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**Ethno-Confessional Realities in the  
Romanian Area: Historical Perspectives  
(XVIII-XX centuries)**

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University of Oradea, Romania

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THE ROMANIAN AREA: HISTORICAL  
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**Mircea BRIE  
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Foreword by **Barbu ȘTEFĂNESCU**

Oradea

2011

This present volume contains the papers of the international conference *Ethnicity, Confession and Intercultural Dialogue at the European Union's East Border* (workshop: *Ethno-Confessional Realities in the Romanian Area: Historical Perspectives*), held in Oradea between 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> of June 2011. This international conference, organized by Institute for Euroregional Studies Oradea-Debrecen, University of Oradea and Department of International Relations and European Studies, with the support of the European Commission and Bihor County Council, was an event run within the project of Action Jean Monnet Programme of the European Commission n. 176197-LLP-1-2010-1-RO-AJM-MO

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## FOREWORD

In a world subject to global levelling, in a Europe of integrative efforts in multiple plans, there are alternative, natural reverse trends, of conservation of cultural specificities, especially in areas such as Central and Eastern Europe, characterized by the multiculturalism provided by the ethnic and confessional diversity, and by the sensitivities that such multiculturalism satiate. A good demonstration of this effect is the series of works contained by this volume; they have been previously presented, submitted to the thorough analysis and in-depth assessment of the participants to the International Conference titled *Ethnicity, Confession and Intercultural Dialogue at the European Union's East Border*, with a wide European audience, excellently organized in Oradea between 2 and 5 June 2011, by our colleague Mircea Brie, known for his ongoing and valuable research in this field. Note that the title *Ethno-Confessional Realities in the Romanian Area: Historical Perspectives* gathers only the works presented at the panel with the same name at the said conference, the other works being the subject of another volume; this fact proves the magnitude of the event and the interest awakened for debates regarding such current and exciting topic.

The volume coordinators - Professor Ioan Horga, Professor Sorin Sipoș, Dr. Mircea Brie, Lecturer - have grouped the 19 scientific contributions signed by both established historians, and by young researchers, be they historians or not, in three chapters: *Confession and Religious Minorities*; *Ethnicity and Nationalism*; and *Migration and Assimilation*.

The first part houses works dedicated to historical realities relative to the Romanian space that are traditionally characterized by ethnic and confessional complexity such as Transylvania - understood in its broad sense - or Bessarabia, during the last three centuries. First, our study follows the impact that the confessionalization process had on the Romanian population in Transylvania, through the emergence of the Greek-Catholic denomination, which broke the previous Orthodox religious bloc, splitting the mostly peasant Romanian society of the time, creating a moment of initial confusion, of exacerbation of emotional states that led to disputes, including violence, before the Greek Orthodox and Catholics believers would accept tolerance, coexistence and cooperation. Religious sensibility and how it affects the



community sociability transcend from the notes left by priests or teachers of previous centuries - subjective evidence, indispensable to the research of peasant mentality, dominated by orality and with little expression in writing. Two papers - signed by Eugen Ghiță and Corneliu Eugen Pădureanu – address the ethnic and confessional issues in today's western Romania from the historical demographics specialist position; in a first case, in the modern world and Arad circumscribed area; in the second case, an overview of the entire region in the period between the two World Wars. The call for statistical data processing, so characteristic to historical demography, is illustrative to marking the quantitative developments of the population in general and its adherence to various denominations. It allows for necessary and illustrative comparisons over time at different chronological landmarks, or in space between administrative units. Integrated in the general history of an era, the findings of these statistical measurements have the merit of capturing the dynamics of the evolution, in its most sensitive nuances. A pertinent analysis of the situation of confessional minorities in the province of Bessarabia turned into a *gubernia* of the tsarist Russia during the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, with a particular analysis of the Jewish population, is owed to the historian Ion Gumeni. In his case we have a recurrence of one of the leading researchers of this phenomenon in the mentioned area. A reign – of the said Tsar – so controversial in the today's historiography, and concerned with the homogenization of the language and the common denominator of the Orthodox Christian religion, is concerned with solving the Jewish problem from anti-Semitic positions; this is the main message of the Moldovan historian and university professor, transmitted with resources of the specialist accustomed to the research theme and the tools required by such theme. The following contribution to this section signed by Lavinia Buda uses the symbolism of the Rosary introduction to the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church at the turn of XIX-XX centuries, to capture the theological debates and disputes about the possible removal of this denomination from the Eastern ritual matrix, in a context of a broader Catholic offensive in this sense.

The second section groups 9 works with similar themes and discourses centred around the concepts of ethnicity, and nation and nationalism; these are all essential given in terms of defining the political space of Central Europe, modelled after Herder's ideas that place the cultural differences at the basis of the creation of national states. Ethnicity is thus the essential criterion of state dimensioning during the XIX century; this idea has been very resilient over time, producing effects until today, when in the context of the European economic and institutional crisis, they outbreak against the imposition of the Western values system as the sole common denominator of integration. Created in other historical circumstances, on criteria of value other than the western European ones, the Central and Eastern European nationalisms prove to be, on

the one hand, a large recurrent force and on the other hand, are a form of protest against the denial, once again, of own values, of the sense of conviction to a peripheral status that was lived also in other integrative formula previous to the European Union.

First, the study signed by Cătălin Turliuc addresses the relationship between nationalism, multiculturalism and minority rights in the XX-century Romania, from a theoretical and methodological perspective that is based on an undeniable erudition proved by reference to views expressed convergently or divergently in different cultures. The paper is an exhortation to not reduce the complexity of history as fact in the historiographical discourse to ideologizing perspectives with various meanings. Many of the conclusions of his work are found at authors who proceed to sectorial approaches. Thus, Mircea Brie's considerations relating to the role of ethnicity-religion binomial in promoting marriages in the north-western part of Transylvania in the decades that follow the turn of the XIX and XX centuries propose an interdisciplinary approach, which, based on the power of information of various sources used for research, and on how the demographic data were recorded, are able to explain marital options. The author emphasizes behavioural differences in the choice of partners of other ethnicities and confessions, even if the trend is strongly in favour of marriage within the denomination; if it does - inevitably – go outside this framework, their preference is to promote them inside their ethnicity and less within the dogmatic related denominations. In the same thematic area falls the paper signed by Florentina Chirodea who looks into the ethnic and religious structure of the students of the Law Academy of Oradea in the interwar period, and into its representation in relation to the overall ethnic and national structure of the population located along Romania's western border, when the Romanian state promoted the Romanization of the urban space, trying to balance the gap between the Romanian majority of the area given by the rural population, and the modest presence of Romanians in the urban area.

Several papers address the political and cultural consequences of the Treaty of Trianon, which internationally sanctioned the separation of Transylvania from Hungary and its union with Romania, event that even in its early days raised a conflict of statements between the Romanian and Hungarian sides; it is assigned as "happy memories" by Romanians, and as "painful memories" by the Hungarians. The treaty itself is analysed from a historical perspective by Istvan Polgar, while the other two works dwell into the imagology of the Transylvanian literary discourse after 1918, when Hungarian writers resume the older Transylvanian concept, seen now as a means to defend the Hungarian identity that appeared threatened by the actions of the Romanian administration (Imola Katalin Nagy) or that of the German literature in the Romanian space developed in the XX century obsessed with a self-perception

of periphery, of secondary cultural group in relation to both Romanian culture, and German culture (Nagy-Szilvester Orsolya).

In the same register falls the paper signed by Alina Stoica congruent to her concerns with the interwar Romanian-Portuguese relations seen through the same cultural lens that was used by members of the Portuguese Legation in Bucharest; a thorough analysis is carried out on the written notes of the diplomat and writer Martinho Brederode, fine *connaisseur* and analyst of the interwar Romanian reality.

Anca Oltean puts in comparative perspectives the situation of the Jews in Romania and in Hungary in the first decade after the end of the Second World War, when many of them returned as survivors of Nazi camps faced not only the inherent difficulties after the war but also the rigors of the communist regimes installed in the two neighbouring countries that acted to restrict the range of manifestation in the economy, prompting them to consider ever more the option of migration.

Sorin Șipoș's contribution is largely a reflection on the historian's condition when confronted with the excesses of a totalitarian regime – the historian Silviu Dragomir imprisoned for his promoted ideas, for his quality as a minister of a “*bourgeois*” government and then released – a historian who had to seize every favourable circumstances – Stalin's death – who had to compromise in order to be able to publish his writings, deceiving the communist censorship, accepting the humiliation of brutal intervention in the text by censoring reviewers, and even the denouncement carried out by colleagues. A look at how the Romanian press in Transylvania captures the Hungarian minorities and Hebrew issues in the interwar period in Oradea and other Transylvanian cities is proposed by our colleague Gabriel Moisa, drawing on information gathered mainly from the *Western Gazette* published in Oradea, with anti-revisionist positions and as such very attentive to cultural phenomena visible among the Hungarian and German populations of the city, warning of the danger of minorities cultural offensive, but also noting the failures in the line of cooperation between minorities.

The third section contains 4 papers grouped under the concern for migration, undoubtedly one important phenomenon for anthropological and historical research by their consequences: first, the history knows eras dominated by large population movements that have reshaped the demographic and political geography of areas - see upheavals due the great migrations of the early European Middle Ages. Not even our time is free from their spectrum, whether caused by war, ethnic or religious cleansing, each time with serious humanitarian consequences, be they differences in economic development and standard of living, which determines the population of the poorest regions to be tempted to find a place under the sun in areas perceived as paradise, with the most handy example: the migration from Eastern to Western Europe.

Migrations largely explain the presence of ethnic groups in areas dominated by other ethnic groups, without considering this, of course, to be the only explanation for all cases of this kind. It is the case of Bulgarians immigrated to Bessarabia, a historical phenomenon followed by Duminica Ivan in terms of its reception by the Romanian historiography, especially on the interwar Romanian writing, or the case of German presence in southern Bessarabia, whose history is looked upon since colonization until their return to Germany by Arthur Viorel Tuluș, in both cases migration being encouraged by the Tsarist regime in Russia to populate the southern peripheries of the Tsarist empire, sparsely populated. Cătălin Negoită discusses the issues relating to the Muslim emigration in Dobrudja - carried out in successive waves, in the beginning by the Byzantine Empire, then by the Ottoman Empire, with Turks and Tatars representing the majority population in Dobrudja at its union with Romania. The historical circumstances of the interwar period triggered a reverse immigration phenomenon, from Dobrudja to Anatolia, under an agreement in this respect between the Romanian and Turkish governments.

The phenomenon of assimilation of ethnic and religious groups is analysed by Alexander Roitman against the tsarist policy of the XIX century for the assimilation of Jews by converting them to Christianity, policy supported by a huge administrative gear with its forms of expression found in the territory of today's Republic of Moldova.

If we were to seek common features in the works included in this volume, we might dwell on the preponderance of contributions that have the strength of pulling back from the usual clichés of a historiography of legitimacy, to which we can undoubtedly add the modernity of discourse, the lack of inhibition in addressing topics once considered too sensitive to be discussed from a purely scientific approach. Cultural similarities specific to a wide area of Central and Eastern Europe arise from the thematic area addressed; we should have the research convergent conclusions, but this is not yet entirely feasible, only partially. This bias proves, once again, the anchoring of the historian in cultural environments that are still strongly individualised by the nationalist flares of previous centuries.

Oradea, September 20, 2011

Prof. Barbu ȘTEFĂNESCU



**CONFESSION AND CONFSSIONAL  
MINORITIES**

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# CONFESSIONALISATION AND COMMUNITY SOCIABILITY (TRANSYLVANIA, 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY – FIRST HALF OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)

Barbu ȘTEFĂNESCU\*

**Abstract.** *There are always potential dangers of disintegration threatening the community solidarity. There are several factors acting towards disintegration according to the wish of a Divinity often angry because of excessive human sins. The anger may be expressed as a punishment from the point of view of peasant understanding both directly, by means of power, or indirectly, by setting villain forces free. Opposition against a negatively perceived alterity considered dangerous and attempting to community assets and cohesion is always an opportunity for the members of traditional communities to stick together against possible aggressions. A new form of alterity is confessionalisation, a phenomenon occurring at the dawn of the 18th century within Romanian communities. The crash of the confessional monolith disoriented the Romanian community and brought about reluctance and condemnation.*

**Keywords:** *community, confession, alterity, fear, rural, sociability*

There are always potential dangers of disintegration threatening the community solidarity lines whether real or imagined by people belonging to a world “besieged” by several perils expressed by the fear of “wasting themselves” coming from different directions. It is a core element of a mediaeval mentality said to have had a propensity for fear. There are several factors acting towards disintegration according to the wish of a Divinity often angry because of excessive human sins. The anger may be expressed as a punishment from the point of view of peasant understanding both directly, by means of power, or indirectly, by setting villain forces free. One of them is the impact of alterity, whether human or trans-human. Opposition against a negatively perceived alterity considered dangerous and attempting to

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community assets and cohesion is always an opportunity for the members of traditional communities to stick together against possible aggressions.

A new form of alterity is confessionalisation, a phenomenon occurring at the dawn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century within Romanian communities previously homogenous from this point of view. The crash of the confessional monolith disoriented the Romanian community and brought about reluctance and condemnation, which was natural in a traditional society. The Metropolitan Bishop of Wallachia, one of the top level representatives of the Romanian Orthodox Church deserted by many believers, cursed the archpriests signing the act of union with the Church of Rome. In their turn, the priests facing local segregation expressed their frustration and indignation. A virulent attack against the villagers turning to the new Greek-Catholic confession tearing down parish solidarity was expressed by Father Gavril from Ciulesti (Bihar County) in a note dating back to 1781. The incriminated actions seemed to the priest as worthy to be punished by the worst penalty that could be enforced on a Christian baptized as an Orthodox: exclusion from the Church and permanent separation from God, with no means of redemption, passing to “the irreversible jurisdiction of Satan”.

Segregated from a confessional point of view, the Romanian rural world gradually assumed elements belonging to new identities in connection with the other confession inasmuch as it elaborated specific piety patterns often expressed in the notes written on church books. The historical background was dominated by the attempt of the Habsburg state to provide the multiethnic empire with a spiritual connection through Catholicism. On the other hand, the Orthodox Russia under Catherine II's rule assumed the role of a defender of all Orthodox in the Empire through the Serbian patriarchs at Karlowitz by bonding the Romanian Orthodox in Transylvania with those over the Carpathians despite the ever harder law meant to prevent it. This identity separation led to strengthening and stressing the differences and intolerance eventually leading to violence. Confessionalisation of the Romanian world could not avoid the violence following confessionalisation as it occurred in other European areas.

In conclusion, in the Transylvanian area mingled for several centuries, confessionalisation was a continuous process amongst the Romanian population, as they were more numerous. The Austrian state tried to restore through them the Catholicism weakened by the Protestant reform. The image of preservation of Transylvanian Romanian people's confessional unity that the state and representatives of the Uniate Church strove to accredit was hit by a reviving culpability of betraying eastern traditions of their ancestors, which had always been very powerful over rural people. Hence the strong Orthodox reaction that ultimately led to acknowledging the legitimacy of the Orthodox

confession and strengthened the contradictions between the two Romanian confessions that seemed less important at the beginning.

The community has been defined as “the place for spontaneous solidarity” that is not imposed by tutelary powers exercise (Ariés: 227). Although due to the study of rural world, we are relatively familiar with the inevitable encounters of peasant community life with external world – there are several documents providing information in this respect – we have little knowledge on aspects of life within the community despite the voices drawing attention to the fact that in pre-modern society peasants “lived by themselves, for themselves and focused on themselves” (Raclot, 1978: 35) and “each life develops within the community that one barely leaves for short spans of time” (Ariés: 228). Under the circumstances, the community has been defined as “a very small yet complete world difficult to imagine nowadays as most of its functions are henceforth provided by family, state, or public communities” (Ariés: 228). Community cohesion is based on “mechanisms of social life able to reproduce themselves in detail from generation to generation thanks to the immutable staging of social roles” (Muchambled, 1990: 79) imposing “rigorous behavioural frameworks on everyone” (Muchambled, 1990: 73).

There are always potential dangers of disintegration threatening the solidarity lines whether real or imagined by people belonging to a world “besieged” by several perils expressed by the fear of “wasting themselves” coming from different directions. It is a core element of a mediaeval mentality said to have had a propensity for fear. There are several factors acting towards disintegration according to the wish of a Divinity often angry because of excessive human sins. The anger may be expressed as a punishment from the point of view of peasant understanding both directly, by means of power, or indirectly, by setting villain forces free. One of them is the *impact of alterity*, whether human or trans-human. Aliens to social circles are considered “enemies by definition” (Mazilu, 2001: 35), agents of harm, often held responsible for serious actions on community level. Opposition against a negatively perceived alterity considered dangerous and attempting to community assets and cohesion is always an opportunity for the members of traditional communities to stick together against possible aggressions.

A new form of alterity is *confessionalisation*, a phenomenon occurring at the dawn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century within Romanian communities previously homogenous from this point of view. The crash of the confessional monolith disoriented the Romanian community and brought about reluctance and condemnation, which was natural in a traditional society. The Metropolitan Bishop of Wallachia, one of the top level representatives of the Romanian Orthodox Church deserted by many believers, cursed the archpriests signing the act of union with the Church of Rome (Mazilu, 2001: 187-188). In their turn, the priests facing local segregation expressed their frustration and indignation.

A virulent attack against the villagers turning to the new Greek-Catholic confession tearing down parish solidarity was expressed by Father Gavril from Ciulești (Bihor County) in a note dating back to 1781. He condemned the “initiators of church conflicts”: “Oanta Toma and his wife, Tudura, ... Maria Gavril Oneasa and her husband, Ioan, and all their family following Toma and Tudura. Besides them, Copos Flore, the pagan, and Indries, son of an assassin, and his witch wife Maria”. There were also people that were not nominated: “all those having the same thoughts”. The “humble amongst priests father Gavril” was personally affected by the fact that some believers were leaving. Hence the harsh words mentioned in the imprecation, adding to the well-known formulae mentioning the holy texts the “anathema, anathema, anathema shall draw upon them all curses written by Moses the prophet at the second law, tremble of Cain...”, words invoking supreme hardships in daily life according to the model of the “infertile land” curse uttered by God against Adam (Mazilu, 2001: 31), or by Moses against those breeching the Law (Mazilu, 2001: 41-42). “May the land, the vineyards and all their goods not bear fruit; may poverty, want, famine and others be with you forever...”. So, from the villagers’ point of view, all sources of material welfare, such as land, vineyards and “all their goods” should produce non-values: “may not bear fruit, but poverty, want, famine and others” (Evanghelie: 240-241). Irrespective of their nature, they often endangered the slight balance of basic human solidarity. The worst part of the imprecation was the first as it repeated the word “anathema” three times, the most extreme form of excommunication from the Christian family, which was reduced by the author to Orthodoxy. The evasion from the old and genuine Christian family was according to father Gavril’s interpretation a sort of heresy. It was to the same extent a vote of censure on his parish activity. Anathema was rightfully granted to those nominated because they parted from the faith of their ancestors. To the priest, they placed themselves outside the community, as divisive on different levels. Consequently, they deserved supreme punishment. The Church they turned to degraded itself by encouraging this break, by receiving low elements, such as the “initiators of church conflicts”, individuals tagged as “cursed”, “son of an assassin”, “witch”, the last two being a family whose Christianity was doubted by the priest. Thus, it could not be considered a Church. Consequently, the priest author of the imprecation thought that the actions of those incriminated were under the incidence of Apostle Paul’s words: “As I told you before, I tell you again: If someone preaches something else than you have been told – let there be anathema!” (Mazilu, 2001: 85). The incriminated actions seemed to the priest as worthy to be punished by the worst penalty that could be enforced on a Christian baptized as an Orthodox: exclusion from the Church and permanent separation from God, with no means of redemption, passing to “the irreversible jurisdiction of Satan” (Mazilu, 2001: 85-87).

Segregated from a confessional point of view, the Romanian rural world gradually assumed elements belonging to new identities in connection with the other confession inasmuch as it elaborated specific piety patterns often expressed in the notes written on church books. A 1780 note expressed solidarity of an Orthodox community as opposed to the Uniate one: “Year 1780. This Mineiu has been bought from godson Bunea for 12 florins and is given to the Church of Noul Roman, that is, the village church except for the Uniate one. *Should the book be required, it should remain at the non-Uniate church, otherwise where would the villagers go (...)*” (Antologhion, 2004: 239, 277). The book was donated to a non-Uniate church. Yet there was a theoretical possibility, considering the frail confessional climate, of a powerful recurrence of Greek-Catholicism troubled by Sofronie’s movement with the support of state institutions, so that the church might be given to the Uniate community. Under the circumstances, the “village” (the Orthodox community) would have had to go to another church and the book would follow the non-Uniate believers. We can find resembling lines written on a *Gospel Book* at Beius on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1783: “This (...) Gospel Book belongs to the monastery (...) at Beius, *to the Greek Orthodox Christian merchants, not to the Uniate?*” (Evanghelie: 242, 277).

The historical background was dominated by the attempt of the Habsburg state to provide the multiethnic empire with a spiritual connection through Catholicism. On the other hand, the Orthodox Russia under Catherine II’s rule assumed the role of a defender of all Orthodox in the Empire through the Serbian patriarchs at Karlowitz by bonding the Romanian Orthodox in Transylvania with those over the Carpathians despite the ever harder law meant to prevent it. This identity separation led to strengthening and stressing the differences and intolerance eventually leading to violence. Confessionalisation of the Romanian world could not avoid the violence following confessionalisation as it occurred in other European areas.

In the year 1744, the action of monk Visarion based on collective blame against those turning to the Union thus separating from the faith of their ancestors raised a serious matter of consciousness in a peasant society very sensitive in their relations with their exemplary forerunners: those turning to the Union could no longer be present to Judgement Day and could never live Heaven eternity with their forerunners. This was the plain yet very persuasive message of the mysterious monk, thus acquiring the aura of a saint in the eyes of the masses. Instead of posing problems to the dead in the afterlife, they would rather burry them without a priest according to Bishop Inochentie Micu-Klein and “baptize their children with old women”. Bearing the guilt that, in their ignorance, they had embraced another faith than their ancestors’, the Romanian peasants “carried away with zeal started to clean the churches in some areas, particularly in the County of Hunedoara; they banished the Greek-Catholic priests, dug the land and took out the earth, or brought water and

washed the floor of the church” (Rus, 2002: 36), wrote Petru Bod. First, the peasants returned to tradition accompanied by gestures belonging to popular Christianity, where Christian and pagan practices were mingled. They became aware of the sin of deserting their old faith not due to Visarion’s action. This was but a mean of stressing and confirming it. They needed its ephemeral passage to be more convinced of the path they should follow. It was the expectancy of the extraordinary that provided force to the movement, not the extraordinary itself (Șipoș, 2007: 70). Authorities were not able to understand the Orthodox fervour. An order of the Government issued on May 6, 1745 read as follows: the “poor minded Wallachians” were lured in their opinion by “such villain and despicable low-life”. In vain did the Catholic clergy attempt to discredit the “fake monk”. The situation turned into a catastrophe, according to their representatives, by becoming a cliché more generally expressed at the time, as people abandoned even their status as Christians when leaving the Uniate Church and joined pagan rites: “This harm is so deep that the people, after leaving the Union, do not seem to return to the schism; moreover they become savage. Instead of receiving the eucharist, they receive tree buds and fruits. Instead of the holy myrrh, they use honey and other things. They baptize their children with women and have other despicable ceremonies” (Șipoș, 2007: 223). Only pagans or fake Christians could deviate in such manner from basic Christian sacraments. Institutionally illegitimate, the Orthodox Church proved to be precarious and illegitimate from a canonical point of view by welcoming them, according to the authors of the abovementioned lines.

The adversaries of Orthodoxy spoke more and more often about attacking and disdaining Queen’s Church that the Romanian priests had joined. The same frequent images in the discourse of the lay officials or representatives of the Uniate Church incriminated those leaving the Union, such as: the purification of churches and cult objects touched by the “non-priests”; the burial of the dead separately from the ones buried with Uniate priests; even exhumation of those buried with a religious service served by them; baptism and marriage of old people; illegal or incestuous marriages; the practice of rites to idols: liturgical meetings in hidden places; receiving the eucharist with tree buds; the action of profaning Uniate churches: a dog thrown in the Greek-Catholic church at Rasinari, where people threw stones through the windows of the church to the priest performing the divine service; the persecution of the Greek-Catholic priests, setting some houses on fire, pulling some others down. They made them pay taxes and excluded them from the community: they did not let their cattle with the herd; they refused to eat or drink with them at the same table; they refused to marry the daughters of Uniate priests or to go to their funerals; imposture in practising the holy secrets: selling the eucharist. To these we have to add the allegations of connections with the clergy in Wallachia, where priests were still ordained, although it was defended by orders

and proclamations. Missionary actions of Orthodox priests in different corners of the country to turn people from Greek-Catholicism were incriminated. The disdain against their fellows returning to Eastern law was expressed in phrases such as “cohort”, “herd”, “villain garbage”, “traitors” (Ștefănescu, 2011: 170).

On the other side, particularly the Metropolitan Bishop of Karlowitz, they sent to Maria Teresa a long line of petitions annexed to memoires. In the spring of 1755, the villages responded to the calls of priest Cosma din Deal with “letters” on the repression he had had to suffer in the past ten years. Certainly, these were subjective exaggerated testimonies elaborated in such a way to provide a paroxysmal trend to the dramatic situation, to victimise the Orthodox communities and to demonise the Uniate clergy and the authorities serving it.

Maybe the pattern provided to villages was the “letter” written by priest Cozma on his own behalf. Beyond the initial belief in the cause he embraced, we can see in “Cartea popei Cosma” (Priest Cosma’s Letter) dated April 13 an increasing rage as his status as a leader generated a tough treatment from the representatives of the Uniate Church supported by public authority targeted both on him and (particularly) on his family. He felt entitled to start collecting data relating to the troubles suffered by the Orthodox believers in Transylvania in order to give them to the Serbian Metropolitan Bishop for two main reasons: a moral one – the superiority conferred by the fact that “he was caught in Beograd for 60 weeks”, the other one relating to the acknowledgement of his quality as a representative of Orthodox villages by the highest authorities on earth from his point of view: Queen Maria Teresa and the Emperor of Russia, who had interceded for his release from prison. The oppression he was subject to, as we understand at the end of the “letter”, started once he was ordained as priest in Bucharest by the Metropolitan Bishop of Wallachia. “When I became a priest at Neofit in Bucharest, I went home on November 30, 1745. When I arrived, Daianul got me 20 pails of wine for becoming a priest of Greek law.” He did not intend to show all troubles he had suffered as he considered them as inherent to his position as a leader. He only pointed out that during the ten years of conflict “the gentlemen from Sebes and the Uniate priests ran to catch the priest... about 28 times”. He mentioned the most relevant ones: he first evoked the detention that lasted over one year, his dramatic release ordered by the commandant of the garrison under the direct order of the Empress and he stressed the intervention of the Moscow messenger to Vienna. Then, “as God saved him from their hands, when he returned home on the third day, the Uniate priests chased him again trying to catch him”. Since they could not catch him, he was hit through the suffering his family had to undergo: “they caught the priest’s father and held him for four weeks on August 15 in the year of God 1752”. The same year, “lazy Daianu and two bold forest guards and their Uniate priests came again to catch him. As they could not catch him since he was not at home on December 13, they tied his wife and the child on her lap

and held them until the child froze to death”. These events with a deep imprint on the priest’s sensibility were accompanied by a long line of notes on spoliation of goods that were mentioned in all his “letters”: when his wife was arrested, “they took a four pail container of wine and, without waiting for the bread to be ready, they took four loaves and went away”. There were other sacrileges besides the priestess’ arrest and torture particularly as a mother losing a child under dramatic conditions: the large quantity of wine the Uniate priests drank while waiting for the priestess to cook the bread morally disqualified them just like the fact that they did not have the patience to wait for the bread to be cooked before taking it and leaving, considering that both bread and wine as symbols of the Christian belief were defiled. We also have to notice the time when these events occurred, particularly in wintertime, which has several explanations: on the one hand, they avoided disturbing agricultural labour that was important to public authorities and, on the other hand, they sought to find the inhabitants at home. It was quite difficult to hide in the woods and thus it was easier to break the resistance of people facing wintertime and spoliation right before holidays with the aim of preventing them from enjoying them in peace. The same spoliation was at the end of winter, when in traditional societies there was the risk of exhausting the resources and facing starvation. The facts enumerated in this matter are not exhaustive, they are merely representative: “in 1750, the judge from Sebes named Hutar, sent them and they took a horse that was worth 24 zloty; in 1751, Hutar sent them again and they took 24 sheep and 5 small lambs; within two days, they took the rest of the sheep and their lambs; in 1752, Daianul and three priests tried to catch him again, but they could not seize him, so they took two mares”. These were valuable assets in the peasant system: cattle and animal products were frequently mentioned in this type of documents. They were the basis of a peasant household. The Orthodox priest’s household was a peasant one, as he was legally assimilated to a serf. Yet, it was more prosperous than many peasant households as it benefitted from different services rendered by the parishioners (Ștefănescu, 2011: 174).

Due to this type of complaints, he intended and managed to outline a terrible picture of the situation of the Romanian Orthodox that had to be regulated by officially acknowledging the Orthodox confession and by restoring the church hierarchy.

Villages acquired self-confidence and imposed their point of view by force, such as the case at Jina where, on September 28, 1755, people chased away the Uniate priests from the church and gave it to Orthodox priests. When they went to render the church, several priests led by the “famous Avram Pop”, an archpriest of Daia, accompanied by county officers, were expected at the entrance to the cemetery by beaten up villagers armed with pitchforks (Dragomir, 2002: 187-188). Gradually, Transylvanian authorities’ confidence in

the possibility of restoring the situation as before 1744 was weakening. Even the Uniate archbishop was convinced when, going to the mass at Saliste in September 1757, only a small part of the villagers accompanied him, most of them preferring to gather at the “counter-church” nearby, at the pub, “whence they shout and threaten” (Dragomir, 2002: 188). In other places, the Uniate clergymen were disdained: the Uniate archpriest of Rasinari went to Cacova on March 28, 1757, to convince the community to return to the Union; spending the night over, the villagers entered the (Uniate) priest Oprea’s barn and cut the horse’s tail (Ștefănescu, 2011: 188).

At the same time, peasants’ attitude was equivocal. They declared they would not ever return to the Union. Yet, when arrested, they changed their point of view. It is the case of the people in Orlat in 1758, who promised that they “would partly search the Uniate Church”. However, this did not prevent them from defending the Uniate priest to perform the service. They brought the non-Uniate priest from Sibiel for liturgy. When the Uniate priest Bucur came with an order from Sibiu on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Orthodox believers chased him out of the church by force (Ștefănescu, 2011: 189).

In order to eliminate hesitations at meetings held in more and more places, such as the one called by priest Stan from Glamboaca on May 7, 1759 for the Romanians along the Olt and Hirtibaciul river described by Jesuit Pallovics, people were first informed that the action was guaranteed by the queen through a sealed decree shown to everybody present. It attested that resorting to non-Uniate priests was a legal act. People gathered seven coins from each commune and were asked to sign with their fingers certifying that they would not return to the Union. The leaders used of specific oral persuasion means: showing the seals to prove the authenticity and legitimacy of the movement, or marking the paper with the finger as a sign of commitment, of oath. Signing one after another, people were convinced not only of the acknowledged justice of the “good queen”, but also of the force represented by their solidarity for a just cause. The Jesuit author of the letter was concerned: devoid of forceful measures, these condemnable measures – imposture, lying to the people with fake diplomas, or breeching of law – the movement would expand to most of the country. The fake diploma that the Orthodox priests would use to lie to people was also invoked by the Uniate Archpriest Colun, who described and presented it at the meeting organised by priest Ilie from Sacahaza: he first held it hanging from a string and showed it to the people; he then read it from a higher place in the church, probably the pulpit, finally adding: “It was given to us five years ago and it was lost; now God gave it back to us”. Petru Bod was also aware of its existence. (Ștefănescu, 2011: 191). It was a typical peasant way of action: solidarity and instigation against Uniate priests, authorities, and soldiers; occupying and taking over the churches often given back to the Uniate under threat, then re-occupying them. When becoming aware



of the force provided by their large number, they afforded to use peasant sarcasm: making fun of the adversary, irony by means pertaining to peasant humour, ostensive meetings at the pub as a “counter-church”, or the “church of devil” – as French historians say – where they spoke louder when Uniate priests performed the service, thus symbolically lowering the competing church to the level of the pub. They left the church where they were brought by force by the judge under the pretext that his nose was bleeding. They cut the Uniate Archpriest’s horse tail when he spent the night in Cacova. They threw a dead dog in the church. We cannot confirm that such actions were real considering that the information comes from the incriminating sources. In peasant society, these could be framed within easily traceable anthropological boundaries. They can be noticed particularly on the Uniate side to show the lowering level of codes of conduct of people belonging to a Church depicted as primitive for allowing and encouraging such practices of pagan origin, thus supporting the spiritual and institutional superiority of the Church United with Rome. Allegations aimed at discrediting the Orthodox to authorities. Their Christian behaviour was doubted. There were references to derogations from administering the sacraments, breeching the norms of the Eastern Church on whose behalf they committed such actions. According to the representatives of the Uniate clergy, they ignored the basic rules of eastern belief. What could they restore, considering that the Christian-Oriental tradition was preserved by the Uniate Church, while the claims of the non-Uniate were illegitimate, absurd and against Christian faith in general? Eucharist and sacramental bread with tree buds; what might one expect from impostors and foreign agents forging diplomas to encourage pagan practices? Obviously, according to the same logic, they could officialise incest, sell the sacramental bread, take advantage of naivety and good intentions, as well as of peasants’ naivety to take money from them, etc. (Ștefănescu, 2011: 192-193).

In conclusion, in the Transylvanian area mingled for several centuries, confessionalisation was a continuous process amongst the Romanian population, as they were more numerous. The Austrian state tried to restore through them the Catholicism weakened by the Protestant reform. The image of preservation of Transylvanian Romanian people’s confessional unity that the state and representatives of the Uniate Church strove to accredit was hit by a reviving culpability of betraying eastern traditions of their ancestors, which had always been very powerful over rural people. Hence the strong Orthodox reaction that ultimately led to acknowledging the legitimacy of the Orthodox confession and strengthened the contradictions between the two Romanian confessions that seemed less important at the beginning.

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# RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN BESSARABIA DURING THE “REACTION” OF NIKOLAI I (THE CASE OF JEWISH POPULATION)

Ion GUMENĂI\*

**Abstract.** *In this article the author first examines the general framework that characterizes the reign of Tsar Nikolai I in the Russian Empire. At the same time, the author establishes the main directions in different areas, the attitude and position of the autocrat regarding the religious policy, the attitude towards dominant Orthodox Church and towards other religious currents. Continuing with the religious side, the author focuses on the legal issue and on the situation of the Jews in Bessarabia during Nicolai I. For a consistent and accurate speech, there are highlighted the main legal provisions and rules which regulated the evolution of Jewish community in Bessarabia over 30 years. To determine more exactly the status of this demographic segment between the Prut and Dniester, the comparative method is used, as to the rest of representatives of the Jewish faith from the Russian Empire so to the local population, so as to determine the attitude more or less favorable of the imperial authorities towards the Jews, as well as the causes that generated this.*

**Keywords:** *Russian Empire, legislation, Judaism, local population, political, religious*

A historical research or a study of empires is not a novelty today, as well as the investigations carried out with regard to these national superstructures for a specific segment of time or for a period when the same were ruled by figures with a positive or negative tinge, depending on the qualificatives given by current researchers. Today are various the works which try to conceptualize empires, other than the traditional one, with daring interpretations, both in the general historical appreciation of them and appreciation of different branches and actions within them. In the first and in the latter cases, we would like to

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point out a major drawback, namely the generalization that in a more thorough research with an emphasis either on geographical, or on demographic, ethnic or confessional element, can highlight a completely different result.

In our case we would confine to a particular territory, to a certain ethnic-religious segment and to a segment of time of 30 years during the reign of Tsar Nikolai I. As to the territory, it is contained within the space between the Dniester and the Prut, or Bessarabia. The ethnic-religious element chosen represents only the Jewish population, because of the limited space given for such a research and the probability to overload the proposed speech by including all religious minorities from Bessarabia of that time on the one hand, and on the other hand by the availability of a vast number of documents related to this segment. Thus for the period of Nikolai I, more than 600 decrees and other state regulations referring to Jews, can be listed (Левайда, 1874.).

As for the person of Nikolai I, it also has not been chosen by chance, being known that it was the period of maximum expression of Russian autocracy as inside its guberniyas so to the peripheries and on the international level.

Generally the personality of the King succeeded to the throne of St. - Petersburg, is still a controversial figure in contemporary historiography. Due to the fact that during his reign a number of reforms had been performed in the Russian Empire having a progressive character that allowed to improve things, as for example the legal regulations (The full collections of the Russian Empire laws and of the Russian Empire code of Laws had been published), an important breakthrough in transportation (the construction of the first railway line and of developed network of roads) or another significant breakthrough in culture, some of the researchers believe that the period of his reign may be regarded as one with a positive character<sup>1</sup>, and some, we mean primarily the representatives of the monarchical movement, even consider him “the knight of autocracy and the savior of the nation”<sup>2</sup>. It is however clear that the measures, undertaken by the Tsar immediately after his enthronement and throughout his reign, were of course backward as compared to its predecessor and his successor. In this respect we refer primarily to such measures as the overall number reduction in the State Council, an advisory democratic body constituted by Alexander I. The system of ministries, created by the same king, was replaced with a new organ - Imperial Majesty's Chancellery. This consisted of Bureau I representing the personal chancellery of the king; Bureau II dealing with the codification of rules; Bureau III supervising the political police and gendarmerie, two instruments that became extremely influential during Nikolai

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<sup>1</sup> Ерошкин Н.П., *Российское самодержавие*, Издательство РГГУ, Москва, 2006 on <http://www.regiment.ru/Lib/A/52/1.htm> (last access 03.05.2011)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.imperiya.net/nikolaj\\_1.htm](http://www.imperiya.net/nikolaj_1.htm) (last access 18.04.2011)

I; Bureau IV dealing with charitable institutions<sup>3</sup>. The institution was founded and run by such principles that it actually represented the body through which the whole Russian Empire was governed. Then, in 1828 the new regulation on primary and secondary schools was introduced, by which actually was established an educational system based on the principles of social belonging. As an amendment, in 1835 was entered the new Regulations on universities, which greatly reduced the autonomy of the university, the institutions being subjected to strict political control. Generally, by the end of the reign of Nikolai I the process had increased even more, the university autonomy was practically liquidated, the access to higher education being reduced to a maximum<sup>4</sup>. That course was adopted because of the firm conviction of the Emperor that the dangerous reformist and revolutionary ideas were implemented in particular through educational institutions, and for that reason he was always saying “I need people to be loyal not smart.” In this context, an excessive bureaucratic apparatus had been instituted, by which the Tsar would control all the branches and departments of the Empire. Or, as shown by some researchers, the suppression of the Decembrist rebellion and the personal participation of the autocrat to their hearing, had shown that the entire noble class was under the influence of Western Europe thinking, so of the Revolution, which made him not be able to support it as the Emperor was saying “The revolution is on the verge of Russia, but I swear that it will not enter into it, as long as I am alive and until by the God mercy I am the king”. For these reasons the great nobility was removed from all key executive positions by central and local order, being mostly replaced by officials, basically of military origin so that all the empire was framed into a docile and disciplined bureaucratic-military system in order of the autocrat, so that Vasily Klyuchevsky showed that the bureaucracy “is the power that has lost the goal of its activity, for which reason it has become aimless, but has continued to be strong<sup>5</sup>.”

The thing not least important for our study is the position of Nikolai I to the Church. As show by F.I. Tyutchev for Nikolai I that was mostly antipathetic to the revolutionary spirit: “Revolution is first and foremost enemy of Christianity. The anti-Christian spirits is the soul of the revolution: this is its distinctive character”. For those reasons the tsar accepted without hesitation the propagandist and ideological formula proposed by S.S. Uvarov, Minister of Education in 1833, which had the formula “Orthodoxy – autocracy – nation” (Мицлер, 2006), which we believe should oppose the Western formula: “Liberty - Equality – Fraternity”. We believe that it is no mere chance that the

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<sup>3</sup> Н.Павленко; И. Андреев; В.; Кобрин; В. Федоров, История России с древнейших времен on <http://wordweb.ru/andreev/index.htm> (last access 21.05.2011)

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>5</sup> Ерошкин Н.П., *op.cit.*

first official anthem of the Russian Empire is composed in the same year "Боже, Царя храни" (Go Save the Tsar). In this sense, Nikolai I really saw in the Orthodox Church one of the main institutions he could rely on and by which the Russian autocracy in the Russian Empire could be maintained. For these reasons the institution was given a great of attention, a series of decrees and laws being issued<sup>6</sup> aimed to make the Orthodox Church one of the most powerful and dedicated institution, which in fact happened, the period when the Holy Synod could be compared with a simple ministry in the hands of the tsar. Otherwise were seen the other religions and confessions, naturally and

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<sup>6</sup> From the financial point of view during the reign of Nikolay I the state costs for the needs of the Orthodox Church increased about three times, and subsidies for the Holy Synod increased about twice and a half, from 1.7 million to 4.1 million silver rubles. The wage for parish priests was introduced, and in addition to that an annual pay of 500 000 rubles was introduced for the needs of poor parishes. The imperial decree was issued in 1829 which united the smallest and poorest parishes to create the strong ones.

At the same time measures were taken to raise the prestige of those institutions. In 1826 there were introduced severe penalties to clergy that denigrated its status. The Imperial Ordinance issued in 1831 by which the priests could not be reformed, were enrolled in the army as well as their children who had the same behavior. To stop priests "migration" from one parish to another, the Passport system was introduced to them. At the same time the administrative structure of the church was changed. The College of synod bishops transformed practically in a consultative body attached to the Ober-prosecutor. The Synod, like the Ministries, was divided into departments, and Ober – prosecutor with the rights of a minister was introduced to the Committee of Ministers.

Also during the reign of this tsar, the diocesan leadership was put under a double allegiance, of the Ober - prosecutor and gubernator, for that reason the diocesan boundaries were modified because of their coincidence with the guberniyas. Because of that the number of new religious-administrative units increased of 1.5 times. That way the diocesan bishops actually turned into gubernator's assistants for religious issues, and for the "safety" of the bishops, there was instituted a supervision by Bureau III of his Majesty's Imperial Chancellery. Thus actually the maximum submission of the Russian Orthodox Church to secular power in the Russian Empire was reached.

Nikolay I had a negative attitude towards the religious fanaticism and obscurantism, but neither accepted the "libertinism" in matters of faith and also towards any attempts against the Orthodox institution and his positions. For those reasons in 1825, in 1853 and in 1831, there were established special secret committees for developing measures to fight the different unorthodox movements from the Russian Empire and particularly against the dissenters (Old believers). Also at the initiative of the Emperor, in 1842 the Holy Synod issued the act of separating and grading of the most harmful, less harmful and acceptable heresy and sects from the Russian Empire, aiming to take appropriate actions depending on the degree of danger.

logically so, because those already by their existence could harm the authority and power of the Orthodox Church.

This can be stated at a general level in the Russian Empire, but what was the actual situation in the provinces and in our case in Bessarabia? And here we shall make a statement to say that the term “reaction” has been quoted not to refer to the territory and the local Orthodox Bessarabian population but to the representatives of the religious minorities compared with the general situation in the empire and with the local population.

So, as mentioned above, most of the references to a religious minority are related to Jewish population. Our attention has been drawn by the fact that some young researchers, taking without a critical attitude the position of G. Bogdan - Duica generally consider the Tsarist policy in Bessarabia towards the Jewish people as being very anti-Semitic (Bogdan-Duică, 1913: 51). Thus, the first instrument of the reign of Nikolai I, which referred only to the Jewish settlers, was of January 12, 1826, which depicted the deplorable situation of the Jewish colonies in Novorussia, showing that Jews were not accustomed to agricultural work, that there was a high mortality rate, and four years of drought could be added. Therefore, it was decided those settlers not pay state taxes but in the next 10 years to pay a single tax of 15-20 kopecks for a dessiatina of land, like the rest of the settlers (*Полное Собрание Законов*, 1830: том 1, Nr. 52). Or, by this law we can see nothing that could show a negative connotation to this segment of the Jewish population.

In the same year, a new censorship law was introduced that stiffened the administrative control over the press and literary activity, which among the intellectuals was dubbed “The iron law”. The Paragraphs 194 -200 of Chapter IV referred to the Jewish press and writings and by which Jewish books that did not pass the censorship committee were forbidden to circulate in the Russian Empire, while the following books being allowed to be published: a) books of Holy Scripture without comments; b) Books of prayer “without other additions”, c) polemic books of various Jewish movements that correspond to the censorship. It was strictly prohibited the publication of books that were against Christianity or against God. There were forbidden books that recommended to Jewish a negative attitude towards the representatives of other faiths, or books that recommended not to testify for a Christian, or that permitted to deceive Christians (Леванда, 1874: Nr. 143 ).

It goes without saying that if those laws taken separately, without being included in the general context of the law, then there could be seen an obvious discrimination of what would have been literary and journalistic product of Jewish element. In the general context, the whole framework which that new censorship law referred to has been put in the same situation of coercion. From another point of view, if we try to make a comparison with native Bessarabian element, a very different situation is outlined. In this context, we give only one example, the law of



June 10, 1826 did not limit the use of language for works. But for the space between the Prut and Dniester in limitation in circulation of Romanian books is known since 1823, when the wife of a Moldovan tax-collector, Zoitsa Paleolog could pass the board to Bessarabia with only 15 of the 24 books she wanted to take, getting hardly an approbation even for this (Constantinescu-Iași, 1929: 12).

Or after the enthronement of Nikolai I and especially after commissioning in 1828 the “The Vorontsov Regulations”, the disuse or prohibition of the Romanian language, including of the literature in that language was one of the main directions of the tsarist administration (Danilor, 2007). In this case, what could be more important for a nation than the language it speaks?

In 1827 on 26 August there were issued the Regulations on recruitment and military service of Jews (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 2, №. 1330). It comprised 14 chapters and stipulated that beginning with the year of 1827 the Jewish people from will be treated under the law equally as the rest of the population of the Russian Empire, canceling the total release of the Jews from military service, replacing the existing practice at the time of payment in money, by requesting this segment of the population to perform the military service in nature. The Regulations also established the rules under which the Jews military representatives will be recruited and the penalties that were to be taken in case of evasion and sheltering of those who tried to evade the performance of this service.

After dealing with issues on the categories that could be released from the military service, providing the oath of allegiance and the manner of execution of service in the army, some facilities were given for Jews who had performed military service, last chapter set out the arrangements for religious life of Jewish faith representatives in the army institutions (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 2, №. 1330).

Practically, the Jewish population was put under the same conditions regarding the military service in the Russian Empire with other coexisting nations and religions.

From another point of view the Jewish people from Bessarabia neither beginning with 1827 nor in subsequent years were recruited in the tsarist army, being exempted from this service together with the local population. Only on October 18, 1851 an imperial decree was issued stating that no impediments are found to recruit Jews from Bessarabia for military service, that is why it was required that starting with the next year when the tenth military recruitment for Western Region the empire was to be done, to take from among the Jews the number of recruits stated in the Imperial Manifesto (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 26, №. 25655). That happened when four days later the Official Opinion of the State Supreme Soviet was issued, which stated the necessary measures of punishment to be taken in cases of the Jews evasion of military service (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 654).

On the other hand, it is not known what the impediments that did not allow in Bessarabia the recruitment of Jews in the Russian army were, but in 1854 on November 13 and then December 9, the Senate issued the decrees by which the Jewish population of Bessarabia was again released from military service in the tsarist army (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 29, Nr. 28812). It is clear, however, that until the mid-70s of the nineteenth century Jewish population of Bessarabia was not enrolled in the tsarist army, a fact which we believe was more favorable than in the Russian Empire.

In 1830 there was adopted a number of important laws. So on September 6, the Minister of Interior issued the law by which allowed the Jews enrolled in the army to join on their will to any Christian religion tolerated within the borders of the Russian Empire (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 5, р. II, Nr. 3896). A few days later, on September 25, as an amendment to the previous law, this time by the order of the Senate, there was granted the privilege of exemption from taxation of the Jewish population who will take Christianity (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 5, Nr. 3951). If comparing the situation with other religious movements in fact we see that there are no differences, because in 1826 on 17 June the Supreme Soviet took the decision on tax exemption for a period of three years of Mohammedan and other pagan religions representatives (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, ТОМ 1, Nr. 409).

