

BETWEEN EMANCIPATION AND ANTISEMITISM: JEWISH PRESENCE IN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS IN HUNGARY 1867–1884

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THE PERIOD UNDER STUDY

The early 1880s were both difficult and extraordinary from the point of view of Hungarian Jewry. Political antisemitism had been present for half a decade, but it became violent and influential during these years, though only for these years. In other words, this was a time of crisis within the ‘Golden Era’ of the Hungarian Jewry, as some researchers of Hungarian Jews call the period of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy 1867–1918. [1] Besides antisemitism ‘normal’ political debate took place in parliament simultaneously, namely that related to the bill on Jewish–Christian marriages, which was also decisive from a Jewish point of view. The ‘antisemitic wave’ started with the attempts to establish a nation-wide movement, the Central Association of Non-Jewish Hungarians, following the example of Wilhelm Marr’s *Antisemitenliga* in Germany. [2] This period of virulent antisemitic activity culminated in the events related to the infamous Tiszaeszlár blood libel case, including a series of riots threatening the safety of Jews in numerous counties, and the foundation of the National Antisemitic Party in 1883. After the clear defeat of the antisemites in the elections of 1884, antisemitism practically became insignificant. [3] It took ten years until a political party incorporated antisemitism in its programme again, but the antisemitism of the Catholic People’s Party was ‘less virulent’, [4] and neither their only nor even their main goal.

THE ‘DOUBLE PROGRAMME OF EMANCIPATION AND ASSIMILATION’

András Kovács in an article about the relationship between politics and Hungarian Jews argues that ‘independent Jewish politics has no tradition in the history of Hungarian Jewry’. [5] He says also that the golden rule of political participation for Hungarian Jewry has been the same for one-and-a-half centuries: ‘it is forbidden to appear as a Jew or to represent particular Jewish interests on the political scene’. In his view, this model of behaviour was in connection with the ‘double programme of emancipation and assimilation’, namely that the Jews, having achieved political rights by Act XVII of 1867, were treated as equal members of the political community, distinguished merely by their religion from other citizens, which was supposed to put an end to their social separateness. He also points out that, while the Jews had specific group interests (mentioning especially the aspiration to achieve emancipation, the attainment of the equality of the Jewish religion, ‘reception’, and the fight against political antisemitism), Jewish politicians did not attempt to represent them as specific Jewish issues, but expected the non-Jewish followers of the emancipatory political tradition to protect these interests. [6] It is worth mentioning that the listed issues formed a coherent part of contemporary Hungarian liberal thought, or more exactly, the ‘gentry liberal’ programme of modernisation.

As we have seen, the period in question was an exceptional time from a Jewish point of view, since it coincided with the rise of political antisemitism. Hungarian Jewry did not merely have a special interest in issues arising during this period – although some cases, like the bill on Jewish–Christian marriages, can be understood this way – but the Jewish community as such was threatened by the activity organised by the relatively small antisemitic group. The aim of this paper is to examine the political history of this period from a particular point of view, namely how those political actors who could be expected to represent, or actually defend, Jewish interests behaved during this period of crisis. I will focus on the activity of politicians who were members of the Jewish community, but also take into account converted politicians of Jewish origin. One can ask whether it is relevant to extend the scope of my research to baptised Jews, having already argued that Jews were treated merely as a religious group, with the result that a convert was not counted as a Jew. Despite this argument, however, it seems reasonable to assume that converted Jews still had ties to their original community, and they were probably more interested in issues concerning Jewry than other politicians. Moreover, if we consider the starting point of Kovács’s article, the basic question is the political representation of the interests of Jewry as an ethnic community, so politicians with Jewish connections by origin might be even more interesting objects of study.

THE RISE OF POLITICAL ANTISEMITISM IN HUNGARY

The first appearance of political antisemitism in Hungary was, as mentioned earlier, the speech of Győző Istóczy in the House of Representatives in 1875. Istóczy was a minor administrative official when he became a representative for the electoral district of Rum, a town close to the administrative district of his office in Vas county. As a representative he belonged to the governing Deák Party, and after the merger of 1875, to its successor, the Liberal Party. For several years he only gave rise to laughter in the Lower House, and nobody took him seriously. His only political activity consisted of regular speeches concerning his obsession, the Jewish Question. He tried to launch a periodical to support his efforts but, as he wrote later, because of lack of interest he had to give up after a couple of issues in 1878. Later on he found kindred spirits in the parliament, and a little group of representatives joined him, agreeing with some of his antisemitic opinions. [7]

However, antisemitism was only an extra-parliamentary movement which did not have political importance until the Tiszaeszlár case. The Tiszaeszlár ritual murder case was the most important factor in the rise of political antisemitism. It kept the so-called Jewish Question on the pages of the newspapers for several months. As György Szabad has said, the antisemitic politicians were a negligible group until the blood libel case brought them to the fore. [8]

As a result of the antisemitic politicians' extra-parliamentary activity and their loud propaganda, a series of antisemitic riots took place in Hungary during the summer of 1883. These riots occurred in 83 municipalities in 31 counties, including the capital, several county towns and other important places. Kubinszky, concurring with contemporary opinions, has doubts about the spontaneity of individual events. [9] The antisemitic politicians probably played a role in them.

ANTISEMITIC ACTIVITY IN PARLIAMENT IN THE EARLY 1880S

As I mentioned earlier, parliament was a very important place for the antisemitic movement to make its voice heard. Their basic idea that antisemitism was a social and economic question caused by a 'social caste' which had special ethnic or racial characteristics (or at least community of blood) meant also that every single question was also a Jewish Question, and they did their best to prove it. In practice it meant that it was difficult to discuss anything without touching on the role of the Jews. The antisemites did not hesitate to act outrageously even in parliament (unprecedented at that time), although sometimes they declared that they did not support violence. They frequently acted contrary to the House Rules, but this kind of proceeding was not advantageous because it lacked the protection of those Rules. It was more appropriate to use the traditional forms of procedure in parliament. Besides the debate on the bill on Christian–Jewish marriage, [10] which was a great opportunity to deliver speeches on the Jewish Question, interpellations and petitions were the ways used to put questions on the agenda (on the 'table of the House'), even against the will of the majority.

According to contemporary parliamentary procedure civil organisations (including municipal and church organisations, as well as local party organs) had the right to petition the parliament. Interpellation was preferred by Istóczy throughout his 'lonely battles', but in these years antisemites were also very successful in launching petitions. The direct impact of the antisemites cannot be proven in every single case but it seems very probable.

On 18 February the House had its debate on the report of the Committee of Public Petitions about a petition produced by the 'Catholic Priests of the Deanery of Vasvár', asking for the abolition of the Act of Emancipation. This ecclesiastical district happened to be situated in the electoral district which sent Istóczy to the House with his antisemitic programme. Five months later the house discussed the petition of Szatmár county, supported by a number of other counties, concerning the restriction of Jewish immigration. On 25 November 1882, the county of Heves had its demands put on the agenda of the House. They opposed the way prime minister Tisza [11] had banned certain antisemitic printed matter. Two months later the House was forced to reconsider its views on Jewish emancipation, since an assembly of citizens from the electoral district of Tapolca had filed a petition demanding the abolition of emancipation. In this case it was unquestionably the work of antisemites since the man who formulated the petition was Andor Vadnai, a devoted follower of Istóczy, who became known as his defence attorney in a libel case. [12]

This series of attacks on Jewish rights, interests, and Jewry as a whole naturally made the position of Jews in parliament difficult. They were provoked to act, to answer these attacks. They were provoked even more explicitly than by the topic of the parliamentary debates: Istóczy had the habit of presenting his accusations and aspersions concerning the Jews by turning in the direction of Wahrmann, a Liberal Party representative who was the leader of the Reform Jews in Pest. After the foundation of the Antisemitic Party and the intensification of political struggle due to the approaching time of elections, the small group of representatives belonging to that party became very aggressive in their behaviour. They became involved in bitter verbal battles with everybody, not just Jews.

JEWISH ACTORS ON THE POLITICAL SCENE: JEWISH ORGANISATIONS

As we have seen, several issues and events touched Hungarian Jewry very closely during these years. According to our assumption, the Jewish model of behaviour had to be based on the principle of 'not getting involved'. Following the concept of Jewry as merely a denomination which did not have special political interests, they had to let these problems be solved by professional politicians, the government, and the parties. Especially in the case of the shocking riots, it was the duty of the state to ensure the safety of its citizens.

Hungarian Jewry was strongly divided into two camps, reformers and conservatives, that is, the Orthodox. The Jewish Congress held in 1868/69 [13] produced a schism inside Jewry, although it was meant to carry out organisational reforms within the Jewish religion. However, the Orthodox minority was not ready to make any compromise, on religious grounds, and most of them left the Congress. Officially only one denomination existed, but the division was a fact which caused difficulties also in relation to the state. As the outcome of the Congress, the Jewish congregations belonged to three competing groups, 'Congressional' (or Neolog), Orthodox, and Status Quo Ante congregations – this latter consisted of communities which did not accept this split. [14] Although the two main groups, the Neologs and the Orthodox, did not differ in their linguistic 'Magyarisation', Neolog Jewry was more ready to assimilate socially and to get involved in the affairs of Hungarian society.

In March 1871 Reform Jewry established its nationwide organ, the National Bureau of Israelites. A month later minister of justice Pauler issued a decree which stated that the Bureau was the only authorised mediator between the Congressional congregations and the government. [15] There is no evidence that the Bureau, or any other official Jewish organisation, appeared as the official defender of the Jews in the 1880s. The Bureau hired Károly Eötvös to lead the defence in the Tiszaeszlár case, but never intervened officially to counterbalance antisemitic activity. Kubinszky went through the documents of the Ministry of the Interior at the time of the antisemitic riots and she found only one case when a Jewish congregation sent its request for aid with reference to its threatened position to the Ministry of Home Affairs. [16] However, there are no signs of Jewish officials lobbying for more effective action. It was the duty of the government to protect the property and lives of citizens, and that Jews were entitled to these rights was part of the so-called 'assimilation contract'.

JEWISH ACTORS ON THE POLITICAL SCENE: PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS OF JEWISH ORIGIN

The Jewish members of parliament, however, could hardly remain silent. They were forced to react to events in the country, and even in parliament. However, they represented different parties, their professional backgrounds and political weight was different, and they followed different tactics in their political activity.

