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**JOBBIK: A BETTER HUNGARY AT THE COST OF
EUROPE**

by

Damon L. Smith

March, 2014

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Donald Abenheim
Carolyn Halladay

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JOBBIK: A BETTER HUNGARY AT THE COST OF EUROPE

Damon L. Smith
Major, United States Air Force
B.A., Utah State University, 1999

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Author: Damon L. Smith

Approved by: Donald Abenheim, PhD
Thesis Co-Advisor

Carolyn Halladay, PhD
Thesis Co-Advisor

Mohammed Hafez, PhD
Chair, Department of National Security Affairs

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ABSTRACT

Jobbik, an ultra-nationalist party in Hungary, was founded in 2003. By 2010, this party had secured national parliamentary representation and sent three representatives to the European parliament.

In its manifesto and public speeches, Jobbik has called for Hungary to leave the European Union and possibly the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to forge relations with, among other Eastern countries, Russia, China, and Iran. Meanwhile, the group rattles sabers—and nerves—on Hungary’s uneasy borders with Slovakia and Romania, states with significant Magyar minorities.

This thesis seeks to answer the following questions: What will a Jobbik-influenced Hungary mean for Europe and the European Union confronted by political, social and economic turmoil that can swiftly has security implications? What, if anything, can the EU or NATO do to influence the path of a once-promising democracy in the heart of Europe and the resurgent nationalist conflict in Eastern Europe?

This thesis concludes that Hungary will maintain its strategic usefulness to NATO regardless of whether it can maintain a Western-styled democracy—NATO’s other Allies will be content to defer action to other European institutions. The EU’s previous attempts to influence far-right governments have failed and many of the EU’s member states have human rights issues of their own—The EU is not likely to take meaningful action against Jobbik. Therefore, it is up to the Hungarians to save their own democracy.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ELTE	Eötvös Loránd University
EU	European Union
Fidesz	Alliance of Young Democrats
FPÖ	Freedom Party of Austria
GDP	gross domestic product
Jobbik	Right-wing Youth Association
MIÉP	Hungarian Truth and Life Party
MSZP	Hungarian Socialist Party
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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I. JOBBIK: A BETTER HUNGARY AT THE COST OF EUROPE

Jobbik, an ultra-nationalist party in Hungary, was founded in 2003. By 2010, this party had captured 16 percent of the popular vote in the Hungarian parliamentary elections and sent three representatives to the European parliament. The Hungarian Guard, created by Jobbik leadership, descended upon Roma neighborhoods as a show of force and intimidation, giving form to Jobbik's motto that Hungary is for the Hungarians and that "Gypsy crime" will not be tolerated. Jobbik has quickly gained international notoriety for anti-Semitic remarks and policy proposals.

In its manifesto and public speeches, Jobbik has called for Hungary to leave the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and to forge relations with, among other Eastern countries, Russia, China, and Iran. Meanwhile, the group rattles sabers—and nerves—on Hungary's uneasy borders with Slovakia and Romania, states with significant Magyar minorities. The party's 16 percent share of the electorate may not, in itself, bode ill for Hungary's democratic future among the institutions of pluralist, liberal, western values—yet. But Jobbik's fortunes are rising—as is the profile of the hard right generally in Hungary. This phenomenon mirrors the rise of neo-Nazi, radical right-wing and/or populist, nationalist movements not only in Central Europe, but in Western Europe as well.

Jobbik, as a movement and a legitimate political power in Hungary, seems to threaten to re-establish an autocratic or even fascist government in a country still struggling with its fascist and authoritarian past in the twentieth century. Meanwhile, the rest of Europe looks on, with its proverbial finger wagging about the pluralism and inclusive values upon which the EU has been erected, but which in the year 2014 are under assault from forces with strong resonances from a very unhappy past of integral nationalism, violence and conflict in Central Europe. As the sides square off, the basic questions remain unanswered: What will a Jobbik-influenced Hungary mean for Europe and the European Union confronted by political, social and economic turmoil that can

swiftly has security implications? What, if anything, can the EU or NATO do to influence the path of a once-promising democracy in the heart of Europe and the resurgent nationalist conflict in Eastern Europe?

A. IMPORTANCE

Jobbik has caught the attention of the West; even if the party never amasses the votes to obtain a parliamentary majority, it has already shown it can pressure mainstream politics toward the extreme right.¹ Hungarian democracy hangs in the balance; its fall may pull Hungary out of the EU and will surely create shockwaves throughout the region. Those who principal role it is to assure the security of the Euro-Atlantic area must realize that Jobbik should not be underestimated.

Hungary was in the first round of enlargement of NATO in 1999, along with the Czech Republic and Poland. Thus, it had at first a favored status that owed in part to Hungarian martyrdom in 1956, as well as to the nation's claim to belong to the heart of a free Europe. As such, both Hungary and its western allies have political and strategic reasons to favor a stable, democratic Hungary in the middle of Europe. Jobbik's increasing electoral success raises concerns about the future of Hungary in NATO. For example, on the operational level, Hungary is also home to a key NATO mobility air base—against which Jobbik rails as another instance of great-power meddling in its affairs as in times past when Turks, Austrians, Germans, or Soviets intruded along the Danube and the Carpathians.

Moreover, Hungary is surrounded in the heart of the continent by other Central and Eastern European countries that are also struggling to fortify their fledgling democracies now in an era of crisis following the high-flying hopes of the 1990s. Hungary has historic border disputes with Slovakia and Romania, to name a few, and Jobbik has made the nullification of the Trianon Treaty and the Beneš decree a key pillar of its platform. A Jobbik-led government, or even a sufficiently influenced coalition, thus

¹ András Bíró Nagy, Tamás Boros, and Zoltán Vasali, "More Radical than the Radicals: The Jobbik Party in International Comparison," in *Right-Wing Extremism in Europe*, ed. Ralf Melzer and Sebastian Serafin (Frankfurt: Druck, 2013), 243–50.

could result in a destabilized region and renationalized militaries in Central Europe, further imperiling the progress and stability of the EU and the Atlantic alliance.²

Although it is difficult to speculate about the alliances a Jobbik-led Hungary might succeed in establishing, Jobbik has made it clear that the party wishes to establish economic and political relationships with Russia, China, and various countries in the Middle East and Central Asia. Should these plans become reality, they may further Prime Minister Putin's vision of creating a Eurasian Union to compete with the European Union and re-extend Russia's influence into Europe. Other Central and Eastern European countries, struggling with democracy and less-than-anticipated economic success from Europe, are sure to be watching Hungary and could follow its lead. These scenarios are of keen interest to NATO and the U.S. government.³

B. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

Influential European countries, and the EU as a whole, have been unable or unwilling to effect change in Hungarian politics regarding human rights. The fact that the EU was quick to condemn new economic policies, enacted by Hungary's Orban government, shows that the eye of the West is upon them.⁴ Why, then, is the powerful EU content to wring its hands in the face of a surging extreme right in Hungary? The shared problem of extremist groups throughout Europe is one hypothesis. Extreme right groups exist in nearly every European country with varying levels of prominence.⁵ It seems that many EU member states are dealing with their own issues concerning far-right extremism—and these issues prevent them from acting in an effective and united manner against Hungary. Moreover, a resistance against encroaching globalization and the attending mixture of ethnic populations is a phobia that has found a welcome home

² Jobbik, "Radical Change: A Guide to Jobbik's Parliamentary Electoral Manifesto for National Self-Determination and Social Justice" (Jobbik Foreign Affairs Committee, 2010), 15, 21, <http://www.jobbik.com/sites/default/files/Jobbik-RADICALCHANGE2010.pdf>.

³ *Ibid.*, 2–3.

⁴ "Backing Down Gently; Hungary and the European Union," *The Economist*, February 25, 2012.

⁵ Peter Rieker, Michaela Glaser, and Silke Schuster, *Prevention of Right-Wing Extremism, Xenophobia and Racism in European Perspective* (Halle: Deutsches Jugendinstitut, 2006), 1–126; Ralf Melzer and Sebastian Serafin, eds., *Right-Wing Extremism in Europe* (Frankfurt: Druck, 2013), 5–8.

among the traditional cultures across the continent. The unwillingness of many EU nations to seriously confront the issue of far-right extremism results in its inability to deal with Jobbik with any level of legitimacy.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no shortage of scholarly articles describing the resurgent threat of fascism in the Carpathian Basin—the heart of Europe. Whether Jobbik is populist, extreme right, ultra-nationalist, or neo-fascist is up for debate, but in the end it may not matter. What is not debatable is the troubling and meaningful nature of the actions the party condones and the rhetoric proudly proclaimed from rallies in large cities and the intimidating marches in small villages.

1. Jobbik's Constituency: Confounding Observers' Expectations

At some level, Jobbik may look like a throwback to Hungarian fascism, but there is rather more going on in the party and in society that gives Jobbik a particular—and very contemporary—relevance. Griffin, Payne, and Paxton⁶ provide a general foundation to consider fascism in general and Hungarian fascism more specifically. Kenez again, along with Cohen and Weber,⁷ provides a glimpse into Hungary's particular relationship with fascism.

Karácsony's study⁸ reveals that the Roma issue crosses all party lines and gives Jobbik significant relevance and staying power as far as politics are concerned. Karácsony's, Barlai's, and Bartlett's⁹ studies conclude that Jobbik is not the stereotypical hooligan cell of neo-Nazis. They are not a group of unemployed, disenfranchised,

⁶ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 4–8; Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 7, 267–76; Robert O. Paxton, “The Five Stages of Fascism,” *The Journal of Modern History* 70, no. 1 (1998): 21–22; Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 20–26.

⁷ Asher Cohen, “Continuity in the Change: Hungary, 19 March 1944,” *Jewish Social Studies* 46, no. 2 (1984): 133; Eugen Weber, *Varieties of Fascism: Doctrines of Revolution in the Twentieth Century* (Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, 1982), 271–76.

⁸ Gergely Karácsony and Dániel Róna, “The Secret of Jobbik: Reasons Behind the Rise of the Hungarian Radical Right,” *Journal of East European and Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 61–92.

⁹ Jamie Bartlett et al., *Populism in Europe: Hungary* (London: Demos, 2012), 85.

skinheads who look for minorities to beat once they have had a few drinks. Jobbik is not satisfied with being a thorn in the side of the ruling party, but genuinely expects to *be* the ruling party. While there is a meaningful portion of undereducated and unemployed young men represented in the party, Jobbik's membership rolls include disproportionately high numbers of men and women with graduate-level education. This population at least ought to have something to lose in an anti-liberal political and social system, and yet great swathes of Hungary's middle and professional classes have found an ideological home in Jobbik. Barlai's conclusion summarizes the prevalent oversimplification regarding Jobbik:

The fact is that Jobbik's ... supporters are motivated in large part by a desire to protect identity, ideological and cultural considerations rather than economic ones. Therefore, the interpretation of Jobbik's success as a mere political consequence of the economic crisis is a false simplification. The results also stress that the Jobbik party should not be grouped together with other nationalist populist parties in Western Europe. While there are obvious similarities, the demographics, concerns and attitudes of Jobbik supporters—as well as the Hungarian context—differ in significant ways.¹⁰

Part of the story is the shift in prevailing views about the way forward in Hungary. Bartlett's study points out that far-right views have become surprisingly mainstream. A significant majority of Hungarians polled believed that Hungary would benefit from an "iron-fist" ruler, while another poll revealed a 23 percent decrease in respondents affirming that fascist groups are a danger to society.¹¹ Whatever stigma might have attached to fascism, even openly espoused, seems to be fading in Hungary.

Not all analysts agree on the characterization of Jobbik or the significance (or even the existence) of major discontinuities with earlier fascist forms in Hungary. For example, Kulinska¹² portrays Jobbik as a traditional fascist party, consisting of mostly young, economically depressed activists, arguing that Jobbik's popularity soared based

¹⁰ Melani Barlai, "Jobbik on the Web: Right-Wing Extremism in Hungary," *Call for Papers: CeDEM12: Proceedings of the International Conference for E-Democracy and Open Government*, 2013, 236.

¹¹ Bartlett et al., *Populism in Hungary*, 27.

¹² Elena Kulinska, "The European Extreme Right in 2010: A New Phenomenon or the Same Pattern?," *Western Balkans Security Observer* (English ed.) 5, no. 17 (2010): 57.

on its oversimplified, unprofessional, yet promising economic solutions. These voters, according to Kulinska, were eager to believe in the solutions and accept the party even if they might not agree with other, less savory, portions of the party's platform, namely anti-Semitism and abuse of the Roma minority. Jordan¹³ also seems to conclude that Jobbik's rise in popularity comes from the economic situation and Jobbik's ability to exploit Hungarian disillusion.

While Kulinska's argument seems to be widely accepted and propagated, the conclusions drawn from Karácsony, Barlai, and Bartlett suggest that economic suffering contributes only one tile to the mosaic that is Hungarian extremism. The previously mentioned studies reveal that Jobbik's popularity draws from a wide swath of the Hungarian population. While many of them may not yet feel comfortable associating themselves with Jobbik, it is clear they can sympathize. Any attempt to portray Jobbik as a marginal extremist group, born only of economic strife, misses the complex Hungarian context.

Hungary's virulent anti-Semitism was a major player in provincial and national politics and eventually gave way to fascism. Many countries in Europe flirted with fascism, but Hungary is one of the few countries where a fascist government actually came to power. It remains unclear if Jobbik will eventually take up the mantle of its fascist fathers but it seems evident that its motives and proposals are cut from the same cloth.

2. Jobbik Policies: A Guilty Pleasure throughout the European Right

For all these policies and positions, Jobbik is featured prominently in European headlines; Western European leaders are quick to condemn the group's anti-Semitic posturing and members' maltreatment of the Roma. Meaningful actions, however, have yet to be taken. It may well be that the rest of Europe cannot take particularly muscular

¹³ Michael J. Jordan, "The Roots of Hate," *World Policy Journal* 27, no. 3 (2010): 100–101.

actions in response to Jobbik because many of the EU countries have extreme-right movements similar to Jobbik within their own borders, guilty of many of the same contemptible behaviors.¹⁴

Many countries—for example, Germany—limit recognition of minorities, especially the Roma, in order to prevent the necessity of granting them rights. Other countries have refused to sign treaties designed to protect the rights of minorities, and the Roma in Italy¹⁵ may fare no better than the Roma in Hungary.¹⁶ Anti-Semitism within Europe justifiably seems to draw quick and severe domestic and international outcries; Muslim-directed discrimination garners some attention. Maltreatment of the Roma, however, receives comparatively little notice. It is possible that Jobbik may continue to persecute the Roma and receive nothing other than strongly worded letters from international organizations. Germany, Italy, and France may not take action against Hungary at the risk of similar actions toward their countries.

European economic woes, particularly in the so-called euro-zone, clearly contribute to the general trend on the continent toward right-wing or populist parties—though few of the older EU states acknowledge the issue. For example, Kulinska describes extreme-right movements within France, Belgium, and Austria, which have existed for decades, yet have not experienced electoral success until recently. She argues that both the EU and individual countries have ignored the extreme movements and have failed to present meaningful solutions to economic chaos. This ambivalence fostered a power vacuum for the extreme right to occupy. Right-wing extremism, it would seem, is a widespread problem in Europe; it just so happens that Hungary's skeletons have opened the door to their closet.

¹⁴ Cas Mudde, "Racist Extremism in Central and Eastern Europe," *East European Politics & Societies* 19, no. 2 (2005): 161–184.

¹⁵ Michael Johns, "Do As I Say, Not As I Do': The European Union, Eastern Europe and Minority Rights," *East European Politics & Societies* 17, no. 4 (2003): 695.

¹⁶ Sohrab Ahmari, "Dancing Over Catastrophes: The Far Right and Roma in Hungary," *Dissent* 59, no. 1 (2012): 16–21, DOI:10.1353/dss.2012.0002.

3. Ramifications

The possibility of Hungary returning to fascism is a sobering thought, but a logical question follows such an outcome. A dictator-led Hungary, determined to leave the EU and NATO, would most likely seek to replace economic and security-based alliances. Where would they go and what would it mean for Europe? What other consequences would come as a result of a dictatorship in the heart of Europe? Kagan¹⁷ explores possible alliances that Hungary might pursue. Russia and China have a history of supporting countries that act against the wishes of the West. Kagan's article supports Jobbik statements and press releases claiming that Jobbik is actively working toward economic alliances with Russia, Central and East Asia, Turkey, and the Middle East. While it is doubtful that Jobbik would trade membership in one union for another, the European Union would certainly not welcome the loss of Hungary to Putin's proposed Eurasian Union.

Largely missing from the reviewed literature is any discussion of the possible fallout for Europe if Hungary continues its backslide from democracy. While there are many articles devoted to the human rights situation, few look beyond to what other dominos might fall. NATO is surely aware of Jobbik's desire to renationalize Hungary's defense and possibly withdraw from the Alliance. A Jobbik-led government is certain to create increased tensions along the borders; the real or perceived maltreatment of ethnic Hungarians in Romania or Slovakia could possibly be another Eastern European powder keg.

D. METHODS AND SOURCES

Research for this thesis was conducted as both a historical study on Hungary as well as a case study of Jobbik. The historical portion of the research was limited only to the episodes that are deemed relevant to the formation of Hungary's less-than-fully-European identity as well as events that were influential to Hungary's prevalent view of victimization at the hands of foreign powers.

¹⁷ Robert Kagan, "League of Dictators?," *The Washington Post*, April 30, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/28/AR2006042801987.html>.

Materials for this research were limited to scholarly articles and books, relevant online periodicals as well as Internet publications issued by Jobbik. The material consisted mainly of English-language sources but included several Hungarian-language sources with the thesis author's translation to English.

E. THESIS OVERVIEW

The next chapter includes a brief historical overview of Hungary including its previous experiences with fascism during World War II. The historical portion is important to frame what makes Hungary unique in Europe and why their extreme tendencies should be viewed with serious concern.