Obviously, to increase the control over the process, on 14 October, there were issued rules on preclusion of the cases of simulation by Jews of receiving the Christianity which among other things requested: 1. To put in the responsibility of the spiritual leaders of Evangelical and Romano-Catholic churches, the education by the priests of Christian dogmas and traditions to Jewish. Upon accepting the same, a letter shall be written by the priest as well as positive recommendations from the clergymen. 2. The leaders of these churches shall not baptize Jews with poor knowledge of Christianity and baptize on Sundays when a lot of people is present, and in the same or the next Sunday to come to Communion. 3. To baptize the Jews only in the city churches. 4. The priests shall inform if they are to baptize a sick Jew who can not be baptized in public and who has to come to the church immediately after recovery (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 220).

In order to present the situation in this field in Bessarabia, we shall remember the decree of the Supreme Soviet of November 28, 1830 by which a series of privileges were granted to Jews who accepted Christianity and which stated: 1. All the Jews from Bessarabia who received Christianity before adopting the present order are to be exempted for life to pay taxes and fees. 2. While bringing this decree to the attention of all baptized Jews to oblige them choose the type of occupation and the society they will be registered to under the Act of September 26, 1829. 3. These exemptions are not applied on children of already baptized parents. 4. For those who will receive Christianity

after this law is adopted to be exempted from taxes for a period of three years, after which to provide all the services depending on the caste which they choose (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 224).

The last order referring the Jews was issued on December 20, 1830 by the Committee of Ministers and provided certain privileges to all the Jews who wish to migrate to Bessarabia from Nikolaev and Sevastopol and that repeated those set in the imperial decree of 26 September of the same year with reference to all the merchants of the Russian Empire who will want to settle in the region (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, том 5, р. II, Nr. 4204). As the tsarist government did not fulfill all the promises, the Jews submitted a series of appeals to the higher courts, so on February 26, 1835 the Committee of Ministers issued the order by which the Jewish people from Ismail, who came there from Nikolaev and Sevastopol, received facilities for a period of 25 years (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, том 10, Nr. 8886).

If talking about the facilities or privileges for the Jewish population in Bessarabia, then such laws can be found throughout the period under discussion. So, for example in 1837 at the initiative of Bessarabia General Gubernator Vorontsov, Jews were allowed to remain near the locality of Tuzla, an important salt center extracting, for increasing the commercial activity (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 342); on January 15, 1838 there was introduced *The law on exile from the capital of the Jewish having no passport* (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 361), fact which did not refer to Chisinau, where we have not reported such measures; on October 11, 1838 there was issued the law which allowed the Jews who held degrees from Russian academies and universities to be employed as doctors in the civil service in Novorussia Guberniya and Bessarabia Oblast (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 382); from January 7, 1839 the Jews of Bessarabia and Novorussia were allowed to open small markets on landowners property, thing necessary for stimulation of commercial exchanges (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 385); on February 17, 1842 the holders of the right to collect taxes for beverages from Bessarabia were allowed to keep a Jew aimed to consume beverages (ПОЛНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ЗАКОНОВ, том 17, Nr. 15501).

Critical to the development of the Jewish population's situation in the Russian Empire was the year of 1844. In that year, on 26 June, there was issued the law on the location of the Jewish churches in relation to the Orthodox churches (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 496), on 13 November the Ministry of Education introduced the regulations regarding the Jewish schools (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 506), and on 19 December the law on the abolition of Jewish Kahal was adopted (ЛЕВАНДА, 1874: Nr. 510).

The last law actually abolished the Jewish self-government. Namely, the law was seen as one of the most reactionary in the period of Nikolai I, with reference to Jewish people. We would agree but still we presume to make some remarks. First we think it is one of the few ethnic groups that have retained autonomy up to that point, the more that these very freedoms were viewed very

negatively by Nikolai I, as it has been said. The law actually liquidated in major lines the administrative bodies of Jewish communities existing up to that point (such privilege was hard to find on the whole territory of the Russian Empire) and passing them under the administration of the local bodies that were part of the whole administration and ruling system formed by tsarism, which seemed, again, normally in relation to any other ethnicity or ethnic group, where the Russian autocrat wanted to have the grip on all the possible levers of society control. On the other hand these laws did not abolish or prohibit the Jewish societies that continued to exist.

From another point of view, if comparing the situation of the Jewish and Romanian population of Bessarabia after the adoption of “Vorontsov Regulations” since 1828, we can see that the situation of the last was much more impaired. It is enough to mention here only a few of the finer points. In terms of governance of the region: by the new regulations, the Supreme Council was replaced with a provincial council, officially called “Institution for Bessarabia region administration”. Pursuant to the law the council was being convened only twice a year and had as a priority only economic and supply issues to discuss. The nobility was not present in this body, this layer being represented only by nobility Marshal, the only elected member of the council, and two permanent members appointed by the ruling Senate, after the proposals of the Governor General. The remaining members were appointed by the central authorities. Being deprived of any initiative, the body actually represented an authority with advisory rights with the right to make proposals on issues that were submitted by the Governor General, civil governor, provisional government or nobility Marshal. The Council decisions could be stopped by the Governor General and submitted by him at the corresponding ministry (Boldur, 1992). The resident position was abolished, and Bessarabia was transformed into a part of Novorussia. All power was now concentrated in the hands of the civil governor, who depended directly on the Governor General of Novorussia. Later, in 1836, he would become also the military governor, combining also the duties of Bessarabia military commander. Instead of district subprefects there were appointed Russians *nachalniks* (commandants), actually during this period Bessarabia was practically invaded on the level of administration by officials who came from the Russian Empire, mostly Russian (Nistor, 1991). At law, the courts were organized by the Russian model. In terms of language policy in 1828, in Chisinau, Bender, Balti, Hotin, Cetatea Alba and Ismail there were established only schools having Russian as the teaching language. With regard to them, in the years 1839-1841, there were presented petitions to the government for the introduction of Romanian language in popular schools. Eventually, however, in October 1842 there was

allowed the introduction of Romanian language, but in the seventh decade of the nineteenth century it will be completely and permanently excluded<sup>7</sup>.

Any national freedoms as well as Moldovan laws were suppressed. The Russian language was introduced in all public acts. “*Common guberniyal institutions for all Russia and the entire state tax system*” had been set up here. *The secretarial work had been done in Russian language*”. Meanwhile, the Romanian language was removed from the provincial administration. It was even forbidden by Article 63 of the new regulations, which stated: “All the records of the state establishments of Bessarabia province will be written in Russian”. But, however, ascertaining the impossibility of complete elimination of Romanian language out of the official documents, it will be used until 1834, and even casual until 1854. As an example of this policy may serve the fact that by the late nineteenth century, in the Chisinau public library, founded in 1832, among the 20,000 volumes contained in that institution, there was no book in Romanian language<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, taking into consideration the presented data, it can be easily concluded that the situation of the native population was not better than that of the Jewish people and even worse in some cases, if we consider the provisions with respect to Jewish education which provided among other things that “For teaching Jewish law disciplines at Jewish schools, teachers from among the Jews shall be chosen, who, if necessary, can be brought from other countries, especially from Bavaria, Prussia and Austria, for the own account of these institutions”, not to mention about the right to use the national language in education (Леванда, 1874: Nr.506).

After the liquidation of Jewish communities self-administration, there followed a series of laws from the tsarist government that aimed to track more precisely the Jewish population and especially to control the payment of taxes and the financial circuit. In this context, we can interpret the nominal order of the Minister of Interior of December 16, 1846 stating that the rescript comes at the initiative of the Emperor who had examined the proposal of the Committee for Jewish people settlement, for the census of the Jewish population in Bessarabia (Полное Собрание Законов, том 21, Nr. 20709), thing that would happen during the years 1847-1848. We do not know what the concrete cause was, but a few years later, in July 6, 1853 there will be ordered, this time by the Senate, a new census of the Jewish population of Bessarabia (Полное Собрание Законов, том 2, Nr. 27414). Perhaps the execution of the first order

<sup>7</sup> Mircea Rusnac, *Perioada autocrației în Basarabia țaristă (1825 - 1873)* on [http://www.istoria.md/articol/460/Perioada\\_Autocra%C5%A3iei\\_%C3%AEn\\_Basarabia\\_%C5%A2arist%C4%83](http://www.istoria.md/articol/460/Perioada_Autocra%C5%A3iei_%C3%AEn_Basarabia_%C5%A2arist%C4%83) (last access 01.04.2011)

<sup>8</sup> Idem, *Perioada reacționară în Basarabia* on [http://www.istoria.md/articol/462/Perioada\\_Reac%C5%A3ionar%C4%83\\_%C3%AEn\\_Basarabia\\_%C5%A2arist%C4%83](http://www.istoria.md/articol/462/Perioada_Reac%C5%A3ionar%C4%83_%C3%AEn_Basarabia_%C5%A2arist%C4%83) (last access 20.05.2011)

was defectively performed, a new census of this segment of the population of Bessarabia being needed at short time after. This is actually not uncommon, inaccuracy or failure in fulfilling orders was a mere thing typical for bureaucracy at the local and the central levels. Otherwise, for example, we can not explain the nonobservance of the provision of the Committee of Ministers of 4 April 1839 on the removal of Jews living at the borders from Bessarabia (Полное Собрание Законов, том 2, Nr. 12201). The very issue of law was in fact nonsense, since by executing the provision, a major part of the territory of Bessarabia should be prohibited for Jewish population. On the other hand neither the officials did their best to execute it.

Such a situation is not specific to only two cases above, but exists as a matter of fact, when sameness and poor execution of the provisions by the officials of the bureaucratic body, depends mostly on the distance from the center, that is why Bessarabia and was an area that various dissidents, including religious one, tended to. Moreover, in cases where the law could not be breached, the state official could be bribed not to meet certain provisions or simply be “forgotten”. For good reason, by the end of his life, the Emperor Nikolai I had been addressed his son exclaiming that “I think sometimes that in the whole Russia only you and I do not steal”, which is confirmed by one of the autocrat’s memoirist, who shows that the autocrat himself understood that his unlimited power was in fact limited by the “bureaucracy - the allover dreaded power, because all violations performed by the bureaucracy are called as compliance of order”<sup>9</sup>.

In the last part of his reign Nikolai I as already noted, dealt in particular with the population of Bessarabia regarding their recruitment in the imperial army, decree issued in 1851, which was eventually canceled by two subsequent laws 1854.

We have exposed the above data and information not to demonstrate that the situation of Jewish population in Bessarabia in the studied segment of time was a progressive and positive one. The facts set out above show only that this segment of population had, in our opinion, a better position compared to all the Jewish population of the Russian Empire and compared to the native population. This situation is not due to the fact that the administrative body representing the tsarist state power tried to replace the importance of the local element by the Jewish one, as it was actually tried in the northwest guberniyas of the Russian Empire and in the Kingdom of Poland, where it actually failed but with negative results for the Jewish Diaspora who the local population was directed against (Миллер, Долбилов, 2009).

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<sup>9</sup> М. Рахматулин, *Император Николай I и его царствование*, in «Наука и жизнь», № 1, 2, 3, 2002 on [http://www.nkj.ru/archive/articles/4008/?sphrase\\_id=41017](http://www.nkj.ru/archive/articles/4008/?sphrase_id=41017) (last access 01.04.2011)

Thorough analysis of the context and the diachronic development of events demonstrates that this status the Jewish population of Bessarabia has been framed in, results from the things specific to the Russian Empire and was highlighted by Geoffrey Hosking showing that the survival and intact maintenance of the empire's territory was the priority for all Russian leaders, an especially prominent thing, we would add, during the reign of Nikolai I, the goal that pushed to the sidelines any other issues of national, religious, economic or other origin (Хоскинг, 2001: 56-57).

And indeed we can state that the local Romanian population could not be the main support in the tendency to maintain the integrity of the territory, that being actually the main centrifugal force. In this case, the central power from St. - Petersburg, could not count on the support of local political elite, as it did elsewhere, luring it to its side by giving different privileges and different favors, as in Bessarabia there was no such elite. Nor was possible the displacement of the native element, knowing the importance the region between the Prut and Dniester had for the Russian policy in the Balkans. Thus the way out found and actually manifested most strongly in the period of Nikolai I, was the establishment of a balance represented by the population loyal to the tsar, which included the Jewish people. Namely, by means of it, we can find an impressive number of laws and provisions that reduced the importance of the Dominant Orthodox Church in the region had been brought, together with Jews, Protestant (Полное Собрание Законов, Nr. 2013, 2122, 7311, 17405) and Nekrasov Cossacks (Полное Собрание Законов, Nr. 6094) (mostly Old-Rite Orthodox) as well as the representatives of other sects (Полное Собрание Законов, Nr. 8096). To this we can add the violation of certain political principles and bringing and colonization in Bessarabia of a part of the Zaporozhian Cossacks returned from the Ottoman Empire (Полное Собрание Законов, Nr. 913), or population of the territory by Slavonic people that came from the south part of the Danube (Полное Собрание Законов, том 2, Nr. 2066; 3697; 3775; 3993.) and even a policy oriented to colonization of Russian peasants (Полное Собрание Законов, том 2, Nr. 592, 5394).

If to the situation to add the fact that Bessarabia, like Novorussia, was generally used by the tsarist government in the sense of “valve” to solve “the problem of Jews” and to reduce pressure on the central guberniyas of the empire, as well as the failures of the civilian-bureaucratic system of the Russian Empire, then it becomes clear what is the situation it is in, so on a more favorable level of life compared with the rest of the nationals of the rest of the empire and with the native population.

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# POPULATION, ETHNICITY AND CONFESSION IN THE COUNTY OF ARAD IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Eugen GHIȚĂ\*

**Abstract.** *At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Arad County contained only 25 localities in the north of Mureș River, and in the middle of the century, the administrative unit was extended by incorporating two districts of Zarand County, which would then be abolished. We made calculations on population from Arad County in its extended administrative form, but also including in these calculations the Serbian militaries' families, who, at least until the abolition of the Tisa-Mureș military border, had an important share in these areas. The growth of Arad County population throughout the period was 13.8 times, from about 15000 inhabitants around the year 1700 to 207039 inhabitants in 1828. From this point of view, Arad is different from all the counties from Transylvania and Partium. Only Sătmar County has grown quite large, 7.6 times during 1720-1828, while Bihor County increased 5.4 times and Cluj County 3.3 times in the same range.*

**Keywords:** *urbariums, conscriptions, population growth, demographic evolution.*

## 1. Introduction

Numbers regarding Arad County's population in the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th Century are very diverse, meaning that information varies from author to author, depending on the calculation method. Estimations were made with illusory approximations, without any real basis. The index of multiplication for the inscribed people was 5, 6 and even 7, depending on what tried each historian who was interested in the demographical problems of Arad County to prove. Many of them did not have

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any factual evidence. It is understandable for the historians of the 19th and early 20th century, but not acceptable for the late 20th century ones. These historians, although they had at hand more demographical notions, limited to taking information from earlier bibliography, which they adapted due to a critical spirit rather stated than realized. The mathematical rigor and continuity are not always visible in the works which treat the evolution of the population from Arad County during the 18th and early 19th century.

Some of the sources of errors which I ran into are:

- obvious calculations errors if we take into account the methods and the diversity of analyzed numbers
- rough estimations, even when available data would not imply this behavior
- random use of multiplication indices for the conscripted population
- the inexistence of complete and reliable statistical materials for the first 5-6 decades of the 18th century.
- the administrative structure of the county, which was reorganized several times, with direct implications on its population. Some historians compared the county's population in its early and late 18th century, ignoring the expansion which took place at the middle of the century, by incorporation of Ineu and Zarand subunits from Zarand County. This resulted in inconsistent numbers and percentages, which are without any logic.
- the existence of soldiers from militarized settlements who were not conscribed in the civilian documents of the 18th century, but were an important demographical presence at least until the middle of the century.

Striving to improve the method, I tried to obtain exact numbers by using some modern calculations and statistics. I had a big advantage, given that any operation could be rigorously done, from a mathematical perspective. I also took into account the Zarand and Ineu addition when following the county's population. I verified information from as many sources as possible, and, where possible, I compared it to the original historical source or I used original archive documents in order to verify the accuracy. It was one of my primary concerns to maintain a mathematical rigor, using 5 as the multiplication index. When information from two or more sources indicated otherwise, I did not hesitate to use that number, with the necessary explanations. Finally, I tried to eliminate obvious discrepancies by permanently comparing the number of inhabitants between different periods.

For the 1701-1828 period, there are more types of sources:

1. Original sources – the 1715 conscription, urbariums from 1767, 1771-1772; 1776 conscription, conscriptions of Arad town: 1741,

1767, 1768, 1776, 1779 and other conscriptions from Hungarian archives: 1757, 1773, 1774, 1791.

2. Edited sources – 1720, 1743-1752 conscriptions, the Iosephinian census, and the 1828 conscription.
3. Hungarian and Romanian bibliography which referred to the county's population, as evidenced below.

In what follows, I will make a summary of all numbers and sources, and then, by critical analysis I will try to clarify some data regarding the county's population. As it is apparent, data is very heterogeneous. The biggest discrepancies appear for the first half of the 18th century. The information underwent a critical analysis based on logical interpretation of figures which resulted from comparisons and evaluations.

## **2. Arad county's population in the period 1701-1828**

For the year 1700 Márki tried to estimate the county's population in its form after the Habsburgs came, that is, only 26 settlements above river Mureş. He estimated 10.000 inhabitants, which appears plausible at a close analysis (Márki, 1895: 627). The zone was depopulated after the conflicts with Ottomans, but the organization of the military border on the eastern bank was an attraction for Serbs and Romanian. There are no conscriptions for the first years of the century, but from following information we may assume that Márki's findings were close to reality. Nevertheless, we should add the population from the Zarand County, which would be incorporated after several decades. These are Zarand and Ineu districts, which counted 110 villages out of the county's 175, more than 60%. In 1715, entire Zarand County's population was a little above 10.500 inhabitants. Starting from these figures, I appreciate that the amount which needs to be added is somewhere near 5-6.000 inhabitants, which sums up to give approximately 15-16.000 inhabitants for the Arad County, in its shape from the middle of the century.

The consolidation of the Austrian occupation in Arad brought new conscriptions, which were designed for a better knowledge of the demographical realities in the new territories. There have been issued conscriptions on a regular basis, 1715 respectively 1720, which, although sometimes arbitrary and not rigorous with the total population, offer us important data on which we can recount the population. In 1715, Arad County had 981 (Ciuhandu, 1940: 29) inscribed, to which we add 1306 military families and 1342<sup>1</sup> inscribed from the Zarand County. We then obtain 3629 inscribed, representing 18.145 inhabitants. Consistent to the same methodical approach,

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<sup>1</sup> The 1342 enrolled in the two rounds of the Zarand county I obtained by processing data from the 1715 conscription from the Hungarian National Archives.

for 1720 we obtain 17.875 inhabitants, from 589 inscribed, together with 1306<sup>2</sup> military families and 1680 from Zarand (Gyémánt, 1990: 179; Kovách, Roz, 1977: *passim*).

A new stage in the evolution of Arad County represents Maria Theresa's (1740-1780) early rule. A former request of the noblemen to disintegrate the militarized commons and integrate them into the county superimposed with the authorities' wish to reorganize the county. It was therefore that a big part of Zarand County was added to Arad County, namely, Zarand and Ineu districts. In this context, both problems were solved by organizing conscription, for a better knowledge of the reality. Unfortunately, results are not fully convincing for the simple reason that these conscriptions were from different years. Especially the process of dismantling the military border was slow, given that many chose to immigrate to Russia or move to other border regiments. Gheorghe Ciuhandu published these conscriptions, which he mainly used to determine the ethnical and confessional percentage of Arad County. Even if he wasn't rigorously interested in computing the total number of inhabitants, information from the conscriptions permit this computation for the middle of the 18th century.

The conscriptions issued by the authorities were the following: 1743 – conscription of the 31 settlements which formed the initial Arad County; 1746 – conscription of 50 settlements from Zarand district; 1746 – conscription of 78 settlements from Ineu district; 1746 – conscription of militaries from Arad and Ohaba; 1747 – conscription of militaries from 6 settlements which were inventoried before; 1752 – conscription of other 8 militarized settlements. Excluding the twice conscribed settlements I obtained a total of 169 settlements which formed up the Arad County at the middle of the 18th century (Ciuhandu, 1940: 30-31).

In what regards the computation of the total population, I think we can consider 1747 as a reference, because four conscriptions are from 1746-1747, and, moreover, they contain the most part of the population. Reanalyzing and correcting miscalculations I found a total of 47.154 people (Ghiță, 2011: 82).

The following conscription we can use to estimate the county's population is the one from 1771-1772. It is an urbarial conscription which tried

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<sup>2</sup> In the absence of other data we considered similar to the figure five years ago, although at a first glance significant changes have occurred after the Austro-Turkish war of 1716-1718, by limiting the importance of border at Mureș. At the same time, there are at least two arguments that make me state that the number of military families was at least 1306 in 1720. On the one hand the number of these families in Arad increased from 373 to 410 during the five years. This trend is true in the county, proof that in 1746-1747 there were 1505 military families at a time when importance was much reduced for the Mureș border as compared to the first two decades of the century.

to make a precise inventory of taxing subjects, land, fields, animals etc. Although there weren't conscribed all of the people, this document permits sound demographical quantification. The centralizing statistic built up several years later and is stored at the Budapest Archives. Kovách Géza published some data concerning economic aspects of this urbarium, issuing the inscribed people amount, but two different values in the same article – 16.316 and 15.916, respectively (Kovách, 1977: 128, 161; Idem, 1980: 164).

At DJAN<sup>3</sup> Arad there still is the typewritten manuscript after the statistic from the Hungarian archives<sup>4</sup>. Using this manuscript I recalculated the number of inscribed people. After the corrections I found 17.270, which correspond to a total population of 86.350. After a few years, in 1776, a general conscription was organized in the county. The centralizing document is stored at DJAN Arad and offers information on confession, sex, age groups, administrative subunits etc. The value of this “Conscriptio Animarum” is even bigger, due to the fact that it is realized for the whole county, and data is consistent.

In the four administrative subunits there were a total of 100.039 people.

**Table 1.** Population structure in Arad County in 1776

Administrative subunits	Male		Female		Total
	Adults	Infra 15 Annum	Adults	Infra 15 Annum	
Arad	8534	6553	7818	6004	28909
Şiria	7443	5518	7133	4641	24735
Zarand	7845	5496	6809	4903	25053
Ineu	6605	4362	6383	3992	21342
Total	30427	21929	28143	19540	100039

The percentage of population from the four subunits is relatively balanced, although Arad is slightly in front, due to it being the administrative capital of the county.

From a religious standpoint, the Orthodoxies preponderance is evident. They represent 83,77%, Catholics 8,53%, Reformed 3,84%, Jews 0,3%. Another 3550 people (approx. 3,55%) do not explicitly state their religion, most of them being serfs.

<sup>3</sup> DJAN Arad (Direcția Județeană Arad a Arhivelor Naționale – National Archives of Arad County).

<sup>4</sup> DJAN Arad, *Conscripția generală din 1828*, ms. Kovách Géza, cota dosar 13241.

**Table 2.** Confessional structure of Arad County in 1776

Religion	Total	%
Orthodox	83806	83,77
Catholic	8534	8,53
Protestant	3846	3,84
Jewish	303	0,30
Other	3550	3,55
Total	100039	100

The most important statistical document of the 18th century was certainly the Iosephinian census, based on scientific criteria, which confers it a great credibility. Unfortunately, data for Arad County were not rigorously studied, and bibliography is none too generous in this respect. A real use were Nicolae M. Popp's information, who, in analyzing aspects from Arad County during the Iosephinian census, used an archive document from Hofkammerarchiv Vienna, which contains data about all settlements, with the number of houses in each of them I merged this document with information about the census from Hungarian authors Dezső Dany and Zoltán Dávid, where exists information about the number of families and people from the county (Dany, Dávid, 1960: 50). In conclusion, the county's population in 1787 was 152.930, a number we can find in other historians' works such as: Gyémánt and Răduțiu, Pădurean, Lákos.

This census was the most convincing from the population quantification perspective, because it was realized by terrain work, input data having a great accuracy. All people were added to the inventory, regardless of their social status, following the central directions with utmost rigor, minimizing phenomena such as evading. The total number of houses I obtained is 25.957, a very little difference from Nicolae M. Popp's findings, or Caciora's 26.439. Knowing the number of houses, families and total population we could establish the cohabitation rates, average number of family members, average number of house members, numbers which I then used to reconstruct Arad County's population on settlements, administrative subunits, different habitat forms, in Arad town etc. (Ghiță, 2011: 199 sq).

For the last part of the 18th century there is information from two different years. For example, in 1794 the county had 26.165 houses and 149.617 inhabitants (Răduțiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 692, 718). The slight deduction since the Iosephinian census can be linked to the recruitment during the Napoleonian wars and to the worse general conditions.

In 1798 we have incomplete information, that is, Márki speaks about the existence of 143.138 Orthodoxies in the county (Márki, 1895: 741). Starting from this figure we can indirectly determine, with a slight error, the total population of

the county. In the 1776 conscription the weight of the Orthodoxies was 83.77%, while during the Iosephinian census, Orthodoxies represented 84% of the 152.930 inhabitants (Răduțiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 703). I believe this shows a constant behavior for the Orthodox confession, given that in 1804 they had the same weight. On this assumption, we can affirm that the total population of the county in 1798 was a little more than 170.000 (Ghiță, 2011: 88).

The 19th century started with a new census, which also contains important information. The taxpaying population was 182.560 and the total population 185.173 at 30.922 houses (Schwartner, 1811: 520). The masculine population was registered as a function of their confession. Out of the 92.901 registered, 78.088 (84.06%) were Orthodox, 10.389 (11.18%) Catholic, 4.010 (4.32%) Protestant and 414 (0.45%) Jewish (Răduțiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 703; Pădurean, 2003: 107).

The Hungarian Parliament from 1825-1827 issued a new general conscription, which took place in 1828. Its data are valuable for the purpose of population quantification. The number of houses, population aged 18-60, artisans and merchants can be used for reconstitution of the total population in the county. I could compare bibliography data – Kovách, Caciora, Gyémánt, Pădurean – to the typewritten manuscript stored at DJAN Arad, which the researcher Kovách Géza realized after the original from the Hungarian National Archive, and also to a work from the epoch (Nagy, 1828).

In 1828 there were 33.214 houses homing 35.720 families, amounting a total population of 207.039 (Răduțiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 692). Kovách Géza inventoried only the subjected population, without considering artisans, merchants and intellectuals (*honoratorii*) (Kovách, 1987: 105-123). Recalculating for all the social categories I found 33.804 houses in 1828 and 207.039 inhabitants, which means that the average number of people per house was 6.12. The recalculated number of families is 35.536 (Răduțiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 711), which means an average number of 5.8 members per family.

The global picture of Arad County's population evolution during 1700-1828 resulted from archive documents and critical analysis of the bibliography is reflected in the table below.

The global increase during the whole period was 13.8 and from this perspective it distances from all counties from Transylvania and Partium. Satmar County had a 7.6 times increase, Bihor increased 5.4 times and Cluj 3.3, all in the same interval.

The most radical increasing interval was 1720-1771 when population increased 4.8 times. Explanations for this massive increase seem hard to fit in this stage of research. The Hungarian historiography was speaking about a massive colonization of the former Partium during the 18th century, but scientific counter-arguments of the Romanian historiography have long settled this issue (Prodan, 1944; Meteș, 1977).



**Table 3.** Evolution of the Arad County population during 1700-1828

Period	Source	Population of extended Arad County		Total	Families number	Houses number
		Old Arad County	Districts from Zarand			
1700	Márki/estimate	10000	5-6000	15-16000		
1715	Conscription	11435	6710	18145	3629	
1720	Bibliography	9475	8400	17875	3575	
1743-1752	Conscriptions	12736	34418	47154	9287	
1771-72	Urbariums			86350	17270	
1776	Conscription			100039		
1787	Census			152930		25957
1794	Bibliography			149617		26165
1805	Bibliography/ Source			182560		30922
1828	Conscription			207039	35536	33804

How is it possible for this considerable population increase? On no basis can demographical phenomena sustain a plausible explanation to clarify this situation. Neither colonization – scarce in the 18th century – nor the political stability, nor the increase of living standards can bring enough arguments. Only one thesis comes to my mind. Practically, until the second half of the century, conscriptions didn't have enough strictness, and the phenomenon of evading was a current practice. To this added clueless conscription, based on talking rather than terrain work. Intentional omissions were obviously more common than accidental ones.

The most complete data stem from the Iosephinian census. It represented a superior stage because its preparation, questionnaire build-up, data extraction, population registration give it maximum credibility. What happened after 1787 from a demographical point of view is normal and doesn't necessitate further explanation. Comparable evolutions happened between 1787 and 1828 in all of the counties from Transylvania, Banat, and Partium (Răduțiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 690-693).

### **3. Ethnical and confessional structure of Arad county in the 18th and early 19th century**

On a global scale, for the entire period, the majority of population were Romanians, and from a religious standpoint, Orthodoxies. Knowing that ethno-confessional disputes had contributed to a series of misunderstandings between

Hungarian and Romanian historiography, I tried to use objectively information from both sources and corroborate them with archive documents. In the same methodological approach, I determined the percentages for the extended Arad County. From this point of view it was more difficult to determine the figures for the first half of the century, when information had to be collected separately for Arad and Zarand counties. I did this in order to get a bigger picture, and to compare things in the same space, with the purpose to observe continuity and discontinuity elements through time.

The method used by several historians – Ignác, Ciuhandu, Gál – started from the inscribed people's names. Even if results are not the most convincing, I believe estimations are possible. Acsády Ignác, the one who made fallacious approximations by limiting the weights of Romanian population from Transylvania and Partium in the 18th century, has considered, though, that Arad and Zarand counties obviously had Romanian majorities at the beginning of the century (Prodan, 1992: 29-53). He considered that Romanians represented 76.61% and Hungarians 6.98% in Arad County, while in Zarand there were 88.4% Romanians and 11.52% Hungarians (apud Prodan, 1992: 38). For Arad, similar weights gave Ciuhandu – 77% Romanians, 7% Hungarians, 16% Germans – and Gál – 76.61% Romanians, 6.98% Hungarians, 16.41% Germans (Ciuhandu, 1940: 29; Gaál, 1898: 27).

All three historians referred only to the civilian part of Arad as we know it at the beginning of the century. However, military population (which arrived since 1701) were an important group. Most of it was of Serbian origin, and their presence significantly modified ethno-confessional weights.

Gál mentioned the following proportions for the militarized settlements: 25.79% Romanians, 65.95% Serbians and 8.26% Hungarians, without mentioning the Germans, who, it is true, represented an insignificant share outside the city of Arad.

Starting from these proportions, I determined Arad's ethnical structure for the year 1720, including the part from Zarand County which was to be added later during the century.

**Table 4.** Ethnic structure in 1720 in extended Arad County

Ethnicity	Romanians		Serbs		Germans		Hungarians		Others		Population
	% in adm. subunits	% in extended county	% in adm. subunits	% in extended county	% in adm. subunits	% in extended county	% in adm. subunits	% in extended county	% in adm. subunits	% in extended county	
Civil Arad County	76,61	12,62	0,00	0,00	16,41	2,70	6,98	1,15	0,00	0,00	2945
Military Arad County	25,79	9,42	65,95	24,09	0,00	0,00	8,26	3,02	0,00	0,00	6530
Two Districts of Zarand County	88,40	41,54	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	11,52	5,41	0,08	0,04	8400
Total		63,59		24,09		2,70		9,58		0,04	17875

I obtained overall proportions from partial ones for different ethnicities by using a simple mathematical formula that took into account the weight of each ethnicity in each administrative subunit considered, relative to population subdivision and entire population. For example, the 88.4% Romanians from the 8.400 inhabitants of Zarand represent in fact 41.54% out of the total 17.875 people of Arad's extended form. Also, the 65.95% Serbians from the militarized zone represent 24.09% of all population of the administrative zone.

At the middle of the 18th century, Ciuhandu, using the same criterion based on names, made ethnical and confessional quantifications based on the conscriptions which he studied. His results are valid, provided that following conscriptions sustain his figures. We could believe that his writings were partially affected by the political context, but his weights regarding Romanians and Orthodoxies are not fundamentally wrong, only a bit increased. He therefore said that Romanians were 87.61%, Serbians 5.35%, Hungarians 4.75%, Germans 2.03%, Bulgarians 0.23%, and the rest of 0.03% "Greeks", without saying anything about Jews and gypsies (Ciuhandu, 1940: 42).

Surprising are the radical changes for some ethnicities, primarily the marked decrease of the Serbians and the increase of Romanians. The Serbian decrease has another explanation, excluding the wrong interpretation of Serbian names as Romanian. We know that these conscriptions were realized when the process of military border disbanding was already instated. Some soldiers preferred to leave Arad, rather than becoming serfs. They went to other territories of the Habsburg Empire, where they could fulfill their military duties, or they migrated to Russia at the call of Tsar Empress Elizabeth.

Ulterior conscriptions made by authorities are theoretically more credible and offer us a better picture of the reality. The document from 1776<sup>5</sup> speaks about 83.78% Orthodoxies, 8.53% Catholics, 3.84% Protestants, 0.3% Jews and 3.55% other categories with unknown religion. The latter are extraneous people, housekeepers and hospitalized people.

**Table 5.** Confessional structure in subunits of Arad County in 1776

Confession	Orthodox		Catholics		Protestant		Jewish		Others		Total population	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Administrative units												
Arad District	21452	74,21	5170	17,88	148	0,51	107	0,37	2032	7,03	28909	100
Șiria District	21764	87,99	2225	9,00	3	0,01	196	0,79	547	2,21	24735	100
Zarand District	20342	81,20	848	3,38	3221	12,86		0,00	642	2,56	25053	100
Ineu District	20248	94,87	291	1,36	474	2,22		0,00	329	1,54	21342	100
Total	83806	83,77	8534	8,53	3846	3,84	303	0,30	3550	3,55	100039	100

<sup>5</sup> DJAN Arad, Fond Prefectura județului Arad, *Conscripția comitatului Arad – 1776*.

On the four administrative subunits – Arad, Şiria, Zarand and Ineu – there are marked differences.

Most Catholics were in Arad (17.88%), while in Ineu Orthodoxies were 94.8%. Protestants were mostly in the plain area of the county, while Jews were only 0.3%.

These figures are confirmed by the Iosephinian census which inventoried the population also by confession, but also by the 1804 conscription, when religion was registered only for male population. For the 1828's conscription the confessional percentage is taken from more sources, existing some differences between them (Pădurean, 2003: 261; Caciora, 2006: 257-262; Răduţiu, Gyémánt, 1995: 703).

**Table 6.** Confessional evolution in Arad county during 1787-1828

Confession	Orthodox		Catholic		Protestant		Jewish	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1787	128500	84,02	17078	11,17	7000	4,58	352	0,23
1804	78088	84,05	10389	11,18	4010	4,32	414	0,45
1828		76,13		16,82		6,36		0,69
		71,96		19,14		8,23		0,67

The end and the beginning of the century don't bring significant changes, although some change is identifiable to a simple analysis of the figures. The decrease of Orthodox number in 1828 compared to previous periods have to look among the Romanians of Greek Catholics confession that appear in statistics with Roman Catholics, and another part may be due to colonization made in the county at the beginning of the nineteenth century, newcomers being Catholic or Protestant.

#### 4. Conclusions

In the following table, I proposed to inventory the different percentages in what concerns the ethnical and confessional evolution of Arad County from the beginning of the Habsburg domination until 1828.

For the years 1715 and 1720 percentages are adjusted by including the militaries, assuming that the 373 from 1715 and the 410 from 1720 were all Serbs. In 1776, at the "others" category, are conscribed housekeepers, extraneous and the people from the hospital's hospice, whose religion is not specified, and in 1828, Greek-Catholics are regarded as Catholics.

**Table 7.** Ethnic and confessional evolution in Arad County between 1715-1828

Year	1720	1747	1776	1787	1804	1828
Ethnicity	%	%	%	%	%	%
Romanians	63,59	87,61				
Germans	2,7	2,03				
Serbs	24,09	5,58				
Hungarians	9,58	4,75				
Jews						
Others	0,04	0,03				
Total %	100	100				
Confession	%	%	%	%	%	%
Orthodox	87,68	93	83,78	84,02	84,05	76,13
Catholic	12,28	4	8,53	11,17	11,18	16,82
Protestant		3	3,84	4,58	4,32	6,36
Jewish			0,3	0,23	0,45	0,69
Others	0,04		3,55			
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100

For the first half of eighteenth century I have obtained confession proportions from ethnic percentages considering Romanians and Serbs were Orthodox and Germans and Hungarians were Catholic. We can remark that Orthodoxies always constituted a majority. From 87-93% in the first half of the 18th century, they became 84% in the second half of the century and then 76% in 1828. The decrease from the second half of the 18th century is directly linked to the demilitarization and to the departing of many families of Serbs and even Romanians. Moreover, colonizations also contributed to the modification of weights in the county.

Colonizations continued during the first decades of the 19th century, especially with Hungarian ethnics. This factor and the conversion of some Romanians to Greek-Catholicism have both contributed to the 76.13% Orthodox share in 1828. From an ethnical point of view, the county's population was mostly Romanian, because the Serbians' overall percentage was reduced, provided that they were predominant only in the town of Arad.

The decrease of the Orthodoxies' share is valid for arguing the increase of the Catholics and the Reformed. Colonizations with Catholic Germans, Catholic and Reformed Hungarians, Reformed Slovaks and some Romanians' conversion to Greek-Catholicism explain the dynamics of percentages from the second half of the 18th century and the early 19th century.

Regarding the ethnical and confessional structure of the settlements from the county, most of them were preponderantly Romanian. Among them there existed or were created during the 18th century settlements with German

ethnics (Sântana, Aletea, Horia, Glogovăț, Sânmartin), with Hungarian ethnics (Zerind, Iermata, Adea, Vânători), or Slovaks (Mocrea). In the same time, there existed mixed settlements where more ethnicities and confessions were represented. Beside the town of Arad, which is the most relevant example, such settlements were, Sebiș, Ghioroc, Șiria, Pădureni etc.

The established trend continued during the 19th century, both in the county and the town. In 1890 Orthodoxies and Greek-Catholics from the county represented 63.9% and 4%, respectively, while in the town, 22% and 2.5%, respectively. During the same year, Romanians were 66.68% in the county and only 18.72% in the town (Pădurean, 2003: 261).

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# “ORATORY OR THE ROSARY? A NONEXISTENT CONTROVERSY”<sup>1</sup> IN THE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH

Lavinia BUDA\*

**Abstract.** *As soon as the introduction of the Rosary in the ritual of the Greek Catholic Church had occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century, a debate concerning this aspect was brought about. The strongest objections invoked the desire of maintaining the Eastern specific features and of Latinisation. Despite these objections, the Rosary, which started as a private devotion, managed to become one of the most frequent devotions practiced by the Greek Catholic believers. The introduction of the Rosary did not exclude the Oratory; it only completed the Marian devotions. The act of instituting the Rosary within the ritual of the Greek Catholic Church can be subscribed to the general policy of the Holy See which aimed at promoting the Marian cult, notably after the apparition at Lourdes, when the dogma of the untainted conception was decreed. The Rosary constituted only a means of attracting believers back to the Church by means of devotion accessible even to those illiterate.*

**Keywords:** *rosary, oratory, Virgin Mary, devotion, piety, Transylvania, Greek Catholics, prayer, Lourdes, Latinisation*

In Christianity the Marian cult has an important place in the ritual of the Church as well as in the believers' piety. Among the devotions dedicated to Virgin Mary, prayer has an essential role. A common prayer in the east was called "Birthgiver of God" and in the west Ave Maria, being almost identical and having at the basis the first chapter of the Gospel according to Luke.

In the Latin rite the main devotion addressed to Virgin Mary was the Holy Rosary. In the present paper we shall confine to delimiting the main

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features of the Rosary devotion, starting from a few historical elements of this practice, from its introduction and spread in the Romanian Greek Catholic milieu of Transylvania. The Rosary practice was considered a practice of piety recited by the believers on a daily basis or only on Sundays. In a broad sense it was a string of pearls used as a mnemotechnique for reciting a series of prayers consisting of 15 of Pater Noster, 15 times of 10 Ave Maria, 15 Gloria Patri. (Bistrițeanu, 1996: 70)

The Rosary has developed during the centuries, its present form consisting of 15 mysteries (respectively cycles of 5 mysteries each: 5 joyful mysteries, 5 luminous mysteries, 5 sorrowful mysteries, 5 glorious mysteries), Our Father!, Hail Mary!, Glory be to the Father!. In the apparition at Fatima in 1917 Mary asked that the prayer O my Jesus forgive us our sins! be introduced between decades. Many papal documents discuss the spread of the rosary and suggest this form of piety towards the Mother of God. Moreover, the Virgin herself appears with the rosary in her hands as well in the various representations. (Dumea, 2004, p.10-11)

In 1897 Pope Leo XIII decided by the *Encyclical on the Rosary of the Most August Virgin Mary* that parallel to the recitation of the Rosary in the Latin Church, the month of October be dedicated to the Virgin and in the Greek Catholic Church the Oratory to the Most Holy Birthgiver of God be recited the. It is suggested that “no believer should have anything more enjoyable and more sacred than the Marian cult... so that everyone should try to use for their own selves and for the oppressed Church by reciting the Rosary”. (*Unirea*, nr. 41, 1897: 325) During the pontificacy of Leo XIII measures aimed at popularizing and spreading the Marian culture are known as well as the especial devotion that the Pope had for the Virgin Mary since childhood. By the *Supremi Apostolatum Encyclical* of September 1<sup>st</sup> 1883 Pope Leo XIII dedicated the month of October to the honor of the Most Pure Virgin of the Rosary; and by *Superiore anno Enncyclica* of August 30<sup>th</sup> 1884 the prayer of the rosary for the month of October was once again disposed. (*Revista Catolica*, 1885, fascicol IV: 135) These kinds of measures repeated in 1883, 1886, 1889 specifying that the month of October was consecrated to the rosary, and those who would pray in the Church and would fulfill the necessary conditions, plenary indulgency of 7 years would be granted. As according to the rite of the Greek Catholic Church there existed no rosary, in the Romanian context the Archdiocese Ordinariate of Blaj decided by circular no. 2671/1883 that in all the churches of the archdiocese the Oratory to the Most Holy Birthgiver of God be sung or read on Sundays and feast days. The decision was updated by order no. 2796/1886, when the celebration of the Oratory was again demanded. The same decision was taken in the Greek Catholic Diocese of Lugoj by circular no. 1427/1883. (Genț, 1912: 610) In the encyclical of 1889 it was mentioned that those persons who would recite with piety the indicated prayers, would beneficiate from indulgencies for

7 years. The consecration of 19<sup>th</sup> March of Saint Joseph and practices of piety in March was also suggested, even though this feast was not included in the official calendar. (*Revista Catolica*, 1889, fascicol IX: 301)

It is difficult to establish if these suggestions were followed as such in the Church or just in a private way by some of the priests or believers.

In 1898 Pope Leo XIII came back to the problem of the rosary issuing the *Encyclical Letter on the Rosary*. This was published in Rome on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1889, being justified by the approach of the month of October, the month of the rosary. The newspaper “*Unirea*” of Blaj also published every year starting from 1883 this encyclical, reminding that the month of October was dedicated to the rosary which aimed at “awakening the endeavor to support with devoutness the preservation of this holy tradition”; since the prayer offered “a model of completeness of household society“, that is the family from Nazareth. At the end of the encyclical it was mentioned that “we regenerate the memory of the price and great use that the Marian Rosary possesses because of riches of rights and privileges attached to it, especially because of its great treasures of indulgencies.”(*Unirea*, nr. 38, 1898: 297-298) Those who had special devoutness towards the Virgin Mary knew her graces and indulgencies, granted due to the recitation of the rosary.

In the Greek Catholic Archdiocese of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș the Byzantine rite was taken into consideration that is why they resorted to the change of the rosary with the recitation of the Oratory of the Most Pure Virgin. But this measure was kept only for one or two years, after which it was given up, though the Pope’s disposition was valid forever. For this reason the intervention of the Ordinariate was requested, the only with power to impose the recitation of the rosary. (*Unirea*, nr. 38, 1898: 301) We can state that the local specificity was imposed at the expense of the measures received from the central power and it was very difficult for the religious hierarchy to impose a measure that was not a tradition of the place, although Romanian Greek Catholics had a special devoutness towards the Mother of the Lord as preservers of two traditions, that of Latin and Byzantine.

The Oratory was used on different occasions, since 29<sup>th</sup> July 1914 by the pastoral letter no. 6522 addressed to the nation and to the clergy; Vasile Hossu ordered the recitation of the oratory during the whole fast of Saint Mary. (*Șemantism*, 1947: 34) The circular also mentioned the conditions under which the Oratory must be recited. In order to participate as many as possible it had to be celebrated in the evening after twilight and those in charge of it were the priests and the church singers that had to ensure that it would be sung, or recited audibly and understandably for everyone. The celebration of the Oratory in the fast of Saint Mary (1-15 August) was desired to be a means of attracting many members in the Wreath of the Most Pure Virgin Mary. (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of.Gr.Cat.Ciceu Mihăești, Dosar 1/1912-1920; 1934, f. 27-30) As in many other

cases, by this pastoral the bishop probably celebrated a fact that had already existed. It is known that at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a series of apocryphal pocket books destined to individual piety circulated. Among these books we find the Oratory as well, in a slightly different variant in comparison to the one already known to the Church. Bishop Iuliu Hossu continued with the disposition of his predecessor and by pastoral no. 467/July 20<sup>th</sup> 1931 suggested singing the Oratory in the fast of Saint Mary (*Semantism*, 1947: 60).

The oldest mention related to the rosary in the Romanian Greek Catholic Church press we found in *Sionul românesc*, a religious, literary and scholastic newspaper, drawn up by Gregoriu Silași and published in Vien. In the first year of publication in 1865, in issue no. 12 of 15<sup>th</sup> of December, an article with the title *About the rosary or counting* was published. The article explains the origins of the rosary that was attributed to the monks from holy places who started to sell different things to the pilgrims, among which “numeri” (counting), “the beads of which were made of kneaded mass of rose leaves, that is why it was called rosarium“. “Numerii” (countings) were used by different nations in the East and Asia as a technique of remembering more easily the order of the prayers which needed to be recited. In the Eastern Church these were introduced by the anchorites and ascetics from Egypt. (*Sionul Românesc*, nr. 12, 1865: 134) Keeping the record of the recited prayers was very important regardless of the confession, but on the other hand it was a form of remembrance of the advantages acquired by recitation.

In the Western Church the rosary was popularized by Saint Dominic, “for remembering the mysteries of the Christian faith and for the veneration of the immaculate Virgin Mary...” In the course of time, every Christian started to wear the rosary; probably because the first who used it on a larger scale were the soldiers, with a role much more that of an “amulet“. (*Sionul Românesc*, nr. 12, 1865: 134)

Starting from 1898 a series of articles about the rosary started to appear on the pages of *Unirii* about the history of its origins, as well as about the need of its use by the Greek Catholic believers. In the issue no. 27 of June 6<sup>th</sup> 1901, entitled *Origins of the Rosary* we find out “some historical data, related to the origins and development of this chain of pearls“. The legend according to which Saint Dominic helped by the Most Pure Virgin, who gave him this “weapon against the Albigensians” would be the initiator of this cult in the Western Church, is of a recent date, fact proved by the Jesuits. It is certain that in the Western Church popes accepted officially this particular form of glorifying the virgin and rewarded its recitation with indulgencies. For these and other reasons also, it is necessary “... not to reject our wreath decorated by our brethren from the West. It is not about the combination of rites, because it is not the case that the rosary should be introduced as a public cult, but as a private devotion especially for the illiterate whose number is overwhelming. If

we do not care of the people to have on them an object that would lift their mind towards the heaven, he will take care of himself, so that today there are so many superstitious books spread among the Romanians to which they attribute a special importance; our peasant even believes much easier in some inventions than his own priest“. (*Unirea*, nr. 27, 1901: 223).

The use of the rosary was suggested in the Greek Catholic Church because the great number of believers was not able to read and did not pray from a book, and on the other hand, for this reason they could be easily influenced. The editor of *Sionul românesc* replies to these problems in the article mentioned above the following: “if they cannot read, they should learn; and they should use the rosaries for other reasons“, especially for reasons of piety and religiosity. (*Unirea*, nr. 27, 1901: 135)

The introduction of the rosary raises as well such an organizational problem. Preservation of individuality within the Latin Church represented a major aim. On the pages of *Unirii* a dispute was brought about between those who supported the introduction of the rosary and those who supported the preservation of local specificities, resorting to a wide range of arguments for and against.

The best well-known debate related to this subject belonged to George Șuta, a Greek Catholic priest from Moftinul Mic, Sătmar, and a Catholic priest of Latin rite from Moldavia in 1901, a debate in which appeared a short history of the rosary as well. *Unirea* published in 1902 the arguments for and against of the two priests as well.

