

# Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube: III

Re-thinking the meaning  
of Symbiosis -Past,  
Present and Future

Edited by

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and

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**Transboundary Symbiosis over the Danube: III**  
Re-thinking the meaning of Symbiosis—Past, Present and Future

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# Propaganda and “Realpolitik.” T. G. Masaryk and His Attitude towards Hungary and the Magyars during and after World War I

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Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk started his resistance activities against Austria-Hungary with the aim of creating an independent Czechoslovak state immediately at the start of World War I. The assassination in Sarajevo caught him while on a family holiday in Germany (Bad Schandau). In Germany, he experienced the mobilization that made a good impression on him with its precision and organization which was in sharp contrast to what he later experienced in Prague. Although at first he had not believed that a world conflict would really break out, when it happened, he immediately realized that a great war in Europe would also decide the fate of Central Europe, which would also be the fate of the Czechs and Slovaks.<sup>1</sup> He thus observed the mobilization and the first battles very carefully. From the beginning, he considered the options, economic, military and political potentials of those countries that were fighting. He published his reflections in a study called *Válka [War]*<sup>2</sup>. A month later, another

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1 MASARYK, T.G., Světová revoluce. Za války a ve válce 1914 - 1918. Vzpomíná a uvažuje. Praha: Orbis a Čin 1925, p. 10-12. English translation: The Making of a State. Memories and Observations. With introduction by Henry Wickham Stead, London 1927.

2 MASARYK, T.G., Válka a revoluce I. Články - memorandá - přednášky - rozhovory 1914 - 1916, Spisy T.G.Masaryka svazek 30 (ed. Karel Pichlík, Dagmar Hájková and Richard Vašek) Praha 2005: Ústav T.G.Masaryka, o.p.s., Masarykův ústav AV ČR, p. 11-27. Paper originally published in Naše doba on 20th August 1914, p. 961-

er essay, this time not signed by Masaryk, was published in *Naše doba* [*Our Age*] dealing with the economic potential of the countries at war.<sup>3</sup> It was quite surprising that the war censorship allowed these articles to be published, since they were far from patriotic. In his comments, using the language of numbers, Masaryk soberly, even drily, weighed the positive and negative aspects of both of the military groups. The economic indicators were particularly in favour of the Triple Entente, mainly in the case of a long-lasting war. These reflections were somehow drowned out by the common opinion that Germany and Austria-Hungary were going to win the war quickly, as many still remembered the short Franco-Prussian War.

The possibility of the Triple Entente winning the war encouraged Masaryk to be active, because, in this case, resistance on the side of the Triple Entente could have led to the division of Austria-Hungary and the formation of independent states from its ruins. Masaryk started working towards this plan and his first memorandum, formulated by the British journalist Robert William Seton Watson, which was sent to the powers of the Triple Entente through the British government, originated as early as October 1914 during his interviews with Seton Watson.<sup>4</sup> This memorandum already represented a comprehensive program for the formation of the Czechoslovak state that is a unification of the countries of Czech St. Wenceslas' crown and the parts of Hungary populated by the Slovaks.

Masaryk's decision was a great surprise to many of his contemporaries who learnt of his plan, since pre-war Masaryk had been better-known as a fierce critic of Czech nationalism and its program of "the renewal of Czech statehood" in the Czech milieu. His specific political program followed more in the footsteps of František Palacký and his "idea of the Austrian state," because he had always rather pushed for Austrian democratization and modernization than for its downfall. This surprise could still be seen in newer publications from the end

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979 and later serialized also in *Čas*.

3 MASARYK, *Válka a revoluce*. p. 28-34. Article *Válka a hospodářství: Hospodářský boj Anglie a Německa* [The War and Economics. Economic fight of England and Germany] Originally published in *Naše doba*, 20th September 1914.

