. And his answer also corresponds to Széchenyi's views in several aspects. Wesselényi, as it can be found in *Hitel* as well, regarded the 'culture of the strength of mind' to be the source of richness. And in stressing the importance of culture the author went beyond Széchenyi and regarded this criterion quite one-sidedly as the 'sole source' of getting richness. Wesselényi explained that a country may be rich in minerals, may have fertile soil, yet "beside all these blessings it would remain poor if it has no culture and beautification". Favourable national characteristics cannot be causes of the acquisition of wealth by the nation "because the germs of the best characteristics remain undeveloped if the soil of the nations is kept frozen by the icy breath of the lack of culture, ignorance or oppression." A favourable political situation, good laws and constitution cannot alone make a nation wealthy. Wesselényi is right in the fundamental idea that the material richness of the country and the good qualities of a nation, are already the consequences of the given economic and social conditions, and are by themselves insufficient to favourable development. It is worth noting that the author had correctly referred to the spirit of the age in connection with the development of the nation as it presses its stamp on the latter.

Wesselényi studied in general the criteria of the freedom and independence of nations in close connection with the problem of their growing richness. A nation is free only, he confessed, if it can work and move about freely. And this free work is inspired by the desire to meet its requirements, to achieve its wishes, to fulfil its expectations and longings. If it has no opportunity and aptitude for all this, "then there is no real free movement but the limbs are burdened by chains and it is followed by the stiffening of death and not of labour, and by the silence of languish." And the connection between the two ideas becomes clear when the author expounds that an ignorant and coarse nation is poor as well, "the poor is weak, the weak is servile and a prey to the powerful ones. According to the eternal law of proportions the weak would always be subjected to the strong."

It is not difficult to recognize behind these general explications of Wesselényi the allusions to the Hungarian conditions. And though the author was loyal to the Austrian monarch in many respects, his ideas

expressed on the freedom and independence of the nation sharply criticized the policy of the Austrian government is Hungary.

The author had linked culture with nationality. This idea can be found in Széchenyi's writings as well. Thus Wesselényi, while earlier dealing with universal beautification, later he also expounded that he only hopes for the happiness of Hungary by "the intellectual education and spread of the nationality." And enthusiasm towards the homeland and its laws was regarded by him to be the main sustaining force of the nation.

Thus we reach the matter of patriotism and patriotic education about which one can frequently read in his work. It was he who had made a survey of the phenomena of unpatriotism and consciously aimed at the weeding off of these prejudices as he had put it. Thus Wesselényi was among the first to indicate the trend of a patriotic bourgeois education.

He defined patriotism. First of all similarly to Széchenyi and in stressing the importance of the motherland there is some affinity of his views with those of Kölcsey: "The most natural and sweetest emotion is the attachment of the homeland, the love of the motherland; and patriotism deriving from the acknowledgement of sacred duties, built on this love is the source of most of the beauties and good things, which alone refines beastly man into glorious moral being..."

Wesselényi found that the introduction of the country and the deepening of patriotism do not obtain their proper place in the education of children and the youth in Hungary. Whereas it would be necessary from early childhood that the children would come to know their country and its history on the level of their mental development. If this were done then there would be neither "stupid prejudices, nor the weed of unpatriotism" in Hungary. But instead several duties are dinned into the ears of the youth which they cannot perform... and they are taught about their duties towards the sensible and senseless animals, insects and even towards the angels, but what are the duties towards the country? Do they exist at all? The youth would rarely hear these even mentioned during his whole school career."

Upon leaving school the impressive youth gets into various companies where most frequently the unpatriotic mood prevails; this is followed by Wesselényi's account on the unfavourable impact of such, mainly nobiliary circles where the youth can hardly hear Hungarian speech, or expressions of the national sentiment. Instead he has to listen to a ridiculing of everything, "a mockery of all that belongs to the country and even of patriotism." In such circles not a single wise word can be heard, boring and insignificant things are spoken about, and it is only the ignorance of the persons present or their prejudice that is darker than the smoke of the ones reclining on the sofa with their pipe. Ribald jokes, pointless laughters, humbling of women characterize the atmosphere. And the country is primarily regarded "as a field where their fertile meadows are situated and they estimate and know the country only by their own estates." They are not interested in public affairs and if a scientific topic occurs they exhibit deep ignorance.

