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Are Members of the Hungarian Minority in Romania Part of the Romanian Political Community?

LEVENTE SALAT

The successive attempts of the Hungarian minority's elite to seek integration into the Romanian state, first between the two world wars[1] and then after 1945, under the communist rule[2], have lead subsequently to two equally unfavorable conclusions: first, that the way in which the leaders of the community think about the terms of the integration is in conflict with the interests of the Romanian majority and, perhaps, with the *raison d'être* of the Romanian state itself; second, that the perseverance of the Hungarian minority to seek integration on its own terms generated a deep mistrust of the Romanian authorities concerning the political objectives to the community. Between the two world wars this mistrust became the central element of the Romanian state's minority policies, suspecting educational and cultural institutions, churches and youth associations of subversive activity[3]. Following WWII, especially after the 1956 Hungarian revolution, the Communist authorities in Romania considered that the interest of the Hungarian minority in separate institutions is a matter of state security[4].

The failure of previous attempts to provide patterns of integration acceptable for both the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority, together with the tradition of institutionalized mistrust of the Romanian authorities represented a difficult legacy for the post-1989 political projects and ethnopolitical strategies. From the perspective of the present approach, the most important changes that occurred after 1989, as compared to the period of the communist rule, was the disappearance of any barrier in front of assuming "Hungarianness" in public, and the acceptance of the idea that the Hungarian community, together with other minorities, needs political representation, on a corporative basis. In the context of the young Romanian democracy and the emerging multi-party system, the role of representing Hungarians in the country's political life was assumed by a rapidly assembling organization, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR)

[1] See in this regard Zsolt K. LENGYEL, *Auf der Suche nach dem Kompromiß. Ursprünge und Gestalten des frühen Transsilvanismus 1918-1928*, Verlag Ungariches Institut, München, 1993; Ferenc F. HORVÁTH, *Elutasítás és alkalmazkodás között. A romániai magyar kisebbségi elit politikai stratégiái*, Pro-Print, Miercurea-Ciuc, 2007 and Lucian NASTASĂ, Levente SALAT (ed.), *Maghiarii din România și etica minoritară (1920-1940)*, CRDE, Cluj, 2003.

[2] Vladimir TISMĂNEANU, Dorin DOBRINCU, Cristian VASILE (ed.), *Raport Final*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2007, pp. 332-354.

[3] Cf. Irina LIVEZEANU, *Cultură și naționalism în România Mare, 1918-1930*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1998, p. 217.

[4] Nándor BÁRDI, "A romániai magyar elit generációs csoportjainak integrációs viszonyrendszere", in Nándor BÁRDI, Attila SIMON (ed.), *Integrációs stratégiák a magyar kisebbségek történetében*, Fórum Kisebbségkutató Intézet, Somorja, 2006, p. 56.

which found itself in the position to re-launch the attempts aiming to find ways of accommodating Hungarians within the structures of the Romanian state. After 18 years of activity, DAHR exhibits a unique and quite paradoxical account: while it is the most stable political organization in the Romanian Parliament since the first post-1989 elections, and is the only political organization which has been in power (or on the side of the government) for the past 11 years, the most important objectives of its political program – the ones referring exactly to the desired ways of integration of the Hungarian minority into the structures of the Romanian state – proved impossible to achieve.

The situation of the Hungarian minority in Romania has improved significantly in many concerns. Beyond wide political representation, the community gradually earned extensive language rights (in education, public administration, mass media and, to a more limited extent, in jurisprudence) and its members are the beneficiaries of a considerable network of state-funded educational, cultural and media institutions operating in Hungarian language, as well as dozens of private associations[1]. In spite of the undeniable achievements, the conflicting interests of the two communities could not be reconciled, and the options of the Romanians and Hungarians, as far as the issue of the integration is concerned, continue to differ in essential terms. The dominant patterns of public opinion yield conflicting – or at least mutually ignorant – identity structures and competing ethnopolitical strategies, which raise the intriguing question: on what grounds can Hungarians in Romania be considered as part of the Romanian political community?

I will try to offer an answer to this question by comparing the dominant trends in conceptualizing the term *political community* with recent research results baring the evidence of the conflicting identity structures and competing ethnopolitical strategies which divide the Romanian political community along ethnic fault-lines.

The Concept of Political Community

The concept of political community is surprisingly undertheoretized in political science. Seemingly, there aren't any comprehensive research projects targeting the different historical, theoretical and empirical aspects of the issue which do not fall back on studies dedicated either to the concept of the state, or theoretical accounts – regularly anchored in the republican tradition – of the term "nation". The *Handbook of Political Science* mastered by Goodin and Klingemann[2] does not provide any definition of term and more systematic works dedicated to the concept are generally lacking, in spite of the fact that the issue of the "bounded" or "integrated" communities has been a concern for authors like Kant, Hegel, Marx, Max Weber, Marcel Mauss, Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, Robert A. Nisbet and many others[3]. A more analytical account of the concept has been of-

[1] For details see István HORVÁTH, *Facilitating Conflict Transformation. Implementing the Recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to Romania, 1993-2001*, INCORE Working Paper no 8, Hamburg, 2002.

[2] Robert E. GOODIN, Hans-Dieter KLINGEMANN (eds.), *A New Handbook of Political Science*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998.

[3] Some of the most recent referential works are: Chantal MOUFFE, "Democratic Citizenship and Political Community", in IDEM (ed.), *Dimensions of Radical Democracy. Pluralism, Citizenship,*

fered recently by Elizabeth Frazer, from the perspectives of the communitarian political theory[1].

Though the concept is widely used, its significance is considered in most cases as being self-referential. However, if we have a closer look to the broad area of its significance we can easily discover that the concept is loaded with several internal tensions, contradictions and ambiguities.

Some use the term as equal with the polity, and most authors see a strong relationship between the state, the society and the concept of political community. "Our dominant sense of *political* community remains the nation-state", observed Michael Saward in one of his recent papers[2]. This interpretation follows without doubt from Max Weber's authoritative view, who defined the particular type of community (or group) which can be considered "political" as one that has a "territorial basis" and is interested in the "enforcement of its order", usually through the "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force". If the claim of a binding authority over all action taking place in the area of its jurisdiction translates into the successfully upheld monopoly of the legitimate use of force, the political community "will be called a 'state'", concluded Weber[3].

There are, however, opinions according to which well organized, self-governing sub-state actors can also be considered political communities[4]. Others believe that political communities can be constituted beyond the nation-state, too, in the realm of the inter-state relations, for instance[5]. It is illustrative in this respect that after the short-lived attempt, between 1952 and 1954, to enact it in Europe's first Constitution[6], the concept of the "European political community" has also been in use again lately[7].

On a different level of analysis, Frazer observes that the term, and its usage, embodies at least four different types of ambiguities. The most common interpretation refers to a particular type of community, along other kinds of "partial" communities

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Comunity, Verso, London, 1992, pp. 225-239; Paul LICHTERMAN, *The Search for Political Community*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996; Daniele ARCHIBUGI, David HELD, Martin KÖHLER (eds.), *Re-Imagining Political Community. Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy*, Stanford University Presss, Stanford, 1998 and Andrew LINKLATER, *The Transformation of Political Community*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1998.

[1] Elizabeth FRAZER, *The Problems of Communitarian Politics. Unity and Conflict*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.

[2] Michael SAWARD, "At the Edge of Political Theory: Political Community and Deliberative Democracy", paper presented at the epsNet plenary conference *Political Scientists in the New Europe*, Paris, 13-14 June 2003, p. 1, emphasis in the original.

[3] Max WEBER, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, The Free Press-Collier Macmillan Publishers, New York-London, 1964, pp. 154-156.

[4] See for instance, Arthur G. RUBINOFF, *The Construction of a Political Community. Integration and Identity in Goa*, SAGE, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi, 1998.

[5] The most eloquent example is provided by Karl W. DEUTSCH et al, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton University Press, Princeton New Jersey, 1957.

[6] Richard T. GRIFFITHS, *Europe's First Constitution: The European Political Community*, 1952-1954, Federal Trust for Education and Research, London, 2000.

[7] The project of the European Political Community was abandoned after the failure of the European Defence Policy, due to the refusal of the French National Assembly to ratify the corresponding Treaty, the idea being reiterated later within the so called "cohesion policy" of the EU. See in this regard Sonia MAZEY, "The Development of the European Idea: From Sectoral Integration to Political Union", in Jeremy RICHARDSON, *European Union: Power and Policymaking*, Routledge, London-New York, 1996.

like, ethnic, local or business communities, in which what is shared is *political*: institutions, values, etc. A second widespread account of the concept considers that political community is a community which is organized politically. According to this view, the political tie is added to other, prior commonalities like culture, economy and shared territory. A third sense of the term refers to the belief that a community can be considered to be a political community if it acts politically and behaves as a political actor, by defending the communities continued existence, protecting the members' needs and benefits, norms, institutions and traditions. The fourth interpretation holds that the distinctive feature of the political community is that it is constituted politically; this view reflects the recognition that in a historical perspective the reasons of the disintegration of communities are usually political[1]. Frazer observes that political theory is highly ambiguous particularly as far as the first two connotations are concerned: while many authors consider that political ties are thinner and overlook other types of allegiances, it is at least as widespread the belief that a genuine political community needs deep forms of commitment, reciprocity, shared culture and common meanings attached to various aspects of communal life.

Two further apects of the issue are of interest for Frazer: the way in which a political community comes into being and the level of internal conflict and diversity which withholds the community from disintegration.

As far as the first aspect is concerned, Frazer notes that political communities can be constituted both exogenously and endogenously. The endogenous version implies cases in which a ″social contract″ transforms an aggregation of individuals into a ″duly constituted political association (or society, or polity – or community) with agreed procedures for legislation, adjudiciation, and administration and an agreed locus of and distribution of sovereign power″[2]. However, a more ″realistic″ account of ″bringing into being a political community″ seems to be the following:

> ″A political settlement is forged – by violent conquest, by the gradual centralization of power and the accrual of legitimacy, by the dispossession of kings in the favour of the commons – a political community, in the present sense, might be said to be the upshot at the point when individuals share allegiance to a particular set of institutions and procedures″[3].