4 National Archives London, Public Record Office (PRO), Foreign Office (FO) 371/1900, pp. 115-124. The interviews took place on 24th and 25th October 1914 in Rotterdam.

of the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> As a matter of fact, Masaryk's "turnaround" was not so sudden. As a member of the Reichstag in Vienna, he was able to closely watch not only the unpromising policy of the court but also the increasingly radical German-nationalistic policy in Cisleithania and, finally, the magyarisation policy of the Hungarian governments in Hungary. According to his own testimony, Masaryk still did not believe that a military conflict of such magnitude would break out, even when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.<sup>6</sup> The war, however, became a reality and the evolutionary development that he had pushed for before lost its *raison d'être*; moreover, there was a threat that a victorious "German war" would strengthen German and Hungarian influence in Central Europe which could have led to catastrophic consequences for the Czechs and Slovaks. It was thus a rational analysis of the situation that arose because of the war. Masaryk made it quickly, just like he made the decision to lead resistance abroad with a goal to gain approval from the Triple Entente politicians for the break-up of Austria-Hungary and the formation of the independent Czechoslovak state.

It was not a simple task, since, at the beginning of the war, Masaryk's plan represented more of a utopia than a real political goal in the eyes of Triple Entente politicians; moreover, such a plan was also in conflict with their military goals which focused on defeating Germany and they followed a policy of the separation of Germany from Austria-Hungary. The plan had, however, been in existence since October 1914 and it was necessary to start vigorous activities towards its realization.

This was Masaryk's goal to form a Czechoslovak state. It was a specific, pragmatic goal. The new state was already given its borders in the first memorandum, which was especially important for Slovakia, since there had been no firm language border between the Slovak and Hungarian populations in Hungary and no historic border. It was necessary to lead broad-based agitation during the war to support this pragmatic plan, especially after the failure of the first memoranda. In other words: the Czechoslovak resistance movement needed propaganda to be successful.

Propaganda was mainly focused on demonstrating the logic of forming the Czechoslovak state. In fact, the formation of the Czechoslovak state necessarily

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5 See GALANDAUER, Jan, *Vznik Československé republiky 1918. Programy, projekty, perspektivy* [Emerging of the Czechoslovak Republic 1918. Programmes, Projects, Perspectives], Praha: Nakladatelství Svoboda, 1988, p. 30

6 MASARYK, *Světová revoluce...*p. 10.

meant the break-up of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy unlike, for example, the formation of the Polish state or expansion of the Romanian or Italian states. The Czechoslovak propaganda thus had lead not only with the pragmatic goal of forming a new “national state,” albeit the very idea of a national state was principal in the propaganda, but it also had to deal with the matter of the new organization of Central Europe.<sup>7</sup> The main motive lay in stopping German expansion towards Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, that is the German “Drang nach Osten.” New national states, especially the Slavic states of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, together with Romania, were to create a barrier against German expansionism. Foreign propaganda led by Masaryk thus had a strong anti-German bias from the beginning, but, as an area populated by Slovaks was also to be part of the new Czechoslovak state, criticism of the Hungarian denationalization policy was also strongly supported. Propaganda abroad was systematically organized by Masaryk, always in response to a specific situation, and used every possible chance to discredit Germany and, particularly, Austria-Hungary. This form of propaganda was so effective that the French author François Fejtő called Masaryk, together with Beneš, “the geniuses of propaganda.”<sup>8</sup>

In his book *Světová revoluce [World Revolution]*, Masaryk himself offered a rather extensive description of the principles of propaganda that the Czechoslovak foreign resistance used abroad. Apart from connections with important Triple Entente politicians and journalists, a lot of time and effort was devoted to public lectures and domestic journalism as well as journalism in selected foreign periodicals such as *La Nation Tchèque*, *Le Monde Slave* and especially the weekly *The New Europe*. To influence small but influential and opinion-forming groups - this was one side of the propagandistic activities, but the press was the main medium. In a circular that he sent to the representatives of societies and organizations of foreign countrymen in March 1915, Masaryk defined these brief principles of propaganda: “1, Seriously pronounce a demand for indepen-

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7 On this topic see: HÁJKOVÁ, Dagmar. Role propagandy ve válečných aktivitách T. G. Masaryka od vypuknutí války do ledna 1917 [The Role of Propaganda in the Masaryk War Activities from Outbreak of the War till January 1917]. *Historie a vojenství*, XLIX, 2000, no. 1, pp. 14-37.