In his article about German Jews Pulzer concludes that although politicians of Jewish origin were quite numerous, number did not entail influence. [17] He also says that 'neither empire [i.e. Germany and Austria-Hungary] had responsible parliamentary government'. On the other hand, he admits that the consent of the legislatures of Germany and Austria-Hungary 'was needed for legislative proposals and budgets'. [18] We can also add that in Hungary the government was dependent on both the support of the parliamentary majority and the confidence of the ruler, even if the latter played a very important role. However, political influence primarily had to do with personal traits.

As far as Jews were concerned, the periodical *Egyenlőség* [Equality] dedicated an article to the problem of 'Jewish preponderance'. [19] The author, in order to examine 'empirically' the charge of Jewish dominance in Hungarian society, goes through the various fields of public life to see if Jewish presence in them is comparable to the proportion of Jews in the population of the country, which was, according to the census of 1880, 4.5 percent. It was easy to demonstrate that no Jew had entered the Upper House, which was still the realm of the Catholic clergy and the aristocracy and was widely held a feudal relic, while the number of Jews in the House of Representatives did not even approach the amount they were entitled to by virtue of their share in the population. It was also a commonplace that hardly any Jews could enter the central administration, let alone the local administration. The contributor of the *Egyenlőség* denied even the common belief that Jews had a strong position on editorial staffs:

We few, on whom the duty has been devolved to defend the deeply offended rights of Hungarian Jews in the sphere of the press, we can tell from experience that such a thing as a 'Jewish press' does not exist. On the contrary, it is completely impossible to publish an article in defence of the Jews even in the *Pester Lloyd* which has often been called Jewish. [20]

Looking at the way newspapers handled the Tiszaeszlár case the statement sounds convincing, even if the proportion of Jews among journalists was remarkable. [21]

Pulzer counted seventeen professing Jews elected to the *Reichstag* between 1867 and 1879, with seven 'baptized deputies of Jewish origin'; he also reports thirty-nine Jewish members of the 'various *Landtage*'. [22] These numbers are huge compared with those in Hungary. Ede Vadász mentions sixteen Jews by religion

elected in ten elections in thirty-two years. It is telling that the elections of 1905, which produced the first defeat of the government side since the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, brought twenty new Jewish deputies to the Lower House. [23] The proportion of converts was probably more significant as compared to religious Jews than in Germany. [24]

The very first elected representative with a Jewish background was Albert Wodiáner [25] (1834–1913), the grandson of Sámuel Wodiáner, the remarkable banker, merchant, and businessman, one of the first Jews to acquire nobility (even if after conversion) in the nineteenth century, as early as 1844. [26] He was named after his uncle, the other son of Sámuel Wodiáner. Albert's father, Mór, converted even earlier (before 1834) than the grandfather. [27] The family had large estates in different parts of Hungary, and Albert was elected in 1865 to represent the district of Érsekújvár, a region in which they had considerable property, and where his father established an 'entailed estate' some decades later. [28] He was elected in the same district twice more, until 1875, when he lost to the candidate of the moderate opposition. For the next twelve years he represented a district from Krassó-Szörény county, where the estate called Kapriora, the fief that the family gained with its ennoblement, was located. Having become an Austrian baron, Albert Wodiáner behaved like an old-fashioned aristocrat who ran for the position of representative in a region where his large estates served as the basis of authority needed to get elected. Having acquired the title of baron in 1874 he became a member of the Upper House in 1887, where he joined his uncle, Albert, who had been made a baron in the previous year.

Parliamentary membership became possible for professing Jews in 1867, through the Act of Emancipation, and the first elections after the passing of the bill were held in 1869. Albert Wodiáner's cousin, Béla (1830–1896) became a representative at those elections. [29] He was ennobled in the same year. He was a member of the Calvinist Church, [30] and his career differed significantly from that of his cousins. As a youngster he joined the Hungarian army, and participated in the War of Independence, where he reached the rank of lieutenant. As one of the defenders of the Komárom fortress, he did not have to face the reprisals of the winning Austrians. In the 1850s he achieved some success in international trade, although he never became as wealthy as his cousins.

The first professing Jew in parliament was Mór Wahrmann (1832–1892) who was also elected in 1869. [31] As the son of a Jewish trader, and grandson of the first rabbi of the Pest Jewish community, he became one of the wealthiest entrepreneurs in the city. Wahrmann proved his devotedness to the aims of the Hungarian political elite in the 1860s, when he wrote a series of articles in the *Pester Lloyd*, the newspaper of the merchant organisation in Pest, demanding economic independence for Hungary. He was one of the vice-presidents of the Jewish Congress of 1868, [32] and became also the chairman of the Jewish Community of Pest (more precisely of the Reform wing) in 1883. When he finally accepted the post, he had already been in the House of Representatives for fourteen years, and was widely held to be the 'symbol' of Hungarian Reform Jewry. [33] According to an article in *Egyenlőség*, he was asked to be the chairman several times, but he refused until 1883. It is interesting to see how his reputation changed. Mór Bogdányi (the owner and editor-in-chief of the weekly) published a book with short descriptions of politicians in 1882, in which he presented a severe critique on Wahrmann. [34] However, as a later article of the *Egyenlőség* indicates, [35] a radical change occurred in his attitude. Maybe it was a consequence of Wahrmann's more active role in defending the Jews. He remained a member of the legislature until his death. He held several other positions both in commercial life (he was a member of the Stock Exchange Council, the Chamber of Commerce – at the end of his life he was even the chairman of it – and the School Board of the Budapest Commercial Academy) and in the national institutions of arts and humanities (a member of the Board of Trustees of the Hungarian National Society of Fine Arts – where he was also a member of the committee established for acquisition – a member of the Governing Body of the Academy of Music, and a founder of the Hungarian Historical Association). His most important 'non-governmental' position was his membership in the leading body of the Lloyd Society of Pest (from 1863), then his post as one of the three directors of the organisation (1873), and finally his position as chairman of the Society (1877–1892). [36]

The following year brought two influential men of Jewish origin into the House of Representatives. Ignác Helfy (1830–1897), a convert, was to a certain extent the ideal type of the politician of the early Dualistic era. [37] Although he was relatively young at the time of the 1848 Revolution and War of Independence, he took part in the events from the start. He became a volunteer and even worked with Kossuth; he also magyarised his name from Helfer that year. After the defeat of the uprising he was interned. He left the country in the early 1850s and went to Padua where he finished his studies and converted. Helfy became an important figure of the political emigration, editing the paper *L'Alleanza*. He became a close co-worker of Kossuth again, who arranged his election in 1870. [38] He became one of the leaders of the so-called 'far left', known as the Independence Party from 1874, and he was a member of the party's parliamentary group until his death. He also became known as the editor of Kossuth's collected papers published in Hungary.

The career of another convert, Miksa Falk [39] (1828–1908) was similar. He was a journalist from his early years, and he had a close relationship with important politicians of the Reform Era, such as Széchenyi, Deák, and Eötvös. While Széchenyi was in the mental hospital at Döbling, Falk was a member of the group which arranged the publication of his works. As a publicist he was a supporter of Deák's line. He was sentenced to prison in 1861 for an article which demanded the restoration of the constitution in Hungary. In the same year he became a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the proposal of Deák. Of his many posts and activities, his role as the companion of Elisabeth, the Emperor's wife (his task was to support the Queen's efforts to learn Hungarian), and a translator of Dumas and Jókai (into German) are particularly worthy of mention. He was a representative until 1905, and also a member of the parliamentary delegation, which together with its Austrian counterpart, controlled the common Austrian--Hungarian military and foreign matters. [40] His major role, however, was probably his position as the chief editor of the *Pester Lloyd*, the leading German-language newspaper of Hungary. The other important connection with Wahrmann, who is said to have been a close friend in their childhood, was the moment when Falk was invited to take this position, which he held for more than a quarter of a century. [41]

The same year as Falk and Helfy, [42] a remarkable figure among Hungarian Jewry, Ede Horn (1825–1875), was also elected. In the 1840s he was a rabbi in Pest, where he established a Reform synagogue; he also became known as a journalist. He joined the revolutionary army and he was appointed the first Jewish army chaplain at the very end of the War of Independence. [43] After the revolt he left the country and lived in Leipzig, where he published a treatise on Kossuth (1851), for which he was forced to leave the German lands as well. He changed his name for safety's sake (his former name was Ignác Einhorn). He lived in Belgium, later in France, and worked extensively as a journalist. He was also a prominent economist. He did not convert, but contracted a mixed marriage with a Roman Catholic woman in Belgium. As an economist he became involved in the labour movement in France; however, upon his return to Hungary (1869), he was not accepted by the local leaders of the movement. [44] He was re-elected twice, and he became the first Jewish secretary of state in Hungary, but died the same year. [45]

In 1871 the number of professing Jewish representatives rose to three, when Ferenc Chorin (1842–1925) was elected in Arad, where his grandfather was a famous rabbi, one of the most prominent representatives of Reform Jewry. Originally he had trained as a lawyer. During the second half of his life he seems to have gained a stronger and stronger position in industry, and became 'Hungary's leading coal magnate and very wealthy' (McCagg). [46] He is also known as the founder of the National Alliance of Manufacturers. His son, Ferenc Chorin Jr, was a 'key industrialist' of inter-war Hungary, and the chairman of the Alliance. In 1903 Chorin senior was appointed to the Upper House, which was preceded by his conversion. [47]

During the 1870s three legalists entered parliament. Two of them, Károly Csemegi (1826–1899) and István Teleszky (1839–1899) were baptised; they attained the rank of secretary of state. The third, Pál Mandel (1839–1908), was a professing Jew until his death. Of the three, Csemegi was the most prominent. He was the codifier of the Hungarian Penal Code and his main parliamentary activity was concerned with that. After 1878 (the Hungarian Penal Code was Act V of 1878) he was appointed a member of the Supreme Court. He certainly had an exemplary career from a 'national' point of view. His father immigrated from France, and was called Nasch, but Károly magyarised his name in 1845. He studied law in Pest, where he was a founding member of the university's 'Hungarian Association'. He participated in the War of Independence, and even founded a volunteer unit: as its commander he rose to the rank of major (very few Jews achieved such a high rank in the revolutionary army). He was sentenced after the suppression of the uprising and served one year as a private in the Austrian army. He converted to Catholicism, [48] and in the 1850s he was interned. From 1860 he participated in local political activity, and from 1867 he was appointed to the newly organised Ministry of Justice. He became secretary of state in 1872.

