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INTRODUCTION

ETHNICIZING EUROPE?

ÉVA KOVÁCS, RAUL CÂRSTOCEA, AND GÁBOR EGRY

WHEN WE STARTED PLANNING THE BIENNIAL SIMON WIESENTHAL Conference in Vienna in 2019, one of the main issues we identified was that the Peace Treaties of 1919–1923 can be seen as attempts to establish an international order corresponding to the new realities of nationhood. Because of the pandemic, the conference was not held until the summer of 2021—and even then, in hybrid form. Today, in the fourth year of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, when the end of the war seems far away, World War I and the peace treaties that ended it are being cast in a new light. Moreover, ethnicized tensions are once again commonplace—and not only in the post-Soviet region. Our conference took place before the war, during the pandemic, so our volume does not reflect on these more recent events in a direct way. Indirectly, however, the reader can observe several similarities and analogies that may help them to account for today's political reality.

Irrespective of whether the peace treaties concluded after World War I led to new conflicts, the new regimes of ethnicity entailed the legal creation of minorities and majorities, involving processes of inclusion and exclusion, according to a dichotomy of nations and nationalities. Forging a clear ethnic or national identity allowed no shades of gray. Previously diffuse identities, sentiments, and loyalties had to become unambiguous after 1920. Alongside national legislation, international regulations and institutions were designed to discipline and control this process.¹

Let us illustrate this phenomenon from the particular perspective of Central European Jewry. Let's travel back in time a hundred years and arrive in Eperjes/Prešov, in the new Czechoslovak Republic, in 1921. That year, a Hungarian Jewish intellectual, Aladár Komlós, published a pamphlet with the title "Jews at a Crossroads":

The truth is that I am a Hungarian, a Jew and an internationalist at the same time! [...] And look at these assimilated Jews: one is more nationalist than the other, but all of them are radical, tend to be socialist. [...] Although we have no reason for not

being loyal to our new states, changing our Hungarian character overnight would be a renegade behavior. If our Hungarianness is a skin only, one does not give up his skin very easily and it is impossible to cast it quickly both for moral and technical reasons. [...] If someone doubts our double skin, we may prove it experimentally: beat the Hungarian and it will ache. . . . Beat the Jew and it will ache even more. We can ache twice.²

The quote could be taken as a sign of “chronic Jewish ambivalence” or an illustration of society’s refusal of the creativity of Jewish assimilation strategies. Furthermore, it could also be understood as an example of new loyalty conflicts in an ethnicized society. What did Komlós and his Jewish contemporaries, who lived in the new states that were established after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, expect from the future? As the quotation above shows, at that time they were still counting on the continuation of the prewar nationalist assimilation discourse. On the one hand, they assumed that they would have to choose between the former Hungarian and the new Czechoslovak assimilation pressure. On the other hand, Komlós also stressed a general existential fear that the vernacular culture of the Hungarian Jews living in the new nation-states might disappear.

The fear of cultural extinction was not a particular Jewish sentiment. On the contrary, it became a fundamental frame of reference for the national majorities as well. Komlós was not a pragmatic individual in terms of his cultural and political choices, but rather an emblematic protagonist of the ethnicized Central European, post-Versailles landscape.

STATEHOOD AND ETHNICITY: RUPTURES, VIOLENCE, CONSOLIDATION

Possibly the best-known principle of the Versailles order was and is—at least in rhetoric and on the European continent—its preference for nation-states and democracy. These ideas, interrelated and intertwined in the thinking of the contemporaries, were contrasted to an imperial past embodied by the now defunct Austria-Hungary (“the prison of nations”), Tsarist Russia (the archetype of “Eastern despotism”), and Wilhelmine Germany (associated with Prussian militarism and barbaric war-making). Even though only the Habsburg realm disappeared from the maps entirely, all of the three states once dominating the East of Europe had to relinquish territories to a series of new states whose elites claimed to bring to realization an eternal (but minimum centuries old) dream of their peoples, the oppressed nations of Europe: Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Poles,

Romanians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, and Finns. Moreover, even the defeated Austro-Germans, Hungarians, and *Reichsdeutsche* eagerly embraced the principle of the nation-state and the idea of democracy.³

What was imagined as a new order was understood as a clear break with the past and a renewal of the continent, a democratic and national revolution—a perception that almost inherently consisted of a West-East dichotomy too, as only the East of Europe was understood as a post-imperial and post-authoritarian space. This new order was thus seen to be morally superior too due to its democratic nature. Democracy was strongly linked with national liberation and the nation-state, but also with a kind of maturity of society—appropriating an allegedly civilized, liberal, and rule-of-law-based way of governing and politics. While the peacemakers generally presumed that Eastern Europeans mostly fulfilled the latter criterion too, unlike the people assorted into mandates according to their alleged (im)maturity,⁴ they still felt it safer to conclude a series of separate treaties on the protection of minorities with all these states. These fell short of any recognition of national minorities as political subjects; their aim was to forestall discrimination, and they postulated legal equality and the right to citizenship without respect to national or ethnic belonging. But before establishing a legal framework, Europe needed states, and that was less obvious on the ground than it seemed from the negotiation tables in Paris.

Despite the fact that the Versailles Treaty and the newly established League of Nations had been designed to ensure lasting peace in Europe, ample evidence attests to the continuation of violence in its aftermath, at least until 1923. Factoring in the revolutionary upheavals, civil wars, pogroms, and the more infrastructural violence occurring at the grassroots level, the current scholarly consensus is centered around Robert Gerwarth's notion of the war that "failed to end."⁵ Explanations for this varied, from Gerwarth's own focus on "cultures of defeat," through the idea of the "brutalization" of soldiers and civilians as a result of the unprecedented nature of World War I,⁶ to emphases on the breakdown of the former imperial order and the ensuing power vacuum⁷ resulting in a dynamics of ethnic conflict and (counter-)revolution sweeping particularly across much of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, the region most affected by imperial collapse.⁸ The centenary of the end of World War I prompted a spate of new publications on the topic that further explored these complementing interpretations, while simultaneously broadening the scope of our understanding of "violence" to go beyond armed conflicts and encompass instances of communal violence or sexual violence, for example.⁹ As we have written elsewhere and others have also pointed out, minorities, and Jews especially, were often particularly exposed to such violence, whether state-condoned or undertaken by non-state paramilitaries, which was in stark contrast with the intentions of the Paris Peace Conference to offer protection to precisely such groups.¹⁰

However, the respective literatures on violence in the aftermath of World War I and on the processes of ethnicization discussed above, complete with a new legal regime centered on post-imperial notions of citizenship underpinned by the idea of national self-determination and its corollary in minority rights, have often proceeded in parallel to each other. Studies of violence have repeatedly been dismissive of the more “peaceful” developments occurring at this time, focusing instead on the legacy of the war, just as works on the post-Versailles national and international legal regimes have only pointed at continuing violence as the limit or failure of legal norms.¹¹ Our volume seeks to bridge these two separate literatures, arguing for the importance of placing a focus on “ethnicization” and on legal concepts of citizenship in dialogue with the violent history of the immediate postwar period. To do so also entails a partial departure from the overwhelming focus on World War I, by tracing the roots of such violence, just as that of ethnicized legal difference further back into the *belle époque*, nuancing arguments that overemphasize “the absence of the horrors of warfare in Europe for more than forty years” prior to it.¹²

Instead, such an interpretation connects with the literatures that have explored broader understandings of violence that go beyond warfare and interstate conflict more generally, while considering “Europe” in a wider, global context. Studies of genocide, for example, have long pushed back the timeline of such mass organised violence against religious or ethnic groups to the late nineteenth century, starting with the Hamidian massacres of Armenians and other Christians in the Ottoman Empire, or by factoring in cases of colonial genocide, such as that of the Herero and Namaqua.¹³ Scholars of antisemitism are all too familiar with the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries pogroms in the Russian Empire and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, prompting waves of migration that in turn fueled the rise of antisemitism in Central Europe and beyond.¹⁴ With Eric D. Weitz, we can read the history of the heyday of European liberalism *and* imperialism stretching from the 1815 Treaty of Vienna to Versailles in conjunction with one of escalating violence, indicative of a shift from understandings of sovereignty grounded in territorial considerations to “a politics focused on populations.”¹⁵ Viewed through such a lens, the Paris Peace Treaty is no longer *just* a response to unprecedented warfare, but also the culmination of an interplay between nation and empire as principles of population (and diversity) management that was played out across the long nineteenth century; one where, contrary to prevailing views, the former did not completely supplant the latter.¹⁶ While paramilitaries feature prominently in the history of interwar violence, their origins can also be traced back to the late nineteenth century, which witnessed the emergence of party militias, “shirt movements,” and paramilitary organizations, just as intellectuals and artists of the *belle époque* theorized the positive, or “moral” character of violence.¹⁷