Frazer observes that the accrual of legitimacy presupposes ″stories, actions and orientations which tend to confirm its [the community's] existence″[4], as well as a group of persons who undertake to provide the rules and their justification. It is quite common that the group which assumes this role acts in its own interest:

> ″The institution of politics, as has been observed, is quite consistent with a politically dominant class or group promulgating and promoting mythical justification of the social order, or arguments in favour of traditional patterns of government […] – in their own interest″[5].

The existence of a group which defines the political community according to its own interests has further consequences in Frazer's view: the exclusion of those

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[1] Elizabeth FRAZER, *The Problems of*…cit, pp. 218-219.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 220.
[3] *Ibidem*.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 221.
[5] *Ibidem*, p. 236.

who cannot accept the prevailing trend of justification for the community's existence. For the sake of stability and efficiency, the discursive space of the political community has to be defined in such a way that the voices of the excluded cannot be heard.

> "The rules of the political game and the rules of conduct that govern participation in it, has been constructed so as to benefit those who constructed the political sphere and continue to participate in it, and so as to exclude persons whose disadvantage and subordination is necessary [...] At the same time, the claims of the disadvantaged cannot be pressed or heard in the normal political process which is organized so as to exclude certain kinds of voices, certain kinds of claims, and certain agenda items"[1].

The issue of exclusion from the political community has deep roots in the history of political thought and is closely connected to the assumption according to which the good political community is homogeneous from a certain point of view – which quite often equals with linguistic, religious and cultural homogeneity but can take other forms, as well –, either as a pre-existing condition, or an outcome of the continued and successful existence of the community. This tacit and rarely verbalized conviction stems most probably from the practical advantage represented by a community constituted of people who feel and think alike, share the same way of life, pray to the same God and speak one common language. Within such a community the main functions of politics are easier to perform: the common good can be defined with less difficulty, consent between the rulers and the ruled is more probable and easier to be reinforced time and again.

In spite of that, the issue of the political communities tacitly required – and quite often brutally pursued – homogeneity is largely underresearched in political science. Though neither Michael Mann, nor Charles Tilly pays more systematic attention to the issue, in my view both Mann's account on the social sources of power[2] and Tilly's analysis on the construction and deconstruction of states[3] bare important consequences in this respect. In Mann's case, his broad historical analysis regarding the development of human capacity to organize and control populations and territories includes several illustrative examples of the quest for homogeneity, and the different types of power he concentrates on – ideological, economic, military and political – all play an important homogenizing role in the process of organizing the control of a certain territory, beyond the emphasis laid by Mann on the "overlapping, intersecting, network"-type nature of power relations which "produce unanticipated, emergent consequences"[4], instead of being separate dimensions of a "single social totality"[5]. In Tilly's case, his core concept of "coercion" bares a lot of implicit relevance as well to the process of homogenization. In addition to that he explicitly admits at one point that

[1] *Ibidem*, p. 234

[2] Michael MANN, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. I. *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986 and *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. II. *The Rise of Classes and Nation-states, 1760-1914*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993.

[3] Charles TILLY, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992*, Blackwell, Cambridge MA-Oxford UK, 1992.

[4] Michael MANN, *The Sources of*...cit, 1993, pp. 9-10.

[5] IDEM, *The Sources of*...cit, 1986, p. 2.

> ”In one of their more self-conscious attempts to engineer state power, rulers frequently sought to homogenize their population in the course of installing direct rule. From a ruler’s point of view, a linguistically, religiously, and ideologically homogeneous population presented the risk of a common front against royal demands; homogenization made a policy of divide and and rule more costly. But homogeneity had many compensating advantages: within homogeneous population, ordinary people were more likely to identify with their rulers, communication could run more efficiently, and an administrative innovation that worked in one segment was likely to work elsewhere as well. People who sensed a common origin, furthermore, were more likely to unite against external threats. Spain, France, and other large states recurrently homogenized by giving religious minorities – especially Muslims and Jews – the choice between conversion and emigration”[1].

In spite of that, the quest for homogeneity is not utilized either by Mann, or by Tilly as an explanatory variable with a central role in their theory[2].

The criterion of homogeneity within stable collective identities as frameworks within which effective political rule could be reinforced has changed evidently several times during the course of history. In the history of political thought it was Aristotle, most likely, whose normative recommendations concerning the advantages of the homogeneity remained recorded for the first time. Talking about the dangers that may jeopardize the stability of the colonies he warns, in the 5th book of his *Politics* that accepting strangers, on a collective basis, into the political community may undermine the stability and it can also lead to decay:

> ”Another cause of revolution is difference of races which do not at once acquire a common spirit; for a state is not the growth of a day, any more than it grows out of a multitude brought together by accident. Hence the reception of strangers in colonies, either at the time of their foundation or afterwards, has generally produced revolution; for example, the Achaeans who joined the Troezenians in the foundation of Sybaris, becoming later the more numerous, expelled them; hence the curse fell upon Sybaris. At Thurii the Sybarites quarrelled with their fellow-colonists; thinking that the land belonged to them, they wanted too much of it and were driven out. At Byzantium the new colonists were detected in a conspiracy, and were expelled by force of arms; the people of Antissa, who has received the Chian exiles, fought with them, and drove them out; and the Zancleans, after having received the Samians, were driven by them out of their own city. The citizens of Apollonia on the Euxine, after the introduction of a fresh body of colonists, had a revolution; the Syracusans, after the expulsion of their tyrants, having admitted strangers and mercenaries to the rights of citizenship, quarrelled and came to blows; the people of Amphipolis, having received Chalcidian colonists, were nearly all expelled by them”[3].

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[1] Charles TILLY, *Coercion*…cit, pp. 106-107.

[2] As we shall see later, the conclusions regarding the inherent homogenizing consequences of the centralization of political power will be assumed by Mann more overtly in his later work on ethnic cleansing, in *The Dark Side of Democracy*. *Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005.

[3] ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, Book V, in Mortimer J. ADLER (ed.), *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 8, Encyclopaedia Britannica, London, 1994, pp. 504-505. For the correct interpretation of the quote it is important to mention, however, that the colonies Aristotle is talking about are artificially

Indeed, the early forms of the territorial-political citizenship characteristic to the ancient Greeks preserved its traditional, consanguineal, kinship-based and tribal features even after the far reaching reforms of Kleisthenes: the 139 *demes* of Attica which resulted from the reforms, even if they were meant to represent the transition from the traditional ethnic solidarity to a new, territorial kind of solidarity based on neighborhood, the importance of what had been shared in the tribal and consanguinal ties did not disappear, and continued also in new, shared religious cults. Though, as Aristotle notes, Kleisthenes ”distributed Athens into ten tribes, instead of the previous four, with the object of mixing them up so that more might share the rights of citizen” – and Kleisthenes accepted, indeed, foreigners into the *deme* –, the walls of ethnic and tribal boundaries that divided the early forms of political communities were effectively pulled down only in the Hellenistic world, which discovered the broader philosophic concept of humanity and *kosmopolis*[1].

In the early beginnings of the roughly five centuries of Roman citizenship, during the time of archaic Rome organized in three tribes and thirty *curiae*, the political community was based, as well, in essence on common descent and blood relations, which provided the main content solidarity. The importance of the tribal relations started to diminish with the fifth century B.C., giving place to a new social divison between the *plebs* and *patres*, associated with the emergence of new sacral cults and new institutions which provided the frameworks and content for a different type of integration of the community. As Gross notes:

> ”Social divisons called, however, for a general institution and bond that could integrate the entire nation and correspond to fundamental political solidarity: the solidarity of all members of the city-state of all of Rome versus the outside world which was considered foreign and largely hostile. Also an institution was needed that would mobilize the entire community in times of various emergencies, that would moreover supply legitimacy of political power and validity of the law. The evolving institution of citizenship represented such a bond”[2].

The institution of Roman citizenship was limited in the beginning, as in the case of the ancient Greeks, to the members of a single city-state, and has been extended gradually to once foreign, even hostile peopes. By the end of the republic, citizenship was extended to all Italy, and about 212 A.D., due to *Constitutio Antoniana* the institution of citizenship included all free persons of the Roman Empire, according to the principle: *civitatem omnibus datam*.

The institution of citizenship is one of the remarkable outcomes of the genius of the Roman jurisprudence which managed to detach the concept of political community from the original consanguineal and tribal bonds. As Gross puts it:

> ”The political bond and imperial identity were separated definitely from the consanguineal-tribal and detached from ethnicity, even religion. Romans were all people, not only from the Roman *urbs*, born in the Roman clans and tribes, but simply men who were free inhabitants of the empire”[3].

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created, insular political communities, lacking the advantages of human settlements emerging from more organic evolution.

[1] See in this regard Feliks GROSS, *Citizenship and Ethnicity. The Growth and Development of a Democratic Multiethnic Institution*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Cooencticut-London, 1999, pp. 19-28.

[2] *Ibidem*, p. 33.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 38. Italics in the original.

It is important to note, however, that the expansion of citizenship did not erase the importance of kinship and other types of primordial bonds between people: it just succeeded to efficiently separate legal and political institutions from primordial – consanguineal, tribal and sacral – types of bonds by integrating different peoples with various ethnic, linguistic and religious identities into the empire. The scope of extending citizenship to peoples who spoke different languages and worshipped different gods was in fact expanding and integrating the empire, while securing its internal coherence. Gross admits himself, echoing Sherwin-White's opinion[1], that the institution of Roman citizenship was in effect an instrument of "political assimilation of aliens" into a "new identity, a broader social-political bond" which became the basis of the new type of sameness and homogeneity within the Roman world[2]. Indeed, Cicero, in his *De re publica*, exploring the bases of the ideal state defines the political community as a gathering of people united by the consensus regarding the common good and the unity of interest[3]. But the integration which separated the new forms of solidarity from primordial identities did not overwrite the latter. Gross quotes the same Cicero elaborating in his *De Legibus* on an interesting consequence of Roman citizenship: Roman citizens regularly "have two fatherlands, one which is given by nature, the other the civic one of the state"[4]. The separation of solidarity from identity didn't go smooth either: Tacitus mentions in his *Annales* a debate in the Senate, during the time of the consulate of Aulus Vitellius and Lucius Vipstanus, when foreign borne candidates to the Senate were contested on the ground that they do not represent the traditional Roman virtue and morals[5].

