

Wilson proclaimed that nations have a natural right to exist, he overlooked the fact that a nation's de facto situation depended on the degree of its economic development and cultural context.

HERFRIED MÜNKLER

Support for ethnic nationalism in Central Europe has grown significantly in recent years. Its rise has a specific nature in every country, but the key common catalyst for its strengthening has been the refugee crisis, presented in the region as a mortal threat.

ADAM BALCER

What we, the journalists, can do is to produce great content which has truth and impartiality at the heart of it, but make it in a way that is going to be shareable, viral video, reaching many people.

LIZ CORBIN

How to increase the income of the electorate and keep more of the money foreign owners have been channeling to their own countries is a key question that various governments have tackled in different ways.

MARTIN EHL

No.
01
2018

ASPEN
Review

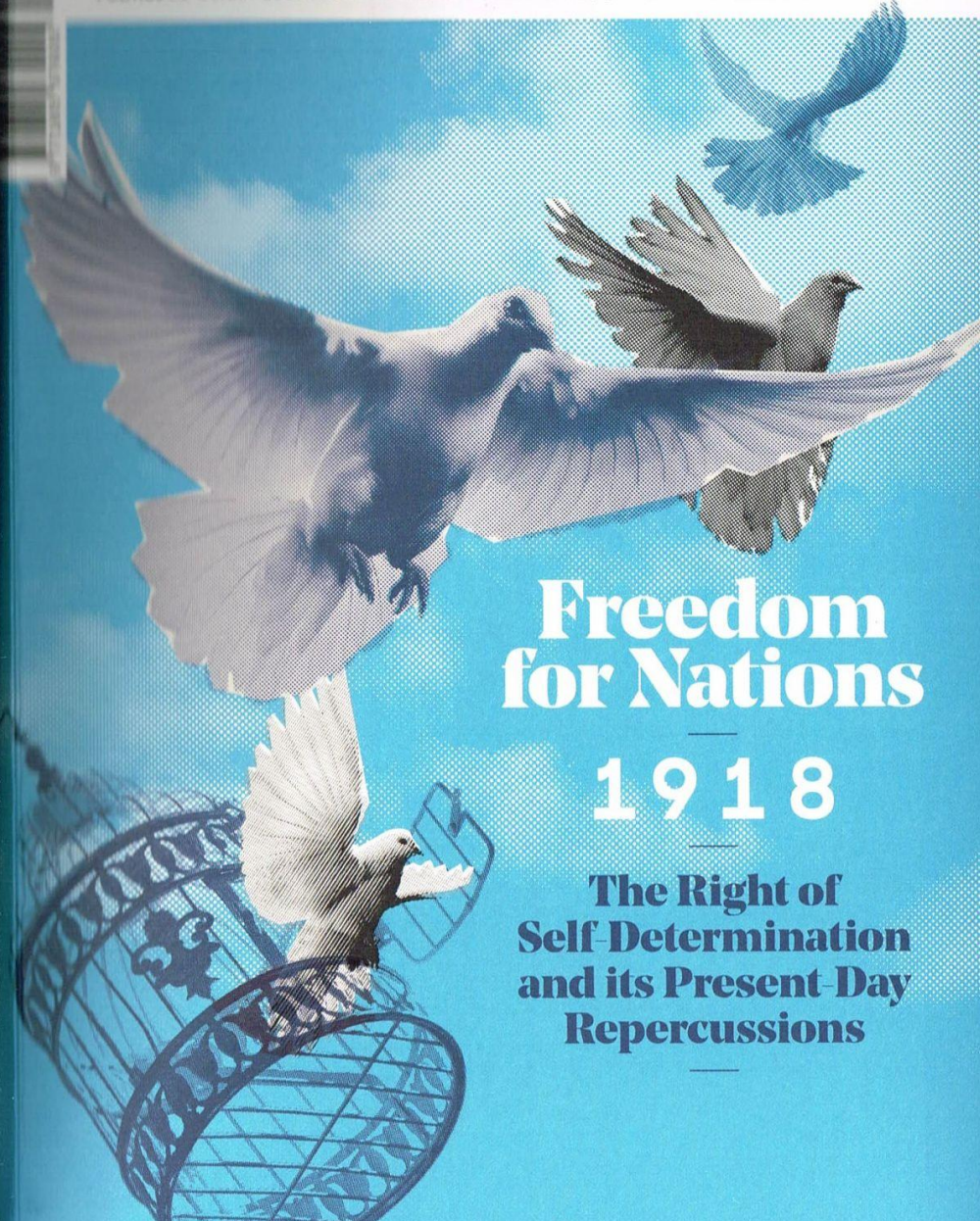
No.
01
2018

ASPEN Review

ASPEN.REVIEW
CENTRAL
EUROPE

COVER STORIES Michal Kobosko, Herfried Münkler, Jiří Pehe, Brendan Simms, Constance Simms
POLITICS Liz Corbin ECONOMY Zdeněk Kudrna CULTURE Patrycja Pustkowiak INTERVIEW Adam Hochschild