Priest George Șuta does not consider that: “the prosperity of the Romanian Church United with Rome would claim the recitation of the rosary, the wearing of scapular, the feast of green Thursday, the introduction of the worship of Saint Anthony of Padua ..”; since the Greek Catholic Church has a majestic cult that was able to “feed and potentiate the culture of our religious, moral, national and patriotic interests“. The problems of everyday life must also be taken into consideration, “when it is so hard to earn a living, frequenting the church three times a day would not be enough, and potentiating the moral and religious life of the believers, it is required to visit the church for the fourth time as well to recite the rosary...” In spite of these measures the priest was wondering: “Is not this cult developed sufficiently in our diocese? People celebrate with all possible solemnity the feasts of Mary; even the conception of Saint Ann is considered in the diocese a *festum fori*. And our good Bishop disposed by circular no. 1019-1889 that the whole month of October be dedicated to Mary and her fiancé Saint Joseph, and everybody recite at the end of the liturgy: three Birthgivers and the specified prayers“. The introduction of some innovation in the Greek Catholic rite was not perceived positively. Every priest had the power to decide how they should promote the Marian cult among the believers. In Sătmar the custom of pilgrimage was practiced twice a

year to Bixad and Máriapócs. Taking into consideration those stated above, the priest added some observations:

- the rosary was introduced only in those congregations where the inhabitants were Hungarianised;
- the introduction of the rosary might have caused the denationalization of the population;
- the priests had to oppose categorically to such innovations;
- the church's own rite had to be preserved;
- new devotions cannot be introduced when the peasants work even on feast days;
- he was skeptical about the participation of women at the rosary, since many churches were empty". (*Unirea*, nr. 12, 1901: 96)

The remarks made by priest Şuta on the one hand go beyond the sphere of denomination and enters in the problem of preservation of the national particularity, and on the other hand, they were also of a practical kind bringing into the debate the place and role of the women in the Church and in the public sphere, raising the problem of the folk customs that did not disappear in spite of the norms suggested by the Church. Preservation of the identity and the local and national specificity was carried out exactly by the rejection of the innovations that endangered tradition. The custom of pilgrimages to Nicula, Bixad, Prislop, Strâmba etc. had to be preserved and be granted a new blaze to attract the people.

Related to those stated above priest Şuta received the reply of a Catholic priest of Latin rite, who brought into discussion some passages. The Catholic priest suggested that "the prosperity of the religious, moral, national and patriotic interests" was only possible exactly due to the recitation of the rosary, because "all the spiritual and temporal gifts and help, that God gives us go through the hands of His Holy Mother"; "therefore the recitation of the Holy Rosary is a powerful prayer and to obtain from God, by the mediation of His Most Holy Mother, all godly help, whether spiritual or temporal, that is the recitation of the holy rosary is able to potentiate the culture of religious and moral interests and to prosper the nation and the mother country". The statement of priest Şuta according to which: "In Sătmar I was born, in Sătmar I have been a priest for 31 years, so I know all the people's account in Sătmar" is also brought into the debate. The Latin priest believed that we had to adapt permanently to the progress declaring - a bit ironically -, "It is a pity that the above mentioned Roman Pontiffs did not advise with your eminence about the recitation of the rosary!" (*Unirea*, nr. 37, 1901: 302) The priests had to use the free time of the believers by attracting them to various practices of piety to the detriment of the pubs knowing that the Virgin was the main mediator between man and deity. They had to resort to her help. The spiritual benefit of the rosary was evidently greater than spending money on alcohol on Sundays and feast days.

Again one could ask: „Is not the cult of the Most Pure Mother developed sufficiently in our diocese?” The Latin priest argued that the church fathers of all centuries promoted this cult and they were convinced that through it „acquired the greatest comfort and spiritual peace”. At the same time the Catholic Church of Latin rite introduced in her rite or cult the feast of many Greek Catholic saints as well (for instance on May 2<sup>nd</sup> Saint John Chrysostom, the Golden Mouth, on June 14<sup>th</sup> Saint Basil etc.). The Latin priest identified the real problem of the introduction of the rosary, that is the denationalization of the united Romanian nation and believed that priest Şuta suffered from „childish fear and for no reason”, making a mistake by impeding the „Christian people from praising the Most Holy Mother of God, who has always been a source of holiness, spiritual goodness, for the Christians, a strong means to introduce sinners to God, it is also said that the recitation of the Holy Rosary represented a source of miracles among the Christians as proved by the very many historical monuments”. (*Unirea*, nr. 38, 1901: 310) Priest Şuta denied „the lies” addressed to him and tried to make difference between belief and cult. (*Unirea*, nr. 40, 1901: 317)

We find that between the two priests belonging to the Greek Catholic Church respectively to the Roman Catholic Church various discrepancies appear caused by the necessity of the introduction of the rosary, by the historical arguments of its use, by the necessity of a particular devotion practiced in Greek Catholic context as well but under a different name, by the necessity to adapt to the requirements of time etc. The need to introduce and practice the devotion of the rosary answered mainly to a fact existent in the Greek Catholic Church, taking into consideration that the majority of the believers were illiterate. Until the official acknowledgement its practice was suggested as a private devotion. The Romanian priests identified the danger of the disappearance of the Romanian mother tongue, because of the inexistence of a variant in Romanian taking into consideration as well that in some areas the rosary was cited in Hungarian.

Another cause of the rejection of the rosary’s introduction was due to the invocation of the principle: „by accepting Latin instructions, the separating wall that separates us from our brothers of the same blood, would not get smaller but higher”. The Romanian pontiffs „emphasised harshly”, „that our rite, discipline and virtues must be preserved in all their purity and integrity”. (*Unirea*, nr. 41, 1901: 334) The introduction of the rosary would contradict the preservation of the tradition of the Eastern rite, and instead of contributing to the approach to the first church; it would contribute to the alienation from the Romanian Orthodox brothers. The 57 years old priest Şuta accused his Latin brethren that he „is not familiar with our national reports of the country” or maybe he was Hungarian and had some hidden reasons.

The response to these accusations of the Latin priest who surprisingly did not disclose his name, age or other details, can be seen in two large articles published in *Unirea* in issue no. 9 and 10 of March 1<sup>st</sup>, respectively March 8<sup>th</sup> 1902. The editorial office of *Unirea* mentioned that the article was published on the author's demand about which we only know what he wrote about himself, that is he was from Moldavia, Romania, he was not Hungarian and conducted missionary activity. After a detailed exposition of the history of the rosary devotion from the beginnings of Christianity, he made reference to the writings of the most important authors of papers with Marian subject that militated for spreading the cult of the rosary. On the basis of the analysis carried out on the main writings with Marian subject, he states that „the recitation of the rosary has never been ordered by any synod, but it has always been recited...” The Greek Catholics did not change their rite and their ritual books contained the following prayers: „the Lord's Prayer”, „Birthgiver of God”, „Most Holy Mary, Mother of God ...” The conclusion drawn was very interesting: “the prayers contain the elements of which the rosary consists of; consequently, the most essential elements of the rosary stem from the deep antiquity ....”. By repeating for more times a day these prayers, believers recited the rosary even though they did not know it as such. The Latin priest published the list of the mysteries as well which was nothing else but a sample to be followed by the believers who were invited to accompany the holy family in joy, pain, praise. In some parishes the priests introduced the recitation of the rosary and priest Șuta „makes the most laugh” of these parishes.

In order to highlight the differences and similarities between the two rites, the priest resorted to the comparison of the Latin prayers with those Greek Catholic prayers included in the book *Calea cerească* of Constantin Lucaciu which appeared in Baia Mare in 1894. (*Unirea*, nr. 9, 1902: 85-86) He stated that the additions and differences were no major due to the different historical evolutions and various influences. The rosary together with the joyful, sorrowful, glorious mysteries was recited by those who could read and the Christians who could not recited the rosary without mentioning these mysteries. Regardless of the name the different prayers for the adoration of the Virgin were called or of their content, all had the same aim: the expression of devoutness towards the Mother of God. These prayers were a form of respect and of appreciation to the Virgin but as well as a request addressed in needy times.

The increased interest towards the rosary can be observed on the pages of the newspaper *Observatorul* of Beiuș which starting from 1928 published in three issues the translation of the brochure *La Rosaire médité, par l'ame religieuse*, Paris: Bonne Presse. (*Observatorul*, nr. 8, 1928: 235-237) On the pages of the magazine we can identify many articles dedicated to the Virgin Mary that explained different aspects of her life and the privileges granted to those who served her. In this context the magazine published in 1934 a special edition

entitled Saint Bernadette and Lourdes, where among other form of Mariana piety suggested for believers we find the rosary as well. This way the Rosary of Our Lady Lourdes (*Observatorul*, nr. 3-4, 1934: 84-85) became known by all believers.

The controversy started in 1898 in *Unirea* related to the spread of the Rosary was not yet concluded in 1933. In an article entitled *Oratory or the Rosary? A nonexistent controversy*, it was stated that only „the people with narrow mind and heart” could consider that Oratory was enough, although „the Holy Rosary strikes root day by day in our churches as well”. In spite of these remarks, the author of the article underlines unequivocally: „Nobody should believe that only after these we would consider giving up the oratory and start to recite only the rosary. No way! The oratory will remain for all the time one of the most beautiful prayers of the Eastern Church, but this would no way mean not to introduce the Holy Rosary to our church as well” (*Duminica*, nr. 21, 1933: 2-3) Among the arguments mentioned in the favor of the Rosary was the fact that it was a prayer dedicated to the Virgin Mary and it was suggested in the apparitions in Lourdes, Fatima etc. The use of the Rosary only came to complete the patrimony of prayers of the Greek Catholic Church; it did not exclude other prayers.

The celebration of the Rosary in Hungarian by the believers in Sătmar determined the Ordinariate of Oradea to approve this prayer and put the Romanian version at the disposal of those interested. (Geţ, 1912: 611)

The spread of the Rosary in the Romanian Greek Catholic area has to be linked to the existence of some Rosary Societies in the Hungarian Catholic Church which gradually were adopted by the Greek Catholic area. In the Greek Catholic Diocese of Oradea the oldest such certified societies date from 1885 that is the Holy Rosary Union of Mădăras, the Rosary Union of Găloşpetru. (ANDJ Bihor, Of.Par. Gr.Cat. Oradea, dosar 267/1922-1928, f. 126,135) These societies functioned on the basis of the Articles of Association of the Catholic Church, while the language used was that of Hungarian. Gradually appeared societies where Romanian language was used, such as the Rosary Society of Văşad in 1909, the Rosary Society of Gereuşa in 1910, the Rosary Society of Hurer in 1913 (ANDJ Bihor, Of.Par. Gr.Cat. Oradea, dosar 267/1922-1928, f. 156, 164, 95) and so on and so forth. Members of these societies were called the Rosarists, who were busy in attending different practices of piety in honor of the Virgin Mary, but also towards the sick and old members of the parish. These societies represented the basis for the foundation of the Marian societies. In many cases these were changed into Marian societies, for instance in the case of the ”Holy Rosary Society” founded in 1885, we know that starting from 1914 it becomes “Saint Mary” Society of the Romanian Greek Catholic believers of Mădăras. (ANDJ Bihor, Of.Par. Gr.Cat. Oradea, dosar 267/1922-1928, f. 126) We found a unique case in the parish of Curtuiuşeni where more societies functioned: the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus, Saint Joseph Society,



Music Society, but not less than three societies dedicated to the Virgin Mary - Saint Rosary Society with 28 members (26 women and 2 men), "Saint Scapular" Society with 25 members (20 women and 5 men), the "Perpetual Rosary" with 10 members (8 women and 2 men). (ANDJ Bihor, Of.Par. Gr.Cat. Oradea, dosar 267/1922-1928, f. 130) Such a large number of societies reduced the number of members but not in all cases since some people were registered in two societies. This way the reciprocal borrowing of some devotional practices were facilitated which later on were introduced in the articles of association. The lack of data makes us not to dare considering the "Perpetual Rosary" of Curtuiușeni to be a Living Rosary Association. (*Duminica*, nr. 41, 1937: 5) Although it could be plausible taking into consideration that in the Greek Catholic Diocese of Oradea operated many rosary societies, and the influence of Latin Catholic rite was much more evident than in the other dioceses. This development had to be attributed to the measures promoting the Marian cult of the religious hierarchy but as well as a consequence of searching for new ways to attract laymen in the activity of the Church.

The success of this practice of piety was greatly due to the Marian societies, which started to activate at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The oratory, the akathist, the rosary were parts of the exercise of private and collective piety provided under the articles of association of the Mariana societies. The members of the society attended on a regular basis various activities such as reading the rosary on the first Sunday of the month and reading the akathist in the eve of the Marian feast etc. These practices represented subject of debate in the meetings of the Committee of the Saint Mary Society of the Romanian Greek Catholic Women of Cluj, when the Oratory of the Lord's Mother was introduced and some sermons and speeches related to this devotion was organized. (*Almanah*, 1928: 80)

The Marian societies contributed not only to the spread of these practices among their members but also among other believers. Many believers attended the meetings of the societies who were able to connect to the rosary this way as well. In the reports drawn up on the basis of some questionnaires they submitted annually, the Marian societies from the Greek Catholic Diocese of Maramureș, among others reported about the attendance of the members and other believers at the oratory on the first Sunday of the month, at the rosary on the second Sunday of the month or at the daily recitation of the rosary in May as well as the oratory in August. (ANDJ Maramureș, Protopop. Gr. Cat. Baia-Mare, dosar 685/1939, f. 10) During the interwar period, due to the Marian societies' activities, the celebration of the oratory in August, the akathist in the eve of the Marian feasts as well as the rosary on Sundays and feast days became a reality among the Marianists as well as among other believers. (ANDJ Maramureș, Protopop. Gr.Cat. Baia-Mare, dosar 685/1939, f. 336) Some Marian societies had special sections dedicated to the rosary (ANDJ,

Protopop.Grec.Cat. Seini, dosar 442/1932, f. 12), fact probably due to the previous existence of a “Rosary Society” in the respective community. In the majority of the cases the Jesus’ Heart section functioned along with this section. Some Marianists chose to recite the Rosary daily (ANDJ Bihor, Protopop. Grec.Cat. Beiuș, dosar 125/1938, f. 200), or to participate in October at the celebration of the oratory and the rosary. (ANDJ Bihor, Protop. Grec.Cat. Beiuș, dosar 125/1938, f. 237,560) The Rosary used by more and more Greek Catholic believers in the 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be considered a success of those who counted on it though were accused of Latinism. In an activity report drawn up in 1922 the president priest of the “Marian Society” of Veliș founded in 1892 states with obvious satisfaction that: „after 30 years of being accused of destroying tradition and inclination to Latinism, today my initiative is being approved”. (ANDJ Bihor, Ep.Gr.Cat. de Oradea, dosar 267/1922-1928, f. 119).

In the Greek Catholic Diocese of Oradea and that of Maramureș the existence of some Rosary Societies prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century advanced and facilitated the use of the Rosary. We cannot state the same about the Greek Catholic Diocese of Cluj-Gherla where, although the rosary was recited in some of the parishes, in others it was introduced by the presidents of the Marian societies in the 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (ANDJ Bistrița Năsău, Of.Par.Gr.Cat. Rodna, dosar 817/1938, f. 10) Bishop Iuliu Hossu in many cases rewarded the work of the Marianists with rosaries (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of.Gr.Cat. Telciu, dosar 21/1934-1947, f. 11), trying also in this way to attract as many women as possible to practice this devotion suggested by the Virgin Mary in her apparitions. Many priests experienced the beneficent effects of the introduction of this prayer and the change in the women's behavior that stayed to recite the rosary on Sundays and feast days after the vespers. Priest Romuli noticed that the Marianists but other believers as well: „Gather together with pleasure ... at the rosary prayer on Sunday after the vespers, a new thing for them brought by some believers who had been to the Monastery of Bixad”. (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of. Par.Gr.Cat. Romul, dosar 94/1880-1947, f. 60) The Marianists also organized in Marian feasts such as the Immaculate Conception on December 9<sup>th</sup>, the holy rosary novena at the end of which confessed and communicated *in corpora*. (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of. Par. Gr. Cat. Archiud, dosar 20/1924-1947, f. 94) The intensification of these practices was also due to the introduction of the devotion of Holy Heart of Mary, as well as the anniversary of 1500 years of the Synod of Ephesus in 1931 when the divine maternity of the Virgin Mary was acknowledged.

In the case of some Marian societies we can identify some of the steps followed by Marianists in the rosary practice on the basis of record books containing protocols. Such sources represent a priceless fountain for the history of this devotional practice. For instance, the case of the Rosary Society of the United Romanian Women in Dragu founded in 1934 which since 1938 had a

section called the Wreath of Rosary. Members of this section, about 30 in number, were in general elderly Marianists but not exclusively. The appearance of the section determined the priest to ask for help from the dean in order to be able to bless the believers' rosaries, who required his prayer of blessing together with indulgencies. (ANDJ Sălaj, Par.Gr.Cat. Dragu, dosar 13/1924-1945, f. 19) In the following years the practice of the rosary devotion intensified and at every Great Fast the Rosarists listened to the Liturgy on Tuesday and Friday, after the Holy Communion and recited in corpore the rosary and the sorrowful mysteries. In 1943 they got to know the Rosary on icons that is with the mysteries on images especially useful for illiterate members. In order to spread this practice 60 brochures with the rosary on the icons were distributed. (ANDJ Sălaj, Par.Gr.Cat. Dragu, dosar 13/1924-1945, f. 21) In the case of this society the rosary devotion completed the repertory of the devotion to the honor of the Virgin Mary, joining the novenas, sanctification of the Virgin's Pure Heart, pilgrimages to the Strâmba Monastery and the Monastery of Nicula etc.

The distribution sections of the Marian societies contributed as well to the spread of the Rosary. Among these books we mention: *The Prayer of the Rosary* (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of.Par.Gr.Cat. Rodna, dosar 827/1939, f. 18), *The Virgin of Fatima*, *The Queen of the Rosary* of Ioan Suci, *The Month of Mary* of P. A. Berlioux, *The Marian Life* of G. Mureșan, various *Collections of Marian hymns* (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Vicariatul Rodnei, dosar 1476/1945, f. 11) and last but not least, rosaries for pupils at the end of school year. (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Vicariatul Rodnei, dosar 1457/1943, f. 27) In cooperation with the General Assembly of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church (AGRU) the Marian Societies distributed rosaries and Booklets with the Prayer of the rosary among others on AGRU's Sunday and Good Press's Sunday. (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of.Par.Gr.Cat. Rebra, dosar 9/1942-1948, f. 3-8) The Oratory, the Rosary or the Belt (ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Of.Par.Gr.Cat. Telciu, dosar 10/1912, 1934-1947, f. 30) of the Lord's Mother or the other prayers suggested on such occasions were included in the program of the religious Missions.

In spite of the objections related to the introduction of the rosary in the Greek Catholic Church we find that this devotion did spread among the Christians. This fact was partially due to the Marian societies that suggested this practice to its members. The prelates encouraged and supported such practices. The Rosary helped the simple believer to accompany Mary on the road of life filled with joy, pain, suffering, offering him the chance of redemption.

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- ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Fond Oficiul parohial greco-catolic Romuli, Dosar 94/1880-1947
- ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Fond Vicariatul Rodnei, Dosar 1457/1943, 1476/1945
- ANDJ Bistrița-Năsăud, Fond Oficiul parohial greco-catolic Rebra, Dosar 9/1942-1948
- Arhivele Naționale Direcția Județeană Maramureș, Fond Protopopiatul greco-catolic Baia Mare, Dosar 685/1939
- ANDJ Maramureș, Fond Protopopiatul greco-catolic Seini, Dosar 442/1932
- Arhivele Naționale Direcția Județeană Sălaj, Fond Parohia greco-catolică Dragu, Dosar 13/1924-1945

## ETHNIC GROUPS AND DENOMINATIONS AT ROMANIA'S WESTERN BORDER IN THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

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**Abstract.** *The present study aims at revealing certain aspects concerning the ethnic and religious structure of the counties in Romania's current western part, from south to north - Timis, Arad, Bibor and Satu Mare - as it was presented in the census of 1930. These counties have a common frontier with Hungary on certain distances. Arad and Bibor border with only Hungary, Satu Mare borders with Hungary and Ukraine, and Timis borders with Hungary and Serbia. In order to see what changes were registered after the Treaty of Trianon, we made comparisons with the census conducted in 1910.*

**Keywords:** *western counties, structure, groups, confession, Treaty of Trianon*

After World War I, a process of violent changes started in the world. Because of this, the 20<sup>th</sup> century seemed shorter. "An age of extremes", as the English historian Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm, 2008), inspiredly entitled his book, "the short 20<sup>th</sup> century" covered the period between the October 1917 Revolution that meant the birth of the communist regime and its fall in 1991, namely the birth and fall of the Soviet Union. This "shortened" century was marked by the most rapid succession of processes and phenomena in history.

The treaties concluded at the end of World War I confirmed the new reality of the world, which in many cases was decided by the free will of the peoples that benefited from one of the Fourteen Points of President Wilson, the one dealing with the autonomy of the minorities within the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Kissinger, 1998). The Great Powers had no choice but to take the free expression of the peoples' will into consideration, even if not

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completely. For Romania, the most important treaty is the one concluded with Hungary at Trianon, on June 4<sup>th</sup> 1920. This treaty acknowledged that the Romanians did historical justice themselves at the National Assembly in Alba Iulia, on December 1<sup>st</sup> 1918 (Știrban, Iancu, Țepelea, Racovițan, 1997: 191). The issue of the frontier between the two states caused long, hot debates. The frontier was delimited on the ground by a Delimitations Commission made up of representatives of France, Great Britain, the USA, Romania and Hungary (Tilea, 1925: 49). The border was established based on the ethnic principle, which is why the complaints of the Budapest governments regarding the “great historical injustice” suffered by Hungary after the Trianon Treaty are absolutely unfounded. Romania did not take any single piece of land from Hungary (Știrban, Iancu, Țepelea, Racovițan 1997: 191).

Since 1920, Hungarian historiographers have kept affirming the existence of a policy “of making Transylvania more Romanian” by force (Megyenk 1997). This kind of policy would lead to a considerable decrease in the share of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania.

In the following pages, we intend to reveal certain aspects concerning the ethnic and religious structure of the counties in Romania’s current western part, from south to north — Timis, Arad, Bihor and Satu Mare — as it was presented in the census of 1930. These counties have a common border with Hungary on certain distances. Arad and Bihor border with Hungary only, Satu Mare borders with Hungary and Ukraine, and Timis borders with Hungary and Serbia. However, in the inter-war period things were a little different. Two counties, Timis-Torontal, that bordered Yugoslavia and Arad, Bihor and Salaj counties, and Satu Mare, a neighbour of Czechoslovakia, shared a small frontier with Hungary. In order to highlight the dynamics of these structures, we shall use the results of the census conducted by the Hungarian authorities in 1910.

Our analysis must consider the territorial changes that took place at the end of World War I and were established through the Treaty of Trianon for the Hungarian border.

In order to be able to explain the dynamics of the population and ethnic and religious structures, we must be accustomed with the area covered by the counties under discussion.

The table below gives information about the civil and military population of the *comitate* (territorial-administrative units) and the counties registered during the two censuses (1910 and 1930), as well as their areas.

On studying the data in the table, the first observation is that the only county with positive values between the two censuses was Arad. In the 20 years that passed from 1910 to 1930, the population of the former *comitat*, now turned into a county, increased with 2.2%, and its area as an administrative unit extended with 3.3%. As one would expect, the population density decreased with 0.7 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>. In the first stage, the territory of the county was

reduced after the largest part of the Elek (or Aletea) *plasa* (administrative subdivision of a county) had been ceded, so the area of the Arad *comitat* remained 6,005 km<sup>2</sup>. At the time, Arad County comprised the town of Arad, the communes that remained from the former Arad *comitat* and several localities from the Cenad *comitat*. Following the requests formulated by the local authorities as early as 1921, another 10 communes that had belonged to Timis-Torontal County (Monitorul Oficial, 1925: 6-7), were included within the perimeter of Arad (Alunis, Aradul Nou, Cruceni, Fantanele, Frumuseni, Sanicolaul Mic, Sag, Tisa Noua, Zabrani and Zadareni); as a result, Arad County covered 6,255 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 1.** Population dynamics and area counties in western Romania in the first half of the twentieth century

No. crt.	County	Population			Surfaces		
		years		dinamic's	years		dinamic's
		1910	1930		1910	1930	
1.	Arad	414.388	423.649	+ 9.261 + 2,2%	6.048	6.248	+ 200 + 3,3%
2.	Bihor	646.301	510.318 &&&& &&&& &07467. &&&& 0&&&& &&&& &&&&06 8.184000	-135.983 - 21,1%	10.657	7.467	- 3.190 - 30,0%
3.	Satu Mare	396632	294.875 &&&& &&&& &&&04 242.&& &&&0& &&&& &&&& &&&&0 69.57400 0	-101.757 -25,7%	6.257	4.242	- 2.015 - 32,3%
4.	Timiș-Torontal	500.835*	499.443 &&&& &&&& &&&07	-1.392 -0,3%	7.433	7.600	+ 167 + 2,2%

\* it is just the population within the Shire of Timis



			600.000 &&&& &&&& &&&& &&&& 65.84400 0				
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**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlálása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 8, 58.

This administrative structure was kept until the end of 1929. By the Royal Decree No 4063/7 issued on December 1929, the county's administrative division was changed again when Talpos commune was ceded to Bihor County and the area of Arad County was reduced to 6.248 km<sup>2</sup> (Monitorul Oficial, 1929: 15-18).

A slight increase in area was registered in Timis-Torontal County in comparison with the previous Timis *comitat* that measured 7,433 km<sup>2</sup>. Timis-Torontal was born when parts of the two *comitate*, Timis and Torontal, were united. In 1910, Torontal had 10,042 km<sup>2</sup>, so together with Timis it covered 17.745 km<sup>2</sup>. After long debates about the delimitation on the ground of the frontier established at the Peace Conference and the release of Banat by the Serbian troops from the two former *comitate*, most of Torontal and a small part of Timis went to Yugoslavia, while most of Timis and a small part of Torontal formed Timis-Torontal County. As said before, Timis lost some localities to Arad County (Aradul, 1978: 427).

A more important part played the territories that remained in Hungary after the Trianon border had been delimited, as recorded for Bihor county with 30.0% and 32.3% of Satu Mare.

Naturally, the territorial changes were followed by changes in the population of the counties. In Arad, the number of inhabitants increased with 2.2% between the two censuses. Although this county had lost some territories, the loss was compensated when it gained other regions, as we have seen above. The regions it gained came with their own population, thus compensating for the population that had remained in the Hungarian state. Other phenomena such as the natural movement of the population, which we shall not deal with now, and migration contributed to the population dynamics as well.

After 1920, in Arad County a migration phenomenon took place that involved Hungarian families that had remained in Hungary after the frontier had been established. These were refugee families that did not want to live in the Hungarian state and requested to cross the border and live in Romania. According

to some centralising data from June 1924, the total number of refugees from Hungary living in Arad County reached 2,044 (S.J.A.A.N., 1924: 276).

There is no doubt that the reverse of the above phenomenon involving refugees occurred after 1920. It was, however, much more extensive, given that only a small part of Arad county had been ceded to Hungary, while in the part that was given to Romania lived quite a large number of Hungarian ethnic groups. In spite of their large number, those groups did not represent the majority in the localities they lived in. Based on a document entitled "Table of male persons who repatriated in 1919 and 1929 included" and compiled by the head office of the Police Station in Arad on November 13<sup>th</sup> 1933, 3,748 men, all householders, chose to leave Romania (S.J.A.A.N., 1930: 2-56); Arbonic, 2009: 136). It is true that some of those who preferred the Hungarian citizenship to the Romanian one gave up their decision later. It is also true that their number was not very high. For instance, in 1924, 14 people (3.5%) changed their decision to give up their Romanian citizenship (S.J.A.A.N., 1923: 40-44). Based on some questionable calculations that were made in the absence of explicit documents, we have come to the conclusion that the number of the people who left Arad County after 1919 and were not necessarily Hungarian might have been about 11,244, but this figure is not confirmed in any document issued in that time (Pădurean, 2010: 414).

Naturally, such phenomena also occurred in different proportions in the other counties that had suffered major territorial and population losses, but they did not compensate for the demographic decline. The case of Arad was just an indication of the demographic events that might have happened in the other western counties of Romania that we are dealing with in this study.

The changes in the county area and population affected the population density (people per square kilometre).

**Table 2.** The population density in counties in western Romania

No. crt.	County	Population density per square kilometer.		
		Years		dynamic's per square kilometer
		1910	1930	
1.	Arad	68,5	67,8	- 0,7
2.	Bihor	60,6	68,2	+ 7,6
3.	Satu Mare	63,1	69,6	+ 6,5
4.	Timiș-Torontal	63,9	65,8	+ 1,9

**Source.** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlálása, első rész.* A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 8, 58.

One can notice that in Bihor and Satu Mare, counties that had suffered major territorial losses, a significant increase was registered in the population density. This means that the territories that were given to the Romanian state were more densely populated than those that remained in Hungary. The area of Timis-Torontal County increased only slightly and although the number of inhabitants declined, its density increased from 63.9 to 65.9 per km<sup>2</sup>. We can assume that in this case too, the localities of the county were more densely populated than those that had been lost. In Arad, the territorial extension led to a 0.7% decrease in density and number of inhabitants.

All these variations in the population dynamics and the areas covered by the counties resulted in great changes in the ethnic and religious structure of the former Hungarian *comitate* that became Romanian counties.

After the treaties of Karlovitz (1699) and Passarovitz (1718), the settlement policy of the Vienna Court led to the creation of a diverse society from the ethnic and religious point of view in the counties that are examined in this study. After the Austro-Hungarian dualism, the authorities in Budapest carried on a policy of altering the natural ethnic structure in which the Institute of Statistics played a major role. We are not going to analyse this topic, as there are many references about it. We shall only mention the paper written by Stefan Manciu, *Granița de Vest (The Western Border)*, published in Blaj in 1936 and reprinted in Baia Mare in 1994.

Based on appendices 1, 3, 5 and 7, we shall now study the evolution of the ethnic structure in the four administrative units in the 20-year period established at the beginning of this study (1910-1930).

We shall start with the Romanians. At the census conducted in 1910, they had the highest population share in the Arad and Timis *comitate*. In the former county, they even represented the absolute majority (57.8%). In the Bihor and Satu Mare *comitate*, they were the second ethnic group, but numbered more inhabitants in the former than in the latter. After 20 years, at the census organised by the Romanian authorities, the situation had changed almost completely. Unlike in 1910, when the mother tongue was registered, in 1930, the census takers registered the nationality. This time, the Romanians were the majority in all counties (over 60%), except for Timis-Torontal, where they represented a relative majority (37.6%). The highest increase in the share of the Romanian population was registered in Satu Mare (49.0%) and Bihor (18.4%), precisely the counties that had ceded the largest territories to the Hungarian state. In Timis-Torontal and Arad, the share of the Romanians increased only slightly, with 11.2% and 7.7%. This small increase was noticed in both counties, as they were not “emptied” of their Hungarian element following the frontier delimitation. This means that in the localities that were given to Romania the Romanians represented the majority of the population.

Besides the territorial changes that brought about variations in the Romanians' share in the western counties, other phenomena such as natural growth, emigration and immigration on both sides of the frontier between Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, must have influenced the demographic evolution. Emigration took place in two ways: through the expulsion of the people who manifested a hostile attitude towards the Romanian government or the voluntary repatriation of those who no longer wanted to live in Romania and refused to pledge loyalty to the new state in which they found themselves after the frontier delimitation. In our opinion, cases of illegal emigration could also have occurred, but not very many; it is, however, difficult to determine their number (Pădurean, 2010: 414).

In the same train of thought, we should mention the small contribution of those who returned from the United States or Canada. In the official letter no 1122/5956 of June 5<sup>th</sup> 1920, the General Secretariat of Cluj announced the Prefect's Office of Arad County that a group of Romanians "born in Ardeal" were about to return from America (S.J.A.A.N., 1920: 13). A list of 29 names of people born in Arad County was attached to the letter.

As the data of the 1930 census include both civilians and military, in these counties the military units that had been brought there after 1919 to replace the Hungarian ones consisted of Romanian military who also increased the share of the Romanian population.

We shall now analyse the situation of the Hungarian ethnic group using the pattern applied to the Romanians. At the census in 1910, the Hungarians represented the majority in the *comitate* of Satu Mare (67.7%) and Bihor (56.5%). Next came the *comitate* of Arad (29.9%) and Timis (15.9%). The larger or smaller percentage of the Hungarians in the four *comitate* is the result of the settlement policy initiated by the Austrian and Hungarian state.

The 1930 census indicated that the Hungarian ethnic group occupied the second place, except for Timis-Torontal County, where it was on the third place, as it had been in 1910. It is interesting to notice that in Timis-Torontal, judging in absolute values, the Hungarian population increased with only nine persons between the two censuses, but its share declined with 0.5%. Its largest decline occurred, as expected, in the county with the highest increase of the Romanian population, namely Satu Mare. In relative values, the Hungarian population was diminished with 99.8% in this county and with 58.2% in Bihor. In Arad, the loss was 33.7%.

We have already explained the reasons for the decline in the Hungarian population. The localities in which the Hungarians were the major ethnic group had been removed from the Romanian counties and given to the Hungarian state, so the new counties were left with localities where most inhabitants were Romanian. This gave the false impression that an attempt was being made to make the former *comitate* "more Romanian".

On one hand, some of the people who chose to leave Romania after 1920 did not go to Hungary only, but also to South America, especially Brazil, as indicated in some information about Arad County (Pădurean, 2010: 417).

On the other hand, we should also recall that the censuses conducted by the Hungarian authorities registered not the nationality, but the native tongue. For this reason, people born from mixed marriages in which the mother was Hungarian, but the education was based on the father's ethnicity were considered Hungarian; as a result, they increased the values registered with the dominating ethnic group. Furthermore, neither of the censuses registered the Jews separately, so their share can be approximated after the declared Mosaic denomination. Many of them converted to the Roman-Catholic religion. As an ethnic group, the Jews were registered together with those whose mother tongue was Hungarian, like the gypsies. These "statistical" tricks increased the share of the Hungarians in Transylvania.

As we have already mentioned, in 1930, the census takers registered the nationality, the religion and the native tongue for the first time. Therefore, it was possible to determine the national structure of Romania's population, especially that the external revisionist claims were becoming more and more adamant (Roman, 1995: 27). The census was limited to "knowing the individual feeling of ethnic affiliation" of each citizen in order to indicate the size of each ethnic group in the country. Therefore, it was decided that the census takers should register the nationality to which a person feels connected to through tradition and feeling. The census taker had no right to alter or check the information. Thus, the concept of "ethnic origin" was replaced with "nationality". For this reason, the Jews and the gypsies were registered separately; thus they contributed both to the decrease in the artificial share of the Hungarians that was calculated by the Hungarian Institute of Statistics, and to the false impression that in the inter-war period the Romanian government attempted to turn the Hungarians into Romanians by force.

Interestingly, only the Hungarians are under this impression. Let us take the Germans' example. In Timis-Torontal they were the second major ethnic group after the Romanians both in 1910 (33.1%) and in 1930 (34.9%). Consequently, their share did not decline. On the contrary, it increased both in gross and relative values, probably as a result of the natural movement of the population. The same is true for Arad and Satu Mare counties as well. A decline in the number of the German inhabitants was seen in Bihor, where the German population decreased with 1,311 people in 1930. This can be explained both by the fact that part of the Germans registered in 1910 lived in the localities that had been ceded to Hungary and their possible emigration to Austria, Germany or the American continent.

Not only the settlement policy carried on by the Austrian and Hungarian state, but also the requirements imposed by industrialisation and the

various neighbouring ethnic and socio-cultural communities influenced the ethnic and religious structure of the counties that we are studying. On analysing the tables in the appendices about the ethnic structure, we can see that in terms of population share and the above-mentioned variables, various ethnic groups come after the Romanians, Hungarians or Germans.

According to the 1910 census, in Arad County the figures registered for those of Mosaic religion placed the Jews on the fourth place. In 1930, they fell to the fifth place, outrun by the Slovaks. The same significant presence of the Jews can be noticed in Satu Mare and Bihor counties; the figures of 1910 may be relative, but they are confirmed by the small differences noticed in comparison with 1930. The share of the Jewish population was smaller in Timis-Torontal, where the Serbians and the Croatians were on the fourth place.

The higher share of the Slovak population in Arad is explained by the integration of the locality Nadlac in the county. Nadlac was inhabited by many Slovaks and belonged to the *Cenad comitat* before the delimitation of the Romanian-Hungarian border. The Slovaks were also present in Bihor County. In 1790, the first Roman-Catholic Slovaks arrived there and settled in the Plopisului Mountains region, where they founded the localities Budoii and Varzari. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were followed by other Slovaks who founded Sinteiu, Faget etc.

We mentioned the share of the Serbians and Croatians in Timis-Torontal. At the census of 1910, they accounted for 14% of the population, but this percentage decreased significantly to 5.8% after 20 years. This is explained by the ethnic principle that was applied when the border between Romania and Yugoslavia was delimited and the localities with a majority of Serbian population were ceded to the latter.

To put an end to the analysis of the changes in the ethnic structure of Romania's western counties after World War I, we should mention that Timis or Timis-Torontal was the most cosmopolitan county in both censuses. The percentage of the various ethnic groups registered as "others" was 2.5 (1910) and 3.9 (1930), while in the other counties it was only about 1%.

Now let us examine the religious diversity of the four studied counties. To make the analysis easier, appendices 2, 4, 6 and 8 were compiled. The dynamics of the Orthodox denomination will be studied by applying the same pattern as for the ethnic structure.

If we take into account the fact that most Romanians were Orthodox, it goes without saying that at the 1910 census they were the majority in the Arad and Timis *comitate* (55.7%, 46.3% respectively). If we compare the relative values of the Romanians in the two administrative units with the same values regarding religion, we shall notice that in Arad the number of Orthodox Christians was with 2.1% lower than that of the Romanians. This means that the rest were of a different denomination, especially Greek-Catholic. The share

of the Orthodox population increased with the 0.5% percentage of the Serbians living in the same *comitat*.

In the Timis *comitat*, the number of the Orthodox inhabitants was higher than that of the Romanians. This was but natural, as the Serbians (about 14.0%), increased the share of the Orthodox population.

In 1930, however, the Orthodox Christians kept their leading position in the census only in Arad County. In Timis-Torontal, they were on the second place, although their corresponding values shown in appendix 8 were higher.

In the Bihor *comitat*, the Orthodox (36.0%) Christians were on the second place after the Reformed Christians. On studying appendix 3, we can see that the Romanians accounted for 41.0% of the population, while the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholics added up to 44.9%. It is thus obvious that the values of the two denominations were increased by other ethnic groups living in the *comitat*, such as Serbians, Ruthenians etc. At the 1930 census, the Orthodox Christians were the main denomination, as the number of the Reformed was reduced dramatically. The Greek-Catholics accounted for 60.5% and the Romanians for 61,6% of the population. This meant that at least 1.1% of the Romanians living in this county belonged to other religions, while the Greek-Catholics included the Serbians and the Ruthenians.

In the Satu Mare *comitat*, the share of the Orthodox population was very small: only 0.5%. This means that the rest of the 30.1% of the Romanians were mostly Greek-Catholic. After 20 years, although the number of the Orthodox inhabitants increased with 484.9%, their contribution to the religious structure of the county was still small, being only 4.4%, although the Romanians accounted for 60.5% of the county's ethnic groups. We can draw the conclusion that in the 20 years separating the two censuses no major alterations affected the religious structure of the ethnic groups which remained chiefly Greek-Catholic.

The Roman-Catholic religion was not the main denomination either in 1910 or in 1930. In 1910, most of the Roman-Catholics lived in the Timis *comitat*. The 44.1% Roman-Catholics were mostly Germans (33,1%), but some of them, not very many, were Hungarians (15.9%). The 350 Croatian inhabitants were also Roman-Catholic, but they were insignificant in terms of absolute values. The share of the German and Hungarian ethnic groups was 4.9% higher than that of the Roman-Catholics, a natural fact, if we think that the some of the Germans were Evangelic and some of the Hungarians were Reformed. Interestingly, the two denominations together accounted for precisely 4.9% of the Christians of various religions living in the Timis *comitat* at the time. However, we should not generalize and forget that the population also included 3,080 (0.6%) Slovaks and Czechs who were mostly Evangelic.

In 1930, in Timis-Torontal, the Roman-Catholics constituted the main denomination. This was the natural consequence of the territorial changes that

had occurred in the former Hungarian *comitate* that were not located at the frontier between Romania and Yugoslavia. We have already mentioned that the percentage of the Serbians decreased with 8.2, being very close to the value (7.5%) with which the Roman-Catholics outran the Orthodox.

In the other *comitate*, the Roman-Catholics had different percentages in the general picture of the religious structures: Arad (28.3%), Satu Mare (17.1%), and Bihor (10.5%). After the border between Romania and Hungary had been delimited, on the basis of the new demographic realities, the Roman-Catholic religion lost many of its Christians in 1930; the greatest loss (54.8%) was registered in Satu Mare, while the lowest (4.8%) in Arad. This decline corresponds to the population loss that we have seen when analysing the ethnic losses.

After 1920, the effects of the losses registered in the Hungarian population upon the religious structure of the counties should also be viewed from the perspective of the Reformed denomination. In the *comitate* of Bihor (38.6%) and Satu Mare (31.9%), most of the Hungarian population belonged to this denomination. According to appendices 2 and 8, in the other two counties the number of the Hungarian Reformed Christians was very small. Therefore, in 1930 the number of the Reformed Christians decreased very little in Arad and increased very slightly in Timis-Torontal, maybe also owing to the natural growth rate of the population. In Bihor and Satu Mare, however, the share of the denomination decreased significantly: 17.6% in the former and 6.9% in the latter.

In the four counties, the Greek-Catholic denomination is linked with the Romanian and Ruthenian ethnic groups that had also Orthodox Christians among them. As seen from appendices 1, 3, 5 and 7, their contribution to the ethnic diversity of the four counties was rather small. In Satu Mare, they barely reached 1% in 1930.

A religion that is strictly connected to a certain ethnic group is the Mosaic one. As we have already said, the censuses conducted by the Hungarian authorities did not register the Jews separately; instead, they registered their religion. In order to set some reference points for 1910, we have included the number of those declared as belonging to the Mosaic religion in the appendices related to the ethnic groups. For this reason, for the year 1930 we have suggested a comparison between those who declared themselves of Jewish nationality and those registered as belonging to the Mosaic religion.

From this perspective, differences between the values of those who declared themselves Jews and the values of those who belonged to the Mosaic cult can be noticed in all four studied counties. The differences lie in the fact that the number of the faithful is higher than that of the Jews. This means that a certain number of Jews declared themselves as belonging to a different ethnic group. In the *comitate* located at the border with Hungary, according to the customs of the time, they declared themselves Hungarian, but it may well be that after the establishment of the Romanian administration they chose to



declare themselves Romanian. The biggest difference between the declared Jews and the inhabitants of Mosaic religion was 2.1% and was registered in Bihor County. In the other three counties, the differences ranged between normal limits.

Now let us compare the values of the Mosaic religion at the times of the two registrations. In Arad County, the difference between the two censuses was minor, showing 81 people less in 1930 than in 1910. Therefore, no change was seen in their share.

In Timis-Torontal, the neighbouring southern county, the number of the Mosaics increased with 1,255 (12.8%) as a result of the natural growth rate, as well as the voluntary migration movement, given the economic possibilities of the county.

In 1930, in Bihor and Satu Mare, the number of the Mosaics decreased with 14.4% (4,655 people) in the former and 14.0% (4,098 people) in the latter. Paradoxically, in the same year, of those who declared their affiliation to a certain religion, the Mosaics accounted for 6.4% in Bihor and 8.6% in Satu Mare, against 5% and 7.4% in 1910. This can be explained by the “leaks” which were much more significant among the Reformed Christians than among the Mosaics; this is why the percentage of the latter increased.

As for the other denominations, Evangelic and Unitarian, their share was small or irrelevant. Their evolution followed closely the dynamics of the ethnic groups that shared this religion.

In the end of our study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the evolution of the ethnic groups and denominations in the four analysed counties, in the first ten years following the treaties signed after World War I.

According to Table 3, the four former *comitate* that had belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and were later integrated in Romania after the border delimitation lost 11.8% of the population that lived on the 17% of the territory of the four counties that was ceded to Hungary. This means that most inhabitants of the 83% of their territory belonged to the Romanian ethnic group. A percentage of 88.2 remained on this territory. Some came and increased this percentage, others left, refusing to live in the state they were supposed to live. In any case, their number did not change the absolute value significantly. Under the circumstances, it was but natural that in 1930 the population density increased with 4.1 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 3.** Summative dynamics of the four counties in western Romania between 1910 – 1930

population		surfaces		density per square kilometer.	
years	dinamic's	years	dinami	years	dynami

1910	1930		1910	1930	c's	1910	1930	c's
1958156	1728285	- 229871 - 11,8%	30791	25557	- 5234 - 17%	63,5	67,6	+ 4,1

**Table 4.** Evolution summative ethnicity of the four counties in western Romania between 1910 – 1930

Ethnics	Year				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930		nr.	%
	nr.	%	nr.	%		
romanian	793.643	40,5	938.891	54,3	+ 145.248	+ 18,3
hungarians	838.202	42,8	366.524	21,2	- 471.678	- 56,3
german	214.847	10,9	238.415	13,7	+ 23.568	+ 10,9
slovak czech	17.413	0,8	27.021	1,5	+ 9.608	+ 55,1
ruthenians	1.032	0	4.824	0,2	+ 3.792	+ 467,4
serbian croatian	72.854	3,7	30.987	1,7	- 41.867	- 57,5
hebrew	81.766	4,1	63.482	3,6	- 18.284	- 23,3
others	20.185	1,0	38.119	2,2	+ 17.934	+ 188,8

The denominations evolved at the same time with the ethnic groups that shared them. Table 5 shows the correspondence between them.

**Table 5.** Summative evolution of confessions of the four counties in western Romania between 1910 – 1930

religious	Year				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930		nr.	%
	nr.	%	nr.	%		
orthodox	698.325	35,6	708.886	41,0	+ 10.561	+ 1,5
gr. as	255.057	13,0	259.991	15,0	+ 4.934	+ 1,9
rum. as	474.748	24,2	444.776	25,7	- 29.972	- 6,4
reformed	414.283	21,1	186.892	10,8	- 227.391	- 54,9
gospel	29.105	1,4	27.313	1,5	- 1.792	- 6,2
unitarians	728	0	407	0	- 321	- 44,1
mosaic	81.766	4,1	74.187	4,2	- 7.579	- 9,3
others	4.144	0,2	25.500	1,4	+ 21.356	+ 615,3

„Consequently, the census conducted in 1930 shows that the Romanian population is a compact mass that covers the whole plain and hill areas in the west of the country, while the Hungarians make up only ethnic islands ( Manciualea, 1994: 148).

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## ANNEX

### Annex 1. The ethnic structure of Arad County in 1910 and 1930

Ethnicity, by language and nation	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930		nr.	%
	nr.	%	nr.	%		

romanian	239.755	57,8	258.239	61,0	+18.484	+7,7
hungarians	124.215	29,9	82.422	19,5	- 41.793	-33,7
german	38.695	9,3	52.202	12,3	+13.507	+34,9
slovak czech	5.451	1,3	11.790	2,8	+6.339	+116,2
ruthenians	677	0,1	826	0,2	+149	+22,0
serbian croatian	2.158 70	0,5	1.969	0,5	- 259	-11,7
hebrew	10.102	2,4	9.048	2,1	-1.054	- 10,5
others	3.387	0,8	7.128	1,7	+3.741	+110,4

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlálása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 8.

**Annex 2.** Religious structure of Arad County in 1910 and 1930

Confession	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930		nr.	%
	nr.	%	nr.	%		
orthodox	230.907	55,7	236.576	55,8	+5.669	+2,4
gr. as	16.318	3,9	17.766	4,2	+1.448	+0,8
rum. as	117.630	28,3	112.097	26,5	-5.533	-4,8
reformed	26.709	6,4	23.180	5,5	-3.529	-13,3
gospel	10.950	2,6	13.546	3,2	+2.596	+23,7
unitarians	223	0	109	0	-114	-51,2
mosaic	10.102	2,4	10.021	2,4	-81	-0,9
others	1.549	0,3	10.021	2,4	+8.805	+568,4

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlalása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 8.