During the Middle Ages, under the influence of Aristotle and the Roman legalistic spirit, the visions on the state of authors like Augustine, Saint Thomas Aquinas or Marsilius of Padua included the implicit assumption of a certain kind of homogeneity: they all conceived the state as an organic community of people who are united in the pursue of the common good. The medieval concept of the *status*, from which the modern sens of the term "state" derived, beginning with the 13th century referred to the fact that certain groups of people were united by the similarity of habits and a shared standing before the law[6].

Jean Bodin, in his influential work on the theory of sovereignty, *The Six Books of the Commonwealth* (1576) suggests an interesting distinction between the concept of the "commonwealth", which might incorporate diversity, and that of the "commune", which is and must be homogeneous in his view:

> "The whole body of the citizens, whether citizens by birth, by adoption or by enfranchisement (for these are the three ways in which citizen rights are acquired) when subjected to the single sovereign power of one or more rulers, constitutes a commonwealth, even if there is diversity of laws, language, customs, religion, and race. If all the citizens are subject to a single uniform system of laws and customs they form not only a commonwealth but a commune,

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[1] Adrian N. SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Roman Citizenship*, Oxford University Press, London, 1987.
[2] Feliks GROSS, *Citizenship and Ethnicity*…cit, pp. 38-39.
[3] CICERO, *Az állam*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 2007, p. 90 (I. 25).
[4] Feliks GROSS, *Citizenship and Ethnicity*…cit, p. 36.
[5] TACITUS, *Összes művei*, Európai Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1980, pp. 267-268 (XI. 23)
[6] Péter TAKÁCS (ed.), *Államelmélet. Az államelmélet, az állambölcselet, és a politikai filozófia vázlata*, A Miskolci Egyetem Jogtörténeti és Jogelméleti Intézete, Miskolc, 1997, pp. 20-34.

> even though they be dispersed in diverse townships, villages, or the open countryside. The town is not the commune, as some have held, any more than the house is the household, for dependants and children can live in widely separated places, yet still form a household, if they are subject to a single head of the family. The same applies to the commune. It can consist of a number of townships and villages, provided they share the same customs, as is the case with the bailliwicks of this realm. Similarly the commonwealth can include a number of communes and provinces which all have different customs. But so long as they are subject to the authority of a single sovereign, and the laws and ordinances made by it, they constitute a commonwealth"[1].

It is not difficult to discover in this distinction the attempt to reconcile the empirical fact of diversity with the claim of exclusive, binding authority of the sovereign within the given territory. Bodin also emphasized the fact that for the survival of the political community the social bonds between the citizens and the state (sovereign) should not be extended to aliens: political communities endure as long as they are exclusive, and establish peculiar identities which differentiate them from aliens[2].

Johannes Althusius, in his *Politics* published first in 1603 (and then in two subsequent editions) formulates explicit recommendations regarding the way in which the good political community should be organized and governed. For him, one of the basic functions of politics is the reproduction of the fellow-feeling among the members, through permanent communication that can facilitate "consent and agreement" in a discoursive community:

> "The efficient cause of political association is consent and agreement among the communicating citizens. The formal cause is indeed the association brought about by contributing and communicating one with the other, in which political men institute, cultivate, maintain and conserve the fellowship of human life through decisions about those things useful and necessary to this social life"[3].

Provided the importance he lays on communication, it is not surprising that he mentions, among the duties of the ruler, the task of unifying the language within the territory. Without that, he warns, no political community can survive and no communion of rights is possible:

> "The third right is the maintenance of a language, and of the same idiom of it, in the territory. The use of speech is truly necessary for men in social life, for without it no society can endure, nor can the communion of right"[4].

He also recommends, echoing Aristotle, that for the sake of stability it is not recommended to grant foreigners with equal political rights:

> "A community of citizens dwelling in the same urban area (*urbs*), and content with the same communication and government (*jus imperii*) is called a city (*civitas*) or, as it were, the unity of citizens. And they are citizens of this

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[1] Jean BODIN, *The Six Books of the Commonwealth*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1955, p. 20.

[2] Cf. Andrew LINKLATER, *The Transformation of*…cit, p. 1.

[3] Johannes ALTHUSIUS, *Politica. Politics Methodically Set Forth and Illustrated with Sacred and Profane Examples (An abridged translation)*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1995, p. 24

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 85.

> community or city who are partners in it, as distinguished from foreigners and aliens who do not enjoy the same standing within the city's legal order (*jus civitatis*)"[1].

The issue of the political communities' required homogeneity became more explicit in the era of nationalism which gradually replaced the imperial vision of the polity, following the end of Napoleon's historical role, with the ideal of solidarity characteristic of the national community. This change in vision, which strongly marked the whole nineteenth century and remained remarkably influential ever since, furthered the logic underlying the Westphalian state system – based on the view that the world consists of clearly definable territorial units, each under the rule of a sovereign power, exercising complete, exclusive and unlimited control over the space and the people inhabiting it – in the sense that the ethno-political arrangement of the world should not be viewed from the perspective of territory, but from that of the nation exercising control over it.

In the history of political thought John Stuart Mill had, among many others, a major contribution to consolidating this system of believes. In 1861, in his memorable work *On Representative Government*, while exploring the prerequisites of good government, he reaches the conclusion that representative government is only possible by

> "uniting all members of the nationality under the same government […] free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among people without fellow-feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion, necessary to the working of representative government, cannot exist […] when there are either free institutions, or a desire for them, in any of the peoples artificially tied together, the interest of the government lies in an exactly opposite direction. It is then interested in keeping up and envenoming their antipathies; that they may be prevented from coalescing, and it may be enabled to use some of them as tools for the enslavement of others"[2].

Mill's vision was strongly confirmed by history: his theoretical views were shortly incorporated in the agenda of international politics orchestered by Woodrow Wilson and put into application subsequently – though with large imperfections – in the peace treaties ending WWI, then WWII and during the process of decolonization. Mill proved to be right, however, concerning his second warning, too. In 1969, while evaluating the performances of the young post-colonial African states, M.G. Smith concluded:

> "Cultural diversity or pluralism automatically imposes the structural necessity for domination by one of the cultural sections […] many of the newly independent states either disolve into separate cultural sections, or maintain their identity, but only under conditions of domination and subordination in the relationships between groups"[3].

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[1] *Ibidem*, p. 42.

[2] John Stuart MILL, "Considerations on Representative Government", in IDEM, *On Liberty and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York, 1998, p. 428 and 430.

[3] Leo KUPER, Michael G. SMITH (eds.), *Pluralism in Africa*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1969. Quoted by Arend LIJPHART, *Democracy in Plural Societies. A Comparative Exploration*, Yale University Press, New Haven-London, 1977, pp. 18-19.

Returning to the history of political thought, an interesting proof of the implicit assumption concerning the political community's homogeneity is provided by the theory on citizenship of T.H. Marshall[1], which talks about three main dimensions of the concept: the *civic* component of citizenship (implying equality before law), the *political* component (refering to the right to participate in the political life of the community) and the *social* aspect of citizenship (implying the right to equitable standards of living). According to Marshall, the three components evolved gradually as subsequent phases of the emancipation of (British) citizens. The lack of a cultural component in the structure of citizenship proposed by the so far most influential theory on citizenship is an interesting proof of the tacit assumption regarding the ethnocultural homogeneity of political community.

In a more recent account, Dominique Schnapper, interested in the ″politics of social bonds″, offers an interesting insight into the intriguing issue of homogeneity[2]. Building on Hume, Max Weber, Marcel Mauss and Raymond Aron, she acknowledges as a fact that from Aristotle to John Stuart Mill the homogeneity of populations has been considered a necessary condition for the stability of the political units. She recalls that the commonality of language within people gathered into a ″political body″ has been considered essential for the success of the community also by Hume, and with reference to the advantages of the coincidence between the cultural community and political community she quotes Mauss[3] and Aron[4].

Giving the deserved credits to these stances, Schnapper observes nevertheless that cultural homogeneity cannot be considered a sufficient condition for ″constituting a nation″, and, on the reverse, instances are known in which cultural diversity did not make impossible the articulation of a ″nation″. In her view, the necessary condition for various ethnic attachments to be compatible with a common political loyalty is that citizens share an agreement with regard to the justified existence of an ″independent political domain of particular interests″, together with a respect for its internal rules of functioning[5]. It follows from here that according to Schnapper the integrative capacity of a political community depends essentially on the ″political project″ which undertakes to provide content and legitimacy for the ″social bonds″:

> ″Les institutions de l'État, si elles portent un projet politique et forment – ou sont portées par – une société politique et non plus seulement par une

[1] Thomas H. MARSHALL, *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1973.

[2] Dominique SCHNAPPER, *La communauté des citoyens. Sur l'idée moderne de nation*, Éditions Gallimard, Paris, 1994.

[3] ″Une nation complète est une société integrée suffisament, à pouvoir central démocratique à quelque degré, ayant en tout cas la notion de souveraineté nationale et dont, en général, les frontières sont celles d'une race, d'une civilization, d'une langue, d'une morale, en un mot d'un caractère national […] Dans les nations achevées tout ceci coïncide.″ Marcel MAUSS, *Œuvres*, t. 3, *Cohésion sociale et divisions de la sociologie*, Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1969, p. 604. *Apud* Dominique SCHNAPPER, *La communauté*… cit, p. 42.

[4] ″La nation, en tant que type-idéal d'unité politique, a une triple caracteristique: la participation de tous les gouvernés à l'État sous la double forme de la conscription et du suffrage universel, la coincidence de ce vouloir politique et d'une communauté de culture, la totale indépendance de l'État national vers l'extérieur.″ Raymond ARON, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris, 1962, p. 297. *Apud* Dominique SCHNAPPER, *La communauté*… cit, p. 42.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 44.

ethnie particulière, sont susceptibles de surmonter les différences culturelles et éventuellment – plus difficilement – identitaires entre les groupes. L'existence des nations dépend de la capacité du projet politique à résoudre les rivalités et les conflits entre groupes sociaux, religieux, régionaux ou éthniques selon les règles reconnues comme légitimes"[1].

Schnapper also observes and frankly admits that when such a political project is successful, cultural particularities regularly become less salient, and even if the process of political organization does not lead necessarily to the "cultural genocide of the pre-existing identities", the State's intervention regularly favors egalitarianism at the cost of marginalizing the logic of identity politics. In a historical perspective, she also adds that:

"Les nations stables, peu nombreuses, qui ont été fondées à partir de populations hétérogènes, étaient toujours le produit d'une histoire multiséculaire, au cours de laquelle les membres de chacun des groupes avaient non seulment intériorisé l'obligation de respecter les autres, mais aussi lentement élaboré les institutions politiques qui perpétuaient objectivement ce respect réciproque"[2].