Wesselényi strongly condemned the indifference of the nobility and encouraged them to active patriotism with sharp and true words: "If the serf and common man do not pay their tax properly for the public good and the needs of the country it is forcibly extracted from them; if he wants to exempt himself of military service needed for the defence of the country and he tries to stand aloof, he is obliged by the rope, getting rid of the public burden is not allowed by the stick." On the other hand, if the Hungarian noble sacrifices part of his income to the country, helps to share its burdens, this is an event of great significance, but as this phenomenon is rather rare, it may be regarded as a serious merit. Thus the author encouraged the service of the public interests emphasizing that instead of force honesty and noble sentiments should promote patriotic activity. So Wesselényi refused compulsion in the service of the country and after the improvement of the situation of the serfs he considered voluntary activity as the form of true patriotism besides the nobility even in the case of the oppressed.⁵³

The author also criticized nobiliary nationalism and correctly defined the criteria of nobiliary freedom. He sharply attacked that nobiliary attitude that "many imagine our nice, legal freedom and our whole national existence to be summarized in *that the Hungarian noble does not pay anything and is not supposed to carry any burden.*" With this view Wesselényi stood for the inclusion of the people and for granting them equal rights. True freedom is primarily expressed by the measure how far the members of the nation can influence the management of the national affairs. Second among the criteria of national freedom there is the service of the nation, i.e. duties towards it beside the rights. Thirdly real freedom contains another important right: everybody should be given the opportunity to carry on an occupation that helps his advancement and economic progress. "Where any reason may completely exclude a *part of the society* from the opportunities of acquiring wealth by work and industry, and the hard way of the enrichment of others is barred, there the life of the whole republic will only be withering and will turn to early old age." These lines again show that the author, similarly to Széchenyi and Kölcsey, wanted to make the broad masses interested in the service of the country and the nation by guaranteeing their rights.

In connection with this view, similarly to his fellow combatants, Wesselényi also dealt with the necessity of the establishment of national integrity. In accordance with his concept he spoke about those prejudice that hinder the realisation of this alliance and he called these wrong notions "prejudices against birth and bourgeois position". The aristocrats, he wrote, despise everybody who have on sheepskin, though its possession is not related to the merits of the owners. It is also ridiculous "to show off with the old family, great background, and brilliant ancestors."

"The most shocking and most dangerous" among these prejudices, the author said, is manifested against the peasantry. A great part of the nobility looks at the serfs with contempt and pride, "some believe that the serfs' situation is quite good and really just, some do not want any

change in this matter, or regard it unnecessary, dangerous or unaccomplishable." Wesselényi bravely criticized the magnates who "heartlessly waste their immense income acquired by the sweat of their serfs", who prodigiously spend money in their whole life and do not sacrifice a penny for public affairs. Between the aristocrats and the lesser nobility there are also several prejudices nurtured by both sides. Thus the lesser nobility is to blame for their hatred against the aristocrats, or that they cringe before the magnates.

There are also several prejudices against the bourgeoisie in the country. The nobility, together with the magnates look down upon this "medium Estate", they despise and feel that commerce is beneath them, though, he wrote, without it the nations cannot become rich, great and cultured. The nobles are wrong also because among the bourgeoisie culture is on an unusually high level and they have a refined practical sense. As a consequence, he stated, though surveying only the superficial phenomena, bourgeoisie in Hungary is of foreign origin.

Among the peasants there are also several prejudices, he found. The serf regards his landlord only as his tormentor, he has no confidence and trust in the master. And though the author is not surprised at it, he still considered the creation of unity between the nobility and the serfs to be of outstanding importance. It is a pity, he felt, that the "gap" between these two Estates "keeps on eternally growing, the wounds fester, and being separated, they remain weak though it would be so necessary for them to hold hands for their own benefit or common activities and they would be strong if united. This is quite a big barrier in the intellectual and material development of the country, which could be achieved only by the united effort of all the Estates of the population." The key to the change is in the hands of the nobility: they should stop the merciless and "very rarely" just treatment and arbitrariness.

Prejudice between the magnates and the other nobles is particularly dangerous for the country as it is illustrated by the Diets. Unity among the nobles can be achieved by the cultivation of the nationality and by the maintenance of the constitution.