No. 01/2018 — Freedom for Nations



Freedom for Nations

1918

**The Right of
Self-Determination
and its Present-Day
Repercussions**

About Aspen

Aspen Review Central Europe quarterly presents current issues to the general public in the Aspenian way by adopting unusual approaches and unique viewpoints, by publishing analyses, interviews and commentaries by world-renowned professionals as well as Central European journalists and scholars. The Aspen Review is published by the Aspen Institute Central Europe.

Aspen Institute Central Europe is a partner of the global Aspen network and serves as an independent platform where political, business, and non-profit leaders, as well as personalities from art, media, sports and science, can interact. The Institute facilitates interdisciplinary, regional cooperation, and supports young leaders in their development.

The core of the Institute's activities focuses on leadership seminars, expert meetings, and public conferences, all of which are held in a neutral manner to encourage open debate. The Institute's Programs are divided into three areas:

— **Leadership Program** offers educational and networking projects for outstanding young Central European professionals. *Aspen Young Leaders Program* brings together emerging and experienced leaders for four days of workshops, debates, and networking activities.

— **Policy Program** enables expert discussions that support strategic thinking and interdisciplinary approach to topics as digital agenda, cities' development and creative placemaking, art & business, education, as well as transatlantic and Visegrad cooperation.

— **Public Program** aspires to present challenging ideas at public events, such as Aspen Annual Conference that convenes high-profile guests from all over the world to discuss current affairs, and via Aspen Review Central Europe.

ASPEN Review Freedom for Nations

- 04 **FOREWORD** One Hundred Years After
Jiri Schneider
- 06 **EDITORIAL** The Weak Go East
Aleksander Kaczorowski
- 10 Wilson's Fourteen Points and Their Consequences for Europe
Constance Simms & Brendan Simms
- 18 A Storm Front over the Atlantic
Michał Kobosko
- 26 The Proclamation of the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination
and Its Present-Day Repercussions
Herfried Münkler
- 32 **COMMENT** Is Wilsonianism Coming to an End?
Jiri Pehe
- 36 **YOUNG LEADERS** Let Us Build Bridges Instead of Walls
Adéla Al Sharua
- 44 **INTERVIEW** with Adam Hochschild: We Can Learn from the Abolitionists
Jakub Majmurek
- 52 Euroskeptic Central Europe
Adam Balcer
- 62 Hungary: The Key to the System
Dominik Héjji
- 68 **INTERVIEW** with Liz Corbin: How to Fight Fake News with Quality News
Konrad Niklewicz
- 76 Zagreb and the EU—Five Years after the Accession
Vedran Obućina
- 82 **COMMENT** The Crisis of the Central European University in an Age of Political Populism
Larry Wolff
- 87 Central Europe Has Fallen out of Love
Robert Anderson
- 95 The Different Sides of the Same Coin: Recalculating the Case for Euro Adoption
Zdeněk Kudrna
- 102 Economic Policy of the Polish Government: More Consumption, Less Investment
Witold Gadomski
- 108 **COMMENT** A Chasm That Will Not Go Away
Martin Ehl
- 112 Men Explain Things to Us
Patrycja Pustkowiak
- 118 Moral Compass
Benjamin Cunningham

Hungary: The Key to the System

The stakes in the elections which will take place in Hungary on April 8 are much higher than it would potentially seem. Victory of the Fidesz-KNDP (Christian Democratic People's Party) is certain, but the size of the majority in the National Assembly with 199 deputies remains the crucial question.

Fidesz twice acquired a constitutional majority, first in 2010, under the old electoral system, and then in 2014. It achieved 133 seats - exactly the amount necessary for a constitutional majority. This majority is necessary not only to pass a new constitution but also to pass some laws regarding various areas of the state. These are the so-called "cardinal laws" [*sarkalatos törvény*]. They were introduced by the Round Table agreement providing for the transition from the communist to democratic system. Now there are 31 of them, and this number significantly increased after 2010. Should Fidesz lose an election in the future, in order for the current system to be changed, another political party would have to either achieve a constitutional majority or form a coalition resulting in such a majority. Otherwise, the "Fidesz system" will last despite this party losing.

