

Sacred Characteristics of the Nation: "Hungarianism" as Political Religion?

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This article examines the structure of the correlation between Hungarian radical right wing ideology and the field of religion. It briefly presents the relations of radical right wing groups and Christian churches in Hungary, and tries to reveal the background and role of the explicit religious elements of the ideology. During the analysis of the Hungarian radical right wing, the concept of "political religion" is introduced, which has never been used before, and the concept is separated from the notion of "civil religion" in the Hungarian context. Finally, the theory of radical right wing ideology as political religion is analysed along six dimensions.

The Relation between the Radical Right Wing and Religion in Hungary

Following the collapse of state socialist system in Eastern Europe, a new political space opened for ideologies of the extreme right. The radical right-wing exploited the bitterness and disapproval of the losers of the new social and economic order, and tried to offer a "national" alternative for the more and more discontented masses, which opposes the transformations due to globalisation. Similar processes took place in Hungary as well, as a result of which the radical right wing MIÉP¹ made it to the parliament in 1998 and tried to represent its interests in the "official" political space until 2002. The activation of Hungarian radical right wing movements and the wide scale spread of radical right wing ideologies can be dated to 2002, when MIÉP lost the election and the Hungarian Socialist Party won. The establishment of so called "polgári körök" (civic circles) created the background for questioning the legitimacy of the new government by moderate right wing groups. On the fundamentals of this, new, organised radical right wing groups were able to gain strength. In parallel with the development of Hungarian IT society, radical right wing appeared in the cyberspace and established its network: news portals, forums, books, ideological supplements became accessible. Radical groups used to opportunities provided by the internet to organise the series of disturbances in Hungary that have been taking place since 2006.

The social background of Hungarian radical right wing is extremely heterogeneous. Its main supporters are the citizens who are disappointed in the system change and who fear for the loss of traditional values and their social status; the entrepreneurs who are in an impossible situation due to international companies; the unemployed; and the children of the above mentioned in growing numbers: young people, students.

¹ Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja ~ Hungarian Justice and Life Party

If we examine the relation between the Hungarian radical right and the religious field in general, we have to see that they do not have official relations with mainstream religious groups – historical churches². Hungarian historical churches sharply distance themselves from the activities conducted by radical right wing groups and they do not share the ideologies of these groups. However, the relation of individuals, who are members of these churches, towards these ideologies and activities is a different question. The largest scandal was caused by reformed pastor Lóránt Hegedűs jr. – formerly the member of MIÉP – who made anti-Semitic remarks in a Budapest newspaper in 2002, for which the Reformed Church was forced to condemn anti-Semitism in a synod resolution. The other case, which drew the attention of the public, is the country-wide cross erecting “actions” of JOBBIK Party during Christmas, which started in 2003. Their aim is to enable people to “*stop for a minute during Christmas shopping fever, say a prayer or think about the true meaning of the holiday*”. Several Christian intellectual groups have disapproved these actions; however, no clear objection appeared from the churches against the political appropriation of the religious symbol. Members of historical churches participated at the initiation of the members of The Hungarian Guard, and blessed the flag of the guard. The semi-military organisation, which was formed in the summer of 2007, can be connected to JOBBIK Party. This event caused a scandal and churches distanced themselves from the participating priests and ministers and emphasised that they participated at the event as individuals and not as representatives of their churches. Hungarian media has picked up several similar events in the past years; however, the members of the churches that are connected to radical groups have not received open support or protection from their churches. In general, we can state: radical right wing is seeking the connection points with Christian “historical” churches, but they have not received any official support or encouragement from Hungarian church circles. Cases, which prove otherwise, are only isolated events, which are the expressions of individual ideological preferences.