The consequences of the prejudices against the bourgeoisie are not less harmful either. The bourgeoisie hates the nobles who despise them. "They are disinterested towards a constitution that gives them so little, whereas so many rights to the nobles and it is rather a means of their oppression than of their protection." At the same time he blames the bourgeoisie for keeping in view only their own interest and for not feeling to be a part of the nation. This apparent contradiction intended to lay down the basis for the compromise necessary to the establishment of national unity. Wesselényi's view on the bourgeoisie was similar to that of Kölesey and was characterized by the already mentioned onesidedness.

The author sensed with sharp eye several characteristic features of the contradictions of classes and layers and in the interest of the establishment of national unity he made several proposals deserving attention. His brave analysis of the situation saw without doubt that unity can be

of brief duration only and Wesselényi, together with his contemporaries wanted to see this integration on firm foundations.

A further major obstacle in the way of unity is the prejudice among the peoples of various nationalities and religious denominations. This is a great danger, he expounded, and it is practically impossible to eliminate all, it can be done only by "the homeland, a bourgeois constitution and an equal enthusiasm towards the law. And it can only be achieved if the blessings of the nationality and bourgeois constitution are equally spread to people of all languages, religion and origin and that there should not be a single one above the others and favoured to their disadvantage, and that not a single one should be treated adversely."

Thus Wesselényi was the first to clearly and unambiguously state the liberal objectives of the policy on nationalities of the Hungarian nobility on the way of bourgeois development: the granting of bourgeois rights to the non-Hungarian peoples. It is true that the idea occurred in Széchenyi's writings as well, but he did not express them so definitely.

In the interest of the establishment of unity, Wesselényi pursued his earlier method and criticized the parties opposed to each other. He criticized the Hungarians because they were liable to mock at or despise those whose mother tongue was not Hungarian; "they honour them with several ornate epithetons" such as "savage Serbian, crafty German, ram Saxon, open-mouthed Swabian, wild bee Wallachian, etc." It is true, he pursued the idea, that the Hungarians are the real "masters of the house", but the others are not "wandering incomers", they are also part of our national existence, they avail themselves of the advantages of the civil constitution and bear its burdens." Even if a considerable amount of tolerance may be observed in this exposition, (the national minorities were of the opinion too, that they had also made sacrifices for the common homeland), yet the nobiliary nationalist argument of the historical right had also found its place in it.

Wesselényi blamed the non-Hungarians for their independent national ambitions and in this respect also we may hear of ideas similar to those of Széchenyi. The Saxons aim at promoting the development of their nation, the Slavs (i.e. Slovaks) isolate themselves, as this was the exaggerated but characteristic attitude of the Hungarian nobiliary opinion; the Serbians and Rumanians "remain in their own nationality" and hate the other nations, the Croats jealously defend their autonomy and enthusiastically stick to their own language. In fact all of them should consider, the author warned, that never a "Saxon country, a Slovak Empire, Serbian or Wallachian national existence, and a Croatian Kingdom by its own strength would exist and that it is only the Hungarian nationality under the aegis of which all of them may flourish in freedom." This idea is nothing else than the well-known concept of the 'single political nation' which, in the case of Wesselényi, but others as well, was linked with the liberal idea of the inclusion of non-Hungarians into the constitution.

Keeping in view all this, Wesselényi's exposition on prophecying great future to the Hungarians if they succeed in eliminating the prejudices among

the peoples of the country and in creating cooperation for the benefit of the land, cannot be regarded anything more but a benevolent desire with little hope of realization. "If all nationalities would adjust their good and expedient qualities (which all of them have plenty in this or that respect) and would burn the opposite and hostile ones on the altar of the homeland." These were words deserving attention and sincerely wishing an appeasement with the non-Hungarian peoples. Unfortunately similar ones were hardly expressed and if they can be met with at all, the concrete analysis, as also in the case of Wesselényi, reflected increasing antagonisms and was less suited for the establishment of even a transitory unity. The latter was hindered not only by the nationalism of the Hungarian nobility, but by that of the ruling and leading classes of the national minorities.