8 FEJTŐ François, Rekviem za mrtvou říší. O zkáze Rakouska-Uherska, Praha: Academia 1998, p. 233. French original: Requiem pour un empire défunt. Histoire de la destruction de l'Autriche-Hongrie, Paris 1994.

dence at special meetings and in the newspapers - both domestic and foreign; 2, Maintain relationships with foreign politicians and newspapers; Try to have a positive influence on Prague, send people and letters there.”<sup>9</sup> In Masaryk’s view, it was very important for the propaganda to focus on the defence of democracy and humanitarian principles, and to mainly be “honest”: “Exaggeration and even lies are not beneficial; there have even been individuals amongst us that have considered the art of politics to be the art of trickery, and they have tried to spread ‘patriotic lies;’”<sup>10</sup> It was also this aspect that, according to Masaryk, had not only a moral aspect, but also an exclusively pragmatic one, since strong German, Austrian and Hungarian anti-propaganda was readily able to contradict such lies, which, of course, weakened the position of the foreign resistance. Of course, it was not easy to strictly follow these principles. Even Masaryk himself used unverified rumours about the Crown Prince Rudolf and his death and about Franz Ferdinand, in his article on the House of Habsburg and its degeneration. However, criticism of German Pan-Germanism and its goals was the main focus of the propaganda. Here, Masaryk relied on his good knowledge of German literature itself which was quite open in spreading Pan-Germanism.<sup>11</sup> Variability and flexibility were important features of the propaganda. It was always important to know who the foreign resistance was trying to address and with what aim. In a sense, the propaganda was thus also subject to pragmatic goals and needs.

Masaryk had already started writing his main work devoted to foreign resistance throughout World War I during the war, and, after the war, he finished it, edited it and published it under the name *Světová revoluce*. It is interesting that the English translation of this work published in 1927 is called *The Making of a State*.<sup>12</sup> The difference between the two titles is worth noticing. During the war, Masaryk saw the formation of the Czechoslovak state as a part of a world democratic and humanitarian revolution, that is in relationship to the changes throughout the world. He also saw this process as a part of the formation of a

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9 HÁJKOVÁ, Role propagandy, p. 19.

10 MASARYK, Světová revoluce, p.100.

11 Masaryk, T.G. The Literature of PanGermanism, in: The New Europe 1916, no. 2-5 and no. 8.

12 MASARYK, T.G. The Making of a State. Memories and Observations, London, 1927.

new Europe.<sup>13</sup> The defeat of Germany and the fall of the Russian Tsar verified Masaryk's opinion to some extent. However, the process, which might have appeared this way during the war, was given a different character after it ended, due also to the peace talks and peace treaties. The Bolsheviks - Russian, German and Hungarian - also laid claim to a world revolution. Only the process of forming a new state remained out of the processes in this new post-war situation - this had been Masaryk's starting position at the beginning of the war. So Masaryk accepted the suggestion of Henry Wickham Stead and changed in the English translation the title of his work. The entirety of the extensive propaganda - published in newspapers, magazines, publications, memoranda, interviews with politicians, appearances in important media and, last but not least, the organization of the foreign army and its successes, which were very adroitly used as propaganda - all of these were necessary for the pragmatic formation of a new state during the war. It was really important to maintain contact with domestic politicians so that they would not deliver loyal speeches at home and negate the effort of the foreign resistance, since it was a very sensitive aspect of the entire action in a situation where the Triple Entente politicians did not support Masaryk's plan or did not consider it relevant.

The relationship between "Realpolitik" and propaganda can be easily observed throughout the entire process of foreign resistance led by Masaryk. In the first, so called Memorandum of Rotterdam, Masaryk limited himself to a plain description of the plan to form the Czechoslovak state, that is the practical aspects of formation - borders, currency, form of government and such - and, as far as Germany was concerned, he only plainly stated in the memorandum that Germany's defeat in the war was a precondition of the formation of the Czechoslovak state: "Without the decisive defeat of Germany there can be no independent Bohemia, but with Germany defeated, it can be created to its maximum extent. In that case the proper course would be to restore the historical Bohemia-Moravia-Silesia, and to add to this the Slovak districts of Hungary (Slovakia)."<sup>14</sup>

The failure of the Memorandum of Rotterdam convinced Masaryk that the plan to form a Czechoslovak state itself was not interesting to the Triple Entente at this stage of the war and that it was necessary to vigorously argue for it so that

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13 MASARYK, T.G.: *Nová Evropa. Stanovisko slovanské* [The New Europe. The Slav Standpoint], Praha: Gustav Dubský, 1920.