Further noteworthy arguments are being offered by Mann in his recent impressive work, *The Dark Side of Democracy*. Building on his previous investigations concerning the social sources of political power, he concludes:

"Political power is inherently territorial, authoritative, and monopolistic. Ideology is partially private and substantially voluntary, economic life involves market choices, and military power is normaly institutionalized and kept away from our everyday life experiences. But we must submit routinely to regulations by a state, and we cannot choose which one – except by staying or leaving. Rival claims to sovereignity are the most difficult to compromise and the most likely to lead to murderous cleansing. Murderous cleansing is most likely to result where powerful groups within two ethnic groups aim at legitimate and achievable rival states 'in the name of the people' over the same territory…"[3].

In a historical perspective, adds Mann, it can be observed that

"murderous cleansing has been moving across the world as it has modernized and democratized. Its past lay mainly among Europeans, who invented the democratic nation-state. The countries inhabited by Europeans are now safely democratic, but most have also been ethnically cleansed […] Now the epicenter of cleansing has moved into the South of the world. Unless humanity takes evasive action, it will continue to spread until democracies – hopefully, not ethnically cleansed ones – rule the world. Then it will ease"[4].

Based on the above we can conclude that though rarely overtly assumed, the tacit assumption according to which the good political community is homogeneous

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[1] *Ibidem*, p. 140.

[2] *Ibidem*, p. 141.

[3] Michael MANN, *The Dark Side of Democracy. Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 33.

[4] *Ibidem*, pp. 4-5.

from certain point of view – the ethnic, linguistic, legal and religious dimension of the sameness being regularly the most convenient markers – has played an important role in the history of political thought and action, and has often justified attempts to achieve the ideal of homogeneity through various actions from successful integration, expulsion and forcible assimilation to murderous ethnic cleansing.

Several recent reports and analyses offer further examples of how political communities try to forge unity by the means of exclusion. An ECMI report on the Javakheti Armenians in Georgia describes for instance the process through which the Georgian Government's attempts to create "national unity" by hardline monolanguage policies, by changing the demographic balance in the territory, refusal of any form of autonomy claims. According to the report, the measures taken by the government run the risk of being counterproductive, since they undermine the trust of Javakhetians in the Georgian state and push them to seek other forms of integration, or even to consider going violent[1].

Ilkka Liikanen and Joni Virkkunen's paper on the dynamics of the currently ongoing attempts of identity construction in Estonia – which is, according to the authors, "a political process connected to the constitution of new political arenas and ideological battle for hegemony on these arenas" – states the following:

> „Contemporary Estonian legislation is based on the generally recognised principle of democracy. The Constitution secures equal human and civil rights, as well as constitutes the legal framework of the Estonian political system. Simultaneously, Estonia has entered the post-modern spaces of global economics, World Wide Web and media. People have an access to a wide range of information that promotes possibilities of the counter-hegemonic popular politics. It can, however, be argued that the democratic ideal does not fully reflect the contemporary social and political realities. Estonia has 'nationalised' (Brubaker) its territory and claimed the monopoly of power. This has 'othered' one section of the non-Estonian population, as well as transformed the concept of democracy and political system to discussions of inter-ethnic relations, social stability and border construction"[2].

A particularly relevant example is offered by an analysis concerning Iran's political community following the 1970-1982 period, during which a group of Khomeini's followers, the circle of "insiders" (*khudi-ha*), seized power by excluding their rivals from the political field and has monopolized ever since all major political positions in the country[3]. The unifying ideology was provided by

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[1] Hedvig LOHM, "Javakheti after the Rose Revolution: Progress and Regress in the Pursuit of National Unity in Georgia", in *ECMI Working Paper* nr. 38, Flensburg, April 2007. The report includes the following quote from an interview: "You know, we didn't arrive here recently; we were here before independence was declared in 1918, and this is our homeland, our state. When the referendum was held in 1991 people here voted for the old Constitution from 1921 that stated that we had the right to use our language in the region. And what do we get now? It would have been better if we had fought, like South Ossetia, they are now being offered extensive autonomy solutions while we get nothing". (Hedvig LOHM, "Javakheti after the Rose Revolution …cit.", p. 35.)

[2] Ilkka LIIKANEN, Joni VIRKKUNEN, *Reflections on the Political Construction of Identity in Estonia*. http://www.indepsocres.spb.ru/virkun_e.htm (May, 19, 2008)

[3] Yadullah SHAHIBZADEH, Kjetil SELVIK, "Iran's Political Community", *Gulf Studies*, no. 7, 2007, University of Oslo, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages. http://www.hf.

Khomeini's doctrine of *velayat-e faqih*, based on the conception of the strong political leader acting in a "mythical unity" with the people. The doctrine of *velayat-e faqih* became the core of the Iranian Constitution, and as such the "rule of the game", the members of the political community considering the opponents of the *velayat-e faqih* as their enemies. This ideology – in parallel with Ali Shariati's influential view according to which "a community (*ommat*) is a society of human individuals who share the same thoughts, beliefs, religion and pusrue the same goal"[1] – provided the basis for gradually excluding from the political process and ousting all the political actors which were considered as "outsiders". After several subsequent waves of exclusion, the political community reached its "decisive shape" in 1981 with the ousting of Bani Sadr. The significance of the process is reflected in the following way in the Shahibzadeh-Selvik analysis:

> „The process of *exclusion* also made clear what would be the criteria of *inclusion* in the political community. According to the community's perception of itself, it was the community of followers of the *velayat-e faqih*. These followers were in 1981 at war with external and internal 'enemies'. Externally, they were fighting the Iraqi invasion and, internally, opposition groups throughout Iran. To wage this battle, they used institutions like the *Basij*-militia, the revolutionary committies (*komiteha-ye enqelab*), the Islamic Councils (*shuraha-ye eslami*), and the Revolutionary Guard (*sepah-e pasdaran*). Opponents of the *velayat-e faqih* would not be admitted to these organizations. Thus, the members of the political community could easily identify each other and tie personal bonds. For example, if a member of the Revolutionary Guard from the city of Shiraz ran into a member of the Teachers' Islamic Council of Mashhad, they could recognize each other from their behaviour, appearence and affiliation. Intuitively, they would feel like belonging to the 'same family'. The common identity and shared experiences gave the political community a strong cohesion which defended it from destabilizing effects of internal disputes"[2].

The issue of the costs and conditions of national integration is also addressed in Arthur Rubinoff's already mentioned case study dedicated to the province of Goa, India.

Returning to Fraser's analysis, her account offers further interesting insights into the political community's relationship with diversity, as well as to the acceptable level of internal conflict which a coherent political community can afford to tolerate without jeopardizing its stability. Though Frazer seeks, throughout the whole book, to keep the balance between the empathy required by proper comprehension and the unengaged critique of the communitarian views, she seems to reach the conclusion that the essence of the political community can be grasped only from the perspective of the communitarian political philosophy. Acknowledging the merits of what we might call the "thin" interpretation of the term, according to which one can speak of a political community whenever a group of people is politically constituted through a common subjection to the same governing institutions, she firmly opts for a "thicker" version of the concept, according to

uio.no/ikos/forskning/forskningsprosjekter/utvik/gulf/7.pdf (May 19, 2008)

[1] Ali SHARIATI, *Ommat va Emamat*, p. 62 (place and date of publication not specified). *Apud* Yadullah SHAHIBZADEH, Kjetil SELVIK, "Iran's Political…cit", p. 4.

[2] *Ibidem*, p. 7.

which members of the political community are "related by sharing not only institutions, territory, state or national symbols, a legal system, etc., but also values, political culture, national and political identity, a sense of allegiance, and so on"[1]. Echoing Rawls – author of *Political Liberalism* (1993), rather than that of *A Theory of Justice* (1971) –, she stresses at one point that

> "anything less than a reasoned agreement – grudging acceptance, for instance, indifference or the absence of conviction – will mean that the polity is nothing more than a *modus vivendi*, and that cannot meet the needs for commitment and participation that generat genuine political stability"[2].

Frazer is aware, of course, that a community also involves arguments, even conflicts over the meaning of the shared values and goals, or the way those values need to keep pace with time. However she believes that in a full-fledged political community "what is shared will be priviledged for practical purposes over disagreement and differences"[3].

Priviledging agreement on values and purposes is relatively easy in communities which are not divided along ethnic, linguistic, religious lines and do not belong to incompatible legal traditions. In deeply divided societies however, the practical reasons are often less then sufficient. With respect to this challenge, Frazer admits, building on Benedict Anderson and David Miller, that in the circumstances of diversity "political relations and state unity can only be achieved by the use of symbols, and rituals as symbols, which relate each to each and to the whole on the imaginary level". More concretely, "state institutions must deploy myths and associated symbols of 'nationhood' in such a way that all citizens orient to these in such a way as to understand themselves as related to their fellow citizens and to the whole"[4].

However, as Frazer herself emphasized, the mythical justification of the prevailing political order is usually provided by self-interested political elites, who prefer to deploy the instruments of exclusion, rather then more integrative ways of defining the state and the political community, definitions in which the different segments of the society relate each to each and to the whole on the imaginary level. In addition to this internal contradiction, Frazer's account bears a second one: when anchoring her interpretation of the ideal political community in the sphere of communitarian political theory, she is obliged to assume the consequences of what she sees to be one of the distinctive feature of political communitarianism:

> "Communitarians argue that the conduct of political life must be congruent with the conduct of community life. That is, the culture inhering in political institutions of the state and the locality, must fit with the cultural life people live in their communities – their local area of residence, their schools and workplaces and churches"[5].

Two consequences follow from here, equally problematic for contemporary olitical theory: (1) the political community is justified to seek homogeneity in order to

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[1] Elizabeth FRAZER, *The Problems of*…cit, p. 241.
[2] *Ibidem*, pp. 224-225.
[3] *Ibidem*, p. 239.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 242.
[5] *Ibidem*, p. 238.

secure the congruence between politics and culture; (2) when the conduct of community life at the level of the state differs from the one in certain local areas of residence than the latter are entitled to seek congruence between politics and culture by claiming the status of separate political community.