The Transylvanian noble sensitively reacted to religious conflicts, to "this dangerous contagion" as well, for which examples were offered by the past centuries. In this field he did not see the possibility of an early solution, therefore he left it for the time and "developing wisdom."⁵⁴

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In the 1840s the general explanation of the bourgeois concept of the nation, presented here, did not change, only some new and more advanced formulations of liberal ideas occurred. The economic criterion of the bourgeois nation came into the foreground, the concept of the obligatory manumission compensation developed which represented a more advanced level of liberal views. On the basis of these practical principles the liberation of serfs took place in Hungary ultimately in the spring of 1848.

The plebeian elements appeared also in this decade who meant under the inclusion of the people into the nation much more than the liberals, they emphasized more markedly the lack of the rights of the people and saw the way out more clearly, thus intending to build national unity on a safer soil.

NOTES

- ¹ This question is dealt with in detail by *Ágnes Várkonyi* in her paper "A nemzet, a haza fogalma a török harcok és a Habsburg-ellenes küzdelmek idején (1526–1711)" (The concept of the nation and homeland during the struggles against the Turks and the Habsburgs [1526–1711]). In: *A magyar nacionalizmus kialakulása és története* (The development and history of Hungarian nationalism) (Budapest, 1964), pp. 27–68.
- ² *Lajos Schedius*, *A nemzetiségről* (On nationality) *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1817 (1) pp. 57–61.; *Antal Gömbös*, *A nemzetiségről* (On nationality), *op. cit.*, 1819 (11) pp. 43–64.
- ³ *József Hajnóczy*, *A magyar országgyűlésen javasolandó törvények lényege. Közjogi-politikai munkái* (The essence of the bills to be motioned at the Hungarian Diet. Constitutional-political works) Ed. by *Andor Csizmadia* (Budapest, 1958), p. 70.; *Ignác Martinovics*, *Oratio ad proceres et nobiles regni Hungariae 1770–1791; Monitum ad hungaricos (1793); Status regni Hungariae anno 1792; Entwurf einer neuen für Ungarn bestimmten Konstitution (1793); Cathecismus occultae scietatis reformatorem in Hungaria (1794)*. The works of Martinovics quoted here were edited by *Kálmán Benda*, *A magyar jakobinusok iratai* (Papers of the Hungarian Jacobins) (Budapest, 1957), pp. 117–149, 916–921, 1015–1036, 777, 898, 1010–1015.