When in 2015 Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in an interview that Fidesz did not need a constitutional majority any longer, for it had changed everything it wanted to change, he seemed to underestimate the importance of this majority. The interview was published shortly before by-elections in which opposition candidates won: Social Democrats from MSZP and

Without a constitutional majority the government coalition will be unable to implement its vision of the state in a stable and effective way.

nationalists from Jobbik. Fidesz lost its majority then. From that moment on it lost only two votes: in November 2016, on the seventh act changing the constitution, and in the spring of 2017, when it pursued changes regarding the transparency of party financing. These changes were contained in a law on parties requiring a constitutional majority to be passed. The two-thirds majority is also needed when nominating the Constitutional Court judges (the absence of the majority resulted in months-long vacancies, until an agreement with the party Politics Could Be Different [LMP] was reached).

Fidesz Does Not Want to Lose the Control over Several Important Offices

There is something else, and it is extremely important: the next parliament (2018-2022) will see the end of the term for heads of several offices which are important for Fidesz, such as the chairman of the National Judicial Office [*Országos Bírószági Hivatal, OBH*], judges of the Constitutional Court, chairman of the National Media and Infocommunications Authority [*Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság, NMHN*]. Without a constitutional majority the government coalition will be unable to implement its vision of the state in a stable and effective way. This vision is realized under the National Cooperation System [*Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere, NER*], which assumed the form of a new social contract legitimizing the victorious political camp. It was supposed to mean a complete abandonment of previous politics. The document was passed first as a parliamentary act, and then as a decree right after the election, in June 2010. The absence of a two-thirds majority will force Fidesz to search for one-time allies, and that will mean the necessity of far-reaching concessions to potential partners or an ongoing institutional paralysis of the state.

A Separate Legislation for the Newly-Emergent Nationalities?

Another issue which will come to the fore during the next parliamentary term is the ethnic policy of Hungary in the context of the 2021 census. Under the 2011 legislation, 13 nationalities are regarded as ethnic minorities. People are asked to define their ethnic origin in the census. Besides them, there

is also, of course, the Hungarian nationality, and four others are not listed in the law: Arab, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese. There is also a category called "other." Comparing the data from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, we notice that the size of the four minorities not included in the Act on Nationalities is growing. This concerns mainly the Chinese and Russians as there are about 6200 of them, which is more than some nationalities accounted for in the law, i.e. Bulgarians, Poles, and Slovenians. In the previous decade the number of people declaring themselves as members of these nationalities rose threefold, while the number of Slovenians fell by one third. In the future, it will be like that with the Arabs.

The question remains open what the government will do if the 2021 census shows that the size of nationalities not included in the legislation increases significantly and surpasses the size of the 13 nationalities. It will be faced with the following dilemma: extend the group of nationalities or start a discussion on introducing separate legislation for the newly-emergent nationalities. This is all accompanied by a decrease in the number of persons declaring their nationality as Hungarian (a decline by 800,000 within a decade) and by a very bad demographic situation, despite the generous programs of support for families with more than two and more than three children.

The problem of inequalities will not be solved by the program of granting Hungarian nationality to Hungarians living in neighboring countries once belonging to the former Hungarian Kingdom, whose lands were divided by the Trianon Treaty of 1920. In 2014-2018, Hungarian nationality was granted to one million people.

Budapest Must Show a Conciliatory Approach

Foreign policy is largely determined by the domestic situation. In the near future, the main priority of Budapest, which is solving the question of mi-

Budapest on the one hand still strongly stresses its rejection of the current EU migration policy.

gration policy on the European Union level, will remain unchanged. Budapest on the one hand still strongly stresses its rejection of the current EU migration policy (including the now-discussed system of distributing the so-called migrant quotas in the version proposed in the spring of 2016) and also accuses Brussels of attempting to constrain the sovereignty of the member states.

On the other hand it announces the possibility of joining a new program of relocating refugees (in a form that is yet to be developed and not based on mandatory allocation of refugees by Brussels), and informs the Hungarian citizens that contrary to the anti-immigration campaign run for almost three years, the government admits refugees, as the deputy foreign

And also accuses Brussels of attempting to constrain the sovereignty of the member states.

minister recently announced. It regarded exactly 1291 people who were given international aid in 2017. This number is very important, for under the schedule adopted by the EU in 2015 Hungary was obligated to receive 1294 persons, that is just three less than were received last year. However, these are separate things which should not be confused with one another. Admitting refugees outside the schedule does not count, so, formally, Hungarians did not let in a single "quota" refugee. This is a very important reservation, for opposition to the relocation mechanism from 2015 is the foundation of the Hungarian government's message, just to mention the national consultations, poster campaigns, and finally the 2016 referendum.