The third chapter logically transitions to the forces and environment that facilitated the creation of Jobbik in 2003 as well as its rise to parliamentary representation in 2010. It describes Jobbik's domestic and international policies, focusing on those that give Jobbik its extreme profile.

Chapter IV documents Jobbik's connection with the Hungarian Guard and its potential to become a militant enforcer for a strong national party and government. It explores links and similarities between the modern guard and the World War II-era gendarmerie, which proved to be an efficient facilitator of Jewish deportation and other heinous acts.

Chapter V covers the ramifications of an autocratic or fascist state within the heart of Europe and discusses possible effects within NATO and the EU, as well as possible conflicts with nearby European nations. Chapter V also discusses what NATO and the EU can and should do to influence the course of Hungarian political and social changes. Finally, this chapter also discusses why Europe may not be able to effectively address the issues raised by Jobbik due to common extreme movements in many EU member states.

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II. THE HISTORY OF ANTI-SEMITISM AND FASCISM IN HUNGARY

To many observers of politics and security in Europe, particularly outside Hungary, Jobbik seems to draw on or continue the country's unhappy modern experience of anti-Semitism and ultra-nationalism—if not outright fascism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. All of these terms have very specific meanings within Hungarian history, however. This same history has informed and influenced Jobbik's development, though not, perhaps, in the ways that the handiest political labels might imply.

A. JEWS AND ANTI-SEMITISM IN HUNGARY'S PAST

To understand the sustained undercurrent of animosity between a large segment of so-called native Hungarians and Jewish Hungarians, one must appreciate the unexpected relationship between the two sides, dating back to the politics and society of the late seventeenth century. Amid circumstances peculiar to Hungary and the Habsburg lands in the east, the Hungarian Jews found themselves in a position of power and influence, lasting from the late eighteenth century through the interwar period. Peter Kenez captures the vital distinction for Jews in Hungary:

Hungarian Jewry was unique; its history was full of paradoxes and contradictions. Nowhere else did Jews come closer to dominating the economy and cultural life of a nation, nowhere else did the Jews play a more crucial role in the leadership of Marxist socialism, and nowhere else was the gap wider between assimilated and Orthodox Jews.¹⁸

Following the occupation of the Ottoman Empire, which ended in the seventeenth century with the victory of Habsburg armies in the so-called Turkish wars, Hungary was faced with a population shortage and a stagnant economy. The local nobility was eager to allow immigrants into the kingdom and contribute to its post-occupation revival; among the newcomers was a relatively small population of Jews as well as the Danube Swabians

¹⁸ Peter Kenez, *The Coming of the Holocaust: From Antisemitism to Genocide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 52.

from western Germany.¹⁹ These outsiders were welcomed along with the toleration tax²⁰ they would pay to the nobility in return for the promise of a better life.²¹ While the growing Hungarian Jewry did not escape completely from varying degrees of discrimination, Jews in Habsburg Hungary enjoyed more freedom and greater economic opportunities as compared to Jews in the Romanov parts of Poland or in Russia.²²

This difference in the experience of Hungarian Jews, in turn, inspired a somewhat different variety of anti-Semitism as it emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth century—one based on distrust, mutual violence, and xenophobia but also entwined in Hungary’s national development in very particular ways that diverge from the experience of Jews and nationalism in say France, Germany or Russia. In a sense, the record of anti-Semitism in Hungary is also the story of Hungary’s distinct path to (or toward) European history.²³

¹⁹ Ibid., 52–53. Kenez notes that a small population of Jews lived in the lands that would become Hungary from the time of the Romans; however, most of the Jews that settled in Hungary came from Bohemia, Moravia, and other Hapsburg regions. By the early eighteenth century, the Jewish population in Hungary was estimated to be 18,000.

²⁰ Ibid. The tolerance tax—essentially a levy on a given Jewish community for residence permission—was a regular obligation of most established Jewish populations in Europe to their respective monarchs. Before emancipation, it was not uncommon for rulers, particularly those with mounting debts in the wars among the absolutist regimes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to extort additional “special taxes” to fill their coffers. For example, “in 1713, the Jews of Prussia had to pay 20,000 Taler [as a community] for confirmation of their privileges. In 1714, they paid 8,000 Taler to prevent a law requiring all Jews to wear red hats. In 1720, they gave [King Frederick William I] 20,000 Taler as a ‘free gift.’” Steven M. Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family, and Crisis, 1770–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) p. 13.

²¹ Moshe Y. Herczl, *Christianity and the Holocaust of Hungarian Jewry*, trans. Joel Lerner (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 6–8. Unprecedented levels of rights were granted to the Jews following Jewish participation in the 1848–49 war between Hungary and the Hapsburg dynasty. A law granting rights equal to any other Hungarian was adopted while the war was still being waged, but after the failure of the revolution, the Austrians stripped the newly endowed rights from the Jews. In 1867, following Hungary’s recognized independence in the dual monarchy, a bill was unanimously passed through Parliament granting Jews political and civil rights equal any other inhabitants of the kingdom. The unintended consequence of this law was an anti-Semitic awakening among the general population as well among certain members of Parliament.

²² Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 52–53.

²³ Ibid., 54, 64–68.

1. Hungarian by Decree: Jewish Emancipation, Acculturation, and Assimilation

In Hungary, Jewish emancipation coincided with the transition of the bourgeois in estate Europe to the middle class of the industrial, national epoch, beginning with the reign of Joseph II (Holy Roman Emperor from 1765 to 1790 and ruler of the Habsburg lands from 1780 to 1790) and finalizing after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. As in the West, breaking with the reactionary and intolerant legacy of the past, Joseph II sought to deal with the “Jewish question” by fostering the assimilation of the Habsburg Jews—thus ensuring their loyalty to the crown and freeing up the community’s potential as subjects and taxpayers.²⁴ Schools and universities were opened to the Jews, and they were encouraged to learn German as the supra-national language of administration and assimilation in place of their native languages.²⁵

The emperor’s attempts to impose German-Austrian culture extended beyond the Jews to the rest of his subjects in the Hungarian half of the empire. Nineteenth-century Hungary was multicultural conglomeration of nations in the medieval sense and languages where native Hungarians were in the minority. Joseph II sought to use a united language and culture as a means to unite its people and centralize his Empire’s power. Things worked out rather differently in Hungary, however. “Ironically,” notes Kenez, “Joseph’s effort to impose Germanic culture was a great boost to the development of Hungarian nationalism Until this time being a member of the Hungarian nation meant possessing a set of political rights and privileges, regardless of language, but Joseph’s attempts to Germanize changed the concept of nation.”²⁶ The Hungarian

²⁴ Joseph II’s Edict of Toleration of 1782 started the process formally, although Jews in the empire continued to endure “endless restrictions, oppressive taxes, and a profoundly precarious legal status.” Marsha L. Rozenblit, “Jewish Assimilation in Habsburg Vienna,” in *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 227. See also, David Vital, *A People Apart: A Political History of the Jews in Europe 1789-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 36.

²⁵ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 54; Robert Gildea, *Barricades and Borders: Europe, 1800-1914*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 257–58. One can argue that one of the goals of Joseph’s edict was to encourage assimilation—or, more precisely, to facilitate the disappearance of the Jews as distinctive, “alien” elements in the Habsburg realm—by making the edicts privileges contingent on such concrete steps toward acculturation as abandoning Hebrew and Yiddish. Vital, *People Apart*, 35–36.

²⁶ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 55.

nationalists—by and large aristocrats—were determined to establish a nation based on a common culture and language—among their greatest allies were the Jews,²⁷ caught up in the intellectual currents of the day, particularly assimilation, emancipation, and Enlightenment.²⁸ “Of all the minorities that lived in the kingdom,” according to Kenez, “it was the Jewish minority that was the first, most successful, and most enthusiastic to convert to Hungarian culture, and language, while accepting the ruling classes’ definition of national interest.”²⁹

2. The Enlightenment: The Divergence of Two Europes

Clearly, the Enlightenment played out differently in Hungary (and, indeed, in all of Eastern Europe) than the Western European “model,” with significant ramifications on all that followed in terms of modernization, nationalism, capitalism, and eventually mass politics and culture. In France and other like-minded revolutionary societies, people sought to be viewed as individuals as opposed to members of a designated estate, race, or religion. The eclipse and/or destruction of the feudal system in the nineteenth century gave way to the middle class: the bourgeoisie and an emerging merchant class. The Enlightenment paved the way for the scientific and industrial revolutions, with the native middle class seizing the opportunity to take its place in the new capitalist, industrialized market. By the mid-nineteenth century, Western Europe had a new economic, political, and social system, empowered by a middle class from all walks of life: former peasants and nobles, Catholics, Protestants and Jews alike.³⁰

²⁷ Oscar Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), 320–22.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 173.

²⁹ Kenez, *The Coming of the Holocaust*, 55; Michael K. Silber, “The Entrance of Jews into Hungarian Society in Vormärz: The Case of the ‘Casinos,’” in *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 285. Silber also notes the comparatively low interest among Hungarian Jews in Zionism or other forms of Jewish nationalism, even though Theodor Herzl, Zionism’s most prominent contemporary advocate, was born in Budapest. *Ibid.*

³⁰ Gildea, *Barricades and Borders*, 7–24; Ivan T. Berend, *History Derailed: Central and Eastern Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 5–16; Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 11.

Meanwhile, Hungary, along with much of Central and Eastern Europe, experienced a second serfdom and feudal revival. Ottoman occupation, the Thirty Years' War, and other catastrophes resulted in a decimated population in Europe, especially among the peasants. The West responded by decreasing obligated labor service for the peasants as well as lowering their rent. The East, on the other hand, imposed greater controls on peasant mobility and introduced increased requirements for indentured labor service. As a result, serfdom ended in the West and was reinforced in the East.³¹

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, while the bounty of the Enlightenment—modernizing politics and economies, new and expanding opportunities for social and geographical mobility, and the rise of the modern nation—trickled down to most of the Western European population, however unevenly, the people of Europe's eastern half seemed hopelessly estranged from the leading developments. This divergence was especially acute among the rural masses. The liberated peasantry in Western Europe continued its intellectual and economic rise, fueled by the Enlightenment; Jews and non-Jews alike flourished in the emerging bourgeoisie. The Eastern European peasantry languished in oppression, neglected by an intellectual awakening that came too late. While this circumstance allowed the Hungarian Jews to thrive as a discrete middle class, it also left great masses of Hungarians to seethe about the inequities of their time and place. With modernity, prosperity, and national self-respect seemingly just out of reach, Hungary sublimated the frustrations of the age into increasing tensions between the anti-Enlightenment but pro-nationalist nobility and the continually suppressed peasantry.³²

3. Jews in Europe: Making the Most of a Bad Situation

The Jews' symbiotic relationship with the Hungarian nobles continued, earning them enviable positions of power and influence that was laden with the potential for eventual disaster in the age of nations and mass politics. This observation should not be

³¹ Berend, *History Derailed*, 18–20.

³² *Ibid.*, 34–35. As one signal example, the West had obtained 60 to 90 percent literacy by the year 1800, while in Hungary, fewer than 10 percent of the youth attended school. Moreover, nearly 70 years later, only 31 percent of the Hungarian population was literate. *Ibid.*

interpreted to mean that they were universally or even generally liked by the non-Jewish majority—the Jews certainly could not hope to accede to the Hungarian gentry, even if the nobles recognized the Jewish grasp of markets, industry, and banking.³³ The Jews proved to be invaluable, and in Hungary as nowhere else, irreplaceable.

Over the course of centuries, many Jews acquired characteristics that would serve them well in the modernizing world. Some were acquired from their culture, others, ironically, were obtained as a result of restrictions placed on them as outsiders. Kenez, a Hungarian Jew and survivor of the holocaust, lists the characteristics thus:

(1) The importance of engaging in...intellectual tasks, such as studying the Torah and Talmud, (2) the consequences of their exclusion from agriculture; (3) the Jews' concentration in commercial and financial occupations; and (4) the consequences of belonging to a persecuted minority, including the need to rely on one another.³⁴

Religious education among the Jews held a place of paramount prestige. Young boys prepared for manhood by learning to understand and argue religious texts with their elders, a process that resulted in near-universal literacy among males. Poor religious scholars were held in similar esteem as their wealthy coreligionists. When emancipation diminished the primacy of Jewish religious education, these habits of mind and manner transferred easily to the new order. Kenez argues, “What mattered was engagement with intellectual issues, rather than the particular subject matter. What better preparation to be a lawyer in a modern state than training in the interpretation of a difficult passage in the Talmud?”³⁵

Perhaps even more instrumental in the Jews' elevation to the middle class was their prohibition from agriculture in large swathes of Europe, from guilds, and from other occupations reserved for non-Jews. Because of these restrictions, Jews were not anchored to the medieval trades and skills soon to be lost to merchants and the Industrial Revolution, nor were they tied to the land via farms and mines. Thus, Jews were more

³³ Silber, “Entrance of Jews into Hungarian Society,” 287.

³⁴ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 15.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

likely to urbanize with the growth of such places as Vienna and Budapest, pre-positioning themselves both intellectually and geographically for new opportunities.³⁶

In the early modern period, Jews established a niche for themselves as money handlers for Christian leaders who were forbidden to lend money at a profit.³⁷ Jews also served as tax collectors for the monarchs and rent collectors for the nobles; this arrangement provided an intermediary between the rulers and the peasants. Unfortunately, the collectors became the face of the financial hardship of the transition to absolutist (and ultimately modern) governance; the peasants projected their disdain, once again, on the Jews. Meanwhile, the rulers padded their treasury not only from the taxes collected by the Jews but also *from* them in terms of a tolerance tax.³⁸

Finally, the Jews developed a strong sense of community as a result of continued persecution as well as out of religious obligation. Their ties of kinship extended past state boundaries, developing international coreligionist identities that often trumped their national identities, particularly in Eastern Europe, where nationalism developed more slowly and tentatively.³⁹ “This sense of belonging,” writes Kenez, “of being able to trust one another and thereby create international networks, came to be a great advantage in the development of modern capitalism.”⁴⁰

These silver linings, so to speak, were double-edged in an age of political and social upheaval that allowed old hatreds to secure a new basis. With the looming change in social structure, unlocked by the Jewish emancipation of the late nineteenth century, the European Jewry in general and Hungarian Jewry specifically, were poised for a golden age that was doomed to end abruptly. At the same time, according to Kenez, those disadvantaged by the tipping of the social and economic scale had a different view of the Jews:

³⁶ Jászi, *Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy*, 172–73.

³⁷ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1951), 11, 16.

³⁸ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 17.

³⁹ Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 17–18.

⁴⁰ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 18.

The other side of the coin was how antisemites saw those same Jewish characteristics. For them, Talmudic learning was merely an exercise in meaningless hair-splitting; Jewish mobility was the same as rootlessness; involvement in the banking business was just another name for the traditional Jewish ‘vice’ of usury and an unwillingness to engage in ‘healthy or useful labor;’ and the desire to help fellow Jews was clannishness.⁴¹

4. Jews in Hungary: From Golden Age to Scapegoat

Upon emancipation, the European Jewish population benefited equally from middle-class opportunities in the middle of the nineteenth century and later; even in Germany, 80 percent of the Jews were considered to be middle class. The crucial difference between Hungary and the rest of Europe is that the Hungarian Jewry had a near-monopoly on the middle class, as well as a disproportionate amount of its accompanying power and prestige. Of course, the prosperity would not last⁴²—the social segregation persisted and acquired ominous tendencies.⁴³

a. The Golden Era: From Ausgleich to World War I

By the late nineteenth century, the Hungarian Jewry, thanks to a strong birth rate and an influx of immigration, had grown from approximately 100,000 at the beginning of the century to nearly a million at its close. Hungary was still struggling to fully shed some of its outdated social stratifications, which persisted despite the efforts of even such notable activists as Louis Kossuth; the emancipated and overwhelmingly acculturated Jewish bourgeoisie emerged from the *Ausgleich* of 1867 into the cultural void between the nobles and the multi-ethnic peasants.⁴⁴

Jews were climbing the social, economic, and political ladders at unprecedented levels. According to Paul Lendvai, “There were 16 Jewish MPs in the parliament in Budapest...Baron Samu Hazai became Minister of War, whilst Theodor Herzl’s nephew Ferenc Heltai was the Mayor of Budapest. The appointment of Vilmos Vázsonyi, a

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 52; Gildea, *Barricades and Borders*, 166–7.

⁴³ Silber, “Entrance of Jews into Hungarian Society,” 285–88.

⁴⁴ Berend, *History Derailed*, 199; Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 53.

practicing Jew, as Minister of Justice in 1917 completed the symbolic breakthrough for the Jews who had become Hungarians.”⁴⁵ Assimilated Jews were now only visible for their triumphs. As a population, they performed well in universities; a disproportionate number of the faculty was Jewish. Many were successful in accumulating wealth and married into noble families that had lost their fortunes.⁴⁶

Their successful assimilation brought about a backlash that its proponents may not have expected. The rapid and extensive acculturation of so many Jews created a growing sense of apprehension among the resident anti-Semites. To them, Jewishness was not a religion but a separate race, an inescapable alien-ness in a belatedly but vigorously nationalizing Hungary. By this time, the acculturated and urbanized Jews became even more feared and hated than the Orthodox Jews who clung determinedly to their otherness; they became an invisible enemy capable of subverting their traditional Christian nation,⁴⁷ a veritable enemy within whose very existence imperiled the national project.⁴⁸

b. *The Interwar Period*

Hungary suffered greatly during the war and was handed an ignominious defeat at the Trianon near Paris. The historical events between the two wars are too numerous to reproduce here but two in particular deserve attention: The disruptive 1919 communist regime of Béla Kun and the Treaty of Trianon, which adumbrated Habsburg Hungary and historical Hungary. The former event further engrained the animosity between the Jews and non-Jews, while the latter scarred the Hungarian nationalist psyche so indelibly that it remains a bitter point of resentment today, as well as a major portion of Jobbik’s platform.

After a short-lived democratic republic at the end of World War I, an even shorter communist regime came to power in Hungary. The party was staffed with a

⁴⁵ Paul Lendvai, *Hungary: Between Democracy and Authoritarianism*, trans. Keith Chester (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 56.