- ⁴ An early concept of the single political nation was raised by *Count József Dessewffy*, an ardent supporter of the Hungarian national movement in paper written in 1808, but it survived only in a copy from 1816: Egy-két szó a magyar nyelv és literatura közzétételéről a hazában (A few words on the publicity of the Hungarian language and literature in the homeland) Manuscript Coll. of the Széchényi Library (Budapest) Fol. Hung. 959. The closing section of Desewffy's work, as an unknown fragment under separate register (Fol. Hung. 615) and title (A nemzetesedés káros vagy hasznossága felől az országló székre nézve [On the use or harm of nationality from the point of power]) — Regarding the twenties cf. Intés a Magyar Országai népekhez. (Warning to the peoples of Hungary) *Hasznos Mulatságok* 1825 (1) pp. 353–356; *Felsőmagyarországi Minerva* 1827 (3) pp. 1363–1366. Regarding the subsequent decades see E. Arató, A nemzetiség kérdés története Magyarországon 1790–1848 (The history of the nationality question in Hungary in 1790–1848) (Budapest, 1960), Vol. 2., pp. 34–38.
- ⁵ *Count László Teleki*, A magyar nyelv előmozdításáról buzgó esdeklései (Ardent requests for the promotion of the Hungarian language) (Pest, 1806); Vegyes írásai (Miscellaneous writings) Vol. 4, A magyar nyelv műveléséről (On the cultivation of the Hungarian language) Manuscript Coll. of the Hung. Acad. of Sciences, Misc. fol. 20.; The Tübingen competition essay of *Ferenc Kazinczy* on the Hungarian language, 1808 (ed. by *Gusztáv Heinrich*) (Budapest, 1916); *András Thaisz*, Közönséges észrevételek a nemzeti characternek megítélésére különösen a magyar nemzetről hozott némely ítéletekre (Common remarks on the judgement of the national character, particularly on some judgements on the Hungarian nation) *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1819, (9), p. 42.; *Gergely Edes*, A magyar hangzat szerinti versszerzés (Composition of poems in the Hungarian tone) before 1820, MS Coll. of the Széchényi Library, Oct. Hung. 279. fol. 13.; *Izidor Guzmics*, A nyelvnek hármias befolyása az ember emberesítésébe, nemzetesítésébe, és hazafiúsításába (The three-fold impact of the language on the humanization, nationalization and patriotism of man) *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1822 (8), pp. 3–36.; *Pál Kánya*, A magyar nyelv műveltetése módjáról (On the ways of the cultivation of the Hungarian language). *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1824 (2) pp. 89–95.; *József Náttly*, Némely vélekedések a magyar nyelv ügyében (Some views on the matter of the Hungarian language) (Szeged, 1825).
- ⁶ *András Thaisz*, op. cit., *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1819 (9) pp. 32–56.; *Ignác Svastics*, A magyarok esmérte (Knowledge of the Hungarians) (Pest, 1823), pp. 293, 339–340, 408.
- ⁷ Némely hazafiúi emlékeztető szavak a magyarok nemzeti lelke és characteré felől (Some patriotic reminders on the national ethos and character of the Hungarians) *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1822 (6) pp. 30–56.; *István Vedres*, A magyar nemzeti lélekről (On the Hungarian national ethos), loc. cit. 1822 (11) pp. 55–75.
- ⁸ *András Thaisz* and *Antal Gömbös*, op. cit.
- ⁹ *Izidor Guzmics* and *Pál Kánya*, op. cit.
- ¹⁰ A nemzeti kultúráról közönségesen, s a magyar nemzet kultúrájáról különösen (On national culture in general, and on the culture of the Hungarian nation in particular) *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1817 (1) pp. 13–42., (2) pp. 3–27., *Pál Tóth*, Mi az oka, hogy némely nemzetek a tudományokban és szép mesterségekben más nemzetek felett feljebb emelkednek (What are the causes of some nations excelling others in the sciences and fine arts?) loc. cit. 1818 (9) pp. 10–27. *József Elek Horváth*, A nemzeti csinosodásról (On the national beautification) loc. cit. 1819 (12) pp. 41–50.; *Kristóf Faddy*, A vitézség csak a nemzeti csinosodás által dicsőíti meg a nemzetet tökéletesen (Valiancy glorifies the nation perfectly only by the national beautification). Loc. cit. 1824 (9) pp. 45–53.; Mi serkentheti a nemzeteket a tudományok és szép mesterségek elősegítésére (What are the nations urged by to promote sciences and fine arts?) loc. cit. 1825 (11) pp. 9–18.
- ¹¹ Az igazi hazafi kinek tulajdonságait együgyű beszédbe foglalta egy hazája s nemzete javát óhajtó szív (The true patriot the qualities of whom have been summed up in simple speech by a heart, desiring the benefit of his country and nation) (Pest, 1792); *Pál Magda*, Magyarország és a határőrző katonaság vidékének legújabb statistikai és geográfiai leírása (The latest statistical and geographical description of Hungary and of the borderregions) (Pest, 1819) pp. 3–4; *Tudós értekezések gyűjteményéből*. A valóságos jó magyar hazafi (From the collection of learned papers. The real, good Hungarian patriot),