“ETHNICIZING EUROPE”—AN EXCURSUS INTO THE CONCEPT OF “ETHNICITY”

In the public and scholarly discourses of the time, the word “ethnicity” was not yet widely used. The words “nation,” “nationalism,” “minorities,” and “race” were more frequently used to describe the phenomenon we explore here. The first recorded use of “ethnicity” dates from 1953, when the sociologist David Riesman referred to “the groups who, by reason of rural or small-town location, ethnicity, or other parochialism, feel threatened by the better educated upper-middle-class people.”¹⁸ “Ethnic Studies” as a curriculum and discipline emerged from social movements only in the 1960s in the United States to offer an anti-racist, multicultural curriculum that reflected the diversity and complexity of the North American societies. From then on, American ethnic studies included the agenda of decolonization and self-determination of minority groups and communities as well. What these now-classic, mainly sociological studies have in common is that almost everyone agrees that the competition for power, privilege, and economic resources in multiethnic societies propels the protagonists to oppose each other as members of an ethnic group with ascriptive loyalties and conflicting interests. Thus, social mobilization is often related to or articulated in ethnic competition.¹⁹

At the same time, the concept arrived in European ethnology, but with a much more limited sociopolitical agenda and under quite different methodological conditions. In his groundbreaking book, Fredrik Barth defined ethnicity as a fundamental mechanism of boundary making, which “held constant and is implicitly assumed to be context-independent.” Ethnicity as an unconditioned and *anthropological* characteristic of all human beings is therefore a universal social phenomenon, a predisposition in social actions. As Barth wrote: “Categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories.”²⁰

Furthermore, Barth stressed that ethnic labels most often endure even when individual members move across boundaries. This is the interdependency of ethnic groups, which are therefore the product of continuous ascriptions and self-ascriptions, accompanying processes of inclusion and exclusion. With this concept, Barth made a radical break with the essentialist view of ethnicity.

Another Scandinavian anthropologist, Thomas Hylland Eriksen, defined ethnicity as an aspect of culturally distinctive social relationships between groups in regular interactions: “Ethnicity refers both to aspects of gain and loss in interaction, and to aspects of meaning in the creation of identity. In this way, it has a political, organizational aspect as well as a symbolic one.”²¹

A new approach to ethnicity studies was the historical one that emerged in the late 1980s, which then fed back into sociological and anthropological research, and by the 2000s had made “ethnicity” an established concept in almost all social science and humanities disciplines. The history of nationalism borrowed the anthropological concept of “tribe” and “ethnic group,” while both are close to the European concept of the culturally homogenous “nation.” Thus, “ethnic group” appeared as a child of nationalism. Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, Anthony Smith, and Eric Hobsbawm have had a significant influence in debates on ethnicity, nation, and nationalism.²² As Gellner claimed: “Men do not in general become nationalists from sentiment or sentimentality, atavistic or not, well based or myth-founded: they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognized.”²³ In his constructivist-functionalist view in which nationalism produces the nation and not vice versa, Gellner believed that nationalism strives for one ethnicity under one state. For him the worst case could be when the ruler of a state is not a member of the ethnic majority within the boundaries of the state.

In contrast to this, Anthony D. Smith argued that “the core of ethnicity [...] resides in the quartet of myths, memories, values and symbols”²⁴: “For *ethnie* are viewed as consisting in: (1) symbolic, cognitive and normative elements common to a unit of population; (2) practices and mores that bind them together over generations; and (3) sentiments and attitudes that are held in common and which differentiate them from other populations.”²⁵

In this ethnosymbolist perspective, many modern nations base themselves on antecedent ethnic ties, which were selected from several other categories and turned into the ethnic basis for nations or ethnic communities. Without ethnicities we would not have had nations or nationalism.

Benedict Anderson defined the nation as an imagined political community—a kind of “deep, horizontal comradeship.”²⁶ The word “ethnicizing” appears in his book *Imagined Communities* when he describes the situation in colonial Malaya:

It was precisely because temples, mosques, schools, and courts were topographically anomalous that they were understood [by the rulers] as zones of freedom and—in time—fortresses from which religious, later nationalist, anticolonials could go forth to battle. At the same time, there were frequent endeavors to force a better alignment of census with religious communities by—so far as was possible—politically and juridically ethnicizing the latter. In the Federated States of colonial Malaya, this task was relatively easy. Those whom the regime regarded as being in the series “Malay” were hustled off to the courts of “their” castrated Sultans, which were in substantial part administered according to Islamic law. “Islamic” was thus treated as really just another name for “Malay.”²⁷

Anderson thought about the concept of ethnicizing in a very similar way to how we would like to use it in this volume. His examples of how “ethnic” Christianities were sought to be created by the authorities in the heterogeneous Dutch Indies are only *prima facie* different in their power-technical essence from European post-1920 census topographies. The census, the map (and the museum in his analysis) symbolize the ethnicizing practices of the repressive state, which seek to eradicate the situational character of ethnicity.

When Hobsbawm and Ranger coined the phrase “invented tradition” in the early 1980s, their intention was to criticize contemporary views of the great national traditions of modern Britain, especially the British political and colonial power. They showed how certain cultural patterns form the “nation.”²⁸ Hobsbawm differentiated between “custom” or “convention” and “invented” tradition. *Custom* is an established practice that can be easily adapted if needed. *Convention* is simply routine without any ritual or symbolic function. Both custom and convention are practices that facilitate day-to-day life, but do not have an ideological basis for nation-building: “The former [custom] were specific and strongly binding social practices, the latter [invented] tended to be quite unspecific and vague as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate: ‘patriotism’, ‘loyalty’, ‘duty’, ‘playing the game’, ‘the school spirit’ and the like.”²⁹

Hobsbawm’s model, although criticized for its lack of operationalization, and later in postcolonial and aboriginal historiography also for not considering the subversive power of invented traditions in the recognition of subordinated social and ethnic groups, has been used ever since to analyze modern ethnonationalism.

It is not possible here to go into the ways in which the debates around ethnicity have fertilized other disciplines, from minority studies to *microstoria*, but we must briefly mention the new wave of criticism in the 1990s and the 2000s, which came from feminist theory and challenged the concept of ethnicity as such. In her writings, Nira Yuval-Davis analyzed in detail how the national phenomenon relates to racist exclusions. In her view, nationalist ideologies always separate political representation of ethnic collectivities using the myths of “common origins,” the perceptions of “common destiny” or the conception of “common culture”—as types of national exclusions which might be racialized. She stressed that in situations of national, ethnic, and racial conflicts, “the membership in the collectivity becomes the most dominant organizing principle, even if, before this conflict arose, members of the collectivity had only relatively weak bonds with it.”³⁰

Yuval-Davis criticized the fact that major theories about nationalism had not taken gender into account; however, nationalisms are always gendered because they depend upon women’s reproductive potential to keep reproducing the chosen identity. This is how women’s bodies became the state’s property and how women’s sexual relations

were strictly policed and controlled in certain historical periods in a bid to maintain the “purity of blood.”³¹ Women’s citizenship of the nation is affected by public-private dichotomy, active/passive axes.³² Ethnicity and other forms of marginalization can also affect women’s citizenships. Gender relations are at the heart of cultural constructions of social identities and collectivities, as well as in most cultural conflicts and contestations.

Narrowly focused on the notion of ethnicity, the critical approach relevant to this volume again came from the field of sociology. In the 2000s, Rogers Brubaker devoted several studies and volumes to the issue. In his view, the paradigm of prioritized ethnocultural descent, previous nationality, place of residence, and so forth was codified by the Treaty of Versailles, legitimizing a more exclusive definition of national belonging, promoting the French ideal citizenry over the inhabitants’ right to choose their optimal state.³³ He suggested analyzing the successor states not simply as national but as nationalizing states. The Yugoslav wars between 1991 and 2001, the violent ethnonational conflicts on the southern periphery of the former Soviet Union, the genocide in Rwanda, and Hindu-Muslim riots in parts of India put the questions of ethnic and nationalist violence—or rather the ethnicization of political violence—back in scholarly debates: “I want to suggest that ethnic conflict—or what might better be called ethnicized or ethnically framed conflict—need not, and should not, be understood as conflict between ethnic groups, just as racial or racially framed conflict need not be understood as conflict between races, or nationally framed conflict as conflict between nations.”³⁴

Brubaker introduced a new sociological concept, of “groupism,” to distinguish the ethnic from the ethnicized. Groupism is a political, social, or cultural “tendency to treat ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities to which interests and agency can be attributed.”³⁵ He further asked: How can we understand ethnic conflict, if not as a conflict between ethnic groups? How can we go beyond “groupism”? Brubaker summarized his proposal for a new research methodology in eight points: (1) rethinking ethnicity; (2) the reality and existence of ethnicity; (3) groupness as event; (4) groups and categories; (5) group-making as project; (6) the relations between groups and organizations; (7) the constitutive character of framing and coding; and (8) ethnicity as cognition.