The situation of Noua Dreaptă (New right wing), which cultivates the spiritual heritage of the Roman radical Iron Guard, offers an interesting basis for comparison. Representatives of the Romanian Orthodox Church regularly participate at the celebrations and actions of this organisation, and they are on the same platform in certain issues like the fight against “destructive sects” or abortion. It is important to note that this Romanian radical right wing group is admittedly strongly religious Orthodox Christian, and beside ethnic identity, religious identity defines their ideology. All this cannot be stated about Hungarian radical right wing groups. The emphasis of their Christianity only serves as a kind of spiritual background for anti-Semitism, and enables the regular quotation of the thousand-year-old antijudaistic topos, the charge of “deicide.” Reference to Christianity and the traditions of Hungarian Christianity is a legitimating factor in their ideological system. In reality, Christianity is necessary for the maintenance of We/Them dichotomy as general narrative. The way of loyalty to any church we can see in the case of Noua Dreaptă is alien from the Hungarian radical right, moreover, the church (most often the Catholic Church) appears as the servant of the alien order, which “made a pact” with the Jews. In other times, these churches are accused of not being radical enough.

² Historical churches include the Catholic, Reformed, and Lutheran churches and the Alliance of Jewish Communities

Since radical right wing groups only incorporated certain elements of Christianity into their ideological system, they have to go back to pre-Christian traditions for the sake of the legitimization of their ideology and for providing an "ancestral" aura to their thoughts. These pre-Christian traditions, the original traditions of Hungarian paganism, however, do not offer the feeling of cultural greatness or the feeling of being chosen as expected by modern-day followers. These are traditions of nomadic people, which can be typologised with traditions of other nomadic cultures in a way that these show no significant differences. This means that it is necessary to reconstruct these traditions and create a "national canon" by organising these into a system, which will become the spiritual base of right wing national ideology. The specific form of this is the sacralisation of nation, "hungarianism" and Hungarian statehood, and filling the Doctrine of Holy Crown with religious content.

Sacralisation of the Nation

The Holy history

Similarly to several Eastern European radical right wing movements, the nation as mythical entity, symbols connected to the idea of the nation, the sacralisation of events or traditions play an important role in the rhetoric of Hungarian right wing radicals as well. According to Anthony D. Smith, two conditions are necessary for the definition of nation. One is the presence of an increasingly separated culture and history within a part of the population, and the other is the fact that this population is able to define its position in a given territory, the "historical home" (Smith 1995). The role of these two conditions in the process of the sacralisation of the nation is worth examining.

The common history, common memory is one of the most important elements in the definition of national identity. This common memory expresses itself in specific mythological constructions. These mythological constructions formed a relatively coherent narrative in the case of Hungarians from the 19th century during the process of becoming a nation, however, the traumas of the 20th century crushed this narrative. The intellectual elite of the right wing political movements appearing following the system change started a process of re-mythologisation for strengthening national identity, which led to the radical revision of Hungarian past and history. This process started towards two directions. One of the directions is the "re-programming" of cultural identity, filling it with old-new content. The other is taking possession symbolically and practically of the former, idealised home („Nagy-Magyarország - Greater Hungary), as the basic unit of "sacral geography," reclaiming it from the "usurpers."

The figures of alternative or "ethnic" history writing play an emphasized role in filling cultural identity with new contents. Their predecessors appear in the 19th century, primarily in the anti-Habsburg historian tradition, but their theories draw attention from the first decades of the 20th century. The followers of these alternative schools introduced their numerous theories – which often contradicted each other – about the origin of the Hungarian nation, its language and religion.³ There is one common aspect of these theories

3 In his book „Jesus Christ the Parthian prince”, Badiny Jós states not less than Jesus Christ did not belong to the Jewish nation, but instead he can be originated from the Parthian (Schyttian-Hun) ethnic group which was at the time present everywhere in Galilee. He also adds that Jesus was a royal prince. His argumentation based on a chain of conspiracy theories, reaches its peak when he reveals that „Álmos-Árpád Hungarian royal dynasty is the direct continuity and descendants of our Lord Jesus – the dynasty of the Adi-Aban Parthian royal prince”.

however, namely the attempt to displace the Hungarian nation from its central-European locality and put it in the realm of "great" historical events, even if it means the reinterpretation of the world's ancient history. These researchers (the most well-known are: Badiny Jós Ferenc, Bobula Ida, Baráth Tibor and Padányi Viktor) handle historical facts in a rather arbitrary way, they often tend to interpret historical reality in order to justify their own views. The justification takes place through citing some relevant literature without any coherence or applying the methods of amateur linguistics, for instance rooting back many international toponyms to Hungarian language⁴. The trend became popular in Hungary mainly after the change of system, when many of its researchers (for example: Badiny Jós, Endrey Antal) returned from exile and some publishers (like Püski) propagated the spreading of these theories as sort of a national mission.)