MS Coll. of the Széchényi Library Fol. Hung. 11.; *József Reviczky*, A haza boldogítása (The improvement of the country) loc. cit. Quart. Hung. 1209.; A közjó, vagyis haza boldogítása tudományának nevezetesebb állításai (The public good, or some more notable statements of the science of improving the country) loc. cit. Quart. Hung. 81.; Az időnek körülállásaihoz alkalmaztatott beszéd a haza szeretetéről vagyis patriotizmusról (Speech on the love of the country, i.e. on patriotism adjusted to the conditions of time) (1809); A hazaszeretetről. (On patriotism) Erdélyi Múzeum 1816 (3) pp. 17–20.; *Gábor Döbrentei*, A műveltség becsé, s a haza szeretetének nemes volta (The merit of culture and the value of patriotism) loc. cit. 1817, (8) pp. 43–80.; Hogy kell a haza iránti vonzódást tekinteni s miért szükséges a végett buzgóságot ébreszteni? (What is the way of considering the attraction towards the country and why is it necessary to evoke enthusiasm for it?) loc. cit. 1817 (9) 186–189; The diary of *Gábor Döbrentei*, MS Coll. of the Libr. of the Hung. Acad. of Sci. Ms. 193. F. 35. (entry of July 8, 1824); Hazafiúgondolatok töredékei (Fragments of patriotic thoughts) Tudományos Gyűjtemény 1825 (4) pp. 85–87.; *József Sombori*, A haza szeretete egy beszédben, melyet a marosvásárhelyi piaci r. k. nagytemplomban pünkösdi hava 22-én 1801-ben elmondott (Patriotism in a sermon which he held in the great church on the market place of Marosvásárhely on the 22nd of the month of Whitsuntide of 1801) (Marosvásárhely, 1809); *József Kolmár*, A patriotizmusnak megegyeztetése az evangéliumi etikával azon felséges rendelés kihirdetésekor, hogy legyenek könyörgések a királyi felségért és fegyverének szerenéséjéért (The harmonization of patriotism with the ethics of the Gospel at the proclamation of that noble order that there be prayers for the Royal Majesty and the victory of his arms) (Komárom, 1813).

- 12 *Count István Széchenyi*, Diaries (ed. by *Gyula Vízota*) (Budapest, 1932), Vol. III, pp. 9–10.
- 13 *Count István Széchenyi*, Articles (ed. by *Antal Zichy*) (Budapest, 1893), Vol. I, pp. 9–10.
- 14 *Count István Széchenyi*, Hitel (Credit) (Pest, 1830) pp. 161–171. (Quotation from p. 164.)
- 15 Loc. cit. XV–XVII, pp. 229–230, 234, 237, 249–250.
- 16 Loc. cit. pp. 64, quotations 265, 223, 69–70, 264.
- 17 Loc. cit. p. 171. The identification of the language and nationality was common in the 1840s as well. This idea was expressed by *Count László Teleki*, in his address to the Upper House on November 16, 1843. . . . I consider nationality a concept that means exactly the same as the unity of the national language. . . common nationality does not only mean that the peoples linked together would wish to stay together under the worst and most difficult circumstances, that they should feel united throughout all adversities of time, after the gravest blows of destiny and whatever may be in their material interest, they should never leave each other in trouble, so that they should not only enjoy together but struggle and mourn as well, that they should be united in the past, present a future as well, which can only be imagined where there is a *common language* in use” (Italics mine E. A.) Selected works of *László Teleki*, (Budapest, 1961), Vol. I, pp. 374–375.
- 18 Hitel (Credit) pp. 30–33.
- 19 Loc. cit. pp. 70–74, quotation from p. 73.
- 20 Loc. cit. pp. 227, 230, 233; quotations 235, XVII–XVIII, 226, 253, 255.
- 21 *Antal Mindszenty*, Hazafiúi észrevétel (Patriotic remark) (A small fragment) Sas 1831, (VIII) pp. 130–131.
- 22 *István Széchenyi*, Válogatott írásai (Selected writings) (ed. by *István Barta*) (Budapest pp. 120–121.
- 23 *Count József Dessouffy*, A Hitel című munka taglalatja (Discussion of the work entitled Credit) (Kassa, 1831), pp. 11–117; quotations 112, 115, 125.
- 24 Loc. cit. pp. 226–227, 78–79, 245–246; quotation p. 79.
- 25 Loc. cit. pp. 23–27, 35–37, 153–154, 156–158; quotations pp. 36, 153–154.
- 26 Loc. cit. pp. 18, 63–65, 70–74, 220–221, 230–234, 158–162.
- 27 *Count István Széchenyi*, Világ, vagyis felvilágosító töredékek némi hiba s előítélet eligazítására (World, or enlightening fragments to correct some mistakes and prejudices) (Pest, 1831), I, II, VIII, pp. 63–86, 163, 368, 517; quotations 63, 68, I, 80, II.
- 28 Loc. cit. pp. 120, 128–129, 195–197, 318–319; quotations 128–129, 197, 319.
- 29 Loc. cit. pp. 325–326, 413, 430–431, 376–378, 524; quotations 413, 430–431, 524.
- 30 *István Barta*, A fiatal Kossuth és kora. Fejezetek a magyar polgári reformmozgalom kibontakozásának történetéhez (The young Kossuth and his age. Chapters to the his-