**Annex 3.** The ethnic structure of Bihor County in 1910 and 1930

Ethnicity, by language and nation	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930		nr.	%
	nr.	%	nr.	%		
romanian	265.098	41,0	314.109	61,6	+49.011	+18,4
hungarians	365.642	56,5	152.942	30,0	-212.700	-58,2
german	3.599	0,5	2.288	0,4	-1.311	-36,5
slovak czech	8.457	1,3	11.162	2,2	+2.705	+31,9
ruthenians	211	0	493	0	+282	133,6
serbian croatian	122 156	0	191	0	-87	-31,3
hebrew	32.462	5,0	21.982	4,3	- 10.480	- 32,3
others	3.016	0,4	7149	1,5	+4.133	+137,0

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlalása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 58.

**Annex 4.** Religious structure of Bihor County in 1910 and 1930

Confession	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930			
	nr.	%	nr.	%	nr.	%
orthodox	233.159	36,0	253.942	49,8	+20.783	+ 8,9
gr. as	57.488	8,9	54.438	10,7	-3.050	- 5,4
rum. as	68.019	10,5	52.899	10,4	-15.120	- 22,3
reformed	249.613	38,6	107.269	21,0	-142.344	- 57,1
gospel	3.307	0,5	1.531	0,3	-1.776	- 53,8
unitarians	299	0	162	0	-137	- 45,9
mosaic	32.462	5,0	27.807	6,4	-4.655	- 14,4
others	1954	0,3	12.270	1,4	+10.316	+ 527,9

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlalása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 58.

**Annex 5.** The ethnic structure of Satu-Mare County in 1910 and 1930

Ethnicity, by language and nation	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930			
	nr.	%	nr.	%	nr.	%
romanian	119.760	30,1	178.523	60,5	+ 58.763	+ 49,0
hungarians	268.385	67,7	54.191	25,2	-214.198	- 99,8
german	6.670	1,6	9.530	3,2	+2.860	+ 42,8
slovak czech	425	0,1	555	0,2	+130	+ 30,5
ruthenians	114	0	3.020	1,0	+2.906	+ 164,9
serbian croatian	27 66	0	61	0	- 32	- 34,5
hebrew	29.468	7,4	23.967	8,1	- 5.501	- 18,7
others	1.185	0,2	5.028	1,7	+3.843	+ 324,3

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlalása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 394.

**Annex 6.** Religious structure of Satu Mare County in 1910 and 1930

Confession	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930			
	nr.	%	nr.	%	nr.	%
orthodox	2.202	0,5	12.880	4,4	+ 10.678	+484,9
gr. as	168.870	42,5	173.910	59,0	+ 5.040	+2,9
rum. as	67.924	17,1	37.286	12,6	- 30.638	-54,8
reformed	126.826	31,9	44.138	15,0	- 82.688	-65,2
gospel	1.237	0,3	455	0,2	- 782	-63,3
unitarians	46	0	41	0	- 5	-8,9
mosaic	29.468	7,4	25.370	8,6	- 4.098	-14,0
others	59	0	795	0,2	+ 736	+1347,4

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlalása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 394.

#### Annex 7. The ethnic structure of Timiș-Torontal

Ethnicity, by language and nation	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930			
	nr.	%	nr.	%	nr.	%
romanian	169.030	33,7	188.020	37,6	+18.990	+11,2
hungarians	79.960	15,9	76.969	15,4	-2991	- 3,8
german	165.883	33,1	174.395	34,9	+8.512	+ 5,1
slovak czech	3.080	0,6	3.514	0,7	+434	+14,0
ruthenians	30	0	485	0	+455	+616,6
serbian croatian	69.905 350	14,0	28.766	5,8	-41.489	- 59,0
hebrew	9.734	1,9	8.485	1,7	- 1.249	- 12,9
others	12.597	2,5	18.814	3,9	+6.217	+ 49,3

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlalása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 468.

#### Annex 8. Religious structure of Timiș-Timiș County in 1910 and 1930

Confession	Years				Dynamic's	
	1910		1930		nr.	%
	nr.	%	nr.	%		
orthodox	232.057	46,3	205.488	41,1	-26.569	- 11,5
gr. as	12.381	2,4	13.877	2,8	+1.496	+ 12,0
rum. as	221.175	44,1	242.494	48,6	+21.319	+ 9,6
reformed	11.135	2,2	12.305	2,5	+1.170	+10,5
gospel	13.611	2,7	11.781	2,4	-1.830	- 13,5
unitarians	160	0	95	0	-65	- 40,7
mosaic	9.734	1,9	10.989	2,2	+1.255	+ 12,8
others	582	0,1	2.414	0,4	+1.832	314,7

**Source:** *A Magyar korona országainak 1910 évi népszámlálása*, első rész. A népesség főbb adatai, Budapest, 1912, p. 340; *Recensământul General al Populației României, din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II, București, 1938, p. 468.





# **ETHNICITY, NATION AND NATIONALISM**

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# ETHNIC IDENTITY AND THE ISSUE OF OTHERNESS THROUGH MARRIAGE IN NORTHWEST TRANSYLVANIA (SECOND HALF OF THE XIX - EARLY XX CENTURY)

Mircea BRIE\*

**Abstract.** *The ethnic structure of this region has been strongly influenced by the evolution of different historical-geographical, and political factors, but also by the evolution of the confessional structure. Ethnicity, from this point of view, is closely related to religion. What is typical and important to note is that the ethnic structure is very diverse. In addition to Romanians and Hungarians, also Gypsies, Germans, Slovaks, Jews, Ruthenians, and Serbs are present; other ethnic groups are numerically insignificant.*

*For this period we identified two important categories of documents relating to ethnic identity of Transylvanians: 1. records made by the Austrian state authorities; 2. Church documents. They must be viewed and analyzed with great care because they do not correspond directly to the necessity to establish ethnic identities.*

*The documents that are available to us do not allow for an accurate determination of a person's ethnicity. Given the lack of a variable on nationality from the few censuses conducted by the Hungarian State, we propose based on analysis of other documents (particularly those of ecclesiastical origin) to: a. check the mother tongue, b. establish religious identity and c. run an onomastic study.*

**Keywords:** *ethnicity, confession, censuses, ecclesiastical documents, Transylvania*

The ethnic structure of this region has been strongly influenced by the evolution of different historical-geographical, and political factors, but also by the evolution of the confessional structure. Ethnicity, from this point of view, is closely related to religion.

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What is typical and important to note is that the ethnic structure is very diverse. In addition to Romanians and Hungarians, also Gypsies, Germans, Slovaks, Jews, Ruthenians, and Serbs are present; other ethnic groups are numerically insignificant.

### **Ethnic identity in the information sources**

For this period we identified two important categories of documents relating to ethnic identity of individuals or communities of people: 1. records made by the Austrian state authorities, known after 1867 as the Austro-Hungarian (censuses and other records of state authorities), 2. Church records, (split into two categories: a. civil status registers and annual reports of parishes, church authorities b. funds, documents and minutes recorded by the bishops) (Brie, 2008: 39). This information is supplemented not only by references of various researchers, who take on the issue of ethno-religious structure of population in this region directly or tangentially.

The sources of information should be considered and analyzed with great care because they do not correspond directly to the necessity to establish the ethnic identity.

#### **a. Censuses**

Following the few official censuses conducted by the Austrian and the Austro-Hungarian states, for this very period, we will try capturing the demographic issues in their evolution. In our opinion, this would remove the most part of the shortcomings of the church funds research (often these funds – we particularly refer to parish records and reports of marital status - are incomplete, subjective, many of them having gotten lost in time, etc.) and it would also make possible the framing within a general demographic context of the whole population belonging to these area settlements<sup>1</sup>.

This is how we looked into the data from the censuses run within this period by the Austrian and Austrian-Hungarian states after 1867<sup>2</sup>. Such censuses were conducted in 1850, 1857, 1869, 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Data on administrative units in this region was also recorded in the work of Iosif I. Adam, I. Pușcaș, *Izvoare de demografie istorică*, vol. II, *Secolul al XIX-lea – 1914.*, Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului, București, 1987.

<sup>2</sup> We used data from the published works of Traian Rotariu on censuses of 1880, 1900 and 1910, but not only them (we also had available the Ioan Russu Șireanu, *România din statul ungar*, publicată at la Arad in 1904, and which is an analysis of the census from 1900, a.s.o.).

<sup>3</sup> Information referring to these censuses that we will briefly present was collected from Traian Rotariu (coord.), Maria Semeniuc, Mezei Elemér, *Recensământul din*

On the territory of Hungary and Transylvania, following the first census from 1784-1787, a new official and general census was only carried out after six and a half decades, at the beginning of XIX century. After suppressing the revolution from 1848/1849 in Hungary and in particular after the political and administrative restructuring of the Monarchy, a new census became inevitable. Other countries of the Austrian Empire needed a census, as well. The Imperial Commissioner in charge of civil affairs, Karl Geringer, ordered Hungary to conduct a census on April 24, 1850.

The census was started in the summer of 1850, but because of preparations for war against Prussia, its carrying off was put on hold until its completion in the summer of 1851. Perhaps most of the census had been completed in Transylvania since the summer of 1850. According to estimates of that time, 5-6% of the population were missing from the census records, but this margin of error was subsequently considered as being too high.

The census used nationality as a criterion for recording the population. The census instructions did not clarify the meaning of the concept of nationality so that, when filling in the respective heading, several understandings of the matter intertwined. Moreover, the Hungarian statisticians received, generally with skepticism, the results of nationality records because, in their opinion, the executive body of the absolutist Austrian government was biased when finding the figure representing the number of Hungarians and tried to obtain a value lower than the real one.

Since the census of 1850 did not have the expected results in all respects, the Austrian Interior Ministry began almost immediately to prepare a next census. Under the time laws, the census should have taken place every 3 years, so the next census was due in 1854. Due to political and administrative reforms, the census was delayed. After extensive preparatory work, on March 23, 1857 the imperial patent was promulgated on the new census. Questions concerning religion and marital status were shaped in the same manner as in 1850, but in 1857, following the previous census experience, the nationality of population was no longer recorded.

In religion, this time next to Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran (Evangelical) Reformed, Unitarians and Israel, new separate sections are allowed for Armenian Catholics, Armenian-Gregorian and other religions.

In 1863, the census, which according to the regulation had to be carried out at every six years, was delayed throughout the whole Austrian empire. After other delays, finally Law III of 1869 ordered the census to be conducted in Hungary, by synchronizing the recording with the one from the Austrian part of the empire; it became in the meantime two-headed (the dualism of 1867).

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1910. *Transilvania*, Studia Censualica Transsilvanica, Editura Staff, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 693-712.

This census gives us information about the religious structure of the region under study and less about ethnic groups.

The next census, the one from 1880, was already undertaken by a more independent body with increased power, that is the Hungarian Royal National Institute of Statistics, established in 1871.

Through individual questionnaires, the census from 1880 acquired a more “personal” character. A special emphasis was put on maintaining the household as the unit of the census, which was expressed by requiring that the individual polls be submitted on households.

Compared against these changes that were more formal, the real novelty of the 1880 census was the introduction of questions about the mother tongue. Thus, the census form was completed.

The instruction on language read: “The 6<sup>th</sup> heading will register the person’s mother tongue. Each heading will record the language declared by the person, and this statement must be firmly done and no reviewer has the right to influence the person”. According to the instruction, the children’s mother tongue could be different from that of the parents. Determination of nationality based on language and how the literal interpretation of language was done made those who could not speak be left out of the mother tongue heading; they were recorded into a separate heading. This section contained mostly infants (98% aged 0-2 y.o.), thus those very ones who could not speak because of their early age. Of course, this procedure was wrong because it is obvious that those reported in this group belonged to a certain nationality, too. Acknowledging the error, a proportional distribution was subsequently made between the languages for those who could not speak.

The new census, the one from 1890, regulated by Law IX of 1890 (which had nearly identical contents with the previous census law) and with the reference point of December 31, 1890, was carried out between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1891. Confession was an important criterion for the classification of the population. The census of 1890, the recording of the mother tongue was generally the same as it was in 1880, with the stipulation that the children who had not yet been able to speak were recorded depending on their mother’s mother tongue.

In the decade that followed the 1890 census, there were several significant events affecting the next census. This would be the case of the two important records: the census of the Gypsies in 1893 and the census of agriculture in 1895. Then, significant effects had the introduction, effective October 1895, of the civil status registers and closely related the reorganization of statistics on natural movement, together with Law XXXV of 1899, which allowed for a more solid census and statistical service. From then on it functioned under the name that it better reflected its tasks, i.e. Central Institute of Statistics of Hungary.

In general keeping the characteristics of the 1890 census, the 1900 census suffered some changes and additions. The census results were published in ten volumes, between 1902 and 1909.

In 1900 only an alive mother tongue could be entered, thus Latin, Gypsy and Jewish languages were not recorded. The fields of language and religion presented in the first volume of the census were simplified by removing one heading.

The last inventory of people from the old Hungary was carried out based on Law VIII of 1910. The reference date was fixed on December 31, 1910; all local works needed to be carried out, like previous censuses, during the first ten days of the new year.

A significant technical innovation of the census was the large-scale introduction of the pre-printed answers. To avoid, however, errors and abuse, the mother tongue and other spoken languages were still entered the traditional way. The prerequisite for hiring new reviewers was - this time, too – mastery of the Hungarian language.

## **b. Church documents**

Ecclesiastical information gives us a relatively clear picture of the religious structure, but not of the ethnic structure. This information should be closely analysed, if possible even be compared with information from other sources, because often, this information refers only to followers of that denomination, and not least we can see a certain bias that slipped in when data was recorded. A comparison between information from multiple documentary sources is, we believe, welcome if we want to achieve its purpose, namely to determine the structures of ethnic and confessional structures and the respective links between them.

Parish registers of civil status are complex sources for the researcher interested in historical demography, social history, economic history, toponymy, birthday, etc. Processing the data contained in these records requires a specific methodology. They allow us to observe trends that occurred on the long-term demographic events with reference to birth, marriages and deaths (Pascu, 1980: 12-13; Brie, 2008: 39). To study the observations made by representatives of churches, Sorina Paula Bolovan uses the method of family reconstitution sheets (SP Bolovan, 1999: 33). These records allow us to study the various events or demographic phenomena in terms of the confessional. By looking into the confessional we can deduce, to some extent, the ethnicity of those recorded registries. There are two major groups within the region, namely Romanians and Hungarians, and they are individualized, with some exceptions of course,



by religious confession<sup>4</sup>; we could establish an approximate direction to infer ethnicity. On the other hand, neither the prewar censuses are not directly related to ethnicity, but to the mother tongue<sup>5</sup>. This fact brings into question the relativity of interpretation of such documentary sources in view of determining the ethnicity.

We also have the annual reports of parishes; these reports allow us to verify and supplement data provided by the parish registers (even more as both documentary sources have been damaged to various extents). The research of these documents, the survey of data, the quantification of information, are followed by analysis and interpretation from many points of view. Ethno-religious structure of this period is influenced both by local realities and by socio-economic situation of the whole of Transylvania (Adam; Pușcaș, 1987: 117).

### **Political context – factor of influence on the evolution of ethnic structure of population**

The political reality, the events with political overtones that occurred during the XIX and XX centuries, had a direct influence on the conduct of the processes and phenomena related to ethno-religious developments of the population in the area subject to our research. Transylvania was part of Austrian Empire structures (before 1867) and then until 1918 it was part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

The first big event of the XIX century, which influenced the Habsburg policy on ethnic and religious issues, was the revolution of 1848. This year highlights revolutionary conflicts of ethnic and religious nature that existed at the time between Romanians and Hungarians living in Transylvania. Both ethnic communities were attached to the values expressed in that year by their own people

The second half of the XIX century was a very tense period during which this region was strongly affected by measures that were taken at political level. The Imperial Constitution of 1849 gave freedom to all inhabitants of the monarchy. At the beginning of the 7th decade of the XIX century, Romanians and other ethnic groups were granted political and religious rights. In 1865, however, the Diet of Transylvania in Cluj opened its session and the incorporation of Transylvania to Hungary was greatly supported. On this occasion the Diet abolished the autonomy of the principality, all problems and

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<sup>4</sup> Romanians are usually Greek Catholics or Orthodox, and Hungarians are Roman Catholics or Protestants (Calvinists).

<sup>5</sup> These issues will be addressed during this work and we will try to remove the shortcomings on the subject using other means for determining ethnicity or confession, by linking the mother tongue with the anthroponym of the target study.

interests of this territory remained under discussion and subsequent decision issued by the Diet in Budapest.

The Austrian state as a result of deep internal crisis and external pressure will yield to Hungary and in 1867 will put the basis of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy. As a result of this agreement Hungary was able to keep Transylvania. During the period that followed and until the First World War, people of ethnicities other than Hungarian underwent an intense process of Magyarization. This policy was supported by either a series of laws designed for this purpose or by abolishing laws that favoured non-Hungarian population, Romanian population in particular; we refer here to "*Law on equal rights of the Romanian nation*" and "*Law on the official character of the Romanian language*". The policy lead by the Hungarian Parliament and Government resulted in the period that followed 1867 in pushing Romanians out of the political, social and cultural life. From Hungarian laws that were passed during this period and had negative consequences for all ethnic groups of non-Hungarian ethnic group we would like to remind "*Law of nationalities*" and "*Education Law*". These two laws were motivated by the fact that in Hungary there is only one nation and only one official language, respectively Hungarian. Among other such laws such we can also mention "*Election Laws*" that resulted in the restriction of voting rights for non-Hungarian ethnic groups (especially after 1874) (Ilies, 1998: 18-19). In 1892 the "Apponyi Law" was voted and passed; this was the law regulating schooling. This law had an even stronger effect on the non-Magyar population of Hungary that was undergoing Magyarization. Confessional education was abolished and the Hungarian language learning was introduced as a mandatory class in all schools. These laws, together with others, shaped a disastrous period for the non-Magyar population in the region, aiming at its forced Magyarization.

1 December 1918 brought the unification of Transylvania, Banat, Crisana and Maramures with Romania (Ilies, 1998). The Romanian State shall guarantee, through the Constitution of 1923, individual and collective freedoms of all citizens of this country, regardless of nationality or religion. The Law of Religions from 1928 would guarantee freedom and protection to all churches. The new administration favored religious freedom for all nationalities within its borders (Ilieş, 1998).

Unreservedly we can note that political events, both national and international, are very important in determining the ethnic and religious composition. It is not only the politics that influences this structure. We met other factors among which we highlight the social, the economic, the cultural, the geographical, a.s.o.

## Methods of determining the ethnic identity

As the nationality variable is lacking from the very few censuses conducted by the Hungarian state, we propose that, based on other documents (mainly those of ecclesiastical origins) to: a. check the mother tongue; b. establish the confessional identity; c. onomastic study.

The available documents do not allow us to accurately determine a person's ethnicity. Even if we wanted to highlight just ethnicity, we cannot do this because at the level of the XIX century even the official censuses do not use the nationality variable, but only the mother tongue variable. Parish registers and civil status reports allow for establishing a person's ethnic identity in an even lesser extent, the criterion by which the population was recorded was their confession. In the latter case, establishing a relationship between ethnicity and religion has an even greater margin of error. Ecclesiastical documents, however, are the only ones allowing us a research of the marital process, in the sense that we would take on.

The criteria that can determine the ethnicity in this region are, in addition to individual declaration of ethnicity (data is very scarce), language, religion and the name of the person (mainly family name). Obviously, when using these criteria, we must consider all these indicators, not just one. An individual may know or may not know the language of the people to which he/she belongs. He/she loses the religious identity, or simply converts to another denomination or religion. The variable of name is even more relative. A person, often through marriage, changes her/his name. At the beginning of the XX century, the process of linguistic change is increasing under the influence of the Apponyi Law (Şişeştean, 2002: 15). But, what is ethnic identity? An individual who loses his religion, name and language (especially) and does not lose ethnic identity? Ethnic, national identity is more complex than the religious or linguistic issue (Bocşan, 1997: 130). Precisely for that reason, we must consider all factors together with socio-political, economic and cultural conditions that imprint a particular ethnic reality.

It is necessary to use at least two of the mentioned criteria. If we consider religion, we can say that Romanians are Orthodox and Greek Catholics. We do not exclude the fact that some Hungarians might be Greek Catholics or Orthodox<sup>6</sup>. We need to consider all factors, all possible indicators. The fact that we found in documents Hungarians of Greek Catholic or Orthodox religion is explained to a lesser extent by converting Hungarians to

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<sup>6</sup> A good example is the village of Beius Şuncuiuş (Bihor county), where in 1900 there were, according to census 370 Romanian Hungarian, 388 Greek Catholics, plus the 19 Orthodox. From here we can easily conclude that some of the declared Hungarian majority population in the village were Greek Catholic or Orthodox

these confessions, though we find many such cases, rather by some Romanians' Magyarisation, but who will not give up their religion. After being Magyarised, many Romanians converted to Roman Catholicism or Protestantism.

Another problem that occurs in establishing ethnic identity according to religion is in this area, but not limited to Jews. In 1880, for example, in Beiuș and Vașcău there were 621 Israelis (Rotariu, 1997: 50-82) and in 1900, across the entire Country of Beiuș there were altogether 1,709 Israelis (Ilieș, 1998: 327). All these people are in fact Jews. In censuses conducted by the Austrian-Hungarian state, the region does not list any Jew (because of census procedures). Most of them declare themselves as Hungarians or Romanians, according to case.

The declared native language is not only for Jews a questionable criterion for establishing ethnic identity. However, the language of a person defines a great part of the ethnic identity of that person. The direction of this phenomenon was the loss of the Romanians' linguistic identity. Another quite interesting, is that of a person's native language knowledge. In 1880, when the census was conducted incorporating such a metric, those who did not speak were recorded at the section "unknown language". In the *Country of Beiuș* there are records of 1,446 people with unknown language (this category also includes children who did not speak yet and therefore could not declare their language) (Rotariu, 1997: 50-82). What ethnicity did they have? In cities such as Stei, Lunca or Buntești (Bihor County) where the share of Orthodox and those who declared Romanian as their mother tongue is overwhelming and the number of people with unknown language is quite high, then we can deduce that they were Romanian.

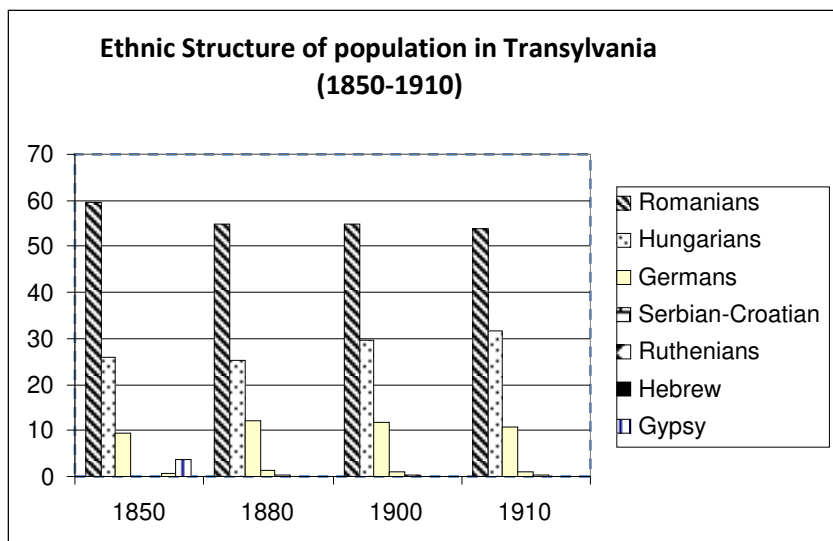
Using both criteria associated with anthroponyms is required, as we have seen. Moreover, it appears that in the process of losing the ethnic identity, language is lost first, then religion and, finally, the anthroponym.

Ethnicity is expressed in a determinant way in the choice of the life partner. This factor should not be neglected in any way. But we cannot say that within the marriage process ethnicity takes a more important role than religious belief. It is important to note the ethnic determinisms that in association with the confessional determinisms influence the marital act. Most marriages take place between partners of the same denomination. A small part of marriages involve a partner of another religion, but in this case, we can say that only a small proportion involved a partner belonging to other ethnic group.

### **Image of ethnic structure evolution in Transylvania**

What deserves a special mention is that with the establishment of the Habsburg rule in Transylvania, at the end of the XVIII century, major demographic changes began due to immigration and systematic colonization, controlled and coordinated by the Austrian state. This process has considerably

increased the share of ethnic Hungarians, Germans and Jews. This process resulted in a heterogeneousness of the population from the ethnicity point of view. The political context after 1867 knows a constant increase in the share of ethnic Hungarians, compared to other ethnic groups, a steady increase until the onset of World War I.



For the year of 1850, the data refers only to the Principality of Transylvania

Romanians, in 1880, were representing 55.07% of the total population of Transylvania; their share will fall to 54.98% in 1900 and to 53.74% in 1910. All this in terms of population increase of Romanians of 27.1%, with a real increase of 2,224,336 (1880) to 2,827,419 (1910) (I. Bolovan, 2000: 14).

Hungarians in the same period were developing a reverse evolution than Romanians. Their share increased from 25.05% (1880) to 29.54% (1900) and 31.6% (1910). In absolute figures, the increase is from 1,012,154 (1880) to 1,662,180 (1910) (Ioan Bolovan, 2000: 14).

The Germanic population grew from 485,917 in 1880 to 564,559 in 1910. In percentage this time, the German population during the same period experienced a decline from 12.03% to 10.73% (Ioan Bolovan, 2000: 14). Other ethnic groups, least significant in number, have evolved similarly to other non-Hungarian ethnic groups.

Changes taking place after World War I influenced the demographic structure of the Romanian state. Reunification of Romania was accompanied by important changes in terms of ethno-religion.

An important effect was the increase in the Romanian population: it almost doubled. Another demographic effect was the increase in population of another ethnic group (other than Romanian) and other religion (other than

Orthodox). Within the borders of the Romanian state, according to the 1930 census, lived about 5 million other nationalities (28.1% of the entire population). This percentage varies from region to region (Muresan, 1999: 50).

### **Ethnic determinism and constraints in the marital process**

Marriage between two young Greek Catholic and Orthodox religion was regarded as almost normal in some communities. This is explained by the fact that few parishioners perceived differences between the two faiths. However, let us consider the ethnic aspect, as well. Ethnicity cannot be separated in this case from religion. The Greek Catholics and Orthodox are in this area of mostly Romanian ethnicity. For these things must be taken into account more as we address an almost entirely rural space, where customary “laws” overlap the official laws. On the other hand, mixed communities of Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics, mixed marriages are accepted more easily at the “official” level, because both denominations were under the same higher authority, under the papal chair respectively.

**a. The case of Romanians:** the phenomenon of preserving ethnic identity is evident in both denominations. Following a complex investigation, which involved the analysis of 8,373 mixed marriages (Brie, 2009: 389), the following conclusions reached: 1. when choosing a partner of another denomination, 42.95% of the young Greek Catholic choose a partner of Orthodox confession, 2. on the other hand, 40.12% of the young Orthodox choose Greek Catholics. The option for a Romanian partner was therefore, for both communities, the first after their own confession.

The Orthodox parish of Feneriș (CRSC BH, file 412: 47-68) during 1860-1910 had 300 marriages, of which 45 (i.e. 15%) were mixed marriages, inter-confessional. But all these marriages are done with Greek Catholic partners. The town has a compact Romanian population of 1,880 people, where in addition to the 567 Romanian, there are 4 Germans and 5 Jews (Rotariu, 1997: 7).

Interestingly, in the village (in 1880) there is no Greek Catholic. These marriages explain the fact that in 1900 (Rotariu, 1999: 147), the village registered 25 Greek Catholics. Here is therefore not just a religious issue, these young people come through marriage to an Orthodox parish, but they remain Greek Catholic or even tilt the other partner towards Greek Catholicism. Under the “*General Austrian Civil Code*” (promulgated on 29 May 1853), the marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic is officiated before the Catholic priest (Rotariu, 1999: 147). Although it was not fully complied with, the law favored the two Catholic denominations: Roman Catholicism and Greek Catholicism. Of the 45 marriages with Greek Catholic partners, only 5 are local partners. At the beginning of the period studied, most marriages are mixed between local

Orthodox girls and Greek Catholic boys from other places. Only while nearing 1900 and after, the number of marriages involving partners from other villages between Greek Catholic boys and Orthodox girls is increasing. It seems that the consanguinity threshold was reached and in these circumstances the young look into marrying partners from other localities. First, partners are chosen from the Orthodox (112 such marriages), then from the Greek Catholic (40 cases). Why only Greek Catholics, given that the neighboring villages had also young people of other confessions? This fact has two general explanations available for both Orthodox and Greek Catholics in this region. On the one hand, the difference in the rural world, between the two denominations is hardly perceived, and on the other hand, the ethnic component occurs. The latter works in many cases in a very decisive manner.

We found a similar situation in the Orthodox Parish of Forău (CRSC BH, file 438: 4-29), a village, again with a majority of Orthodox Romanian population<sup>7</sup>. In the period 1864-1891 there were 338 marriages registered, mostly between Orthodox partners. That fact that the village is not very big determined the young people to largely marry partners from outside the village. All 26 of mixed marriages are concluded with Greek Catholic partners. In this town, all marriages are concluded by the Orthodox girls.

Săliște de Beius (CRSC BH, file 1079: 22-39; file 1080: 1-12) is a settlement situated in Romanian compact area, where the majority of Romanians were Orthodox. In this town, in the period of 1870-1929, the Orthodox priest recorded 178 marriages. Of these 114 are with partners from other localities, and only one mixed marriage was recorded (Catholic girl, Greek Orthodox boy). Although they are obliged to resort to marriages with partners from other localities (in the village only 351 people lived in 1880) (Rotariu, 1997: 5), the young people in this village do not use mixed marriages. If we analyze the localities of origins of these young people we note that they do not only come from compact Orthodox villages. In this locality, the strongest factor of influence is the confession, and only then the ethnicity; this is by no means to be pushed aside given the fact that 18 people of other ethnicities lived in the village.

The orthodox Parish Buntești (CRSC BH, file 192: 69-88) is very similar, from our point of view, with the one of Beius Săliște. Of the 218 marriages in the period 1853-1910, only two are mixed (all with Greek Catholics partners). Only 54% marriages are closed between partners within the parish. We found the same situation in Hinchiriș. Here, in the period 1865-1908, 227 marriages were registered, only one is mixed (an Orthodox girl with a boy Greek Catholic from another location) (CRSC BH, file 516: 4-21). In the town of Bradet (CRSC BH, file 174: 13-26), in 1871-1895 the Orthodox priest

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<sup>7</sup> According to Hungarian census, in 1880, the village recorded 1,127 people split in 1,114 Orthodox; in 1900, of 1.300 people, 1,293 are Orthodox.

in the parish recorded a number of 117 marriages (4.7 marriages / year). None of these was a mixed marriage. Of these marriages, 121 are with partners from another town. In Poieni de Sus (*CRSC BH*, file 914: 9-24) in 1870-1900, all 187 marriages were made within the Orthodox confession. And in this case, as well, more than half of marriages were between partners from other localities.

As for the Greek Catholic population, it is more open to inter-ethnic mixed marriages. It is situated, geographically, in a region which is more heterogeneous, both ethnic and confessional. A high percentage of mixed marriages, GC-O, was recorded in deaneries with a large Orthodox population (Barcău, Beiuș, Crișul Repede, Holod, Sebiș, Șimand or Șiria) and in the deaneries where the two religious communities of Romanians were in minority (Lunca, Mako or Oradea). Other Greek Catholic deaneries recorded very low percentages of mixed marriages involving Orthodox partners. The reason for this is found in the low proportion (almost non-existent) in these deaneries of the Orthodox community and not in a lower affinity for such marriages<sup>8</sup>. We should not neglect in this context the Catholic spiritual affinity between Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics, which contributed to the erosion and dilution of ethnic precepts. Then, many GC were Hungarian in some regions and their Hungarian marriage or RC or even CH has no relevance to the erosion of national spirit of the Romanians.

**b. The case of Hungarians:** the ethnic determinism is also visible, although not at the same extent. An ethnic affinity between young Roman Catholics and the Reformed can be seen in several localities that were analyzed. This affinity in question is highlighted where one of the two communities was in minority compared with a third confession (usually Romanian).

In the Roman Catholic parish of Tileagd most mixed marriages were concluded with CH partners (42 cases, representing 73,68%). Of these, 25 marriages were concluded by men (16 involving partners from other cities, and 9 were between partners who lived in Tileagd) and 17 by women (5 between Tileagd people, and 12 involved partners outside the village). This preference to CH has two explanations: on the one hand, the large size of the reformed community, which provides most options for young people willing to enter a marriage outside the religious group, and on the other hand, the ethnic affinity between the two communities (many of RC in this locality were Hungarians like most of the Reformed).

A greater inclination towards religion Roman Catholic partners was shown by the reformed young people in Boiu (7 out of 12 marriages involving young people of this religion). The ethnic component, together with the socio-

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<sup>8</sup> Studies made on these deaneries have shown just the opposite: in proportion to the Orthodox population of these localities the number of mixed marriages involving the partners is more significant.



professional determinism led to such mixed marriages, mainly concluded between partners from different localities. In 1866, an RC furrier marries a young CH girl, both partners being from Boiu (*CRSC BH*, file 142: 96-97). On 28 February 1872, Laszlo Marko (27 yo), an RC from Oradea, “machinist” by profession, married Sara Suranyi (18 yo) (*CRSC BH*, file 142: 106-107).

In Reformed parish of Balc, the absence of a confessional otherness was generated, we believe, also by the large overlap of the two ethnic and confessional components. It is known that this region shared Reformed faith (in small part Roman Catholic, too), the Romanians were Greek Catholic and Orthodox and the Slovaks were Roman Catholic. These religious and ethnic groups showed several features of a strong preservation behavior of their identity. Obviously there were exceptions to this general framework. In such a context, the religious otherness, doubled by the ethnic otherness, was a low. When ethnic component disappears (the case of Roman Catholic Hungarian identified within marriages with Reformed partners in Suplacu de Barcău and Ip), the confessional otherness was more obvious.

c. The Strong national identity preservation can be noted in the **Slovak communities** in the Valley of Barcău. The Roman Catholic parish register of civil status from Suplacu of Barcău includes, as recorded from the beginning of register by the parish priest, in addition to the marriages between the youth from Suplacu de Barcău, those of Roman Catholic communities in Balc, Borumlaca, Ip and Vărzari. The population in the village of Suplacu de Barcău was majority Hungarian, so they shared mainly the Hungarian Reformed faith (1,226 people in 1900) (Rotariu, 1999: 155). There is also a small group of Roman Catholic parishioners (up to 201 people in 1900) (Rotariu, 1999: 155). In addition to the two communities, two major religious communities were present: the Greek Catholic (346 people) and the Jewish (132 people). In Borumlaca, along with the 205 Romanians lived 380 Slovaks (Rotariu, 1999: 155). They fully shared Roman Catholic faith. The Slovak community of Roman Catholic religion had majority in Varzari (230 of the 249 people sharing this ethnicity) (Rotariu, 1999: 146-147). In Balc, the Roman Catholic community, which numbered in 1900 129 people, had both Hungarians, and Slovaks. The small Roman Catholic community of Ip (this community did not exceed 60 people in 1900) consisted mostly of Hungarians (Rotariu, 1999: 523). In the period we studied there were 223 marriages (10,6 marriages / year). Of these, 27 were mixed marriages (12,1%). When opting for mixed marriages, the RC young people of this parish almost all chose to marry a partner of the Reformed confession. These options represent 96,3% of all mixed marriages. Of the 26 RC-CH marriages, 14 were completed by women, and 12 by men. The lack of mixed marriages with partners of other faiths is placed primarily on the absence of such religious communities in these villages and in neighboring

villages. Secondly, a strong instinct of conservation and preservation of their identity is to be noted. The Roman Catholics in these villages prefer to marry among themselves. This behavior is more visible to the ethnic Slovak Roman Catholics trying to keep their identity, than the Hungarian Roman Catholic. Moreover, the relatively high number of RC-CH mixed marriages was due just to marriages between Roman Catholics and Reformed Hungarians.

d. *It is still the ethnic determinism* that draws the evangelicals **Germans** close to the Roman Catholic **Germans**. Due to dispersion and powerful Magyarization process to which the Roman Catholic Swabians were submitted, preservation of ethnic identity by means of marriage was less possible. To this it also added the small number of these communities that were most often under pressure of consanguinity. However, in many Swabian localities within Satu Mare region or Palota (Commune of Santandrei, Bihor County) features of marital behavior are noted to ensure survival of isolated communities

### Conclusions

The ethnic identity of the inhabitants of northwestern Transylvania proved to be very strong during the second half of the XIX century and early XX century. Constraints and ethnic determinisms for marital process proved to be, next to the confessional determinism, decisive in the choice of partner. Preservation of ethnic identity through marriage however sees some nuances and mutations in time. Over time, the ethnic and religious otherness proved to be growing, in the city more than in rural areas. Ethno-confessional constraints and determinisms fall in the category of traditional behavioral models.

Not all ethnic groups have a similar behavior with regard to this phenomenon of “dilution” of strong ethnic identity through marriage. Small and isolated groups are exposed by achieving consanguinity threshold. They, bound to perform marriages outside their own group, choose the closest option in relation to the confessional. Roman Catholic Swabians choose Roman Catholic Hungarians or Slovaks, or Greek Catholics Romanians. The Protestant Germans choose Protestant Hungarians. The Orthodox Serbs or Ukrainians choose Romanians of the same confession. The Greek Catholic Ruthenians choose Greek Catholic Romanians or even Hungarians. These are just a few tendencies that we have noted. No doubt, however, the phenomenon of ethnic otherness is often associated with confessional otherness. The young people are either forced by local demographic realities to make marriages outside their own communities, or are determined to do these things by new social and professional realities that manifest themselves as strong determinism. These trends are present especially in the pre-urban and urban environments of mixed ethnic and religious living, in places of transit, more within the young circles

with non-agricultural occupations, more in men in terms of personal empowerment and in women by constraints generated by the lack of local options (knowing that the woman moves less).

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# THE THESIS ON THE HISTORICAL MISSION OF HUNGARY IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND IN THE BALKANS, AND THE CRITICISM AGAINST IT

István POLGÁR\*

**Abstract.** *The article entitled The Thesis on the Historical Mission of Hungary in Central Europe and the Balkans and the Critics against It aims to briefly describe a thesis conceived by the Hungarian intellectuals about the role and historical mission played by Hungary in civilizing the nations of Central Europe and Balkans.*

*In the same time, the article presents the counter-arguments of the Romanian intellectuals, turning it into a historiographical comparison, into a dispute of intellectuals from both, the Romanian and Hungarian side.*

**Keywords:** *Trianon, Romania, Hungary, Transilvania, Central Europe*

“It took me a while to make up my mind but I finally decided to introduce the issue of Transylvania, which is one of the most important matters of Hungary. To me, as a citizen of the Ardeal, it is a matter of spirit. You may be aware of the injustice made to Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon and you must have heard of the endeavours of this nation to acquire the reparation of this treaty’s effects and its revision. We have to see in which way this revision may be carried out” – this is how Istvan Bethlen began his discourse defended at the Royal Institute for International Affairs in London (Bethlen, 1933: 95).

The speaker needed this introduction in order to subsequently make a broad presentation of a thesis conceived by the Hungarian intellectuals on the role and historical mission played by Hungary to civilise peoples in Central Europe and the Balkans with the aim of making people sensitive and aware on the error of the Western world once their country was eliminated from the

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European culture, according to him. Bethlen further stated that the whole political life of the province was supported by the two races with cultural supremacy in the Ardeal: the Hungarian and Saxon ones. Therefore, he considered that mere numerical superiority of the Romanians that he tendentiously considered “pretty slight” would not justify their claims, while “cultural superiority”, although not decisively justifying them, would legitimate the claims of the Hungarian population “rooted in the ancestors’ soil of the Ardeal, where Romanian emigrants were tolerated only for humanitarian reasons” – he pointed out making reference to the Transylvanian Middle Ages law (Bethlen, 1933: 101).

The former Prime Minister Albert Apponyi agreed to this thesis in his paper on “Hungary’s Justice” meant for the audience in the United States of America. “The Hungarian nation has had and still has the historical mission to protect the world. This is determined by over a thousand years of achievements and trends that are currently undermined and weakened by the catastrophe of Trianon. This mission has been and still is to defend peace and preserve the highest Western standards through political, military and cultural endeavours according to the time. The territories taken from us once the mutilation of Trianon have been broken by the Western world and thrown to the semi-Oriental darkness devoid of Western culture, where they will no longer enjoy cultural enrichment (...). The mutilation of Hungary, the weakening of the Hungarian nation, is a loss for the great moral and intellectual interests of humanity and is an insurmountable loss” – he considered (Apponyi, 1928: 19-20).

Returning to the topic volume published, Bethlen largely made a step by step description of the historical path of Hungary in order to support the thesis of the Hungarian nation’s endurance on the territory of Transylvania and fought the claims to receive inhabitants of the province mentioned by the Romanians. In his opinion, history would support the fact that Romanians had never been originally from Transylvania and that the Dacian-Romanian theory would have been made up by Gheorghe Sincai and later developed by Petru Maior in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century (Bethlen, 1933: 116). On the basis of an omitting argument, he argued that the first Hungarian document mentioning the Wallachians – which would be the real name of the Romanians in his opinion – mentioned the existence of a colony of theirs in 1222 in south-eastern Carpathians; that would be 400 years after the Hungarians had established their own state. Hence the conclusion that there had been a larger Wallachian political structure mentioned in documents, such as the colonisation of the Szeklers in the Ardeal and Tatra under the Arpadian dynasty kings (Bethlen, 1933: 117).

The author seems to have completely forgotten about the chronicle entitled “Hungarians’ Deeds” by the notary Anonymus printed in a critical edition of high scientific quality in 1892 under the auspices of the Hungarian Academy that clearly made reference to the presence of the Romanians in both

Pannonia and Transylvania at the time Hungarian tribes settled in that part of Europe (Fejérpataky, Király, 1892). He ignored the surveys carried out in 1895 by Lajos Fejérpataky and Mihai Bejan (Mihail Besan) on Romanian toponyms mentioned in the chronicle or the alphabetiform signs of Romanian phonetic origin used by the anonymous notary in the chronicle, both undeniable arguments regarding the ancestry of Romanians in Transylvania (Besán, 1899: 5).

According to Roesler's argument, Bethlen turned to contemporary Hungarian historians' research settling that "in both parts of the Cuman Kingdom subsequently making up the ancient Kingdom of Romania, Wallachians were born out of the combination of Roman shepherds, Slavs and Albanese tribes coming from Macedonia and Tracia. Just like the Cumans, Wallachians did not have horses; yet they had huge flocks of sheep and dispersed in the entire Balkan Peninsula; then they went up to Galicia and Moravia under Cuman rulers. Their rulers became a kind of seniors called boyars, a term of Bulgarian origin, and settled in Transylvania. They had Cuman, Pecheneg and Bulgarian blood" – and that a part of the Wallachia came from the Tbar river area in Serbia and went up to Maramures settling in north-eastern Carpathians. They were considered as the first ancestors of the Romanians settling in Hungary (Bethlen, 1933: 119).

The term "shepherds of the Romans" was taken over by the author from a first edition of Anonymus' Chronicle, the one dated 1765, where Johannes Georgius Schwandther wrongfully translated the phrase "Blachij ac pastores romanorum". Yet the error was found and made public by Ladislau Iuhasz and Gheorghe Popa-Lisseanu from Ardeal in the 1930s printed editions in the (Iuhasz, 1934: 81).

According to the same Roesler historiography, Bethlen tried to show that Romanians' migration to Ardeal increased after both Romanian countries fell under the Turkish rule being supported by the inhuman regime imposed by the Phanariote governors appointed by the Turks. It reached its peak under the Habsburg regime, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A Jesuit statistics – he argued – showed the presence of 40% Romanians in Transylvania out of the total number of inhabitants of Ardeal (Bethlen, 1933: 122). In order to provide credibility, the author used the conscription ordained by the Austrians in the so-called "Small Wallachia" (Oltenia) that had been under the Habsburg rule for 14 years. In 1721, there were 13,000 families. Soon, their number increased to 40,000; after 1738, when the province was under the Turkish rule again, 15,000 families had to move to Banat, a phenomenon scaring Austria and making them accuse Bucharest to have encouraged the process of making people become Romanians on their territories (Bethlen, 1933: 123).

It is interesting to see how the same Hungarian politician criticising the Dacian-Romanians stigmatized the historical programme of the Romanians in Ardeal in front of the Hungarian Parliament in 1914. He qualified it as the

handwork of coryphaeus of the “Ardeal School”, that is, an expression of the perpetual and ceaseless wishes of the Romanians from Ardeal. In the international political context of the time, all the deputy Vaida-Voevod had to do was to turn again to the discourses uttered by nationalist adversaries in the Parliament, who were in both Hungarian parliament camps, whether leaders or opposition. More precisely, he had to make reference to the document read in the Chamber by Earl Istvan Bethlen through which he requested the end of the political programme of the Romanian national party which he considered a programme of the Romanian nation established throughout centuries. “The programme his party testifies to belong to nationalities party is the result of the two-century old historical development. The programme was not conceived by George Pop and his companions yet by great powerful historians by force and strength and only the power can put a stop to it, I should say” (\*\*\*)Discursul deputatului Dr. A. Vaida-Voevod..., 1914: 8).

Further, he began a briefing on the main moments with influence on the history of the Romanian movement for national emancipation in the activity of Bishop Inochentie Micu-Clain, who had sacrificed his career and endangered his life to acquire the acknowledgement of the state as an accepted nation, then the Supplex signed by the two bishops of Romanian confessions, Bob and Adamovici, to the proclamation uttered in 1848 on the Campia Libertatii during the national assembly of the Transylvanian Romanians led by Bishops Lemeny and Saguna, a proclamation claiming again the acknowledgement as a recognized nation (\*\*\*)Discursul deputatului Dr. A. Vaida-Voevod..., 1914: 9).

Vaida-Voevod sought to inform the audience that all attempts of the Hungarian Governments ruling throughout time to limit and even prevent the development of the Romanian national movement failed. Moreover, they strengthened and increased even more the activity of their leading bodies. The paragon was the Memorandum and lawsuit following it, thus drawing the attention of the West on the mediaeval methods to govern Hungary at a time when democratic changes took place all over modern Europe (\*\*\*)Discursul deputatului Dr. A. Vaida-Voevod..., 1914: 7).

On the other hand, Bethlen strived to put aside the allegations of cohabitating nationalities according to which the governors in Budapest discriminated non-Hungarian minorities on the offensive reasons that it was not the racial policy that led to the stagnation of their cultural and material development, but their racial inferiority. His proof was based on statistic data provided by the controversial census required by the authorities in 1910. According to the abovementioned census, 55% of the inhabitants in Ardeal were Romanians, 35% were Hungarians, while 9% were Swabians, a “numerical superiority that should not influence international public opinion as long as

economic and civilisation development have been the means of the last two races” (Bethlen, 1933: 105).

In his well-known rhetoric, he reminded that the Romanians had settled in mountainous and forested areas as valleys had been long taken by the Hungarians and Swabians. In other words, the more fertile areas belonged to the Hungarian and Swabians landowners. He did not realize that it would be a means to legitimate the future agrarian reform required by the administration of Great Romania. He also said that in the 29 towns of Transylvania, 58.7% were Hungarians, 16.1% were Swabians and only 23.4% were Romanians. As for the Romanians, few were educated and the rest were workers or servants and provided no explanation for the state of facts he referred to. Instead, Hungarians were involved in industrial and commercial activities to a percentage of 41.4% while the Swabians covered 17.4% (Bethlen, 1933: 105).

The same boomerang effect had Bethlen’s demonstration when approaching the “standard of civilisation of races living in Transylvania”. In order to illustrate the theory of racial superiority of the dominant classes in Ardeal, he used historical data from the 1910 census, where the literate Romanians’ percentage was merely 27.9% as compared to the 59.9% Hungarians and 75.9% Swabians. Disproportions were even more obvious concerning the number of high-school or higher education Romanian graduates. “Hence, we can see the high number of illiterate people amongst the Romanians, which cannot be blamed on the lack of schools where they can learn their mother tongue, considering that out of the 2,663 elementary schools in Transylvania, 1,145 (43%) belonged to the Greek-Catholic and Orthodox churches or to the communities, while Hungarian was not taught even as a secondary language here” (Bethlen, 1933: 107) – pointed out Bethlen with reproach.

How optional the study of Hungarian was in elementary schools is “confirmed” by the author only a few sentences below where – another reproach – he complained that only 12% of the Romanian pupils could understand Hungarian although the Government allowed 992,965 gold crowns for these schools, which was much more than the funds allowed by the Roman-Catholic Church to schools (Bethlen, 1933: 108). Under the circumstances, Romanians’ access to higher education could be explained very easily. Racial inferiority claimed by Bethlen could not be considered. The main cause was the repudiation of the Romanian population in the process managed by the Government to make people Hungarian through school.