This concept had an enormous impact on ethnic and minority studies and on history-writing in the 2000s, especially in East Central Europe, mainly because it helped to move away from a substantialist conception of ethnicity. Mostly in the form of a growing historical literature that was informed by Brubaker’s work and that applied the concept of national indifference, it provided powerful methodological tools for a better understanding of situational, hybrid, or simply changing ethnic identities—and not least for exploring the role of ethnopolitics and their entrepreneurs in society. Its

basic assumption was that people in Central and Eastern Europe were not inherently nationalists, and for a long time did not accept nationalist assumptions of social order and issues, generating the very anxiety of national activists that animated their push for eliminating ambiguities of national identification.³⁶ However, his anti-groupist moral, political, and social theory was widely criticized as a cosmopolitan view and as an underestimation of particular collectivities and the participative character of ethnic belonging.³⁷ Most of the essays in this volume explore ethnicity, whether explicitly or implicitly, through a research agenda similar to national indifference in its theoretical and methodological assumptions.

As we can see, the history of the idea of ethnicity has undergone many transformations and generated many research debates in recent decades. Nevertheless, in most cases, the original concept of Max Weber has remained inescapable. In the following section, we will therefore briefly look at the original concept and its historical embeddedness in the period of World War I.

THE WEBERIAN PUZZLE: ETHNICITY AS STRUGGLE FOR A POLITICAL COMMUNITY

At the outbreak of the war, Max Weber, aged fifty, volunteered for service and was appointed as a reserve officer in charge of organizing the army hospitals in Heidelberg. Weber's views on the war and the expansion of the German empire changed during its course. Early on, he supported nationalist rhetoric and the war effort. In time, however, Weber became one of the most prominent critics of German expansionism. He joined the worker and soldier council of Heidelberg in 1918. He then served in the German delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. He opposed both the leftist German Revolution of 1918–1919 and the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles. As an advisor to the Confidential Committee for Constitutional Reform, he codrafted the Weimar Constitution. More controversially, he also defended the provisions for emergency presidential powers that became Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution. (These provisions were later used by Adolf Hitler to subvert the rest of the constitution and institute rule by decree, allowing his regime to suppress opposition and gain dictatorial powers.)

Frustrated with politics, Weber resumed teaching during this time, first at the University of Vienna, then, after 1919, at the University of Munich. On June 14, 1920, Max Weber contracted the Spanish flu and died of pneumonia in Munich. Among the papers found after Weber's death in 1920 was an untitled draft that has since been published in the *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik* (*Outline of Socio-Economics*) and given the title "Ethnische Gemeinschaften." Weber started to introduce the concept with the description of social relationship:

The term “social relationship” will be used to denote the behavior of a plurality of actors insofar as, in its meaningful content, the action of each takes account of that of the others and is oriented in these terms. The social relationship thus consists entirely and exclusively in the existence of a probability that there will be a meaningful course of social action—irrespective, for the time being, of the basis for this probability. Thus, as a defining criterion, it is essential that there should be at least a minimum of mutual orientation of the action of each to that of the others. . . . Hence, the definition does not specify whether the relation of the actors is co-operative or the opposite.³⁸

Collective identities are thus social linkages that merely create the *possibility* that a national or ethnic community with a sense of group will emerge. Weber discusses the links of ethnic communities in a separate chapter. He refines the concept above in the following manner:

The belief in group affinity, regardless of whether it has any objective foundation, can have important consequences especially for the formation of a political community. We shall call ‘ethnic groups’ those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether an objective blood relationship exists. Ethnic membership (*Gemeinsamkeit*) differs from the kinship group precisely by being a presumed identity, not a group with concrete social action, like the latter. In our sense, ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand, it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organized, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity. This belief tends to persist even after the disintegration of the political community, unless drastic differences in the custom, physical type, or above all, language exist among its members. This artificial origin of the belief in common ethnicity follows the previously described pattern of rational association turning into personal relationships.³⁹

Weberian terminology questions all essentialist understandings that accept collective identity-formations as given and fixed; at the same time, romantic notions that consider solidarity the main organizational principle of social groups are done away with. Ethnic, national, and other social relationships are only presumed forms of belonging that create the *probability* that certain social acts will take place. Even in the places where he wrote about mixed marriages between African Americans and Native Americans and whites, he emphasized that “the conventional *connubium* is far less impeded by anthropological differences than by status differences, that means, differences due

to socialization and upbringing.”⁴⁰ These relationships must be created anew from act to act, while even their intended meaning may change—to the point that they disintegrate and break off.

Social relationships conceal alterity and identity. The equivalent of alterity in Weberian terminology is “struggle” (the singling out and displacement of difference); that of identity is “community” and “association”: “A social relationship will be called ‘communal’ (*Vergemeinschaftung*) if and so far as the orientation of social action—whether in the individual case, on the average, or in the pure type—is based on a subjective feeling of the parties, whether affectual or traditional, that they belong together.”⁴¹

It is an important condition here that social relationships are “very heterogeneous states of affair,” since every single participant endows them with a different meaning. Thus, for example, there may be those who perceive social relationships aimed at national or ethnic identity as a community, and those who view them as an association. The second group does not take part in them because of feelings of subjective belonging, but based on the equalization or connection of interest. Common characteristics, situations, or forms of behavior are not sufficient to create a community. A uniform answer to possible exclusion is also insufficient for this purpose. Community comes about with a *collective* answer: The orientation of individuals toward each other (not the environment). Common language—one of the cornerstones of identity studies—is only a *tool* of understanding according to the Weberian approach, not a primary content of community. Only the *conscious contrast* that emerges between members of a linguistic group and outsiders creates a community, of which language is one—also conscious—foundation.⁴²

Yet, not only the category of ethnicity, but also the Weberian concept of it, contains a number of ambiguities. It is not necessary to decolonize Weberian thought and the oeuvre, which cannot be detailed further here, to see the shackles of prejudices behind the seemingly clear definitions of interpretive sociology. And although Weber is not usually accused of racist language in academic debates, and it is also a fact that he believed in the importance of status stratification through honor, which he saw as underlying both ethnic and racial group formation, it is undeniable that he indeed formulated his sociological views from the political perspective of Western modernism (and rationalism) and especially of the ideology of “Germanism.” His examples of mixed marriages, the Polish nation (*Poľentum*), or even the perceptions of American whites on the “pariah peoples” of African Americans and Native Americans would hardly stand the test of contemporary sociological analysis.⁴³ Nevertheless, the early interpretive sociological method, which was not averse to the inclusion of emotions or historical phenomena to ground a sociological argument, the situational character of social groups, the dynamic categories that could be applied, and so forth, all remained relevant for the study of ethnicity.

THE ROLE OF THE SUPERSTRUCTURE: LAWS AND LEGAL CONCEPTS OF CITIZENSHIP

Weber's work was just as much a reflection of the politics of his time as an abstract analysis of human society. His notion of ethnicity is thus reflected in the process of ethnicizing after World War I, although often in an inverse way—not in the process of community formation but in the practices of the state that aimed to impose a community where there wasn't necessarily one yet. The motivation for the minority treaties was the fact that the nation-state was perceived as the political face of ethnicity-based ideas of community. However, as we will show below, the relationship between ethnicity, nation-state, and democracy was and is more intricate than simply being different aspects of the same phenomenon that provide for discursive interchangeability of the ethnic community and the nation. At the very heart of all three—ethnicity, nation-state, and democracy—lies the same issue: Who is in and who is out. But the groups they delineate are not identical at all, despite their theoretical and practical entanglements. Ethnic difference does not need legal forms to prevail, while nation-states exercise categorization through law, with citizenship or legal nationality. Finally, a democratic polity qualifies its members through political rights and entitlements.⁴⁴ It is therefore not a surprise that citizenship, democratic polity, and ethnic categorization continued to vex people, politicians, and state officials after 1919, despite the settling of the new borders and the problems that often came to light in an entangled manner, the different aspects manifesting simultaneously. But was it a new process of ethnicization, and, if yes, what exactly was ethnicized?