Teleszky, whose father had magyarised the family name from Jeteles in 1839, was a remarkable figure in the Hungarian legal profession; he was a member of the executive committee of the Hungarian Lawyers' Alliance and for six years (1887–1893) secretary of state in the Ministry of Justice. He was an expert on the law of succession. He was elected for the first time in 1874 and remained a member of the Lower House until 1897. Pál Mandel was not necessarily comparable to the two legalists described above but he seems to have been a good lawyer. He became a representative in 1875 and was re-elected – with a couple of hiatuses – until 1905. The same year as Mandel another Jew entered parliament; Károly Sváb (1829–1911) is said to have been a representative of the Budapest upper bourgeoisie. He is mentioned in his official biographies as a former officer of the revolutionary army, but his name is not mentioned in the works of Gábor Bóna, or in the lists published by Bernstein. After being a representative for ten years, he was appointed to the Upper House as one of the only two Jews in the newly organised institution. [49]

Coming to the early 1880s, the focus of our interest, two more men joined the group described above: Ernő Mezei (1851–1932) and Gyula Lánchy (1850–1911). The former studied law in Pest and worked as a journalist

from his youth. He belonged among the magyarisers: his original family name was Grünfeld, which he changed in 1875. He worked as a political analyst for a number of newspapers in the capital before he became a representative. Lánczy was a convert: his father magyarised their family name from Lazarsfeld in 1861. Lánczy himself was a historian and held several positions in the central administration in the 1870s. He was appointed chair of world history at the University of Budapest after his short excursion into politics.

Of the thirteen representatives described above two were not present in the Lower House of 1881–1884. Horn died in 1875, while Csemegi moved into another field. If being continuously re-elected is an indicator of political success, these politicians can be considered successful. However, before going into the evaluation of their individual political substance, let us look at the data we have on the basic components of their background.

Table 1

Name	Elected to parliament	Religion	Party affiliation	Social status
Chorin	1871	Jewish/convert	2	A (B)
Csemegi	1872–1878	Catholic	1	B
Falk	1870	Lutheran	1	B (A)
Helfy	1870	Catholic	3	B
Horn	1870–1875	Jewish	3	B
Lánczy	1881–1884	Calvinist	2–1	B
Mandel	1875	Jewish	1	B
Mezei	1881–1884	Jewish	3	B
Sváb	1875	Jewish	1	A
Teleszky	1874	Catholic	1	B
Wahrmann	1869	Jewish	1	A
Wodiáner, Albert	1865	Catholic	1	A
Wodiáner, Béla	1869	Calvinist	1	A

In Table 1 of the parliamentary representatives discussed above those who magyarised their names are listed in bold. [50] What is clear at first sight is that the converts represent all possible confessions present in the Magyar majority. Unfortunately, we cannot compare this finding to general statistics on Jewish conversion, since we lack such statistics for this whole period of Hungarian history. [51] What is more interesting is that two different patterns of behaviour can be identified. We have a group formed by those who (or whose family) converted early on, before 1848 (A. Wodiáner, Teleszky, Csemegi), and another group in which conversion was connected (in one way or another) to the events of 1848–1849 (B. Wodiáner, Falk, and Helfy). Most converts also had a magyarised name, the exceptions being the Wodiáners, who bore the name of an ennobled family, and Falk. However, Magyarisation of one's family name did not necessarily go hand in hand with conversion, which is more clear if we observe another group composed of men active in public life (to be described below), namely the editorial staff of *Egyenlőség*.

According to existing stereotypes, the constitutional opposition, the opponents of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, were antisemitic, while the Jews supported the government. [52] There can be several explanations of the existence of this stereotype. The Jews were thankful to Deákian liberalism which gave them equal rights, or they were pro-Compromise because of their traditional identification with the Monarchy, or they rejected the Independence Party nationalism which was becoming increasingly ethnic and chauvinistic, or at the time of the antisemitic wave they expected protection from the government. However, considering the party affiliation of the representatives with a Jewish background, their distribution basically reflects parliamentary power relations; the opposition is over-represented, if only professing Jews are taken into account. It seems that social status was a more decisive determinant of political affiliation than Jewishness, at least in the case of people engaged in political life. However, this sample is so small that any concrete statement would be unjustified.

According to András Gerő's analysis, the Lower House was dominated by the aristocracy (approximately 10–12 percent of the representatives) and landed nobility (two-thirds in the 1860s and 1870s), while the third group consisted of 'professionals', also mostly of noble origin. 'There were hardly any representatives of peasant origin, nor were there many representatives of the industrial class.' [53] Gerő lists also the traits that constituted a politician's authority. Traditionally, birth was decisive. However, birth does not mean simply descent, the ancestry of the family, or noble status. The complex system of family relations and connections, due to the nature of political culture, was very important from the point of view of a political career. Another field of legitimisation for politicians was their possible role in the political struggles of the Reform Era, and

especially in the War of Independence of 1848–1849. Imprisonment or some other penalty for such activity, such as years in exile, redounded in one's favour. Politicians with less merit or weaker connections had fewer possibilities of becoming elected, and their weight as politicians was clearly smaller. However, these sources of increasing status on the political scene could be replaced by personal qualities. [54]

Jews did not really fit into this picture, since they could not participate in political activity before emancipation, and they were not born into the existing network of the politicising elite. However, if we have a brief look at the biography of the Jewish representatives listed above, certain typical traits will be found. Many of them were connected with the events of 1848–1849. Csemegi was a major in the revolutionary army (only two Jews achieved such a high rank), Károly Sváb and Béla Wodiáner were lieutenants, and Horn was also engaged in 'national self-defence'. Falk participated in revolutionary events in Vienna and during the neo-absolutist era, as already described, he proved his commitment to national ambitions. Helfy (like Horn) supported the political emigration as a journalist. Csemegi, Falk, and Horn were sentenced for their activity. Actually, all the others were too young to get involved in the events (Lánczy and Mezei were born even later). Moreover, Wahrmann aroused attention also before the emancipation era with his series of articles demanding independence for the Hungarian economy, published in the *Pester Lloyd*.

In a special sense descent seems to have played a role in the selection of the Jewish representatives. The Wodiáners were from a family which rose to attain considerable wealth in the early period of Hungarian capitalism, and three other representatives were from remarkable rabbinical backgrounds (Horn, Wahrmann, and Chorin). The fact that some of these Jewish representatives magyarised their names before magyarisation as a typical form of Jewish assimilation became widespread suggests that they were determined to assimilate.

Besides the personal sacrifices which proved a politician's commitment to the interests of the nation, and the role of wealth and intellectual resources, the personal talent of a politician can best be discerned from his political activity. Looking at the parliamentary presence of our representatives, we can find remarkable differences. [55] Helfy and Horn were definitely 'keynote speakers': they commented on a great number of issues. Their parliamentary weight was thus indisputable. Others, like Wahrmann, Teleszky or Csemegi, had a central role as prominent experts in their field and participated in the activity of the specialised committees of the House. Wahrmann was a speaker of the parliamentary budget committee, while Teleszky was a speaker of the parliamentary judicial committee. Wahrmann was also active in submitting interpellations, and, according to contemporary accounts, he was a respected member of the House. Chorin and Mandel can also be regarded as jurists, although of far less importance (which can also be seen in the lower frequency of their contributions).

Falk belongs among those who spoke seldom in parliament but whose political influence was still remarkable. His great influence was definitely due to his position as the editor-in-chief of the *Pester Lloyd*. It can also be assumed that he exerted his influence on public opinion through his newspaper rather than by delivering parliamentary speeches. This means also that he was not necessarily a popular politician who was re-elected by several districts time and again. His influence was more informal. [56] The two Wodiáners had an almost identical attitude towards parliamentary activity. In the first stages of their parliamentary membership they sometimes contributed to debates, delivering approximately one speech a year, usually concerning topics closely related to their own district. After 1875 they did not utter a single word in any public session of the House. Károly Sváb, who became a representative in 1875, failed to deliver his maiden speech during the ten years of his presence in the House. They definitely belonged to the Liberal Party 'forest' – a metaphor which refers to the procedure of voting in parliament at that time, when voting took place by the members rising to their feet. Sváb was an exceptional representative, since more than 90 percent of the representatives contributed to debates at least once during the parliamentary term. The image would be incomplete if the so-called 'delegation' was not taken into account. From time to time Albert Wodiáner, Wahrmann, and Falk were elected by the House to this special committee which was deputed to carry on negotiations with the corresponding organ of the Austrian part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Members of this almost aristocratic body had influence almost by definition.

THE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEBATES OF THE LOWER HOUSE

As a rule the Jewish representatives in the House did not address Jewish issues. It must be noted that representing particular, especially religious, interests was not popular – although acceptable in some cases – within the framework of contemporary parliamentary mores. The behaviour of Catholic priests, for example, often generated bad blood in the secular atmosphere of the House. When János Jánossy, a priest and representative of the Liberal Party, while delivering a speech supporting a Catholic petition said that he was speaking in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, his patriotism, and his duties as a priest, the opposition expressed its dissatisfaction. [57] A more direct case was the debate on the bill on Jewish-Christian

marriage, when Catholic priests were expected to prefer national interests to their religious convictions. Since they did not do so, Herman, a recognised natural scientist and Independence Party politician, said quite aptly that ‘the planet of clericalism darkened the sun of liberalism for almost a whole session’. He also said that ‘priests have never spoken in such a tone in the Hungarian parliament’. [58]

A self-evidently denominational issue was the budget of the Ministry of Education and Religion, namely the subsidising of Jewish schools, which recurred every year. However, Jews did not generally take part in the discussion, with the exception of Helfy and Wahrmann, who contributed in 1874. Apart from Wahrmann’s speech concerning relations between Reform and Orthodox Jewry, one can find hardly any Jewish contributions to debates on issues related to Jews. Some of them handed in petitions which were probably from Jewish citizens, [59] but the one representative (Antal Szabély) who interpellated the government on the issue of feeding Jewish prisoners in accordance with Jewish custom and concerning their religious observance in the autumn of 1880, was not of Jewish origin. Exceptionally, in 1875 Wahrmann and Chorin objected to certain measures against Jews included in the text of the trade agreement between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Romania. [60] The incident is interesting and unprecedented because two Jews – who represented different parties – rose to speak in defence of Jewish interests. The prime minister did not accept their views and Istóczy could easily argue against them, with the agreement of the House, that they represented denominational interests at the expense of national interests. [61] However, some liberal contributions were also presented criticising Istóczy’s speech heavily, [62] and supporting the equality of Hungarian citizens in foreign states as well. [63]