In his turn, Imre Josika-Herczeg claimed that the allegations of ethnies living in the former dualist monarchy about the attempts of the Governments in Budapest to render them Hungarian belonged to a joint programme of propaganda intoxication of public opinion in the West, considering that the 1868 education law provided freedom of education in their mother tongue; yet



they were compelled to study Hungarian, too. He stated that in 1913 there were 447 German schools, 377 Slovak schools, 270 were Serbian, 59 were Ruthenian and 2,233 were Romanian. Many of them were financially supported by the state. In other words, there were 3,186 minority schools, which was 1/5 out of the total elementary schools in Hungary. Out of the 30,000 teachers, 5,327 were of non-Hungarian origin. There were 244 teachers of German origin, 8 were Slovaks, 143 were Romanians and 80 belonged to other minorities, out of which 39 spoke Hungarian very badly, while other 21 could not speak it at all (Josika-Herczeg, 1936: 156). As he pointed out: “How different is now the attitude of successor states as compared to Hungarian minorities! How differently minorities are nowadays considered by the so-called former ‘oppressed’ in point of education! The Romanian Government does not even care to finance non-Romanian education and its spirit of intolerance pours in rage on the Hungarian pupils and students under the permissive eyes of the officials” (Josika-Herczeg, 1936: 157).

The laments written down by both supporters of Hungarian race superiority thesis and the historical and civilising mission of Hungary in Central Europe supported by the statistic “data” accompanying them are but a proof of the failing attempts of the Hungarian politicians to forcefully assimilate all co-inhabiting ethnies in a Hungarian unitary ideal nation. This was shown by Vaida-Voevod using the same statistic data. Vaida-Voevod attacked the 1914 project on the education law proposed by Prime Minister Istvan Tisza, a project meant to adjust discriminating laws issued by Earl Apponyi during his office. He stated that both aimed at rendering the Romanian population Hungarian. In order to be more convincing, the Romanian member of the Parliament would invoke the discourse of the Liberal Deak Francisc in January 1872 in which the latter showed that they needed at least 300 primary-schools to train non-Hungarian youth, while Tisza Istvan proposed one and a half primary-school for each ethnie (\*\*Discursul deputatului Dr. A. Vaida-Voevod..., 1914: 15).

The conclusion of the Romanian speaker was more than enlightening concerning the way the Romanian side understood to defend their national interests without a conflict with the Hungarian authority to work together for the political stability of Hungary. “If we cannot become Hungarians, then you have to acknowledge the thesis that you have to earn [our trust] us to support this state, so that we, both intellectuals and the people, should not feel only the burden and hardships of the state just because we are Romanians. We should also feel the benefits and equal rights and live our national life provided through education” (\*\*Discursul deputatului Dr. A. Vaida-Voevod..., 1914: 8). He added in a visionary manner that the danger menacing both Hungarians and Romanians did not come from within the country, but from the East, the “Russian danger”.

Following the same pattern, Cassiu Maniu, the brother of the future statesman Iuliu Maniu, made the pertinent remark that all great neighbouring countries founded their vitality on “autocratic power” as the “last state grounds” but that in the case of Hungary, it was undermined by the “race despotism using constitutional arguments”. In other words, according to the politician from Ardeal, the existence of the Austro-Hungarian state itself was endangered by the harmful policy of the leaders in Budapest against the co-inhabiting nationalities and their opacity in admitting that Hungary was a multinational and not a mono-national state, as well as their stubbornness in proceeding with the process of rendering all nationalities Hungarians by all means (Maniu, 1905: 6-7).

Concerning the motivations used by the Hungarian leaders to argue their claims to have a Hungarian language unitary nation, Maniu identified its origin under the irredentism claimed by all partisans to recover Saint Stephen Kingdom. On behalf of this aim, they annexed territories with a Romanian majority such as Banat, Crisana, Maramures and Transylvania in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. “Here are the ethic results of the ‘fake Hungarian irredentism’: shattering the Romanian provinces, annulling Ardeal’s, Voievodina’s and Banat’s autonomy, the specific interests of the parties, and ultimately the establishment of ‘race despotism’” concluded the politician (Maniu, 1905: 8).

Maniu used the term “fake Hungarian irredentism” as compared to natural and legitimate irredentism in Italy in the process of recovering the former territory inhabited exclusively by people speaking the same language.

Yet in Hungary, the things were exactly the opposite since, according to Maniu, “state authorities, the legislative, executive and juridical ones, serve the fake Hungarian irredentism; the contrast between the social and the political structure of this country is getting bigger and bigger”. This situation could transfer the conflict between the rulers and the submitted peoples beyond the borders of the country and the issue could become international. “The seriousness of the situation makes the issue of nationalities in Hungary become an issue of international law, that is, a matter where tribe law rules apply”, pointed out Maniu, thus anticipating Wilson’s principles (Maniu, 1905: 13).

The fact that the Hungarian politicians were inflexible to national minorities’ requests and glorified the thesis of Hungarian race superiority is illustrated by the conclusions subsequently uttered by Bethlen under the guise of local patriotism also known as “Transylvanianism” through which he tried to show the forced union of Transylvania with Romania to the detriment of the province’s autonomy. “To this day I really believe that most Romanians from Ardeal do not agree to this reconstruction scheme, many of them out of local, or Transylvanian, patriotism existing in the soul of any citizen. The best proof in point is their repulsion against their fellows in the Kingdom, a repulsion that

has been growing in the past 20 years”. In order to be more credible, he argued that “in 1919, before settling the final peace conditions, the Supreme Council of Ambassadors sent to Hungary the American neutral expert Mr. Coolidge and his secretary, Mr. Story, to examine the situation in Transylvania on the spot. Back to Budapest, Mr. Story would have made the revealing statement that both Romanians and Hungarians or Swabians were Transylvanians rather than Romanian, Hungarian or Swabian ethnics as such. A very pertinent remark based on the genuine local patriotism of the three nations bearing the imprint of their common history and particularly of the hardships and standard of their common living” (Bethlen 1933: 140-141).

Local patriotism perceived by the American diplomat in Ardeal had nothing to do with the “Transylvanianism” thesis promoted by the vengeful Hungarian intellectuals according to whom Transylvania would rather have an autonomous and equidistant status as compared to the interests of either Romania or Hungary. The historical events related to the Assembly in Alba Iulia on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918, when all Romanians from Ardeal expressed their unanimous and unequivocal wish to join Romania clearly contradicted the theory of “Transylvanianism”. The same holds true in the case of the Vienna Dictate on August 30, 1940, when all Romanians were against the territorial disposal claimed by Hungary.

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At the end of the First World War, the future peace treaties would provide the coordinates for a new political geography of the European continent through legal instruments differing from the previous sources used before mainly based on the will of the defeated to “oppress the nationalities” living on their territories<sup>1</sup>. The idea of justice was summoned to express its opinion on the fate of peoples under foreign rule. This idea should have been developed in a complex of prerogatives defined under the disguise of “nations”

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<sup>1</sup> Earl Berchtold to Earl Mensdorff, in Londra: Telegram. Vienna, 28 July 1914 – „*The idea of Sir E. Grey on the opportunity to prevent the hostilities from occurring is late, because the Serbians shot at our border soldiers yesterday and we have declared war to Serbia today. As far as the idea of a discussion on the answer of the Serbians is concerned, I have to refuse it. We have requested full acceptance, Serbia has tried to get rid of perplexity by going around. Both Serbian methods are well known (...).*

*If Sir E. Grey wishes to save European peace, he will certainly not face new difficulties. Yet he has to consider that European peace would not be saved if the great powers protect Serbia and intervene to save it from punishment.*

*Even if we were willing to admit such an understanding, Serbia would be even more encouraged to follow the same path, which would hinder peace soon enough”.*

right”, a concept that could be expressed to the full as the “national free state mastering its own destiny”. This approach could bring about a revolution in point of international relations by abolishing the relations of subordination between states in favour of implementing the principle of “equal states”, as George Sofronie pointed out. According to him, “it also foretold a radical change in international relations – determined, if not de jure, at least de facto, by subordination of small powers to great powers – as the adoption of the principle of nationalities as guiding line in elaborating treaties would transpose the theory of universal vote to the international field, that is, equality between national and democratic states” (Sofronie, Săulescu, 1934: 3-4).

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# CLASHES OF NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN INTERWAR TRANSYLVANIA

Imola Katalin NAGY\*

**Abstract.** *This paper focuses on the issues of national identity in Transylvania between the two world wars. The Great Union of 1918 brought about radical changes, with tremendous implications not only in the political field or the geographical borders of the region, but also in the way Romanian and Hungarian writers shaped their own national identities and defined themselves and each other. The regional impulse was a widespread trend, not only in the area of our research, but also in East-Central Europe. The Hungarians' Transylvanianism and the Romanians' creative localism alike offered a wide range of key concepts and ideas that shaped/and were shaped by the cultural context of the time. Romanians' and Hungarians' regionalism shared many of these concepts and ideas, although they never really sustained an open and efficient communication..The shifts that occurred in the self-defining strategies, the communication breakdowns that characterized the relationships between the two cultural milieus, the identity discourses that can be spotted in the media of that time, and the movement known as Transylvanianism are all approached with the purpose of identifying the causes that hindered real and efficient communication between Romanians and Hungarians. We shall try to find explanations by referring to certain Central-European attitudes that were operating back then.*

**Keywords:** *identity discourse, alterity, we, the others, media, disputed territory*

The debates upon the issue of intercultural communication in interwar Transylvania and the various aspects of national identity and alterity must take into consideration the so-called *Transylvanian ideology*. During the first four decades of the 20th century, several regional ideologies were operating on the European continent, the Central and Eastern parts of it were no exception

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(Neubauer-Cornis Pope, 2006, vol II: 5). Transylvanianism appeared and spread in Transylvania, while Europe became more and more receptive to the regional ideas promoted by Josef Nadler and August Sauer, or when Leo Frobenius's *Paideuma* was published in Munich, in 1921. In the 1920s, Sauer's and Nadler's *Landschaftstheorie* became more and more popular, the latter's book, *Literaturgeschichte der Deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*, had a huge impact on the development of other regional theories, among which Al. Dima's *creative localism*. Similar regional ideas and thoughts were promoted by the German movement called *Heimatlidung* or the French *régionalisme*.

Transylvanianism is the Transylvanian regional ideology, which gained huge popularity on the one hand, and triggered a lot of critical remarks, on the other hand. Its main feature was the activism it promoted. Numerous Hungarian intellectuals from Transylvania embraced Transylvanianism, but the regional ideas were widespread among the Romanian and the Saxon cultural milieus as well. Traditionally, Transylvanianism is considered and defined as an interwar regional ideology developed and promoted by the Hungarian writers of the time. Zsolt K. Lengyel refers to two periods in the history of Transylvanianism – early Transylvanianism and the *Helikon* period (K. Lengyel Zsolt, 2007: 24). The three main principles of this ideology were: multiculturalism (as it sprang from the three neighbouring cultures of Transylvania), love for the native land, the need of establishing and following aesthetic criteria in literature.

There are moments and events that foreshadowed the rise of the Transylvanian ideology, as early as the Transylvanian School/ Școala Ardeleană movement with the Romanians, or the dualism in the history of the Hungarians (K. Lengyel Zsolt, 2007: 42). As Mircea Zăciu puts it, “it has been unanimously acknowledged, that beginning with the Transylvanian School, this Romanian province (i.e. Transylvania) has brought an explosive energy to the nation's movement of ideas, and has also enriched certain literary chapters, like poetry or the novel. It has emphasized epic, social, ethnic and ethic aspects, all major categories necessary to a young literature often lured by mirages from far off that may take the form of the integration into European rhythms. Between tradition and modernity, a battle that has been fought at various times by different protagonists and yet is essentially the same, Transylvania has been assigned the fief of Tradition by long-term prejudice. It wanted to test the Transylvania aesthetic conservatism and resistance to the new, in its finest forms. Paradoxically, the values of this province remain actual and sometimes very modern, while others, ostentatiously modern, did not pass the test of time ... But the meanings Transylvania assumes in our national consciousness transcend the strictly aesthetic spheres” (Zăciu, 1994: 19-20).

After 1900, the term *transilvanism* started to be used more and more often in the Transylvanian media. The very first time Transylvanianism was

used as an argument in a debate was in 1902, in the controversy of Endre Dózsa, the sub-prefect of Cluj county, with a Budapest newspaper, *Pesti Napló*. In 1905, the Hungarian poet, Endre Ady, offered the image of Transylvania, as a land of freedom and as a haven of cultural and spiritual safety in his poem *Egy ismeretlen Korvin kódex margójára*. In 1908, Endre Dózsa uses the term *Transylvanianism* in *Transylvanismsus. Elnöki megnyitó* in a Cluj newspaper, *Erdélyi lapok*. In 1912 Károly Kós's review, *Kalotaszeg. Képes betilap* (7 Jan.-26 March 1912 – Stana) appeared, and this is considered another pre-transylvanist moment. The objective of the editor was to publish and promote his theory on Transylvanianism (K. Lengyel, 2007: 41; Pomogáts, 1983: 82). Twelve numbers were issued overall. The main idea of the articles included in this magazine was that of the interdependence of the three nations living in Transylvania. These pre-war Transylvanist manifestos appeared as a reaction against the centralist policies of Budapest. After 1918, the same centralist attitudes of the new capital, Bucharest, rendered the anticentralist Transylvanian ideology even more actual.

The birth certificate of the Transylvanian movement is a text published on 23rd January 1921 and called *Kiáltó szó/The Word in the Desert*, which was signed by Károly Kós, Árpád Paál, István Zágoni. It was the first formal debate upon Transylvanianism. What is known today as Transylvanian movement started to spread after the appearance of this manifesto. The 1920s can be considered the golden age of this regional ideology, while the 1930s brought about the first serious crisis, which culminated in Ferenc Szemlér's essay *Jelszó és mítosz/ Slogan and myth* (1937), which was intended to be the valedictory of the Transylvanianist ideas. Yet, not even Szemlér, a strong contestant of Transylvanianism, could deny the positive features of the movement, especially the urge for interethnic tolerance, a deep sense of humanism and a high appreciation of the European values and culture.

There are several definitions of the Transylvanianist ideology, the majority of the writers from the *Erdélyi Helikon* group gave a definition, among these one can cite the names of Lajos Áprily, Mária Berde, Károly Kós, Károly Molter, Aladár Kuncz, Géza Tabéry and others. All these writers believed that Transylvania had a specific spirituality that had been shaped along the centuries, and that was rooted in the Transylvanian geography (landscape) and history, and was based on a very strong connection with the land and with the people. Its basic features were tolerance and well-balanced attitudes towards otherness, differentness. Károly Kós was the main spokesperson of the Transylvanianist ideology, he considered this region unique due to its variety and intercultural crossings. He even wrote a book called *Transylvania*, a sketch of cultural history, in which he argued for the existence of a specific Transylvanian spirituality, shaped by the landscape, the history and the cultural diversity of the region. As Gábor Flóra puts it, Kós wanted to define a specific Transylvanian identity, hinting to the very particular geography of the



region, which induced a specific economic and social status, and all these distinctive geographical features, corroborated with the region's history, led to a very special Transylvanian culture, to which the co-existing nations added some of their own spiritual particularities, though keeping their own peculiar spirituality unaltered (Flóra, 1999: 201).

In what the Romanians' Transylvanianism is concerned, the first thing to be mentioned is that our research focuses on the image of Transylvania and the problem of the Transylvanian ideology, as they are reflected in the media and the Romanian essay literature. There is a long list of writings dedicated to the problem of Transylvania, among the most important names we should mention those of D. Popovici (1943), Ion Breazu (1944), G. Ibrăileanu, E. Lovinescu, G. Călinescu, Ion Chinezu etc. As Ion Vlad puts it, in his *Preface* to Chinezu's *Aspects of Transylvanian Hungarian Literature (1919-1929)*, "The supporters of cultural regionalism and of the investigations based on the criteria of the literary geography have more than once found favourable arguments in the peculiarities and in the specificity of certain cultural phenomena; in its turn, ethno-psychology enriched the system of references necessary to a more convincing approach of the distinctive features meant to integrate themselves into the complex of a unitary national culture.

Just like professor Ion Breazu, himself a partisan of this type of study, Ion Chinezu follows the suggestions in a famous work signed by Joseph Nadler, *Literaturgeschichte der Deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*, I-III, Regensburg, 1912-1918. Quite important, the issue of literary and cultural regionalism appears in the pages of Gând românesc, the idea being that historical circumstances, on the one hand, and the intention to bring the province in line with the country, on the other, represent the data of the aforementioned paradigm. The efforts of Ion Breazu, Vasile Bancila and, naturally, Ion Chinezu to assert Transylvania's place within the national culture, to dissociate the terms of a unique physiognomy found expression in magazine articles, lectures and, of course, studies" (Chinezu, 1997: 15).

Liviu Rebreanu, the famous Romanian novelist writes, in 1929, a preface to a volume dedicated to Hungarian prose writers from Transylvania, *Povestitori unguri ardeleni*, in which he tries to define the profile of the Transylvanian writer and Transylvanian writing. Rebreanu emphasizes the strong connection with the land and the people, and the fact that the act of writing is an act of apostolic sacrifice: „The art of these authors is never a mere play on words or intentions. The Transylvanian writer, perhaps more than ones elsewhere, feels himself eternally tied to the land and considers his art a form of

apostolate. This is why literature mirrors more strongly the soul of the people, with its yearnings, joys and hopes” (Lupu, 1928: 4).<sup>1</sup>

Bucur Tincu refers to the prototype of the Transylvanian intellectual, whose main features are: traditionalism, a strong connection with the social background, activism, dynamism (Avram P. Todor, 1983: 306).<sup>2</sup> The painter Catul Bogdan considers the seriousness and depth of the Transylvanian soul and spirit the outcome of the western milieu in which the Transylvanians had lived (Todor, 1983: 307).<sup>3</sup>

Transylvanianism is approached in terms of alterity and difference in Vasile Băncilă’s article, *Semnificația Ardealului/The Significance of Transylvania*, which is an insight into the spiritual history and geography of Transylvania: „we know that *others* talk about Transylvania and document its significance for them. There is also a term *Transylvanianism* that have been circulating for a while. Sometimes, it has political connotations, promoting a so-called mutual Transylvanian soul, common for all the people living here, disregarding and neglecting the ethnic realities. But this is denied by history, by the psychology of the nations and by the philosophy of culture. Moreover, they emphasized, on several pathetic occasions, how sacred Transylvania is for them. But let us make things clear: it is only a second-hand sacredness. A saintity of the ego and of self-suggestion” (*Gând românesc*, 1939, no. 7-9, 170).<sup>4</sup> The article does not deal with the Transylvanian regional ideology in terms of principles or arguments, the author denies it by erasing the writers who promote it. He uses plenty of impersonal phrases, such as *others*, *they*, avoiding to accuse anybody

<sup>1</sup> “*Arta acestor creatori nu e niciodată un simplu joc de cuvinte, sunete sau intenții. Scriitorul ardelean, mai mult parcă decât cel din alte părți, se simte veșnic legat cu pământul și socotește arta un apostolat. De aceea și literatura aceasta reoșindește mai puternic sufletul poporului, cu dorurile, bucuriile și speranțele sale*”.

<sup>2</sup> “*Intellectualul ardelean, bazându-se pe tradiție, servește societatea, cel izolat și cel chinat de dureri personale, cel snob și înnoitor universal sau extravagant nu are ecou social. Caracteristica principală a intelectualului ardelean este activismul și dinamismul în formare continuă*”.

<sup>3</sup> “*oamenii se caracterizează prin seriozitate și înclinare spre aprofundare a problemelor. Aici există vechea și neclintită forță culturală a satului românesc. În pictură e caracteristică sobrietatea, plenitudinea și robustețea culorii*”.

<sup>4</sup> “*Știm că și alții vorbesc despre Ardeal și documentează importanța lui pentru ei. S-a pus chiar în circulație și mai circulă și azi, termenul Transilvanism. El e însoțit uneori de intenții politice, vizând un pretins suflet comun tuturor popoarelor ce locuiesc în Ardeal și pe care ar voi să-l opună realităților etnice. Dar acesta e infirmat de istorie, de psihologia națiunilor și de filosofia culturii. Mai mult: aceștia au vorbit, în ocazii patetice, de sfințenia Ardealului pentru ei. Dar să ne înțelegem: e vorba, în fond, de o sfințenie derivată. Și anume, o derivație a orgoliului și una de autosugestie. Pentru un popor cu psihologie imperialistă, cum sunt Ungurii, Ardealul poate căpăta atributul sfințeniei văzut în perspectiva de exaltare a puterii ... Beția puterii e și ea o mistică și încă una dintre cele mai puternice. În aceste condiții, autosugestia este și ea fatală și deci foarte explicabilă*”.

directly, but being obviously hostile to the whole phenomenon. The conclusion of the article is that not only did intercultural communication fail, but it did not even come into being. Băncilă ends his article by introducing a special kind of I statement, the *we* element, in strong opposition with *they*: „who has spoken about our tragedy for the past two millenia? They, the Hungarians, swaggered ... They took our goods, our wealths, our freedom, our churches, our right to pray, our ballads/doinas... even our kings”( *Gând românesc*, 1939, no. 7-9, 172.).<sup>5</sup>

In a completely different register, E. Bucuța publishes an article in a magazine called *Boabe de grâu* in September 1932, in which he refers to the necessity of intercultural communication and the causes for which Romanians and Hungarians fail to establish contacts. The myth of the first comer also appears in the article, which promotes the idea that the two nations should start forgetting about their past injuries and present fears and start a necessary and unavoidable process of intercultural exchanges (*Boabe de grâu*, 1932, no. 9, 439-440).<sup>6</sup>

After studying the Romanian cultural press from Transylvania (*Gând românesc*, *Provincia literară*, *Cele Trei Crișuri*, *Țara noastră*, *Boabe de grâu*, *Pagini literare*, *Familia*, *Societatea de mîine*, *Revista Fundațiilor Regale*, *Blajul*, *Abecedar*), we have come to the conclusion, that Transylvanianism is criticised in a large number of articles, but it is approached with openness and constructive criticism in others, while some writings prove to be even more understanding. There is a clear distinction between the Hungarians' Transylvanianist ideology (called *transzilvanizmus/transilvanism*), and the Romanians' regional ideology (usually referred to as *ardelenism* or *localism creator*). The idea of a trans-national Transylvanian spirit is not accepted in the Romanian press of the time, but the idea that spirituality can be determined by the geographical features – an idea common to all regional ideologies – is accepted. It is not the Transylvanian idea that is rejected by the Romanians, but its Hungarian connotations, the very distinctive term they use to refer to their own regionalism (*transilvanism* vs. *ardelenism*) is meant to avoid any confusion or mix up with the Hungarians' regional approach.

The contribution of the Romanian essay writers must be mentioned as well, as the essay literature proved to be more open to the Transylvanian

<sup>5</sup> „de tragedia noastră, timp de aproape două mii de ani, cine a vorbit? Ei, ungurii, au buzurit până acum. Ne-au luat bunul nostru, averile, libertatea, bisericile, dreptul de a ne închina, doinele ... până și regii.”

<sup>6</sup> „Căile pentru schimbul de valori dela unii la alții sunt deschise și n'așteaptă decât programul de fapte și bunăvoință, ca să fie umblate. Datorită însă, pentru noi, amintirilor trecutului, și pentru Unguri, prefacerilor de ieri, apropierea se păstrează încă mai mult fizice. La orice inițiativă mai îndrăzneată susceptibilitățile din ambele tabere țipă de niște dureri care depășesc mult prilejul de naștere și au în ele ecouri străbune ... una își va da seama că n'are ce să ocolească identificarea unor altoiri mai vechi sau să se simtă jicnită de împrumuturi mai noi, iar cealaltă că n-are de ce să se teamă de porniri spre desființare sau spre falsificare.”

ideology, and recognized in a more efficient way its positive outcomes. We have in mind, in this sense, the writings of Ion Chinezu, Avram P. Todor, Nicolae Balotă, Mircea Zăciu and others. In fact, it was Zăciu's book, *Ca o imensă scenă, Transilvania ...*, published in 1996, that did not avoid the term *transilvanism*, and first used it along with *ardelenism*, to refer to the regional impulse of the Romanians. The book is an attempt to define a so-called *Transylvanian spirit*, and the author launches the idea, that there is a special Transylvanian soul, and, just as the Hungarians did in the interwar period, he defines Transylvania not only as a geographical or historical space, but also as a cultural concept. "As a matter of fact, historical consciousness seems to me to be the characteristic component of the Transylvanian spirit. More than once, in connection with it have been also mentioned its ethnicism and militantism, a tendency toward Benedictine reasoning, whence the subordination of the aesthetic to history, ethics, culture, etc. Do these come from the cultural education, do they come from the rural strata where all Transylvanian writers originate, remaining afterwards peasant-scholars for all their lives? One shouldn't ignore their permanent connection with the West either, their refusal of the Balkan spirit, which they considered inferior and harmful for art, the refusal of the city as a form of oppression (since the city was considered alien) but the identification with the entire Romanian space, the adhesion to a higher form of urbanization, the dream of a library-fortress, a place of scholarly education and achievement" (Zăciu, 1994: 25).

Mircea Zăciu also identifies the very peculiar set of attitudes that have always characterized Transylvanian writers, i.e. preference for action, defensiveness and dedication for the national cause: "However, it has been said that Transylvania did not have the necessary time to indulge in the true enjoyment of art. Its spirit, permanently required by the need of defense, permanently assailed by the dangers of estrangement through more subtle forms or through brutal denationalization was too much trained for action ... , public thinking ..., historical philosophy ..., conceived as a tool used in proving its historical existence. ... Even theology was taken down from the sacerdotal pulpit to be employed in lay objectives, like political education, the acquiring of rights, emancipation. The first image of Transylvania is, therefore, a wistful, cultural one, in agreement with the corpus of ideas pertaining to the enlightenment" (Zăciu, 1994: 23).

The definition proposed by Gavril Scridon resembles Kós Károly's concept of Transylvania, as the Romanian critic describes the special Transylvanian *spirit loci*, characterized by a profound love of the land, a tremendous attachment to history and openness towards the others (Scridon, 1996: 18).

Ion Chinezu writes, in his *Aspects of Transylvanian Hungarian Literature*, that "Transylvanianism surfaced when Transylvania turned its face towards Bucharest. This is the truth. We shall not dwell on the political meaning of this statement, on

the deeper roots of Transylvanianism, on the spectre of the *buffer-state* sometimes discernable behind this word. Restricting the discussion to the realm of literature, we shall try to see if there is an art-generating Transylvanianism, a specific soul of the region, a Transylvanian way of thinking, capable of crystallizing itself into its own form of literature. Such an approach of the issue is within the field of literary geography. Well, it is beyond doubt that a Transylvanianism of this kind does exist, and that it also existed when it was being ignored, the same way one could discern a Moldavian, Muntenian, Transylvanian and Oltenian soul in Romanian literature. There is no Transylvanian writer of certain standing who did not mention Transylvanianism, which is viewed by some as the axis of the literature in this area... a deep sense of nature, an interesting mixture of conservatism and modernism, a sense of leveling eclecticism and a marked ethical character (to which L. Rebreanu refers too): this is the framework in which we should put this literature in order to understand it in its true light” (Chinezcu, 1997: 47-48).

Transylvanianism attracted another Romanian critic as well, namely Nicolae Balotă, who defines it as an ideology that came into being due to the work of Károly Kós, who *invented* Transylvanianism as a semiotic system, holding the signs and symbols of Transylvanian lifestyle. He rejects the criticism that blamed Kós for having created a simple romantic vision, with an eye on the past, and the other on the landscape (Balotă, 1981: 29).<sup>7</sup>

If we try to resume the main ideas that shaped the Transylvanian ideology, we must mention that it had two main pillars, two main arguments on which it relied, namely the *geography* and the *history of Transylvania*, that gave birth to a special Transylvanian spirituality. The positive aspects of this spirituality and the main elements of Transylvanianism as an identity discourse are: tolerance, multiculturalism, multilingualism, readiness to take action, defensive tendencies, an urge to protect national identity, respect for the mothertongue, anti-central attitudes and a strong need for freedom, europenism etc.

In 1932, a very similar ideology appeared in Sibiu, when Al. Dima and other intellectuals (Paul I. Papadopolu, Tiberiu Iliescu, Pimen Constantinescu, George Fonea, Ion. Th. Ilea, Ionel Neamtzu și Horia Petra-Petrescu) founded the *Thesis Group/ Gruparea Intelectuală Thesis*, along with an art review, *Provincia*

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<sup>7</sup> ”transilvanismul care a fost o idee-forță, al cărei părinte a fost el mai mult decât alții, și-a avut laturile pozitive îndeosebi în atașamentul la valorile tradițiilor transilvane și în preconizarea bunei înțelegeri între fiii de diferite limbi ai marelui ținut.... transilvanismul lui Kós Károly nu este un provincialism, un izolaționism insular, dogmatizat pe vagi temeuri romantic-nostalgice. Afirmațiile care probează teza sînt întemeiate în tradițiile culturale ale Transilvaniei, în solul transilvan, în legăturile oamenilor cu acel sol și între ei. Că a știut să facă conștiente unele din arhetipurile Ardealului încercând să creeze o epură (geometric vorbind) sau un sistem semiotic al acelor semne ale Transilvaniei pe care el le interpreta ca simbolurile unei existențe, este cert. Nu putem, deci, fi de acord cu cei care echivalează viziunea și actele lui Kós Károly cu o viziune romantică ce se pierde în trecut și în peisaj.”

*literară*, later continued by *Sibiul literar*. After the Great Union of 1918, an interesting phenomenon occurred, i.e. a phenomenon of poligenesis (Fanache, 1973: 2), that means a strong and rapid revival of the Transylvanian cultural centres. This led to the appearance of a remarkable number of newspaper and magazines (*Braşovul literar*/ 1931, *Provincia literară*/Sibiu, 1932, *Lanuri*/ Mediaş, 1933, *Gând românesc*/ Cluj, 1933, *Abecedar*/ Brad, 1933, *Progres și cultură*/Tg.-Mureș, 1933, *Pagini literare*/Turda, 1934, *Sibiul literar*, 1934).

It is interesting to note that the members of the Thesis Group had a special taste for debate, which makes their resemblance to the Hungarians' *Helikon* movement even more interesting. What is more, Dima called his group a *creativity workshop*/ *un atelier de confruntare în problemele creației* (Fanache, 1983: 66), while the Erdélyi Helikon group was defined a *literary plein-air parliament*. "Localism does not mean isolation or exaggerated use of some realities limited to a given area. On the contrary, it proclaims an aspiration toward integration and affirmation through distinct, unique voices in the concert of a national culture" (Chinez, 1997: 15).

The ideology of the group was crystallized, among other writings, in Dima's article, *Creative localism*/ *Localismul creator*. (*Familia*, 1935, no. 2, reproduced in *Blajul*, 1935, no. 3, and in *Revista Fundațiilor Regale*, 1935, no. 7 and 9). The key terms Dima makes use of are *time/space*, *tradition/contemporaneity*. Dima hesitates in the usage of the terms *localism* and/or *regionalism*, and finally decides upon the first one, to avoid the confusion with the regional approach of the Hungarians, i.e. Transylvanianism, though Dima's localism wishes to promote local creativity and recommends local topics for literature. In the same time, localism, just like Transylvanianism, is meant to promote local values, the beauty of the landscape and the uniqueness of its specific spirituality (Al. Dima, *Localismul creator*, in *Blajul*, 1935, no. 4, 174)<sup>8</sup>. The professor from Sibiu is aware that his approach has parallels in the Hungarians' and Saxons' cultural activities, and he knows that their Transylvanianism has very similar objectives to his own creative localism, namely to help and facilitate the creation of high quality aesthetic productions (Al. Dima, *Localismul creator*, in *Blajul*, 1935, no. 4, 175).<sup>9</sup> The same ideas appear in Andrei Ungheri's article *Literatura săsească ardeleană din zilele noastre*/*The Contemporary Saxon Literature in Transylvania* (*Blajul*, 1935, no. 5). Dima expresses the same awareness in other articles as well, what is more, he constructs his theory on the same bipolar

<sup>8</sup> „*comoara geografică, istorică, socială a locului urmează a fi valorificată pe plan creator. E desigur o pioasă datorie a talentelor locale de a cultiva subiectul realității imediate și precise, de a descoperi culoarea inedită a solului de a prinde frământarea vie a unității spirituale specifice*”.

<sup>9</sup> „*cu acest program de activitate a cărui multiplă justificare în tradițiile localiste ale culturii românești, în considerații de ordin sociologic prin existența caracteristică a ținuturilor, de filosofie a culturii regionale, de etică socială, de naționalism în sfârșit prin necesitatea de a înviora creația Ardealului de pildă, în comparație cu remarcabilele eforturi ale ungarilor și sașilor*”.

system of arguments as the Hungarians. His creative localism relies on „geographical and social arguments, within each region there are lands with their own specific physiognomy... their geography leads to a relatively autonomous spiritual life ... which proves that our localist programme can definitely lead to solid and genuine works of art .... the previous argument is completed with historical arguments as well ... Creative localism has always been dominant in the Romanian cultural life, in point of quality and quantity, local literary movements have always been better than central ones ... ” (*Revista Fundațiilor Regale*, 1935, no. 9, 718).<sup>10</sup>

The members of the *Thesis Group* lived in Sibiu and they kept close contacts with their Saxon fellow writers. Their relationship with the Hungarian intellectuals of the time are not known. That is why, the numerous similarities between the two movements – Dima’s localism and the Hungarians’s Transylvanianism, are so striking. In this respect, we can identify the following common features: both ideologies are based on the geographical and historical arguments, both intend to design a special spiritual geography of Transylvania, they both assume their identity as going against centralist tendencies, and they are both identity discourses. The Helikon group and the Thesis group alike, try to impose aesthetic criteria in the evaluation of literary productions and they both implement and organize a wide cultural movement (editing papers, publishing books, organizing conferences etc.). We do not wish to develop the issue of the aesthetic value of the books the writers belonging to the two groups wrote, as this is sometimes debatable. Yet, we must mention, that some of the best Hungarian writers of the interwar period belonged to the Helikon group and openly assumed their Transylvanianist convictions. What differentiates the two groups is that the members of the Thesis group rejected, at least on a declarative level, their implication in political activities.

Nevertheless, the two movements did not establish or facilitate intercultural communication. There are several causes of this failure, among these causes we mention the national traumas of the Romanians before and those of the Hungarians after 1918. Another cause is the rise of nationalism and its career in both countries, as, in different periods, both Romanian and Hungarian authorities displayed nationalistic attitudes in their official policies. Another cause could be the overuse of the term *Transylvanian* (in the names of papers, magazines, groups, titles of books etc.), which might have provoked

<sup>10</sup> „considerente de ordin geografic și social, ce-l determină imperios ... din cadrul unitar al fiecărei regiuni se desprind ținuturi ce-și au fizionomia lor distinctă ... existența geografică a acestor țări aduce cu sine - în același timp - o viață spirituală relativ autonomă, pe fundamentul căreia programul localist are mari posibilități de creație solidă și autentică ...”.

„Considerațiile de mai sus se întregesc însă cu argumente de ordin istoric. Localismul creator a existat în mod dominant în cuprinsul culturii românești mai totdeauna, în orice caz cantitativ și calitativ mișcările literare localiste ai întrecut cu mult pe cele centraliste”.

rejection on the part of the Romanians, who preferred to state their belonging to the newly formed state by the use of the adjective *Romanian* (e.g. *Gând românesc*) and not *Transylvanian*. Another cause is the political involvement of regionalism, in such a way that even literary and aesthetic productions were rejected and criticised by and because of political criteria. An interesting example of the interference of politics into cultural matters is an article signed by Romulus Dianu and first published in *Curentul* (17 June 1933), and then reproduced in *Primul Buletin al Grupării Intelectuale Thesis din Sibiu*. Dianu makes highly appreciative remarks on the activity of the members of the Thesis group, but defines their localism as a movement that must go against similar tendencies in the other Transylvanian cultures: „the state policies will make use of them (the Thesis writers) ... when their work will become a form of counterattack against the cultural block of the ethnic minorities” ( *Primul Buletin al Grupării Intelectuale Thesis din Sibiu, 1932-1933*, 37).<sup>11</sup>

In order to build up a healthy and functional image, each community must construct communication channels and surfaces, where the history, the values and the traumas of the community can be deposited. In this respect, the printed media has one of the most important roles. This applies to the interwar Transylvanian society as well. One of the main topics of the Romanian newspapers was the so-called crisis of the Transylvanian press, which stated that the golden age of the Romanian press from Transylvania was not under Romanian government, but under the oppression of the Austro-Hungarian authorities. On the other hand, the Hungarian press seemed to flourish in the 1920s and 1930s, and a lot of Romanian journalists instanced it as an example to follow for the worsening Romanian publications (Onisifor Ghibu’s article, *O soluție în chestia presei din Ardeal/ A Solution in the Problem of the Transylvanian Press*, published on 30 January, 1926, in *Societatea de mâine*, no.5, 71)<sup>12</sup>. N. Ghiulea expresses the same idea on 17th January 1926, in an article intitled *Pentru presa Ardealului/For the Press of Transylvania*, where he blames the Romanian press for losing its traditional roles: maintaining nationalism alive, educating citizens and creating leaders (*Societatea de mâine*, 1926, no. 3, 33). In the first issue of the same month, I. Lupaș publishes *Criza presei ardeleni/The Crisis of the Transylvanian Press*, where he debates upon the same topic, in the same way. There is a very simple explanation of this seemingly strange phenomenon: the main roles of the pre-war Romanian media from Transylvania (shaping and reinforcing national identity, propaganda, activating hidden energies, striving to resist oppression,

<sup>11</sup> ”Politica de stat va putea face apel la ei, atunci când se va ști cuprinsul și întinderea problemelor studiate de spiritul independent al scriitorilor organizați, și când opera lor va constitui un element de contraofensivă împotriva blocului cultural al minorităților etnice”.

<sup>12</sup> ”ori câtă durere ar fi, trebuie s’o spunem pe față, și s’o repetăm, că presa noilor provincii este astăzi în România mare, mai prejos de presa pe care aceasta au putut-o avea în vremea subjugării lor de către Unguri, Nemți și Ruși”.



nourish survival instincts, etc), were simply overtaken by the Hungarian media, which became better, along with a loss of quality of the Romanian papers. The huge change that occurred in 1918 led to a *role shift* in the Transylvanian society, and this logic of reversed roles might stand as an explanation for the decay of the Romanian press and the flourishing of the Hungarian one. The status of the two nations dramatically changed, thus a transfer of behaviours, attitudes and cultural phenomena took place.

Another cause of the lack of efficient and open communication between the Romanians and Hungarians might be the impossibility of forgetting, which is, according to Cornis Pope and Neubauer, specific for Central Europe: „The Central Europeans are ignorant of the science of forgetting, of filing away events... and this is both their strength... but also their weakness that makes them prone to repeated conflict. The memory of their great national traumas has often prevented the peoples in the region to forget or reinvent history, seeking new possibilities of interaction. But this obsessive memory has also allowed them to retrieve those periods, however short-lived, when multicultural interaction seemed like a real possibility, as in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup>” (Neubauer–Cornis Pope, 2004: 222).

Another stereotype related to Transylvanianism is that the Hungarians’ regionalism was mainly political, and the Romanians’ one mainly cultural. It is more accurate if we say that there are several packages of discourse about Transylvanianism. Some of these were against Transylvanianism, some others displayed ambiguous attitudes, hesitating between rejection and acceptance, while some others were favourable, and there were obsessive, exclusivist Transylvanianist as well. We can refer to a *soft* and a *hard* version of Transylvanianist or anti-Transylvanianist attitudes. The hard variant allows nationalism and narrow thinking to spread and flourish, whereas soft Transylvanianism implies Europeanism, intercultural communication, critical thinking and acceptance of differences.

Transylvanianism has been considered beneficial and progressist only when it refers to *my* regionalism, *my* Transylvanianism: when it comes to the others’ Transylvanianism, the regional ideology becomes subject to powerful negation and vehement disputes. „The closer the chosen enemy is, the more convincing and thus real the constructed danger becomes, and the lack of a group’s own identity... projects itself onto the unknown but threatening other ... in east-central Europe, the identification or evaluation of us automatically also isolates and evaluates as positive everything that we claim to be ours, an act which is impossible to, perform without simultaneously fencing in the space of ourselves” (Neubauer–Cornis Pope, 2004: 378).

There is a number of principles that were laid down in the 1920 and that foreshadow the 21st century European ideas. In point of different types of

Transylvanianism, some say that there is a Romanian and a Hungarian Transylvanianism, some others say there is a transnational variant as well. Applying another set of criteria, we can mention early Transylvanianism, flourishing Transylvanianism (the 1920s), a Transylvanianism in crisis (the 1930s), a neo-Transylvanianism (the 2000s). There is a cultural Transylvanianism and a political one two, but the interference of the political discourse was natural between the two world wars. There is a restrictive form of Transylvanianism, which leads to provincial literature, but there is another type of Transylvanianism with strong European accents, which promoted modernity. While the first form nourished nationalistic fobias and false patriotism, the progressive Transylvanianism was promoted by Chinezu, Balotă, Kuncz or Kós, and gave names like Rebreanu, Slavici, Tamási or Ady.

All the aspects of the interwar Transylvania have that *in-betweenness*, mentioned by Cornis Pope and Neubauer, it is natural that Transylvanianism is also in-between cultural and political, national and European, traditional and modern. Transylvanianism is based upon the idea that space can determine and shape the spirit, that certain geographical features of a landscape may imprint a certain *forma mentis*. This idea is accepted and promoted by both Transylvanianisms, Romanian and Hungarian alike, and this becomes evident even in the articles published in the interwar period. Transylvanianism was alternatively assumed by the two nations, and even if Hungarian intellectuals are traditionally referred to as the creators of the Transylvanianian ideology, one cannot state that it has been exclusively a Hungarian brand. A large segment of its ideas and arguments could be found in writings belonging to Romanian men of letters of the time, though they claimed they didn't belong to the Transylvanianist movement, and they called their attitudes *ardelenism* or *creative localism*. The causes of this denominative separation lie within the characteristics of Central-European self-defining strategies (Neubauer–Cornis Pope 2004: 378.). Such negative or oppositional self-definitions did not allow that the very same term designate the Hungarian and the Romanian regional tendencies alike. The two types of Transylvanianisms operated with the same set of keywords and phrases, with the same ideas and arguments (as we have already mentioned, Transylvanianian geography, history, Transylvanianian spirit, Transylvanianian idea, anti-centralism, a wise balance between tradition and modernity, taste and openness to European ideas, etc). One of the most striking failures of Hungarians' Transylvanianism and the reason for which Romanians argued against it was that it couldn't acknowledge that roles had shifted and it tended to require the same patience and unconditioned openness they had refused to provide some years earlier. Delicate topics have become taboos over the past decades and the nations from Transylvania have failed to reach a stable compromise due to psychological causes that made Romanians incapable to understand the extent to which Hungarians were

traumatized by the Treaty of Trianon, and which made Hungarians incapable to perceive the signals Romanians had sent them before 1918, and how dramatic the loss of Northern Transylvania in 1940 was for them.

Transylvania is the birthplace of the nation for both ethnic groups. “Therefore, no wonder that while the modern Romanian nation is being built, its literature appeals to Transylvania in an attempt to engage its forces under the same banner of unity. Transylvania is no longer just the birthplace of the Romanians. It is also the birthplace of culture.... Therefore, Transylvania acquires the meaning of birthplace of Romanians” (Zaciu, 1994: 20-21). Both Hungarians and Romanians from Transylvania define themselves by their Transylvanian roots, and neither admits or accepts the others’ right to do so. History and the past are equally used to give arguments and motivate actions of the present, and remembering a glorious and mythical historical background can always establish and reinforce the dividing line between *we* and *the others*. Representing the image of the inimical other is similar all over Central Europe, thus the set of ingredients of representing otherness is almost the same with the Romanians and Hungarians alike, and they include nationalism and attitudes towards this, history, mother tongue. The formation of national identities has very specific mechanisms in the areas that Neubauer and Cornis Pope call *multicultural corridors*. „The new us emerges not so much through positive self-recognition, but rather through the negation of *not-us*-entities, singled out and labeled as the annihilating energy which constantly endangers our invented us ... practically this also means, that the survival of one group, regardless of its ethnic, racial or social background, directly depends on the demise of another group or groups” (Neubauer- Pope, 2004: 378).

Margit Feischmidt develops the same idea when she refers to the so-called *disputed territories*, marked by a double loyalty of its citizens, those geographical areas that belong, politically, to one state, but in the same time, the linguistic and ethnic loyalties of a large part of the population are directed towards another state. This is the very situation that can easily lead to deep and difficult conflicts. The paradox of the nationalistic attitudes in such areas and, in the same time, the tragedy of the small nations of Eastern-Europe is that, although the geography of such territories is made up of several microregions, the national ideologies that arise here do not take into consideration this aspect, and are rather centred on territory and not on multiculturalism (Feischmidt, 2005: 20). The article signed by Ion Băilă, *Caracteristica culturii minoritare/The Characteristics of the Minority Cultures* deals with the topic of the contacts between Transylvanian cultures, and its main idea is linked to the building of hostile images of the others. „The circumstances have made it that the Romanian public opinion perceives the ethnic minorities only as unpleasant, political elements. The same thing happened with the minorities as well, and they judge us according to the way they are treated by the

authorities. The cultural aspects have been completely neglected on both sides”(*Societatea de mâine*, 1926, no. 20, 378).<sup>13</sup>

The motives of *we/ the others, my nation/ the other nation* are strongly linked with the issues of national identity and multicultural territories. Veres Valér refers to two main types of national identity: the Western-European type, based on the concepts of country and citizenship, and the Eastern-European type, based on the concepts of ethnic origin and culture (Veres, 2005: 88). In the Central and Eastern parts of the European continent, in the region of the former big multinational empires, the nations have constructed their national identities on cultural, linguistic and ethnic attributes, that is the precisely the reason for which ethnic rivalry and inherent conflicts are most likely to occur right where ethnic plurality has remote historical roots and traditions (Grüber, 2002: 13). John Neubauer and Marcel Cornis Pope define the cultural milieu from Transylvania with the help of a conflictual paradigm, mixed with rivalry and mutual neglect, which cannot erase those multicultural crossings that are still operating (Neubauer-Cornis Pope, 2004: 5). In Transylvania, just like in other parts of Central-Europe, regionalism functioned as an alternative to the centralist approaches. The Hungarians’ Transylvanianism and the Romanians’ Transylvanianism or creative localism were nothing else than such regional movements.

Defensive anxieties are always a symptom of poor intercultural communication. We can apply György Csepeli’s ideas on the prevalence of ethnocentrism syndrome in Transylvania to the interwar period, as defensive attitudes and ethnocentric anxieties were widespread phenomena in those times as well: “In Transylvania both Romanians and Hungarians tend toward self-victimization which is a paradoxical version of ethnocentrism focusing on collective suffering and self-pity” (Csepeli-Örkény-Székely, 2000: 149). Such anxieties prevented the interwar Transylvanian intellectuals, Romanians and Hungarians alike, from establishing open and efficient communication, and that is why Transylvanianism did not fulfill the role it might have fulfilled, and it separated, instead of reuniting. Besides the above mentioned causes, the articles on the problem of Transylvania provide some more causes for this communication fiasco: some literary topics that proved to be too delicate to bear (for instance, a lot of Hungarian writings were criticised by the Romanians not because of their poor aesthetic value, but because they dealt with the delicate topic of history), nationalism, stereotypical attitudes such as *superiority* vs. *inferiority complex*, europeanism vs. balcanism, the question of who came first, whose home is Transylvania, who has more rights to rule it, etc.

<sup>13</sup> ”Împrejurările au făcut, ca opinia publică românească să vadă în minoritățile etnice numai niște elemente politice, puțin simpatice. Acelaș lucru s-a petrecut și cu minoritățile, care ne judecă după felul cum ele sunt tratate de către funcționarii siguranței de stat. Partea de cultură a noastră ca și a minorităților a fost astfel neglijată”.

Mythology and history are very important factors in identity building all over Central Europe, and so they are in Transylvania. The conflicts are likely to appear where myths and historical figures or events are interpreted one way by one group, but rather differently by the other. When history appears reinterpreted or even negated by the inimical other, when it is not infallible anymore and when alternative variants show up, conflicts arise (Schöflin, 2003: 98). A particular case of conflict generating situations is when myths penetrate the historical discourse, and mythical figures are perceived by the collective unconscious as absolute truths, thus any criticism of the myth is interpreted as an attack that endangers the integrity of the whole nation (as in the above mentioned article by Vasile Băncilă, *Semnificația Ardealului*). Mitteleuropa is characterized by this tendency to create historical and historical public discourses, and the relationship between the Romanians and Hungarians are intertwined by such mythical elements and arguments (Schöflin, 2003: 100).