In legal parlance, *citizenship* and *nationality* are closely related; both can denote what the German word *Staatsbürgerschaft* entails. In the historical scholarship, however, they are mostly used as separate concepts, *citizenship* referring to the legal links with a state, *nationality* to the national identification of individuals. In his groundbreaking book on citizenship in late nineteenth-century empires, Benno Gammerl used them as complementary concepts, citizenship as the set of rights and obligations an individual holds as regards to the state, and nationality as the legal link between them. He argued convincingly that ethnicization was in the offing well before World War I and not only in nation-states. Imperial citizenship laws and practices just as easily embraced ethnicity as a basic frame of nationalization and citizenship rights as nation-states. First, it was possible for political units within larger imperial formations, like Canada or dualist Hungary, to set their own citizenship laws and to pursue a nation-state approach based on ethnic assimilation as an implicit or explicit condition of citizenship. Second, classic colonial imperialism used ethnicity to delineate groups who were privileged or discriminated against, often linking racist thinking (the idea that human groups hold inherent and unchangeable differences that are reflected in their physical features) with

ethnic ideas too. True, Gammerl identified a third approach to citizenship, the so-called statist one, which positioned state administrators as arbiters of ethnic or national conflicts occupying a neutral position and making citizenship neutral in ethnic terms, like in dualist Austria. However, even in such cases the ethnic principle could have been incorporated into citizenship legislation, at least with regard to what rights citizens enjoyed on what bases. Equal recognition of ethnic groups as political subjects or at least as one legitimate and institutionalized axis of political representation and claim making, a development that happened in the series of provincial compromises in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Monarchy in the early twentieth century, required ethnic categorization of citizens and provided simultaneously limited political rights on this basis even though it was neutral in terms of its effects. But the practice was to stay after Cisleithania did not exist anymore.⁴⁵

Thus, ethnicization of citizenship and nationality was not started, only exacerbated by the war, mostly due to the emergency legislations targeting enemy aliens in various forms or as the emergency measures applied to allegedly disloyal groups of people, who were often defined on the basis of their ethnicity.⁴⁶ The persistence of such discriminatory practices was one of the reasons the peace conference implemented the system of minority treaties and included citizenship provisions into the Peace Treaties themselves. They were to provide a generous universal basis for citizenship legislation as they not only stipulated that new states could not simply discriminate against nonethnics when according citizenship to them, but also required equal rights for everyone, setting the stage for a presumably nondiscriminative catalog of rights too.⁴⁷ The treaties postulated a right to citizenship on the basis of residence or pertinency (a legal institution linking individuals to communities wherever they lived otherwise), and a right to citizenship options within a period of twelve months, the possibility to take the citizenship of a country in which the majority consisted of coethnics.⁴⁸

While this solution seemingly resolved the problem of the incongruence between boundaries (state territory) and population (the presence of nonethnics who were potential targets of discrimination), it could not help with handling the effects of another important social phenomenon that was crucial for ethnicization already before 1914—mobility and migration. People moving to places where they experienced alterity while the local population was also made to face the immigrants and sense their difference was one potent source of ethnicity. In an era of selective and localized social provisions,⁴⁹ it could still cause tensions between groups. Together with the rise of social entitlements—more and more stipulated as social rights⁵⁰—the presence of migrants and aliens was a factor of radical political mobilization. Its first target was the group of wartime refugees who were resettled temporarily within the empires, and later the subsequent wave of refugees from Russia and the Ottoman Empire. As nonresidents and nonpertinents, they were not entitled to accede to citizenship

automatically, and neither could they exercise a right for citizenship option as they were not coethnics in any way.

Finally, there was another group that did not fit neatly into a system of citizenship designed to follow the nation-state approach described by Gammerl, even if it was made milder through nondiscrimination provisions. Jews were almost universally recognized as others—not only in Eastern Europe—but unlike other nationalities, they did not have a kin state to promote their rights in the international arena and bilateral relations. Furthermore, their otherness was often perceived as an unchanging unsimilable essence, making politicians and the wider public reluctant to accept their inclusion to what was seen as an ethnic community. Countries from Romania to Poland and Austria were reluctant to grant them citizenship even if they were residents, and plans of legal discrimination emerged very soon—to be implemented gradually, starting from Hungary's infamous *numerus clausus* in 1920 to mass retractions of their citizenship in Romania at the end of the 1930s.⁵¹ These developments were entangled with the sense that Jewish citizenship was imposed on the new states from outside, and as such it was a violation of their sovereignty, the right to decide on inclusion and exclusion through the means of nationalization.

Still, the system of minority treaties and citizenship provisions was an abstract legal design based on the idea of mitigating ethnicization of citizenship that threatened mass statelessness within the new boundaries, while restricting the system to the East of Europe. It was accompanied by the acceptance of a limited and voluntary population exchange in Central Europe and an organized one (population exchanges between Turkey and Greece, Bulgaria and Greece) in Southeastern Europe, where the new states were perceived as “less mature.”⁵² In principle it was solid and simple, basically following the nation-state approach. But the practice of inclusion and exclusion through citizenship, addressed in the first part of the book, revealed how entangled all three approaches described by Gammerl remained in the practice of individual states, not least because Eastern Europe's migration and population issues were situated within a global system of migration and citizenship since the nineteenth century.

Thus, it is very important that all three chapters in this section address issues that are geographically linked to or situated in the West. Devlin Scofield's chapter highlights how the French Republic, with its boldly claimed republicanism, struggled to manage the reintegration of Alsace-Lorraine's population after almost five decades of demographic change. Throughout this process, the most important aspect was the delimitation of reliable and unreliable individuals and the exclusion and removal of the latter. In this case reliability was ethnicized: The danger was seen in Germanness, associated with origins outside of the province or anti-French and pro-German wartime behavior. In order to support the fiction of French continuity and the idea that Alsace was a natural part of France, French politicians and administrators postulated an authentic

Alsatianness that was supposed to inhabit in people originating from an Alsatian lineage reaching back to 1870. It was probably also a means of dealing with the legal contradictions arising from the idea of Alsace being a redeemed territory and not one annexed to the Republic, thus questioning legal continuity with the period of German sovereignty.

Most importantly, however, French authorities used the interlude between occupation and the peace treaty, a period when citizenship remained in a legal limbo, to apply discriminative practices usually characteristic of the imperial approach to citizenship. The categorization of the population according to A, B, and C identity cards that provided very different rights was nothing more than pure discrimination and led directly to the exclusionary citizenship practices later, the removal of hundreds of thousands from the former *Reichsland*, a process not much different from the parallel semivoluntary and forced population movements in the East of the continent.

Still, for the individuals affected it was a rather chaotic situation where they were confronted with unpredictable and arbitrary decisions, a time of limited rule of law, and unclear criteria of categorization. This aspect of citizenship comes out clearly from Zachary Mazur's chapter too, which brings together the turn in US immigration policies at the beginning of the 1920s with Polish concerns surrounding the country's sovereignty, international standing, and the ethnic structure of Poland's population, most importantly the large number of Jews.

While Mazur argues how much racist ideas crafting Jews as problematic and unasimilable people conditioned US responses to immigration attempts of Jews from Poland and Russia, his story of a Jewish family refused entrance despite traveling with Polish passports shows how asymmetric power relationships diluted the sovereignty of the new nation-states of Eastern Europe. The United States simply refused to accept Poland's claim of nationality on the Jewish family, although international law left only a very narrow space for doing so. Poland, on the contrary, insisted on the legality of citizenship despite all the well-known concerns and reservations about Jews as Polish citizens. Finally, Mazur also highlights how the view of the state from below deviated from the idea of nation-state and ethnicized citizenship, due to the very stringent conditions required with citizenship applications, instead of accepting anyone based on their ethnic belonging.⁵³ Applicants were to demonstrate first of all that they would not constitute a financial burden on the state, making the unconditional solidarity underlying nationhood questionable. Such attitudes clearly demonstrate the persistence of the statist logic of citizenship, although in an altered form—less as the role of neutral arbiter and more as the guardian of bureaucratic rules that should not be twisted just because of some political issue.