Istóczy delivered twelve speeches during a seven-year period before the first contribution from the Jewish side was made. However, the frequency of speeches related to the Jews, especially antisemitic ones, increased greatly in the early 1880s. While Istóczy delivered one or two speeches a year in the 1870s, virtually all concerning the Jews, in the years of the antisemitic wave nearly every session brought debates on the Jewish Question: that is, five petitions, more than ten interpellations, and a bill of crucial importance. But it was not only the increase in the number of issues which caused this frequency, but also the growing interest in the question. It became a decisive topic of political discussion. [64]

Although this exceptional time produced more intensive participation on the Jewish side, the Jewish representatives did not contribute regularly. It was not possible to answer interpellations with antisemitic intent since the House Rules did not allow any discussion. However, even on other occasions, such as the debates on petitions, the Jewish representatives did not participate regularly in the discussions either. Of the four petitions we listed earlier, only in two cases were Jewish contributions noted; one in each case. During the long debate on the bill on Jewish–Christian marriage, only two Jewish representatives participated. Jews were usually not participants in the debates on the Jewish Question, which occurred quite regularly at that time. [65] The clear exception was Ernő Mezei who took a pro-active position and interpellated minister of justice Pauler who was accused of sympathising with the antisemites concerning the Tiszaeszlár case. However, consideration of his activities belongs in another context.

Coming to the period of our investigation, it is worth looking at the parliamentary activity of the representatives introduced above. The converts, especially Helfy, participated very frequently in daily debates. It was part of his role to comment on nearly every topic from a political point of view. He expressed his views on fifty different topics in more than one hundred cases, and only two of them were concerned with Jews and antisemitism, but then it was not a field of particular concern to him. [66] Falk was not active as a parliamentary speaker during these years and he did not touch on the Jewish Question in the rare speeches which he delivered. The two Wodiáners were inactive, too; they did not speak a single word in parliament. Teleszky and Lánczy touched on a question related to Jewry when they spoke in the detailed discussion on the Jewish–Christian marriage bill, but they were concerned with practical judicial issues.

Turning to professing Jews, Chorin participated only twice in the discussion, but one of these speeches concerned the Tapolca petition (see section ‘Antisemitic activity in parliament in the early 1880s’ above). Wahrmann was considered a leader of Neolog Jewry, [67] so his words carried authority. In this sense he bore some responsibility, and thus he probably tried to avoid getting into needless polemics. He spoke twenty times in parliament in 1881–1884, and only once in a discussion concerning Jews. Károly Sváb did not speak at all. The two other religious Jews were the most active, relatively speaking. Mandel rarely touched on problems other than the bill on copyright, but on those occasions he defended the Jews against antisemitic accusations. Mezei, on the contrary, addressed numerous topics in parliament, but dealt with antisemitism nine times out of twenty.

JEWES AND THE ANTISEMITIC PETITIONS

When the House discussed the 'Vasvár petition', the Jews did not contribute. However, six months later, in June 1882, Wahrmann delivered a speech in the debate on the petition concerning Jewish immigration. It was not just the first speech of the decade from the Jewish side in parliament concerning a question related to Jews, but it launched a series of events which does not lack significance from the point of view of our topic.

The problem the parliament was dealing with was related to the wave of pogroms in Russia, which forced large masses of Jews to leave the Russian Empire. These refugees went first to Galicia, a part of Austria, and then moved to the West or to the South. Some Northern counties of Hungary were concerned about a possible mass immigration of refugees without any property, and they petitioned the parliament. The petition was not necessarily meant to be antisemitic, but Ónody and Istóczy used it for their own purposes. On 7 June Ónody delivered a speech which generated general disapproval. On 9 June it was Istóczy's turn to speak. He spoke very aggressively, explicitly announcing a war against the Jews; [68] he also spoke about 'the final solution of the Jewish Question which has been reserved for our age'. [69] The Speaker had to warn him for using 'unparliamentary' expressions several times. By chance, Wahrmann spoke right after him.

After he said that he was not inclined to get into an argument with someone who threatened with violence against the Jews in a parliamentary session, he explained his reasons for participating in the debate. He said that he did not speak as a representative of Hungarian Jewry because he did not have such authorisation; he could only give his own opinions. As he explained, he had not intended to participate in the debate, but he had seen a motion of prime minister Tisza the day before, when the latter was speaking about the standpoint of Hungarian Jewry, which Wahrmann understood to be a question. As a consequence, he did not speak merely because Jews were involved, but because he thought the prime minister was seeking the views of the Jews.

Without going into too much detail, I shall present some elements of his argument which are important from our point of view. He pointed out the importance, and the priority, of Hungarian national ambitions concerning assimilation. Assimilation was in the interest of both Magyars and Jews, and not only Jewish, but any mass immigration endangered the position of the Hungarian language in the country and the assimilation of minorities. But because the Jews of Hungary intended to assimilate as soon as possible, massive Jewish immigration was not in their interest either. He referred also to the arguments presented by Ónody a couple of days earlier, when he showed very convincingly the weaknesses of Rohling, who was presented as the ultimate expert on the Talmud by the antisemites.

After he finished his speech, he became involved in a quarrel with Istóczy, who struck him in the library of the parliament, and their dissension led to a duel. Among the events connected with that conflict (the 'scandal', as the newspapers reported it) [70] the most important one in terms of the history of the antisemitic movement may be the fact that Istóczy had to leave the Liberal Party. Istóczy himself writes in his memoirs that he left the governing party because he wanted to form his own party. [71] Actually the formation of the National Antisemitic Party took place more than a year later. Venetianer, on the other hand, argues that he was kicked out of the Liberal Party, [72] while Kubinszky tells us that Istóczy was 'practically speaking' expelled. [73] Relying on newspaper reports, the alliance of the antisemitic leader and the government party ended as follows. [74] Wahrmann was very upset after this unusual event and demanded satisfaction. As a result of Wahrmann's complaint, the leaders of the party retired for an informal meeting. When Istóczy asked Tisza if it was true that they wanted to expel him, the latter expressed his regret concerning the events, and answered that 'unfortunately the leaders of the party declared that they did not want to belong to the same party as Istóczy'. It was quite clear that Istóczy would be expelled on the same day, [75] so he announced with typical lack of logic that he did not want to belong to the same party as Wahrmann (he had already done so for almost ten years). In other words, he left the party, not of his own accord, but to anticipate his expulsion.

It is also interesting that Wahrmann became a hero because he had fought for his Jewishness. Several hundred people gathered in front of his house (next to the building of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) waiting for news about the fascinating events; they even blocked the traffic. It was probably unprecedented that someone was celebrated as a hero by the press (practically all the newspapers blamed Istóczy for the scandal, and supported Wahrmann), [76] explicitly as a Jew.

The antisemitic nature of the 'Heves petition', which was the next issue to provide the antisemites with a chance of promoting their ideology, is debatable, since it dealt with the treatment of the prime minister, who issued a decree banning certain antisemitic printed matter. Naturally, the majority of the House concluded that this did not contradict the law. Kubinszky is also of the opinion that maybe Tisza's decree did not fulfil every legal requirement, but he was right to act because antisemitic agitation had to be stopped. [77] The argument which the government side presented during the debate was basically as follows: the situation needed urgent action and the legal regulations concerning the press were not clear enough. However, without taking sides in the conflict, it must be noted that the arguments which were presented in order to show that Tisza's action was incorrect seem quite convincing; which is to say that the opposition was in an uncomfortable situation. Their duty was to show in parliament that Tisza did not respect liberal values – in other words, he was not the *real*

bearer of the 1848-tradition – while if they supported the petition they could be accused of antisemitism. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the Jewish representatives did not participate in the discussion. Helfy who presented the views of the Independence Party did not regard the petition as one which concerned Jews or antisemitism. For him, it was a question of freedom of the press.

The next petition to be dealt with in parliament was the one most clearly directed against Hungarian Jewry. This was clear both from its wording and from the circumstances of its birth. It was not created by any existing organisation, but the antisemites organised a meeting with some one hundred participants who accepted a petition which demanded the retraction of emancipation, and abolition of the right of Jews to possess real estate and of Jewish schools. [78] Ferenc Chorin delivered a well-prepared and quite long speech from a slightly different angle than Wahrmann, but touching on similar topics and using similar arguments.

As he spoke after an antisemite, Iván Simonyi, he started his speech by declaring that he did not want to reflect on the ideas presented before him. It was customary in parliament to respond to the arguments of the previous speaker, and it was one of the ‘antisemitic achievements’ that more and more speakers refused to do so. Chorin’s main argument was that antisemitism was not directed against Jews only but against ‘modern civilisation’, [79] ‘constitutionalism’, and the ‘basis of the modern state’. [80] He pointed out that the antisemites attacked all the constituents of political and social life from the university to the press, including the government, parliament, and the judicial system. In other words, protecting the Jews from the antisemites meant protecting the achievements and stability of modern Hungary. He turned to the merits of the Jewish denomination only afterwards. What is most striking in his speech is that he did not refer to the Jews’ accomplishments in terms of linguistic assimilation, but to their achievements in the field of social assimilation.

THE DEBATE ON THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE BILL

The bill, which was discussed between the end of 1883 and the early weeks of 1884, was a very important one for several groups, and for different reasons. Attitudes towards it were determined by three main factors: the importance of civil marriage, the antisemitic movement, and religion. Of the 27 participants in the general debate two were Jewish by religion, and Helfy also delivered a speech which discussed the bill in connection with antisemitism, not merely as a matter of marital legislation. Teleszky and Lánczy were active in formulating the legal technicalities in the detailed debate. Without going into details, antisemitic views and clerical antipathies towards secularisation and civil marriage merged, while on the other hand the bill gained the support of those who demanded marital reform. The discourse on the ‘Jewish side’ of the question was dominated by the argument that as long as the Jews showed willingness towards linguistic assimilation they deserved the right to merge with the majority through marriage.