One of the most interesting cases of promoting nationalism as a valid and necessary argument for both parts is a text signed by Corneliu Codarcea, *Sigismund Móricz în Ardeal/Móricz Zsigmond in Transylvania*, in which the publicist concludes that nationalism or intolerance have always been the normal ingredients of Transylvanian militantist discourses (*Țara noastră*, 12th Dec. 1926, no. 50, 1479).<sup>14</sup>

The representations of differentness in interwar Transylvania are ambivalent, and they are based on dichotomies like *similarity/difference, identity/alterity, we/the others*, both with the Romanians and the Hungarians alike. Two neighbouring nations, occupying and coexisting on the same territory, have created parallel and rival identity discourses. In the press of the time, there are numerous articles that exemplify such discourses. Both the Romanians and the Hungarians consolidated the ethnocentric side of their national awareness. One of the stereotypes of interethnic relations in Transylvania, besides differentness is moral disdain. In a large number of articles, there is an extremely stigmatized representation of *the other*, but in other writings the need to become more open towards each other is urged. Nevertheless, in the collective unconscious of both nations there is a stereotypical ethnic hierarchy, which always places *the other* onto an inferior position and status. This phenomenon might be explained by the evolution and career of nationalism in Europe in general and in Central Europe in particular, although we do not intend to develop this topic hereby. We cite, in this sense, an article signed by

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<sup>14</sup> ”să ne întrebăm dacă scriitorii noștri Alexandri, Eminescu, Coșbuc, Goga, Iosif, Rebreanu etc. au înfățișat sau nu pe unguri în colori obiective în opera? Evident că nu. Pentru ce? Foarte simplu. Am fost un popor subjugat care avea nevoie de-o literatură ofensivă. De instigație chiar, față de cei ce țineau în asuprire atâtea milioane de români dornici să se scape de jug ... tot astfel, maghiarii aveau nevoie în literatura lor de elemente de ură față de cei ce primejduiau integritatea patriei Sfântului Ștefan”.

Cronicar, where the author signals the regional ideas that are promoted in the Hungarian literary and cultural review, *Erdélyi Helikon* (*Societatea de mâine*, 1928, no.16-17, 285). Cronicar (most probably Teodor Murășanu) makes a short historical overview of the ideology, and refers to the centralist economic and cultural tendencies of Budapest at the end of the 19th century. Due to some peculiarities, the peripheries of the Monarchy resisted these tendencies: „in regions like Transylvania, Banat, Croatia, etc., an intense cultural and economic activity of the populations that were the majority developed, and, in comparison with this activity, the one of the Hungarians was *inferior*, despite all the advantages provided by the state, and perhaps due to this very centralist behaviour of Budapest” (*Societatea de mâine*, 1928, no. 16-17, 285).<sup>15</sup> Transylvanianism is, according to the author of the article, a kind of cultural regionalism that opposes „the retrograde and chauvinistic behaviour of Budapest, which is always in the clouds about reestablishing the situation prior the war. And we are convinced, that this new attitude (the Transylvanian ideology) will help the Hungarians from Transylvania ... *ascend* spiritually, through the creation of some important scientific and cultural values, by remaining loyal to the Romanian state, which will not hinder their activity, provided that it does not turn into a disguised conspiracy against its bases” (*Societatea de mâine*, 1928, no. 16-17, 285).<sup>16</sup>

One of the dilemmas of the Transylvanian self-defining strategies is that, between the two world wars, this always takes place on the account of *the other*. Both cultures, the Romanian and the Hungarian alike, consider Transylvania an identity matrix, the birthplace of the nation, and this is the most probable cause of the long series of misunderstandings. In the interwar media the definition of the *self* and of the *other* is always done by making use of the ethnic categories. In the Transylvanian society of that time, alterity and identity are talked about, referred to, used as arguments and stated as examples both by Romanians and Hungarians. Transylvanians tend to define themselves and the others from a national perspective, underlining the separating lines between the two parties (Fox, 2005: 109). The discourse on *us* and *the others* is, in the same time, a discourse about the past, present and future, about nations and nationalities, about nationalism and European attitudes, about intercultural

<sup>15</sup> „În regiuni cari sunt Ardealul, Banatul, Croația etc. s'a dezvoltat, cu toate opreliștile Budapestei, o activitate culturală și economică mai mult sau mai puțin intensă a naționalităților majoritare, alături de care cea a națiunii maghiare, cu toate avantajele dominației de stat, era în inferioritate, poate tocmai din pricina sistemului centralist al Budapestei?”

<sup>16</sup> „concepției retrograde și șovine a Budapestei, care-și plimbă capul numai în nori de colb ai unei reveniri la situația dinainte de războiu. Și suntem convinși că această nouă atitudine îi va ajuta pe ungurii din Ardeal să se înalțe spiritualicește prin creația unor valori importante științifico-culturale, rămânând politicește fideli statului român, care nu se va opune activității lor atâta vreme cât aceasta nu va mai fi deghizată conspirație împotriva temeliiilor lui?”

communication and its failures. Transylvania has always been, for every nation living here, an *axis mundi*, an identity landmark, that is why the Romanian and the Hungarian identity discourses are equally impregnated by defensive reflexes and suspicions. Perhaps, these could reveal the roots and the motives of most nationalistic stereotypes that still function today.

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# ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE ASPECTS FROM THE WESTERN BORDER OF GREAT ROMANIA. THE ACADEMY OF LAW STUDENTS IN ORADEA (1919 - 1934)

Florentina CHIRODEA\*

**Abstract.** *The Oradea and Crișana demographic realities, respectively the geopolitical ones of the border area with Hungary, have influenced the inter-war evolution of the oldest law academy in Great Romania, in its efforts of Romanization, strengthening and administrative and scientific development in a city still with Hungarian majority from the demographic point of view even if its hinterland was massive Romanian. In this context, the ethnic and religious structure of the student body, who attended the Law Academy of Oradea between the Romanian period of the institution, constitutes an additional argument to demonstrate the regional character of the Romanian academic school in the western border of Greater Romania.*

**Keywords:** *ethnic, confession, students, The Law Academy in Oradea*

The end of the World War I meant the disintegration of the last three multinational empires (Austro-Hungarian, Tsarist and Ottoman) on the ruins of which, as a result of the right to self-determination of peoples, there were young national states (Istoria României. Transilvania, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol., 1997: 873).

The 1918 Union of Romania was not a simple installation and cohesion of the national borders of language, religion and economic life of the past. The event inaugurated transformations, radical strategies and policies, the new Romanian state facing a wide range of issues which have "touched, perhaps in the most difficult way, the border towns" (Livezeanu, 1998: 29 and Păcurariu, 1988: 346). Between these Oradea, the main gateway to the western border, a must pass road linking Central and Northern Europe to the Southeastern side of the continent, stands by the happily interaction of defining elements of the

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city, which caused the city to enroll early in the concert of Europe's cultural emanation (Borcea, Gorun, 1995: 5 and Moțiu, Țărău, 2002: 37).

Thus, Oradea is a city that has functioned for nearly a century and a half higher education institution known as the Academy of Law. Established in October 1777 as the Royal Academy of Law, the academic school of Oradea was made up of the Faculty of Philosophy, and from the autumn of 1788 the Faculty of Law becoming also the institution in which the most Romanian lawyers have formed until 1918 (Sigmirean, 2000: 134). The Romanian era of the Academy (1919 - 1934) begins with taking the institution by the Ruling Council for Transylvania, Banat and the Hungarian Lands Inhabited by Romanians, immediately after the entrance of the Romanian Army in Oradea, on April 20, 1919. The 15 years have marked a period in which the institution has experienced the fastest development, receiving the approval for the organization of the first doctoral courses. Being an isolated law faculty, the institution's functioning being an exception in the inter-war Romanian, the local authorities' efforts to establish a university in Crișana remaining unfinished. The fifth law faculty in Oradea in Romania worked until 24 august 1934 when, through a Royal Decree, will be merged with the Faculty of Law Cluj.

The ethnic and religious structure of the student body that attended the Law Academy of Oradea, during the cultural offensive that followed the Great Union, is, in fact, the subject of our scientific approach. The topic has even more interest to us, thus the Oradea academic school worked at the Western border of the Great Romania, "considered a strategic area, which is easily reached from Budapest by road, rail or by radio and menaced by irredentism" (Leuștean, 2003: 94-99 and 172-174). This influenced the fate and evolution of educational institutions in its area, the proposed solutions to educational problems recorded by the Romanian authorities in the border area in the western part of the country being even more interesting, as they reflect their views on school, culture and religion. In this context, by a rigorous statistical analysis, we propose an interpretation of quantitative and qualitative studies of information contained in documents issued by the Secretariat of the Oradea academic school for students and their professional journey.

Small country in the world, Greater Romania, with 14.5 million inhabitants in 1919 became the second country after Poland, as population of Central and Eastern Europe. In the following decades the population grew, the 1930 census recorded 18,057,028 people heterogeneous from ethnic and religious point of view. The Orthodox majority, like the ethnic composition of Romanians, represented 72.59% from the total of inhabitants while the Greek Catholics (United) recorded a rate of 7.9%, Roman - Catholics 6.83%, Jews 4.19%, Reformed 3.93%, Lutherans 2.2%, Muslims 1.02%, and other religions 1.34% (Tănase, 2008: 23). Approximately 30% of population was represented by other ethnics – Hungarians, Germans, Jews, Ukrainians,

Russians, Bulgarians, Gypsies etc., which over the centuries, due to the complex historical conditions, settled, lived and developed historically with the majority population (Livezeanu, 1995: 17-18).

Most of the minorities came from the new provinces of Transylvania with the rising or declining trends according to certain concrete historical conditions. Between the 1910 – 1930's is a significant increase of the Romanian population (from 53.8% to 57.8%) and a decrease in the share of Hungarians (from 31.8% to 24.4%) (Bolovan S., Bolovan I., 1995: 160). Also, the numerical decline of the German population (from 10.8% to 9.8%) was a phenomenon found in Transylvania since the early nineteenth century (Istoria României. Transilvania, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol., 1997: 867-869). The third ethnic minority in the province, Jews numbered 178,699 inhabitants, representing 10.4% of the Transylvanian urban population. The remaining ethnic groups occupying a rate of 4.8% were made up of Gypsies, Slovaks, Serbs, etc. On the confessional side, we have a great diversity embodied in Christian: 31.1% united, 27.7% Orthodox, Protestant 25.2%, 12.8% of Roman - Catholic and Jewish 2.5%. The Orthodox percentage is below that of Romanian ethnicity, but as Greek Catholics (Units) considered themselves citizens of all ethnic Romanian, by merging the two Christian confessions (Orthodox and units), we arrive at a percentage sensitively equal to the Romanian ethnics (Tănase, 2008: 25).

In the county of Bihor, the demographic data from 1921 indicates 489,732 inhabitants, of which 56.33% were Romanian, Hungarian 35.33%, 6% Hebrew, 0.4% German. The only city in the county and it was also its residence, Oradea, with a population of 68,133 inhabitants, the majority (69.62%) Hungarians, 26.21% Hebrew, Romanian 19.80%, 0.87% ethnic Germans, 418 were of a different nationality. At the 1930 census, the Romanian majority was below the national average of 75.3%, but fit the average region. After the Romanian, the Hungarians were the growing share of Bihor, although figures show a decline in the numerical evolution of the Hungarian population (172,885 inhabitants in 1921 to 152,942 ethnic Hungarians in 1930). In terms of religion, 49.8% of the population in Bihor was orthodox, 21% Reformed - Calvinists, 10.7% Greek Catholic, 10.4% Roman Catholic, 5.4% Jewish, 2.2% Baptists and 0.3% Lutheran. In Oradea the Reformed – Calvinists were in number of 20,394 (24.7%), followed by Hebrews (24%), Roman Catholics (21.9%) and Orthodox (17.4%). The other religions - Lutheran and Unitarian - represented an insignificant percentage from the population of the city (Zainea, 2007: 197 – 202).

In this demographic context, the education in Transylvania was, as in all the United Provinces, a more difficult evolution, sometimes contradictory, despite of the existence, in the early twentieth century, of an education system with a structure similar to that of the Old Kingdom: primary, secondary and academic. The fundamental difference was that the teaching activities were carried out according to laws and regulations issued by the Hungarian

governments, which sought to bring the Romanians' education in line with the idea of Hungary, as a Hungarian National State. Another feature of the education in Transylvania, at the beginning of the twentieth century, is the great diversity of the educational institutions. Therefore, there were public schools, communal, religious or minority and private schools, which were maintained by the state, the community, the religion, the ethnic minority, or any private company. The language teaching in these schools was the language of the community that supported the school, therefore, in addition to Romanian and Hungarian schools; there were also schools of all other nationalities living in Transylvania (Istoria României. Transilvania, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol., 1997: 996).

Although drafting laws for the unification of the academic education required a period of 12 years, the Romanian academic education experienced a rapid dynamic during the inter-war period (Sălăgean, 2004: 597). The academic law legal education, especially, reaches its maximum development, in terms of students and licensees. At the Faculty of Law in Bucharest, the number of students amounted to 6825 and that of the licensees at 990, the largest number of graduates of colleges in the country, given that at the Faculty of Sciences of the same university, the number of graduates was 120. A similar situation but with lower figures, is registered at the Faculty of Law at the University of Iasi as well as at that of Cernăuți (Giurescu, 1971: 328). In the academic year 1928 - 1929 were 31,154 students enrolled at Romanian universities compared to 2,283,211 graduates of state, private or religious school (Antonescu, Gabrea, 1933: 43-44). The most students were enrolled in faculties of law and letters - philosophy, focusing on the few technical faculties, especially to the agricultural nature. At the University of Cluj, the Faculty of Law was attended by a number of 1813 students, representing 40.56% of those enrolled in the 1932-1933 academic year at the faculties of Cluj (Bozgan, 1995: 91).

For the 15 years of academic school during the inter-war period of the Law Academy of Oradea, the following categories of students were enrolled: ordinary students- those enrolled on the certificate of successful completion of high school, classic and modern, accompanied by proof of baccalaureate exam; extraordinary students who are enrolled with completed high school, but with no baccalaureate exam, they have the obligation that within a year to become ordinary students; commercial and real high school graduates who have the examination of maturity or capacity were admitted as extraordinary students with the condition that at the end of the first year to pass an examination of Latin. The graduates of a high school or seminary, aged 17 years, could attend the Academy, with the approval of the Teaching Council, being registered as trainees. They could participate in seminar papers, "whereas they would not hamper the work of students", only with the approval of the course professors. The trainees could enter "to pass the exams on the courses or parts of courses

being heard, in order to obtain academic certificates” (Article 64 of Secondary and Higher Education Act of 1912).

**Table1.** The area of origin of students enrolled in the 1919 – 1921<sup>1</sup> period

Academic year The county of residence	1919-1920 (109 students in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester)	1920-1921 (273 students in the 1st semester)
<b>Crișana – Maramureș</b>		
Arad, Bistrița Năsăud, Maramureș, Zalău (Zala), Satu Mare (Szatmar), Sălaj (Szilaghy)	32	66
Bihar / of which Oradea	55/ 12	151/ 45
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>Banat - Ardeal</b>		
Caras - Severin, Timiș, Hunedoara, Lugoj, Abrud, Alba, Brașov, Cluj, Făgăraș, Turda, Sibiu, Odorhei	<b>11</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Counties in Moldova</b>		
Roman, Câmpulung	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Old Kingdom</b>		
Dolj	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Counties in Hungary</b>		
Ugocsa, Weinbohla, Bajoronag, Pesta, Cenad (Csanad), Szoreng, Somogyuzsopa, Szolnok, Veszprem, Szabolcs, Miskolcs, Nagylak, Hajdu – Bihar	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Undeclared</b>		
Undeclared	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

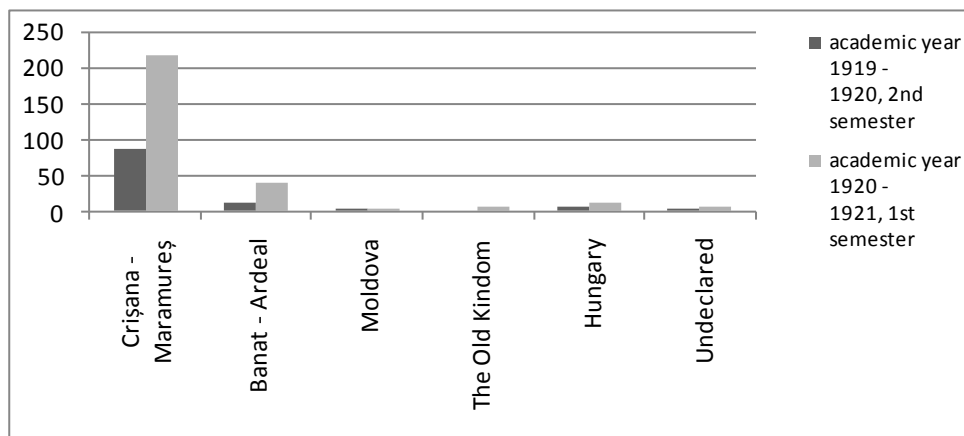
The area of origin of the Academy students<sup>2</sup> has not changed with the passage of the institution in the Romanian authorities managing, their vast majority (70% in the 1919-1920 academic year, respectively 79% in 1920-1921) residing in localities belonging the Crișana – Maramureș area. Of these, 63% (69% for the 1919-1920 academic year) are from Bihar and 14% (21% - the 1920-1921 academic year) are from Oradea. The next area from which most students are, is the Banat - Transylvania, administrative units in Hungary, being conclusive in this respect the map shown below. Isolated, the archival documents mention one student - two of the districts of Moldova and the Old Kingdom (Wallachia). For the last years of existence of the academic school

<sup>1</sup> Data were taken from the National Archives – Bihar County Department, Law Academy of Oradea fund, records 563 and 564 for the academic year 1919 – 1920, respectively records 565, 566, 567 and 568 for the academic year 1920 – 1921.

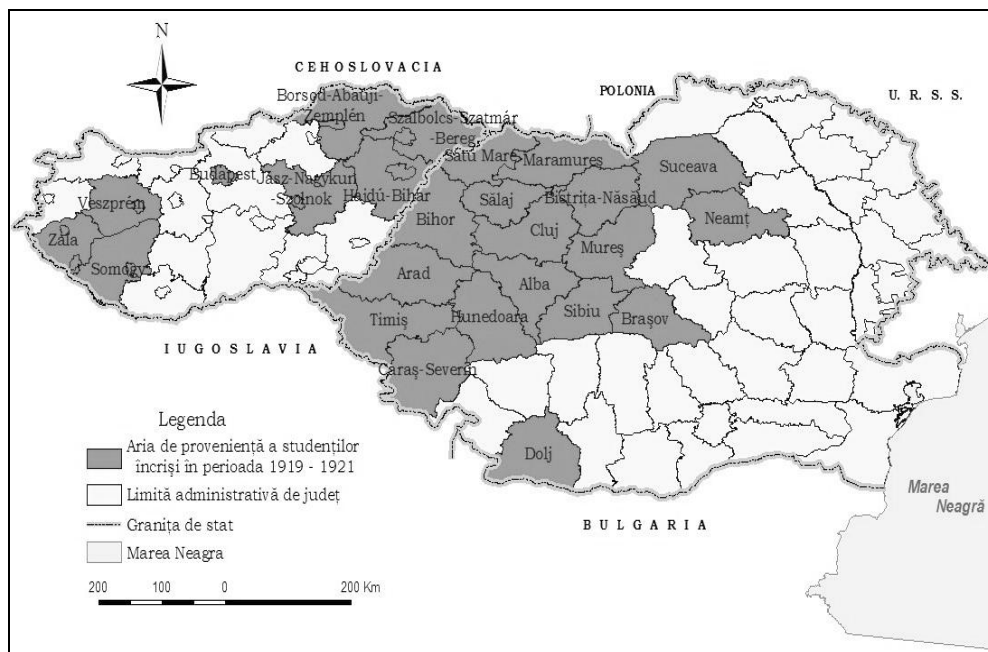
<sup>2</sup> This area was determined based on the place of birth declared by the student in the registration sheet or recorded in the transcripts, complete information is found only for the academic years 1919 - 1920, 1920 - 1921. For our research, the data has been pooled referring to the distribution of students by county.

Oradea the edited sources state out as an area of origin of students Crişana and the Western Region, "the overwhelming majority" being the children of Romanians from "Bihor, Salaj, Sătmar and the entire Western border region" (Memoriu cu privire la Facultatea de Drept, 1933: 4).

**Graphic1.** The area of origin of students enrolled in the 1919 – 1921 period



**Map1.** The area of origin of students enrolled in the 1919 – 1921 period



From the statistical processing of data on the area of origin of students who attended the Law Academy of Oradea during 1919 - 1934, it appears that the first two academic years, the institution has maintained a regional character despite the restriction of the basin of recruitment of students<sup>3</sup>, "the statistics of students enrolled at the Faculty of Law showing that the institution meets the large requirements of the region" (Memoriu cu privire la Facultatea de Drept, 1933: 4-5).

In this area, highlighted in Map 1, at the beginning of the 1919 - 1920 academic year, 70 students were following the Academy courses (64 ordinary and extraordinary 6), of which 14 in the second year, 11 in the third year, 10 in the fourth year, from October 1 to 15 enrolling 29 students in the first year. In the second semester, the Academy students increased to 95 (68 ordinary and 27 extraordinary). In the next academic year there is an increase of 2.5 times the number of students (273 students, of which 70% ordinary), due to the regulation of the students statute who accomplished the military service. It is about a significant number of young people in Transylvania, which returned from the front and wanted to continue their studies (Istoria României. Transilvania, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol., 1997: 1014). The Directing Council issuing the order 25312 of December 23, 1919 by which students benefit from reduced time for study due to military service during the war<sup>4</sup>. The exemptions were granted by the Dean, after discussing in the teachers' council, based on an application

<sup>3</sup> In the 1897 - 1898 academic year, the Academy students came from all counties of Hungary, namely: Abauj-Tolna, Alba Inferioară (Alsó – Fehér), Árva – Baranya, Bács – Bodrog, Bars – Bereg, Békés, Bistrița Năsăud (Beszterce Naszód), Bihar (Bihar), Borsod, Braşov (Brassó), Cenad (Csanad), Ciuc (Csik), Csongrád, Făgăraş (Fogaras), Gyömör, Győr, Hajdu, Heves, Trei Scaune, Hunedoara (Hunyad), Târnava Mică (Kis Küküllő), Cluj (Kolozs), Komárom, Caraş (Krassó – Szörény), Lipto, Mureş (Maros), Maramureş (Máramaros), Târnava Mare (Nagy Küküllő), Nógrád, Bratislava (Pozsony), Sáros, Sopron, Sătmar (Szatmár), Sibiu (Szeben), Sălaj (Szilágy), Solnoc (Szolnok), Timiş (Temes), Tolna, Turda (Torda), Torontal, Torocz, Odorhei (Udvarhely), Ugocza, Veszprém, Zemplény, Budapesta. See National Archives – Bihar County Department, Law Academy of Oradea fund, record 409, p.7

<sup>4</sup> By this normative act, the students who took a year and a half army, plus a year as volunteer, could receive the Absolutory after 6 semesters of attendance rates. Those who had between one year and one and a half of army, received the Absolutory after 7 normal semesters, however those who were under one year of military service had no relief. For two and a half years of military, the student may receive the Absolutory after five semesters, those with 3 and half years, after four semesters, and those exceeding this period only after three semesters. If students are attending the courses over one or more semesters before the period in which they performed military service, the Dean can approve the sustaining of basic exams, giving them time to prepare. See *Ibidem*, record 562/1919-1920, p. 215



submitted by the student which was accompanied by a statement "in the word of honor" on the duration of the military service that the allegations are true, supported by a certificate of performing the military service. Any false statement, determined the invalidation of semesters, examinations and diplomas as well as the qualification of the fact as crime with criminal consequences. The order remains valid even after the dismantling of the Directing Council, the result for the period 1919 - 1922 was a steady increase in the number of extraordinary students who were attending the courses of the Law Academy of Oradea.

**Table 2.** The Dynamics of the Academy of Law students in Oradea during 1919 - 1922<sup>5</sup>

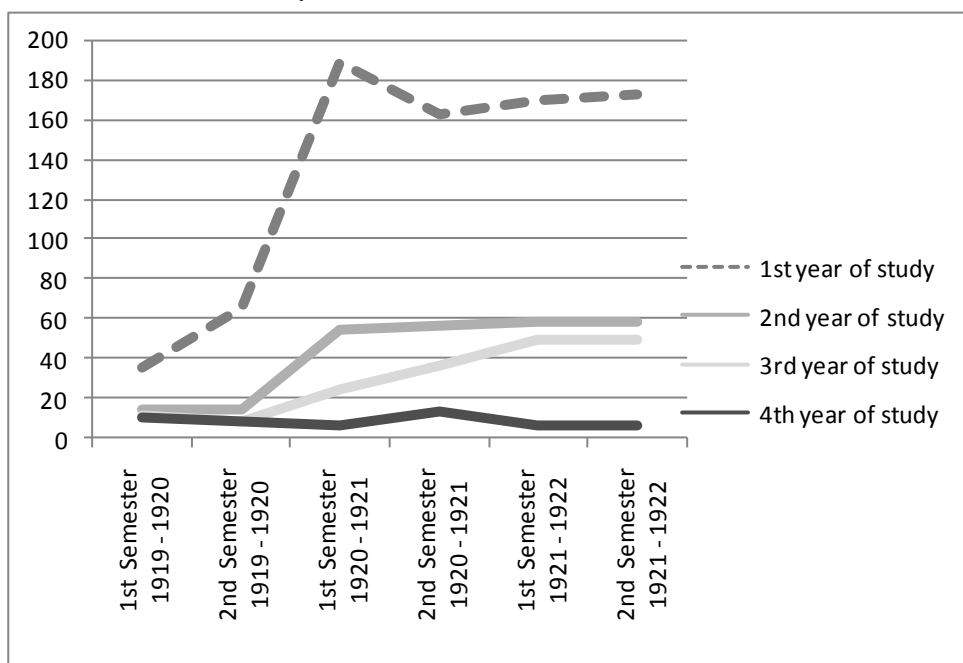
School year	Total no. of students	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year
1st Semester 1919-1920	Total - 70 64 ordinary 6 extraordinary	35	14	11	10
2nd Semester 1919-1920	Total - 95 68 ordinary 27 extraordinary	65	14	8	8
1st Semester 1920-1921	Total - 273 191 ordinary 82 extraordinary	189	54	24	6
2nd Semester 1920-1921	Total - 268 195 ordinary 73 extraordinary	163	56	36	13
1st Semester 1921 - 1922	Total - 376 283 ordinary 93 extraordinary	170	58	49	6
2nd Semester 1921 - 1922	Total - 379 286 ordinary 93 extraordinary	173	58	49	6

Analyzing the data on Table 2 and their graphical representation, we can state that the number of those enrolled in the first year of study has tripled in the 1920-1921 academic year, the peak being recorded in the first half, mainly due to the approved facilities for commercial and normal high school graduates. For the following years of study, even if there is not registered the same level of growth, this trend manifests itself, most likely, the cause being the return to normality of everyday life for many families, which allowed the resumption of studies for young people affected by the just ended war. Also in late 1920, some facilities for students were cancelled, and approval procedures hinder their

<sup>5</sup> Data were taken from the National Archives – Bihor County Department, Law Academy of Oradea fund, records 562/1919-1920, p. 363 and National Archives – Cluj County Department, Law Faculty of Oradea fund, record 24, p. 1, 4, 15 and 21

applications. Thus, the order of the Directing Council referring to graduates of commercial and normal schools was repealed, the examination commission at Latin being dismissed, and exemptions for students returning from the front for attending the courses were approved only by the Dean and the General Secretariat of Cluj (National Archives – Cluj County Department, Law Faculty of Oradea fund, record 23, p. 3-4). All of these had as result the decrease of the number of students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 1920-1921 academic year, without being dramatic. Towards the end of the period, namely the academic year 1921 - 1922 it is noticed a certain stabilization in the number of students, despite the peak recorded for the third year of study due to the growth of the extraordinary students.

**Graphic 2.** The Dynamics of the Academy of Law students in Oradea during the academic years 1919 – 1920, 1920 – 1921 and 1921-1922



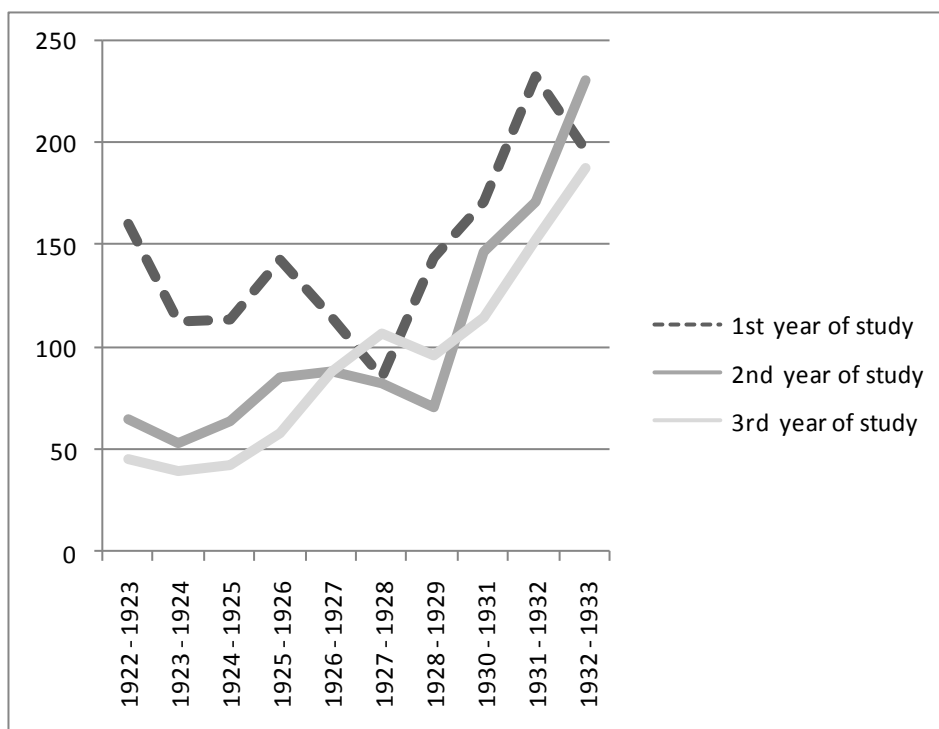
Once with the approval of the Regulation of functioning in October 1921, the courses of the Academy of Oradea become public, being able to register "to attend the Faculty of law any person with a sufficient degree of instruction in order to understand". They were part of the audience and were admitted only "if the Dean of the Faculty with the teacher to whose class they sign give a favorable opinion". At the end of the academic year, the audients "could not get another right" only a certificate of attendance at courses that have signed at. The same regulation changes the duration of study from four to three academic years, which has not caused a major decrease of the number of

students. As it can be seen from the data presented in Table 3, in the academic year 1922-1923 the Academy has enrolled only 85 students less than the previous academic year.

**Table 3.** The dynamic of the Academy of Law students in Oradea during 1922 -1933<sup>6</sup>

Academic year	Total no. of students	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	PhD
1922 – 1923	Total - 294 294 ordinary	160	65	45	-
1923–1924	Total – 204 204 ordinary	112	53	39	-
1924 – 1925	Total – 219 219 ordinary	113	64	42	-
1925 – 1926	Total – 286 261 ordinary + 1 audient 16 extraordinary	143	85	58	-
1926 – 1927	Total – 296 290 ordinary 6 audients	114	88	88	-
1927 – 1928	Total – 280 274 ordinary 6 audients	85	82	107	-
1928 – 1929	Total – 311 311 ordinary	144	71	96	-
1930 – 1931	Total – 432 432 ordinary	171	147	114	-
1931– 1932	Total – 557 557 ordinary	233	171	153	-
1932 – 1933	Total – 774 774 ordinary	197	231	188	158

<sup>6</sup> Data were taken from the National Archives – Cluj County Department, Law Faculty of Oradea fund, record 35 for the 1922-1926 period and National Archives – Bihor County Department, Law Academy of Oradea fund, records 582,595,602 for the 1927-1933 period.

**Graphic 3.** The Dynamic of the Oradea Academy of Law students during 1922 – 1934

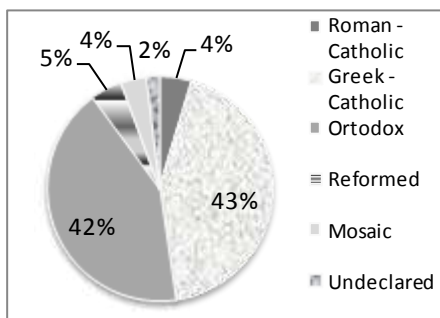
The upward trend in the number of students enrolled at the beginning of each academic year it also maintains during the period 1922 - 1934 (see Graphic3), even if for the 1929 – 1930 and 1933 – 1934 academic years, from the study of archival documents it couldn't be reconstructed the distribution of students by year of study. In another documentary resources consulted it is mentioned only the total number of students, namely 350 for the 1929 – 1930 academic year, respectively over 800 for the last academic year attended by the students of the Academy at Oradea. Despite the “depression period, the signings of October 1932” increased at Oradea with almost 200, especially due to the debut of doctoral studies, in the fall of the same year being registered the first 158 PhDs (Bozgan, 1995: 90 and Memoriu cu privire la Facultatea de Drept, 1933: 6).

A breakdown of students by religion and nationality in the period 1919 - 1934 is shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6, respectively the figures 4.1 – 4.4, 5 and 6, and this time from the archival documents couldn't be extracted data only for two academic years: 1919 – 1920, 1920 – 1921.

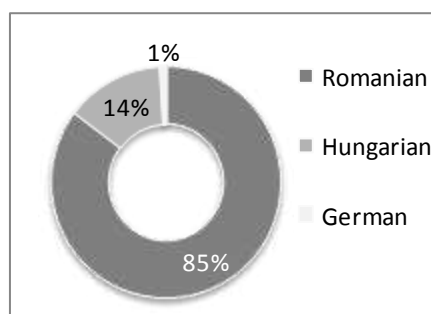
**Table 4.** Students registered during 1919 – 1921 according religion and ethnicity<sup>7</sup>

Academic year	Religion																	
	Roman – Catholic			Greek– Catholic			Orthodox	Reformed	Mosaic			Unitarian	Evangelical		Undeclared			
	Hungarian	German	Romanian	Hungarian	German	Romanian	Romanian	Hungarian	Hungarian	Jewish	Romanian	ungarian	Romanian	Hungarian	Hungarian	German	Romanian	
(109 students in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	4	1	0	1	0	46	46	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
(273 students in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	12	3	1	6	1	94	64	16	62	6	1	1	0	0	5	1	0	

**Graphic 4.1.** Students registered in the 1919-1920 Academic year according to religion

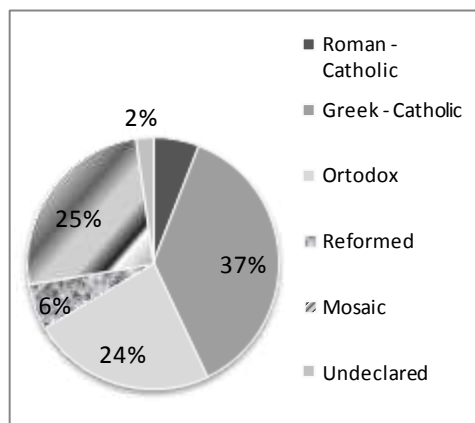


**Graphic 4.2.** Students registered in the 1919 – 1920 Academic year according to ethnicity

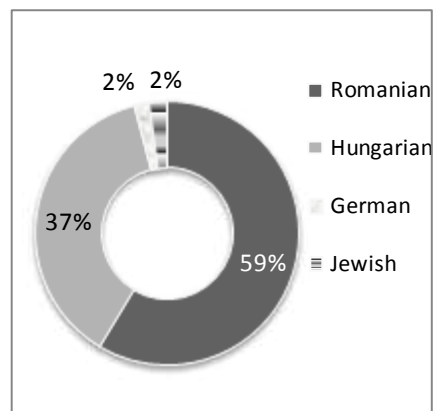


<sup>7</sup> Data were taken from the National Archives – Bihor County Department, Law Academy of Oradea fund, records 562/1919-1920, p. 363 and National Archives – Cluj County Department, Law Faculty of Oradea fund, record 24, p. 1, 4, 15 and 21

**Graphic 4.3.** Students registered in the 1920-1921 Academic year according to religion



**Graphic 4.4.** Students registered in the 1920 – 1921 Academic year according to ethnicity



For the academic year 1919 - 1920 the data collected from the school register indicates an equal number of Romanian Greek - Catholic and Orthodox students (see Graphic4.1), respectively an equal distribution of the number of students who have declared their membership of the two religions, despite the fact that the Romanians were the majority (85%) to the students registered in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (Graphic4.2). The Hungarians, in proportion of 14%, are mainly Roman Catholic and Reformed. It is also interesting the situation of the four students of mosaic religion, who declare themselves of Hungarian nationality, given the fact that in the Old Romania, the Jewish had been excluded from the citizenship, this being given to them after signing the Treaty of minorities with Hungary, which guarantees protection to ethnic communities in Transylvania (Roth, 2006: 123-124).

In the following year, 1920 - 1921, once with the increase of number of students, there is a change in the distribution of students by religion and nationality (Graphic4.3). Thus, the most enrolled in the semester are Romanian Greek Catholics, causing an increase in the number of Greek Catholic students than the Orthodox (37% Greek Catholic than 24% Orthodox). Romanian students remain the majority (59%), but not in such big proportion as in the previous academic year (Graphic4.4). They are followed by Hungarian students, who doubled (37%). In comparison with the dates from the 1919 – 1920 academic year, these are much closer to the values representing the situation of the two nationalities in Transylvania resulted after the first census made by the Romanian authorities short time after the Union (57.1% Romanians, Hungarians 26.5%) (Pană, 2007: 156-157). The decrease with approximately 30

% of the number of Romanian students of the Law Academy, in a very short time, of an academic year, we think it is due to the confusion in which Hungarian citizens were, the idea of being a “minority” on a territory on which they considered themselves at home and upon which they extended, the aspirations of a state – nation, shaped in the first years after the Union a state of confusion and despair still hard to accept (Nastasă, Salat, 2003: 31). In what concerns the students of Mosaic religion, unlike the 1919-1920 academic year, at the Academy of Law in Oradea in 1920 - 1921 there were registered 68 students who declared as being of Mosaic religion, of these 62 Hungarians and 6 Jews.

For the next period 1921 - 1934 the analysis of ethnic and religious structure of Oradea students may not be as thorough, due to the incomplete records existing at the archival funds from Cluj and Bihor referring to transcripts for each academic year, therefore Table 5 was made only on the basis of statistics prepared by the head of the Oradea academic school and given to the authorities in Bucharest. From the graphic representation that resulted, it can be easily noticed, that Orthodox and Greek Catholic students are the majority, followed by those of Mosaic religion and Roman Catholics. The other religions (Unitarian, Evangelic, Lutheran and Reformed) are less represented in the religious structure of the students registered at the Oradea Academy of Law.

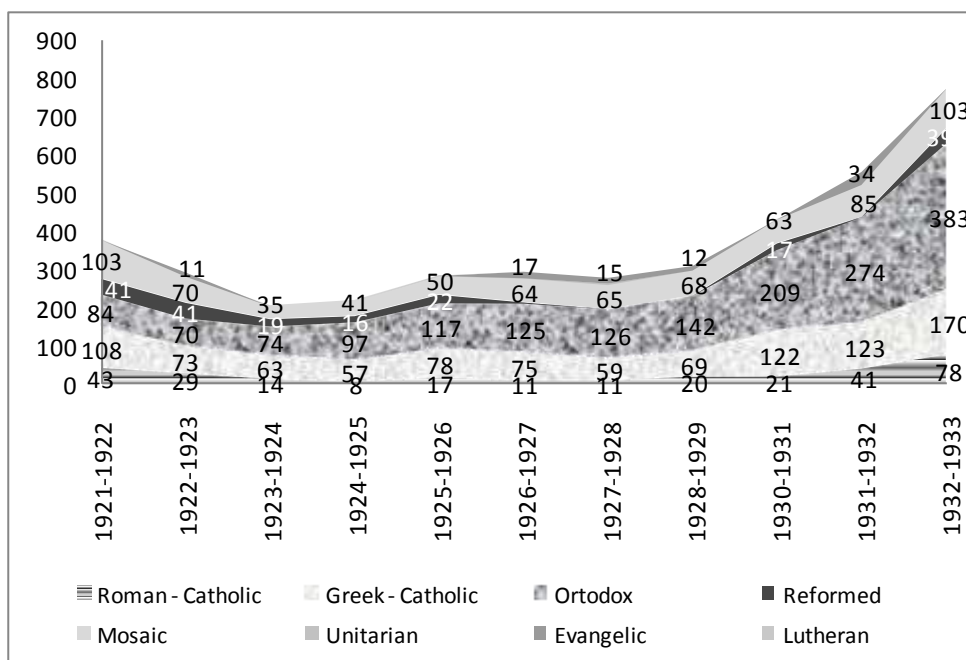
**Table 5.** Students registered during 1921– 1933 according to religion<sup>8</sup>

Academic year	Religion							
	Roman – Catholic	Greek – Catholic	Orthodox	Reformed	Mosaic	Unitarian	Evangelic	Lutheran
1921-1922 (379 students)	43	108	84	41	103	0	0	0
1922-1923 (294 students)	29	73	70	41	70	0	11	0
1923-1924 (204 students)	14	63	74	19	35	0	0	0
1924-1925 (219 students)	8	57	97	16	41	0	0	0
1925-1926	17	78	117	22	50	1	0	1

<sup>8</sup> Data was taken from the National Archives – Cluj County Department, Law Faculty of Oradea fund, record 35 for the 1922-1926 period, and National Archives – Bihor County Department, Law Academy of Oradea fund, records 582,595,602 for the 1927-1933 period.

Academic year	Religion							
	Roman – Catholic	Greek – Catholic	Orthodox	Reformed	Mosaic	Unitarian	Evangelic	Lutheran
(286 students)								
1926-1927 (296 students)	11	75	125	3	64	1	17	0
1927-1928 (280 students)	11	59	126	0	65	4	15	0
1928-1929 (311 students)	20	69	142	0	68	0	12	0
1930-1931 (432 students)	21	122	209	17	63	0	0	0
1931-1932 (557 students)	41	123	274	0	85	0	34	0
1932-1933 (774 students)	78	170	383	39	103	0	1	0

**Graphic 5.** Students registered during 1921– 1933 according to religion





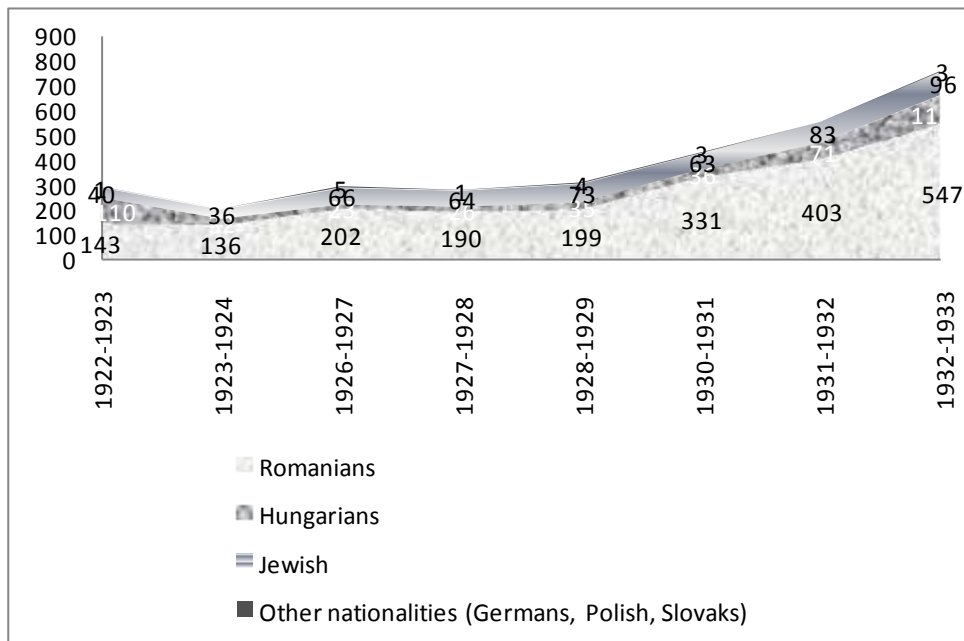
It is interesting the fact that during 1919 - 1933, the number of Orthodox religious students increases steadily as the percentage of Greek - Catholic decreases. The Roman – Catholic students do not cross over the 11% percentage, and the percentage of those of Mosaic religion maintains constantly around the value of 21%. It is notable that in the academic year 1921 - 1922 the number of students who declared themselves of Jewish religion is the biggest, 103, the peak is to be found 11 years later too, in the 1932 – 1933 academic year.

Based on the same archive documents, Table6 was made, which represents the ethnic structure of the student body from the Oradea Law Academy during 1921 – 1933, noting that in the 1921-1922, 1924 – 1925 and 1925-1926 academic years all the students were declared Romanian citizens, without specified ethnicity they belong.

**Table 6.** Students registered during 1921– 1933 according to ethnicity<sup>9</sup>

Academic year	Nationality			
	Romanians	Hungarians	Jewish	Other nationalities (Germans, Polish, Slovaks)
1922-1923 (294 students)	143	110	40	1
1923-1924 (204 students)	136	32	36	0
1926-1927 (296 students)	202	23	66	5
1927-1928 (280 students)	190	26	64	1
1928-1929 (311 students)	199	35	73	4
1930-1931 (432 students)	331	36	63	3
1931-1932 (557 students)	403	71	83	0
1932-1933 (774 students)	547	118	96	3

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*

**Graphic 6.** Students registered during 1921– 1933 according to ethnicity

Analyzing the graphic representation of the data in Table 6, it can be observed that the number of Romanian students increased constantly, from 1922 until 1933, the biggest percentage being registered in the 1930 – 1931 (77%) academic year, bigger than the percentage of Romanians established at the national level through the 1930 census. In the next two academic years the number of Romanian students grows, following the increasing tendency of the students' dynamic from the Academy, at the level of 1933, their proportion (71%) getting to the values registered at national level for the population of Romanian nationality. In contrast, the percentage is higher to the value of 57.6% Romanians registered in by the 1930 census (Murgescu, 2001: 290).

The alert rhythm of territorial homogenization imposed in Bucharest through "the process of Romanization", was perceived by the Hungarian community as an aggressive attitude of the Romanians. In this context, after signing the treaty that marked the end of the war, the Romanian citizens of Hungarian nationality have gradually begun to redefine their new identity, formulating ideas, adopting attitudes etc. the identity theme generated attitudes that became real by defining and creating of a diverse category of politic, economic and structural category, in trying to formulate ideological constructions that could justify the adhesion to the new state body, or, on the contrary, to nurture the tendencies of rebelliousness or irredentist. Between the various extremes of activism and passivity, of loyalty to the new state and irredentism, there have developed many projects and discourses of identity,

creating solidarity or differences within the community of Hungarians in Romania (Nastasă, Salat, 2003: 32). Locally, things have crystallized in 1922 with the establishment of the Bihor branch of the Hungarian Party in Oradea, fact felt also in the increasing number of Hungarian students enrolled at the Academy of Law (Zainea, 2007: 253-255). Actually, in this year, it is registered their biggest percentage (37%), in the following academic year being registered a half of Hungarian (16%), in the year of the national census being registered the lowest proportion of the Hungarian, 7,9% - equal with the national one, but much lower compared to that existing in Transylvania. Towards the end of the analyzed period, the percentage of Hungarian ethnics inside the students of the Oradea Academy comes back to 15%.

The Hebrew Community of the Oradea students has an important increase, in 1922 being recorded a 14% percentage of enrolled who have declared themselves as belonging to this category, although in the same year, a double number of students were Jewish. Therefore the crystallization process of the identity of this community continued, in the academic year 1928 - 1929 being registered the highest proportion of Hebrew students enrolled at the Academy of Law (23.5%). In 1930, the figures reported to the central authorities, referring to students of Hebrew nationality, sits around 15%, much higher than that registered nationally (4%) or regionally, for Transylvania (2,4%), but close to that of 17,9% registered in 1930 for Oradea (Scurtu, 1982: 88 and Zainea, 2007: 200). Moreover, between the two world wars, Oradea remained a strong industrial and commercial center, the most obvious presence of Hebrew capital being in trade area. As for the Hungarian community, in the early years after the establishment of Greater Romania, the Oradea Jews did not participate in the political life of the city. The absenteeism is left out since 1923, when it is established in Oradea a local department of the Hebrew Party, which boosted, probably, the free declaration, without constraints, of the ethnicity they belong to (Drecin, Moisa, 2009: 238 and 243).