⁴⁶ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 53–60.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 62, 290.

⁴⁸ Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 55, 60–62.

disproportionate number of Jewish members, although they did not consider themselves especially Jewish. What followed is known in Hungary as the Red Terror, as the Jewish Béla Kun and his accomplices terrorized property owners and other common bourgeoisie targets— Jews and non-Jews suffered alike, though the revolution was and is commonly seen as a Jewish-led Bolshevik revolt. A mixture of forces put down the Bolshevik revolution; chief among them was a group of extreme-right young men from Szeged. These counterrevolutionaries were well known for their anti-Semitic ideology,⁴⁹ and the so-called White Terror that followed the fall of the communist regime in August 1919 was “directed with special ferocity against Jews of all political persuasions or none at all....”⁵⁰ The year 1920 saw the passage of a *numerus clausus* law “that heavily restricted the entry of Jewish students into the country’s universities to the 6 percent held to be the Jewish proportion of the population at the time.”⁵¹ The new and embittered Hungarian nation seemed determined to reconstruct itself without Hungary’s Jews.

The Treaty of Trianon was signed at Versailles on June 4, 1920. By the terms of this pact, Hungary lost 71 percent of its territory to its surrounding neighbors—mostly going to Czechoslovakia and Romania—and 64 percent of its population. The loss of power, prestige, natural resources, and wealth can hardly be overstated. Trianon and its aftermath also precipitated the final devastations of what was left of the relationship between the Jewry and the Hungarian nationalists. Until now, the Jews had been valuable allies to the ethnic Hungarian nationalists. Together, they formed an effective coalition in maintaining order among the remaining minorities in Hungary. The result of Trianon was a near-homogeneous Hungarian population.

The only use the nationalists had for the Jews was to replace their recently departed bogey, the non-Magyar minorities.⁵² Perhaps the most striking example of this

⁴⁹ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 63–64; Lendvai, *Hungary: Between Democracy and Authoritarianism*, 57–58; Paxton, *Anatomy of Fascism*, 25.

⁵⁰ Vital, *People Apart*, 801.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Kenez, *The Coming of the Holocaust*, 67; Steven Béla Várdy, “The Impact of Trianon upon Hungary and the Hungarian Mind: The Nature of Interwar Hungarian Irredentism,” *Hungarian Studies Review* 10, no. 1 (1983): 21; Lendvai, *Hungary: Between Democracy*, 58.

new animosity—and the determination to delegitimize the Jewish presence in Hungary altogether—was the passage in June 1938 of the omnibus Law for the More Efficient Protection of the Social and Economic Balance, which sought to cap Jewish involvement in industry, commerce, banking, medicine, the law, and entertainment. “Henceforth, no more than 20 percent of the workforce in any given enterprise was to be of Jewish origin.”⁵³

In sum, the interwar period created the conditions that led to the violent, anti-Jewish excesses of the war years—and afterwards. The Revolution gave ammunition to those who believed the Jews wanted to take over the government of Hungary and would use violence to accomplish it. The Treaty of Trianon removed the usefulness of the Jewish nationalists as a loyal counterbalance to the non-Magyar minorities. By the time that Hungary marched into fascism, together with Admiral Horthy’s November 1919 march into Budapest, the country’s anti-Semitism had already undone a century or more of the Hungarian-Jewish experience.

B. HUNGARY’S FASCIST PAST: WILL IT BE JOBBIK’S FUTURE?

A discussion of Hungary’s fascist past and whether it has a future with Jobbik requires a cursory discussion on the general topic of fascism. Numberless authors and historians have attempted to define fascism. The number of definitions outstrips the individual attempts to define it; no one author agrees with another’s definition, and some authors cannot tie themselves to one answer. In many cases, a simple definition cannot even be reached; Roger Griffin lists 10 features that may apply to a fascist movement, ranging from anti-liberal to anti-conservative.⁵⁴ Not to be outdone, Stanley Payne lists 13 characteristics, adding considerations for the exaltation of youth and its emphasis on

⁵³ Vital, *People Apart*, 801.

⁵⁴ Griffin lists 10 features of fascism: 1) Fascism is anti-liberal, 2) Fascism is anti-conservative, 3) Fascism tends to operate as a charismatic form of politics, 4) Fascism is anti-rational, 5) Fascist ‘socialism,’ 6) Fascism’s link to totalitarianism, 7) The heterogeneity of fascism’s social support, 8) Fascist racism, 9) Fascist internationalism, and 10) Fascist eclecticism. Roger Griffin, *Fascism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4-8.

symbols, to name a few.⁵⁵ Robert Paxton makes a valiant effort at a concise definition: “Fascism is a system of political authority and social order intended to reinforce the unity, energy, and purity of communities in which liberal democracy stands accused of producing division and decline.”⁵⁶ He cannot, however, leave it so simply. Paxton argues that because of fascism’s amorphous nature, it must be observed in motion—as if to imply that fascism cannot be accurately defined, but “[We] know it when [we] see it.”⁵⁷ The sources do agree, however, that Hungary saw quite a bit of fascism.

1. Far-right and Fascist Groups Emerge

By the 1930s, three major anti-liberal nationalist groups had formed in Hungary. It must be emphasized that the groups were not necessarily the cause of the evident increase in ultra-nationalism and anti-Semitism; rather, they were the product of a long-latent racism, encouraged by rapidly deteriorating economic and political conditions. The amputation of nearly two-thirds of Hungarian territory resulted in a sizeable influx of displaced middle class and lower-ranking nobility. The incoming native Hungarians found that they were forced to compete with the resident Jewish middle class for a shrinking number of jobs. Further, resentment caused by the Bolshevik revolution was

⁵⁵ Payne’s typological description of fascism includes 13 characteristics. Its ideology and goals consist of: 1) Espousal of an idealist, vitalist, an voluntaristic philosophy, normally involving the attempt to realize a new modern, self-determined, and secular culture, 2) Creation of a new nationalist authoritarian state not based on traditional principles or models, 3) Organization of a new highly regulated, multiclass, integrated national economic structure, whether called national corporatist, national socialist, or national syndicalist, 4) Positive evaluation and use of, or willingness to use, violence and war, 5) The goal of empire, expansion, or a radical change in the nation’s relationship with other powers.

Furthermore, fascism negates: 6) Anti-liberalism, 7) Anti-communism, and 8) Anti-conservatism (though with the understanding that the fascist groups were willing to undertake temporary alliances with other sectors, most commonly with the right).

Finally, fascism’s style and organization includes: 9) Attempted mass mobilization with militarization of political relationships and style and with the goal of a mass party militia, 10) Emphasis on aesthetic structure of meetings, symbols, and political liturgy, stressing emotional and mystical aspects, 11) Extreme stress on the masculine principle and male dominance, while espousing a strongly organic view of society, 12) Exaltation of youth above all other phases of life, emphasizing the conflict of generations, at least in effecting the initial political transformation, and 13) Specific tendency toward an authoritarian, charismatic, personal style of command, whether or not the command is to some degree initially elective. Payne, *A History of Fascism*, 7.

⁵⁶ Paxton, “Five Stages of Fascism,” 21.

⁵⁷ Paul Gewirtz, “On ‘I Know It When I See It,’” *The Yale Law Journal* 105, no. 4 (January 1, 1996): 1024, DOI:10.2307/797245; Paxton, “Five Stages of Fascism,” 21–22.

still fresh in their memory. The perception that Jews were attempting to take over their government, combined with the dominant position Jews still held in business and education, played perfectly into a spreading Jewish narrative. The dubious tract, entitled the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, implanted diabolical conspiracy theories of Jewish plans for global domination.⁵⁸

The young Szeged counterrevolutionaries, prominent in the overthrow of the short-lived communist regime and led by Major Gyula Gömbös, formed the first group of anti-liberal nationalists in the 1930s. The Party of Racial Defense showed early characteristics of fascism but was more prone to support authoritarian control via the army. Gömbös was eventually installed in the Admiral Horthy's cabinet, first as Defense Minister, then as Prime Minister. Either Gömbös was tempered by Horthy's moderation or he recognized the government's reliance on the powerfully placed Jews—after his appointment, Gömbös disbanded his party.⁵⁹

The new prime minister may have been forced to abandon his more flagrant attacks against the Jews but he now had powerful legislative tools at his disposal. J. Erös reveals that “[t]he records of the cabinet meetings and the official papers of the Gömbös era show pathetic and dangerous attempts by the Hungarian leaders, including Horthy himself, to reinterpret fashionable racialism in an innocuous and ‘positive’ way.”⁶⁰ The Prime Minister also created a political militia and a youth organization in true Nazi fashion. Gömbös died in 1936, and a string of prime ministers filled his vacancy. Gömbös may not have lived to see a fascist Hungarian government but he laid the foundation for others to build upon.⁶¹

László Baky led the second group, The Hungarian National Socialist Party, and was involved in the earliest stages of Hungarian fascism and the darkest side of the counterrevolution. According to Erös, “[László] Baky had been a leading terrorist at

⁵⁸ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 290; Payne, *History of Fascism*, 267.

⁵⁹ Payne, *History of Fascism*, 269; Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 236–37.

⁶⁰ J. Erös, “Hungary,” in *Fascism in Europe*, ed. Stuart Joseph Woolf (London: Methuen, 1981), 133.

⁶¹ Payne, *History of Fascism*, 269; Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 237.

Horthy's headquarters...in 1919.”⁶² This operational experience was unfortunately brought to bear against the Jews during the forthcoming German occupation. After Baky's violent activities during the 1919 counterrevolution, he was posted to a leadership position within the Hungarian gendarmerie followed by his entrance into politics. While in office, Baky maintained his connections with the gendarmerie officers while simultaneously developing a relationship with Berlin, specifically with Heinrich Himmler.⁶³

Following the German occupation in 1944, Baky and a co-conspirator, László Endre were appointed by the Minister of the Interior, Döme Sztójay, to act as the local leaders for the upcoming holocaust. Where Germany had dictated extermination plans for Western European countries, in Hungary they worked hand-in-hand with the two Lászlós. “The German role in the destruction of Hungarian Jewry,” observes Kenez, “is best understood as giving an opportunity to some determined antisemites to carry out a policy that they had long desired and planned.”⁶⁴ The Hungarian historian György Ránky observed:

The uniqueness of the German occupation in Hungary was that they left a relatively large part of National Sovereignty in the hands of the Sztójay regime—more than anywhere else in Europe, including Denmark...The gendarmerie willingly took upon itself to organize the deportations, with the direct or indirect help of the administration.⁶⁵

In the space of less than two months, Baky, along with his loyal gendarmerie, deported 434,351 Jews on 147 trains—most of which arrived at Auschwitz and were immediately gassed.⁶⁶

⁶² Erös, “Hungary,” 142.

⁶³ Ibid.; Payne, *History of Fascism*, 268.

⁶⁴ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 250; Admiral Horthy, though no friend of the Jews, had been more attuned to the historical connection between the Hungarian Jews and the Hungarian nobility—to say nothing of their role in the development of the Hungarian nation; as such, he had resisted increasing German pressure to deport Hungary's Jews. Ibid., 64–65, 248.

⁶⁵ György Ránky, quoted in Cohen, “Continuity in the Change: Hungary, 19 March 1944,” 133.

⁶⁶ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 250–52.

Finally, there was the Arrow Cross party, led by Ferenc Szálasi. Szálasi was a mixed-heritage Hungarian nationalist who served on the general staff. Unlike most of his extra-national contemporaries, notes Payne, “Szálasi was a man of limited talents, skilled neither as an orator nor as a journalist.”⁶⁷ The would-be Führer started several national socialist parties in an attempt to gain parliamentary representation. While both the right-leaning regent and prime minister were openly anti-Semitic, they had no desire to allow a fascist revolution. Horthy and his government dissolved Szálasi’s party and sent him to jail, but they could not curb his growing popularity. Szálasi’s new national socialist party eventually merged with eight other similar parties, forming what became the Arrow Cross Party. Through a series of elections and coalitions, the Arrow Cross Party managed to garner 49 parliament seats, roughly 25 percent of the popular vote. Although it was far from unseating the Government Party’s majority, with 179 seats, the Arrow Cross party had established itself as a truly powerful political force.⁶⁸

2. Fascism’s Violent Last Gasp

In October of 1944, Horthy attempted to free his country from the control of his one-time ally. The regent bumbled through an ill-conceived coup, which resulted in its failure and his arrest. Horthy was forced to abdicate his rule and name Szálasi as his replacement. Though politically popular, Szálasi had proven to be less than competent, which probably played into the designs of the occupiers. At this point, it was clear that the Germans had lost the war, but they still had no problems finding willing collaborators. It is likely that the Hungarian henchmen understood that they only had a limited time to complete the national cleansing process.⁶⁹

With full control over the government, Szálasi could implement his desires unchecked. Kenez notes sadly: “The anarchic situation gave opportunities to people to live out their sadistic fantasies.”⁷⁰ The Hungarian gendarmerie conducted Jewish prisoner

⁶⁷ Payne, *History of Fascism*, 271.

⁶⁸ Weber, *Varieties of Fascism*, 92–96; Payne, *History of Fascism*, 271–276.

⁶⁹ Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 257.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 258.

marches of such a harsh nature that death could have been the only expected outcome. Prisoners froze, starved, or marched until they dropped, then were quickly shot. The brutality of the marches was such that a German SS officer later remarked on the brutality of the Hungarians.⁷¹

The Red Army liberated Budapest in January of 1945. In three short months, the Arrow Cross Party had murdered an estimated 50,000 Jews in Budapest—and an unknown number throughout the countryside. For Hungary, the war was over. The flirtation with fascism had failed, climaxing with approximately 94 days of murderous rampage. One occupier took the place of the other and the war between “us” and “them” went back underground. Sadly, this failed dream of re-creating the proud Magyar Fatherland came at the price of an estimated 570,000 Hungarian Jews.⁷²

C. CONCLUSION: THE FRUITS OF AN UNADDRESSED PAST

Anti-Semitism and the nationalist sentiments that fed fascism in Hungary were never dealt with after the Russian invasion—they entered an uneasy hibernation. Jobbik has not created a new version of otherness and fear, but merely resurrected antiquated visions of outsiders occupying powerful economic and cultural positions. Jobbik’s struggle to obtain increased political power is not so much to restore economic prosperity to Hungary, as it is to recreate a homogeneous Fatherland—a Hungary for Hungarians.

Hungary has had many anti-Semitic and nationalist parties, yet only a very few pursued the path toward fascism. Few except Jobbik will deny that it is anti-Semitic, but determining whether Jobbik is fascist or not is much more problematic. Paxton acknowledges that the term “fascist” has lost some of its meaning for its overuse.⁷³ What truly matters is whether Jobbik intends to take up the standard where Szálasi and Baky

⁷¹ For an eyewitness account of these events—from the perspective of a highly acculturated, highly patriotic Hungarian Jewish victim of them—see Béla Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, trans. Ladislaus Löb (London: Random House [Pimlico], 2005).

⁷² Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 258–60; Lendvai, *Hungary: Between Democracy and Authoritarianism*, 62.

⁷³ Paxton, *Anatomy of Fascism*, 20.

dropped it. Will Jobbik revisit totalitarian methods to recreate a Hungary free of outsiders? Observers may differ on their predictions, but one thing is for sure: Like Paxton, they'll know it when they see it.

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III. JOBBIK: “A MOVEMENT FOR A BETTER HUNGARY”⁷⁴

Ultra-nationalist movements have found an accommodating home in Europe, especially a Europe shaken by the ill effects of globalization and the 2007 crisis; they range from skinhead motorcycle clubs content with beating up neighborhood minorities to National Socialist parties seeking to establish their conception of a Fourth Reich on the wreckage of social market pluralism of the post-1945 and post-1989 variety. Fringe groups on either side of the spectrum are readily discounted, marked as unwilling or unable truly to establish themselves as anything more than rabble-rousers. Closer to the center of the spectrum—or, more aptly, nipping at the heels of the old big-tent parties of the postwar period—however, several European political movements have gained momentum and relative legitimacy in democratic political culture. Careful consideration of these organizations reveals not only that Jobbik is one of many right-wing movements in Europe, but also that it is different in ways of aims and means that cannot be discounted. Jobbik’s variation of extremism cannot be lumped in with its contemporaries; Jobbik defies the comfortable, preconceived notions of the West, its deep-seated hatred cloaked behind the noble-seeming veil of integral nationalism and honor as a contrast with the dishonor and cosmopolitanism of the EU.

A. JOBBIK: NOT YOUR FATHER’S FASCISM

In a study of right-wing extremism in Europe, Hans-Georg Betz describes the radical right-wing movements as belonging to one of two distinct camps: national populist parties or neo-liberal populist parties. Betz characterizes the former as a party that “Tend[s] to appeal to voters with lower level of education, working-class status, from areas characterized by a lower quality of life ... Emphasiz[ing] law and order, traditional moral values, and radical opposition to immigrants and refugees.”⁷⁵ The latter, neo-liberal party, “Tend[s] to appeal to voters with higher level education and mixed social status,” stressing “individualism and a market-oriented liberalism while placing less

⁷⁴ Jobbik, “Radical Change,” 1.

⁷⁵ Hans-Georg Betz, “The Two Faces of Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe,” *Review of Politics* 55, no. 4 (1993): 684.

emphasis on immigration.”⁷⁶ Jobbik is an interesting mix of these characterizations; clearly it is a nationalist party, yet it defies the expectation of a less-educated constituency. While Jobbik does attract voters from the blue-collar population segment, its roots are in academia, and 22 percent of its online supporters have university degrees.⁷⁷ Similarly, Jobbik’s educated voting bloc defies the pro-capitalist policy norms established by other parties with similarly educated constituencies. Italy’s Lega Nord and Austria’s Freedom Party (FPÖ) seek a government based on market-oriented liberalism, while Jobbik is calling for the nationalization of natural resources, banking, transportation, and retirement pensions.⁷⁸

Jobbik’s motivations and goals do not line up nicely with its contemporaries but veer off down unexpected paths. Its scapegoats are not newly arriving immigrants, but populations that have lived within its borders for centuries. Jobbik’s potential allies are not other right-wing Christian parties in Europe, but Islamic autocracies in the Middle East and Hungary’s former occupier, the former Soviet Union. If one is to understand Jobbik, one must account for its uniqueness; Jobbik cannot be lumped in with other right-wing extremism movements.