The salience of communitarianism in political thought on the nature and functions of political community, as well as the exclusionary and homogenizing consequences of the dominant interpretations of the term have been acknowledged by Andrew Linklater, too, who explores the issue from the perspective of the theory of international relations[1]. Building on Hegel, he emphasizes the importance of the communities' fundamental right to protect ″their different ways of life″, a right which stems from the ″importance which human beings attach to their membership in specific bounded communities″. By exercising this right, through self-determination and the principle of sovereignty, communities create the appropriate frameworks of freedom, in accordance ″with the unique experience and distinctive tradition of different forms of life″[2].

Self-determination and the principle of sovereignty, however, often generate various forms of exclusion. Sovereignty, warns Linklater, ″is exclusionary because it frustrates the political aspirations of subordinate cultures″[3]. It also involves the right to closure: communal self-determination, the right of a community to determine its own affairs cannot be considered complete, if it does not include the right to decide who can and who cannot enter the community. In order to preserve its autonomy and distinctiveness, the political community is forced to harden boundaries which separate insiders from outsiders. The hegemonic political discourses, which ″set the rules of the game″ in Frazer's terms, are important instruments of the closure since they are meant to

> ″…channel human loyalties away from potentially competing sites of power to centralizing and monopolizing sovereign states which endeavoured to make national boundaries as morally unproblematic, as possible″[4].

What resulted from the practical need of political communities to protect their distinctiveness and particular way of organizing social life was a process through which ″more inclusive and less expansive forms of political association failed in the struggle for survival″[5]. The form of political community which prevailed as the result of this evolution is one which is ″too puffed up and too compressed″ at the same time:

> ″…too puffed up, or universalistic, because the needs of those who do not exhibit the dominant cultural characteristics have frequently been disregarded; too compressed, or particularistic because the interests of the outsiders have typically been ignored″[6].

It is not difficult to discover in Linklater's account the same tension which has been identified by Frazer between the ″thin″ and ″thick″ versions of the idea of

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[1] Andrew LINKLATER, *The Transformation of*…cit.
[2] *Ibidem*, pp. 49-53.
[3] *Ibidem*, p. 61.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 29.
[5] *Ibidem*, p. 28.
[6] *Ibidem*, p. 193.

political community. As Linklater observes, a major dilemma for communitarian political thought originates from this tension: the challenge to think of the sovereign state as the only alternative to the cosmopolitan argument for enlarging the moral frontiers to include the whole humankind, on the one hand, and to take issue with the sovereign state which deprives local communities of the right to self-determinationand, on the other.

Linklater believes that political communities accepted by the international legal order are far less "finished and complete" than neo-realism has depicted them. Many states are "incomplete", political communities are often "precarious", and what is needed in the current phase is exploring new forms of political community, together with a "more comprehensive understanding of what it means to be a full member of a political community"[1].

The shortcomings of the dominant conception of modern political community – in which sovereignty, territoriality, citizenship and one dominant ethnocultural community are wedded together, impoverishing, as Linklater puts it, Western political imagination – can be overcome in his view through a triple transformation of the idea of political community: by greater respect secured for cultural differences (1); stronger commitment for the reduction of internal inequalities (2); significant advancements in universality (3)[2]. Progress in these three directions would have, according to Linklater, the impact of "deepening and widening" the sense of the concept[3], as well as offering a solution to the problem of those groups which "do not feel at home in the political community"[4]. In addition to narrowing the distance between the "thin" and "thick" interpretations of the term, the suggested triple transformation has also the potential to bridge the gap between communitarian and cosmopolitan political thought on the nature of political community:

> "Far from being antithetical, communitarianism and cosmopolitanism provide complementary insights into the possibility of new forms of community and citizenship in the post-Westphalian era. They reveal that more complex associations of universality and difference can be developed by breaking the nexus between sovereignty, territoriality, nationality and citizenship and by promoting wider communities of discourse"[5].

Linklater's account, which is critical and visionary at the same time, will probably not represent the last word in political theory on the prevailing nature and predictable future of the political community. By linking the issue of political communities to the question of self-determination, he sheds light, however, to the critical aspect of the conditions in which a political community is constituted. When communities take possession – in political sense – of themselves, by stepping on the road of self-determination, they often take possession of other, subordinated groups as well, who do not share the agreement on the justified nature of the emerging political unit. If the way in which a political community had been constituted is

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[1] *Ibidem*, p. 187.

[2] With regard to the de-territorialization of the political community see also David CHANDLER, "The Possibilities of Post-territorial Political Community", *Area*, vol. 39, no.1, March 2007, pp. 116-119.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 60.

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 187.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 60.

an issue and remains contested for a long period of time, democratic proceduralism regularly cannot offer a solution[1]: the subordinated groups will be excluded from the community of discourse, or if not, their voices will remain unheard.

Identity Structures and Ethnopolitical Options in the Romanian Public Opinion

I will present in what follows the prevailing identity structures and ethnopolitical strategies as reflected in public opinion polls and researches conducted in the past years[2].

As far as the dominant identity structures of Romanians and Hungarians are concerned, important similarities and differences were observed by Raluca Soreanu, who investigated the databases of a series of surveys conducted between 2000 and 2002[3], on samples representative for the population of Romania. The polls used questionnaires fairly similar so as to allow comparison and drawing conclusion concerning the evolution of the investigated indicators[4].

Analyzing the distribution of answers recorded with regard to the question: ”*According to your opinion, which are the three most important circumstances on the basis of which somebody can be considered Romanian/Hungarian?*” Soreanu compiled the table reproduced in *Annex 1* (the percentages represent the sum of the first, second and third options).

It is interesting to note that while the way in which Romanians define both the *in-group* and the *out-group* is quite similar with the Hungarians' views on the fundamentals of ”Romanianness”, the auto-identification of the Hungarians in Romania is significantly different, laying emphasis on mother-tongue and feelings, instead of place of birth and citizenship. The most important conclusion of Soreanu's analysis is however the fact that according to the way in which Romanians predominantly define ”Hungarianness”, Hungarians in Transylvania do not qualify in this category, since they are not born in Hungary and are not Hungarian citizens.

Based on these findings, Soreanu considers that the relationship between the three identities – Romanian, Hungarian and Hungarian in Romania – can be represented graphically as reproduced in *Annex 2*.

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[1] ”We cannot solve the problem of the proper scope and domain of democratic units from within democratic theory. Like the majority principle, the democratic process presupposes a proper unit. *The criteria of the democratic process presuppose the rightfulness of the unit itself*. If the unit is not proper or rightful – if its scope and domain is not justifiable – then it cannot be made rightful simply by democratic procedures.” Robert A. DAHL, *Democracy and Its Critics*, Yale University Press, New Haven–London, 1989, p. 207. Italics in the original.

[2] This part of the paper is an ammended version of a similar chapter from Levente SALAT, ”Prevailing Identity Structures and Competing Ethnopolitical Strategies in Transylvania”, *Hungarian Studies*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2007, pp. 19-60.

[3] *Ethnobarometer – Interethnic Relations in Romania*, Research Center for Interethnic Relations, Cluj, May-June 2000; *Barometer of Ethnic Relations*, Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, Cluj, November 2001; *Barometer of Ethnic Relations*, Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, Cluj, October 2002.

[4] Raluca SOREANU, ”Autodefinire și heterodefinire a românilor și maghiarilor din România. O analiză empirică a stereotipurilor etnice și a fundamentelor diferite de definire a identității etnice”, in Gabriel BĂDESCU, Mircea KIVU, Monica ROBOTIN (eds.), *Barometrul Relațiilor Etnice 1994-2002. O perspectivă asupra climatului interetnic din România*, CRDE, Cluj, 2005, pp. 65-88.

Romanians accept Transylvanian Hungarians in the civic *in-group* provided that they do not consider themselves Hungarians (which equals with the fact that they see them as Romanians). Since this is not the case – Transylvanian Hungarians strongly consider that they belong to the culturally defined Hungarian nation –, the concept of the "Romanian civic nation" is void in the sense that it falls back to the ethnic concept of the nation – according to the way in which the Romanian Constitution defines it.

Interpreting the findings of the same research, Irina Culic observes that while the self-definition of Romanians is a "mixed territorial-cultural construct", the self-definition of Hungarians in Transylvania is "*par excellence* cultural"[1]. This difference in self-perception leads in her view to the following patterns of exclusion:

> "The Romanians 'enjoy' their nation, while the Hungarians are excluded from it. Or, to concieve the situation from an other point of view, the Hungarians exclude themselves from it, by entering the 'club' of the Hungarian nation, and enjoying its goods and services"[2].

Similar results were recorded by a survey conducted in 1997 as part of a broader comparative research focusing on the Carpathian Basin, initiated by the Eötvös Lóránd University of Budapest, under a UNESCO program on national minorities. The component of the research focusing on Romanian identified significant differences in the dominant identity structures of Romanians and Hungarians in Romania. While 75% of the Romanian respondents' opinions reflected total or partial agreement with the statement that for somebody to be considered Romanian it is necessary to be born in Romania, in the case of the Hungarians only 9% of the respondents agreed totally or partially with the corresponding statement: for somebody to be considered Hungarian is necessary to be born in Hungary. If the question referred to the relationship between citizenship and identity, 78% of the Romanian respondents agreed totally or partially with the statement according to which for somebody to be considered Romanian it is necessary to have Romanian citizenship, while only 18% of the Hungarian respondents took a similar stand with regard to the corresponding question referring to the relationship between Hungarian identity and Hungarian citizenship[3].

Based on the data of the Carpathian Basin research, Irina Culic observes the following:

> "The dilemma of the minoritarian is an important source of tension. First, for the member of the minority community who has to choose often between the two identities, civic and national (ethnic). In many cases, without regard to the alternative which defines, in a given circumstance, the person's actions, attitudes and options, the result seems to be that of a zero, or even negative sum game. In most of the cases in which ethnicity (identity) matters, the two alternatives cannot be reconciled. Second, the duality of the minoritarians' identity is a sourse of tension for the members of the majoritarian

[1] Irina CULIC, "Nationhood and Identity: Romanians and Hungarians in Transylvania", in Balázs TRANCSÉNYI, Dragoș PETRESCU et al (eds.), *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies*, Regio Books-Polirom, Budapest-Iași, 2001, p. 237.

[2] *Ibidem*, p. 241.