As Daniele Conversi points out, this type of ethnic history writing aims for the reconstruction of the imaginary past. The historian creates a fiction, which underpins the programme of national revival. The ethnic historian is nothing more than the modern successor of the one-time myth creator (Conversi 1998), and as such, his role is similar to those of the establishers of religions. However, not the worship of an abstract "metaphysicum" is in the centre of this religion, but the reality of cultural connections. This historian movement represents the characteristic example of the ambition for the sacralisation of the nation. In the context of their theories, Hungarians stand out from other people due to their origin and religion, they have a past and mission, it is culturally superior to other people and as the holder of true traditions, its fate is a question affecting the whole of human civilisation. These created national mythologies raise the Hungarian nation to sacral heights. They do this not only by emphasizing the greatness of ancestral history, but also by embedding the elements of Christian symbolism into the history of Hungarians suffering. The history of Hungarians includes Christian traditions and it is presented as an analogy of the suffering of Christ. This appears as a central element in Hungarian national symbolism especially following the Treaty of Trianon ending World War I, and it lives on in contemporary right wing thought. In this narrative, the tragic events of the historical past – the destruction by tartars, the battle at Mohács lost to the Turkish conquerors, Russian occupation and the communist dictatorship – receive a special interpretation. These historical "tests" indicate that Hungarians are chosen as a sacral community, and the aim of this approach is to make the primacy of the national community unquestionable, even compared to the religious community, which is similarly important as a wider circle of reference⁵. Smith (Smith 1995b) points out that "being chosen is being placed under moral obligations." It is a fundamental condition of being chosen to consider and observe certain moral or ritual rules. The certain holiness of lifestyle, which is also filled with ethic content, comes with the privilege of being chosen. This ethic dimension of Hungarians also appears at Sándor Sík, who was a Piarist monk and one of the significant Hungarian writers between the two world wars: *"Being Hungarian according to the teachings of Saint Stephen is a moral concept. (...) Being Hungarian: moral momentum. Being Hungarian: faith. Faith in the mission of Hungarians"*.

⁴ At this point let the author mention about the special field of study called Tamana which was found by Vámos-Tóth Bátor. The Tamana intends to scrutinise and compare the various toponyms, family and personal names all around the world.

⁵ The universality of Christianity beyond nations conflicts with the mentioned notion of the chosen nation. This is one of the reasons why the radical right wing moves towards the worship of a "Hungarian religion," as I will explain later.

The Holy space

Referring back to Smith, the other important phase of the re-construction of the nation is the designation of the space, where the nation determines its place. In Hungarian right wing rhetoric, this space is connected to the notion of a Greater Hungary. This Greater Hungary is identical to the geographical territory of the Millennial Hungarian Kingdom in its form before the Treaty of Trianon. The trauma of Trianon, the loss of two-thirds of the territory of Hungary generates the appearance of the mystical worship of the geographical space, the "territory." Territorial revisionism is a central narrative in right wing ideologies following World War I. Thus it appears in the writings of Ferenc Szálasi, who is the most known figure of Hungarianism⁶ and the leading ideologist of the Hungarian radical right wing between the world wars. The notion of "ancient land," the "Carpathian-Danube Great home" appears in his writings, the renewal and reconstruction of which is one of the missions of Hungarians. Contemporary right wing radicalism directs emphasized attention to these lost territories, especially towards Transylvania, which belongs to Romania. Transylvania, as the symbol and holder of sovereign Hungarian statehood for centuries, appears in right wing mythologizing narratives as an idealised Golden Age empire. The Seklers, the people of Hungarian ethnicity living in Transylvania are seen as the pure and unbroken keepers of the Hungarian "spirit," compared to the moral corruption of Hungarians living in the mother country. The inhomogeneity of the sacred and profane spheres in mythical national geography also appears in the specific sacral role of Transylvania. The best-known religious event, which is connected to Transylvania, is the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, where hundreds of thousands of Hungarians go annually regardless of religious affiliation. The role of the pilgrimage in national narratives often appears as the strengthening of the people, the renewal of the covenant with God every year, and Csíksomlyó is the "place where Christianity and Hungarians are connected the most organically"⁷.