B. JOBBIK’S BEGINNINGS: “US” VERSUS “THEM”

Jobbik is unquestionably a representation of the far right in Europe but it is not a typical xenophobic motorcycle gang; members do not sport shaved heads or gather on street corners dressed in biker jackets, carrying clubs. Rather, Jobbik is a powerful political party, with members serving on the European Council and in the Hungarian parliament. Its representatives and constituents include retired professionals, distinguished academics, passionate students, and dedicated laborers.

Jobbik’s constituents do not equally support every plank of the party’s platform—many seem to support the party’s agenda in an à la carte fashion. Some voters are not interested in Jobbik’s anti-Semitism but are in favor of the party’s anti-EU or domestic

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Bartlett et al., *Populism in Hungary*, 15.

⁷⁸ Betz, “Two Faces of Populism,” 684.

economic policies. The common thread among these voters is the antiestablishment vote. Many Hungarian voters see past governments' corruption as the cause of the current economic difficulties. They view increased Europeanization as the cultural and economic sellout of their homeland and are eager to give some other party a chance. Even those who may not be completely convinced of Jobbik's ability or motives are so disenchanting with the previous governments that they will vote for any other party in protest.

Another key distinction between Jobbik and other ultra-nationalist European groups is the demographic make-up of the membership. Jobbik has attracted scores of educated, successful people to its cause; Krisztina Morzai, a former Fulbright scholar, published associate professor, and human-rights lawyer, represents Jobbik in the European Parliament.⁷⁹ Morzai was also Jobbik's presidential nominee for the 2010 elections.⁸⁰

Jobbik, the third-largest political party in Hungary, comes from humble beginnings—though with solid right-of-center bona-fides. In 2002, *Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség* (Right-Wing Youth Association, or Jobbik), a conservative student organization, was formed in ELTE (Eötvös Loránd University), a prestigious Budapest university. The founders had grown up under the final years of Hungarian communism and witnessed first-hand the initial optimism of the Hungarian transition to democracy after 1989; they also experienced disappointment and frustration as their government failed to deliver the perceived blessings of a capitalist economy and democratic society in the course of the 1990s.⁸¹

The Jobbik leaders viewed the ruling Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) as a holdover from the Communist Party and the primary source of the country's lingering (and new) economic and societal woes. On the other hand, they saw potential in

⁷⁹ Marcus Stadelmann, "The Rise of the Extreme Right: The Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)," *National Social Science Journal* 39, no. 2 (2013): 102; Thomas Orszag-Land, "Hungarian Jews Reeling from Far-Right Party's Gains," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, accessed January 24, 2014, <http://www.jta.org/2009/06/09/news-opinion/world/hungarian-jews-reeling-from-far-right-partys-gains>.

⁸⁰ Jobbik, "Radical Change," 1.

⁸¹ Lili Török, "The Voice of a Disappointed Generation: Student Mobilization in Hungary in the 2000s" (master's thesis, Central European University, 2013), 25–28.

supporting Fidesz [Alliance of Young Democrats] as a means of achieving their political hopes for Hungary. Like Jobbik, Fidesz was founded by young idealists and realized early success as opposition to the MSZP. Lili Török notes, “The goal [of the student organization] was to create a space for discussing right-wing issues of identity and politics, and to work towards keeping ‘communists’ out of power and ensuring Fidesz’s victory at the next elections.”⁸² Initially, Jobbik offered its services and supporters to any conservative party but held no political ambitions of its own. In the beginning, it was content to help unite conservative efforts against the left.⁸³

Then in the Hungarian parliamentary elections of 2002, the conservative parties, led by Fidesz, lost the controlling share of the government in a close election to the resurgent MSZP. While Fidesz voiced its disappointment with a muted call for a recount, Jobbik’s young supporters took the demand for a do-over a significant step further, taking to the streets in a violent clash with police. The agitations for a recount failed, MSZP retained parliamentary control, and the ties that bound Jobbik with Fidesz and the other Hungarian conservative parties were severed by distrust and the perception of abandonment. Jobbik now viewed Fidesz as part of the Western-style democratic establishment, which made the party part of the problem that politics-as-usual could not remedy.

Jobbik decided to enter the political ring under its own power, graduating from its accustomed approach of agitation and mere demonstration. Fox and Vermeersch note that “Jobbik...bucked [the] trend by consistently (and successfully) seeking political office ... In contrast to other extremist groupings, Jobbik has planned its attack of the establishment from the inside, but unlike [other extreme parties] before it, without diluting its extremism.”⁸⁴ Jobbik initially had little political success as it tried in vain to pair itself with other radical movements in Hungary—for example, the Hungarian Truth and Life Party (MIÉP) and the Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement. MIÉP eventually

⁸² Ibid., 28.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Jon E. Fox and Peter Vermeersch, “Backdoor Nationalism,” *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 51, no. 2 (2010): 346.

agreed to soften its rhetoric as international pressures mounted prior to Hungary joining the EU. Jobbik's determination to incorporate its unadulterated extremist views into mainstream politics is the very trait that separated it from its contemporaries—within Hungary and throughout Europe. Jobbik was determined to create a political platform, one that was unashamed to highlight the perceived Roma problem, the foreign Zionists buying up their homeland, and the crippling results of Western-style democracy and its economic pillage to fatten the powerful countries of the EU.⁸⁵

Jobbik's earliest leadership was more interested in dealing with the onset of economic troubles and resisting Hungary's impending accession to the European Union. A few powerful politicians made monumental decisions regarding the future of Hungary with little effort given to explain the decisions and the resultant economic accommodations. In the view of a traditionally nationalist stronghold, the established political bureaucracy was content to hand the keys to the Hungarian kingdom to the West. This scenario fed into a growing narrative that the far right was only too happy to highlight. Kovács distills the fears of many Hungarians in a way that speaks to many smaller nations' struggle with the double-edged sword of EU enlargement:

The tensions caused by economic and cultural globalization were portrayed as a conflict between cosmopolitan and national interests, joining international integration as a loss of national sovereignty, and the social consequences of the economic and political transition as the result of being at the mercy of colonial masters.⁸⁶

Historically, Hungary has endured domination and invasion on a dramatic scale; the Ottomans, the Habsburgs, the Entente, Nazis, and Soviets all left their mark on the collective Magyar psyche. This generally accepted national identity justifies a hesitancy to relinquish any amount of autonomy to international entities. Jobbik was quick to protest the EU enlargement proposition and include it as a plank in its party platform; it remains a foundational tenet to this day.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Ibid., 345–47.

⁸⁶ András Kovács, "The Post-Communist Extreme-Right: The Jobbik Party in Hungary," in *Right-Wing Populism in Europe*, ed. Ruth Wodak, Majid Khosravi-Nik, and Brigitte Mral (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 223.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 225.

Jobbik's timing, as much as its message, resonated within Hungary's unique political demographics. András Kovács observes that some 33 percent of Hungarian voters demonstrate no allegiance to any particular party, but "[tend] to migrate between the extremes on the political spectrum."⁸⁸ Kovács also notes a possible commonality in this block of voters, in that they appear to be "losers in the transition,"⁸⁹ having lost their former status along with their chance at upward mobility. This disaffection of a large body of voters is compounded by a palpable distrust in public institutions, resulting in a clear anti-establishment voting tendency. Absent a comparable party on the left, Jobbik was able to gather many of these voters, merely as an avenue for the voters to voice their displeasure against the established parties.⁹⁰

Jobbik has captured many voters who feel that the establishment has lost its way and become immobilized in the entanglements of corruption and international interests, but it is more than just capturing disillusioned voters. Jobbik has drawn clear distinctions between itself and its political competition. Jobbik's platform is more than just honesty and transparency; it is a return to a Hungary of the past, a powerful nation that could stand independent of others, both international meddlers and internal "others." To Jobbik, "us" versus "them" will always be both an internal and external battle.

C. THE ROMA: AN INVASION FROM WITHIN

Jobbik quickly seized on another opportunity to expand its voting base with its exclusive focus on "Gypsy crime." In its 2010 election manifesto, Jobbik described the Roma (Gypsy) issue: "The continuation of the Gypsy people's circumstances along their current course is nothing short of a potential time-bomb, and if it is not subject to concerted intervention, our mutual home could sink into a state of virtual civil war."⁹¹

Although a significant population of Roma has lived in Hungary since the fourteenth century, they are still considered "other" and therefore not Hungarian. From

⁸⁸ Ibid., 224.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 224–25.

⁹¹ Jobbik, "Radical Change," 21.

their earliest arrival, they lived on the outskirts of Hungarian society, relegated to second-class citizenship and the restrictions associated with it. Discrimination against the Hungarian Roma was officially instituted in the eighteenth century as the Hungarian monarchs established measures in an attempt to eradicate them from their kingdom. Roma children were relocated to Hungarian families; their language, clothing, and customs were outlawed. These discriminatory measures were ultimately undone by the kingdom's need for cheap labor. While economic necessity forced the end of official discrimination, the Roma have been forced to live in roughly the same social and economic situations since the eighteenth century.⁹²

The Roma are arguably Hungary's greatest "losers" in the transition to democracy. Under communism, they were guaranteed an education, a job, and a place to live. Now, none of that is guaranteed, and for the Roma, neither is it likely. Presently, in some Roma communities, the unemployment rate reaches between 80 percent and 90 percent, while in 60 percent of households there is no income other than welfare.⁹³

Education, often seen as the gateway to employment, is similarly absent from most Roma families; 88 percent of the general population have never attended kindergarten and those who make it to school are twice as likely as their native Hungarian counterparts to be placed in schools for children with mental disabilities. Roma communities remain as they were under the Austro-Hungarian Empire: on the outskirts of Hungarian communities, often lacking paved roads, electricity and indoor plumbing. It is little wonder that under such oppressive circumstances and deprivation that Roma turn to crime in order to survive.⁹⁴

The Roma issue is not restricted to Hungary; in 2010, French President Sarkozy introduced security legislation that forced large groups of Roma from France; the Roma

⁹² Ágnes Kende, "The Hungary of Otherness: The Roma (Gypsies) of Hungary," *Journal of European Area Studies* 8, no. 2 (2000): 190–91.

⁹³ Jordan, "Roots of Hate," 108–09.

⁹⁴ *Addressing Violence, Promoting Integration, Field Assessment of Violent Incidents Against Roma in Hungary: Key Developments, Findings and Recommendations* (Warsaw, Poland: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, June 15, 2010), 45–46, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/68545>.

in Italy face discrimination in terms of housing, education, and employment.⁹⁵ Jobbik, however, has showcased its vitriol of the Roma, making it one of the most prominent campaign issues. Jobbik has garnered significant political power due to successive ruling parties' unwillingness or inability to address the Roma issue in any meaningful way. By the late 1990s, the EU was considering extending membership to several Eastern European countries. Aside from assessing the status of potential member states' economies, the EU was also gauging their human rights policies. While the economic and social situation of the Hungarian Roma was deteriorating at a rapid pace, the established political parties were unwilling to address the rising tide of unrest toward the Roma problem.⁹⁶

Jobbik has championed the majority's angst against the minority Roma. Jobbik acknowledges the difficult position of the Roma but then accuses them of exacerbating their own plight through laziness: "At the present time a segment of the Gypsy community strive for neither integration, nor employment, nor education; and wish only that society maintain them through the unconditional provision of state benefits."⁹⁷ Jobbik offers the Roma community a carrot in the form of soliciting integration and education assistance from religions and civic institutions, all while holding the stick of a newly formed gendarmerie over their heads. This political militia, or Hungarian Guard, has repeatedly shown up to "keep the peace" in Roma communities. Jobbik, it seems, would prefer to take a page from history's playbook, after all, segregation or elimination is much cheaper and easier than integration.⁹⁸

Jobbik's proactive recommendations and show of force in Roma communities give the party dominant ownership of the issue—and a significant pull on the loyalty of voters. Karácsony and Róna's distillation of a 2009 Hungarian electoral study highlights that, regarding a survey sample, 25 percent of the total Hungarian population agree that

⁹⁵ Johns, "Do As I Say, Not As I Do," 695.

⁹⁶ Horia Bărbulescu, "Constructing the Roma People as a Societal Threat the Roma Expulsions from France," *European Journal of Science and Theology* 8, no. 1 (2012): 289.

⁹⁷ Jobbik, "Radical Change," 11.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11–12.

“the growth in the Roma population threatens the security of the society,”⁹⁹ and a stunning 38 percent responded to the same question with an “absolutely agree.”¹⁰⁰ A slightly smaller percentage agreed that the tendency for Roma to commit crime was genetically inherited.¹⁰¹

The solution to the Roma issue, however, may be more awful than the problem to be solved. While the English version of Jobbik’s manifesto speaks of the need to rehabilitate and assimilate the Roma, the much lengthier Hungarian version introduces the possibility of an additional solution. Jobbik promises, “to strengthen the Gypsy youth education, either through integration or segregation.”¹⁰² The threat of segregation is of concern to any who value civil rights, but it carries a deeper and darker connotation in a country still haunted by its history with the holocaust. Established ghettos supplying separate services and accommodations to European minorities should send a shiver up the collective Western spine.

Few argue that Jobbik is not serious about the Roma issue, but some see it merely as a means to an end, as a convenient vehicle to distance themselves from the established parties. Despite the persistent and growing issues associated with the Roma population, successive, post-communist governments have not committed to undertake any meaningful action to address the issues. Jobbik has aggressively addressed the Roma issue, and effectively established itself as an anti-establishment party, one that will solve problems that others have ignored for decades.

D. THE HUNGARIAN JEWRY: THE INVASION FROM WITHOUT

Jobbik gains most of its domestic support for its hardline stance against Roma the Roma, but it gains most of its international notoriety with its anti-Semitic rhetoric. In its

⁹⁹ Karácsony and Róna, “Secret of Jobbik,” 83.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Jobbik, “Radikális Változás: A Jobbik Országgyűlési Választási Programja a Nemzeti Önnrendelkezésért és a Társadalmi Igazságosságért,” January 5, 2010, 40, <http://www.jobbik.hu/sites/default/files/jobbik-program2010gy.pdf>. Translation from original accomplished by this paper’s author.

manifestos, Jobbik is careful not to mention Jews, Israel, or Zionism, but it is quite obvious to Kovács and others that Jobbik has singled out the Jewish people, as a “colonizing ... investor, as a media shark or as a former Jewish-communist functionary morphed into a Hungarian capitalist.”¹⁰³ Kovács goes on to argue that, unlike the Roma issue, “the anti-Semitism of the extreme right has not been transformed into a political ideology; it does not take on the form of anti-Jewish political demands.”¹⁰⁴ Instead, continues Kovács, “the anti-Semitic language currently serves primarily as a medium for establishing extreme right-wing identity, which can then be used to reveal, in the sense of Carl Schmitt, ‘our kind’ and ‘your kind.’”¹⁰⁵ Here, Kovács’s argument encounters some difficulties. It is possible that Jobbik is fomenting racial tensions between non-Jewish Hungarians and Jews in order to solidify Jobbik’s radical identity. Perhaps Hungary’s sustained undercurrent of anti-Semitism is a useful vehicle to establish Jobbik as a clear choice for those who believe that Hungary should be for the Hungarians, but it seems that the party’s act is a little too convincing.

Kovács writes that “Jobbik has redefined traditional political cleavages. Instead of the traditional left-right divide, it set the new political frontline between the ‘Old’ and ‘New’, representing the ‘Global’ and the ‘National.’”¹⁰⁶ Jobbik argues that all of Hungary’s problems—be they social, economic or political—were caused by the old guard, leftover communists and their stooges, determined to auction off the nation to satisfy the desires of the West. If Jobbik can successfully sell this vision to a sufficient number of voters, if it can portray itself as the sole guardian of the Hungarian nation and of nations in general, it will have obtained license to act against those it has clearly defined as “other.” Jobbik, argues Kovács, uses their anti-Semitic language to “[create] a

¹⁰³ Kovács, “Post-Communist Extreme-Right,” 227.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 226.

collectivity: those who speak it belong to ‘Us,’ to ‘real Hungarians,’ as opposed to those who represent the continuity of the former communist and the present ‘colonialist’ exploitation.”¹⁰⁷

In November of 2012, Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik’s deputy for foreign relations, said the following during a parliamentary meeting, “It is high time to assess many MPs and government members are of Jewish origin and who present a national security risk to Hungary.”¹⁰⁸ Gyöngyösi later walked the comment back, saying that he intended it to apply only to those MPs and government members with dual citizenship, but both the comment and its supposed contextual meaning were grossly inappropriate, and the damage was done. In 2009, Krisztina Morvai, Jobbik’s 2010 presidential nominee and one of Hungary’s current representatives to the European Commission, addressed Israelis, saying: “I wish all of you lice-infested, dirty murderers will receive Hamas’ kisses.”¹⁰⁹ Additionally, Morvai stated she “would be glad if the so-called proud Hungarian Jews would go back to playing with their tiny little circumcised tails rather than vilifying [her].”¹¹⁰

Jobbik, on its official website, attempts to deflect the domestic and international charges of anti-Semitism and would downplay individual statements from a grass-roots movement of concerned individuals. Instead, it would direct attention to the alleged large-scale sale of Hungarian land to Israeli Jews. The party’s claims of foreign imperialism were, perhaps inadvertently, given credence when former Israeli president, Shimon Peres, said: “Nowadays you can build empires without establishing colonies and sending in the army. Israeli businessmen are investing all around the world, enjoying

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 227.

¹⁰⁸ All Hungary News, “Outrage over Jobbik Demand for List of Jewish MPs, Officials,” Politics.hu, November 27, 2012, <http://www.politics.hu/20121127/outrage-over-jobbik-demand-for-list-of-jewish-mps-officials/>.