[3] Irina CULIC, "Dilema minoritarului: între identitate civilă și identitate națională", in Irina CULIC, István HORVÁTH, Cristian STAN (eds.), *Reflecții asupra diferenței*, Editura Limes, Cluj, 1999, p. 43.

nation, too. The ambivalence of the minoritarian generates mistrust, uncertainty, suspicion. The majoritarian expects a kind of loyalty which is unattainable for the minoritarian"[1].

Culic believes that the situation could be possibly changed by providing more substantive rights to the Hungarian minority. She is aware, however, that even if the loyalty of the Hungarian minority towards the Romanian state could probably be enhanced in this way, the reactions of the Romanian majority is more difficult to foresee:

"A different type political and civic formalization of the minority's situation (maximal educational rights in the language of the minority, cultural and territorial self-government, or other forms of civic and political organization) might probably change the substance of the minority's identity construction, though it is debatable how such a change could come about, as well as the way in which the majority would relate to the minority in this situation"[2].

Other variables of the already mentioned surveys conducted in 2001-2002 seem to offer several responses to the above question posed by Culic. As far as the dominant views regarding the most important ethopolitical options of Transylvanian Hungarians – autonomy, education in mother-tongue, Hungarian language state university, state subsidies for the Hungarian culture, double citizenship, assistance offered by the Hungarian state – are concerned, the situation, as reflected in the surveys, is presented in *Annex 3*[3].

It is evident from the data that while the enlisted objectives are supported by the large majority of the Hungarian respondents, the resistance of the Romanian population is considerable, especially as far as the issue of autonomy is concerned.

Regarding the way in which the topic of Hungary's involvement is concerned, the opinions are distributed according to the diagram reproduced in *Annex 4*.

The tendencies reflected in the above are being confirmed by subsequent polls, too. A survey conducted in 2003[4] recorded, for instance, the distribution of opinions about Hungarians in Romania as presented in *Annex 5* (the distribution does not include the opinions of those respondents who declared to be Hungarians).

In December 2006 a new nationally representative survey was realized and a research report compiled which compares the recorded results with the ones registered in the already mentioned 2002 poll[5]. As far as the opinions regarding the role and involvement of the Hungarian state are concerned, the situation evolved as illustrated in *Annex 6*.

Concerning the relationships between the Romanian state and the Hungarian minority, measured with the level of acceptance by the Romanian public opinion of the Hungarians' ethnopolitical options, the evolution is reflected by the table reproduced in *Annex 7*.

[1] *Ibidem*, p. 46.

[2] *Ibidem*.

[3] Ioana PAUL, Mirela TUDORAN, Luiza CHILARIU, "Români și maghiari. Reprezentări in-grup, out-grup în cazul grupurilor etnice din România", in Gabriel BĂDESCU, Mircea KIVU, Monica ROBOTIN (eds.), *Barometrul Relațiilor Etnice*...cit, pp. 89-117.

[4] *Intoleranță, discriminare și autoritarism în opinia publică*, Institutul pentru Politici Publice-Gallup, București, septembrie 2003.

[5] *Climat interetnic în România în pragul integrării europene*, Guvernul României. Departamentul pentru Relații Interetnice, București, 4 decembrie 2006.

The report compares the evolution of the opinions regarding the quality of the Romanian-Hungarian relations, too. In this respect the situation evolved as presented in *Annex 8*.

The slightly diminished level of acceptance of the involvement of the Hungarian state and the decrease of the support for the ethnopolitical objectives of the Hungarian minority, together with the quite significant increase in the share of the respondents who see the Romanian-Hungarian relations more loaded with conflict is explained in the report by the reinforcement of ethnocentrism, due to the increased visibility of the Hungarian language in the public spaces (in accordance with the provisions of the public administration law adopted in 2001) and the renewed public debate around the autonomy claims of the Hungarian political elite in Transylvania[1]. It is interesting to note that those respondents who appreciate the relations as being based on collaboration (30.8%) see as one of the major advantages of Romania's EU accession the legal framework of the EU which will curb the autonomy claims of the Hungarians' political organization (DAHR). The same respondents consider that the idea of autonomy is subversive and equals with a political attack against the etnopolitical *status-quo*[2].

The Hungarian analysis of the data recorded in Transylvania during the 1997 Carpathian Basin research identified different types of cleavages in the Hungarian and the Romanian population in Transylvania[3]. According to Csepeli, Örkény and Székelyi, Hungarians in Transylvania can be categorized in four clusters by the fear-hope and the nationalist-assimilationist axes. Close to 60% of the Hungarian population belong to the category of the ″worried″, which includes persons who do not situate themselves at large distance from Romanians, but their networks do not include members of the majority, and they perceive a high level of conflict generated by all actors involved. A second category, the ″moderate optimists″, comprising 20% of the Hungarian population in Transylvania, includes persons who situate themselves at a larger distance from the majority, but they consider that all actors are interested in reducing the tensions. Another 10% of the Hungarians are labeled as ″nationalists″ by the analysis: the persons included in this cluster situate themselves at large distance from the Romanians, they relation networks do not include members of the majority and they consider that the tensions are intensified by the Romanians and mitigated by Hungarians and the international organizations. The remaining 10% constitute the cluster of the ″integrated″. The persons belonging to this category have an extended network of relations with Romanians, do not feel any social distance from the majority, and consider that the tensions are generated by Hungarians and the international organizations.

As far as the dominant patterns of thinking about the Romanian-Hungarian relationships in the case of Romanians in Transylvania are concerned, Csepeli, Örkény and Székelyi identified three clusters. The first category is labeled as the ″distance-keepers″, comprising 47% of the Romanian population. The persons belonging to this cluster do not define a large social distance from Hungarians, but they have no Hungarian networks at all, and they blame mainly the Romanians and the international organizations for keeping the tensions high. The second cluster includes the ″nationalists″, who sense a large social distance from Hungarians,

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[1] *Ibidem*, p. 11.

[2] *Ibidem*.

[3] György CSEPELI, Antal ÖRKÉNY, Mária SZÉKELYI, *Nemzetek egymás tükrében*, Balassi Kiadó, Budapest, 2002, pp. 40-42.

their networks do not include members of the minority and they consider that the tensions are generated by Hungarians, while Romanians and the international organizations try to alleviate the conflict. This cluster comprises 46% of the Romanian population in Transylvania. The last category, consisting in 7% of the Romanians, is labeled as the ”accommodators”, who do not feel large social distance, their networks include many Hungarians and they believe that Hungarians mitigate, Romanians intensify, and international organizations mediate the conflict. For a more illustrative comparison of the dominant relational patterns as reflected in the 1997 Carpathian Basin research see *Annex 9*.

The research report of the polling institute that conducted the 2006 survey contains further interesting data about the level of acceptance of the Hungarian language in public spaces, and on the way in which the role and activity of the Hungarians' ethnic party (DAHR) is appreciated[1].

As far as the opinions regarding the implemented language rights are concerned, the situation registered by the 2006 poll is reflected in the chart reproduced in *Annex 10*.

The report includes an interesting comparison of the way in which the opinions concerning the role and impact of the DAHR were reflected in the 2000, 2002 and 2006 polls. The percentages in the chart reproduced by *Annex 11* reflect the opinion of the Romanian respondents only.

The predominance, in 2006, of the Romanian respondent's negative opinion with regard to the impact of the DAHR's activity is reflected by the set of data reproduced in *Annex 12*, too.

Further interesting aspects are offered by two researches with focus on younger generations. A research conducted in 2004 which included quantitative and qualitative components, too, revealed that the intolerance identifiable at the level of younger generations (aged between 15 and 35) is due mainly to difficulties of communication with Hungarians, who prefer to speak in their language even in the presence of Romanians. Younger generations of Romanians consider that the Hungarian minority has too many rights (representation in Parliament, and they ”aspire even to leading positions within the Romanian state”) and that the objective of the Hungarian community is ”to impose a system in their own language, and they want to govern themselves”[2].

Another qualitative research conducted in 2006 on the dominant values of Romanians aged between 15 and 25 confirms these findings. The participants in the focus-groups generally consider that the Hungarians in Romania have too many rights (in some instances: more than the Romanians), they are disturbed by the fact that Hungarian language is spoken in public and they firmly refuse the idea of autonomy. Some consider that the Hungarians are ”aggressive” and ”they do not like the Romanians”. More than half of the participants would not accept a Hungarian in the family and one third refuse to have Hungarian friends. The report mentions minor regional differences and considers that the members of the 20-25 years age group are slightly more intolerant[3]. These two researches prove that the

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[1] István HORVÁTH, *Relații interetnice în pragul integrării europene. Câteva tendințe comentate* (Research Report), Max Weber Institute, Cluj, 2006.

[2] *Tânăr în România. Raport de cercetare cantitaivă și calitativă*, British Council-Gallup, București, 2004, p. 9.

[3] *O perspectivă asupra valorilor tinerilor din România*, British Council-ORICUM, București, 2006, pp. 68-81.

dominant way of judging Hungarians and their relationship with the Romanian state have been reproduced during the last 17 years.

Though its perspective is significantly different, the overall image emerging from the above is reinforced also by a comprehensive research coordinated by Rogers Brubaker, focusing on the interethnic relations of Cluj, conducted between 1995 and 2001[1]. Though the patterns of ″everyday ethnicity″ investigated by the fieldwork are predominantly peaceful and only occasionally loaded with tensions, the price paid for the peace seems to be avoiding systematically any substantive debate concerning the unsettled issues of Romanian-Hungarian coexistence in Transylvania: various ″everyday coping strategies″ are deployed both by Romanians and Hungarians to avoid confrontation over sensitive issues or to downplay the importance of controversial aspects.

Conclusions

Returning now to our question concerning the Romanian political community, the investigations above entitle us to draw the following conclusions. If we bare in mind, following Frazer, the ″thin″ interpretation of the concept, the Romanian political community qualifies without doubts. However, if we consider the ″thick″ version of its significance, the entirety of the Romanian citizens, which includes the members of the Hungarian minority, falls short of the criteria of the ideal political community for several reasons.

Though territory and political institutions are common, and the proof of political participation of members of the Hungarian minority is undeniable since 1920, values, political culture, national and political identity, the sense of allegiance are, as the evidence of the polls and researches demonstrate, far from being shared by the large majority of Romanians and Hungarians in Romania.