Brussels is already fed up with Hungarian anti immigrant rhetoric, especially the European Commission accuses Hungary of lying.

Brussels is already fed up with Hungarian anti-immigrant rhetoric, especially the European Commission accuses Hungary of lying. Yet Budapest realizes that in order to have a real influence on asylum policy, it must show a conciliatory approach. Communicating the ability to compromise is accompanied by an exacerbation of domestic rhetoric. Its main target is George Soros, a billionaire of Hungarian origin. According to the government, he tries to influence the results of the April parliamentary election. What is more, his tentacles are supposed to have already spread through EU institutions, which implement his plan, mainly through the European Commission. The main idea of this alleged plan is the arrival of another million immigrants to Europe. The current quota system is to distribute them between particular EU countries, and that will destroy the social system based on Christian values.

Counteracting such events takes very specific forms such as the campaign under the slogan "We will not allow Soros to have the last laugh," or national consultations on rejecting the "Soros plan."

The Party Geography in the European Parliament Will Change

In the Hungarian Parliament, a package of bills called “Stop Soros” was introduced and is aimed at organizations supporting illegal immigration. Helping people who have illegally crossed the border is also regarded as supporting illegal immigration. Passing these bills is only a question of time. The proposals include a 25 percent fee (deliberately not called a tax) on government subsidies to be spent on the maintenance of a fence along the southern border of Hungary. But in the general opinion, these acts are aimed mostly at organizations financed by Soros and very critical of the Fidesz-KNDP government, that is the Hungarian Helsinki Committee and the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (TASZ).

The Hungarian prime minister defines European policy in five-year-long cycles coinciding with successive elections to the European Parliament. The new cycle, which will start in 2019, will be preceded by the Brexit. Political scientists also predict that due to the increased importance of populist parties, the party geography in the European Parliament will change. We may prognosticate that the electoral campaign will revolve around issues concerning the migration crisis and the institutional reform of the European Union—whether we will extend the powers of European institutions or transfer some decisions determining the fate of the EU to national parliaments.

The Hungarian prime minister defines European policy in five year long cycles coinciding with successive elections to the European Parliament. The new cycle will be preceded by the Brexit.

And finally, the result of these elections may mean an actual—if not official—breakup of the EU into various integration speeds, with the classical differentiation into the eurozone and the rest, not reflecting the truth of the divisions. Hungary is already trying to adapt to the new opening. Hence the very conciliatory declaration made in early January 2018, on the eve of the negotiations of the new budgetary perspective, that if the remaining partners from Central and Eastern Europe will be willing to increase their contributions to the EU budget in the 2020-2026 perspective, Hungary will raise its share to 1.2 percent of the GDP.

Ruling without a Coalition Partner Will Not Be Enough

In addition to the interest in the European Union, Hungary will not give up its ambitions in the East, including the pursuit of the best possible relations with Russia, especially when a growing number of leaders claim that sanctions imposed by Brussels are ineffective. In 2018, the expansion of the nuclear power plant in Paks will begin, financed in full with a loan from the Russian Federation. It is expected that Vladimir Putin will take part in the cornerstone laying ceremony at the start of this investment. And the last 16+1 summit (November 2017) showed that the importance of Budapest for Beijing is rising again, which means that China will take upon itself some part of the investments flowing from Brussels under the still-generous budgetary perspective.

The challenges that Victor Orbán's government will face in the next term will be among the most serious in years. An ordinary majority and ruling without a coalition partner will not be enough.

The challenges that Victor Orbán's government will face in the next term will be among the most serious in years. An ordinary majority and ruling without a coalition partner will not be enough. If the Fidesz-KNDP system is to function effectively, it will have to recover the constitutional majority. The third victory in a row would mean twelve years of an interrupted Fidesz rule, which puts the Hungarian leader under great stress. And during these four years Orbán will probably think about the inheritors of his work and about deep transformations which would allow Fidesz to extend its rule beyond 2022.

DOMINIK HÉJJ

is a political scientist, analyst, journalist, and university lecturer. He is the editor-in-chief of www.kropka.hu, devoted to Hungary. His academic interests focus on Central and Eastern Europe, mainly on Hungarian politics (e.g. political and party systems). Author of several dozen articles about Hungary in the press, he cooperates with Polish Radio. His PhD dissertation was about the rule of Jobbik party in the Hungarian political system. | Photo: Aspen Review Archive