¹⁰⁹ László Tamás Papp, László Tamás Papp, “Shimon Peres and the True Hungarians,” Hvg.hu, November 15, 2007, http://hvg.hu/english/20071115_shimon_peresz_buying_up_hungary. This quote was widely reported in multiple media forms but much of the context has disappeared; however, it seems that it initially appeared in an open letter from Morvai to the Israeli ambassador to Hungary.

¹¹⁰ Yehuda Lahav, “Hungarian Jews Should Stick to Playing with Their Circumcised Tails,” Haaretz.com, June 7, 2009, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/hungarian-jews-should-stick-to-playing-with-their-circumcised-tails-1.277483>. Similarly related to the previous note, the context for this widely reported quote has disappeared. The report claims that Morvai issued this statement in response to a letter.

unparalleled success, earning economic independence. We're buying up Manhattan, Poland, Hungary and Romania.”¹¹¹ Jobbik opponents claim that the far right in Hungary has misinterpreted the unfortunate comment, but Jobbik continues to use the comment as a means to justify, and perhaps cloak, the more sinister motives behind its anti-Semitic policies.

E. JOBBIK AND ISLAM: NOT WHAT YOU MIGHT EXPECT

While anti-Muslim sentiments are the calling card of most European nationalist movements, Jobbik has touted far and wide its espoused kinship with Palestine, Syria, Iran, and other Muslim countries. Jobbik's affinity for Islam may be explained in Islam's determined traditionalism and hatred of modernity. As a means of contrasting Islam against the neo-liberal West, Jobbik president, Gábor Vona writes:

There's only one culture left which seeks to preserve its traditions: it is the Islamic world...I declare that today the [*sic*] mankind's last remaining bastions of traditional culture—experiencing the transcendent in everyday life—is the Islamic world. I say this as a Roman Catholic man...If Islam fails the lights will completely go out. There will be no foeman against the darkness of globalism. Then the history will really come to an end and there will be no happy end.¹¹²

The significance of Jobbik's views on Islam and the demarcation it represents between themselves and other European far-right movements cannot be overlooked—and Jobbik's senior representatives make use of every opportunity to highlight this

¹¹¹ Papp, “Shimon Peres and the True Hungarians.” This story was not widely reported and therefore may warrant additional scrutiny. The online article purports that Peres made this comment to a chamber of commerce. Shortly thereafter, protesters appeared in front of the Israeli embassy in Hungary, as the Israeli ambassador attempted to walk back the comment. This comment, if accurate, is most unfortunate as it plays into common conspiracy theories of Jewish conquest.

¹¹² Jobbik, “Vona Gábor About the Islam,” December 9, 2010, http://jobbik.com/vona_g%C3%A1bor_about_islam.

difference.¹¹³ Hungary, however, does not have a significant Muslim population; as of the 2011 census, there were 5,579 people who identified themselves of the Islamic faith. It is not unreasonable to conclude that Jobbik's favorable view of Muslims might change with a large influx of Muslim immigrants. Jobbik, one might argue, enjoys multiculturalism and ethnic diversity from a distance.

F. JOBBIK'S FOREIGN POLICY: FROM WEST TO EAST

Jobbik's ideology may gain its notoriety from its policies regarding the Hungarian minorities, but its proposed foreign policy may be cause for concern in the West. Jobbik's entire foreign policy is formed around its core-level distrust of the United States and Western Europe. Jobbik's mistrust goes beyond the common fear that membership in international organizations and treaties, such as the EU and NATO, will lead to the gradual erosion of national sovereignty, they accuse the West of plundering resources and wealth from Hungary in the name of cooperative security and economics. With this, Jobbik seems to express the foundational far-right condemnation of U.S. manipulation in Europe, either directly or through such international organizations as NATO. While Jobbik's policies against Israel seem overtly anti-Semitic, they serve the dual purpose of

¹¹³ Interestingly, as part of the former Soviet Union, Hungary has ties to Islam that pre-date Jobbik's policies. Referencing the end of World War II, Norman Rich argues the Soviets were interested in the Islamic world, most likely as a loose ally against the West, the former European occupiers of the Middle East: "The danger that the Arabs would align themselves with Nazi Germany receded rapidly after the German offensives in Russia and North Africa had been turned back in 1942. But the final defeat of the Germans did not open the way to the restoration of British and French control in either North Africa or the Middle East. Bled white by two world wars, Britain and France no longer possessed the resources to deal effectively with Arab independence movements, which had been growing steadily in strength and influence since the dissolution of the Ottoman empire. After World War II, they could no longer be contained." Norman Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy Since 1914* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 388-89.

In the mid-1950s, President Eisenhower attempted to procure financial aid for the Egyptians; Eisenhower's attempts failed due, in no small part, to Israel's protestations. Rich recounts Egypt's diplomacy with the Soviet Union: "Denied aid from the United States, Nasser turned to the Soviet Union, confident that the Soviets would welcome the opportunity to extend their influence to the Middle East. He was not disappointed. On September 27, 1955, he announced that his government had concluded an agreement with the Communist bloc that would provide Egypt with Czech arms in return for Egyptian rice and cotton." Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy*, 383-89. Most likely, the connections between the Soviet Union, and therefore Hungary and Islamic countries were forged out of the need to balance regional power, as opposed to real affinities for each other.

Emerging from communism, Hungary reaffirmed some of the historic ties with Islamic countries, including trade relations. No doubt Jobbik, as well as most Hungarians, would like to see that economic avenue remain intact. Tamás Szigetvári, "Hungarian Economic Relations with the Arab World," *Hungarian Statistical Review* Special Number 11 (2007): 127-35.

flouting U.S. influence within its country.¹¹⁴ In Jobbik's view, Hungary's current alliance with the West has been more problematic than their former alliance with the Soviet Union.

After the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the newly elected Hungarian leadership looked to the West to secure economic and strategic alliances. To the consternation of Hungarian nationalists, including Jobbik's future founders, overtures were made toward the EU, culminating in membership; Hungary was one of the earlier members of the expanding EU. So confident was the Hungarian leadership in the promise of the EU that it readily agreed to the required reforms and concessions that came with the membership process.

Hungary's decision to move forward with EU accession procedures subjected it to several requirements, specifically those listed in the June 1993 European Council in Copenhagen:

Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.¹¹⁵

Jobbik is decidedly anti-capitalist and, at its core, is distrustful of subjection to the perceived ravages of the EU's market forces. The establishment eagerly accepted the promises of prosperity offered by the EU and the economic boundaries between Hungary and the West were discarded. Jobbik views this to be a colonization effort sponsored by Fidesz and the MSZP, one that can only be corrected by Hungary's departure from the Union.

¹¹⁴ Although speaking specifically about anti-Semitism, Andrei S. Markovits argues that pockets of European animosity for Israel may really be directed to the West and even more so against the United States: "The kind of anti-Semitism linked to the struggle against globalization represents a meeting point between Right and Left... The intensity of hatred against Israel has not least of all to do with a perception of Israel as America's proxy, as a de facto constituent of the United States—as well as vice versa. One can rail against Israel because it is powerful and belongs to an even greater power, the United States. But one can also rail against Israel because it happens to be a Jewish state." Andrei S. Markovits, *Uncouth Nation: Why Europe Dislikes America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 162.

¹¹⁵ *European Council in Copenhagen, 21-22 June, 1993, Conclusions of the Presidency* (Copenhagen, Denmark, June 22, 1993), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/copenhagen/default_en.htm.

In addition to economic requirements, the European Council established the requirement for new EU members to abide by human rights and minority protection criteria. Those requirements were strengthened in the December 2000 EU Charter of Fundamental Rights: “Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.”¹¹⁶ By accepting these terms, the opposition government had agreed to let the West dictate what “True Hungarians” could and could not do with relation to the “others” within their nation. While supporters of Jobbik found the restrictions unconscionable, they were handed a position of relative power in upcoming elections. All that was left was to fan the flames of ultra-nationalism.

In the meantime, European business and money flooded into Hungary to such a level that it now accounts for 50 percent of Hungary’s national product.¹¹⁷ In spite of—or perhaps because of—foreign intervention, the economic transformation has been slow to succeed; many Hungarian businesses have suffered as the European market has replaced their businesses and products. And while Hungary is not alone in resisting the European and even global economies, Jobbik is the only represented party demanding that the government withdraw from the EU.¹¹⁸ Vona clearly stated his disdain for EU membership and international capitalism in a 2013 interview:

At the moment, we Hungarians are sick passengers on a sinking European ship that has lost its values. This is unbearable. First we must get off the ship, then cure our diseases. Hungary was not admitted to the EU so that we could develop. The goal was to colonize us, to exploit our cheap labor and acquire our markets. Western companies and banks now try to maintain their systems by using the profit they pump out of our country in the East...After the anti-value approach of Communism, we are now

¹¹⁶ European Union, “Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union” (Official Journal of the European Union, December 18, 2000), 22, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm.

¹¹⁷ Nagy, Boros, and Vasali, “More Radical than the Radicals,” 233.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 234.

living in the valuelessness of capitalism...I believe that Europe should get back to its own roots and rearrange its relationship with other traditional cultures that only exist in the East now.¹¹⁹

Not only has Jobbik publicly called for Hungary's departure from the EU, but it has also devised a replacement with a pivot to the East. By establishing diplomatic and economic ties to the East, Jobbik seeks to establish Hungary as a bridgehead between its new partners and the European markets. Jobbik has made preliminary overtures for economic partnerships with China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkey. While Vona has not promised his party or his country to Russian President Putin's Eurasian Union, Russian insiders argue that Hungary is a potential target.¹²⁰

Putin argues that this Eurasian Union is not an attempt to revive the Soviet Union; however, the strengthening of Russia at the cost of the EU should cause the West to reflect upon lessons learned from the cold war. Hungary has not been an economic boon to the EU, and likely, was never seriously considered to be, but economic ties between strategic partners are cords that hope to prevent international conflict. The European community eagerly accepted Hungary to solidify peace in the vacuum of the former Warsaw Pact.

The EU is not the only international alliance to arouse scorn from Jobbik. If Jobbik has its way, the relationship between Hungary and NATO may suffer, as well. Géza Jeszenszky, Hungary's former minister of foreign affairs and ambassador to the United States, claims that Jobbik has called for Hungary to leave NATO,¹²¹ but finding a published document or interview that confirms Jeszenszky's statement has proven difficult. What is clear is that Jobbik is seeking a less restrictive relationship with NATO.

¹¹⁹ "Gábor Vona: Euro-Atlanticism Must Be Replaced by Eurasianism," May 10, 2013, http://www.jobbik.com/g%C3%A1bor_vona_euro-atlanticism_must_be_replaced_eurasianism.

¹²⁰ "A New Integration Project for Eurasia: The Future in the Making (Article by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Published in the Izvestia Daily, 4 October 2011)," *Russian Embassy in London*, April 10, 2011, <http://rusemb.org.uk/press/246>; "Moscow Fleshes Out 'Eurasian Union' Plans," *EurActiv*, November 17, 2011, <http://www.euractiv.com/europes-east/moscow-fleshes-urasian-union-pl-news-509042>; Cnaan Liphshiz, "Pact of Pariahs Forming Between Iran and Hungary's Jobbik," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, March 4, 2013, <http://www.jta.org/2013/03/04/news-opinion/world/pact-of-pariahs-forming-between-iran-and-hungarys-jobbik>.

¹²¹ Géza Jeszenszky, "Doomsday in Hungary?," *Hungarian Review*, no. 03 (2012): 14.

Jobbik reaffirms that Hungary is a member of NATO, but asserts that its membership in the alliance will not force Hungary to abandon its independent interests. Furthermore, according to their manifesto, “The creation of foreign military bases [in Hungary], and the deployment of Hungarian soldiers for foreign interests do not interest us.”¹²² Jobbik describes the detrimental consequences of NATO visited upon Hungary’s native ability to defend itself. This, in Jobbik’s view, necessitates the need to re-nationalize its homeland and border defense by establishing a 70,000- to 72,000-member fighting force. This obvious retreat from the collective defense of NATO cannot help but cause concern among the other partners to the Atlantic Alliance.¹²³

Maintaining a collective defense alliance like NATO can be difficult, especially during extended periods of peace or when conflicts are confined to the other side of the globe. In such scenarios, voters are more likely to favor politicians who peddle domestic spending as opposed to carving out a percentage of their nation’s GDP to an international body whose other members are likely thinking the same thing. NATO member states historically explore the boundaries of allowable burden shifting within the alliance, attempting to justify why they are the only country that pay more than the fair amount into the fund. Jobbik’s plans to strengthen Hungary into a militarily self-reliant country may be gamesmanship for future NATO budget talks, but it is a game it will have to play well if it wishes to remain in the Alliance.¹²⁴

The EU and NATO represent modern society’s determination to develop a loose, yet binding co-op for the preservation of peace and development of economic stability within Europe. This project requires nations to lay portions of their sovereignty and traditions (some nations more than others) upon the altar of sacrifice. Jobbik’s foreign affairs policy is a clear rebuke of international collectivization and a call for the return to the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Hungarian Kingdom was powerful and its influence and borders were vastly greater.

¹²² Jobbik, “Radikális Változás,” 74.

¹²³ Ibid., 70.

¹²⁴ Wallace J. Thies, *Friendly Rivals: Bargaining and Burden-Shifting in NATO* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 5–9.

While the EU may be more interested in deemphasizing the importance of member-state borders, Jobbik is in favor of redrawing them, or more accurately replacing them with the borders that existed prior to World War I and the resultant Trianon treaty, which, to the Hungarian mind, marks the first of the searing foreign-policy traumas of the twentieth century.¹²⁵ The trauma of Trianon played an inescapable role in the rise of right-wing extremism after World War I, and its effects are still reverberating in Hungarian politics today. Vona expressed the views of his supporters as well as many other Hungarians concerning the treaty of Trianon: “What happened ... in Versailles ... was a dictate, whereby the enemies of Hungary decided the fate of our country on the basis of lies, manipulated figures and false reports For Hungarians Trianon is the synonym for an attempt of liquidating the Hungarian nation.”¹²⁶

Jobbik’s manifesto stops short of expressing the goal to overturn the treaty but instead declares “Jobbik’s political horizons are not defined by the borders of our country but by the borders of our nation.”¹²⁷ Furthermore, Jobbik seeks to establish a “‘protective power’ status for the motherland vis-à-vis Hungarian communities beyond the border, the cultural and economic reunification of the Hungarian nation, the granting of Hungarian citizenry to every Hungarian.”¹²⁸ In essence, the manifesto outlines Jobbik’s intentions to

¹²⁵ In 1920, this treaty dismembered the Kingdom of Hungary, transferring nearly, three-fourths of its territory and two-thirds of its population, including one-third of its ethnic Hungarian population, to Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Romania and Yugoslavia. Várdy, “The Impact of Trianon upon Hungary and the Hungarian Mind,” 21; John Ashley Soames Grenville, *The Major International Treaties, 1914-1945: A History and Guide with Texts* (London: Methuen, 1987) 46-47; Spencer Tucker, Laura Matysek Wood and Justin D. Murphy, eds., *The European Powers in the First World War: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 1996) 695-96.

The economic repercussions of the treaty are often overshadowed by its societal consequences, but it is reasonable to conclude that the economic fallout was a powerful driver in Hungary’s radicalization in the interwar period. Along with the territory lost to Trianon, Hungary lost “62.2 percent of its railway systems, 73.8 percent of its public roads, 64.6 percent of its canals, 88 percent of its forests, 83 percent of its iron mines, and all of its salt mines.” Tucker, *The European Powers in the First World War*, 697. Hungary also lost its market partner in Austria and local trading partners due to rising tensions over the newly formed borders. Hungary may not have been saddled with crippling reparations, as in the case of the Germans, but they had suffered a comparable economic blow in response to a much smaller part played in the cause and destruction of the war.

¹²⁶ “Gabor Vona: Europe Kept Silent - Interview,” June 23, 2010, http://www.jobbik.com/gabor_vona_europe_kept_silent_-_interview.

¹²⁷ Jobbik, “Radical Change,” 15.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

reunite the Hungarian nation in every way except redrawing lines on a map. However, during a Trianon memorial in 2009 a Jobbik representative to the European Council revealed, “Jobbik considers it one of its main targets that ‘the Trianon borders should be dropped within a few generations or as soon as possible.’”¹²⁹

Border-nation concerns’ were heightened recently as the Hungarian government granted opportunities for all ethnic Hungarians to obtain citizenship. Most likely, this initiative, while providing political strength for Hungary, will further foment agitation among the pockets of ethnic Hungarians in countries such as Slovakia and Romania where ethnic relations are already strained.

With Hungary’s accession into the EU, the international community saw a chance for rapprochement between Hungary and its neighbors; however, the EU’s attempts to erase the significance of European borders actually exacerbated these international tensions. Deemphasized national borders allowed Hungary to create strengthened ties with its one-time citizens, against the wishes of Slovakia and Romania. Hungary eagerly, and perhaps ironically, supported human rights and the monitoring that accompanied it—now countries that had marginalized ethnic Hungarian minorities were losing significant control over them. The fuzzy borders also aided Hungary in its efforts to lessen the claim its neighbors had on their Trianon acquisitions.¹³⁰

G. CONCLUSION: GOULASH EXTREMISM

Jobbik, in less than a decade in the new century, has moved from a student union to the third largest party in Hungary. This party is an uncomfortable mash-up of patriotic nationalism, bigotry, and racism of the nastiest strain.

At its surface, Jobbik is just another manifestation of the rising right in Europe in the twenty-first century, another band of post-communist losers, unsatisfied with the transition from East to West and looking for a minority scapegoat. But Jobbik is different. It is different because of the uniqueness of Hungary’s history in the record of Europe.

¹²⁹ MTL, “Jobbik MEPs to Fight for Pre-Trianon Borders,” *Politic*, June 15, 2009, <http://www.politics.hu/20090615/jobik-meps-to-fight-for-pretrianon-borders/>.