In the wider community of discourse, instead of a definition of the state in which the Romanian and Hungarian segments of the society relate each to each and to the whole, as the normative provisions of the theory would recommend, we see those patterns and agents of exclusion which Frazer and Linklater talk about, providing justification for the political order according to the majority's interest. The Romanian Constitution, adopted in 1991 over the opposition of the Hungarian community and amended in 2003 without taking into account the Hungarians' desires, continues to define the state as being based on the unity of the Romanian people, with reference to the ethnic and cultural sense of the term. The Constitutions makes clear also – in accordance with the political communities' fundamental right to protect their own way of life, acknowledged, as we have seen, by political theory – that the Romanian state serves the interests of the ethnically defined Romanian people, which is the exclusive beneficiary of the state's sovereignty. According to special provisions (Art. 152), any future changes concerning the official language, forms of autonomy or federalism are excluded, which means that the renegotiation of the way in which the different segments of the population relate to one-another and to the whole is excluded by the Constitution.

[1] Rogers BRUBAKER, Margit FEISCHMIDT, Jon FOX, Liana GRANCEA, *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, Princeton University Press, Princeton-Oxford, 2006.

There is a problem, too, whith the way in which the political community was constituted. As a matter of fact, in Transylvania one can talk about a tradition of mutual ignorance among the cultural communities: in 1848 when a national assembly in Cluj adopted the unconditioned unification of Transylvania with Hungary, neither the Germans (Saxons), nor the Romanians agreed. In 1918, when a Romanian national assembly in Alba Iulia declared the unconditioned unification of Transylvania with the Romanian Kingdom, the will of the Hungarian community was ignored, while the representatives of the German community adhered to the decision much later, subsequent to long negotiations with the representatives of the Romanian community[1].

The myths and symbols associated with the Romanian ″nationhood″ – the anthem, the national day, national heroes celebrated in public spaces – do not help Hungarians in Transylvania to feel related to their fellow citizens and to the whole of the political community either: on the contrary, they are permanently warned by those symbols that they are historical enemies of the Romanian people.

This is perhaps one of the many reasons for which Romanians and Hungarians failed throughout history to develop those common political institutions which could reproduce from generation to generation the interiorized ″reciprocal respect″, considered by Dominique Schnapper so critical for a ″stable″ nation or political community.

The lack of political institutions based on mutual trust and respect, as well as its consequences in the dominant paterns of relating to the other, are evident in the researches inventoried above. The data have also reflected negative trends in several concerns in 2006 as compared to 2000 and 2002. What is shared seems not to be privileged, for practical reasons, over disagreement and differences, and, as a result, Hungarians in Romanian evidently do not ″feel at home″ in the Romanian political community. The accentuated interest in autonomy, which equals with the desire to belong to a separate political community within which the enlisted disadvantages can be compensated, seems to be – beyond its historically rooted political justification claimed by the Hungarian political elite – a logical reaction on behalf of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania.

The case of the Romanian political community is evidently not singular. While the great majority of the political communities existing today can be considered as such according to the ″thin″ interpretation of the word, they often fall short if the ″thick″ interpretation provides the criteria. Moreover, the dominant elites of the political communities are guided usually by the ″thick″ version of the concept when they think of themselves, while they regularly recommend to the minority nations to relate to the prevailing political order according to the ″thin″ interpretation of the term.

Building on Linklater, an interesting question follows from the above: to what extent can the Romanian political community be considered ″finished and complete″? Are there still chances for more successful political projects, in Schnapper's sense, of integration which could foster in the future the ″deepening and widening″ of the Romanian political community? Though both the Romanian and Hungarian political elite seems for the time being uninterested in addressing similar questions, the issue might be brought on the agenda in the foreseeable future by advancements in the European Union, the evolution of the Roma question or developments in the Romanian-Moldavian relationships.

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[1] Cf: Károly KÓS, *Erdély*, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1988 (1934), pp. 85-86.

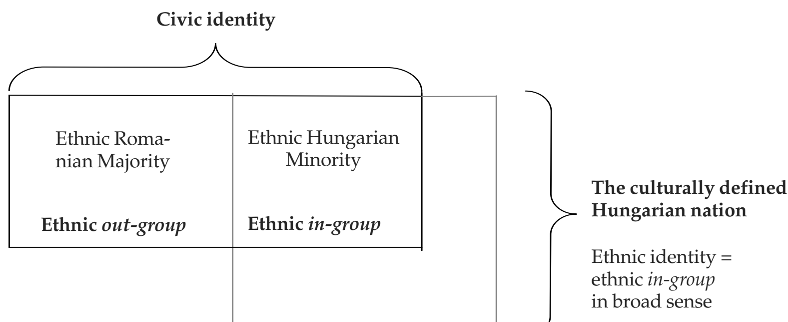
ANNEXES

Annex 1

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Autodefinition</th><th>Similarities/
Differences</th><th>Heterodefinition</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">ROMANIAN DEFINING:
the Romanian (active)
the Hungarian (passive)</td><td>To be born in Romania
63,7%</td><td rowspan="4">Significant similarity</td><td>To be born in Hungary
54,5%</td></tr>
<tr><td>To be Romanian citizen
36,8%</td><td>To be Hungarian citizen
40,9%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Romanian mother-tongue
41,9%</td><td>Hungarian mother-tongue
44,1%</td></tr>
<tr><td>To feel Romanian
31,5%</td><td>To feel Hungarian
30,5%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Similarities/
Differences</td><td>Significant similarity</td><td></td><td>Partial differences</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">HUNGARIAN DEFINING:
the Romanian (passive)
the Hungarian (active)</td><td>To be born in Romania
36,3%</td><td rowspan="5">Partial differences</td><td>Hungarian mother-tongue
75,4%</td></tr>
<tr><td>To be Romanian citizen
32,2%</td><td>To feel Hungarian
51,9%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Romanian mother-tongue
60%</td><td>Hungarian parents
43,3%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Romanian parents
34,2%</td><td rowspan="2">Baptized in a Hungarian Church
35,5%</td></tr>
<tr><td>To feel Romanian
34,5%</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Heterodefinition</td><td>Similarities/
Differences</td><td>Autodefinition</td></tr>
</table>

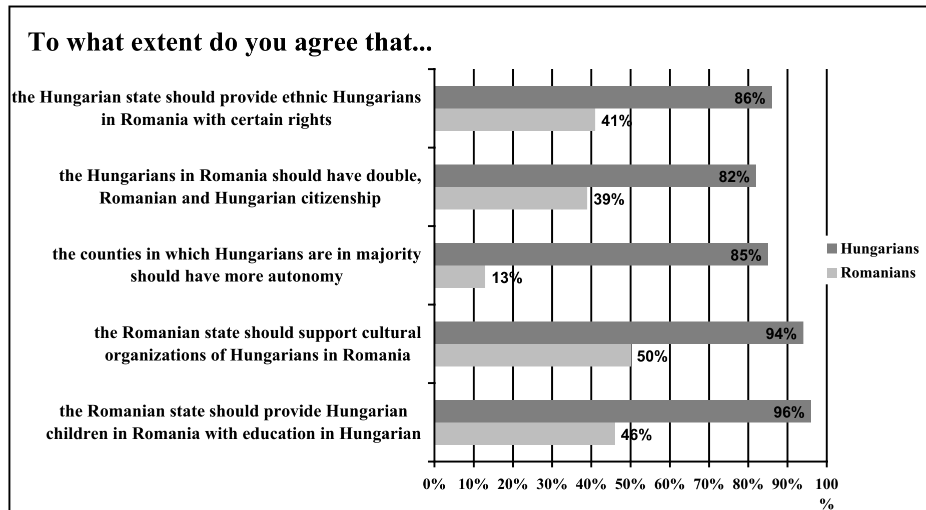
Source: SOREANU, 2005

Annex 2



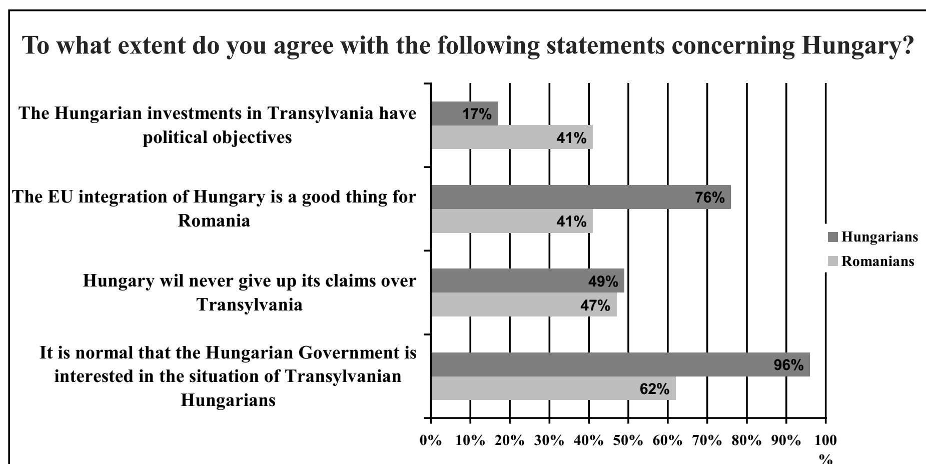
Source: SOREANU, 2005

Annex 3



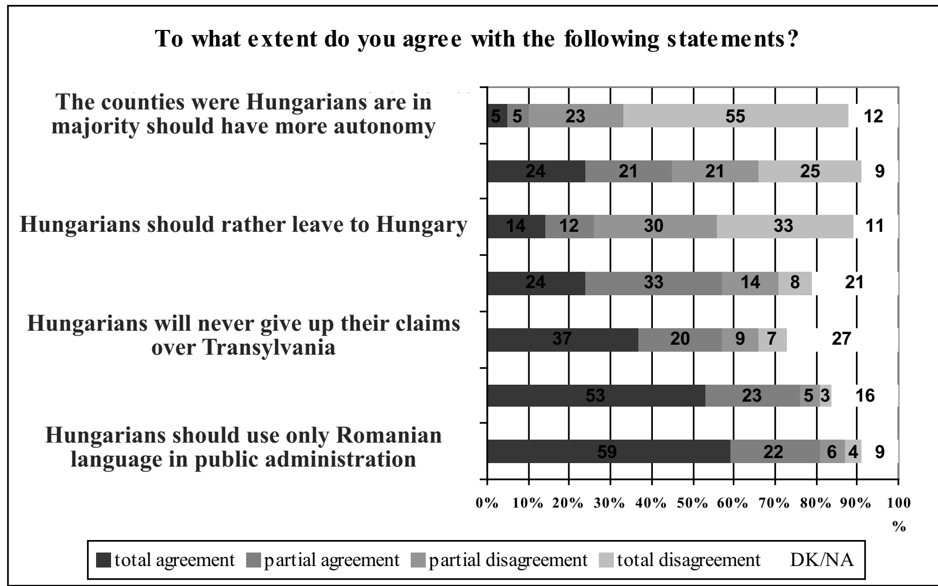
Source: PAUL, TUDORAN, CHILARIU, 2005

Annex 4



Source: PAUL, TUDORAN, CHILARIU, 2005

Annex 5



Source: IPP–Gallup, 2003

Annex 6

"In your opinion is it acceptable that the Hungarian state…"