The arguments presented by Mandel and Mezei are perhaps of less importance; it is more interesting to reflect on the background of their contributions. Mandel was the only Jew from the government side who took part in the debate. It is telling that if those who defended the bill *ex officio* are not counted, he was the only one who found it acceptable without reservation. Since the issue dealt with Jews explicitly, he defined his standpoint as a speaker like any other representative, but concluded his speech stating that ‘as a Jew I want to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to the Hungarian parliament’ [81] because of emancipation and this bill, which would complete emancipation. Essentially he considered the bill from a Jewish point of view, and disregarded the legal and political problems, although those problems were realised by almost everyone.

Mezei took a different approach. He differed from all other speakers since he did not underline the importance of civil marriage or evaluate the bill. [82] He announced that he accepted the bill for only one reason, which was the existence of antisemitism. ‘Fortunately for the bill it appears much more reasonable now than when it was first presented.’ [83] Mezei analysed the ideas of the antisemites; he seemed to understand them better than the antisemites themselves. His approach was thus critical of the government, which ‘sold’ the bill as a gift to the Jews in their difficulties caused by antisemitism, while he took an aggressive attitude towards antisemitic propaganda, and presented appropriate arguments about the derangement of its ideology.

In his view the ‘antisemitic agitators’ had had a chance to prove that their standpoint was justified, but they had failed. He stated that he ‘found they were so hostile towards the Jews that they not only refused to accept the general laws of the state to be applicable to Jews as well, but also suspended the laws of nature and logic when Jews were in question’. [84] He criticised Istóczy for failing to clarify the basic concepts of humanity, nation, and race. His approach differed from other attempts to oppose antisemitic propaganda because he did not merely show that this propaganda was unjust and antagonistic to the achievements of liberalism, enlightenment, or modernity, [85] but also analysed the stupidity and lack of coherence that was an essential characteristic of antisemitic discourse.

Initially, Helfy treated the debate as having to do only with marital problems, but he changed his tactics in his speech concerning the fate of the bill after its rejection by the Upper House. He spoke as a leader of the

Independence Party, a keynote speaker, not as a regular representative. He expressed his regrets that the other speakers did not keep to the topic of the discussion but treated the Jewish Question at length, so he 'could not avoid telling his opinion honestly and impartially on the question this time'. [86] He referred to Kossuth and his devastating opinion on the antisemites and to the parliament of 1849 when defending the programme of his party against accusations of a lack of liberalism, even antisemitism. In his view the Jewish Question was identical with the uncompleted state of assimilation, and he saw it as something created by the antisemites. He pointed out that assimilation could be successful only if both parties (Jews and Christians) supported it. He emphasised the assimilatory achievements of the Jews – this was part of the 'liberal canon' – touching only the linguistic side of it.

JEWISH NEWSPAPERS FOUNDED TO FIGHT ANTISEMITISM

The other important field of political activity is the press. Antisemitic agitation was carried out not only in the parliament but also through different kinds of printed material. Istóczy's own periodical, the *12 Röpírat* [12 pamphlets] was probably the most important of them, and it provoked two immediate responses from the Jewish side. Interestingly, these responses imitated the title of the antisemitic journal they were meant to fight against. The *12 Telefon* [12 telephones] appeared from the very end of 1880, almost simultaneously with the *12 Ellenröpírat* [12 counter-pamphlets]. Both were relatively short-lived; the latter lasted somewhat longer with twelve issues. Both were published mostly by Jews, although the latter was edited by Márton Hegyesi, representative of the Independence Party until 1881. The *12 Telefon* explained that it was not launched for members of the Jewish community, but to enlighten the Gentiles. [87]

Some two years later two new weeklies appeared; in some respects they were very similar, but there were also clear differences. The *Magyar Lapok* [Magyar News] and the *Szombati Újság* [Saturday Paper] explained the need for their existence in very similar terms. As the *Szombati Újság* put it, newspapers meant for the general public were not able to fulfil the needs of the Jewish community, [88] while the *Magyar Lapok* declared that although they 'did their best to defend the Jews against unjust attacks, they cannot devote enough space to a class or a denomination to discuss their problems in detail and continuously'. [89] While the former declared itself religious, congregational and educational, the latter described itself as a 'weekly representing the interests of Hungarian Jews'. The *Szombati Újság* seems to have been close to the Jewish Community of Pest, and the *Magyar Lapok* projects the image of a secular periodical which is much less concerned with Jewish traditions. Both editors felt it necessary, however, to argue against the generally held opinion that it was needless to publish a particular Jewish paper, since it was the task of nationwide organs to promote the interests of the Jews in the framework of national interests.

A weekly cited earlier, *Egyenlőség*, deserves special attention for various reasons. First, because it was the only contemporary Jewish journal which 'survived' the passing of the antisemitic wave, and became a remarkable organ of the Hungarian Jewry until the 1930s. Secondly, because it took a much more active role against antisemitism than the Jewish periodicals described above. *Egyenlőség* was clearly and explicitly created to fight antisemitism, and not simply to enlighten and inform certain strata of society about the views of the 'other side'. The weekly was founded in October 1882, and its unnumbered sample copy appeared on 29 October, while the first issue was published a week later. [90]

This early phase of the history of *Egyenlőség* is best known for the activity of contributor Miksa Szabolcsi, later its owner and editor-in-chief, who played a remarkable role in clearing up the puzzles which hindered the solving of the Tiszaeszlár blood libel case, and who was a correspondent for several major newspapers (among others the *Neue Freie Presse*). [91] A large part of the weekly was composed of reports from Tiszaeszlár and it had a regular column entitled 'The gang which carried out the ritual crime', but it was far from being simply an organ of defence concerning the case. As one of the Independence Party newspapers, *Egyetértés* [Agreement], noted, 'the tone of the weekly was combative'. [92]

This 'combateness' was apparent in several respects. First of all, *Egyenlőség* did not respect authority. A number of articles attacked the minister of justice Tivadar Pauler because of his 'policy of non-intervention' concerning the investigations in the Tiszaeszlár case. He was among others reminded of their earlier works and lecture notes concerning criminal law [93] (all the contributors to the paper were trained lawyers and knew Pauler as a professor). Another authority which it was not fashionable to assault was the clergy, especially the body of bishops sitting ex officio in the Upper House. Commenting on a speech given by a Catholic priest, Benedek Göndöcs, during the general debate on the bill on Jewish-Christian marriage the columnist expressed his suspicion that the clergymen were being guided from behind by unknown forces, and argued that the authority and power of the clergy were based on the unquestioning faith of the ignorant. [94] One issue also contained an attack on the Catholic priest of Tiszaeszlár, the man who made the blood libel publicly known by writing a letter to a clerical daily. [95] They were ready to oppose anyone whose opinion on the Jewish

Question seemed wrong. Thus, for example, they attacked Ottó Herman, a member of the Independence Party, who was close to Mezei (one of the founders of *Egyenlőség*) [96] and who was described in the *12 Rőpirat* as 'worse than the Jews themselves' because he connected the defence of Jews against antisemitism to the criticism of traditional Judaism. The otherwise philosemitic *Nemzet* [Nation] (a daily close to the government) was also opposed on several occasions by *Egyenlőség*. [97]

Another aspect that made the tone of the paper militant was its self-assertion. It was Mezei who, while contrasting the antisemitic propaganda with the Magyar consciousness of Hungarian Jews in parliament, proposed to Istóczy that he leave the country if he could not stand the presence of the Jews in it. The self-confidence characterising Mezei's speech in parliament was also typical of *Egyenlőség*. The attitude of the editorial staff was not that of expressing gratitude for the rights which the 'Hungarian nation' had granted to the Jews as a 'gift' – they saw those rights as natural. *Egyenlőség* was the first to document the actual appearances of antisemitic discrimination (for example, the fact that the university sports club did not accept Jews as members [98]). The article cited above, concerning 'Jewish preponderance', can also be evaluated from this point of view. Similarly, the lack of respect for authority can be derived from this self-confidence.

Egyenlőség also went on the offensive. Its activity was not limited to Miksa Szabolcsi, who basically worked alone, but nevertheless was able to shape the struggle between prosecution and defence. The last antisemitic petition, the 'Tapolca petition', reached the plenary session of the House in January 1883, in the third month of the weekly's existence. The editorial staff of the weekly did not confine themselves to merely expressing their dissatisfaction with the intention to restrict the political rights of the Jews. [99] They carried out investigations and published their findings in a number of articles. First they found that the number of those who signed the document was higher than the number of those who were entitled to vote in the electoral district of Tapolca. [100] In a later issue they proved that most of the signers did not have the right to participate in the elections and that urban centres were underrepresented in comparison to small villages. They also found that in most cases the Catholic priest was the first to sign the sheet and the peasants of the village had followed their spiritual leader. [101]

The editorial staff of *Egyenlőség* took the initiative, making use of the status of one of its contributors as parliamentary representative. The organised attack [102] started already in the first issue, more precisely in the sample copy, with a combative article arguing that József Bary, the investigating magistrate, had committed a number of unlawful actions during the investigation. The next (first) issue (5 November) explained that 'it had been declared' that *Egyenlőség* was to face a libel suit. To start a journal by reporting in its first issue that it had already become involved in a libel suit is rather unusual. However, it seems clear that the purpose was to deliberately provoke the case. One of several articles concerning the libel suit explains also the reason for this attempt. [103] First of all, it was meant to force Bary to justify his actions before a court and, equally importantly, to take the case out of the hands of the provincial judicial organs.

The next step taken in order to give weight to the attempt and to force the minister who was responsible for launching libel cases of this kind was Ernő Mezei's interpellation presented in parliament on 15 November 1882. Mezei delivered a long speech before he put his questions to the minister of justice. [104] He emphasised his reservations concerning the independence of the court which was to judge the Tiszaeszlár case, and explained that in earlier times other religious communities had had to face similar accusations, referring to Voltaire and the French Protestants he had defended. The questions he put concerned only partly the charges against Bary published by *Egyenlőség*. He also questioned Pauler about the unlawful nature of the delegation of the investigating magistrate, about the fact that an infant witness had been kept under arrest for several months, and so on. He also asked whether any steps had been taken in the libel suit against *Egyenlőség*. The speech was well organised and seemed a good one in every respect, but the House did not react positively. There was an almost total lack of cheering (*hear, hear!*), which was usually preserved in the minutes, which also means that Mezei was not supported by his own party.