¹³⁰ Fox and Vermeersch, “Backdoor Nationalism,” 337–40.

Hungary has experienced occupation for hundreds of years by multiple regimes. In the past century, its government has bounced from autocracy, to communism, from fascism back to communism and a less than successful experiment with democracy. Hungary was carved up after WWI, the devastating loss of “home” and “family” has never been fully accepted and the wounds suffered at the hands of the victorious West are still fresh. Jobbik supporters do not fit the general paradigm for the far right and those who seek to understand them or mollify them must seek new approaches.

The rising Hungarian generation, which cannot align itself with the supposed communist holdovers in the MSZP and the failing government that is Fidesz, have little choice but to support Jobbik. While some may hold Jobbik’s views on Jews to be outdated, they seem to hold their nose as they pull the voting lever because of their rigid and crosscutting stand on Gypsy crime. Jobbik has masterfully, if frightfully, filled an empty niche with in Hungarian politics.

IV. THE HUNGARIAN GUARD: JOBBIK'S PARAMILITARY ARM

In its historical and geo-political context, Jobbik looks less and less like a “classic” fascist party and certainly seems to have no direct intellectual connection to Hungary's fascist past. Were its formal statements and proposals—even the more controversial stances on the Roma or international organizations and alliances—all there was to Jobbik, this political party would not deserve any more attention than most other far-right parties that pepper the political landscape of Europe today.

Where Jobbik distinguishes itself, in an ominous way, is with its own paramilitary force, the Hungarian Guard. Indeed, the creation and continued support of the Hungarian Guard is Jobbik's most prominent and inescapable link to Hungary's darkest chapters of the age of total war—and to the politically charged violence of the twentieth century in Central Europe. For all but Jobbik supporters, the Hungarian Guard conjures feelings of intimidation and violence, not patriotism nor security.

A. THE HUNGARIAN GUARD: REFLECTIONS OF A SHADOW

In August of 2007, Jobbik established the *Magyar Gárda* (Hungarian Guard) with the intent to “prepare youth spiritually and physically for extraordinary situations when it might be necessary to mobilise the people,”¹³¹ according to the *Budapest Times*, or as Jobbik's leader, Gábor Vona declared, “to carry out the real change of regime and to rescue Hungarians.”¹³² The initial group counted 56 members as homage to the Hungarian revolution against the Soviet Union in 1956, but within a month, an additional 600 members were added. Current numbers of the Guard are not readily available, but by 2008 Jobbik leadership reported 1,500 members with 5,000 applications; the addition of

¹³¹ “Higher Court Confirms Hungarian Guard Ban,” *The Budapest Times*, July 4, 2009, sec. Articles, <http://budapesttimes.hu/2009/07/04/higher-court-confirms-hungarian-guard-ban/>.

¹³² Jordan, “Roots of Hate,” 106.

nearly 100 new members in 2012 shows that the Hungarian Guard is still growing, albeit slowly.¹³³

The Hungarian Guard is responsible for organizing and participating in demonstrations and marches, primarily in towns and villages with a high concentration of Roma minorities. Two rural towns, Gyöngyöspata and Tatárszentgyörgy, quickly became hotspots for Hungarian Guard marches. While the conflicts remained non-violent, the Guard and their supporters reportedly engaged in speech that promoted segregation of the Roma from the rest of the population.¹³⁴ This breach of civil rights led the Hungarian courts to disband the Guard in 2008; however, the force has since reemerged as The New Hungarian Guard Movement and continue many of its past actions with no discernable interference from the government.¹³⁵

1. Interwar Party Militias in Italy and Germany

The Hungarian Guard has drawn comparisons to Benito Mussolini's Black Shirts, the pre-Nazi Freikorps, and Adolf Hitler's SA and SS—the avant-garde of European fascism in the inter war era—and Ferenc Szálasi's Arrow Cross militia.¹³⁶ While there are no direct lineage between the Hungarian Guard and these fascist militias, the similarities are obvious and deserve closer inspection.

In preparation for his rise to power, Mussolini began to form a private militia (Squadristi) between 1919 and 1920. The burgeoning fascist leader drew on the public's fears of Socialists, Communists, and workers' unions, organizing them into reactionary

¹³³ "Hungary's Far-Right to Defy Court," *British Broadcasting Corporation*, December 17, 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7788000.stm>; Nicholas Kulish, "Hungarian Extremists Reflect Discontent, and Add to It," *The New York Times*, October 24, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/24/world/europe/24hungary.html>; The Contrarian Hungarian, "The New Hungarian Guard Continues to Initiate New Members," *The Contrarian Hungarian*, accessed February 19, 2014, <http://thecontrarianhungarian.wordpress.com/2012/03/19/the-new-hungarian-guard-continues-to-initiate-new-members/>.

¹³⁴ Ahmari, "Dancing Over Catastrophes," 16–21; Adam LeBor, "Marching Back to the Future: Magyar Garda and the Resurgence of the Right in Hungary," *Dissent* 55, no. 2 (2008): 37.

¹³⁵ "Court Dissolves Paramilitary Hungarian Guard," *The Budapest Times*, December 17, 2008, sec. Articles, <http://budapesttimes.hu/2008/12/17/court-dissolves-paramilitary-hungarian-guard/>.

¹³⁶ Jan-Werner Müller, "The Hungarian Tragedy," *Dissent* 58, no. 2 (2011): 7, DOI:10.1353/dss.2011.0048; Jordan, "Roots of Hate," 106.

squads. The Black Shirts, as they were known, came from many walks of life: war veterans, peasants, and other laborers. As Mussolini's influence grew in Italy, he ordered each region to establish their own branch of Black Shirts, emphasizing separate vanguard organizations for young men. These roughly organized militias were loyal to Mussolini and his fascist movement, as opposed to the legitimate Italian government. In 1922, Mussolini executed a successful *coup d'état*, the March on Rome; the Black Shirts provided the force to establish Mussolini's governmental takeover. The Black Shirts were soon reorganized as the *Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale* (Volunteer Militia for National Security), taking orders solely from Mussolini. The haphazardly organized militia was now a legitimate government organization under the new fascist government.¹³⁷

The formation of similar militias in Germany and Austria coincided with Italy's efforts. The Freikorps, sometimes regarded as the vanguard of the Nazism, were founded in 1918 in the immediate wake of defeat. Germany's defeat in the Great War and the resultant Versailles Treaty left their army in shambles and disenchanted with soldiering. In its place, the new government and the German Supreme Command created a volunteer paramilitary, populated by former soldiers who maintained a love of combat and a younger generation who believed that they had missed their opportunity to fight.¹³⁸ The Freikorps were a breeding ground for *völkisch*, or racist nationalist propaganda, with a deep resentment toward Jews, Communists, and democracy.¹³⁹ With the permission of the German Social Democratic party leadership, the Supreme Command used the Freikorps to suppress all opposition on the Left, leaving the streets (and canals) of Berlin littered with debris and casualties. As the Freikorps men had military training, experience, and weapons, their acts were especially violent and oppressive both at home

¹³⁷ Samuel William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), 32–41.

¹³⁸ Gabriel Kolko, *Century of War: Politics, Conflicts, and Society Since 1914* (New York: New Press, 1994), 154.

¹³⁹ Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Nazism, 1919–1945: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts*, vol. 1, 1st American ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 1990), 8.

and abroad, a difference that presently became meaningless. In May 1919, the Socialist government put a stop to the Freikorps' activities, but many of the ex-adventurers would join the emerging Nazis in the years to follow.¹⁴⁰

2. The Political Militia in Interwar Hungary

Closer to home, but slightly different than Mussolini and Hitler's militias, was the Arrow Cross Party's militia. Ferenc Szálasi succeeded in merging many small fascist groups into the largest independent party of its time, but due to his time spent in prison, as well as his less-than-full dedication to Jewish extermination, Szálasi began to lose control of the Arrow Cross militia. The militia was loosed upon the Hungarian Jews only after the occupying German forcibly removed the Hungarian Regent, Admiral Miklós Horthy.¹⁴¹

The common thread that ties the Hungarian Guard to these past militias is their association with a party as opposed to a legitimate government. Like the fascist militias of the early twentieth century, the group takes its orders from a political party, not the established government. The Hungarian Guard, however, is not the recreation of these former fascist militias—not yet anyway. Its small membership is a far cry from the hundreds of thousands of militia members in the once-mighty Freikorps and Black Shirts; it has no discernable military training, and has yet to show overtly violent tendencies. In the end, it stretches reason to consider the Hungarian Guard as an equal to the former fascist militias, but the geopolitical, historical, and cultural context it lives in demands Europe's attention.

B. EUROPEAN GENDARMES: A FORCE FOR GOOD

The Hungarian Guard prefers to think of itself as a nascent gendarmerie that is, not as the militia that it is—this hope being fueled by Jobbik's promise of establishing

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 1–9.

¹⁴¹ Payne, *History of Fascism*, 275–76; Weber, *Varieties of Fascism*, 95. Weber divulges that rather than focusing mainly on the “Jewish Question,” Szálasi was preparing for his opportunity to create a nationalized Hungarian economy and infrastructure. He intended to, “...Employ the Jews on public works, and then settle them elsewhere after the war.” Ibid.

one.¹⁴² To avoid confusing the Guard’s potential options, it is important to illustrate the differences between a party sponsored paramilitary unit—such as a militia—and a gendarmerie. As demonstrated with the Black Shirts and others, militias are an enforcing arm of a single party and defer their allegiance to their party as opposed to their established governments. A gendarmerie, however, is an official organ of the state. These gendarmes can be difficult to define as most countries employ them in different ways. Michiel de Weger notes, “In the broadest definition, all military organisations with some policing tasks can be regarded as a ‘gendarmerie.’”¹⁴³ Gendarmes are quite common in Europe, particularly among Mediterranean states, but also in the Habsburg lands and even in present day Austria and from a European perspective, they are seen as a practical option for securing peace and order within their nations and communities. Gendarmes have a rich history, dating back to nineteenth-century France, were they remain in force today.¹⁴⁴

Contemporary gendarmes differ slightly from their more militant predecessors. Some countries have softened their gendarmes’ overtly military characteristics, severing official links to their countries’ armed forces, while others maintain their gendarmes within their ministry of defense.¹⁴⁵ Some countries continue to use gendarmes in foreign

¹⁴² Jobbik, “Radical Change,” 18.

¹⁴³ Michiel de Weger, *The Potential of the European Gendarmerie Force*, Clingendael Security Paper no. 10 (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2009), 42.

¹⁴⁴ Derek Lutterberk provides greater insight into the history of European Gendarmes:

Gendarmes were first developed in France during the time of the revolution, and in the nineteenth century they were introduced in a number of other European countries as well. They were basically military personnel, but their principal task was to maintain law and order in the interior, chiefly in rural areas and along major thoroughfares. In the emerging nation-states, gendarmeries were essentially instruments of the central powers in extending and consolidating their rule over the national territory, in particular the often ‘unruly’ countryside. As such, they also served to deal with particularly severe forms of internal strife and turmoil, which in many European countries accompanied the nation-building process. Derek Lutterbeck, “Between Police and Military: The New Security Agenda and the Rise of Gendarmeries,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 39, no. 1 (March 1, 2004): 47, DOI:10.1177/0010836704040832.

¹⁴⁵ J. L. Hovens and G.A.G. van Elk, eds., *Gendarmeries and the Security Challenges of the 21st Century* (The Hague: Koninklijke Marechaussee, 2011), 186–87, 230. Several countries, such as France, Spain, and Italy, place their gendarmes under the control of both the Ministry of Defense for military related duties, and the Ministry of the Interior for policing duties. *Ibid.*

conflicts, training them in advanced combat tactics and weapon system.¹⁴⁶ In the wake of NATO enlargement, such gendarmerie units are now employed in positions and operations that other countries, like the United States, reserve for their National Guard. The Romanian gendarmerie, as it has evolved since 1989, is an excellent example of how gendarmeries can bridge the gap between a military and a domestic police entity. The Romanian Gendarmerie has deployed six contingents to Kosovo in support of the United Nations and the EU's Common Support and Defense Policy while retaining their domestic mission of large-scale disturbance response and anti-terrorism actions.¹⁴⁷

C. THE NEW GUARD AND THE OLD GENDARMERIE: AN UNSHAKEABLE LINK

With a lengthy and distinguished history, the European gendarmes have proven themselves to be a valuable tool for security—from the community to the international levels. The Hungarian Guard, however, has not been greeted with any level of international acceptance, as most observers cannot separate the Hungarian Guard of today from the Hungarian Gendarmerie of its fascist past.¹⁴⁸ The Hungarian Gendarmerie's role in the Hungarian Holocaust was addressed in the preceding chapter, but it bears recounting that Nazi Germany's Adolf Eichmann brought only 200 men with him to oversee the deportation of over 430,000 Hungarian Jews in less than two months. This SS/SD was typical, however, of how the SS and Gestapo relied on police forces to do their work for them, be it in the Reich or in Nazi Europe. The grim work fell mainly to

¹⁴⁶ Lutterbeck emphasizes that contemporary gendarmes maintain the dual military/police nature; “Nowadays most of [European Gendarmes] display roughly the following features: they have a double affiliation, with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, they are organized along military lines (and are thus more centralized and hierarchical than ‘ordinary,’ i.e. civilian-style, police forces), and they are equipped with heavier equipment and stronger suppression capabilities than is common for police forces, such as armoured cars, small airplanes, helicopters and light infantry weapons.” Lutterbeck, “Between Police and Military,” 47.

¹⁴⁷ Hovens and Elk, *Gendarmeries and the Security Challenges of the 21st Century*, 176–180.

¹⁴⁸ The Hungarian Gendarmerie is not to be confused with the Arrow Cross militia. Both were eagerly engaged in the Hungarian Holocaust, but in separate roles. The Gendarmerie was chiefly responsible for the deportation of nearly 440,000 Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz (see Kenez, *Coming of the Holocaust*, 250–52), and the Arrow Cross militia was responsible for torturing and murdering over 50,000 Jews. These Jews were among those that remained in ghettos after the deportations had stopped (see Lendvai, *Hungary: Between Democracy*, 62). Both of these are, of course, separate from the contemporary Hungarian Guard.

the local gendarmerie, which was all too happy to conduct it with little supervision.¹⁴⁹ With the end of World War II came the Soviet occupation and new methods for ensuring the peace and compliance of the population—in 1945, the Hungarian Gendarmerie was dissolved.

1. The Hungarian Guard: An Aggressive Neighborhood Watch?

Despite the international perception of the Hungarian Guard, opinions vary domestically. Outside of the Hungarian capital, the Guard is seen by many as a neighborhood watch program, a necessary measure to keep “Gypsy crime” in check. There is no military-style training, or any training for that matter, only an expectation that they will show up when and where they are needed. Vona has wisely placed uniformed guard members in front of the cameras during community service opportunities. In 2008 and 2013, uniformed Hungarian Guard members labored diligently, filling sandbags to hold off floodwaters as the Danube River threatened their communities.¹⁵⁰

Vona maintains that the Guard is a positive force and has not been involved in any criminal activity, attempting to separate the Guard from its World War II-era roots. Chilling similarities, however, remain between the past and present uniforms and symbols. The Hungarian Guard wears a traditional peasant costume of black and white emblazoned with the red-and-white-striped flag of Árpád, the Magyar conqueror of the Carpathian Basin. While the striped flag can be tied to ancient Hungarian tradition, there

¹⁴⁹ István Deák, “A Fatal Compromise? The Debate Over Collaboration and Resistance in Hungary,” *East European Politics & Societies* 9, no. 2 (1995): 226–27, DOI:10.1177/0888325495009002002.

¹⁵⁰ Jordan, “Roots of Hate,” 106; Agence France-Presse, “Hungarians Unite as ‘Worst-Ever’ Floods Threaten Budapest,” *The Jakarta Globe*, accessed June 10, 2013, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/international/hungarians-unite-as-worst-ever-floods-threaten-budapest/>.

is also an undeniable link to its use by the Arrow Cross; their peasant-styled uniforms hearkening to the Brown and Black Shirts of past fascist movements.¹⁵¹

LeBor surmises that the Guard's actions are held in check to support Vona's protestations that Jobbik is a non-violent organization, a vital argument to support Jobbik's political legitimacy.¹⁵² Observers' skepticism regarding Jobbik's position of nonviolence was rewarded when a regional Jobbik leader suggested that when Jobbik assumes power in Hungary, according to a Hungarian news site, the Hungarian Guard would become the backbone of a new gendarmerie, "carrying weapons at their side."¹⁵³

The Hungarian Guard has been one of Jobbik's greatest avenues for publicity and voter recruitment; it has allowed Jobbik to emphasize its proactive programs against the perceived "others" and has placed its political platform on the national and international stage. The Guard, however, has not come without a price; whether they participate in a growing list of hate crimes or not, they are linked by association and are painted with the same violent brush.

¹⁵¹ LeBor, "Marching Back to the Future," 34. Jobbik's English language website provides its own rationale for the uniform of the Hungarian Guard and its symbology:

Journalists for example who see a picture of a person in a white top and black waistcoat, and say, that what they in fact see is a blackshirt. When anyone will tell you that a white shirt and black waistcoat has been traditional peasant formal attire in Hungary for centuries and has never been the uniform of anybody. When dark comments are made about "fascist" paraphernalia or symbols "reminiscent" of the 1940s what is being referred to, and why are these references always so vague? Simply, because any clarification would rapidly dismiss such fear mongering as drivel. The Flag of the Royal House of Árpád...has been a symbol of the Hungarian nation, everywhere, for over 800 years. Precisely because it was, and has for centuries been—everywhere—it was also used briefly and in bastardized form, by a tyrannical four month long government in Hungary complicit in the holocaust. But neither Jobbik nor the Hungarian Guard 'resurrected' this symbol, because it has continued to be used as the emblem of government departments, rural municipalities, and parliamentary banners, for decades in post-War Hungary, long before Jobbik or the Hungarian Guard even existed. Jobbik, "Frequently Refuted Lies," Jobbik: The Movement for a Better Hungary, May 3, 2011, http://www.jobbik.com/frequently_refuted_lies.