The results of statistical processing of data relating to the Law Academy students during 1919 - 1934 allow us to formulate some conclusions. The first is based on graphical representation of the area of origin of young studios from Oradea. The map developed using information extracted from archival documents, is an additional argument to demonstrate the regional character, maintained by the institution of academic education, after its takeover by the Romanian authorities.

The upward trend in the number of students, held for all 15 years of inter-war existence of the academic school of Oradea, falls within the trend registered by the academic law education at national level. The national students' statistics for the academic year 1928-1929, shows that the most registered were following law (38.63%), then letters and philosophy (26.58%) and only third of all faculties of science (16.84%), the last place being occupied

by students of veterinary medicine (0.93%). Comparatively with other European universities, "the Law Academy of Oradea presents itself in conditions becoming more satisfactory", which has a total enrollment close to the University of Salamanca (Spain), that "happens to not include at all four of its faculties more than 300-400 students" at the level of 1926 academic year. Also, the University of St. Francis – Xavier (France) numbered in the same year „all 211 students in all its faculties" and the University of Galway (Ireland) had, in 1925, 186 students registered „at all faculties together". In Italy, the Oradea academic school could be compared, in terms of number of students, with University of Ferrara – 450 students registered to „three faculties and a pharmacy school" and in Switzerland with the University of Fribourg, „researched by many foreigners" with 620 students divided into four faculties, 150-160 to a faculty (Buletinul Academiei de Drept din Oradea, 1928: 11).

The same feature of steady growth is found from 1921 year for Romanian ethnic students, the highest percentage being registered in the 1930 – 1931 academic year (77%), bigger than the percentage of Romanians established at a national level through the 1930 census. The figures are a further proof that the academic education institution on the banks of Crisul Repede answered, first of all, to the Romanian training requirements of local elites, the most students in Romania wanting to become lawyers and judges, thinking, of course, to a political career too (Georgescu, 1992: 219).

Between the various extremes of the attitude of the Hungarian community in Romania, which created solidarity or differences inside this ethnicity, the establishment in 1922 in Oradea, of the Bihor branch of the Hungarian Party, echoed among the young studios of Oradea, recorded this year, the highest percentage of Hungarian students (37%), over the statistic figure of region and county. In the next academic year, there is a half of them (16%), in the year of the national census being registered the lowest proportion of Hungarian students, 7,9% - equal to the national one, but much lower than that existing in Transylvania. Towards the end of the period, the percentage of ethnic Hungarians inside the academic students of Oradea returns to 15%. The large differences between the percentages for only a decade can be put also on the expense of Hungarian youngsters to universities in Hungary, the economic crisis during 1929 - 1933 resulting in their return to Romanian academic schools.

The Hebrew community, numerous in Oradea (24%) is found in the student body of the Law Academy of Oradea, in 1920, with a percentage of 2%. Over two academic years, it is registered a number of 27 Hebrew students (14%), although 25% of students claimed to be Jewish. A possible cause may be that the 62 students of Jewish religion declared themselves of Hungarian ethnicity because of the language currently spoken, the same phenomenon being found also by the researchers in the field of historical demography when comparing the 1910 and 1930 censuses. The process of crystallization of the

identity of this community continued, in the academic year being recorded the highest percentage of Hebrew students (23.5%). In the year of the national census, their proportion decreases, reaching 14.6%, similar to that reported for Oradea (17.9%). This time there is an agreement between ethnicity and religion stated by the student, most of them being from Oradea and becoming from families of traders. Upon the intensification of the Student National Movement activity with a strong anti-Semitic tinge, the Hebrew proportion of student decreases, being recorded in 1933 a rate of 12.4%.

In terms of religion, the Greek - Catholic faith is the first one of the students in Oradea, until 1922, when it was replaced by the Orthodox confession in 1924. In 1923 the two categories of students equally declare their religious membership to Greek - Catholic or Orthodox. As the Orthodox Church reborn in rural Transylvania, the number of Orthodox students increases every year, in 1933 the reported rate being of 49.4%. 1923 is a threshold for the Jewish students, 36.3% students are enrolled with this religion. The following year the percentage decreases continuously, in 1933 being noticed a consistency between the reported figures for ethnicity and religion declared by them. The other religions are represented in a percentage below 10%, much lower than the data recorded in 1930 census for Transylvania or Oradea, but close to the national and county values.

Therefore, based on the structure outlined above we have ethno - religious structure of students who attended the Law Academy of Oradea during 1919 – 1934. The statistical processing of information has allowed the demonstration of the regional and Romanian character which the academic education institution had on the banks of Crișul Repede in a time when the Academy has always been discredited, the academic community and the local one fighting continuously against the dissolution of the academic school.

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# THE IMAGE OF ROMANIA AND THE ROMANIANS, THE PORTUGUESE LEGATION PERSPECTIVE IN BUCHAREST

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**Abstract.** *Based on a unique archive material, found in the Portuguese archives in Lisbon and in the Romanian ones in Bucharest, I tried in this paper to outline the image of Romanians and inter - war Romania, vision of the Portuguese Legation in Bucharest. The analyzed diplomatic notes were prepared by Martinho de Brederode, the Portuguese diplomat, the first Plenipotentiary Minister of the Portuguese Republic in the Balkans. Philologist as intellectual formation, Martinho of Brederode, in the thousands of pages that he sent to the Lisbon authorities, tried to explain a country that adopted him until the end of his life. The reality is multiple and inexhaustible, and its representation in this case can only be limited, simplified and inevitably subjective. History is one, but how many visions and interpretations can be made on its edge?*

**Keywords:** *image, Romania, the Portuguese Legation, the inter – war period*

At the end of World War I, sweeping changes on the European diplomatic relations scene determined the orientation towards collaboration in various fields of small states in the camp of the victors. The new Romania became „ an economic entity able to seek and establish an independent development, (...) which strengthens its position in the concert of the world states” (Scurtu, Buzatu, 1999: 93). This has sparked the Portugal interest for the Balkans. Thus, in 1919 it was founded the first Legation headed by the career diplomat Martinho de Brederode, with rank of Plenipotentiary Minister of class II. In our presentation we intend to point out some impressions of the Portuguese diplomat on Romanians and Romania.

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Therefore, the Great Union of December 1918 marked the entry of Romania into a new stage of its economic and social development, dominated by the growth of its economic potential. There was a significant development of productive forces and capitalism in general. The role of industry in the national economy has grown and created favorable conditions for enhancement of the soil and subsoil wealth. In this context, the role of landowners was greatly reduced, its place in the social sphere being taken by industrial and banking bourgeoisie. (Scurtu, 1983: 6) „ A quarter of century ago had found here only two classes, as in Russia: the lower class and large landowners. By the free declaration of instruction it was formed the petty bourgeoisie and a trained proletariat. If the first group gave the setting elements of the Liberal Party, the second group gave birth to traders' class”. (ADMAE, Lisb, dos. Romania, P3, M360, A11, 27.12.1920, f.1), the Portuguese diplomatic note about this social phenomenon. In 1919 the Romanian government faces the problem of division of the German and Austro-Hungarian capital of the country. The different groups of foreign monopoly, with all the differences between them, held a strong offensive to seize the German capital enterprises and Austro-Hungarian in Romania, against the national bourgeoisie (Șuță, Drăgan, Mureșan, Sută-Selejan, 1996: 150-152).

The large share that reached to hold the foreign capitals in the national economy was always a problem for various Romanian political parties and groups. Although their political program promoted essentially the same thing - restoring the country's economic and financial progress - the objectives had been achieved in different ways. The conceptual difference was determined by a number of factors such as the different social forces on which they represented or supported or economic position they held (Buzatu, 1981: 83). These political elements were eventually divided into two factions: supporters of the "open gates" policy and those of the "by ourselves" policy". The first category was represented by most of the bourgeoisie dependent on Western loans and / or directly concerned with foreign-owned enterprises. For this policy campaigned the People's Party (General Averescu), National Peasant Party (Iuliu Maniu), Democratic Conservative Party (Take Ionescu) and with them the Royal House. The pivot of this group was the Marmorosch Blank & Co. Bank, closely related to the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas. The second group was represented by the combatants of the Liberal Party, the majority holders of the economic power in Romania. Their pivot bank was the National Bank, "who wanted to take a greater extent from the liquidation of German and Austro-Hungarian capital" (Buzatu, 1981: 152). The latter launched the nationalization issue, which meant the replacement of foreign capital (the German and Austro-Hungarian Empire) with the national capital. „They are the ones who began to grow by means of so-called nationalization, which in practice means that they will be those who will now have the income of the country, without shedding

capital in turn” (ADMAE, Lisb., dos. Roménia, P3, M360, A11, 27.12.1920: 2), feels Martinho de Brederode.

“This group [grupul Brătianu – n.n.] forgets that half of century ago, the country was not but a Turkish annex, in which the rural population found herself partially in a complete slavery, and it was ruled by Greek governors, who under the title of ruling princes, bought their titles from the Sublime Gate, in order to staunch the rural classes, who had no rights and were exploited at will by the princes and the great families of landowners; the roads were missing, schools also, and in Bucharest, the capital, the roads were made of planks that rest directly on the mud. People still dressed in Oriental style. Compared with this situation, Romania has made huge progress under the reign of King Charles (Carol), its first, and liberals should be proud of it. But do not imagine that the country can be compared with those in Western Europe, which have many centuries of development behind, while Romania has only a few decades of development behind. Writing continued only between those serving the state and certainly Romania for this honor does not distinguish! 80% of the population is also illiterate” (ADMAE, Lisb., dos. personal Martinho de Brederode, CX 137, A, nr.11, 20.11.1919, f.1).

Interpreted as a matter of arrogance, the liberals' intents are harshly criticized by the Portuguese Minister in Bucharest. Yet, according to Romanian authorities, there is a unanimous opinion on the absolute need of foreign capital. “The disagreement occurred only in relation to the role and the degree of collaboration, that had to be admitted, that the regime would be applied to foreign capital” (Zeletin, 1999: 118). Politics “by us” essentially expressed the strongest desire of the Romanian bourgeois groups to have a role in banking, industrial and commercial country, enabling the control of capital in the Romanian economy.

Three times of economic and social life of Romania are considered more important and we consider appropriate to know. First, it is about the phase of economic reconstruction and adaptation to the new borders of the Romanian economy, during 1919-1926. During this period “the import reached a high level in relation to export, which increased steadily or slowly. The expected effect of increasing customs duties in 1920 with 5 times is wiped out by depreciation of the currency, higher to this coefficient, so that imports in 1921 reached a maximum” (Madgearu, 196). Increasing domestic production in 1921 and the introduction of a more protectionist customs tariff, improved the situation, fact that was seen in the 1922 statistics. „During 1919-1925, the state seeking to prevent depreciation of currency exchange and domestic prices climbing, with the final target the revaluing of the national currency, it was served to this purpose, the foreign trade regime that was thus subject to fluctuations and economic situation continuously changed (Madgearu, p.197)”.

In pursuing the policy of upgrading the lion, the agreement concluded in 1925 between the state and the NBR (BNR), it was set a basis of tickets issuing. How this measure corresponds to deflationary circumstances of high prices, it gives new impetus to exports. But in 1926, the world prices for export of Romanian products dropped and depreciation led to a rise in domestic prices of imported goods, despite the expansion of export and import volume maintained at a relatively low trade surplus for the year decreased considerably (Șuța: 153).

The Romanian economic stabilization phase is represented by the period 1926-1929, when after a long period of oscillations; the lion has stabilized, since 1927. „The export taxes were reduced significantly and a new customs tariff raises the degree of protection of national industry. Instead, the agreement which capped the ticket issue persists, constituting an obstacle to the normalization of national economy” (Madgearu: 197).

Finally the last phase, which Martinho de Brederode will feel by itself during the final exercise of his diplomatic mission in Bucharest, was the world economic depression, which resulted in the withdrawal of foreign capital from Romania strongly affecting the national economy.

Attentive to the smallest details in all areas of Romanian daily life, which could influence the economic development of the Romanian state, and, implicitly, the Portuguese interests in Bucharest, Martinho of Brederode sent during his duties as diplomat, 1919-1933, hundreds of reports with information about economic and social life in Romania, meaning reforms, living standards, trade, financial situation, statistics, agriculture etc.

The information note of December 23, 1919 is the first substantial diplomatic document, sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon. Extended upon an impressive number of pages, the Report already introduces us in the picture of the political life in inter-war Romania. He was aware of the role and political-economic implications of the Vaida Voivod government, which participated in the inauguration activities in his first days in Bucharest. „The Parliament of the universal vote has the most unexpected appearance. Tailcoats and white chests of the old parties shirts sit next to sumane and pants, together with hats held shyly in hand” (ADMAE, Lisb, CX 137, Seria A, nr.6, 5.12.1919, f.2; Scurtu, *Studii...*, 9). One of the politicians with strong implications in the economic development of the Romanian state, remarked by the Portuguese diplomat, was the Finance Minister Aurel Vlad, „Transylvanian as origin”, and who, like most Transylvanians, created a good impression to the Portuguese diplomat. He found in the *Le Progres* newspaper an interview of his, whose frank manner, but also diplomatic, to present the financial situation of Romania, impressed him: „despite the claims of Mr. Vlad optimistic statements, the information he submits are closest to reality [comparable with the rest of the political discourse of the moment - Ed] and contains less than

laudatory terms” (ADMAE, Lisb., Serie A, nr.11, 23.12.1919, f.1). In that article, Aurel Vlad commented on the disastrous state of roads in Romania, as a direct result of war and obviously, its repercussions on the export of domestic products and imports. „And not only were these the most serious problems from the economic point of view, continued in the same Report Brederode. (...)The wheat harvest was so poor that the year's production does not even cover the necessary of people. I saw the peasants who have been distributed the expropriated land from the big landowners, but they failed to sow hardly” (ADMAE, Lisb., Serie A, nr.11, 23.12.1919, f.2), stated the Portuguese diplomat. The war had left heavy footprints in agriculture, where the inventory was almost entirely destroyed. Sown areas, from 13.7 million hectares from 1911 to 1915, decreased to 8.3 million hectares from 1919 to 1920 (Greco, 1996: 56-58). „ From a country known for the export of grain in 1914, Romania came in 1919 to import 230 000 tonnes of cereals and 18 000 tonnes of various food” (Scurtu, Buzatu, 1999: 93).

In 1922 the agricultural problems still persisted. It was necessary the requisition of wheat and other cereals, which the owners refused to sell to the government. A tough measure was also the imposition of an export duty of 30 000 lei for each wagon of corn, which in reality equaled the forbid of the export of grain (ADMAE, Lisb., Serie A, nr.37, 24.08.1922, f.1).

The numerous issues from the post-war Romania borders determined delays in the recovery of important economic sectors in the country, as was industry. According to the Minister of Portugal, not everything was lost. The current administration existing in Romania was guilty. „The industry, already in a state of decay, could have been remedied, according to the Portuguese diplomat, with the arms, meaning with will. This however has been hampered by the Bolshevik troops that arrived at the Romanian border with Bessarabia and probably because of the terror caused by the Hungarians' claims supported by the army of Admiral Horthy, but also because of the rising of the role of the socialist group” in Romania. (ADMAE, Serie A, nr.20, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 12.01.1920, f.1) “O país debate-se num grande mal estar”<sup>1</sup>.

“The prices of the essential things and life in general are expensive from day to day. The Lion, the Romanian currency, sharply decays. Today the Paris stock exchanged 23 cents for a penny and a half franc for a Lion. It still seems to fall”. (ADMAE, Serie A, nr.20, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 12.01.1920, f.1). Therefore "Romania is a rich country, it has everything: minerals of the most diverse among themselves, appreciable amounts of gold, precious metal already known and explored by the Romanians, coal (...), large and numerous forests and, oil in abundance, grain etc. It is lamentable that due to the lack of transport this state is in a drastic situation. Exports are

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<sup>1</sup> „Țara se zbate într-o stare deplorabilă” (n.n.)

impossible". (ADMAE, Serie A, nr. 20, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 12.01.1920, f.1).

Agriculture remained the main branch of the society, but, until the reform of 1921 many problems have affected Romania, like most countries in Central Europe. The agricultural products have "fantastic prices", said Brederode, because "the peasants are wearing a terrible hatred of the inhabitants of cities. And the result is that there are almost no products to send to the markets in cities and the little that still endures to send is too expensive" (ADMAE, Serie A, nr.24, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 23.01.1920, f.8). The lack of food in towns and the obligation to purchase products from rural areas have created to the farmers a real possibility of "They [townspeople - Ed] pay per kg of fresh meat for 10-15 times the real price" (ADMAE, Serie A, nr.24, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 23.01.1920, f.8). And again, the Portuguese diplomat fervently criticizes the Liberal Party, which "has a great guilt here and also in strikes. Nobody respects anyone. It is required a man of action, energetic and intelligent, a true statesman, as is the case of Marghiloman" (ADMAE, Serie A, nr.24, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 23.01.1920, f.9).

"Also my English colleague thinks that life here is very difficult". (ADMAE, Serie A, nr.19, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 12.01.1920, f.13). Among other things, Romania faced with the problem of minorities. Beyond the revisionist attitude of the population of Hungarian origin, the Romanian state had difficulties with the third minority (Scurtu, Buzatu, 1999: 40), in terms of numbers, the Jews, an issue analyzed and noticed by the Portuguese diplomat. „ Since last April, (...) Jews have all political rights. I mention that in the last 60 years, (...) they have dedicated to trade only. (...)With the softness and the support of his intelligence in the business field, which distinguishes his race, the Jew ended up enjoying all with relative ease, both politically and economically. Otherwise what can I say? Almost all trade, all banks are Hebrew. At least the rich and flourishing ones". (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.19, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 12.01.1920, f.14).

What allowed the Jews the access to Romania's economic power? states Brederode himself: „ here the Jews were never persecuted like in Russia. On the contrary, many millions of Hebrew living in Romania have fled and took refuge here from persecution from Poland and Russia. Here they could also work to free trade. But never before did have political rights and therefore public functions. They were left guests, not respected, but tolerated. In the Bucharest society has not entered any Jew before, except for Aristide Blank, one of the rulers of Marmorosch Blank, the largest and most important Romanian bank" (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.19, Raport confidențial și rezervat, 12.01.1920, f.14). The political orientation of the Jews was not consistent, but most of them were "activists of the Socialist Party and by definition anti-monarchic", fact that did not like the monarchist Portuguese

diplomat. This combination of "socialist danger" and "feudalism of Hebrew money" was not viewed kindly by Martinho of Brederode (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.19, 12.01.1920, f.15).

The only salvation for Romania at that time was the access to foreign loans. In this case the Romanian state had hit serious difficulties. To get them "it must offer as collateral, its great natural resources". (...) „ So they can easily arrange loans and aid, and the national currency will certainly increase in value” (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.19, 12.01.1920, f.15).

In the first half of 1920, Martinho de Brederode had external information on that "a consortium of British financiers gave Poland a loan of 4 million pounds, three in cash and one in materials and products. According to *Daily News*, Czechoslovakia has also obtained a loan of 10 million pounds, with 8% interest repayable in 25 years” (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.43, 15.05.1920, f.4). Even Portugal finally managed to obtain a loan of 3 million pounds, which will be succeeded by another 7 million. The immediate impact of these financial market operations in the world it had been seen on the dollar, which fell sharply from 60 ECU to 48 (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.43, 15.05.1920, f.5).

Numerous approaches have been made in this regard and the Romanian state, which in turn has received several offers that they found unjust and therefore unacceptable. Here's what the Portuguese diplomat recorded in his report, addressed to Lisbon: „I inform you that two days before the departure to Paris of Vaida Voivod, the U.S. Minister Romanian offered the Romanian government offered \$ 600 million dollars, with 2% interest, provided that the Romanians to give the United States for a period of 50 years all railways and all oil fields already in U.S. hands for 99 years.” (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.26, 5.02.1920, f.1-2). The conditions imposed to Romania were unacceptable for the Romanian people.

About in the same time a similar offer was made to Romania by the representatives of England at Bucharest. „It offered them [the Romanians - Ed] money (I could still not identify the amount), provided they will seize all the Romanian administration and finance (with English administration? - asked Brederode) for a minimum of 20 year” (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.26, 05.02.1920, f.1-2), stated the Portuguese Minister.

On Brederode's opinion, these "offers primarily affect the interests of Romanian; second of all, strongly strike the Romanians in their ego, but could, therefore, to have currency effects" as happened with the analogous measures recently implemented in Greece (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.26, 05.02.1920, f.3). On 24 August 1922, the Portuguese diplomat attended the Council of Ministers that took place at that time, where he discussed the issue of benefits that Romania claimed from the Germans. It was issued the question of obtaining the means necessary for the reconstruction of the Grivița railway

workshops, destroyed by fire. The necessary railway materials were claimed by Romania to Germany (the Director of railways T Constantinescu specified). This request was unanimously accepted. On the other hand, the government decided the requisition and militarization of Astra society, given that the strikes that took place there were no of political orientation and did not promoted the workers' claims. In the above mentioned meeting, this issue was also solved (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie A, nr.56, 24 august 1922, f.1).

During 1924 - 1929, the public finances and the external and internal trade transport went through a calm phase, with some achievements, but also with failures.

The problem of external borrowing and government's refusal to contact Bratianu, reappears in 1924. „About bad financial policy, avangardist and false of Mr. Vintilă Bratianu, I can say that because of that Romania cannot get external borrowing. And that given that Hungary has received the much needed loan” (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie B, nr.104, 15 iulie 1924, f.1), Martinho de Brederode commented, “full” after his sayings “of this brătienistă policy” (ADMAE, CX 134, Serie B, nr.104, 15 iulie 1924, f.2).

In 1924, the Portuguese diplomat evoked a very serious condition after voting on the Mining Law in Romania, after which triumphed the “policy of hostility against foreign capital” (Bursa, 1924: 1). “We will say this without surrounding that the situation seems very serious. We don't use these words at random, we well-balanced them and particularly chose them from the many we could have used” (Bursa, 1924: 2). The reality begins to see. The agriculture does not leave us to starve, but it will not be able to give so much many years from now so that we can come out thankful from the thousands of problems among which we fight. (...) Fees too high and various internal and external factors, make the agricultural exports no longer able to overall for the general economy of the country the determined value they could have had before the war. (...)The agriculture is the whole of our lives, it is clear that since we no longer can count on to get up by ourselves, we cannot count on anything” (Bursa, 1924: 2). In addition, in the summer of 1924 the taxes on exports of wheat had increased (ADMAE, Lisb., 138, Serie B, nr. 112, 20 Julhe 1924, f.1).

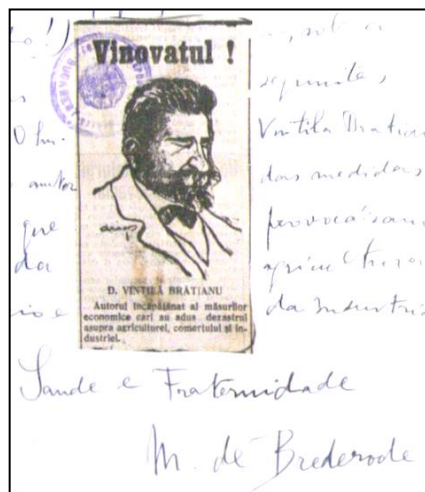
All this information is collected from the Bursa magazine, Martinho de Brederode attached to his report. The above information is highlighted in the text of the Portuguese diplomat in red, in the French version of the journal. To give greater weight to information obtained from Bursa, Martinho de Brederode specified: „all the newspapers, excepting *Vitorului* and the *L'Independence de la Roumanie*, violently protest against this hit given to freely companies” (ADMAE, Lisb., nr. 142, 1.08.1924, f.1).

The Romanian crisis in (Bozga, 1975) was further aggravated by the abundance of crops in Russia, America, Yugoslavia, Hungary etc. “The neighboring Yugoslavia, exported quality agricultural products far below

Romania, at prices, of course, more favorable” (ADMAE, Lisb., 138, Serie B, nr. 131, 4.09.1925, f.1).

Another problem facing Romania, in the opinion of the Portuguese Minister was that of the budget. “The budget is not balanced. It's a lie that would be additional and extraordinary credits. The inevitable ups of wages, fatal material strengths, etc. all coming from the relentless climb in prices, make budgets to not conclude otherwise than by deficit” (ADMAE, Lisb., 138, Serie B, nr. 131, 4.09.120.7.1924, f.1).

Interested in economic developments in Romania, the Portuguese diplomat attached all these years until leaving to retire, many clippings from economic magazine Bursa. After 1928 his reports are brief, often being content to attach one whole number of the economic magazine Bursa, some passages underlined in red to draw attention to themselves, to the authorities in Lisbon. Here's another example: “The situation is very serious. It does not include any optimism. We do not see anywhere any optimism. We do not see anywhere the base on which it could start for a new economic lift. We have no budget, we have no money, we have no means of communication. Oil industry is subject to regulation paralyzed. In under these circumstances we come and tell the world that we do not want to receive foreign capital lower than the local conditions and that after all we can do without it” (Bursa, 1924: 3).



In disagreement with the government's financial policy of Vintilă Brătianu, in 1925, Martinho de Brederode stated: "This country is rich [allusion to mining production - Ed] but it is poorly managed. The public opinion is almost all against Vintilă Brătianu, whom newspapers accuse, that he would be, according to economic and financial policy mistakes and for the intransigence anguish of all the problems, the true actor of the crisis that this country is passing through”(ADMAE, Lisb., CX 138, Serie B, nr. 168, 3.10.1925, f.1).

The loan problem appears again, in 1928, when “the Brătianu government is forced from political considerations to enter into a loan under any conditions and for this stored the pre-war rents, with the goal to impose, at a favorable moment, their forced consolidation” (ADMAE, Lisb., CX 138, Serie B, nr. 49, 13.05.1928, f.2). Without hesitation “Stock Exchange asked at its turn the strengthen of its famous Schroeder tickets, for which the English group showed a few months ago, ready to receive 13 million lei a year, but now requires 40 million” (ADMAE, Lisb., CX 138, Serie B, nr. 49, 13.05.1928, f.2-3).



Alarmed, V. Bratianu asked Tancred Constantinescu [former Minister of Industry and Trade in the Liberal government in the years 1922-1926, an acclaimed specialist in the field - an] the solving of this issue. His negotiations at London were a failure. More, Stock Exchange was the one who suggested Berlin to take a similar attitude, fact that happened. "Today, Berlin has also conditions to make" (ADMAE, Lisb., CX 138, Serie B, nr. 49, 13.05.1928, f.3).

When other countries were prevented by the fact that the government Bratianu came to believe that Romania can not avoid recourse to foreign capital to stabilize the currency and restore the national economy, the Anglo-American financial circles have suggested a loan by the League of Nations, and a French group proposed a loan through the National Bank of France. „The work on the Bank of France was made by the French minister himself in Bucharest Clichant” (Cuvântul, 13.05.1928). To exclude other proposals, the French group has proposed a loan "to the exclusion of any control and any side financial operations, such as consolidating old debts. After reviewing the two offers, the French had won. Its management by Louis Dreyfus, an old friend of Victor Antonescu, who negotiated for Romania, had its own contribution to the final decision. (Cuvântul, 13.05.1928)

Unfortunately, Romania has received a further blow. After having ensured that the Liberal government cut all bridges leading to the loan by the League of Nations, the French group has a completely unexpected condition: „consolidation in gold of the rents before war in France” (Cuvântul, 13.05.1928), in conditions that there were not [later research proved this by the Romanian state - Ed]. Trying the reinstatement links with London was a failure.

The Vintilă Bratianu statement specified the Portuguese diplomat, concluded several times, contained the promise that this will not remain without international policy consequences. “For months the Bratianu government declared to the press and public that the loan was almost done. Lies”, concluded the Portuguese diplomat. (Cuvântul, 13.05.1928)

On 9 February 1929, French negotiators returned to Bucharest. The Finance Minister Mihai Popovici stated: “the atmosphere is excellent for us abroad. The arrival to power of Maniu government is seen as a crucial event” (*L independance de la Roumanie*, 1929, nr.40, 9.02, p.2). Finally in Romania was set up a normal situation, which destroyed the artificial situation” (ADMAE, Lisb., CX 138, Serie B, nr.12, 28.02.1929, f.1). The Finance Minister, in his speech, talked about an internal consolidation of Romania, where the balanced budget made a great impression. In this atmosphere, the loan was re-discussed.

In the Report that approached this issue, Martinho de Brederode concluded: “the Minister of Finance had two different speeches on finance and loan problem - one in Paris, real and another one in Bucharest, where the quality of militant member of the Maniu cabinet was obvious” (ADMAE, Lisb., CX 138, Serie B, nr.12, 28.02.1929, f.1).

The loan em was not really solved until 1930, when the Romanian government contacted the American company international Telephone and Telegraph Corporation' a loan of \$ 8,000,000, giving the new creditor "The phone company in Romania", for 10 years (Pascu, 1974: 387).

Portuguese diplomat expressed a special interest in the political implications of economic issues that could affect Romania's relations with the outside world, including Portugal. He despised the liberals and appreciated the Transylvanians' politic – economic thinking. He was against the "by ourselves" policy, the first ones, framing by this, as it was normal, between the West European politicians.

From its outstanding reports we see, for example, a particular interest in foreign loan problem, faced by Romania until 1930, then the situation of Romanian trade, currency fluctuations, price developments etc. The Romanian oil industry has aroused him a special interest because, "if the conditions of this country [Romania - Ed] will improve, the diplomat was interested in purchasing this product to intercede for his country. For a more efficient cooperation with Romania, Martinho de Brederode set up more consulates in Bucharest, Galati, Braila, etc. Has created important links between Romanian and Portuguese merchants, negotiated a treaty of commerce and navigation, concluded after his exit to pension etc.

Most often correctly done, the image of Romania and Romanians in Martinho de Brederode's vision brings an advantage to our national historical image of the inter-war Romania.

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## ASPECTS FROM THE LIFE OF ROMANIAN AND HUNGARIAN JEWS DURING THE YEARS 1945-1953

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**Abstract.** *The Jews of Romania and Hungary who returned home from the Holocaust faced a series of difficulties amongst which we single out: to resume property of their houses and goods; a poor state of health after the deportation; the vast majority of them were in no shape to make a living. They oscillated between integration in the societies created by the communists, and immigration to Israel whenever the communist regimes from these two countries were more permissive. They were rather victims of the communist regimes, their expectations were not met in the communist states and the ones who managed to get out had lost all their assets, apartments, and jobs when they applied for emigration.*

**Keywords:** *Jews, Hungary, Romania, communism, integration, emigration, propriety, Zionism*

Dennis Deletant (Deletant, 2006) draws a picture of Romanian society after the war. He describes the conditions when the communists took the power: in Romania after the change of regime from August 23, 1944, the communists became the ruling class and by the abdication of King Michael, in December 1947, the new communist regime was already in place. Important members of historical parties were accused to be fascists and of collaboration with the Axis Powers, although often they were not guilty. At the same time, old collaborators of the regime lead by Ion Antonescu were invited to join the communist government<sup>1</sup>. The trials of war criminals from Iași and Bucharest

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<sup>1</sup> Stelian Tănase, *Elite și societate. Guvernarea Gheorghiu Dej 1948-1965*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2006, p.55 asserts that Romanian Communist Party included in its ranks also legionaries: “Some of the ones who changed their political orientation from fascism to communism were sincerely converted: they followed

were opening a new path, notwithstanding that some of the rightfully accused managed to escape conviction. In the years 1945-1953, the very period that makes the subject of our research, the dependency on the Soviet Union was total. It was the consequence of the agreements signed by the Allies at Teheran and Yalta, which set out a 90% Soviet influence in Romania. An important fact, although the respective years were the years of an imported communism and not of the national one, very few voices condemned the dependency on USSR. In the Stalinist period, the Romanian Communist Party recruited an important number of members from the national minorities which were not sufficiently integrated in the previous epochs or in the interwar period time and could not assert their rights in society equally well as the rest of them. The communism with its claims of equality offered them this new chance. "The communist party situated itself above the limit of national and political community, in the non-integrated areas of the Romanian society, where it established its basis of assault. (...) The categories and the groups, marginal in society, deprived categories, ethnical minorities etc. were the privileged environment from where the communists recruited their adherents. (...) In the second half of the years 1940, the non-integrated categories in the previous political order will be mobilised by the communist elite in order to reach their political objectives. The majority of the adherents were people who did not appear until then on political scene" (transl.) (Tănase, 2006: 31). Among the ethnical minorities attracted by the communism an important role is with the Jews who did not succeed to integrate themselves fully, only partially, in the politics of the previous epochs, being constrained to play a marginal role in society. In the opinion of Tănase, "Two main groups were attracted by the communism in Romania from ethnical reasons: one was that of <<rejected people>>, without a territorial basis or a clear ethnical identity (in Romania the Jews were the main group from this category); the second group was formed from irredentists of the neighbouring states which were unhappy to be included in Romania and with their situation. For the Jews, the universal ideology of communism was promising a new identity which surpassed both ethnical and national spheres" (Tănase, 2006: 35). The dependency on USSR became obvious after signing the convention of armistice, at September 12, 1944, when Romania undertook the obligation to send on the front 12 divisions of infantry to fight on allied side; that gave to the Soviet troops the right to march towards West through Romanian territory. In the same time, it undertook the obligation to separate herself from the collaboration with the fascism that was promoted during the

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the fascism because they believed in its vague promises of social revolution, and now they saw that their perspectives were better on communist side. Others were old fascists which liked to beat their co-nationals: they beat "the leftist" when they were on fascist side, and now they were ready to beat their "reactionaries" in the name of the communists". (transl.)

war.” Articles 13 and 14 stipulated the arrestment of war criminals and the disintegration of fascist organization. Whenever the Soviet authorities found necessary, the censorship was introduced. The territorial provisions admitted the annexation of Bessarabia and of the Northern Bucovina by the Soviet Union and annulled the Vienna Award which had given to Hungary the North – West of Transylvania” (Deletant, 2006: 54). The first Sănătescu Government takes shape; it functions during the period August 23 – November 2 1944, the majority of ministerial positions being taken by professional militaries. On October 2 1944, the National Democratic Front<sup>2</sup> is founded; it included the Communist Party, and the Social Democratic Party. The Sănătescu Government came next after the Rădescu Government. On March 1, 1945, the Soviet representative, Vișinski, informed King Michael that Petru Groza was the Soviet favourite. Under the threat that Romania will cease to be an independent state unless she will sustain Groza’s candidature, King Michael accepted on March 6 1945 the creation of the Groza Government. In the new government where FND had 14 out of the 18 positions in the cabinet, the majority was held by the communists.

In August 1945, King Michael declared a “Royal strike” and asked Minister Groza to resign, in the context of the repressions happening in the whole country against the political adversaries of the communism. But the Allies did not help the King in a concrete manner, but asked from the Groza Government to add two more representatives in the Government, one belonging to the Peasants Party, and one Liberal. The King accepted for the Groza Government to go on after the inclusion of Emil Hațieganu from the National Party of Peasants, and of Mihail Romniceanu from the National Liberal Party.

In November 19, 1946 general elections take place. The communists needed the parliamentary majority and, in consequence, they falsified the poles results. As a consequence, 348 deputies were elected as representatives of the governmental block, which included the communists, while the opposition had 66 mandates.

In Deletant’s opinion, most members of the historical parties had nothing to do with the Holocaust, they were accused unfairly by the communists of having had fascist orientation. After signing the Treaty of Paris on February 10, 1947, the political adversaries of the communists continued to be incriminated as fascists, notwithstanding the truth. Following the communist threat that there would be a civil war, King Michael was forced to abdicate on December 30, 1947. In the same day the Popular Republic of Romania was officially proclaimed. On February 4, 1948, the Romanian Republic signed a treaty of friendship and collaboration with the Soviet Union. On February 1948

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<sup>2</sup> FND



the Romanian Party of Workers was created. A special attention was given to the ideological education which was meant to contribute to the consolidation of socialist construction. In April 1948 a Constitution is adopted following the Soviet pattern. In June 1948 the industrial enterprisers, banks, insurance companies, mines and transport enterprisers were nationalized. In March 2, 1949 the agrarian reform entered in force, took over the remaining lands - a total of less than 50 hectares. The collectivisation finished in 1962. The books thought dangerous for the new regime were forbidden and the education was the subject of a new law, effective August 1948. This is how all foreign schools were closed, including the ones administrated by religious cults. The schools that had previously belonged to the Jewish Community were taken out of the equation. Teaching religion in schools was forbidden. While the Greek-Catholic Church was closed, the Roman Catholic Church was allowed to exist. The Chief Rabbi of Romania, Moses Rosen, asserts the existence of a Jewish community and of the existence of a Jewish religion during the communist years (Rosen, 1991). Although the activity of the Synagogues and of the Jewish Communities was not so intense as it had been before the war, these continued to exist, including people involved in the Judaic cult, whom the chief rabbi stopped from emigration because their existence in the country was vital for survival of the Judaic Cult. They were a lot of believers who continued to go to the Synagogue, in spite of the fact that the Security<sup>3</sup> infiltrated among them, trying to get their sources of information in an attempt to conquer the "Jewish streets".

On August 4, 1948 the Law of religious cults was signed and thus the Ministry of Culture could involve in problems regarding the organisation and functioning of the cults. According to this law "religion was practiced in harmony with the Constitution, internal security, public order and general morality". (Deletant, 2006: 94)

Deletant asserts that at the construction of Dunăre – Marea Neagră canal worked also Zionist leaders. A current practice of the communist political power was forced labour. At the beginning of the 50's, the labour camps housed around 80 000 people from all over the country out of which 40 000 were exploited for the construction of the Dunăre-Marea Neagră canal: "No matter of its purpose, the project needed the largest mobilisation of forces from the labour camps where the political dissidents from the entire society were concentrated. The people with higher education were working together with peasants who had been stripped of their land, with Orthodox priests and Unitarian priests, with Serbians from Banat and Sași from Transylvania, all being victims of infringements of human rights, which followed the programme of the Romanian regime of political and economic revolution" (Deletant, 2006: 115). At this canal worked

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<sup>3</sup> Former Romanian Secret Services

also Zionist leaders, while those Jews who were suspected of Zionism and who were still free were being followed, interrogated and persecuted.

After the political act from August 23, 1944, the Jewry hoped at restoration of their civil rights, the restitution of the properties from before the war and the possibility to have access to professions that were inaccessible to them during the war: “An official decree from December 14, 1944 abolished the <<racial laws>> previously adopted. But the decree restoring the full citizenship of Romanian Jews failed to establish the status of refuged Jews from the annexed territories. After many delays and negotiations, an agreement was achieved at the end of 1946, between the Romanian Ministry of Justice (then secretary of Communist Party, Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu) and the leaders of the Jewish Community for guarantying the citizenship for the refugee persons who in 1938 did not have the documents necessary for this”(Meyer, Weinryb, Duschinsky, Sylvain, 1953: 518). In the same time, the Jews resumed their jobs, partially and with difficulty<sup>4</sup>. The deported people and the refugees had to accept modest jobs.

**Table 1** The table below shows the numerical evolution of the Jewish population in Romania before and after the war<sup>5</sup>:

Region	1939	1941	1942	1947
Romania				
Present boundaries	478, 042	466, 128	427, 296	428,312
Oltenia	3,523	2, 841	2,484	3,406
Muntenia	94, 216	114, 470	108,761	163,144
Moldova	160, 330	135, 730	121, 131	150, 651
Dobrogea (without South Dobrogea)	3, 185	2,885	2,239	3,279
Southern Bucovina	23, 844	18, 140	179	17.388
Transilvania (without Northern Transylvania)	18, 929	15, 720	15, 122	15, 847
Northern Transylvania	148, 294	151, 125	152, 228	44, 706
Banat	14, 043	14, 626	14, 009	15, 963
Crișana	11, 678	10, 591	10, 497	13 , 928

<sup>4</sup> Peter Meyer, Bernard D. Weinryb, Eugene Duschinski, Nicolas Sylvain, *op.cit*, p.518 show that a decree from December 14, 1944 established that all properties previously belonging to Jews that are now in the possession of the state or in the possession of any buyer is regarded as belonging to the title holder who had been previously stripped from his/her propriety and thus returned to him/her. But another paragraph of the law stipulated that the Jews cannot receive their before-April 1945 properties back if in those locations there were now factories, schools, shops, and if the Jewish owners did not lived there before deportation.

<sup>5</sup> The table was detailed in Peter Meyer, Bernard D. Weinryb, Eugene Duschinsky, Nicolas Sylvain, *The Jews in the Soviet Satellites*, Syracuse University Press, 1953, p. 516.

Radu Ioanid showed that it is wrong to consider that the number of communist Jews in Romania was high, showing that in 1933, from a total of 1655 of communist members, only 364 were Jews and this represented 22,6% (Ioanid, 2005: 75). Also Ioanid shows that in February 1946, the Jews represented only 5,3% of the party members. (Ioanid, 2005: 76)

As in Hungary, the Jews had particular reasons to adhere to communism. In 1945 the option for communism, meant a vigilant attitude against fascism, and because of this they feared the worst. Most of them could not feel animosity towards the Soviet army or the Russians, because these were the factors which set them free from the Antonescian regime. Many Jews traumatised by the horrors of Holocaust became important personalities of the communist party; moreover, they got involved in the Romanian Security, they would fight against the political opponents of the communism.

**Table 2.** The next table shows the number of people involved in the service of Security at its creation, in 1948, grouped on ethnicity<sup>6</sup>.

<b>Ethnic</b>	<b>Number/per cent of people involved in Security</b>
Romanians	3.334 (83,9%)
Jews	338 (8,5%)
Hungarians	247 (6,2%)
Russians	24 (0,6%)
Yugoslavians	13 (0,3%)
Others	17 (0,4%)
Total	3.973

In 1949, the Romanian communists started a brutal campaign against Zionist leaders. What was interesting was the fact that although in the period that makes the subject of our study a great number of Jews immigrated to Israel, although the Romanian state was willing to sell its Jews, and Romania was a state from Eastern Europe where almost all Jews emigrated during the communist period, the Zionist leaders who tried to persuade the Jewish population using the vision of emigration, and to accelerate the pace of emigration, were imprisoned, interrogated and tortured starting with the year of 1949<sup>7</sup>. From 1949 until 1959 around 250 people were interrogated and

<sup>6</sup> The table was detailed in the book of Radu Ioanid, *Răscumpărarea evreilor. Istoria acordurilor secrete dintre România și Israel*, Editura Polirom, 2005, p.76.

<sup>7</sup> Teodor Wexler, "Procesele sioniștilor", în Romulus Rusan (ed), *Anii 1954- 1960. Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, p. 380 shows that anti-Zionist measures started since 1948: "In fact, the Zionist leaders were followed by the "Securitate" since 1948 and the Embassy of Israel was bugged with tens of microphones. Moreover, since 1947, not only *Scântea*, but also *Unirea*, newspaper of C.D.E., in fact the

sentenced to prison or hard labour. The campaign is resumed in 1954, although Stalin had died in 1953. Radu Ioanid illustrated very well this tendency of the Romanian communist party to allow emigration, but to oppose Zionism: “In August 1949, the Secretary of Romanian Communist Party reached a consensus regarding the emigration of the Jews. The party will allow the emigration but, in the same time, will intensify the propaganda against it, publishing letters from Palestine which described the <<miserable conditions>> from there” (transl.) (Ioanid, 2005: 83). The Israeli historian Avny, investigated and judged the Zionist trials, describes the conditions where the Zionists were investigated: “The investigator was as a rule an officer of inferior rank, second lieutenant or lieutenant. Behind him, in a usual office, was the one who led the investigation. The investigator came with already prepared questions, already formulated. He brought the answers that he intended to obtain. Because the investigated person had a sense of what would follow, he did not agree with the answer that was requested of him; and then he got threatened, he was called *servant of imperialism, of knave, or leader at Zionist latrine*, if the investigator felt that this way he would obtain positive results. The investigation lasted always for 8 hours (with the exception of the cases when something unexpected came up, something unpredictable. The investigation would end, to be then resumed after a day or two, or when the investigators were interested in naive stories, the basis for accusations. Between a declaration and another followed days of pause. Getting on the nerves of the accused or making him to feel that he annoyed the investigator and he had to be punished”. (transl.) (Wexler, 2000: 383).

In Hungary, the Jews were facing difficulties at the end of the war. Before the Holocaust, their number ranged between 756 000 and 800 000 in the extended Hungary, shows Tamás Stark in his study *Hungarian Jewry during the Holocaust and after liberation*. From these almost 600 000 Jews died during the Nazi and Hungarian persecutions. Budapest was an important train hub for the returned Jews. Once arrived in Hungary they saw that their difficulties continued. They could not regain possession of their old houses, nor did they have the money to survive. They were helped by the international organisation Joint Distribution Committee. Hungarian antisemitism was a feeling that did not appear out of the blue, it had been growing in time. The interwar period was a just a phase, including the Numerus Clausus Law which limited the number of Hungarian students in universities and which was in force during

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Jewish section of P.C.R., wrote about the “imperialist-Zionist” agency. Thus Gheorghiu – Dej was only trying to clean his hands, lying that the Zionists were not interrogated or sentenced for being Zionists. After March 1, 1952, the interrogation took violent forms, the prisoners having to face the entire arsenal of the terror. On March 31, 1954 the Military Tribunal in Bucharest sentenced the first rank of Zionists”.

those years. In Hungary, antisemitism did not just disappear after the war. Most Hungarian Jews chose assimilation by the Hungarian communist state in spite of the persecutions which they had suffered before. A new system appeared at the horizon, the communism which promised equality for everybody in the Hungarian state, no matter of their race. Many Jews accepted this system and chose to keep secret the fact they were Jews and they did not tell their children about their heritage.

**Table 3.** The hypothetical number of Hungarian Jews at liberation X 1000<sup>8</sup>.

The hypothetical number of Jews at liberation X 1000								
	Budapest	Provinces	Total in present territories	Subcarpathian Region	Northern Transylvania	Northern Territories	Southern Territories	Total for Hungary during the time of the war
Jewish population n after the deportatio	217	57	274	19	13	11	4	321
People lost during forced labour together with people killed or deported during Szalasi and emigrants	67	22	89	2	2	3	1	97
Populati on at liberatio n	150	35	<b>185</b>	17	17	8	3	<b>224</b>

Ferenc Fejto in his book *Magyarság, zsidóság* (Hungarians, Jews) showed that Hungarian Jews which returned from deportation were around 160 000-190 000 (Fejto, 2000: 282). According to the data supplied by Tamas Stark about the Jews returned from deportation in Hungary during the years 1945-1946, it is showed that before April 30, 1945, 9000 Jews returned, while for the total of the year 1945, returned 82, 144 of Jews. In 1946, the returned Jews,

<sup>8</sup> The table was detailed in Tamás Stark, *Hungarian Jewry during the Holocaust and after liberation* in *Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division B, The history of the Jewish People, volume III, Modern Times, Jerusalem 1994, p.250.

according to his data were 1187. The total combined for the years 1946 and 1945 was of 83 331. (Stark, 2000: 79)

**Table 4.** The estimated number of Hungarian Jews in 1945-1946 x 1000<sup>9</sup>

Number of estimated Jews in 1945-1946x1000						
	Total of present territories	Sub-Carpatian Region	Northern Transylvania	Northern territories	Southern Territories	Total for wartime Hungary
Number of liberated Jews	185	17	11	8	3	224
Number of returned Jews	85	18	30	7	1.5	141
The total sum of Jews	270	35	41	15	4.5	365

According to Tamás Stark the hypothetical number of Hungarian Jews at liberation X 1000, was detailed in the next table. We see that the total number of Jews at liberation from present Hungary was 185 000 of people, while the Jews found under Hungarian administration which survived were 224.000.

The returned Jews chose the assimilation by the new Hungarian state. They suffered traumas more profound than the Jews under Romanian administration. It is hard to understand why Hungarian Jews chose to assimilate in state created by the communists when they suffered so much.

The assimilation of Jews translated in the change of names, mixt marriages or converting to Christianity. So, for the Jews in Budapest, according to the churches who received them, 5521 of Jews converted to Christian religion in 1944 or 3385 of Jews converted to Christianity according to the data of Jewish Community, while in 1945, 388 of Jews converted to Christianity according to the Churches who received them or 261 according to the data of Jewish communities (Viktor Karady Apud Tamas Stark, 2000: 84). Viktor Karády shows that in a smaller number converted to Christianity, Jews in interwar period and during the wartime period. (Stark, 2000: 84)

<sup>9</sup> The table was detailed in Tamás Stark, *Hungarian Jewry during the Holocaust and after liberation in Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division B, The history of the Jewish People, volume III, Modern Times, Jerusalem 1994, p.250.

At the end of the war, the Jewish population lived in conditions of poverty, fear, misery. They did not have sufficient food and shelter. The number of Jewish kids after the Holocaust was very small and they were affected by the lack of food and clothing. In Hungary, the number of Jewish kids under 14 years old was of 7 712. (Wasserstein, 1996: 36) The international organization Joint Distribution Committee helped with food and medicines the Jews from communist states. For instance, Joint spent over 10 million dollars in Hungary during the first year of war. They were helped by the Joint over 200.000 of Jews in Romania, 120 000 in Hungary, 65 000 in Poland and 42 000 in Austria. (Wasserstein, 1996: 36).