Another accentuated place – which is within the borders of present-day Hungary – in real and sacral geographical space is the Pilis Mountains. The Pilis Mountains represent the proof of the ancient continuity for the supporters of this newfold historical paradigms. It is mentioned in many books and papers that the ruins in Pilis refer to an ancient sacred centre found by the Hun-Hungarian ancestor. The castle of Ős(Ancient)-Buda – which was built upon the city of Attila according to the chronicles –, the coronation and funeral place of the Árpád-dynasty, and even the tomb of Árpád stood here. Szántai Lajos claims that there has always been a certain continuity present in the Pilisian triangle and its most important memories were left by a certain Schyrtian-Hun-Avar-Hungarian line of continuity, which can be justified by the results of archaeological researches. Some of the researchers intending to

⁶ The expression Hungarianism is introduced to the public in the 20th century by Bishop of Székesfehérvár Ottokár Prohászka, one of the leading figures of the renewal of the Hungarian Roman Catholic Church. Hungarianism reaches its present-day content in the works of Szálasi in the 1930s, which is an ideology declaredly aiming for the establishment of a Christian, nationalist and socialist order. Szálasi describes Hungarianism as an ideology, which is based on Christian morals and religion. He explicitly rejects the attempts to renew the neo-pagan ancient Hungarian monotheism, which appeared at that time. Szálasi's Hungarianism ideology does not contain doctrines promoting the ethnic superiority of Hungarians, but he clearly proclaims Hungarians as the people, who are chosen to lead the people of the Carpathian basin.

⁷ Within the traditions around the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage – which are mainly connected to the Mária-cult – certain elements of the ancient pagan faith are mixed with elements of the Catholic religion. The Hungarian Mária-cult is based on the pagan-age Boldogasszony myth and the Mary worship of Christianity, who is worshipped as Magna Domina Hungarorum (the great queen of Hungary).

reveal the Pilis secret, such as Szántai introduced a concept borrowed from the Hindu tradition: the Pilis becomes the "heart chakra" of the Earth in their interpretation. Just as in the human body, where 7 main energy centres or "chakras" are distinguished in the traditional Indian medicine practice, the Earth also holds these 7 centres of energy. Two of them – the crown and the heart chakra can be found in the Pilis Mountains, thus Pilis becomes "the most important energy centre of the Earth."

Myths connected to the Pilis Mountains point out that beyond traditional religious narratives, the construction of the holy space has a significant role in the designation of the sacral nature of a territory. These myths are tightly connected to the idea of the chosen people and they are aimed to strengthen this. The role of the emphasis of ethnic continuity is to prove the historical primacy of the Hungarian nation – which claims the territory – over the other peoples of the Carpathian basin.

The sacralisation of the nation is an organic element of radical right wing ideologies, however, Hungarian specialities should be looked for in the prominently religious dimensions of this process. On the ideological level, Hungarian right wing radicalism does not only designate religious doctrines as the source of ideals and values underpinning its political action, but orientation towards the transcendental also appears specifically in its ideological direction. The integrative power of radical right wing ideology helps the forming of the group, it provides practical answers to the questions of the community and designates the direction of political action. These right wing groups form their own structure of plausibility, which is analogous to the similar structures of religious communities. We are witnessing the formation of a modern political religion.