¹⁵² LeBor, "Marching Back to the Future," 38.

¹⁵³ "Tüntetés Sarkadon: Fegyvert Adna a Gárdának a Jobbik," *BEOL*, March 1, 2009, <http://www.beol.hu/bekes/kozelet/tuntetes-sarkadon-fegyvert-adna-a-gardanak-a-jobbik-215811>.

2. ...Or the Return of Baky's Thugs?

In 2013, the European Roma Right Centre released a report detailing 61 separate violent acts against Hungarian Roma, ranging from January 2008 to September 2012. The list describes events that claimed nine lives with dozens of additional injuries, some serious. Many of these cases involved discharged weapons, Molotov cocktails, and even hand grenades.¹⁵⁴ It is possible that few of these attacks were perpetrated by members of the Hungarian Guard, but the surging level of hate crimes in Hungary are often associated with the poster child for Magyar thuggery.

Jobbik has suffered international relations setbacks due to the glut of violence towards minorities, but the formation of the Hungarian Guard also resulted in a huge loss of leadership. Several months after the Guard was created, a Hungarian news agency reported that “[t]hree founding members of the radical right-wing Jobbik party, including former chairman Dávid Kovács, have left the party, declaring that it has become too radical ... Joining Kovács are Márton Fári, a former chairman of the party’s ethics committee, and Ervin Nagy, a former president of Jobbik’s national council.”¹⁵⁵ The news report claimed all three cited the Hungarian Guard as a major source of contention aside from the party’s increased radicalization. Furthermore, the article highlighted what may be argued as the Guard’s greatest weakness. Referring again to the former founders reasons for departure, the report concluded, “The biggest problem ... is that Jobbik leaders have no effective way of vetting those who join the Magyar Gárda.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Catherine Twigg, “Attacks against Roma in Hungary: January 2008–September 2012” (European Roma Rights Centre, October 1, 2012), 1, <http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/attacks-list-in-hungary.pdf>. The author concedes that the report is not exhaustive, nor has it been independently verified. The data was gleaned from various media sources and NGO reports. The report claims no position of bias or motive, while subsequently mentioning Jobbik and the Hungarian Guard seven times each and the Magyar Garda twice.

¹⁵⁵ Hungary Around the Clock, “Founders Quit Far-Right Party Jobbik Over Hungarian Guard,” *Politics.hu*, March 11, 2008, <http://www.politics.hu/20080311/founders-quit-farright-party-jobbik-over-hungarian-guard/>.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Hungary is a hotbed for extreme-right hate groups; the Athena Institute has identified eight extremist groups and is monitoring an additional seven.¹⁵⁷ Some of these groups take a much more active and violent approach with regard to race relations. Zsolt Tyirityán, leader of the *Betyársereg* (Outlaw's Army), recently called on Hungarians to, "Stop being the prey and start being predators."¹⁵⁸ On another occasion, Tyirityán described the path of the eminent race war with the Roma, saying, "Even though we cannot annihilate them," reports the Athena Institute, "[An] apartheid system should be put into place ... The Gypsy has no place in the *lebensraum* of the Hungarians."¹⁵⁹ One of the greatest problems with the Hungarian Guard is that it has no apparatus to screen potential members—it has no way to ensure it is not populated with members of more virulent hate groups such as Tyirityán's.¹⁶⁰

D. CONCLUSION

Jobbik has set itself apart from the other political parties in Hungary by addressing issues of contemporary politics that are controversial and have heretofore remained untouched by more mainstream parties that adhere to the political culture of democratic Europe since 1945 and especially of the EU in its happier years. While its designs and motives leave little doubt of their racist nature with the threat of violence, Jobbik has cleverly worded them in such a way as to leave enough room to maneuver along the border of nationalism and xenophobia—but the cracks in the façade are

¹⁵⁷ "Hate Groups Map," Athena Institute, accessed February 15, 2014, http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/hate_groups/.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. Lebensraum refers to additional "living space" to be stripped from the "inferior races" to the East for Hitler's Greater Germany and European New Order. The additional territory would provide additional food for Germany's growing population as well as new markets for its economy. Tyirityán reveals his feelings for the "inferior race" of the Roma while simultaneously resurrecting Nazi rhetoric. Stephen J. Lee, *Europe, 1890-1945* (London: Routledge, 2003), 237, 343.

¹⁶⁰ Liz Fekete, *Pedlars of Hate: The Violent Impact of the European Far Right* (London: Institute of Race Relations, 2012), 15, 38; "Hungary Gang Jailed for Killing Roma," *British Broadcasting Corporation*, August 6, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-23586440>. In August 2013, four men were convicted of killing six Gypsies between 2008 and 2009 using firearms, Molotov cocktails, and hand grenades. In one case, a house was set on fire and a man and his five-year-old child were shot dead as they tried to escape the flames. Two of the four men are reported by multiple sources to be founding members of the Hungarian Guard. Ibid.

beginning to show as the culture of extremism and violence become generalized throughout Europe once more.

Hungary has issues with crime and no one would begrudge it the right to introduce increased levels of security and protection. All across Europe, countries employ gendarmes to enforce law and order, especially in their rural communities; it would seem that a carefully constructed gendarmerie would serve Hungary's purposes well, but the Hungarian Guard will never successfully fill that role for two reasons. First, a future Hungarian Gendarmerie will be forced to overcome the historical baggage of the Nazi and Hungarian Holocaust; it will need to prove that it could not be capable of the same atrocities of its predecessors. Ironically, and in a process that should cause some dismay among observers of political culture in Central Europe in the midst of crisis, the Hungarian Guard seems to embrace its awful heritage instead of distancing itself from it, as has been the case in such nations as Germany, Austria, and France. The Guard's marches through minority neighborhoods, wearing garb linked to fascism, sends an unmanageable message of fear and intimidation, not that of service and protection. Second, the Hungarian Guard takes its orders from a radical political party, not from a legitimate government, and therefore lacks any semblance of validity. Without a legitimacy derived from the government, the Hungarian Guard lacks credibility, but even more ominously, it lacks oversight and restraint. Without these characteristics, the Hungarian Guardsmen have become vigilantes focused not on crime prevention but on racial intimidation.

As it stands now, the Hungarian Guard is not the second coming of the fascist-led gendarmerie of World War II, but neither is it a passive neighborhood watch. Its greatest danger comes from what it could become if Jobbik comes to power in Hungary. At that point, the Guard will gain legitimacy without restraint, and may seek to enforce a Hungarian people's community, reordered to be an ethnically pure state and society.

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V. CONCLUSION: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Hungary lies at the heart of Europe and has represented much of the West's hope for the new democracies that emerged from the Warsaw Pact a quarter century ago. Both the EU and NATO expressed their confidence in and commitment to Hungary by including it in their initial post-Cold War expansions into Eastern Europe in the 1990s; they were hopeful that Hungary would prove to be a beacon of freedom and progress for other similar new democratic nations in the region. Sadly, it appears that Hungary's commitment to democracy has waned as its virulent nationalism rises amid the crisis of Europe and beyond. In this national project alone, Fidesz and Jobbik are unwitting allies in Hungary's incremental retreat from the West—backsliding into autocracy. Panic grips the hearts of some observers, eager to restrain a resurgent heritage of hate. For others, it yields a sense of sadness; a country deserving of a political and cultural comeback seems to have lost its way in the dead end of integral nationalism.

A. WHAT CAN THE WEST DO?

Member states of the EU and NATO are familiar with the situation in Hungary. While no one can confidently predict where Hungary's autocratic and far-right drift will end from the perspective of 2014, recent European experience has shown that the worst-case scenario is possible, and that when a country proceeds down this path as in the case of the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, it may drag the rest of Europe into a destructive conflict. Therefore, both NATO and the EU have a stake in a happier outcome.

1. NATO: Security Supersedes Democracy

NATO and its leading nations have a right to be interested in the state of affairs in Hungary. The North Atlantic Treaty's preamble states: "Parties to this treaty...are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law."¹⁶¹ It is

¹⁶¹ "NATO - The North Atlantic Treaty," NATO, April 4, 1949, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm.

clear that NATO is concerned with the preservation of democracy, but its chief focus is on the preservation of peace through collective defense and deterrence. The primacy of security through collective defense over such considerations as fully functioning democracy was evident at the foundation of the Atlantic alliance; Portugal joined as an authoritarian regime and remained so until the completion of its 1976 constitution. Current NATO partners include constitutional monarchies, such as Jordan and Morocco, as well as autocratic nations like Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.¹⁶²

Several historical examples provide some insight into NATO's probable reaction to current events in Hungary. For example, in April 1967, a military junta established a dictatorship in Greece in response to an anticipated communist coup. NATO maintained, according to Effie Pedaliu, "[t]hat there was no contradiction between the preamble of its founding treaty and the authoritarian practices of some members, [and] the alliance asserted that its remit was the defense of the West from Soviet attack, not interference in domestic affairs."¹⁶³ The United States showed even fewer qualms about maintaining an allied relationship with Greece under "the colonels;" heavy weapons and other military equipment continued to flow to the dictators in Greece.¹⁶⁴

Greece's neighbor to the East has had similar governmental disruptions. Modern Turkey has experienced three military coups, beginning in 1960. The Menderes-led government of Turkey worked closely with the West in 1950–1960 to implement NATO's strategic goals for the region, but these acts of fidelity were not enough to garner intervention from other NATO member states when Menderes was overthrown by his own military. Upon seizing power, the military junta immediately expressed its loyalty to NATO; the Alliance took no action in Turkey and the United States quickly

¹⁶² David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, DC: United States Inst. of Peace Press, 1998), 71; "NATO - Member Countries," NATO, accessed February 27, 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/nato_countries.htm; "NATO - Partners," NATO, accessed February 27, 2014, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/51288.htm>.

¹⁶³ Effie G. H. Pedaliu, "'A Discordant Note': NATO and the Greek Junta, 1967–1974," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 22, no. 1 (2011): 101–102, DOI:10.1080/09592296.2011.549745.

¹⁶⁴ CSIA European Security Working Group, "Instability and Change on NATO's Southern Flank," *International Security* 3, no. 3 (1978): 156, DOI:10.2307/2626723.

sent economic aid to the new government.¹⁶⁵ Two additional Turkish military coups played out similarly in 1971 and 1980.¹⁶⁶ NATO leaders may have believed they could exercise a more democratizing influence on Turkey within the context of the alliance, or they may have been more alive to Turkey's sensitive geo-political position than to its internal turmoil. Either way, the alliance accommodated Turkey's unhappy civil-military interludes in the name of security and stability.

In at least one instance, "security and stability" have accommodated open conflict between two NATO states. Greece and Turkey joined NATO together in 1952; despite a long history of conflict, they were in the midst of several decades of peace and cooperation.¹⁶⁷ In 1955, however, divisions in the island nation of Cyprus produced tensions that pitted the two NATO members against each other. Cyprus is largely divided between an ethnic Greek majority and an ethnic Turkish minority, and its future remains a contested issue between its paternal nations.¹⁶⁸ The tensions that began with Greek-Cypriot unification efforts threatened to give way to a Turkish invasion in the 1960s, and NATO pursued avenues of diplomacy and threats to forestall hostilities. In 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, forcing many Greeks to flee to the southern part of the island. Again, the other NATO allies refused to themselves itself militarily in the deteriorating comity between two member states along the Alliance's southern flank, but chose to enforce ineffective military embargos.¹⁶⁹

Today, Cyprus exists as a partitioned state, both politically and nationally.¹⁷⁰ While the Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus has never evolved into outright war, the region has arguably transitioned through multiple stages of destabilization and remain's

¹⁶⁵ Ömer Karasapan, "Turkey and US Strategy in the Age of Glasnost," *Middle East Report*, no. 160 (1989): 6, DOI:10.2307/3013440.

¹⁶⁶ Ali Karaosmanoglu, "Turkey and the Southern Flank: Domestic and External Contexts," in *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenges*, ed. John Chipman (London: Routledge, 1988), 312–14.

¹⁶⁷ Fotios Moustakis, *The Greek-Turkish Relationship and NATO* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 70–71.

¹⁶⁸ Jed C. Snyder, *Defending the Fringe: NATO, the Mediterranean, and the Persian Gulf* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), 56.

¹⁶⁹ Moustakis, *Greek-Turkish Relationship*, 68.

¹⁷⁰ Andreas Theophanous, "Prospects for Solving the Cyprus Problem and the Role of the European Union," *Publius* 30, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 219–23, DOI:10.2307/3331130.

volatile today. In view of these precedents, NATO might be expected to accommodate Hungary, even if a Jobbik-influenced government pushes harder for the rights and status of ethnic Hungarians in neighboring states (even if they, too, are NATO members).

Finally, during the 1974–75 Portuguese Revolution, there was a strong possibility that a communist-influenced government would succeed in a complete governmental takeover in Portugal. This development would have been extremely awkward as the leading NATO member, the United States, was engaged in anti-communist efforts in Vietnam during the height of the Cold War. As NATO has no provisions to revoke membership, the most the other NATO Allies could do was to prevent the Portuguese from receiving classified briefings, which the Portuguese had already declined to attend.¹⁷¹

Uzbekistan is a more recent example of NATO's willingness to work with less-than-democratic countries. Uzbekistan is a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace, yet it has earned a dismal "Not Free" rating from Freedom House.¹⁷² Still, NATO has overlooked Uzbekistan's continually wavering in its democratic rigor, in return for basing rights in support of the Alliance's current Afghanistan operations.¹⁷³

A Jobbik-led or -influenced government would be of concern to NATO, but NATO probably would not attempt to influence its course overtly. In any event, Hungary will maintain its strategic usefulness to the Alliance regardless of whether it can maintain a Western-style democracy. The only scenario that might provoke the other NATO Allies to action would be a forceful attempt by a Jobbik-led or -influenced government to recreate the borders of a pre-1919 Hungary, or any other action that would upset the stability and security of the region. However, given NATO's reluctance to involve itself

¹⁷¹ Ingmar Oldberg, "The Portuguese Revolution of 1974—75 and US Foreign Policy," *Cooperation and Conflict* 17, no. 2 (1982): 179–83; Leo G. Michel, *NATO Decisionmaking: Au Revoir to the Consensus Rule?* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies, August 2003), 7, <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/websites/nduedu/www.ndu.edu/inss/Strforum/sf202/sf202.pdf>.

¹⁷² "Uzbekistan," *Freedom House*, February 12, 2014, http://www.freedomhouse.org/country/uzbekistan#.UxYb3_SwIwg.

¹⁷³ Dina Rome Spechler and Martin C. Spechler, "Uzbekistan among the Great Powers," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 42, no. 3 (September 2009): 365–71, DOI:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2009.07.006.

in regional conflicts, like Cyprus, Slovakia and Romania might look elsewhere for assistance. It seems that although the NATO Allies will continue to monitor events in Hungary, they will defer action to other European institutions.

2. The European Union: Good Intentions but Weak Resolve

The EU is similarly interested in Jobbik's actions, but to a greater extent than merely its effect on the stability and security of the region. Rather, the EU is concerned with the effect Jobbik might have on democratic institutions and human rights in Hungary.¹⁷⁴ While the EU has a limited toolkit to deal with member countries that act in ways that undermine its charter, its track record suggests that it may be as ineffective as NATO in holding out for good democratic citizenship.

The Austrian general elections of 1999 produced a coalition government, including the incumbent and a far-right nationalist party, the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ).¹⁷⁵ Although the FPÖ was not a new party, its electoral success in 1999 and its neo-Nazi heritage caught the attention of the West, much as Jobbik has done recently.¹⁷⁶ Before the election and its resulting coalition government were finalized, the 14 other members of the EU warned Austria that if the FPÖ were included in the Austrian government, the other member states would, 1) cease bilateral relations with Austria; 2)

¹⁷⁴ The European Union, "Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union," March 30, 2010, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:083:0389:0403:en:PDF>. The EU's 2010 charter proclaims that it is, "Founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity; it is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. It places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Union and by creating an area of freedom, security and justice." Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ The FPÖ has significant similarities to Jobbik; Austria carries much of the same historical baggage as Hungary (Hitler himself was from Austria, and the parents of the FPÖ chairman, Jörg Haider, were active Nazis), and the FPÖ is a far-right nationalist party seeking to vilify national minorities. Furthermore, during the 1999 elections, the party gained its strength as a catch all party, capturing those unsatisfied with the current government. Finally, the FPÖ also seeks to withdraw from the EU. Walter Manoscheck, "The Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ): an Austrian and a European Phenomenon?," in *Austria in the European Union*, ed. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, and Michael Gehler (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 180–222.

¹⁷⁶ Matthew Happold, "Fourteen Against One: The EU Member States' Response to Freedom Party Participation in the Austrian Government," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (2000): 955. Happold describes some of the controversial statements from Jörg Haider: "He has described Nazi concentration camps as 'punishment centres,' praised Hitler's 'orderly employment policies' and referred to Waffen SS veterans as 'decent men of character.' He has stated that immigration into Austria has led to 'over-foreignisation'...and that the Austrian welfare state coddles immigrants and encourages them to have large families, leading to the degeneration of the Austrian nation." Ibid.

withhold support of Austrian candidates running for international offices; and 3) reduce the recognition of the Austrian ambassadors to a technical level.¹⁷⁷

The Fourteen, as they styled themselves, sent a clear message to Austria and any other EU member states wishing to include radical elements in their government, but it failed dramatically at the outset and did not improve thereafter. The threatened sanctions were intended to convince the Austrians not to include the FPÖ in their government. The threat was ineffective; the coalition government was formed with the FPÖ, and the Fourteen enacted the sanctions.¹⁷⁸ The haphazard coordination through the various European Union entities or perhaps differing agendas stood out as the European Commission failed to follow suit with the Fourteen, and pledged to continue working relations with Austria until it could be determined that Austria had violated any European treaty.