A week later Pauler recorded in his diary that he had heard that 'the Jews [were] expecting the answer [the next day]. Let them wait, I'm not going to answer them.' [105] The following day he worked on his answer 'starting to be clear about the matter', and on Thursday he started to memorise it. The answer, however, was postponed, and he had a chance to think over the speech again on Sunday. He finally presented it on 26 November and after meeting with approval he could note that 'such unity has not occurred in the House for a long time'. [106] The newspapers published the following day agreed with him completely. [107] We cannot go into the details of the Tiszaeszlár case in this context but this speech is of central importance from the point of view of understanding the paradoxes raised by it. To put it briefly, Pauler 'hid' behind the popular principle of the independence of the judiciary. The minister seems to have been biased but the support he gained from the majority of the representatives cannot be explained by anti-Jewish feelings alone. *Egyenlőség* hinted that this support came from the opposition side (meaning probably the group of antisemites) and the representatives on the government side did not necessarily agree with the answer but accepted it out of a sense of duty. [108]

However, it is apparent from both Pauler's diary and from newspapers that the Liberal Party parliamentary club supported his proposed answer. [109]

Although this enterprise was not successful, it was an extraordinary example of a different kind of Jewish attitude towards political activity. Both the tone of *Egyenlőség* and the arguments Mezei presented in parliament differed from the style characteristic of other Jewish newspapers and other Jewish politicians. [110] In order to find an answer to this difference, let us have a short look at the biography of the weekly's editorial staff.

The staff seems to share three major characteristics. [111] First, they were all quite young: four of them were under the age of twenty-five, and only Acsády was over thirty – he represented social status and authority. [112] Age is interesting in two respects. On the one hand, they were all at best teenagers at the time of the emancipation, they started their studies at the Faculty of Law in Budapest after the Jews had gained political rights and they had no (personal) experience of pre-emancipation Jewish–Gentile political partnership. On the other hand, they must have known each other well, since they studied at the same time and at the same place.

Secondly, their professional careers seem to be very similar. After or during their legal studies they started to work for various political dailies, both Hungarian- and German-language ones, published in Budapest and Vienna, so they had acquired experience in political journalism by the time they came to *Egyenlőség*. Sturm (after working for *Neue Freie Presse* among others) was the parliamentary columnist of the *Pester Lloyd*, Mezei had already been a leading columnist at *Egyetértés* for eight years, Halász worked for the *Nemzet*, Acsády was the editor of internal affairs at *Pesti Napló*, and so on. Beside the fact that the editorial staff was composed of journalists of the most significant Hungarian newspapers, those papers also represented all possible political affiliations. The staff of *Egyenlőség* was not only talented, but had remarkable personal connections. The third feature which seems striking is the fact that almost all of them had magyarised their family name. Sturm was the only one who preserved his non-Magyar name.

After having the abovementioned debate over his interpellation Mezei got involved also in a polemic of a personal nature with Verhovay, editor-in-chief of *Függetlenség* [Independence], a daily close to the antisemitic movement, who among others referred to Mezei's supposed relatives in Tiszaeszlár. He basically implied that Mezei was one of those 'killers of Christian girls'. Mezei, after explaining his network of relatives and saying that anyone could be his relative if he was a just man and he would not feel ashamed of the connection, came to his personal commitment to the Jewish Question:

I was not prepared to be the defender of the Tiszaeszlár case, or of any kind of Jewish interests, neither out of respect for tradition nor for personal ambitions. I am the child of a more liberal age, I have attended schools, participated in public life, mixed in society, but I have not experienced anything which would have forced me to defend Jewish affairs. I had to reach manhood to be admitted to parliament to be reminded of my Jewishness, to be forced to handle Jewish affairs. If someone is delighted by this state of affairs, I let him have this pleasure but I am not going to shrink from fulfilling my duties. [113]

These words can be probably taken as a description of the identity of those who formed the *Egyenlőség* circle. One has the impression that their more pro-active attitude as compared with Jewish politicians and periodicals is not a consequence of their stronger commitment to the Jewish community but, on the contrary, of a higher level of assimilation. Their youth coincided with the first one-and-a-half decades of emancipation, a time of 'innocence' which preceded the emergence of modern political antisemitism. It is also probable that the Hungarian society in which they lived was more secular and modernised than the earlier one which served as a background for the social advance of Wahrmann, Falk, or Helfy. The secular tone of *Egyenlőség* indicates also a connection between their self-perception and this change in Hungarian society and political culture. Being deprived of political rights (which had constituted an important part of Jewish identity) had already been history for a while, and they could take for granted the principle that Judaism was merely a denomination. Since they were (probably) non-religious, they did not necessarily perceive themselves as really belonging to the Jewish community in spirit but felt that they had dissolved in the Hungarian nation so they no longer had to regard themselves as Jewish. The brave stand they took on the Jewish side was not necessarily a consequence of their strong sense of affinity with the Jewish community, but of the indignation they felt over the fact that antisemitism questioned their assimilation.

CONCLUSION

Three different types of attitude can be observed among Jewish politicians and converted politicians of Jewish origin during these years of violent antisemitism. However, it must be noted that individual choices were naturally influenced by various determinants. Helfy, the only one who belonged to the group of influential politicians active in everyday party politics, had to take into account his responsibility toward his party, too.

Wahrmann's behaviour was probably affected by his status as 'the foremost Jew', and his exposed position from both sides. Other possible reasons (health, family crisis, and so on) are simply unknown.

As already emphasised, this was an extraordinary period which constituted a new challenge for those already involved in politics. Old forms of behaviour did not seem appropriate any more. Although the Jews as a whole did not constitute an actor on the political scene, their representatives in daily politics found themselves, in contrast to Christians, unable to shrug off the fact that they were Jews.

The converts formed a distinct group – they did not act as Jews. Helfy, who at least touched on the Jewish Question in his speeches, did not feel it necessary to identify himself with Jews on any level. The only logical explanation for this is that the contemporary understanding of Jewishness was that it was identical with religious affiliation. [114]

The opposite form of behaviour was represented by Ernő Mezei and *Egyenlőség*. Mezei was the only one who took on the role of representing Jewry explicitly. Among other things he referred to letters from Orthodox Jews who strongly asked him to defend Judaism and Jews against slanders. [115] He was also exceptional in the sense that he became involved in explicit arguments with antisemitism; he not only pointed out the dangers of antisemitic ideology, but its logical fallacies, too. The assertive tone and offensive attitude described above distinguished Mezei from other Jewish politicians and *Egyenlőség* from other periodicals.

The other Jews who took part in the parliamentary debates were more defensive in their speeches, and they always declared that they expected the Hungarian nation, that is, the political elite, to protect the Jews from the attacks. In their view, Jewish political rights were derived not only from general human or civic rights but from the benevolence of this elite and the Jews were entitled to these rights for their achievements in assimilation. This group of representatives was significantly older, and definitely wealthier, than the *Egyenlőség* circle. However, it is interesting that, apart from Károly Sváb, who was inactive in every respect, all professing Jews contributed once to the debates concerning the Jewish Question. What is equally interesting is that they all expressed in one way or another their embarrassment at being forced to appear as representatives of the particular interests of a particular group. Looking at the reactions of the House, the environment was ready to accept that Jews were in a special situation, but only in a certain context. Jewish interests could not be defended at the expense of perceived national interests or national pride.

Considering the outcome of Jewish political activity, it did not really make a difference whether Jewish politicians were active or passive: they had no impact on Jewish issues. Although the attacks of the antisemitic side in parliament were rejected from every possible direction, the government took the necessary measures to force back antisemitism, and the Tiszaeszlár case ended positively, all this happened independently of the Jews themselves. Chorin left his party in 1884 because the political programme published for the approaching elections did not mention antisemitism; Wahrmann gave up speaking up for the Jews after experiencing intense anguish and fear preceding his duel and all the inconveniences associated with it; [116] and Mezei's tone was taken as unacceptable, [117] and he was not even re-elected. The lesson they learned seems to have been that the fight against antisemitism should be left to non-Jewish actors.