Political Religion or Civil Religion?

The concept of political religion receives wider attention in the first decades of the 20th century, primarily as a theory connected to the religious nature of totalitarian ideologies – German nazism, fascism and communism. The first scholars (Luigi Sturzo, Adolf Keller, Paul Tillich, Waldemar Gurian), who dealt with political religion primarily saw it as a modern phenomenon, a radical manifestation of secular humanism, which lowers humans to being a mere instrument of politics. According to their views, political religion gives up believing in God and – in order to satisfy the needs for faith and rituals – erects a new religion, which legitimates the political order and its leaders at the same time. They call this religion "pseudo-religion" or "substitute religion", the existence of which is connected to modernity, secularisation and the appearance of mass societies. German political philosopher Eric Voegelin examines the structural similarities of totalitarian ideologies and religion in his work titled *Die politischen Religionen*, which was published in 1938. He explains his wider concept on the issue, and the phenomenon received wider attention due to him (Voegelin 1986). For Voegelin, totalitarian ideologies are the products of the secularisation process in states, where becoming a nation state is overdue. At these nations, the creation of national and social cohesion happened through the use of ideologies connected to a class, race or interpretation of economic processes. Voegelin interprets these as a kind of gnostic ambition, which secludes itself from transcendence and replaces some of its functions with an immanent partial aspect of the world (race, state, class, etc.) (Fodor 2005).

From the 1940s, the theory of political religion was pushed to the background for a few decades, but discourse of the topic started again at the beginning of the nineties, in which

the work of Italian historian Emilio Gentile (Gentile 1990) has an important role. The appearance of the academic journal titled *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, which explores the relationship between religion and politics in the widest sense, indicates the increasing attention towards the topic. The interdisciplinary examination of the topic has received attention in the past few years (Maier 2003, Cattaruzza 2005), which strengthens the role of approaches from the study of religions in the examination of political religions.

Several interpretations of the concept of political religion exist. Early writers dealing with the topic defined political religion (primarily in reference to the religious dimensions of totalitarian systems) as such political ideology, which takes a form similar to religion and which undertakes the cultural and social role of religion. In this approach, the pseudo- or substitute religion character of political religion is emphasized. During the further interpretation of political religion, I find the definition of Emilio Gentile authoritative, and speak about political religion within this framework: „*a type of religion which sacralises an ideology, a movement or a political regime through the deification of a secular entity transfigured into myth, considering it the primary and indisputable source of the meaning and the ultimate aim of human existence on earth*” (Gentile: 2004:328).

The definition of political religion is often used as an equivalent or synonym of civil religion. In contrast to the definition of civil religion introduced by Robert N. Bellah in the 1960s (Bellah 1967), political religion has significantly different contents, which should be examined here for exact differentiation. According to Bellah, the American civil religion is “*an institutionalized collection of sacred beliefs about the American nation*”, which Michael Angrosino amends with “*including a faith in a transcendent deity who will protect and guide the United States as long as its people and government abide by his laws. The virtues of liberty, justice, charity, and personal integrity are all pillars of this religion and led a moral dimension to its public decision-making processes quite different from the realpolitik that presumably underlies the calculations of states not equally favored by divine providence*”(Angrosino 2002). According to Coleman’s interpretation, „*Civil religion is the set of beliefs, rites, and symbols which relates a man's role as citizen and his society's place in space, time, and history to the conditions of ultimate existence and meaning*” (Coleman 1970:76). Coleman emphasizes that “*civil religion is a religious system given to the social integration of society*”. The most often quoted writers of the topic (Bellah 1967, Coleman 1970, Hammond 1976) agree that civil religion plays a role of adding values in a society, fosters social cohesion and justifies the authority of social institutions.