14 National Archives, London, PRO, FO 371 / 1900, p. 120.

it would become interesting for the Triple Entente politicians and, in the end, acceptable. Thus the propaganda was necessary. Masaryk prepared the New Memorandum, called *Independent Bohemia*, for the British government as early as a few months later - in April 1915 - at a time when Russian troops were still in the Carpathians. He made much more extensive use of propaganda in this memorandum. He knew Germany was the principal enemy of Great Britain as well as France. He thus based his propaganda on anti-German rhetoric: German imperialism strives to seize control over Central and Eastern Europe and from there to the Middle East, thus threatening the interests of Great Britain. Building the Berlin - Baghdad railway was a symbol of this German strategy. While Austria-Hungary was an obedient tool in the hands of Germany, new states which will be formed from its remains, including Czechoslovakia, will be able to form an efficient barrier against this German expansion. The Czechoslovak-Yugoslavian corridor, which Masaryk demanded in his memorandum *Independent Bohemia*, was to become a very efficient barrier against German expansion: "By forming this Serbo-Bohemian corridor the Allies would prevent Germany from colonizing the Balkans and Asia Minor, and they would prevent the Magyars from being the obedient advanced guard of Berlin."<sup>15</sup> Hungary and the Magyars were thus also included in Masaryk's line of reasoning. Masaryk depicted the Hungarian position before the war and during it as one of a minion and as an obedient tool of German imperialistic policy. Such a characterization, historically correct in many respects, although it could have been more precise, suggesting that Hungarian politicians were actually using their German allies for their own interests, systematically appeared in Masaryk's propaganda. Hungary and the Magyars also appeared as an "independent issue" in the memorandum *Independent Bohemia*. When accounting for the planned corridor to lead through a territory largely populated by the Magyars, Masaryk said: "... it is not unjust to claim this district, the more so that the Magyars have treated and continue to treat the Serbs and Croats in a way worthy of the Huns in the Middle Ages. Whole districts are depopulated, the inhabitants of Bosnia driven to Montenegro, while those of Smyrnia have been sent to Hungary, where they, not being cared for, have died in masses. The Slovaks have also been, for centuries, the victims of the most brutal Magyarisation."<sup>16</sup>

It is interesting that Milan Rastislav Štefánik, who received the memoran-

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15 National Archives, London, PRO, FO 371/2241, p. 101-.

16 Ibid., p. 101.

dum *Independent Bohemia* from Masaryk, used the very same arguments in his own propaganda. It is manifested in his only well-known extensive memorandum, from April 1916 *Gli Czechi e l'Italia nella guera attuale*.<sup>17</sup> Although Štefánik used parts of Masaryk's memorandum in his own, it was primarily addressed to the Italian government which, naturally, sent it to the Allies. There were parts of it that had obviously been composed by Štefánik, since they are written in his expressive style. As far as propaganda related to the Germans and Magyars was concerned, Štefánik proved to be an expressive stylist and such a style and arguments obviously fell on fertile ground among Italian politicians: "It is enough to mention that the newspapers were able to quote thousands of executions, mostly of women and children, condemned by trials; but how is it possible to express in numbers the dead martyrs when entire villages have been massacred by wild hordes of Magyars and Germans?"<sup>18</sup>

The intense propaganda, where the Magyars were principally mentioned as a tool of German Pan-Germanism, carried on in the same spirit during the next stage of war. In relation to the matter of responsibility for starting the war, Masaryk depicted the Magyars as supporters of German Drang nach Osten, where they, however, played their own role. Masaryk did not find Hungarian policy very promising from this point of view, since, in his opinion, the Germans would no longer take Hungarian interests into account after winning the war: "It is only a German and Magyar minority,<sup>19</sup> united by the common desire for power and hatred towards the Slavs that control the Habsburg monarchy. This hatred brings the Magyars into the arms of Prussia which easily accepts their help and gives them certain temporary advantages - it even allows them to Magyarize the Saxon colonists in Hungary because at the moment Prussia needs the Magyars: Prussia knows that once it wins, it can easily relegate them back to a position of their choice - among the defeated, sharing the fate of the other subjugated nations."<sup>20</sup>

He mentions the Magyars themselves, not as a German vanguard in Cen-

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17 National Archives London, PRO, FO 371/2602. pp. 101-106.

