

Mixed Families and Everyday Nationalism Beyond Methodological Nationalism

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About the Project

- The Momentum (Lendület) 2025 project “**Mixed Families: Searching for Identity and Belonging in Post-Conflict Societies**” (MIXED)
- **Five-year** longitudinal project
- Focus: Mixed families in Central and Eastern Europe
- Macro/Meso/Micro Levels
- Historical+Sociological – Hungary and Yugoslavia
- From 1895 – until today



Puzzle

MIXED

- Intermarriage/mixed families are usually interpreted as weakening ethnic boundaries
- Yet mixed families often remain deeply shaped by nationalism
- At the same time, research itself assumes fixed national categories
- So:
 - are mixed families “beyond nationalism”?
 - or are they places where nationalism is reproduced differently?



Existing Literature

- Interethnic marriages embody the blending of diverse national, cultural, and religious identities (Twine 2010; Rodríguez-García 2015)
- Traditionally treated as indicators of:
 - integration
 - acculturation
 - acceptance (Kalmijn 1998; Alba & Nee 2003)
- Seen as signalling boundary permeability and social cohesion (Song 2009)
- Mixedness challenges entrenched social barriers (Rodríguez-García 2015)



My argument

- Mixed families are key sites of everyday nationalism - this is also by Brubaker et al (2006) - “everyday ethnicity”
- National categories are institutionally produced rather than naturally given
- Intermarriage research often reproduces methodological nationalism by treating ethnic groups as fixed entities



How methodological nationalism works?

MIXED

Research practise	Problem
Counting “mixed marriages” through census categories	Assumes stable ethnic groups
Measuring “assimilation” through exogamy	Presumes national endpoint
Coding children into one ethnicity	Erases relational/hybrid identities



Everyday Nationalism inside Mixed Families

Reproducing boundaries

- pressure toward one “national” language
- kin/community expectations
- nationalized schooling
- fixed census categories

Challenging boundaries

- bilingual practices
- hybrid traditions
- negotiated identities
- fluid self-identification

Example: In one Serb–Hungarian family in Vojvodina (Serbia), school choice was framed by the minority parent as a practical decision about bilingualism and mobility, while the majority parent and grandparents interpreted it as a question of national loyalty.



Why CEE matters?

- Not immigration context
- Autochthonous minorities
- Shared citizenship and locality
- Socialist/Post-socialist transformations
- Categories politically charged

MIXED



Why Hungary and Yugoslavia? (1)

Comparative Framework

- Both shaped by:
 - imperial legacies
 - socialist governance
 - post-socialist nation-building
 - Different approaches to managing diversity
- Useful for examining:
 - state policy
 - classificatory regimes
 - social norms



Why Hungary and Yugoslavia? (2)

Differences

- Hungary:
 - **Assimilationist pressures**
– rewarded with upward mobility
 - Cultural negotiations shifted into the private sphere
 - Minority governance ambivalence
- Yugoslavia:
 - **Supranational socialist framework**
 - Mixedness partly normalized – public sphere
 - “brotherhood and unity”



Conclusion

- Mixed families are not outside nationalism
- They are sites where nationalism is negotiated in everyday life
- Intermarriages research often naturalizes national categories
- Mixedness should be approached relationally rather than as fixed demographic category
- Categories should be treated as historically produced, situational, and negotiated rather than naturally given and fixed.





Science website



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Posts

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Thank you for
your
attention!

Questions? 😊



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