In the comparison of civil religion and political religion, Emilio Gentile (Gentile 2004) highlights the “*extremist and exclusive nature of its historical mission*” as the main element of political religion. According to the interpretation of Gentile, civil religion is a form of the sacralisation of politics, which is connected to a supernatural existence, in contrast with political religion, which “*deifies the mythical secular entity*”, though the sacralisation of an ideology. Civil religion is not connected to the ideology of any particular political movements. It remains neutral-accepting towards other political ideas-ideologies. In civil religion, the autonomy of the individual is not questioned, while political religion promotes the primacy of the community and subjects individual freedom to the interests of the community. Civil religion is not connected to any specific denominations, it is accepting towards traditional religions and establishes the terms of its operations beside them. In many cases, political religion is hostile towards traditional religions, and even if it does not step up against such religions, it tries to establish a symbiotic relationship with them, in

which it „incorporates the traditional religion into its own system of beliefs and myths, while designating to it subordinate and auxiliary function”(Gentile: 2000). We can trace the differences between the two religious phenomena in the following table:

	Civil religion	Political religion
Political system	Democratic	Totalitarian
Ideology/ political movement	Not linked	Linked
Relation to political order	Preserving / Supporting	Preserving/Change-oriented*
Relation to other ideologies and political movements	Adopting / Pluralistic	Excluding / Hegemonic
Relation to institutional /traditional religions	Adopting / Supporting	Hostile / Symbiotic
Relation to state	Cooperating	Integralist
Relation to individual	Accept autonomy	Primacy of the Commonwealth

*Change oriented, in this case, means the ambition to change the political order that opposes the ideological background of the political religion

“Hungarianism” as political religion

When we examine Hungarian radical right wing ideology, we can discover several elements that indicate a shift towards political religions. I use the expression political religion for this ideology and not treat it as a civil religious phenomenon for the following reasons:

- It is characterized by strong exclusivism and ethnocentric attitude, it excludes and it is intolerant towards other ideologies and political ideas.
- This ideology strives to integrate elements of the Christian tradition that are important for it, however, its religious universe is more syncretistic than that of civil religion. Though it accepts the primacy of Christian religion, elements of the ancient Hungarian pagan tradition play an important role in its worldview. It rejects religious pluralism, and it is hostile towards new religious movements and other religions (Islam, Judaism).
- Its relation to the political order and state is change-oriented. It seeks to change the existing political and social order drastically.
- It subjects the concept of individual autonomy, and promotes the primacy of the Hungarian nation as sacral community. Compared to this, the individual is secondary and subordinate.
- The sacralisation of politics happens in the terms of an ideology. Radical right wing groups form their own mythical and symbolic universe (which is religious in nature) in the interest of their political aims.

I find the concept of “Hungarianism” as political religion provable along the analysis the heterogeneous elements of radical right wing ideology. Klaus-Georg Riegel (Riegel 2005)

designates six dimensions, which are emphasised in political religions, and the existence of which can be proven based on Hungarian examples.

– *doctrines of inner-worldly salvation*

The distance of radical right wing ideology from Christianity can be principally discovered in the doctrine of inner-worldly salvation. The doctrine of inner-worldly salvation is aimed at inner-worldly community life and bears the characteristics of "Gnostic" and "Chtonic" metacultures (Tiryakian 1996). In the "Hunnia"⁸ concept of György Budaházy and László Toroczkai, the two emblematic figures of Hungarian radicals, such utopistic visions can be found, which aim for the advancement of inner-worldly salvation. In their concept, the already quoted elements of the sacralisation of the nation are mixed: the ideal of the chosen people with a mission, the notion of a sacral space, the religious elements of the Christian and pagan traditions. Hunnia, the "parallel Hungary" is the framework of the rise of the nation and the fulfilment of its political-religious mission.

– *a total reconstruction of society*

Radical right wing ideology attempts to provide a critical description of the current social and political order and present the programme necessary for changing it. The – even violent – reorganisation of society is a central element of this programme. Religious narratives appear among the factors that justify the necessity of changes: Hungarians strayed from the right path designated by the ancestors, they diverged from their God, lost their traditions; the holy space – the Carpathian basin – is under foreign invasion; an alien religious minority – Jews – reign over Hungarians; etc.