18 National Archives London, PRO, FO 371/2602, p. 102.

19 In this place, Masaryk repeats his main argument against Austria-Hungary: German minority oppresses non-German majority in Austria and Magyar minority oppresses the non-Magyar majority in Hungary.

20 MASARYK, *Válka a revoluce* I. p. 225, article Předmluva k publikaci Austrian terrosism in Bohemia

tral Europe, but mainly as an example of a small nation which has its own imperialistic ideals.<sup>21</sup> In several places, Masaryk focuses on the Magyars with respect to the historical arguments on the formation of the Czechoslovak state that is that it should not only be a new state but a "restored" one, which had already existed in the Early Middle Ages, by which he meant Great Moravia. In a secret memorandum *L'Europe Centrale Pangermanique ou une Boheme Indépendante?* from February 1916, he proposed "the redress of this historic wrong" by potentially evicting the Magyars: "The Magyar minority can be evicted, since the Magyars did not hesitate to force the Slavic population of Sylvania to move out to northern Croatia or to even Hungarian territory... The barbarism carried out by the Magyars and Germans in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia and Croatia give the Allies the right to punish the offenders."<sup>22</sup> The secret memorandum was also part of the propaganda, but Masaryk made a very careful distinction between the arguments designated for the Triple Entente governments and those given at public lectures. In public, he did not cross the line he defined in the conclusion of his lecture at London's King's College on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1915: I do not bear a grudge against my enemies, but I cannot love them."<sup>23</sup> The possibility of moving Magyar inhabitants, together with the Czechoslovak-Yugoslavian corridor, through the territory of western Hungary represented the furthest pole of Masaryk's program and agitation, which, as he found out, was not exactly embraced in London. Despite this, Masaryk tried to bring the matter of the corridor forward at the peace conference, but, as it is well known, with no success.

The war finally ended. At the end, the Triple Entente powers accepted Masaryk's plan for the formation of the Czechoslovak state, which required a complete political reorganization of Central Europe.

Masaryk tried to clarify the meaning and the course of the struggle for the independent Czechoslovak state to Russian legionnaires after the end of the war, but at this time the Czechoslovak legions were involved in Russia in the civil war. It was to be a state which would have an important role in the newly orga-

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21 MASARYK, *Válka a revoluce I*, p. 127. It is a translation of Masaryk's inaugural lecture at King's College University of London: *The Problem of Small Nations in the European Crisis*. 19th October 1915.

22 MASARYK, *Válka a revoluce I*, p. 190.

23 MASARYK, *Válka a revoluce I*, p. 184.

nized Europe. This conclusion led him to write the work *Nová Evropa. Stanovisko slovanské* [*The New Europe. The Slav Standpoint*].<sup>24</sup> Masaryk's views on the Magyars and their policy can be seen in this work. Here, he repeated a famous statement by Camil Cavour that the Magyars fought for their freedom but they did not acknowledge the freedom of others. He also stated, based on Robert William Seton Watson's testimony, that the Magyar aristocracy maintained contacts with foreign countries where it manipulated public opinion, and a lack of awareness of the actual situation and ignorance of the Magyar language resulted in a lack of awareness of the true situation in Hungary. He concluded the passage dealing with the Magyars by saying: "The Magyars turn all their energy against the Slavs, especially against the Slovaks (Magyars saying: *Tót nem ember* - A Slovak is not a human!), then against the Little Russians, Yugoslavians and Romanians; their anti-Slavic instigations, finding ready propagators mainly in the Viennese press, was largely responsible for this war."<sup>25</sup>

Masaryk returned to his homeland as the hero of foreign resistance respected in both Czech and Slovak society, as the undisputed creator of the new state. A pragmatic goal that seemed like a utopia at the beginning of the war was accomplished. The state was already internationally acknowledged, although peace treaties still had to solve important matters, especially the matter of borders. An analysis of the entire foreign resistance shows that the making of the state was the principal matter for Masaryk and he made both the ideology and propaganda related to it subject to this. He pushed for the new state under the ideology of a national state abroad, since only such arguments could be successful. The process of forming the nation state of Czechoslovakia thus provided the ideological background. Masaryk's Czechoslovakism in the formation of the state was based on the Czechoslovak political nation as a nation composed of two ethnic Slavic nations - the Czechs and Slovaks - it was, however, an open system. Although we have evidence that Masaryk considered it possible and maybe even necessary for the Czechs and Slovaks to become gradually closer in matters of culture and language, his Czechoslovakism was a political system, not an ethnic one. And it could stay, under certain circumstances, open to other nations too.

