

Central European liberalism allowed the state the right of 'supervision' over autonomous bodies. Kálmán Tisza developed it into a means of effective persecution of minorities. Constant enquiries into the working of their cultural associations could lead to a total ban, as of the premier Slovak organ, the *Matice* (1875) or the state's taking over of the largest fund of the Serbian *Matice*. The traditional local autonomy of Transylvanian Saxons went in 1876. Criticisms of government nationality policy in the minority press brought the risk of prosecution for spreading ethnic hatred or endangering the constitutional order. Nationality primary and then nursery schools were obliged to make the teaching of Magyar compulsory (1879/1891), while the state established new Magyar schools in non-Magyar districts or, since its resources were limited, sought to cajole existing nationality schools, run - like most in Hungary - by the churches, to go bilingual. This was much easier when the churches concerned had mainly Magyar hierarchies, as in the case of the mixed Catholic-Lutheran Slovaks. Thus in 15 counties with a sizeable Slovak population the ratio of Slovak or partly Slovak schools to Magyar schools changed from 2016:1036 in 1876 to 502:3478 by 1908. Where the church hierarchies were outside direct Magyar control, as for the Orthodox Serbs and Romanians and the Uniate Romanians and Ruthenians, minority schooling held up much better, and there were even a handful of Serb and Romanian secondary schools. Nonetheless, here too government exerted its pressure through religious leaders, exploiting their rivalry with the local secular intelligentsia. The substantial autonomy the liberal Eötvös had conceded the two Orthodox churches, with a built-in lay majority in their National Church Congresses, was an irritant but could be circumvented. From 1875 to 1908 the Hungarian government sanctioned only one measure of the Serbian Congress and in 1881 Franz Joseph appointed a conservative Patriarch who had been heavily defeated in the Electoral Congress, in successive ballots.

These tactics won a fair measure of success. The nationalities turned to a Czech-style policy of abstention from the Hungarian parliament which simply left them on the side-lines. In 1878 only six and in 1887 one minority nationalist was elected. An assimilationist could compare secondary schools to sausage machines which took in Slovak boys one end and produced Magyar patriots the other. By 1900 93% of local officials and 97% of judges gave their nationality as Magyar. The constant pressure encouraged fractures in struggling political movements. Miletić's Serb National Liberal Party split after 1884

into the Radical and Liberal parties and what Serbian historiography calls an 'opportunistic' wing. Slovak political nationalism was moribund. Romanian politics were livelier but were checked for a time by the harsh response to their 1893 protest Memorandum, which Franz Joseph simply refused to accept, leading to eventual imprisonment of the 'ringleaders' for exercising the right of petition. Minority leaders, recruited from the narrow circles of the non-Magyarised intelligentsia, lacked the means to mobilise their overwhelmingly peasant populations. As late as 1910, 86% of Romanians were employed in agriculture as against 55% of Magyars.

Yet victories won in the name of the 'Hungarian state idea' came at a cost. Where earlier in the Dualist era all minority national movements had had wings which hoped for an accommodation with Magyardom (Vincențiu Babeș, Budapest university professor, among Romanians; the 'New School' among Slovaks; the Serb Liberal leader and long-serving MP, Polit-Desaničić), by the new century sullen bitterness was general among the still politically active. Disillusionment was particularly strong with the Hungarian independentist tradition, which in the 1870s still claimed to champion minority rights along with universal suffrage. A radical Magyar daily's obituary to Svetozar Miletić in 1901 ranted:

A traitor has died... The venomous spider gave out his death gasp in his own web... The pen in our hand shudders from contempt when we put on paper the name of Svetozar Miletić.¹²

The one-time leader of the Independence Party, Lajos Mocsáry, who remained loyal to the earlier ideals, became so isolated that he was driven out of it in 1887 and subsequently accepted election as MP for a Romanian constituency.

By this time the Magyar nationalist tide was also washing against the walls of Croatian autonomy. By the terms of the 1868 *Nagodba* this autonomy was anyway limited to cultural and administrative affairs, giving Croatia's slender professional elite no instruments with which to overcome the country's chronic economic weakness, admittedly not their priority. A neuralgic point came in Budapest's attempt in 1883 to introduce bilingual insignia on public buildings, thereby breaching the Croatian interpretation of the *Nagodba*. Protests of increasingly indebted peasants quickly fed on the initial nationalist spasms. The attempt made since 1873 to govern Croatia through moderate Croatian nationalists broke down, and Tisza imposed as