While in the 1920s Polish bureaucrats and politicians felt obliged to fight the inferiority of the Polish state in its relations with great powers, the 1930s was an era

of imperialist plans demonstrating a shift in Polish self-perception. As Zofia Trębacz shows in her chapter, after Poland diluted the provisions of the minority treaty and a society-wide mobilization started against Jews, the government embraced ideas of ethnic engineering, the removal of the Jews, not just to Palestine, but to a colonial space. Some of these plans were linked with Polish demands for colonies (one of the former German ones) or linked with the idea of an alliance with colonial administrations (Angola) or postcolonial states (Colombia, Brazil). None of these ideas came to fruition, mostly because of the racist thinking surrounding Jews that led to prohibition of their immigration, but the story clearly shows how Jews were excluded from the body politic, if not legally, then symbolically. This exclusion was associated with their alleged character, their dubious attitude to productive work, and their occupational structure that was supposed to hinder the modernization of Polish society.⁵⁴

What do these case studies tell us about ethnicity and citizenship after Versailles? First, the process of ethnicization continued and its drivers remained mostly the same Gammerl identified: Democratization, social welfare and its legal anchoring, and the mobilization of populations. The new system of states in Central and Eastern Europe, with their new borders, the resulting (re)assigning of population and migration, and the more asymmetric relations between these new states and the destination countries of their outmigration made these phenomena more contested and as such more visible. Citizenship became a significant security concern after the war and as a result of how it changed policies regarding aliens, and this securitization was extended through racial thinking and hierarchies into the broader field of society as a whole, both within and outside the region.⁵⁵ Citizenship started to get emptied of its content as social rights were either not automatically conferred with it or denied discriminatively, just as protection in the face of third states was revoked. Thus, nationality (*Staatsbürgerschaft*) was easy to make nominal and to replace its promise of equality with a layered citizenship of differentiation.

However, as the application of these rules rested with bureaucracies, statist logic persisted and often even trumped ethnic understandings of inclusion. As states are always more than the rules and norms, they are constituted by practices,⁵⁶ that puts a question mark behind their solely ethnic nature too. One aspect showing how they often happily deviated from the ethnic principle was class: They wanted to keep out the poor, and simultaneously the immediate post-World War I years saw the start of a process whereby citizenship became a good for sale on the market, easily accessible to the “filthy rich.”⁵⁷ Finally, whether rich or poor, the inherent paternalism of citizenship laws (which mostly stipulated that women’s citizenship followed the citizenship of the husband) made women even more exposed to circumstances and arbitrary decisions of petty bureaucrats as male protagonists of this story, regardless of their ethnicity.⁵⁸

ETHNICIZING FROM BELOW: ACTIVISM, POPULISM, AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA

In reaction to ethnicizing governmental policies after World War I, local elites tried to quickly adapt to the new conditions—with all the dilemmas that Aladár Komlós, quoted at the beginning of our introduction, formulated. As Pieter Judson observed, “a local elite social group often redefined its own traditional social status more consciously in terms of linguistic, religious, and cultural traditions rather than according to the privileged functions it had played within the empire.”⁵⁹ The resulting loyalty conflicts created the most diverse situations in the lives of ethnically defined groups. The same ethnic groups could be in minority and majority positions at the same time, while political oppression, knowledge exchange, and informal networks were often channeled into ethnic frameworks. The Versailles Treaties produced diasporas outside and inside of a country. If, as William Safran defined the diaspora, the key elements are the dispersal of an expatriate community to at least two “peripheral destinations”; its maintenance of “memory, vision, or myth” about the homeland; an enduring sense of alienation in the new society; a desire for a return to the homeland at some time in the future; and an ongoing commitment to and relationship with the homeland⁶⁰—there is no doubt that many of the ethnicized groups in Europe easily ended up after 1920 in a kind of diaspora position.

As one can learn from the history of World War II, the fulfillment of belonging—the resettlement or the annexation of the territories—was not a guarantee of the diaspora’s existence, nor of its resolution. The paradox of “we live here and want to be somewhere else” can often be reproduced in the “homeland” as well. Moreover, the host country took its ethnic minorities toward this internal diaspora position with the ethnic prejudices of society, which did not allow minorities to emancipate and be on equal terms with the majority and limited the opportunities of social and career mobility.

Last but not least, in the very case of post-Versailles Europe, not only war refugees or stateless migrants but “native” groups were also placed in a marginal position. Who does not know the old joke: The elderly Kohn is visited by an American journalist in the 1980s. Kohn starts to tell his life story: “I was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. When I was growing up, I worked in the Czechoslovak Republic, later had my own small business in Hungary, and retired as an employee in the Soviet Union.” —“Wow, how many places have you been in your life!” the journalist wonders. “Me? I never left Mukachevo in my whole life.”

In Central and Eastern Europe, ethnicity was created and moved more in the contacts between “native” peoples living together (as a nationality, a national minority, a language community, etc.). The pattern of these contacts transformed from the local ethnos of the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries into modern nationalisms and

ethnicized or indeed ethnically based formations, which were chiseled in ethnic conflicts. Mirror identities were created in which the other ethnic group often assumed the image of the enemy. Conflict-based ethnic forms flourished within ethnic borders. The closed ethnicities and the nationalist environment often led to the idea of territorial, ethnic, cultural, language, and other autonomy.

As Elisabeth Haid-Lener analyzes in her chapter, the question of the official language already played a formative role in ethnic conflicts within the Habsburg Empire. While minority protection treaties after 1920 granted national minorities the right to mother-tongue education, this approach was often in contradiction to nation-state efforts toward nationalization, assimilation, and unification. She describes the legislation procedure and the local implementation of the law in the former Eastern Galician Ukrainian/Ruthenian schools under the Second Polish Republic. The introduction of a bilingual school system only seems to have achieved equal opportunities between majority and minority groups. Behind the romantic idea of bilingual education, which enables contacts and thus facilitates “friendship” between children of different ethnic origins, creating a sense of cultural unity in them, only former minority schools were converted into bilingual schools due to the specific provisions of the law, while Polish-language schools in the multiethnic regions of eastern Poland were hardly affected. While it was supposed to provide a framework for the use of minority languages, the law reaffirmed the primacy of the Polish language as the state language. Haid-Lener convincingly shows how the school law contained mechanisms that automatically established the dominance of Polish as the state language and made it easy for the local authorities to adapt the Polonizing logic of the center. Since Ukrainian ethnic entrepreneurs (the Greek Catholic clergy, Ruthenian teachers, and political activists) successfully mobilized the locals, the law quickly became a flashpoint for ethnic mobilization—a kind of school “plebiscite” campaign swept the region, with the Polish majority doing its share. In a discourse familiar from ethnicizing state policies, the Ukrainian minority suddenly appeared in the role of “terrorizer.”

The other two essays in this section focus on the activist aspirations of the ethnonationalist German diaspora. Pauli Aro's case study on the Banat Swabian activism in Vienna is a prime example of transnational ethnic activism. Although *Landmannschaften* became a phenomenon of post-1945 Federal German political culture, they were already acting as “diaspora” lobbies and propaganda networks of German nationalism in the Habsburg and interwar era. However, before 1920 these trends were still firmly embedded in the dense fabric of local language dialects and microcultures, in short, in the context of *Heimat* (home, homeland, home region). Behind this category, which at first sight sounds innocent and apolitical, there was a strong political agenda. Following Celia Applegate, this type of nationalism or ethnocentrism can be understood as the other side of the liberal nation-state that was taking shape during the nineteenth

century.⁶¹ While the liberal nation was characterized by its public spheres and deliberative mechanisms, *Heimat* is situated in “the restricted and secure society of a childhood memory.”⁶² Thus, the invented traditions of the *Heimat* could bridge the gap between national aspirations and the provincial reality of the fragmented local groups.

Since 1918, Austria's *Landsmannschaften* and the German-speaking migrant networks in general were consistent in their beliefs that immigrants from the Banat or the Bačka, from Syrmia or Transylvania, from the Sudetenland or from Hungary, ultimately formed groups that held shared origins and ethnocultural norms and could be mobilized for the sake of the *Volksgruppen* community at large. As Aro convincingly shows, these migrant associations provided self-help, support, and protection to their members. They also organized financial assistance to regional compatriots, provided information on the current state of affairs in the home region, helped people to return there, and organized burials, offered financial support to widows, as well as arranging for the return of the deceased.

The transformations that took place within these communities after World War I are not unique, nor is the development itself. We can observe the same tendencies in Poland, the first Czechoslovak Republic, the Romanian Kingdom, and so forth. The welfare aspects of the *Landsmannschaften* behind the visible ethnocentric scene are also typical for any diaspora association that is a hub for ongoing migratory processes. What would be interesting to see, beyond a better elaboration of this aspect with the help of the sociology of migration, is its place within the several welfare efforts among the provisioning crisis of the first postwar years, and later, how much this role was really capable to attract potential members from a different social milieu.