The political representatives of the new state were faced with new pragmatic goals: to build the newly formed state as confirmed by international trea-

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24 MASARYK, T.G., *Nová Evropa*.

25 *Ibid*, p. 125.

ties. It was a state which, apart from Czechs and Slovaks, had over 3 million Germans, almost 750 thousand Magyars, Ruthenians, Poles and other nations and ethnic groups. It was a state which shared borders with Germany, Hungary and Austria. This border was, at least during the first stages, a state border which had to be secured and it was also necessary to secure the co-operation of the bordering countries. In this new situation political pragmatism directed Masaryk to forget the war propaganda and concentrate on the security of the new state. It was clear that the state could not exist in a permanent state of conflict with a large part of its population. Both Germans and Magyars were citizens of the Czechoslovak Republic and of the three neighbouring states. The new situation demanded a change in the rhetoric used until then and a change in the attitude towards Hungary as a neighbouring state and towards Magyars as minority citizens of the new state.

Such a change in attitude could be observed in Masaryk from the first days after his return to Czechoslovakia. Already in his first message after he was elected president of the Czechoslovak Republic on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1918, he claimed that minorities would have complete national rights in the new state and he specifically addressed the Germans and Magyars and asked them to cooperate. He said apropos of the Magyars: "the falseness of their (i.e. Magyar D. K.) propaganda has been seen through by everyone and the Allies can clearly see today that Magyars only have a right to their national state. I wish our attitude towards them could be modified as quickly as possible. The Magyar minorities will use all the available civil rights. The Magyars were quite cruel when they said: A Slovak is not human - we will not pay them back by doing wrong, we only want Slovakia to have borders that will allow it to flourish."<sup>26</sup> At the beginning of 1919, that is before the Bolshevik Revolution in Hungary, Masaryk also spoke about the organization of Central Europe and how the new states would need to become somehow closer both economically and politically in an interview with the Magyar journalist Dr. Leo Margitai. He declared that Hungary would be welcome in this new alliance as long as it gave up its aggressive policy.<sup>27</sup> However, Masaryk rejected the Danubian Federation, which was especially

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26 MASARYK, T.G. *Cesta demokracie I* [The Way of Democracy], Praha: Masarykův ústav AV ČR 2003, p. 31. Masaryk delivered the passage about Hungary in Slovak language.

27 O našem poměru k Uhrám [About our Relationship to Hungary]. *Rozhovor pre Déli Hírlap*, *ibid.* pp. 69-72:

strong in Austria and Hungary, as a return to the dead Habsburg monarchy and preferred building independent states and mutual cooperation.

Masaryk's statements apropos of Germans and Magyars in the Czechoslovak Republic present clear evidence that he saw a political Czechoslovak nation in an open perspective for all the citizens of the state. Of course, it was necessary that all national minorities, including the Germans and Hungarians, were interested in the concept of a political nation. However, German and Hungarian politicians in the ČSR during the first years of the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic were predominantly negative. They rejected strictly the Czechoslovak state. Masaryk presented his vision of Czechoslovakia and its politics by referring to Switzerland, where citizens of various ethnic groups formed one political nation.<sup>28</sup> He mentioned the example of Switzerland quite often in his interviews with foreign journalists. Even in 1928, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic, he stated in an interview for *Berlingske Tidende*: "In Switzerland, the citizens of various nationalities united to form a common state. We are doing the same in the Czechoslovak Republic, following the main principles of the League of Nations."<sup>29</sup> At that time, Masaryk was, in fact, able to rely on German activism, which had formed in the German political camp, as a block, which was willing to cooperate with state organisations. The Germans entered the government coalition and had two ministers in government. Masaryk was even more precise when expressing his idea for the gradual building of the civic state in his speech on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the formation of the republic: "Not only our Germans, but also all other citizens, even from our smallest minorities, are our fellow citizens and thus will have democratic equality... It is necessary in a democracy to have representation of minorities. By all means, it is a task of the majority, which gives the state its character according to democratic principles, to win minorities for the state. I consider two German ministers entering the government the happy beginning of a definite agreement."<sup>30</sup>