	Agreement [%]		Disagreement [%]	
	2002	2006	2002	2006
encourages the Hungarian language education in Romania?	37.8	26	59	55
provides Hungarians in Romania with Hungarian language textbooks?	42.9	34	54	30
supports the Hungarian companies which invest in Romania?	64.1	57.3	31	45
strengthens its relations with political organizations of the Hungarians in Romania?	42.4	39	51	52
offers Hungarian citizenship to the Hungarians in Romania?	46	34	48	55

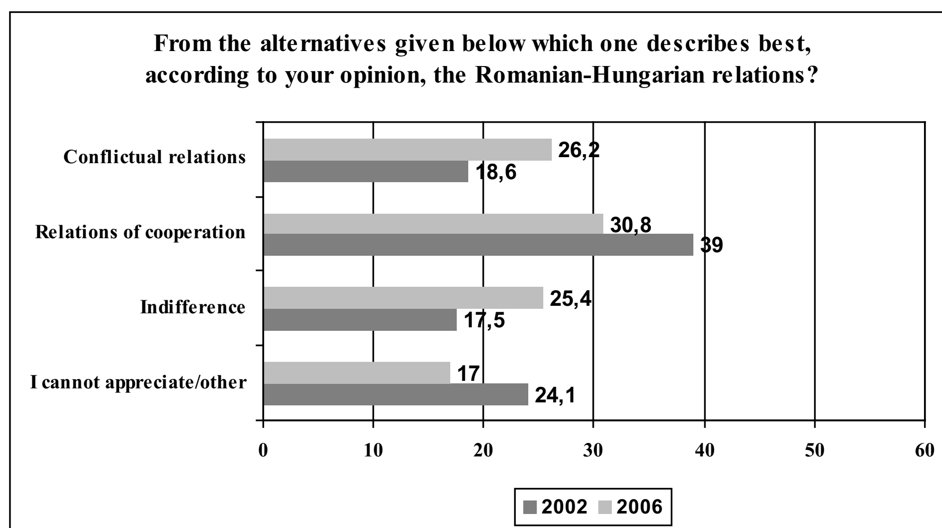
Source: Guvernul României, 2006

Annex 7

	Agreement [%]		Disagreement [%]	
	2002	2006	2002	2006
The Romanian state should provide education in Hungarian language for the Hungarian children.	47.2	46.2	50.2	47.4
The Romanian state should support cultural organizations of Hungarians in Romania.	55.6	51.1	41.5	39.4
The counties where Hungarians are in majority should have more autonomy.	18.6	13.8	77.8	75.5
It is good if Hungarians in Romania have double, Romanian and Hungarian citizenship.	44.1	40.1	50.6	49.2

Source: Guvernul României, 2006

Annex 8



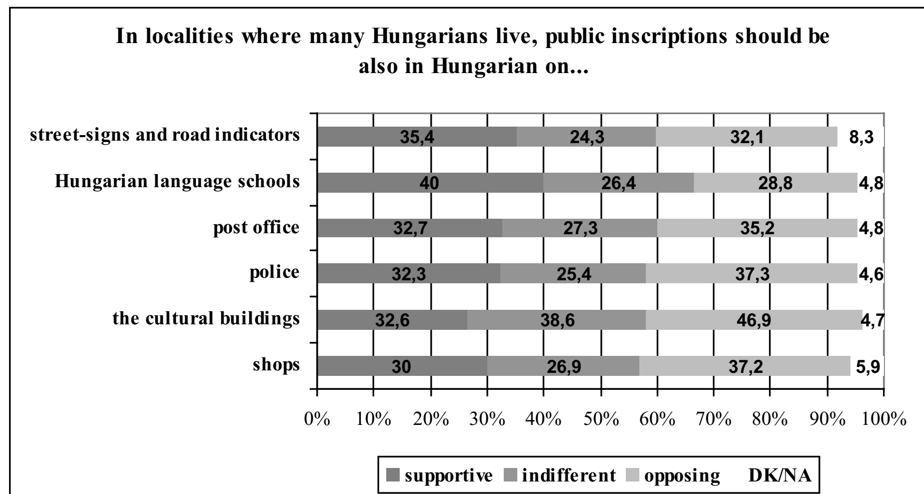
Source: Guvernul României, 2006

Annex 9

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Romanians</th><th colspan="2">Hungarians</th></tr>
<tr><td>"Nationalists"
- large social distance from Hungarians
- their networks do not include members of the minority
- consider that the tensions are generated by Hungarians, while Romanians and the international organizations alleviate the conflict</td><td>46%</td><td>"Nationalists"
- large distance from the Romanians
- their networks do not include members of the majority
- consider that the tensions are intensified by the Romanians and mitigated by Hungarians and the international organizations</td><td>10%</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Distance keepers"
- no Hungarian networks at all
- they blame mainly the Romanians and the international organizations for keeping the tensions high</td><td>47%</td><td>"Worried"
- their networks do not include members of the majority
- perceive a high level of conflict generated by all actors involved</td><td>60%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">"Accommodators"
- do not feel large social distance
- their networks include many Hungarians
- believe that Hungarians mitigate, Romanians intensify, and international organizations mediate the conflict</td><td rowspan="2">7%</td><td>"Moderate optimists"
- large distance from the majority
- they consider that all actors are interested in reducing the tensions</td><td>20%</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Integrated"
- an extended network of relations with Romanians
- consider that the tensions are generated by Hungarians and the international organizations</td><td>10%</td></tr>
</table>

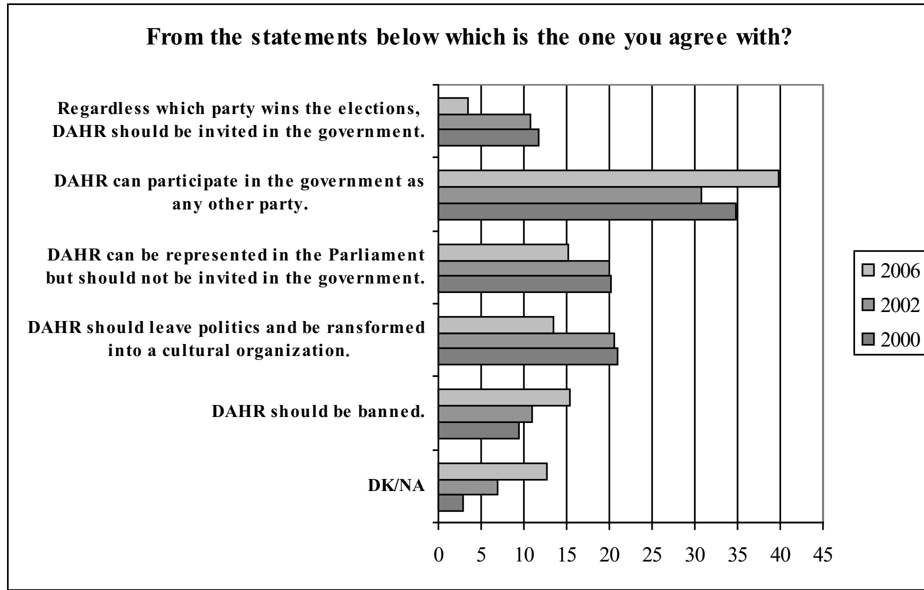
Source: Based on CSEPELI, ÖRKÉNY, SZÉKELYI, 2002

Annex 10



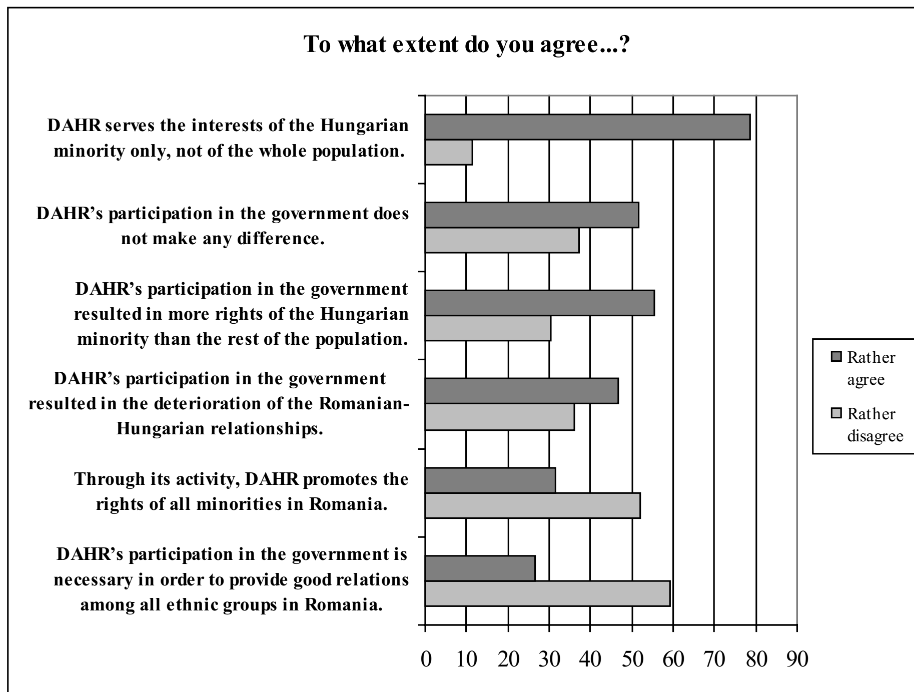
Source: HORVÁTH, 2006

Annex 11



Source: Based on HORVÁTH, 2006

Annex 12



Source: Based on HORVÁTH, 2006