- tory of the progress of the Hungarian bourgeois reform movement) (Budapest, 1964). (D. Sc. dissertation, in MS), pp. 530, 646.
- ³¹ Világ (World), pp. 47–49, 67, 96–97; quotations 47, 67, 96.
- ³² Loc. cit. pp. 244–245, 248–249, 259–261; quotations 244, 259. *Speeches of Count István Széchenyi* (ed. by *Antal Zichy*) (Budapest, 1887), pp. 105–106.
- ³³ Világ (World) XXXI–XXXII, pp. 292–294, 307.
- ³⁴ *Count István Széchenyi, Stádium* (Stage) (Budapest, 1905), Preface, pp. 4, 37–38, 46–47, 70, 73, 110, 256, 258, 109, 227–228; quotations 38, 47, 227–228.
- ³⁵ *Count István Széchenyi, Hunnia* (1835) (Pest, 1858), pp. 30–40, 5–7, 44–46, 141, 200–201, 218–220, 224–225; quotations 34, 36–37, 45.
- ³⁶ Loc. cit. pp. 46–55; quotation 49–50.
- ³⁷ *István Széchenyi*, referred to the pamphlet „Sollen wir Magyaren werden” by [*Samuel Hojč*] published in 1833 at Károlyváros of Croatia. On the pamphlet see *Endre Arató*, op. cit. (Budapest, 1960), Vol. I, p. 233.
- ³⁸ *Hunnia*, p. 52; quotation pp. 56–58.
- ³⁹ See *Endre Arató*, op. cit. Vol. I, pp. 112–134.
- ⁴⁰ *Hunnia*, pp. 101–104, 150–151, 218, 86–87, 204–207, 210–216, 242–245; quotations 151, 104, 216, 242. It should be noted in connection with the last quotation that the criticism of the main features of nobiliary nationalism is apparent in the whole oeuvre of Széchenyi. In this respect cf. his address to the Diet in April 1840, in which he surveyed this aspect of his activities. (See *Széchenyi, Speeches*, op. cit. pp. 186–187).
- ⁴¹ *Széchenyi, Speeches*, November 30, December 29, 1835., op. cit. pp. 125–127, 128–130.
- ⁴² *Ferenc Kölcsey összes művei* (Collected Works) (Budapest, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 1215–1216, 1224–1227; quotations 1224, 1226–1227.
- ⁴³ Loc. cit. pp. 490–523; quotations 508, 509, 513, 514, 517.
- ⁴⁴ Loc. cit. pp. 1275–1276, 167, Vol. II, pp. 242, 336–339.
- ⁴⁵ Loc. cit. pp. 57; quotations 426, 283–286, 68–73, 71, 287–291, 287–288.
- ⁴⁶ Loc. cit. Vol. I, pp. 1222–1224; quotations 1222; Vol. II, pp. 345–346, 366–368; quotations p. 367, 490 Vol. I, pp. 168–169, Vol. II, pp. 349–350.
- ⁴⁷ Loc. cit. p. 355.
- ⁴⁸ *István Barta*, in his D. Sc. thesis dealt mainly with this provocation of the Court in connection with Kossuth, pp. 564–567.
- ⁴⁹ *Collected works of Ferenc Kölcsey*, Vol. II, pp. 392–399, 402–403, 589–592, 161–163, 166; quotations p. 394, 399, 592, 162, 166; Vol. I, p. 176.
- ⁵⁰ Loc. cit. pp. 1227–1228; quotations p. 170, Vol. II, pp. 395, 423–425, 424, 437.
- ⁵¹ *Miklós Wesselényi, Balítéletekről* (On Prejudices) (Bucharest, 1833), pp. XX–XXI, 155–282, 189–191, 296–298; quotations 190, 298.
- ⁵² Loc. cit. pp. XXX, XXXIV–XXXVI, 14–15, 82–83, 90–95; quotations 14–15, 91.
- ⁵³ Loc. cit. pp. 106–114, 279, 296, 116–154; quotations 107, 113–114, 116, 123–124, 150, 153–154.
- ⁵⁴ Loc. cit. pp. 99–102, 48–51, 53–69, 72–73, 75–81; quotations 99, 49, 53, 72, 77, 78, 79, 80.