Postwar Hungary shows an extreme contrast to the other Central European countries because it went from a multiethnic small “empire” to an almost completely homogenous state by 1920. There were no significant differences within the Hungarian-speaking population, either by dialect or by region. The most visible ethnic minority was German, a nationality that, unlike the others, had not had any mature political agenda during World War I and had not left the framework of cultural association before 1920. However, the war brought Germany closer to rural Hungary than ever before, with war propaganda as the most important ally with the direct experiences of serving in the army.⁶³ In his analysis, Zsolt Vitári recognizes the same tendencies on the anomalies in the new minority education system as Elisabeth Haid-Lener did in her chapter: The need for German schooling was already clearly expressed on behalf of the community and the German-speaking population regularly complained because the mother tongue was not taught. Another vulnerable point was the usage of their mother tongue in religious life. Although there were more than one hundred German-majority villages in Hungary, the use of the German language was steadily pushed into the background. The Hungarian German People's Education Association

(*Ungarländischer Deutscher Volksbildungsverein*, UDV) was established in 1923 with the aim of promoting long-term economic cooperations and youth organizations—with relative success. At the beginning of the 1930s, after the economic crisis, however, a new, frustrated generation entered the stage. Furthermore, they saw fewer and fewer opportunities to cooperate with the Hungarian government. They proposed the mainstreaming of German identity against Hungarian aspirations and fought a fierce battle for the preservation of their own ethnic group. Institutional and financial help arrived from the already national-socialist Germany. With the radicalisation of the international political scene, the *Volksdeutsche Kameradschaft* and its successor from 1938 onward, the *Volksbund der Deutschen in Ungarn* (People's Association of Germans in Hungary) wanted to encompass the life of the Hungarian Germans in a complex manner. As Vitári convincingly demonstrates, the national-socialist ethnicizing initiatives in Hungary subordinated all spheres of life to the ethnic point of view and therefore tried to shatter the long-existing hierarchies and milieus. The *Großdeutsche* ambitions, which had already strongly permeated the life of the third generation, resulted after 1938 in a threefold disintegration: The disintegration of the balance in the multiethnic local communities, segregation within the ethnic group, but also among the generations.

ETHNIC STRUGGLES: QUESTIONING THE STATE MONOPOLY OF VIOLENCE

The interplay of contingent and long-term factors is also on display in the chapter authored by Pavel Kladiwa and Andrea Pokludová, in the different context of the Bohemian Lands. While questions surrounding nationality came to the fore as the borders of the new Czechoslovak state were being defined, the authors make clear that ethnicizing was not a postwar phenomenon, but rather one that had been launched in Cisleithania in the last years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with evidence of such provided for example by the Moravian Compromise of 1905. This continued and intensified after the war under changed circumstances, still balancing factors pertaining to ethnicity with economic, social, and political aspects that intersected in multiple ways with the former. As such, the postwar violence in the region often had its roots in wartime violence that was not directly related to armed combat, such as riots and revolts prompted by hunger or labor unrest. As in the case of Eastern Galicia, opposing sides in the “ethnicizing game” often vented their frustrations and discontent toward the outsiders who did not belong to either, in the form of local antisemitic excesses.

The balancing act that Habsburg imperial rule over a vast multiethnic and multi-confessional territory had implied meant that Jews were just one among many different ethnic/religious groups, and one that was, if anything, *less* dangerous or problematic

than those with national aspirations of their own. In the dichotomic either/or logic of self-determination rendered normative at Versailles, however, they did not “belong” to any ethnic group with state-building ambitions (although they were duly counted as such when demographic arguments were at stake, as shown in Jagoda Wierzejska’s chapter) and were correspondingly exposed to their ire when such ambitions were or appeared to be thwarted. Moreover, the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the association of Jews with Bolshevism had rendered them “dangerous” in the eyes of the many would-be state-builders who looked with apprehension at the potential spread of revolution to their lands. In an ethnicizing context, Bolshevism (and implicitly the Jews associated with them) and its internationalist impetus appeared as the sworn enemy of *all* attempts at nation-state-building and consolidation. And while the association of Jews with socialism and revolutionary politics more generally had been long-standing, the newly minted myth of “Judeo-Bolshevism” was both more urgent and more fearsome.⁶⁴ In the volatile context of the Russian Civil War and its numerous interstate ramifications, “the images of Leon Trotsky standing at the head of the Red Army, and of the Jewish Chekist in leather jacket with a Mauser pistol carrying out mass liquidations, conjured up an existential threat of demonic proportions.”⁶⁵ Even as “Judeo-Bolshevism” became a European or even global “specter” following the newfound popularity of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which were translated into numerous languages and became “an extraordinary best-seller” between 1918 and 1920,⁶⁶ its salience was understandably more prominent in the region directly exposed to the Russian Civil War.

Next to territorial disputes entangled with the attempts to ascertain the definitive “ethnicity” of certain groups in an area marked by a significant degree of national indifference and fluidity,⁶⁷ ideological mobilization and conflict was the second major determining factor of postwar violence. Béla Bodó’s chapter in the present volume addresses this topic in the case of postwar Hungary, comparing the “Red Terror” that followed the establishment of the Hungarian Soviet Republic established in March 1919 with the “White Terror” that followed its collapse, with “the ‘hot phase’ of the counterrevolution,” as the author—the foremost authority on the subject—refers to it, lasting between August 1919 and March 1920. Bodó’s chapter opens with a historiographic synopsis that briefly examines retrospective assessments of the crimes committed under each. This is also interesting considering their constituting “atrocities narratives,” similar in some respects to those covered in Wierzejska’s chapter but structured along ideological rather than ethnic fault lines and stretching out over different regimes of memory, all the way to contemporary scholarship.

Whereas in many other chapters in this volume the story was one of border disputes between competing ethnicizing projects, this is a case where at first glance ethnicity and legal citizenship regimes mattered less than ideology, with perpetrators belonging (mostly) to the same ethnic group. That, however, seems to have rendered the

dynamic more, rather than less, violent—while Wierzejska shows that the rules of engagement were mostly followed in Eastern Galicia even though the conflict was not one between two formally established states/armies, this does not seem to have been the case in 1919–1920 Hungary. Instead, as in many other contexts that pitched “Reds” against “Whites,” from Russia through Germany to the Baltics,⁶⁸ Bodó’s chapter reveals the extent of unrestrained violence perpetrated by both sides, but in particular by the better-educated and mostly professional soldiers and officers of the White detachments. This included cases of torture and sexual violence, also covered by the author in previous publications, with the latter especially representing a previously underresearched topic that has recently started to attract more scholarly attention.⁶⁹ In turn, this raises further questions about the boundaries of acceptability in instances of violence perpetrated on ideological grounds as compared to those associated with competing, but formally compatible in their aims, projects of nation- and state-building.

The chapter also provides detailed analyses of both the perpetrators and main victim groups in terms of their socioeconomic profiles, education, and wartime experience, as well as of the local dimension of the violence. In a conflict that was primarily ideological, Bodó also pays attention to other forms of violence that were not ideologically driven, such as the one occurring during the “democratic interlude” in postwar Hungary or the one perpetrated by the “green” armed groups of peasants, and which were primarily motivated by deprivation and desire for revenge rather than any “loftier” considerations. This is reminiscent of Kladiwa and Pokludová’s analysis of the importance of relative deprivation and socioeconomic factors in accounting for the dynamic prevailing in the Bohemian Lands and serves as a useful reminder that the violence in postwar Europe was always *situational* and driven by many other factors in addition to ethnicity or ideology.

Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that these two coordinates—roughly corresponding in this context also to Siniša Malešević’s more general considerations about the role of “the rise and fall of organisational capacity and the extent of ideological penetration within a group” in accounting for the social dynamics of violence⁷⁰—are not mutually exclusive. In the volatile setting of postwar Central and Eastern Europe, “questions” related to ethnicity and ideology could mutate into each other. As Dan Diner argues in his interpretation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, “despite all the revolutionary rhetoric [...] the revolution was in fact a national rebellion against the imminent territorial dismemberment of Hungary. There was no question of any Bolshevik sentiment among the populace, nor even of any socialist sentiment.”⁷¹ Instead, and reminiscent also of Holly Case’s notion of “question bundling,”⁷² we could read the Hungarian case as one where “the national question, made pressing by the looming territorial dismemberment of Hungary, mutated into a social question as the economy spun out of control.”⁷³ Read against the background of national indifference

and “amphibian” populations who crossed ethnic boundaries, and of the numerous constraints—from international ones to war-weariness, hunger, and generalized deprivation—affecting the range of political decisions available, a more capacious and flexible understanding of the causes of violence might be more productive than one structured by sharper analytical lines.