Masaryk's optimism was, however, too early. Magyar politicians did not follow the example of the German activist parties, although they regularly took part in parliamentary and municipal elections. However, the end of the 1920s

28 In an interview for *Swiss Tribune de Genève* on 20th August 1919.

29 An interview granted to Swen Poulsen on 28th October 1928. MASARYK, T.G. *Cesta demokracie III.*, Praha: Ústav T.G. Masaryka, 1994, p. 344.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 329.

surely caused a shift and, in a sense, the climax of the tendency to build the ČSR civic state. The change in the international situation after Hitler came to power in Germany weakened German activism in ČSR and, on the other hand, strengthened the revisionist policy in Hungary which, in turn, directly influenced the policy of Magyar minority representatives.

The relationship between Hungary and the Czechoslovak Republic was, in many respects, more complicated than the relationship with Germany. The Weimar Republic was a democratic state and no territorial claims on the territory of the Czechoslovak Republic were raised by democratic Germany. From a historical point of view, the German population of Bohemia and Moravia could rather raise claims for the annexation to Austria, which would have been very complicated for the minorities living in the northern parts of the state. In this sense, German representatives demanded representation in the Austrian parliament. It only made sense, especially to the more active representatives of the northern areas, if entire Austria (at that time German Austria - Deutsch Österreich) joined Germany. However, the peace agreements prohibited such an annexation, thus virtually eliminating the interest of Bohemian and Moravian Germans in joining Austria. On the other hand, Hungary did not give up its political revisionism, although it was impossible with respect to real policy. The Hungarian Bolsheviks invaded Czechoslovakia and, even though it was just for a short time, they occupied parts of southern and eastern Slovakia. Masaryk knew nationalism also stood behind the ideology of the world's Bolshevik revolution<sup>31</sup> and a large proportion of the Czechoslovak public saw it the same way. The relationship between the two countries was already tense after the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and the border with Hungary was considered more dangerous than that with Germany in the 1920s. It was not by chance that it was the Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Gömbös who paid an official visit to Germany after Hitler came to power.

Complicated international relations, despite considerable progress in real, especially economic, policy, did not change anything in Masaryk's attitude towards the Magyar minority that he was trying to win over to active cooperation. He expressed it clearly in an interview for the Hungarian newspaper *Hirek* in June 1920: "The Paris Peace Conference defined the rights of national minorities. We, however, want to give the national minorities, which is also the Mag-

31 "The Hungarian Communism is nationalist" - a statement for journal *La Correspondencia de España: MASARYK, Cesta demokracie I.*, p. 157.

yars a skilful, hardworking, honest and good nation, much more.”<sup>32</sup> This was completely different rhetoric from the one that Masaryk used in his propaganda during the war. However, it was again “Realpolitik” that stood behind this change in rhetoric. It was not only important for the future of the Czechoslovak state to give national minorities all civil rights, but also to win them over to active participation in national life and the building of the state with the prospect of forming the new political Czechoslovak nation. It is important to say that not all Czech and Slovak politicians shared this vision with President Masaryk. The European reality of the 1930s also did not give any opportunity to realize such a vision. As a realist, Masaryk finally had to acknowledge this fact during the last years in the presidential office.

It can be said that, Masaryk was especially a realistic politician by nature. His “Realpolitik” was limited by principles that he finally expanded upon theoretically. They were especially general ethical principles, humanism and the political principle of democracy. Ideology and propaganda in his political activity during and after the war were subject to this “Realpolitik.” In relation to the Magyars and Hungary, it is well documented by his memoranda, speeches and articles. A model thus emerged in international relations and with respect to national minorities that, in a sense, exceeded the historical milestones and has been, in a way, functional up to the present: Propaganda that aims to support real political plans on the one hand and real policy in a space where national minorities exist in every state and on the other where neighbouring states have to cooperate with each other in the interest of their citizens.

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32 An interview for an editor Emerich Rehberger, 10th June 1920, *ibid.*