– *the primacy of politics*

Despite all religious elements, the ideology promotes the primacy of political action, and places itself in the political field. However, religious explanations serve as the reasons for actions as well. The political field becomes a sacral space, the space of the battle against the inner-worldly political Evil. Radical right wing ideology does not only promote rational political discretion, it also builds on the emotional power of beyond-reason faith-based narratives.

– *a moral élite*

In Hungary, radical right wing ideologists and the right wing intellectual elite try to present themselves as moral elite towards their own followers and its opponents. The demonisation and the discrediting of the moral commitment of the political opponent, the "others" – homosexual, drug user, thief, aims to express the moral superiority of radicals. As the holders of the "one and true" morality, this moral elite is chosen to establish the new social and cultural order and to lead the "new" Hungary.

– *exclusive commitments*

One of the central elements of Hungarian radical right wing ideology is exclusivism and intolerance towards other views. These religious or political views – may it be liberalism or Pentecostalism – appear as heretic trends opposing the salvationist radical ideology, and ideologists urge for fight against them. "Exclude them! If you don't, they will do it to you." wrote Hegedűs jr. in the above-quoted case and this statement can be interpreted as a

⁸ The essence of Hunnia concept is the establishment of a "parallel" Hungary, an alternative state with all of its sub-systems. The overthrow of the existing state order is a declared aim of the concept.

programme. In Hungary, the events of the past two years – attacks on politicians and journalists – point out that the radical right wing has started its “crusade” against the “heretics.”

– *world mission*

Though the ideology of Hungarian radicalism does not contain worldwide missionary plans, its scope clearly expands beyond the borders of Hungary. This means the regions of the neighbouring countries which are populated by Hungarians or the Carpathian basin in general. The recent political concept of Greater Hungary is tightly connected to the Doctrine of the Holy Crown, on which the medieval concept of the Hungarian state was based. The Doctrine of the Holy Crown is a regular point of reference of radical right wing ideologists. According to this doctrine, the crown of Saint Stephen, the first king of Hungary, is a legal entity and this legal entity owns the Hungarian land (including present-day Transylvania, Croatia, Slovenia and Slovakia). Furthermore, the Holy Crown is the source of all other rights. The Holy Crown grants the king the right to rule, and he gets sovereignty from the crown as well. The restoration of the constitution of the Holy Crown is a recurring element in radical right wing ideology, and the Doctrine of the Holy Crown is in fact one of the justifications of the leading role and mission of Hungarians in the Carpathian basin.

Conclusions

In my brief article, I tried to outline the nature of Hungarian radical right wing ideology. Obviously, I could not strive for completeness within this framework, so several questions remain unanswered. It will be the task of further studies to designate the place of Hungarian radical right wing ideology as political religion within the process of Central and Eastern European religious transformations. The following can be stated based on this current research:

- Though radical right wing ideology places itself in the political field, it uses a syncretistic religious narrative to legitimate its programme, the central elements of which are the sacralisation of the Hungarian nation, the idea of a chosen people, the designation of the national territory as a sacral space, and the inclusion of religious moral elements into political rhetoric. The Hungarian radical right wing does not only designate religious doctrines as the source of ideals and values that underpin its political actions, but the orientation towards the transcendental also appears specifically in its ideological direction.
- The elements of Christianity and the ancient Hungarian pagan faith are mixed in the religious narratives of the radical right wing ideology. However, it cannot be proven that either the Christian or the pagan elements mean a unified point of reference for everyone. In the Hungarian radical right wing, the groups using Christian rhetoric seem to enjoy the most popularity, but the currently marginal paganism-oriented group plays a more and more increasing role.
- The examination of the dimensions of political religions and its comparison to Hungarian specialities shows a strong analogy, however, the heterogeneity of Hungarian radical right wing groups makes it impossible to capture the radical right wing as a unified political phenomenon. The concept of a Hungarian political religion

is currently only present in a rough form, however the spread of radical right wing ideology projects the appearance of a clear form.

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