One “ethnic” element does stand out in Bodó’s chapter, and it is one that recalls many other cases analyzed in this volume: The targeting of Jews, in this context by both the Red and White Terrors. The aggressions committed by Red troops against Jews, also analyzed by Brendan McGeever in the case of the Russian Civil War, serve as a useful reminder that the putatively anti-antisemitic socialist ideology did not preclude anti-Jewish violence.⁷⁴ Its more widespread presence among Red revolutionaries in contexts beyond Russia, as in a Hungary that had witnessed the alleged “golden age” of Jewish emancipation from 1867 to 1914, also warns against simplistic interpretations accounting for it by the survival of premodern, religiously inspired forms of prejudice. At the same time, as Bodó makes clear, “the number of Jews who had been killed, tortured, and humiliated [by Red militias] paled in comparison to the number of Jews who fell victim to the White Terror,” where they made up “one-third of the people murdered.” With the myth of “Judeo-Bolshevism” possibly accounting for it, the lines between ideological and ethnic violence appear once again to be blurred in this case, as the White Terror, despite its claims to the contrary, did not enact “revenge” for the crimes committed during the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Instead, Bodó argues, “the Red Terror served as a convenient excuse for ethnic and religious violence, and Jews the perfect scapegoats for national and individual tragedies.”⁷⁵

The different cases analyzed in this volume, read against the background of the wider literature on the topic, present us with a broad spectrum of violence in terms of intensity, typologies, agents, victims, motivations (declared or otherwise), and geographical scope. Despite their differences, they allow a few general conclusions, some of which concur with the recent literature on the subject, while others point beyond them. The presence of “atrocities narratives” as a legitimizing factor appears relatively widespread, irrespective of whether a conflict was territorial or grounded in ideological antagonism, pointing at the increased importance of propaganda in the aftermath of World War I. At the same time, violence appears in all cases to have been highly situational, dependent on local conditions and more mundane factors such as hunger, greed, or opportunities for plunder as much as on nation-making or nation-breaking ideologies. Among such instances of communal rather than state-driven or state-endorsed violence, antisemitic excesses stand out in terms of both frequency and spatial ubiquity across the area of Central and Eastern Europe at least. Anti-Jewish violence points both at the endurance of long-standing antisemitic tropes and at the heightened vulnerability of interstitial groups falling between the cracks of the Versailles-inspired legal regime aimed

at ethnicizing Europe, rendered particularly dangerous for the Jews by the proliferation of the myth of Judeo-Bolshevism. Most importantly, when read in conjunction with the new legal norms centered on citizenship, they recall Eric D. Weitz's sobering remark that "the construction of citizenship necessarily involves boundary-drawing, of territorial borders but also of peoples. The creation of rights for some is, then, inextricably wound up with denying others the access to rights [...] Historically, then, rights and crimes emerged together."⁷⁶ If the situational nature of the violence in an uncertain, changing, volatile context raises questions about its contingent importance as a source of *legitimacy* and in-group solidarity, its imbrication with legal norms putatively aimed at preventing violence points instead at tracing its deeper roots before World War I, into the European fin-de-siècle.

The long-term lineages of postwar violence allow us to zoom in closer on its complex imbrication with the politics of ethnicity and citizenship, as well as on the civilizational notions underpinning them, persistent legacies of the nineteenth-century imperial "civilizing missions." Jagoda Wierzejska's chapter in this volume illustrates these well when discussing the Polish and Ukrainian propaganda during the war for Eastern Galicia (1918–1919). Wierzejska shows the propaganda deployed on both sides of this conflict to be reliant on two main discursive strategies, one involving competing ethnic claims to the region, the other mutual accusations of having committed war crimes. Both bring to the fore the importance of considering the interplay between immediate conjectural factors and long-term developments in approaching postwar violence and its interpretation. On the one hand, the deployment of propaganda centered on "atrocities narratives" was very much a product of World War I, having taken unprecedented proportions in its course and having eventually been formally institutionalized by the creation of specialized government offices.⁷⁷ Originally developed in Western Europe in association with the German "rape of Belgium," according to Maciej Górny these had been imported into Eastern Europe as early as 1915.⁷⁸ However, the rise of propaganda during World War I was itself reliant on the importance of public opinion, a long-term process that unfolded over the long nineteenth century.⁷⁹

Moreover, and on the other hand, the *content* of both types of Polish and Ukrainian propaganda that Wierzejska analyzes in her chapter points in the direction of continuities that antedated the war. With regard to the staking of ethnic claims to the disputed region, both sides' narratives relied on academic knowledge production stretching back into the nineteenth century, invoking arguments based on cartography, anthropogeography, and ethnopsychology that were so characteristic of the era.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, atrocity narratives invoked even earlier associations of the Ukrainians with the *haidamakas*, eighteenth-century paramilitary units active on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. These helped portray twentieth-century Ukrainians not just as "savages" or even "animals," an aspect legitimizing the purported Polish "civilizing mission"

in Eastern Galicia, but implicitly as living anachronisms belonging to another, past era that had to be superseded. In turn, the Ukrainians' propaganda also pointed at the abuses of the Polish gentry during the time of the Commonwealth, which had prompted the *haidamakas'* resentment. This had resulted in several eighteenth-century rebellions and eventually came to be associated with the development of the Ukrainian national movement in the 1930s, with its visible anti-Polish component. Contingent as the violence in Eastern Galicia might have been, its long-term history certainly mattered in legitimizing it and in portraying the enemy as a "beast" beyond the pale of civilization, capable of unspeakable horrors. At a time when borders were far from being settled and both belligerent sides looked with hope toward the peacemakers in Versailles, both the academic studies and the atrocity narratives were written with a foreign audience in mind. As such, the need to prove a certain "standard of civilisation" (and deny it to one's enemy) was a pervasive element, one that again shows the importance of considering together short-term factors like wartime propaganda and civilizational narratives stretching over the *longue durée*.⁸¹

Despite these longer lineages, the end of World War I and the Versailles Peace was certainly a historical "moment" itself, with long-term consequences, some of which reverberate even today, whether in the form of contested borders or in the shape and geographical scope of contemporary minority protection.⁸² As the chapters in this volume show, the intersection of new conceptions of "ethnicity," embedded in new legal norms centered on notions of self-determination—that were as inconsistent or irrelevant in some local contexts as they were proclaimed to be "absolute"—could not provide the grid of legibility that was meant to guarantee state sovereignty and peace in Europe. They were, moreover, as Tara Zahra argues in the Afterword, "supported by a global edifice of racial hierarchies and ideologies," whereby "ethnicity" came to straddle "a view of nationality as a biological fact and a view of it as a cultural construct." Read in this light, Eastern Europe, with its much-invoked liminality of the "lands between," appears less exceptional when compared to France, itself engaged in processes of violent classification of the population in Alsace-Lorraine, complete with expulsions of "undesirables."⁸³ It is therefore a European or even global story, one where if Central and Eastern Europe featured more prominently, it is perhaps at least partly because that is where the architects of the peace were primarily looking.

The fact that this was not just a European story, but a transatlantic one, was rendered even more visible by the presence of American statesmen and experts, as well as the American President Woodrow Wilson at Versailles, who intervened in European affairs more decisively than ever before. Analogies and parallels between Europe and the United States of America, whether along the lines of race, migration, slavery, or emancipation, often missed the very points they were trying to make, and certainly the overarching, racially hierarchical continuum in which such analogies were embedded.

Processes of “ethnicizing” diverse populations might have come up against the limits of national indifference, but, with the weight of nation-states behind them, they increasingly succeeded in creating the majorities and minorities they purported to classify and “manage.” However, the neater, clearer lines of distinction failed to contain violence, as was allegedly intended, but instead ended up exacerbating it, for a host of reasons, many of which were rooted in contingencies that continued to circumvent the rigidity of legal norms and to escape the interpretive grids of states.

NOTES

1. See István Bibó and Péter Pásztor, *The Art of Peacemaking: Political Essays by István Bibó*, ed. Iván Zoltán Dénes (Yale University Press, 2015).
2. Álmós Korall [Aladár Komlós] “Zsidók a választúton” [Jews at a Crossroad], in Aladár Komlós, *Magyar-zsidó szellemi történet a reformkortól a Holocaustig, I–II* [The Hungarian-Jewish History of Ideas from the Reform Age to the Holocaust, I–II] (Múlt és Jövő, 1997), 11, 22.
3. From the vast literature, see Margaret Macmillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (Random House, 2002); Robert Gerwarth, *The Vanquished. Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917–1923* (Allen Lane, 2016); Jörn Leonhard, *Der überforderte Frieden. Versailles und die Welt 1918–1923* (C. H. Beck, 2018).
4. Susan Pedersen: *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2015).
5. Gerwarth, *The Vanquished*.
6. George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford University Press, 1991).
7. John Paul Newman, “Post-imperial and Postwar Violence in the South Slav Lands, 1917–1923,” *Contemporary European History* 19, no. 3 (2010): 249–65; Joshua Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse: The Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
8. Julia Eichenberg and John Paul Newman, eds., “Aftershocks: Violence in Dissolving Empires after the First World War,” special issue, *Contemporary European History* 19, no. 3 (2010): 183–273; Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, eds., *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War* (Oxford University Press, 2013).
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11. Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2015).
12. Siniša Malešević, *The Sociology of War and Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 135.
13. A. Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (Berghahn Books, 2008); Jürgen Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz? Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Holocaust* (LIT, 2011); A. Dirk Moses, *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).
14. Robert Nemes and Daniel Unowsky, eds., *Sites of Modern Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, 1880–1918* (Brandeis University Press, 2014); Steven Zipperstein, *Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History* (Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018).
15. Eric D. Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (2008): 1313–14.
16. Raul Cârstocea, "Historicising the Normative Boundaries of Diversity: The Minority Treaties of 1919 in a Longue Durée Perspective," *Studies on National Movements* 5, no. 1 (2020): 43–79.
17. Georges Sorel, *Réflexions sur la violence* (Marcel Rivière et Cie, 1908); Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914–1945* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 96.
18. David Riesman, "Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom," *The American Scholar* 23, no. 1 (1953): 15.
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20. Fredrik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Universitetsforlaget, 1969), 9.
21. Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (Pluto Press, 1993), 18.
22. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Blackwell, 1983); Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Blackwell, 1986); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 1991).

23. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56. See also István Deák, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (Oxford University Press, 1990).
24. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 15.
25. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 97.
26. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.
27. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 170.
28. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.
29. Hobsbawm-Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 10.
30. Nira Yuval-Davis, "Nationalism and Racism," *Cahiers de recherche sociologique*, 20 (1993): 188, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1002197ar>.
31. Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (Sage Publications, 1997).
32. Éva Kovács and Attila Melegh, "In a Gendered Space. Forms and Reasons of Migration and the Integration of Female Migrants," *Demográfia* 50, no. 5 (2007): 26–59.
33. Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without groups," *European Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 2 (2002): 165.
34. Brubaker, "Ethnicity without groups," 166.
35. Brubaker, "Ethnicity without groups," 164.
36. From the vast literature, see the foundational texts: Tara Zahra, "Imagined Non-communities. National indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010): 93–119, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0037677900016715>; Tara Zahra and Pieter M. Judson, "Introduction. Sites of Indifference to Nationhood," *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (2011): 21–27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0067237811000567>; Marteen van Ginderachter and Jon Fox, eds., *National Indifference and the History of Nationalism in Modern Europe: National indifference and the History of Nationalism in Modern Europe* (Routledge, 2018).
37. Most recently John Connelly, *From Peoples into Nations. A History of Eastern Europe* (Princeton University Press, 2020); see also Gábor Egry, "Beyond Politics. National Indifference as Everyday Ethnicity," in *National Indifference*, 145–60.
38. Max Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, III. Abteilung. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Mohr Siebeck, 1920), 26–27.
39. Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, 389.
40. Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, 386.
41. Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, 40.
42. Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, 42–43.
43. Wolfgang J Mommsen, *Max Weber und die deutsche Politik 1890–1920* (Mohr Siebeck, 1974); Michael Banton, "Max Weber on 'ethnic communities': a critique," *Nations and Nationalism* 13, no. 1, (2007): 19–35, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2007.00271.x>;

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 45. Gammerl, *Subjects, Citizens*, 4–5, 242–252; Börries Kuzmany, "Objectivising national identity: The introduction of national registers in the late Habsburg Empire," *Nations and Nationalism*, 2023, 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12950>.
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 48. Annamarie Sammartino, *The Impossible Border. Germany and the East 1914–1922* (Cornell University Press, 2010).
 49. Ivan Jelacic, Dominique Reill, and Francesca Rolandi, "Redefining Citizenship. The Rights to Welfare to Work and to Remain in a Post-Habsburg World," *Journal of Modern History* 94, no. 2 (2022): 326–62, <https://doi.org/10.1086/719447>; Gábor Egrý, "De l'ethnisation de la nationalité à l'indigénat transnational: migration, citoyenneté, paix de Trianon," *Revue d'Allemagne* 52, no. 2 (2022): 341–63; Gábor Egrý, "Endangered by Alienation? Raising a Minority Elite between Nationalizing Higher Education Systems: The New Generation of Hungarians in Interwar Romania," in *Universities and Elite Formation in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe*, ed. Florian Bieber and Harald Heppner (LIT Verlag, 2015), 39–58.
 50. Jelacic, Reill, and Rolandi, "Redefining Citizenship"; Natali Stegmann, *Kriegsdeutungen—Staatsgründungen—Sozialpolitik. Der Helden- und Opferdiskurs in der Tschechoslowakei, 1918–1948* (Oldenbourg Verlag, 2010); Maria Bucur, *The Nation's Gratitude. World War I and Citizenship Rights in Interwar Romania* (Routledge, 2021).
 51. Mária M. Kovács, "The Numerus Clausus in Hungary, 1920–1945," in *Alma mater antisemitica*, ed. Regina Fritz, Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, and Jana Starek (New Academic Press 2016), 85–112; Philippe Henri Blasen, *La primaute de la nation roumaine at les étrangers* (Casa Cărții de Știință, 2022), 36–64; Michael Miller and Judith Szapor, eds., *Quotas: The "Jewish Question" and Higher Education in Central Europe and Beyond (1880–1945)* (Berghahn Books, 2024).
 52. Theodora Dragostinova, "Navigating nationality in the emigration of minorities

- between Bulgaria and Greece, 1919–1941,” *East European Politics and Societies* 23, no. 2 (2009): 185–212, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325408326787>.
53. It was very similar to the stance of the German or Hungarian administration to such cases. See Annemarie H. Sammartino, *The Impossible Border: Germany and the East, 1914–1922* (Cornell University Press, 2014); Gábor Egrý, “Magyar Returnees and Political Radicalization in Post-World War I Hungary,” in *Migration and Population Politics during War(time) and Peace(time). Central and Eastern Europe from the Dawn of Modernity to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Andrei Cusco, Flavius Solomon, and Conrad Clewing (Editura Mega, 2022), 253–70; Gábor Egrý, “De l’ethnisation de la nationalité à l’indigénat transnational: migration, citoyenneté, paix de Trianon,” *Revue D’Allemagne* 52, no. 2. (2020): 341–63.
 54. Ironically, in the second half of the 1950s, no less a personality proposed Jewish colonization in French Guyana than Shimon Peres. In his case, however, it was supposed to become a manifestation of Jewish industriousness and their ability to transform a natural environment like tropical Guyana into a “civilized” one through their manual labor. See https://blog.nli.org.il/en/hoi_peres_french_guyana/.
 55. Gábor Egrý, *Etnicitás, identitás, politika. Magyar kisebbségek nacionalizmus és regionalizmus között Csehszlovákiában és Romániában 1918–1944* (Napvilág, 2015), 444–49; Gábor Egrý, “Navigating the Straits. Changing Borders, Changing Rules and Practices of Ethnicity and Loyalty in Romania after 1918,” *The Hungarian Historical Review* 2, no. 3 (2013): 449–76; Heidi Hein-Kircher and Steffen Kailitz, “‘Double Transformations’: Nation Formation and Democratization in Interwar East Central Europe,” *Nationalities papers* 46, no. 5 (2018): 745–58.
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 61. Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials. The German Idea of Heimat* (University of California Press, 1990), 13.
 62. Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials*, 8.
 63. Tamara Scheer, *Language Diversity and Loyalty in the Habsburg Army, 1868–1918* (Habilitationsschrift, University of Vienna, 2020), 10.25365/thesis.65387.
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 65. Dan Diner and Jonathan Frankel, "Jews and Communism. The Utopian Temptation," in *Dark Times, Dire Decisions. Jews and Communism*, ed. Jonathan Frankel (Oxford University Press 2004), 5.
 66. Diner and Frankel, "Jews and Communism."
 67. Tara Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010): 93–119.
 68. See, for example, Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies Vols. 1 and 2*, trans. Erica Carter, Stephen Conway, and Chris Turner (Polity, 1987–1988); Robert Gerwarth, "Sexual and Nonsexual Violence Against 'Politicized' Women in Central Europe After the Great War," in *Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones. From the Ancient World to the Era of Human Rights*, ed. Elizabeth Heineman (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Eliza Ablovatski, *Revolution and Political Violence in Central Europe: The Deluge of 1919* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).
 69. See, for example, Béla Bodó, *The White Terror: Antisemitic and Political Violence in Hungary, 1919–1921* (Routledge, 2019), 220–37; Béla Bodó, "Toward an Interactional Theory of Sexual Violence: The White Terror in Hungary, 1919–1921," in Böhler et al., eds., *In the Shadow of the Great War*, 45–64; Emily R. Gioielli, "The Many Lives of Mrs. Hamburger: Gender, Violence, and Counterrevolution, 1919–1930," in Böhler et al., eds., *In the Shadow of the Great War*, 65–88.
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