Notes

1. For example, Randolph L. Braham on the first pages of his *The Politics of Genocide. The Holocaust in Hungary*, Vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
2. Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Antisemitism, 1700–1933* (Cambridge, Massachusetts – London, England: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 274. Istóczy presented the Statute of his League in Parliament on 28 January 1880. Handler translates the name of the (planned) organisation as ‘Alliance of Hungarian Non-Jews’, and later on ‘Federation of Hungarian Non-Jews’. Andrew Handler, *An Early Blueprint for Zionism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp. 52, 54.
3. Cf. Raphael Patai, *The Jews of Hungary* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), p. 351; Judit Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon 1875–1890* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1975), p. 179.
4. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, pp. 9–10.
5. András Kovács, ‘A magyar zsidók és a politika’, *Világosság*, 1998/2, p. 78.
6. Kovács, ‘A magyar zsidók és a politika’, pp. 79–80.
7. On Istóczy’s life and political career see Handler, *An Early Blueprint for Zionism* and Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*.
8. György Szabad, ‘A polgári jogegyenlőség elleni támadás és kudarca a századvégi Magyarországon’, *Társadalmi Szemle*, no. 8–9 (1982).
9. Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, pp. 120, 129–30.
10. The debate took place on 20–30 November 1883.
11. He was minister of home affairs as well.
12. Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, pp. 66–67.
13. Cf. Jacob Katz, *A House Divided: Orthodoxy and Schism in Nineteenth-Century Central European Jewry* (Hanover: NH, 1998).
14. Patai, *The Jews of Hungary*, pp. 314–23.
15. Lajos Venetianer, *A magyar zsidóság története* (Budapest, 1986) pp. 303–304.
16. Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, p. 125.
17. Peter Pulzer, ‘Jewish Politicians in the Liberal Era’, in *German–Jewish History in Modern Times*, ed. Michael A. Meyer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), Vol. 3, p. 174.
18. Pulzer, ‘Jewish Politicians in the Liberal Era’, p. 174.
19. *Egyenlőség*, 4 January 1883.
20. *Egyenlőség*, 4 January 1883.
21. According to Katzburg’s figures, some decades later 43 percent of the journalists were Jews. Nathaniel Katzburg, *Fejezetek az újkori zsidó történelemből Magyarországon* (Budapest: Osiris, 1999), p. 149.
22. Pulzer, ‘Jewish Politicians in the Liberal Era’, pp. 176–77.
23. *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* (1905), p. 117. The publication meant to give a picture of Jewish presence in Hungarian social life at the time of the Hungarian ‘Millennium’. *Magyar zsidók a millenniumon*, ed. Herman Zichy and Gy. Deresty (Budapest, 1896), pp. 63–74, describes the situation in 1896 and gives short biographies of nine Jewish representatives.
24. Vadász was not interested in them; as he expressed it, ‘I cannot disapprove enough of the opinion of those, who, so to say, vindicate the renegades of Jewry because of their Jewish descent for the Jewish community.’ *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* (1906), p. 254.
25. If not indicated otherwise, the biographical data were gathered from the following publications: *Zsidó Lexikon* (Budapest, 1928), the series of biographies and works of nineteenth-century Hungarian writers edited by József Szinnyei (Budapest, 1891–1914), Béla Kempelen, *Magyarországi zsidó és zsidó eredetű családok* (Budapest, 1937), *Országgyűlési almanach 1886* (Budapest: Atheneum, 1886). See also Adalbert Tot, *Parteien und Reichstagswahlen in Ungarn 1848–1892* (Munich, 1973).
26. See William O. McCagg, Jr., *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses in Modern Hungary* (Boulder, New York, 1972), East European Monographs III, pp. 55–56. For a more extensive description of the Wodiáners’ economic activity, including their strategy for rising in social rank, see Vera Bácskai, *A Vállalkozók előfutárai* (Budapest: Magvető, 1989), pp. 153–69.
27. We do not know the exact year of Albert’s conversion, but it seems probable that the father and the two sons converted separately. At least at the moment of their death, Mór and Albert were Catholic, while their father was buried ‘according to the service of those who follow the Helvetian confession’. He was also recorded as the godfather of the notable Calvinist pastor of Pest Pál Török’s daughter (Ráday Archive, D7/birth register of the Pest congregation, 1844). Cf. the Wodiánér family in the collection of mourning cards (written notices sent by the family), Hungarian National Library [=OSZK].
28. According to contemporary lists, the estate of Komját in Nyitra county became entailed in 1890 by the will of Mór Wodiánér as founder and with Albert Wodiánér (apparently his son) as beneficiary. *A korlátozott forgalmú birtokok kimutatása* (Budapest, 1894), pp. 18–19, and Mór Katona, *A magyar családi hitbizomány* (Budapest: Franklin, 1894), p. 367. Since Mór died in 1885, it seems probable that he founded this entail through his testament and the judicial process took some years. See also Bácskai, *A Vállalkozók előfutárai*, p. 164.
29. McCagg describes the branch of the Wodiánér family founded by the ennobled Béla as the ‘younger branch’. Béla was the son of Sámuel’s brother, Rudolf.
30. The Wodiánér clan consisted of Calvinist, Catholic, and Jewish families, and confessional differences were not exceptional even within families. McCagg does not mention the conversion of Béla Wodiánér and the prominent sources of Jewish genealogy (the *Zsidó Lexikon* and Béla Kempelen’s work on Hungarian Jewish families, including Béla Bernstein’s work on Jewish participation in the War of Independence of 1848–49) do not mark him as a convert. However, as the above cited birth register recorded, in January 1858 he ‘went to the office of the Calvinist congregation where he proved by authentic documents and witnesses that he was baptised by the army chaplain in 1848 as a member of the Hungarian revolutionary army’. The date of this action can probably be explained by the need to be registered as Christian because he concluded his marriage with the Catholic Klára Kohen in March of the same year.
31. For an account of his life in English see Károly Vörös, ‘Mór Wahrmann, a Jewish Politician in the Dualist Era’, in *Jews in the Hungarian Economy 1760–1845*, ed. Michael K. Silber (Jerusalem, 1992), pp. 187–95.
32. Cf. Katz, *A House Divided*, pp. 137–69.
33. A phenomenon that can be detected both in contemporary Jewish and the general press. The *Szombati Újság* [Saturday News], a Jewish weekly, for example, which was published in 1882–1883 in Budapest, treated him as an ‘old acquaintance’. Unlike any other newspaper, the *Szombati Újság* never mentioned Wahrmann’s full name. Newspapers recorded that the antisemite leader Istóczy presented his speeches pointing at Wahrmann in order to ‘illustrate’ his statements.
34. Mór Bogdányi, *Törpe Nagyságok* (Budapest, 1882), pp. 107–11. The author accused him of being vain and of having an exaggerated desire to achieve noblement. The accusation seems irrelevant and unjust, which also goes for other statements in the text, too.
35. *Egyenlőség* (25 November 1883), pp. 2–3. Bogdányi explains here that the position was not a real challenge earlier, but when the Jewish community was under threat Wahrmann shouldered the burden of representing it. He also described Wahrmann as a man of ‘tireless spirit’.
36. The Lloyd Society was an organisation established by leading merchants of Pest in 1853 to further commercial interests. According to the self-perception of the Society it was the first ‘constitutional organisation’ at the time of neo-absolutism. Cf. Antal Deutsch, *A pesti Lloyd-társulat* (Budapest, 1903), pp. V–VI and 239–40.

37. Kálmán Mikszáth wrote in 1874: 'The lives of these eminent Hungarians are tediously similar . . . They all took part in the 1848 revolution, were imprisoned for ten years in Olmütz or Kufstein, released in 1861, elected to parliament. . . .' Let us add, years in exile were interchangeable with imprisonment. The quotation is from András Gerő, *Modern Hungarian Society in the Making*, trans. James Patterson and Enikő Koncz (Budapest: CEU Press, 1997), p. 115.
38. For Helfy this return from exile was also an existential question: when he realised he could not make a living from his editorial activity in Europe, he chose to work as a politician in Hungary. Kossuth was not satisfied with the choice but he was ready to support Helfy's ambitions. Cf. Csilla Szabó, 'Függetlenségi elvek – gyakorlati kompromisszumok', *Valóság*, no. 10 (1993), p. 56.
39. Jenő Gaál, *Falk Miksa levelező tag emlékezete* (Budapest, 1909), published in the series of memorial speeches on members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
40. About the rivalry with Wahrmann see the above-mentioned biographical sources. In 1875, Ede Horn, a Jewish candidate, was his opponent in the 6th district of Budapest. The fact that part of the electorate found it relevant to include the difference in their religious affiliation in the campaign indicates that Falk's conversion mattered: the public differentiated on the basis of religion more than on that of descent.
41. Szinnyi and Gaál explains that it was Wahrmann's personal choice, while Deutsch, *A pesti Lloyd-társulat*, pp. 197–98, says that Wahrmann was asked to mediate between the Lloyd Society and Falk.
42. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1971) also dedicates an article to him but unfortunately it is full of mistakes. Among other things it argues that Horn was one of those who formulated the text of the bill on Jewish emancipation, while, on the contrary, the Act made it possible for him to participate in Hungarian politics.
43. Béla Bernstein, *1848 és a zsidóság* (Budapest: Múlt és Jövő, 1998), p. 121.
44. Emma Lederer, *Az ipari kapitalizmus kezdetei Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1952), pp. 175–76.
45. McCagg, *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses*, p. 192, mentions three Jews in the nineteenth century who rose to such a high rank in the central administration, however, the fact that the other two, Károly Csemegi and István Teleszky (both to be described later), were converts must be emphasised.
46. McCagg, *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses*, p. 96; see also Daisy Strasserné Chorin, *Az Andrássy úttól a Park Avenue-ig* (Budapest: Osiris, 1999), pp. 15–17.
47. We have no information about the exact date of his conversion. The *Zsidó Lexikon* states that he converted before his nomination to the Upper House but says nothing about when it was. What is a fact is that he referred to himself as a Jew in a debate on an antisemitic petition. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–84, Vol. IX. p. 291. It is also clear that he had not yet converted in 1896. See *Magyar zsidók a millenniumon*, p. 65.
48. Bernstein lists him as one who converted after the War of Independence and his biographies in various manuals talk about his position as the deputy clerk of Csongrád and/or Torontál county. If he was a Jewish municipal office-holder in 1847, he was definitely a rarity. A more extensive biography on him (Hugó Hajnal, *Csemegi Károly élete és működése* [Pest, 1943]) simply ignores the fact of his conversion, and says only that Csemegi married the Catholic Franciska Fischer in 1854. A modern attempt to refresh our knowledge on his life using local archival sources follows the same lines describing him as the godfather of his niece and nephew in the 1850s, but without mentioning his conversion at all. See István Sebestyén, 'Csemegi Károly jogtudós életpályája és munkássága', in *Oppidum Csongrád* (1996), pp. 3–37.
49. The *Zsidó Lexikon* has an erroneous entry, characterising him as a convert and claiming that he died in 1890. However, he was buried as a Jew in 1911. Cf. his mourning card in the OSZK collection. *Egyenlőség* also noted the death of a prominent Jew (6 August 1911).
50. For clarity I simplified the field of party affiliations according to contemporary understanding: '1' means here the government side, '2' designates those who accepted the compromise system in the opposition, while '3' refers to the constitutional opposition, including the centre left before 1875. By social status I mean two main groups here; the first consists of the prominent representatives of the economic sector, in other words, the members of the upper bourgeoisie (A), and the second consists of intellectuals, journalists, legal experts, or, with another simplification, people from a middle-class background (B). Two short remarks: Albert Wodiáner was both an aristocrat owning large estates and a rich merchant, and Chorin became a 'leading coal magnate' only during his political career.
51. Gyula Zeke published statistical data concerning Jewish conversions only from 1896 on, that is, after the 'reception' of the Jewish religion. Cf. 'Statistikai melléletek', in *Hét évtized a hazai zsidóság életében*, ed. Ferenc L. Lendvai, Anikó Sohár and Pál Horváth (Budapest, 1990), Vol. 1, p. 194.
52. On the relationship between antisemitism and the parties see Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, pp. 164–175.
53. Gerő, *Modern Hungarian Society*, pp. 109–11.
54. Gerő, *Modern Hungarian Society*, p. 115.
55. The parliamentary period of 1881–1884 will be treated separately. The source of the descriptions is *Általános Mutató a Magyar Országgyűlés Képviselőházának Naplóköteteihez* (Budapest, 1896).
56. A quick look at his correspondence shows that prime minister Tisza had to convince him several times that his election would be arranged despite the difficulties that had arisen. OSZK Archive of Manuscripts, Fond IV/912, 224.
57. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 9, p. 136.
58. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 13, p. 196.
59. According to the House Rules, petitions were accepted by the House if one of the representatives personally placed them on the 'table of the House', a big table in front of the chair of the Speaker.
60. 16 and 17 December 1875, *Képviselőházi Napló* 1875–78, Vol. 3, pp. 207–209 and 232–39. Wahrmann turned to the subject by saying: 'as the House is aware of this fact, I am also a Jew.' The minutes preserved also the reaction 'applause', which was not a frequently occurring description of the mood of the House.
61. *Istóczy Győző országgyűlési beszédei, indítványai és törvényjavaslatai, 1872–1896* (Budapest: F. Buschmann, 1904), pp. 23–38, also *Képviselőházi Napló* 1875–78, Vol. 3, pp. 245–46.
62. Lajos Csernátóny, *Képviselőházi Napló* 1875–78, Vol. 3, pp. 246–47.
63. Balázs Orbán, *Képviselőházi Napló* 1875–78, Vol. 3, pp. 240–41.
64. The antisemites had the habit of interrupting speeches with the phrase 'this is also connected to the Jewish Question'. See, for example, Gyula Verhovay *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–84, Vol. 7, p. 33. Prime minister Tisza responded by stating that every single issue concerned all inhabitants of the state, including both Jews and Christians.
65. Since interpellations and petitions were discussed on Saturdays, a condition determined by the House Rules, Géza Polónyi, an Independence Party representative, presented a *bon mot*, namely that the House celebrated Sabbath ritually with its discussions. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–84, Vol. 9, p. 264.
66. A justified comparison might be Ottó Herman, another leader of the same party, who spoke almost as frequently as Helfy did, but more often against antisemitism.
67. On several occasions he was referred to as the one who represented the opinion of Hungarian Jewry, even before 1883. Cf. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–84, Vol. 6, p. 263, or Vol. 14, p. 356.
68. 'They vociferate in vain in their newspapers about medieval barbarism, inhumanity, intolerance, etc. The answer to their jeremiads is simply: 'C'est la guerre!' – this is war.' *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 6, p. 260. He used this panel in various connections during his otherwise strictly planned speech, which suggests that the main message he wanted to get across lies here.
69. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 6, p. 259.