The Austrians responded to the soft sanctions with conditions of their own; the Austrian government retaliated with threats to block EU constitutional reforms, new members to the Union, and new tax initiatives that were intended to benefit the EU.¹⁷⁹ As time progressed, the resolve of some of the Fourteen began to waver; Denmark, Finland, Greece, Italy, and Ireland sought ways to end the sanctions against Austria. A plan was conceived to appoint a council of “Three Wise Men”¹⁸⁰ to determine if Austria had indeed breached any common European values. After a period of approximately three months, the council determined that although the FPÖ was politically incorrect, it had not violated any of the EU treaties. The sanctions were immediately terminated, and the EU proceeded to put the political nightmare behind it.¹⁸¹ The EU’s sanctions against Austria showed that although well intended, the European Union cannot muster the resolve to

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 955–56.

¹⁷⁸ Michael Gehler, “‘Preventative Hammer Blow’ or Boomerang?: The EU ‘Sanction’ Measures against Austria 2000,” in *Austria in the European Union*, ed. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, and Michael Gehler (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 209.

¹⁷⁹ Happold, “Fourteen against One,” 957.

¹⁸⁰ Gehler, “‘Preventative Hammer Blow’ or Boomerang?,” 202.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 202–12.

manage undesirable conduct in its member states, especially when there is not sufficient strength in the treaties to warrant such intervention.

Subsequent attempts to construct barriers against far-right governments have been undertaken within the EU with even less effect. In December 2000, only a few short months after the Austrian debacle, the EU adopted the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This document included language that was meant to prevent member state governments from seriously and persistently violating human rights. Unfortunately, however, the charter did not include means of enforcement.¹⁸² Legal protection of minority rights would have to wait until the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union could be included in the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon.¹⁸³ After the fiasco regarding Austria, and given the EU penchant for plodding toward consensus, it may be difficult or impossible for the EU to enforce the charter.¹⁸⁴

3. Current Options for European Intervention

More than a decade has passed since the failed censure of Austria, yet the specter of right-wing extremism within Europe strengthens despite the EU's increased focus, as noted by Michael Gehler:

The discussion about right-wing populism in Europe, which had occurred simultaneously to the policy of isolation toward Austria, had no moderating effect upon the extremist tendencies in other European states. Neo-Nazi excesses against foreigners increased in Germany, blatant hatred of foreigners was articulated in Spain against Moroccans, and animosity towards foreigners, as well as racism, and brutal anti-Semitism intensified in France. A nationalist wave threatened to come into existence.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Liz Heffernan, "The Treaty of Nice: Arming the Courts to Defend a European Bill of Rights?," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 65, no. 2 (2002): 189.

¹⁸³ The European Union, "Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union," December 14, 2007, 7, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:303:0001:0016:en:PDF>. Article 21 of the charter states that, "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited." Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Elizabeth Pond, "Europe Tames Its Far Right," *World Policy Blog*, September 17, 2012, <http://www.worldpolicy.org/blog/2012/09/17/europe-tames-its-far-right>.

¹⁸⁵ Gehler, "'Preventative Hammer Blow' or Boomerang?," 209.

Arguably, this wave has arrived and is strengthening itself with the ill effects of the Euro crisis and the long duration of the economic, social, and political crisis in the past decade. Since the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, well-established far-right parties in France, Germany, and Italy have surged in popularity, while new ones in countries such as Finland, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Sweden have joined them.¹⁸⁶ If EU efforts since 1999 have not successfully discouraged the rise of the right in its member states, what else can be done? The question becomes much more pressing when, as with Jobbik, the movement in question brings the threat of autocracy.

Jan-Werner Müller acknowledges that EU intervention into member states' affairs is problematic, citing common perceptions of EU hypocrisy and larger state favoritism.¹⁸⁷ Müller also concedes that the EU is not likely to ever invoke the “nuclear option” known as Article 7 of the Lisbon Treaty—most members might not support the move over fears that it will one day be turned against them.¹⁸⁸ Müller also acknowledges the possibility of granting additional power to the European Courts to address Article 2 violations in Hungary, but in the end, he recommends that the Copenhagen Commission work in concert with the European Commission to identify and warn states that are abandoning the principles of democracy. If the warnings go unheeded, the Commissions could assess significant fines or limit access to EU subsidies.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Michael Minkenberg, “The European Radical Right and Xenophobia in West and East: Trends, Patterns and Challenges,” in *Right-Wing Extremism in Europe*, ed. Ralf Melzer and Sebastian Serafin (Frankfurt: Druck, 2013), 9–15.

¹⁸⁷ Jan-Werner Müller, “Defending Democracy within the EU,” *Journal of Democracy* 24, no. 2 (2013): 138. Müller’s full description of the widely viewed concerns follows:

There are four commonly voiced concerns about such interventions: 1) They would be hypocritical because the EU itself is not democratic and therefore lacks the credibility to act as the continent’s democracy watchdog; 2) there is no single, fully agreed-upon model of European liberal democracy that could serve as a guideline or checklist for determining whether a country is departing from shared “European standards”; 3) such interventions are in and of themselves paternalistic and, ultimately, illiberal; and 4) only smaller, relatively powerless member states would ever be subject to interference from Brussels.

¹⁸⁸ Bărbulescu, “Constructing the Roma,” 279–89. Bărbulescu summarizes France’s deportation of Roma populations as late as 2010. Then-President Sarkozy enacted legislation which enabled him to revoke the citizenship of those found to be a security risk to the nation; this move cleared the path for mass deportation.

¹⁸⁹ Müller, “Defending Democracy within the EU,” 146–48.

Erin Jenne and Cas Mudde note that international organizations, such as the IMF, have convinced Hungary to modify its economic decisions in the past, specifically regarding, “legislation addressing the international community’s criticisms about fiscal laxity and the lack of judicial independence.”¹⁹⁰ Jenne and Mudde echo Müller’s recommendation for the EU to develop more limited capabilities, alongside Article 7, to restrict loans or subsidies for Hungary. These threats would give the EU a more tailored and flexible capability for coercion.¹⁹¹

These arguments for the EU’s intervention in Hungary may prove to be shortsighted; the authors are quick to acknowledge some of their vulnerabilities. First, international organizations, such as the IMF and the World Bank, have not shown a desire to interfere in domestic policies, aside from financial matters.¹⁹² Second, any outside interference on the part of the EU would play into the hands of not only Jobbik, but also the ruling center-right party, Fidesz. Both parties would portray any EU restrictions as an attempt to further limit Hungarian sovereignty, giving additional momentum to the political shift to the right. Finally, Jobbik has repeatedly stated that it intends to remove Hungary from the EU. If Jobbik comes to power, any threats tied to EU membership will become meaningless; Jobbik will withdraw from the EU and seek economic and political alliances to the East.

4. The EU versus Nationalism: More Harm than Good?

Not only is it doubtful that the EU can do anything substantial to suppress the progress of extreme nationalism in Hungary, but there are compelling arguments that its policies have actually aggravated the situation. Hungary’s brand of irredentism is complex, extending beyond the lands stripped away by the Treaty of Trianon, but Jobbik’s unveiled desires to reclaim the territory lost after World War I justify significant apprehension on the part of Hungary’s neighbors and Europe as a whole. John Fox and Peter Vermeersch illustrate how the EU’s attempts to erase the significance of European

¹⁹⁰ Erin K. Jenne and Cas Mudde, “Hungary’s Illiberal Turn: Can Outsiders Help?,” *Journal of Democracy* 23, no. 3 (2012): 151.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 147–55.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 151.

borders actually exacerbated these international tensions. Blurred national borders allowed Hungary to create strengthened ties with its one-time citizens, against the wishes of Slovakia and Romania. Hungary eagerly, and perhaps ironically, supported human rights and the monitoring that accompanied it. Now countries that had marginalized ethnic Hungarian minorities were losing significant control over them. The fuzzy borders also aided Hungary in its efforts to lessen the claim that its neighbors had on their Trianon acquisitions.¹⁹³

B. “IF NOT US, WHO?”

As Jenne and Mudde conclude their analysis of democracy and the far right in Hungary, they seem to lament the situation: “The international community will probably continue to critique the Fidesz government’s authoritarian turn without overtly intervening in Hungarian domestic politics. It is therefore up to Hungary’s democratic opposition to assert itself.” While the comment is directed towards the Fidesz government, it applies just as well to Jobbik. Hungary’s extreme version of far-right politics emerged soon after the fall of communism, and it has only strengthened despite the international handwringing.

The West may have every reason to forestall Hungary’s march to autocracy, but it is bound by various constraints. NATO outlasted the Warsaw Pact, in part, due to its focus on its collective defense. Its ability to resist dabbling in the domestic politics of its member states kept the Alliance solid enough to maintain a deterrent effect against its foe. It is highly unlikely that NATO will abandon this proven strategy. The EU failed in its one serious attempt to influence a member state’s far-right government, and it is unlikely to attempt it again for several reasons. The failure is still fresh in the EU’s collective memory, and the current political environment may preclude it from building a willing coalition of EU representatives to attempt a similar action. Hungary is not the only EU member experiencing a popular rise of the right, nor is Jobbik the only far-right party with European Parliament representation. The right-left split in the European Parliament played an important part in the failure of the FPÖ sanctions; it will likely

¹⁹³ Fox and Vermeersch, “Backdoor Nationalism,” 327–41.

prevent the success or even the attempt of such a venture in the future. Furthermore, Hungary is not the only EU member with a questionable record in respecting human rights; the Roma face comparable treatment in Italy and are routinely deported in France.¹⁹⁴

It seems clear that if Hungary is to be saved from a continued backslide toward a Jobbik-led or -influenced government, the Hungarians will have to do it themselves. The West will no doubt express encouragement, but as in 1956, it will find reasons to stay on the sidelines. It is therefore up to the people of Hungary. They will need to decide what kind of government they want to represent them and how their government will treat its people. They will decide if their government dictates policies and actions based on a people's heritage or in spite of it. Hungarian voters will dictate whether the past 20 years of democratization were a beginning or an end.

C. CONTEXT HAS MEANING: THE VIEW FROM HUNGARY

This study has documented the justified apprehension of the international community concerning the state of affairs in Hungary. Few, aside from the far right, will attempt to justify the policies and actions of Jobbik and their ilk. Jobbik, as a party, is anti-Roma and anti-Semitic, as are many of its supporters. The Hungarian Guard operates above the law and harbors the threat of a return to fascism. Jobbik would abandon democracy and a liberal economy and replace them with a vaguely defined state-run apparatus. From the perspective of the West, and from the United States in particular, nothing worse could be imagined—this would be a clear-cut disaster. From the vantage of Eastern Europe, however, and from Hungary in particular, things are not so clear. Context has meaning. This is not to say that context can excuse Jobbik, but before others attempt to solve Hungary's problem, they should understand Hungary's context.

¹⁹⁴ Johns, "Do As I Say, Not As I Do," 695; Bărbulescu, "Constructing the Roma," 289; James Fontanella-Khan, "Brussels Seeks Greater Powers on Rule of Law," *Financial Times*, February 24, 2014, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/1fa9684a-9d70-11e3-a599-00144feab7de.html#axzz2uX6KLaR6>.

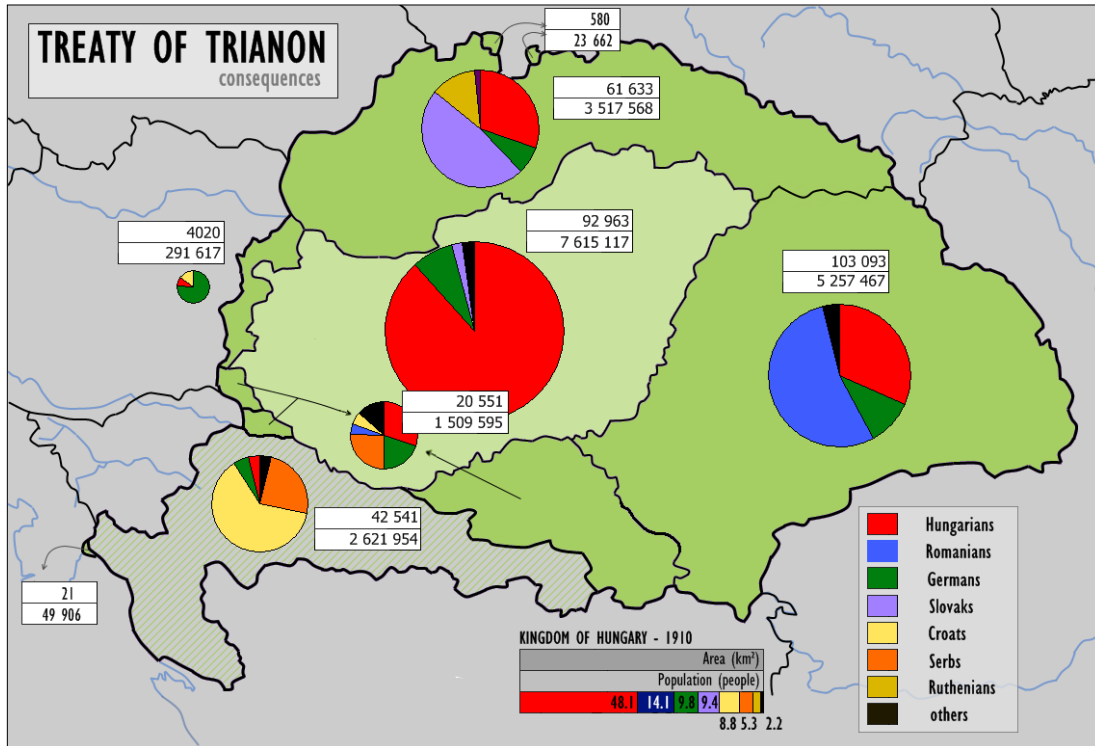


Figure 1. The geographical and national consequences of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon¹⁹⁵

For observers in the United States (except, perhaps, for Native Americans), it is nearly impossible to understand the trauma that the Treaty of Trianon represents for Hungarians—the loss of 71 percent of the country and 64 percent of its population. Péter Hanák described the blow that was suffered in 1921, which still reverberated as he wrote his 1981 memoir:

Our collapse in the war and (the terms of the Treaty of) Trianon have found the nation unprepared. Everything that up to that point used to be absolute, concrete and unambiguous was suddenly shattered. The unity of our country and of our nation vanished, and so did all our fictitious conceptualizations, as well as all historical and geographical realities... The trauma of defeat was so terribly deep, and it shook the nation's life-foundations to such a degree that for years and even for decades we could hardly expect anyone...to come up with an objective assessment (of this whole affair). After all, (Trianon meant) not only the dismemberment of a nation, but also the sudden relativization of such

¹⁹⁵ "File:Magyarország 1920.png," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, accessed March 5, 2014, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Magyarország_1920.png.

formerly absolute concepts as the *nation* and *national destiny*.... One can hardly be amazed, therefore, that the initial reaction was (an intense desire) to revise the whole peace system.... Trianon had in fact set a double trap for the Hungarian nation. On the one hand, it conscribed all elemental patriotism, all inclination to reconstruct one's nation, all justified emotions of grief into the service of...the counterrevolutionary regime; on the other hand, its flagrant injustices beclouded its righteous aspects, namely those of its features that were the unavoidable consequences of national developments in Central and Southeastern Europe. As such, (Trianon) prevented us from recognizing the relativity of our place and role in the world, and the necessity of establishing good relations with the Danubian peoples.... Thus, the Trianon trap had a tighter grip of the majority of our nation than did the dualistic system (that preceded it). The most grotesque aspect of this tragic trap was that thereafter (Hungarian) national consciousness found itself bound not to a living, but to a non-existing, to a vanished absolute.¹⁹⁶

The treaty has left its imprint on nearly every significant political movement since its inception, from Admiral Horthy's regime to Ferenc Szálasi's Arrow Cross, from Viktor Orbán's Fidesz to Gábor Vona's Jobbik. Steven Várdy describes the aftermath of Trianon as a disease;¹⁹⁷ it is a malignant malady that still affects most Hungarians, regardless of heritage or creed. Cosmopolitan politics cannot restore what was lost; therefore, any movement that acknowledges the injustice of Trianon gains a measure of credibility—and any party that prescribes a cure gains a following.

The Hungarians, like many other Eastern Europeans, have experienced the schizophrenic nightmares of revolving occupations. The nomadic Magyars settled in Hungary in approximately 1000 A.D. As with most peoples of their age and region, they developed a proud heritage, one that was only magnified and supplemented in the nationalistic fervor of 1848. In the past 100 years, however, the Habsburgs, the Germans, and the Soviets have occupied Hungary—to say nothing of the preceding occupation by the Ottomans, yet after all these occupations comes the EU. Although the EU carries the hopes of economic stability and enduring peace, it comes at the price of deductions from full national sovereignty and a circumscribed national identity. Justifiably or not, some Hungarians see increased Europeanization (or worse, globalization) as just one more

¹⁹⁶ Péter Hának quoted in Várdy, "Impact of Trianon," 24–25.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

occupation. Is it any wonder that many Hungarians are willing to resort to unconventional or extreme methods in order to assert their version of Hungarian heritage and nationality?

Context is important. Context brings focus to an otherwise blurry understanding of complex situations. Context, however, cannot excuse truth. Jobbik is a party that feeds off of fear, misplaced pride, an unwillingness to accept blame, and a desire to recreate an unrecoverable past.

This study has focused on Jobbik: its roots, its policies, its ramifications, and possibilities for addressing them. However cathartic it may feel to dissect a cultural tumor like Jobbik, society cannot remain content with its biopsy. Jobbik is not the problem. Jobbik is the manifestation of centuries-old hatred and fear. When Jobbik declines, it will be because its supporters feel that it has lost its way. Then, the far right in Hungary will lend their support to future far-right parties promising to take up the political march against the “other.” Until Hungarians can come to terms with the nation’s current reality, acknowledge the sins of their fathers, and view the Hungarian nation without ethnic borders, Jobbik—and its political progenies—will remain a potent political force. Hungarians must learn to accept and appreciate the goulash that is the nation.

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