70. In the description of these events the following dailies are used (issues between 9–13 June 1882): *Egyetértés*, *Függetlenség*, *Magyar Állam*, *Ellenőr*, *Pesti Napló*, *Pesti Hírlap*.
71. Győző Istóczy, *Emlékiratfélék és egyébek* (Budapest: F. Buschmann, 1911), p. 13.
72. Venetianer, *A magyar zsidóság története*, p. 341.
73. Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, p. 140.
74. Especially *Függetlenség* (10 June 1882). The daily was close to the antisemitic movement; if not an organ of the trend, it was on its way of becoming one. Its editor-in-chief, Gyula Verhovay, was at least a ‘fellow-traveller’ of Istóczy, while the paper itself denied any connection, but published tendentious articles about the Tiszaeszlár case. Since its editor was an active representative, *Függetlenség* is a reliable source, even if we can assume a friendly attitude towards Istóczy. Theoretically it may be possible that *Függetlenség* presented the events in a favourable light from Istóczy’s point of view, but the description of the dialogue between Tisza and Istóczy seems to be so realistic, preserving the typical illogical elements of the latter’s thinking, that it can be accepted as reliable.
75. Minister Pauler recorded in his diary that he did not go to the ‘conference’ (a regular meeting of the party leaders), since, as Istóczy had withdrawn from the party, it would not be meaningful. OSZK KT Quart. Hung. 261 1/2.
76. The clerical *Magyar Állam* was the exception.
77. Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, pp. 140–41.
78. Kubinszky, *A politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon*, p. 142.
79. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 9, p. 289.
80. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 9, p. 291.
81. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 13, p. 189.
82. This fact was not a consequence of lack of interest in the problem of civil marriage. Mezei had written a pamphlet on the problem seven years earlier. See *A polgári házasság* (Budapest, 1876).
83. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 13, p. 212.
84. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 13, p. 212.
85. E.g. Ágost Pulszky, the son of the Masonic grandmaster, lamented in his speech that the followers of the antisemites ‘made it necessary to explain the basic elements not just of liberalism, but of modernity [polgárossátság, a notion very difficult to translate, but more or less ‘the result of the process of nineteenth-century civic and bourgeois evolution’] and civilisation, which have been held self-evident for quite a while.’ *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 13, p. 194.
86. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 14, p. 354.
87. *12 Telefon*, No. 2 (1880).
88. *Szombati Újság*, No. 3 (1882).
89. *Magyar Lapok*, No. 1 (1882).
90. Surprisingly, the date of the launch of *Egyenlőség* is inaccurate in the literature. Venetianer (*A magyar zsidóság története* p. 365) argues that the weekly was launched at the time when the Tiszaeszlár blood libel emerged (summer 1882). The *Zsidó Lexikon* gives two dates differing by one year (both wrong) in two different places; the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* borrows one of them. Even Nathaniel Katzburg mentions the end of November as the launch date (Katzburg, *Fejezetek az újkori zsidó történelemből*, p. 133).
91. Lajos Szabolcsi, *Két emberöltő* (Budapest, 1993), pp. 26–39.
92. *Egyetértés*, 30 October 1882.
93. *Egyenlőség* (3 December 1882), p. 4. Sándor Neumann Jr, the young lawyer and later director of the Lloyd Society of Pest, criticised Pauler for elementary mistakes in his parliamentary speech concerning the Tiszaeszlár case. In the same context he pointed out that certain expressions used by Pauler were unknown in the Hungarian penal code and did not occur in his manual for criminal law either. Pauler had been a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 1845, and had been on the staff of the university of Budapest for three-and-a-half decades. He was the ultimate authority on legal questions.
94. The speech does not deserve special attention in this context. Göndöcs argued among other things that Christian culture and morals were superior to their Jewish counterparts, therefore the merging of the two by marriage was a ‘step back’. What is interesting here is his conclusion, according to which the only solution to the ‘Jewish Question’ was conversion. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 13, p. 159. *Egyenlőség* added that mass conversion not supported by personal conviction would have threatened the power of the clergy (25 November 1883), p. 5.
95. *Egyenlőség* (26 November 1882). József Bary, the investigating magistrate in the Tiszaeszlár case, also noted in his memoirs the violent tone of this article. See *A Tiszaeszlári Bűnper* (Budapest, 1944), p. 609.
96. Mezei wrote the leading article of the first issue.
97. *Egyenlőség* (18 March 1883).
98. *Egyenlőség* (24 December 1882).
99. The first appearance of the topic, the leading article in the fourth issue (*Egyenlőség* [26 November 1882]), did not go further but listed those groups which had not had political rights in earlier periods, and concluded that it was not meaningful to deprive anyone of their civil rights. The writer did not question the composition of the petition’s supporters.
100. *Egyenlőség* (31 November 1882).
101. *Egyenlőség* (7 January 1883).
102. Andrew Handler in his book about the Tiszaeszlár case describes the parliamentary part of the campaign but does not realise the connection with *Egyenlőség*. Andrew Handler, *Blood Libel at Tiszaeszlár* (New York, 1980), pp. 90–91. Bary, understandably, devoted more attention to the affair (Bary, *A Tiszaeszlári Bűnper*, pp. 606–25).
103. The information about the possible libel suit appeared in almost every issue as long as it seemed feasible. The mentioned article was in *Egyenlőség* (12 November 1882).
104. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 7, pp. 87–91.
105. Pauler in his diary, Tuesday, 21 November 1882.
106. Pauler in his diary, Monday, 27th of November 1882.
107. *Nemzet* and *Egyetértés* (25 November 1882): both papers reported the speech and its reception, but did not comment on it.
108. *Egyenlőség* (3 December 1882).
109. The club was a place for informal meetings, where proposals were also debated and the support of representatives could be tested.
110. Interestingly, Bary noted concerning Wahrmann’s above-described speech that ‘the tone and the spirit which were present in Wahrmann’s speech differed fundamentally from the provocative behaviour and tone which characterises Szabolcsi and feeds antisemitism’ (Bary, *A Tiszaeszlári Bűnper*, p. 200). Bary’s memoirs offer a unique source in the sense that he comments on the events of the early 1880s in incomparable detail and from a biased point of view, but without any intention of furthering contemporary antisemitic propaganda.
111. I compared the information that the basic biographical publications offer on the journalists who are mentioned in the first issues of *Egyenlőség* as major contributors: Mór Bogdányi (the owner), Ignác Acsády (the editor-in-chief), Mór Mezei, Albert Sturm, Miksa Szabolcsi, Sándor Halász, József Vészi, and Mór Szatmári. Some other contributors are also mentioned, although they rarely wrote for the paper, and Sándor Neumann despite having been a frequent contributor was not mentioned.
112. He was a historian, later a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, at that time a successful journalist, the publisher of several historical studies, and the translator of Buntschli’s books into Hungarian.

113. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 7, p. 320.

114. A peculiar scene in parliament is very telling from this point of view. Actually two antisemites had a dispute over ‘who is a Jew and who is not’. Iván Simonyi mentioned Ede Horn when someone interrupted that the latter was a Jew. Simonyi said that he was not a Jew when Imre Szalay shouted that Horn was like Helfy (the former never converted, while Helfy was a Lutheran). Simonyi answered that Horn was not like Helfy but (or because of that?) he was *Konfessionslos* and married to a Christian woman. The main issue here is not the fact that the antisemites had not reached agreement concerning who was and who was not a Jew some months before the election took place, but that Simonyi represented the traditional understanding that to be a Jew meant only a particular religious affiliation. Conversion or a declaration that one was not attached to any particular denomination made someone a non-Jew without reservations. Cf. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 14, p. 285.

115. *Képviselőházi Napló* 1881–1884, Vol. 7, p. 87.

116. Bary noted Wahrmann’s passivity (who, for him, was a ‘good Jew’ in contrast to Mezei and Szabolcsi) and he saw a causal connection between this fact and the duel. See Bary, *A Tiszaeszlári Bűnper*, p. 201.

117. Handler argues concerning Mezei’s interpellation that ‘the incident stirred up mixed reactions in the press’ (Handler, *Blood Libel at Tiszaeszlár*, p. 91) and he refers to two sources. One of them, however, does not say anything about the reaction of the press, and the other is Bary, who says only that one newspaper showed some understanding of Mezei. Going through the major papers, it is quite clear that the attitude towards him was rather negative.