After the war, the situation of the Jews from Hungary was precarious. Communities disappeared from provinces and the returned ones found their places occupied (Gyurgyák, 2001: 581). In 1947, Joint Distribution Committee recorded 263 of Jewish communities in Hungary, a number that until 1980 reduced to 75. (Gyurgyák, 2001: 586) The leaders of communities and rabbis who survived to the Holocaust helped the re-organization of communities.

Both in Hungary and in Romania Jewish organizations were constituted, after the war. A Jewish organization which was Zionist too and that existed in Hungary after the war was Pirche Agudat Jisrael. Orbán Ferenc (Orbán, 2006: 80) quoted the leader of this organization, Groszberg Slomo, who describes in his memoires a few of the activities which took place in the framework of this organization. Thus, there was a hostel for boys with a reading room and a kindergarden for smaller children. With the help of Joint, trips were organized for the children. A school for the children was organized, and the hostel for daily activities was transfered to Csorna.

An important problem of the time was the issue of Jewish property approached by Steven Roth (Roth, 1997: 733-753). By the decree 200/1945 M.E. from March 17, 1945 the confiscations from fascist period were considered illegal and the deprivations of rights were annulled. The agrarian and horticultural property, asserts Roth, was not given back if it was under the provision of the agrarian reform and of nationalization of the land. Roth shows that other goods could not be recuperated as mobile goods, equipments, stores of Jewish factories and shops were destroyed, the deposits of money lost their value after the inflation, the goods confiscated by the fascists were never returned. At November 15, 1946 a National Fund of Rehabilitation was created. For comparison, from the Jewish Community from Oradea, we have the information that, also in Romania, the goods of the people deported in Holocaust were taken over by this fund. Many houses and appartments passed under the administration of this fund in Romania, but there were exceptions. In Czechoslovakia, the properties of those who went missing entered the property of the state and, in consequence, a great part of the Jewish community entered the state property.

In the work *The Jews in the Soviet Satellites*, the authors Peter Meyer; Bernard Weinryb, Eugen Duschinsky, Nicolae Sylvain (Meyer, Weinryb, Duschinski, Sylvain, 1953), the problem of restitution of Jewish property in Hungary and Romania is approached. In Hungary, the Jews who returned from the concentration camps found their houses occupied by the adherents of the fascist regime, their property destroyed, their shops robbed (Meyer, Weinryb, Duschinski, Sylvain, 1953: 402). In spite of the precarious situation, most Jews from Hungary were not Zionists and decided to remain in Hungary especially because immediately after the war the communist government promised to maintain the private property. The land did not return to Jewish owners, only the properties smaller than 100 *pogoane*<sup>10</sup>. The communist slogan was that the land is of the people who worked it and it was considered that the Jews never involved in working the land. The Jews had to bear difficult times in Hungary also with the restitution of the apartments from the city which belonged to Hungarian Nazis and whom the new regime tried to attract. (Meyer, Weinryb, Duschinski, Sylvain, 1953: 404).

After 1945 and for a short time emigration was possible. But also here, as in Romania, the Zionist leaders were persecuted and imprisoned. Raphael Patai shows, that in 1945-1947 between a third and a fourth of the Hungarian Jews who survived in Hungary left the country, 28 000 in Israel which, together with the ones who emigrated in Western Europe and overseas a total of 56 000 Jews emigrated. (Patai, 1996: 597). According to Gyurgyák János, in 1945-1947 approximately 60 000 of Hungarian Jews chose the path of emigration. (Gyurgyák, 2001: 586)

Religion was excluded from school education, and the Jewish schools entered the property of state. The Hungarian antisemitism did not end in the same time with the Holocaust. As in Poland, in Hungary, antisemitism peaked to pogroms. In May 1946, in Hungarian locality Kunmadaras an antisemite action took place. 2 Jews were killed, and 18 hurt (Patai, 1996). Miskolc witnessed an antisemite action where the Zionist leader Mátyás Rákosi asked the death of Jewish sellers which were working on black market. (Patai, 1996)

In what concerns the adherence of Jews to communism, the explanations are complex. An explanation would be that the Jews did not perceive the presence of the Red Army in Hungary as a negative aspect; on the contrary, for them its presence was a factor which determined the end of deportation. Another explanation of the Jewish adherence to communism would be that the new system offered to the Jews the chance to integrate after an increasing anti-Semitism which culminated with the Holocaust. They were Jews who became members of the high communist nomenclature and were so severe that some considered that it was about a revenge of non – Jews against

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<sup>10</sup> Approx. 50 hectares (n.t.)



the Jews. Another element would be, as Ferenc Fejto shows, that the Jews were more educated than the non – Jews and could take over the jobs from state administration (Fejto, 2000). Because they were uncompromised elements in the fascist regime, they were an important source of racialization for the communists. (Fejto, 2000: 283).

Victor Karady in his study “*Les Juifs, la modernité et la tentation communiste. Esquisse d'une problématique d'histoire sociale*” (Karady, 2006: 85-105) tries to explain why the Jews were in favour of communism after the war. The author tries to explain this adhesion for its character of modernity, for their attraction of separating from the past, to accepted new ideas. The laicity, the scientific atheism of communism, the collectivism, were other elements of attraction for the Jews. (Karady, 2006: 104-105) In other words, the communism offered to Jews the chance of a new life.

Arieh J. Kochavi, in his study *British Diplomats and the Jews in Poland, Romania and Hungary during the communism takeovers* shows that at the end of WW II, with the exception of the Soviet Union, there were important communities of Jews in other states of the Soviet bloc as Romania, Poland and Hungary. (Kochavi, 1995) The article describes the situation of the Jews from the three countries between the years 1945-1947 as reflected in the reports of British diplomats, as Great Britain was trying to stop a possible wave of emigrants that came from these countries. In 1945, more than 100 000 Jews registered in Bucharest with the intention to immigrate to Palestine, those being encouraged by the Red Cross. (Kochavi, 1995) In Hungary, the Jews who returned from concentration camps and came back found it impossible to reorganize their community and religious life. This aspect motivated the Zionists to try to emigrate in Palestine. (Kochavi, 1995) More Jews were present in Hungarian political life: Matyas Rakosi, an important leader of the Communist Party, Erno Gero, Minister of Transport, Josef Revai, a prestigious journalist, Zoltan Vas, the Mayor of Budapest. (Kochavi, 1995)

**A few considerations concerning the situation of Hungarian Jewry in the first years after the war reflected in the work of Raphael Patai, *The Jews of Hungary. History, Culture, Psychology*.**

For the period that followed at the end of the war, Patai approaches the problem of Jewish emigration from Hungary. This problem was important, as Hungarian Jews had a lot to suffer because of fascism and of cooperation of Hungary with the Axis Powers. In spite of this problem, Patai underlines that the number of Jewish emigrants from Hungary remained low in comparison with the Jewish emigration from neighbouring countries. (Patai, 1996: 613)

Patai estimates that in 1945 the Jewish population from Hungary was between 150 000 and 200 000. Among these, 56 000 Jews emigrated during in

1945-1947. (Patai, 1996) But most of the Jews who survived, namely two thirds, decided to remain in Hungary.

Another important aspect underlined by Patai is that, after 1950, emigration was stopped by the communist dictatorship. The creation of Israel was ignored by the Hungarian communists.

Another problem existent in Hungary in the years 1945, underlined by Patai, are the discussions around the Jewish problem and of the Holocaust, respectively to make the Jewish sufferings public and to assume Hungarian responsibility for it. The author showed that during 1945-1948, the Jewish problem and the crimes committed against the Jews were the subject of public debate in Hungary, debate reflected by the articles, pamphlets and books published on this topic. During 1948-1958, the Hungarian government prohibited the publication of books on this topic ((Patai, 1996: 615). Moreover, the communists did not acknowledge that the Holocaust was directed against the particular group of the Jews, but they considered that it was about a persecution of fascists directed against their opponents. This aspect is reflected also in the view of Romanian communists.

Both in Hungary and in Romania, there were Zionist leaders who militated for emigration of Jews in Israel. In both countries, these were persecuted and imprisoned. Patai mentions the Rajk trial who had many victims from the Jews side and that was followed by the persecution of Zionist leaders (Patai, 1996: 616). In those years, the Hungarian Jews were forbidden to maintain connections with the Jews from abroad.

Patai tries to explain what the reasons were for the Jews' adherence to communism. So he offers an explanation considered important by many authors, namely that the Jews received the Soviets as liberators not as enemies of Hungarian ethnics (Patai, 1996: 624).

Although they had the feeling that they were different, the Jews did not reject the assimilation in the Hungarian society. Many Jewish survivors pledged allegiance to communism. Another motivation of Jewish adherence to communism underlined by Patai is the fact that the communists considered the Jewish problem and the anti-Semitism as being bypassed. Moreover, they considered that the communism regime was incompatible with antisemitism, while the capitalism favoured its proliferation. (Patai, 1996: 625)

More than the Christians, shows the author, they took the newly created jobs. The persecution of Jewry did not exclude the Jewish bourgeoisie who were a considerable number and who had been deported too. (Patai, 1996: 626)

In the same time, in the first years after the war, the Hungarian antisemitism found new possibilities of expression. There were problems with the restitution of Jewish houses occupied by Hungarians during fascism and whose owners refused now to give them back.

A campaign carried out against the Jewish traders on black market, shows Patai, culminated with anti-Jewish manifestations just like the ones directed against the Jewish sellers from Miskolc. Antisemite manifestations took place at Diósgyor where the miners were engaged in manifestations against the Jewish traders on black market. (Patai, 1996: 627).

Antisemitism was increased by the fact that important leaders of the Communist Party had Jewish origins, like Mátyás Rákosi, Ernő Gero, Josef Revai, Zoltan Vas.

The author Raphael Patai stands out by his objectivity and understanding of social and psychological motivation of the Jewry to integrate and to accept the communism. The picture of the Jewish society after the war achieved by Patai is a complex one, detailed, and emphasizes all the important ideas that were discussed within this field of study concerning the destiny of Jewry after the war. He is a good psychologist and knows the Jewish world in detail.

As a conclusion of our paper we can say that the destiny of the Jewry after the war was far from being good. They were confronted with a series of problems ranging from physical illnesses, precarious material situation and the difficulty to regain possession of their houses, the persecution of their economical and cultural elites, and their imprisoning, all the way to aspects like their allegiance pledged to the new regime, i.e. the communism, and their assimilation to the Hungarian society, or on the contrary, the opposite situation, i.e. their emigration (mostly to Israel) when the communist Hungarian regime was more permissive with Zionism, their own form of social activism.

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## SILVIU DRAGOMIR AND THE NORTH ROMAN BALKAN RESEARCH IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANIA'S NEW POLITICAL REALITIES

Sorin ȘIPOȘ\*

**Abstract.** *The survey shows the influence of politics in the research carried out by the historian Silviu Dragomir on the Roman origin of the population in the north of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages. At the beginning of the year 1956, only a few months after his release from the prison in Sigbet, Silviu Dragomir presented the sketch of a paper on the northern Balkan Latin origin, a topic considered by most historians as being fundamental to pursue the process of formation of the Romanian people in the context of the new political reality. We have to notice that such a project approaching the issue of the Romanians south from Danube was possible considering the political and ideological changes in the country after Stalin's death.*

*The research on the history of the Romanians in north-western Balkan Peninsula led to establishing the role played by this population of Roman origin in the Middle Ages. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the specialists were aware of the fact that investigating the history of the Romanians in the Balkans in the Middle Ages might provide a better understanding of the fate of the population north from Danube. Silviu Dragomir's research represents a certain contribution to the history of the Romanians in north-western Balkan Peninsula validated by subsequent research. His work has provided and will still provide a thorough basis for new horizons through the information provided and his interpretations.*

**Keywords:** *Silviu Dragomir, the North – Balkan Romanity, Communist regime, political ideology, Romania*

Unfortunately, the Second World War and the establishment of the communist regime, being at its beginnings in total dependence from Moscow, had adverse consequences for the cultural life in Romania. The purges and death sentences and imprisonment of many intellectuals, decided by the Soviet

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commissioners, but performed by the Romanians, have pursued the destruction of the Romanian elite, and, implicitly, of the national identity. Silviu Dragomir fell victim of the irrational policy promoted by the Stalinist leaders, being convicted after a trial with a pronounced political tendency, to one year imprisonment and incarcerated in July 1949 to Caransebes (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 4: 22). After several months in prison there, Silviu Dragomir was transferred on May 6, 1950 in the Sighet prison (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 4: doc. 5). After his release from detention that occurred in the summer of 1955<sup>1</sup>, was undertaken with the support of former collaborators and students from the interwar period, to the Institute of History and Archaeology in Cluj (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 4: doc. 92). Soon, he became a permanent researcher, and later, as the de-Stalinization process gained momentum, came to lead the team of the modern history of the institute (Păcurariu, 1988: 121). In the short period of activity at the Institute between 1956 and 1962, he continued his researches dedicated to medieval institutions and Romanians in northwestern Balkan Peninsula, some of them being initiated before World War I, and others in the interwar period.

In early 1956, at several months after the release from the prison in Sighet, Silviu Dragomir presented his work plan on the South Roman Danube, a subject considered by many historians in the context of new political realities, as fundamental to the prosecution process of training the Romanian people (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 11-14.). It should be noted that such a project, which considered the issue of Romanians from the South of the Danube, it was possible under the political and ideological changes occurring in the country after the death of Stalin. Many intellectuals, some of them followers of a national formula communism were dissatisfied of the forgeries made in Romanian historiography under the patronage of M. Roller. The political changes after 1944, generated high ideological changes. The establishment of communism in our country has coincided with the entry into the sphere of interest of the former USSR. However, many politicians and intellectuals have condemned in harsh terms the value of subjecting political forces promoted by the communist forces in the country. Against them and the value system in interwar Romania, the communists took very harsh measures, aiming, ultimately, the denationalization, erasing the collective memory by falsifying history. On the occasion of the so-called reorganizations, most scientists were removed from the research institutes and from the department, and the academy members were excluded under various reasons (Boia, 1995: 24-25;

<sup>1</sup> According to the Liberation Ticket no. 193 534 din 1956, Silviu Dragomir was released on 9th of June 1955 (*Ibidem*, document without number). The release on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June is also confirmed by the special travel ticket, Sighet-Cluj, the IIIrd class, series A, no. 0635301, on the name of Silviu Dragomir (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 4; A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 11).

Boia, 2000: 107-112). The national history, one of the pillars of the preservation of the national conscience and patriotism, has been subject to counterfeiting operations (Țugui, 1999: 7-8). The cessation of the attacks on national identity could occur only after a political decision taken at the highest level. Stalin's death provided an unexpected opportunity for some of the Romanian leaders to get out of the dependence on the USSR and to expel those party members loyal to Moscow. The separation from the *older brother* was not an easy task. The PMR leaders needed the support of the society, particularly divided after the numerous abusive arrests and political processes. In order to attract the intellectuals on their side, the Communist leaders of national guidance sought to restore the public confidence. The main management action of the P.M.R heading aimed the regaining of the national dignity by stopping historiographical forgeries and promoting a new policy in the research of history (Țugui, 1999: 7-8). The first concrete action that has eroded the dominance of Roller and his followers inside the academy and the historical research system was an academic session in the summer of 1955, the readmission and election of members and correspondents<sup>2</sup>. Following a political decision, the name of the historians Alexandru Lapedatu, Ion Nistor, Gheorghe Brătianu, Constantin C. Giurescu, Ioan Lupaș, Ștefan Ciobanu, Silviu Dragomir, Radu Rosetti, Virgil Drăghiceanu, P.P. Panaitescu, Grigore Nandriș, Emil Turdeanu, some imprisoned during the communist regime, others established in the democratic states, began to return gradually in the scientific circuit (Țugui, 1999: 21).

The work of Silviu Dragomir was to study the community of Romanian origin from North Western Balkans, being ordered, as far as we have information, by the Commission for the Study of Language and the Romanian People, taking into account also the previous research conducted on this issue. The work's project, probably, presented to the Commission, is particularly relevant to the working method, the author's conception on the history of the Roman population from the north of the Balkans, as well as for the professional honesty of the signatory. Silviu Dragomir repeatedly stressed the importance of investigations conducted by the Slav scientists in the South Danube Roman issue<sup>3</sup>. „The exposure” – wrote Silviu Dragomir in a material

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<sup>2</sup> „On the List of Readmissions in the RPR Academy had been written the former titular members Ioan Lupaș, Silviu Dragomir and Nicolae Bănescu, and the former correspondent members Ștefan Bezdechi, George Fotino and Vasile Grecu, and the Presidium of the Academy was to fill the data about Romulus Căndea, Virgil Drăghiceanu, Scarlat Lambrino, T. Sauciu-Săveanu and Ștefan Meteș, former correspondent members“ (Țugui, 1999: 7-8).

<sup>3</sup> „Due to the studies conducted by the great Slav scholars Rački, Jireček, Novaković today can be traced with certainty the remains of the old Romanity, which kept the Romanian character for over a millennium full of vicissitudes. The anthropographic investigations



to the Commission for the Study of Language and the Romanian People – „ would seek to reconstruct the picture of Romanian settlements from the medieval Bulgaria, in the 11th and 14th centuries. It would watch over the former Vlachs from the Serbian territories beginning with the Nemans (Nemanizii) until the total collapse of the Independent States from the northern half of the Balkan Peninsula. The complex historical material that we can provide here allows us to build the following chapters [...] On the Dalmatia and Croatia Romanians we also have very complex material.“ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 11-12.)<sup>4</sup> The plan proposed by the author was very brave, considering the quality and orientation of the historical writing promoted in Romania after 1948.

Silviu Dragomir was methodologically obliged to consider the undertaken researches, especially by the Serbian, Croatian and Bulgarian scientists and published after 1924. According to the author, the work dedicated to the Romanians in North Western Balkans „was to clarify a number of problems, namely: *the territory occupied by the Romanians in the Balkans, the oldness and specificity of the different age groups, the symbiosis results with the Slavic population and the stages they have gone through until the complete disappearance, the contact with the Albanians and the difference of Macedonians and, finally, the three dialectal areas, taking shape in the south of the Danube*“ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 12). It

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initiated by Cvijić and continued by Erdeljanović revealed an extremely valuable material in order to determine the regions in which there were Romanians and to determine the dialects they spoke“ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 11). See Sorin Șipoș, *Destinul unei cărți: Vlăhii din nordul Peninsulei Balcanice în Evul Mediu, în Adevărul omeneste posibil pentru rânduirea binelui*. Volume edited by Lucia Cornea, Mihai Drecin, Barbu Ștefănescu, Aurel Chiriac, Ioan Crișan, Sorin Șipoș, Florin Sfrengeu, Radu David, Elisabeta Ardelean, Oradea, 2001, p. 461-473.

<sup>4</sup> The author's works published during the interwar period, to which were added the latest research, allowed him to build a project maintained, generally, also in the final work. The chapters set by the author are: 1. The Vlachs of the Serbian charters (hrisoave); 2. The Romanians from Zeta and Travunia; 5. The Romanians from the Raguza region; 6. The Romanians from Medieval Bosnia; 7. Romanian material in the Serbian toponymy and onomastics; 8. The Vlachs from the Cetine Valley; 9. The royal Vlachs; the Vlachs from Lika; 10. *Morlacii* from Dalmația; 11. The Vlachs from Veglia and from the other isles of the Adriatic; 12. The Romanians from Istria; 13. The dispersion and assimilation of the Romanians; 14. The extent of the Romanian settlements in Dalmatia. Following like this the Romanian population along so many Slave countries and regions, it is gathered a rich treasure of information, under which there can be reconstructed many of the issues that interest our problem. The name and language of the Balkan Romanians, the Vlach shepherd; the Vlach "turmarii", the social conditions of the Vlach population, the Vlach village and hamlet, the Vlachs' role as soldiers, the organization of the Balkan Romanians in the religious field (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 11-12).

was emphasized the need for reassessment of the researches on the relations between the Slavs and the Romanians in the first centuries, taking into account the critical researches undertaken in the recent decades by the new generation of Slav scholars, but also on relations between the Romanians and the Turanic populations (Pechenegs, Wets, Polovi and Cumans) in parallel with the investigation of the relationships of these people with the Byzantine Empire (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 13-14). The proposed thematic restored the researches on Romanians between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains in the interwar period, so brutally interrupted by the communist regime installed in Romania, constituting novel approach to the historiography in the sixth decade. In the treatment of the subject, the author followed the largely methodological suggestions of specialists like Ioan Bogdan and Nicolae Iorga, of Romanian history research in relation to the history of the neighboring nations.

We note that, in parallel with the researches initiated by Silviu Dragomir upon the Romanians in the North-Western of the Balkan Peninsula, the linguists Emil Petrovici, Iorgu Iordan, Alexandru Graur and Ștefan Pașca were trying to publish the second volume of the work *The Romanian Language* by Sextil Pușcariu, forbidden until then by the Communist regime<sup>5</sup>. The Romanian scientists' steps to remove the counterfeits imposed in culture demonstrated that, gradually, the changes took place in the vision of the political factors with decision-making power in the fundamental problems of national history research. The two initiatives of the historians and linguists represented small steps, but irreversible to the de-Stalinization of the country. The action proved

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<sup>5</sup> „One day I visited the Institute of Linguistics. At the final conversation, the acad. E. Petrovici and professor Ștefan Pașca, in the presence of the researchers Ioan Pătruș, Béla Kelemen, Mircea Zdrenghea, I.I. Russu, they asked me to register the concrete problems of linguists' labor in Cluj, including the printing of the manuscript of the work *Limba română*, vol. II, by Sextil Pușcariu. Acad. E. Petrovici talked about the circumstances in which S. Pușcariu was released, elaborated the work and sent it to the Publishing, but in 1948 the manuscript was returned to the author's family. [...]. On March, 6, 1956, inside the Department of Science and Culture of CC of PMR, took place the meeting with the teachers E. Petrovici, Șt. Pașca and D. Macrea. Ștefan Pașca presented the voluminous dossier *Limba română*, vol. II, by Sextil Pușcariu, and E. Petrovici and D. Macrea made additions, clarifying the circumstances that made the work not be printed in 1948. However, it appeared that acad. Sextil Pușcariu took care to multiply the manuscript in multiple copies, one being the one presented by Ștefan Pașca [...]. The next day, Wednesday, March 7, 1956, over five hours, it was held a meeting with the academicians Iordan, Petrovici, Rosetti, Graur, Malinschi and professor Pașca. [...]. To the end, E. Petrovici and Ștefan Pașca have presented the proposal to print the manuscript of Pușcariu. Those present have embraced the suggestions of the former collaborators of the Transylvanian scholar ...“ (Țugui, 1999: 209-212).

to be difficult and risky, being realized also with the contribution of those intellectuals who survived the Communist prisons.

The writing of the paper devoted to the Romanians from the north western Balkans was not easy, the historian has faced numerous obstacles, from the ideological, mentioned above, to the technical ones, such as buying the bibliographic material appeared in the Socialist Republics of those days, Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. We note that the historians in Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia had published in the last three decades numerous studies and collections of documents on the population of Roman origin, which should be consulted in re-actualization of information. At the end of 1957, the manuscript, entitled, in a first form, *The Balkan Romanians in Middle Ages*, was completed (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 62). Until the appearance of the book, two years later, the author will operate some of the changes requested by referees<sup>6</sup>. The paper *Comments on the Paper: The Balkan Romanians in the Middle Ages* by Silviu Dragomir really seems to be the first evaluation of the manuscript. Some clues from the text, on which we will return, allow us to make that observation. The author of the essay, probably member of the Committee for the Study of the Formation of Language and the Romanian People, ranges between formal observations and background: „Compared to previous publications, the material is much greater, being put in touch with the latest research results, especially from abroad. The views presented in the paper are largely changed compared to those from the past. Since the publication of the book inside the theme of the formation of the language and the Romanian people, the material should be interpreted more broadly, showing it, in addition to the data source and their meaning, taking a stand against the distortions and exaggerations of the past“ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 62). "The exaggerations" and "the distortions" of the interwar historiography (in which, of course, Silviu Dragomir was included) were, in the opinion of the reviewer, numerous. They aimed mainly the attributed meaning, by the author, of the term Vlach, the elements that made up the people and nation, as well as the formation space of the Romanian people, which included, according to Silviu Dragomir, also the territory between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains<sup>7</sup>. Note that the referent

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<sup>6</sup> Regarding the discussions on the *Balkan Romanians in the Middle Ages* manuscript, we are in possession of two essays, as well as of two of the author's answers submitted to the publisher, and a third forwarded to Iorgu Jordan, Chairman of the Committee for the Study of the Formation of the Romanian Language and the Romanian people, particularly important in capturing the concept and working methods of the author.

<sup>7</sup> „So for example, it shows that the name of Vlach, in addition to Romanian, can also mean *Roman, shepherd, Dalmatian coast inhabitant or refugee in the Turkish parts*. It would be interesting to fight against the wrong conclusions drawn on the basis of the exaggerated number of the Balkan Romanians, by those who put the sign of equality between Vlach

disputed the definition of the nation given by the Romanian inter-war specialists, requesting that it should be replaced by the Stalinist definition. In the text of the material we find relevant observations. For example, the reviewer urged Silviu Dragomir to reflect on the Thracian component of the South Danube substrate and then, to compare the Dacic substrate from the north of the Danube. The conclusions, in his opinion, should highlight the significant difference between the Romanian population from the north of the Danube and that from the North Western Balkans. It was necessary, the author recommended to the essay that in the paper should appear a distinction between the Slavified Vlach population in the early modern period and the Romanian population established shortly at the south of the Danube. In this context, it was proposed "that inside the work to use appropriate terminology, making the distinction between past Romanians in the south of the Danube after the formation of the Romanian people – which is natural to be called *Romanians* – and between the Romanized indigenous elements, for which it could be used the term *Vlach* or *Balkan Vlachs*. The Balkan Romanianism expression should also be avoided; in any event it is not identical with *Balkan Romanianism*" (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 50-51)<sup>8</sup>.

In a letter addressed to the Academy Publishing House, the historian spoke in an academic way regarding the observations<sup>9</sup>. To some critics, Silviu

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and Romanian. Also it would be a good thing to show the errors that can arise from the confrontation of the ancient Roman or Romanized elements in the Balkan Peninsula with the Romanians recently come from the north of the Danube. [...] It would be interesting to show the confusion that led to the non-recognizing of these meanings for example about the Minor Vlachia. «In Slavonia, towards the west of the city, – once famous – Sirmium, there were during the Middle Ages an important number of Vlachs that made that this territory to be known as Minor Vlachia». (C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria românilor*, vol. I, ediția a IV-a, 1942, p. 319). From the ambiguity caused by the sense of the word and from the confusion of the Thracian - Illyrian element Romanized with the migrants from the northern Danube, it became, in our bourgeois historiography, to the distortion of the historical realities and chauvinistic thesis. In this context the question of the nationality of Vlach population arises, even in the hypothesis brought by the philological school, meaning the existence of a compact group of southern Danube. We consider objectionable the author's thesis under whose opinion "the safest criterion to specify whether the ethnic character of the Vlachs is represented by the language they spoke" (pag. 204)" (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 47-48).

<sup>8</sup> The essay's author points out that this paper deals only with the Vlachs of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, and only in passing the Aromanian group and that therefore it would be advisable that the title to be changed from the *Vlachs from the North of the Balkan Peninsula*.

<sup>9</sup> „I am grateful for the judicious comments on what concerns the Balkan Romanians in the Middle Ages. They give the opportunity to say some statements and correct the

Dragomir tried to explain the reasons which led him to these conclusions. As it is the case, for example, with that chapter on Romanians in Bulgaria: „It is true that there is a striking disproportion between the extent of the chapter on Romanians in Bulgaria and the many pages devoted to Romanians from the Croatian Serbian territories. But at this point I could not do more, however I have tried. The chief cause is the lack of documentation on the inner life of medieval Bulgaria, first, and the diversion of the Bulgarian historiography on what concerns the role of Vlachs from the Asănești state. The hundreds of pages written by Zlatarski, Mutafčiev and Vsevolod Nikolaev bring no new information, on the contrary it seems to avoid on purpose to identify a region or locality inhabited by the Romanian population (until the 14<sup>th</sup> century). Their concern remains to prove that the Byzantines used the terms Vlach and Vlachia, instead of Bulgarians and Bulgaria, out of hostility and contempt, and that the two Vlach brothers, who freed them from the yoke of Byzantine, were of Turanic origin. The controversy does not help us to explain our problem better. So we left it out, convinced that I lose nothing, especially since the new Bulgarian history treaty adopted the same attitude on the issue of Vlachs, as the ancient historiography“ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 62). To the rest of the observations, involving the issue of method - the role of toponymy in the research of Romanians in the North Western Balkan Peninsula<sup>10</sup>, using or not using of historical information from the work of foreign specialists who had an anti-Romanian attitude<sup>11</sup> –, as well as to

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errors and leakage of view, that slipped into my exposures “ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 62).

<sup>10</sup> „The results based on the anthropogeographical researches of the Cvijić's school show to what extent we should consider the toponymy as an adjunct of history. The lack of Romanian toponymy in the space between the Balkans and the Danube (of course, beyond the area of recent migrations started in Wallachia plain confirmed by Jireček) is a fact so important, that it should be taken into consideration. This lack was not accidental, because in that region (and only here) it was kept a number of Latin names, villages and rivers, while in the rest of the Romanized territory of the Balkan Peninsula the ancient Latin names disappeared completely (except for, of course, the Adriatic coast). Therefore I thought I had to emphasize this interesting observation, whose contradictory discussion to be useful in the study of the history of Romanian people and language. This *vacuum*, whose birth can be explained historically, this enables us to place the country of origin of the Aromanians, if the linguistic theory - that this dialect was formed in the eastern part of the country "străromâne" (ancient Romania) it proves to be close to the truth. In any case, I do not intend to presume the premises of such conclusion, but to retain for our science an interesting finding. In fact, the Aromanians remain outside the reach of our present research, which includes only the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula“ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 63-64).

<sup>11</sup> „I quoted Roesler on purpose, who identifies the Vlachs mentioned by Gregoras in the region of Strumei and in Rodopi. I consider that this mention interpreted even by Roesler, will be used by linguists, seeking the territory of dialect formation

terminological clarifications (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 16), the author of the book answered punctually, in some cases declaring himself agree with the reviewer, in others not.

In an interim assessment, we find that Silviu Dragomir ruled the bibliography of the issue, that he remained faithful to the critical method of interpretation, where an important role had the auxiliary disciplines of history, that he was open minded to the dialogue, recognizing and appreciating, as we have seen, the received suggestions. On September 27, 1958, the Academy Publishing sent to the author "new observations to the changes which strongly suggest you to make in the current phase" (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 64-65). In fact, except for some substantive comments, the publisher sought to persuade him to change the title in the *Vlachs of Northern Balkans*, more neutral<sup>12</sup>. The imperative demand, requested also by one of the referees a year ago, but unresolved, prompted Silviu Dragomir to write to Alexandru Graur, the director of the publishing and to Iorgu Iordan, President of the Commission for the Study of Language and the Romanian People. In the letter sent to the Director of the Publishing House of the Academy on October 10, 1958, the author manifests his willingness to work some of the changes previously requested by some referees<sup>13</sup>. Much harder to convince was the

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megleno-român. Actually, the problem of identifying the regions mentioned by the Byzantine writers for Vlachs - is one of the most difficult - and that is why I tried to have coverage. I judge Roesler and Mutačev by their historical work, but I count that the first is a supporter of the Austrian imperialism from the time of Franz Josef and the second, an ardent defender of the chauvinist thesis (that is why he does not remember a word about any *sturdy* Romanians" (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 64-65).

<sup>12</sup> Through scientific arguments brought by the publisher it was tried to hide the real purpose of the request made by the author, namely not to strain the relations with the neighboring countries, socialist at that time. The historian was asked to change the terms such as *Romanian, Romanian, Romanian population, Romanian names, layer Romanian, Romanian traces; Romanian formations, Romanian ethnic, national character, the process of denationalization*, etc.. this constituted a potential conflict with the historians and politicians in these countries. „We believe that as long as the author has not established that the Vlachs of Serbia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia etc.. are Romanian, one thing he confesses, he is not entitled to speak about them as it does in the pages above (perhaps the others escaped me). It requires a review of them. A second observation that can work is that sometimes the author tries some debates with other scholars, particularly Serbs, who wrote much, 30 - 40 years ago, and endeavored to make Vlachs from Serbians, such as the author tried another time (partly now too) to make them Romanians " (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 18-19).

<sup>13</sup> „, I suppressed the polemic with the Serb scholars and I reduced myself to arguments advocating my thesis. In the discussion with Stoyanov, I think it's necessary to know his interesting objections " (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 33).

historian on the title changing and replacement of the word Romanian<sup>14</sup>. The tone of the letter addressed to the president of the Commission for the Study of Language and the Romanian People is much different, the author trying to convince him about the justice of his point of view. The letter has more an informative character upon the discussions on the manuscript. The historian has not failed to hide his dissatisfaction with some changes requested by reviewers and impede on its purpose<sup>15</sup>. Silviu Dragomir attracted both attention and pressures at which it was submitted in order to change the title and the negative consequences deriving from the unprofessional interventions and sometimes arbitrary interventions in scientific works<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> „I turned also the terminology susceptible of foreign interpretations of my intentions, changing everywhere the Romanian term when it comes to the Balkans remains of Thracian Romanized Illyrians, with the expression employed in the slave origins of the era, meaning Vlachs. In terms of scientific method this change is a gain for the work. However, the term Vlach, unusual in our historical terminology, I sought to avoid when it comes to words Vlach, Vlach language, or name or Vlach toponymy. In only two or three places I have left them uncorrected, where are impossible to replace. I think they do not reach anyone susceptibility, especially as the newer Slavic scholars, use the expressions Romanian, Romanian, as term of comparison to determine the specificity of Vlachs. [...] I wanted to look just as they spoke a particularly dialect of Aromanian and Daco and that their historical evolution was different than those in Thessaly or the north of the Danube. Although I have this belief, if you think more appropriate to amend the title, previously agreed, please change it with the History of *the Vlachs in the Northern Half of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages* “ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 33-34).

<sup>15</sup> „I was, of course, perfectly willing to suppress the passages about the Empire of the Asănești and the recent Romanian migrations from the north of the Danube to the territory between Timoc and Morava. Their elimination removes the event of inappropriate discussions with scientists from the Slavic countries. These discussions are not of too great importance for our research. In order to not arouse the impression that I want to make Romanians all Vlachs of the documentary sources from the south of the Danube, exaggerating their number and importance, I thought it was better to keep the term Vlach sometimes used untranslated in the Slave documents in the two chapters: *The Name of the Vlachs* and *The Language of the Vlachs*. Finally I was asked more than that: to eliminate the terms *Romanian*, *Romanian* even in the interpretation I give to the remaining traces of the language. I confess that I have complied only in part because I do not consider at all right the terminology *Vlach names, toponyms Vlach, Vlach words or Vlach language*. The changes can produce arbitrary perplexities especially in the interpretations given to the material of *toponymy and onomastics* “ (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 9-10).

<sup>16</sup> „Therefore, in order to not be misunderstood, I used in my work several times Romanian terms, the Romanian and the title I formulated as a corollary of the presented argument *Romanians in the Northern Half of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages*. Afterward I had to modify it in the History of Vlachs in the Northern Half of the

The book appeared in 1959, just after the author agreed to operate some changes in the manuscript handed to the publisher, who did not have prejudiced, essentially, its content. Still remains to note the pressure on scientists of some of their fellows close to the political power, in order to maintain the Stalinist control on the culture. It was therefore only the beginning of de-Stalinization in Romania of that time. In the Foreword, Silviu Dragomir highlighted the reasons which led him to resume the investigation of the Romanians in the North Western Balkans, thus contributing to the relocation of historical research on track. Let's see what were the objectives of his research on the population of Roman origin between Danube and the Balkan Mountains, in a time when the de-Stalinization was only at the beginning. „The object of the present research is in an attempt to collect in a bunch and interpret critical unitary and critically all news from the Middle Ages regarding the Vlachs in the northern half of the Balkan Peninsula, which proved to be descendants of the ancient Thracian Illyrian population, Romanized by the beginning of the seventh century“ (Dragomir, 1959: 5; Georgescu, 1960: 224). Thus, Silviu Dragomir, proposed, as a first objective, the development of a work of synthesis on the Vlachs of the Northern Balkan Peninsula, descendants of the Romanized population. Only towards the end of the introductory chapter we learn the true purpose of the synthesis, namely: „... the recognition of its importance [the ground, an] for the study of the beginnings of the Romanian people“ (Dragomir, 1959: 6). Thus, through the author's voice, in our historiography it was recognized, in the Stalinist era and after many years of darkness, that the training process of the Romanian people also included the space between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains. Then, in investigating the birth of our people, had to be considered for the understanding of the historical process, and the realities from the South of the river. It was coming back to the conclusions of the historiography of the interwar period, when the voice of some specialists like Nicolae Iorga, Sextil Pușcariu, Theodor Capidan and Gheorghe I. Brătianu, the Romanity between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains was considered part of the Romanians' ethnogenesis and glotogenesis.

Silviu Dragomir focused on the classical sources, especially the documents and chronicles of the time, which he put to critical analysis. In order to complete the information about the Vlachs, he broadened the notion of historical document, including also the results of the linguistic researches, of the anthropogeographical surveys conducted by the Academy in Belgrade, as well as the ethnographic researches. In the interpretation of the documentary material, he states that he sought "to preserve all freedom. Our way of judging the phenomena of life and ties

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Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages by adopting a formula that does not match the result of my research and, I am afraid, also not to the intentions of the Committed (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 10).



between the many fragments of Vlach population and we have reserved it also to the anthropogeographical investigations..." (Dragomir, 1959: 5-6). In other words, even if he valued the conclusions of some Serb, Croat, Bulgarian historians, Silviu Dragomir held to warn the readers that he kept his own judgement regarding the results to which the remembered experts reached. On the other hand, the use of new documentary sources, as well as the extensions of investigations on all Vlachs from the northern Balkans led, finally, to conclusions sometimes different from those expressed even in its prewar studies.

The publishing of the book *The Vlachs from the North of the Balkan Peninsula in the middle Ages*, in that specific political context, represented a victory for our historiography. Silviu Dragomir insisted upon the Roman origin of the Vlachs in a time when some scholars still approved the idea of Slavic origin of Romanians from the north of the Danube and the synthesis of the history of Romania did not contain any chapter on the Balkan Romanians (Dragomir, 1959: 5-6). The work imposed in the historiography of that time the thesis of the formation of the Romanian people to the north as well as to the south of the Danube. Although in the treatment of the theme the author followed the plan used in the inter-war work, however, in *The Vlachs from the North of the Balkan Peninsula* we have several new items to his previous contributions. The chapters of the space lived by the Vlachs in the south of the Danube are complemented by new chapters and subchapters. The historian expanded the investigation also on the Vlachs of the medieval Serbia. If in the *Vlachs and the morlacs* he researched the Vlachs around Dubrovnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina, now he has expanded the research on those of Vidin and Morava and Montenegro. Silviu Dragomir felt the need of some consideration upon the documentary sources, the space inhabited by the Vlachs in the Kingdom of Serbia and of some linguistic analysis. He completed the chapter about the Vlachs from Croatia with the subchapter entitled *The Extent Vlach Settlements in Croatia*. He also completed the chapter *The Life and Organization of the Vlachs* from the inter-war work, entitling it now *The Life and the Inner Forms of Organization of the Vlachs*. Similarly, the chapter *The Name and Nationality of the Vlachs* in the new synthesis has emerged in the form of *The Ethnic Character of the Vlachs*, with a new chapter devoted to their language. The last chapter is changed by far from the inter-war synthesis. Here appear two new subchapters: *The Vlachs and Albanians and the Inter-dialectal Reports*. The historian, however, dropped, at the request of reviewers, the section devoted to the historiography problem, being eliminated, so for ideological reasons, an important part of the work.

In the beginning of the study, devoted to the space inhabited by Vlachs, Silviu Dragomir researched the Romanian communities in Bulgaria, omitting, however, also from ideological reasons, to speak about the Romanian Bulgarian State. The chapter about the Vlachs in Bulgaria was, as he confessed in the *Preface* of the work, „only an attempt to escape from the endless maze of

polemics and to establish what interests, above all, our historical science“ (Dragomir, 1959: 6). The real reason, as emerges from the author's correspondence with the reviewers, prior to the publication of the book, was one of ideological matter. The Romanian historians, especially Nicolae Iorga, P.P. Panaitescu, Gheorghe I. Brătianu, Nicolae Bănescu and George Murnu, and Bulgarians, especially P. Mutafčiev, have debated between the two world wars on the character of the empire established at south of the Danube, regarding the origin of the Asănești (Panaitescu, 1929: 9; Bănescu, 1943: passim; Murnu, 1932).

In the new socialist regime it was tried that the ethnic differences to be attenuated and even eliminated, as it were, according to authorities, an obstacle to its consolidation. Thus, the different views expressed by experts in the socialist countries were not encouraged, but their approach was recommended to avoid. Researching the Romanian community between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains of the Middle Ages without reference to its role in the establishment of the second Bulgarian Romanian Tzarat gave an incomplete and unconvincing image on the Romanity from the remembered space. Methodologically, the renunciation of the best documentary represented part of the Romanian history Romania between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains was an error with negative repercussions on the research results. The political interferences in the research of the Romanian population between the Danube and the Haemus Mountains associated to the precariousness of the documentary sources for early medieval age, have led to a poorly developed chapter, leaving the impression that in that particular political circumstance it could only signal the presence of the Romanized population in this area. However, the only clear evidence of the existence of Romanians and Vlachs in the contemporary Bulgaria were provided by the toponymy: „ The toponimics confirming the existence of the Vlachs were once kept, most of them, in the surroundings of Sofia and the nearby mountains. More reduced in number are to be found in Sredna Gora, and even in the Rhodope Mountains“ (Dragomir, 1959: 13).

The superficial investigation of the history of the Vlachs in the mentioned area, made Silviu Dragomir to accept the conclusion of the Bulgarian historian P. Mutafčiev, who, studying the institution of heroes, did not find any historical records of the Vlach in medieval Bulgaria, considering, that the Vlachs were soon lost in the Slavic mass and were radically assimilated (Dragomir, 1959: 13). However, recent studies have highlighted reports data from foreign travelers from the late fourteenth century who speak about the presence of a massive Romanian population in the space between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains, contradicting, thus, the Bulgarian historian's conclusions. Following the conducted comparative research, Stelian Brezeanu questions Silviu Dragomir's conclusions and those of the Bulgarian historian P. Mutafčiev regarding the disappearance of the Vlachs, as a population that is not

recorded in documents of the time should not be treated as necessarily assimilated (Brezeanu, 1999: 31-32).

Silviu Dragomir was tributary to documentary sources which mention the Vlachs. This situation is seen in the chapter on Vlachs in Bulgaria, much reduced compared to that devoted to the Vlachs in Serbia. The historian fails to reconstitute relevant social structure, occupations of the Vlachs from the slave states, because the source material, as many as have been preserved, recorded the conditions and duties of the Romanian population to the owners of the place. Instead, he was forced by the lack of the sources, to remain to just mere general considerations of military and religious organization of the Vlachs. *The Vlachs as soldiers and the Church of the Vlachs* are part of *Life and Inner Forms of Organization of the Vlachs* chapter. Both subchapters include references in addition to the information from the inter-war synthesis and, as consequence, we will insist upon them. In what concerns the Vlachs' military organization, the information of the work is quite uneven. If for the Vlachs in Bulgaria we would expect to find many considerations, as there appeared the first Romanian state creation, which has played a fundamental role in the Balkans nearly a century, we find only a general appreciation. The cause of this situation is the refusal of referees to accept the author to speak about the Romanian population from the time of the second Bulgarian - Romanian Tzarat, to avoid the polemics with the Bulgarian historians (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, d. 94: 47-48).

Instead, the historian wrote, "the military organization of the Vlachs of Croatia we know better from their *law*. At the lead of the companies who went to war, staid a voivode. This could not be Croatian, but only one of them. The Vlachs who ruled over villages served with an ounce, meaning that they paid a tax of war, and those who did not have a village served on horseback with sword and shield or with arrows and sword. The groups that went to war were divided as follows: two thirds of them had to fight as soldiers and the remaining third had to take care of the supplies and horses" (Dragomir, 1959: 136)<sup>17</sup>. In other words, the Vlachs were an important element in the military organization in the Kingdom of Croatia, as highlights the presented act. Recent researches had highlighted the contribution of the Romanian population in the military organization of Bulgaria and Byzantium<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> „The Vlachs are obliged to perform military service on horseback and arms from St. Stephen (probably 28 March; other data are 18 May and 13 July) until Saint Martin (11 November). If non-compliance, they will pay six pounds or a cow, fine of which a tenth goes to the Prince Vlach (voivode). The Vlach's horse can not be pawned. If a military expedition, two thirds of people will be combating and one third will deal with horses and food “ (Matei Cazacu, 1996: 88).

<sup>18</sup> „The Vlachs accomplished their military service. [...] În 1091, Alexis Comneni enlists Bulgarians and Aromanians to stop Pechenegs attack. Some Vlachs (of course from the Byzantine Empire and not those living at the north of the Danube) fought among

Interesting and surprising at the same time, is the chapter dedicated to the religious organization of the northern Balkans Vlachs. In light of the decree issued by the Emperor Vasile II, the Vlachs from the Byzantine Empire appear to us, from the religious point of view, as being under the authority of the Archbishop of Ohrid. The religious situation of the Vlachs was, according to Silviu Dragomir, a special one, like that of the Romanian population in the Kingdom of Serbia. In other words, the population of Romanic origin who lived with the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, etc. was removed from the authority of the local bishops. Such a situation led the author to assert that „Removing the Vlachs from the jurisdiction of the local bishops and the obedience to the Archbishop of Ohrid and later on, to that of Žiča, constitutes a departure from the provisions of canon law provisions of the Eastern Church as well as the creation of a bishopric without its own, well - defined, territory. Therefore we believe it justified to consider the provisions of the Byzantine Emperor as a special favor granted to a population that no longer has any old one's own territory or a number of believers too important“ (Dragomir, 1959: 138). In terms of religious, the Vlachs, mostly, remained faithful to the Orthodox Church, except for only a part of the Romanian population settled in Croatia. This made Dragomir to consider that the Vlach settlements were at east of the line of the Isaurian kings, that demarcated the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople of the authority of the papacy.

Largely, the new conclusions reached by the author, were due to the discovery of new documents, the results to which the Serb, Bulgarian and Croat historians reached in the investigation of the Roman origin population in the Balkans and the new methods of interdisciplinary research - history, linguistics, ethnography and geography - that had spectacular results. The recourse to the border researches is one of the great gains of the book, especially noticeable in the final chapter, entitled *Historical Considerations*. Silviu Dragomir managed to clear, after the historical, linguistic, geographical, ethnographic analysis, through compared researches upon the language, social structure, occupations of Vlach population, the relationship of such people with slave populations, but also with Aromanians and Macedo-Romanians. The presence of hamlet and shepherd words in the Romanian and the Albanian language led to clarify the way they entered into the lexical fund. The historian investigated the

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Byzantines in war with Hungary in 1166. [...] We consider that the Vlachs of Samuil's empire had fought before with the Bulgarians against Greeks: the testament of Vasile the II<sup>nd</sup> seems to guard against a possible required Aromanian uprising. No wonder we saw the Asanesti putting the Vlachs from Hemus against the Byzantines. [...] The researches by N. Beldiceanu through the Ottoman documents have strongly established the military functions of the Vlachs in the Balkans, starting with the Dheritage beginning with the Byzantine administration, and following then with the Bulgarian or Serbian one, was maintained also by sultans“ (Petre Ș. Năsturel, 1996: 74-75).

demographic, linguistic, economic reports in the Middle Ages between Romanians from the Danube and the Balkan Mountains and those from the north of the river. Specifying any link is important because many experts still consider the Vlach a population that settled at the north of the Danube.

The analysis of documentary sources made Silviu Dragomir to conclude the following regarding the area inhabited by Vlachs: „The Vlach settlements dating from the 10<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> century deals, as we have seen, a fairly well-known territory in the northern half of the Balkan Peninsula. Their head nucleuses are all inside the area formed by the Danubian Romanity, by the assimilation of the autochtine population in the first six centuries of our era. But there occurred also notifiable changes. Romanity of the Inferior Moesia is no longer in the second half of the Middle Ages, and the two south Danubian Dacians have kept only fragmentary remains from the former Latin. The North of Upper Moesia, the strip stretching from Magrum (Morava) to Sirmium, in the immediate vicinity of the Danube, was also lost. At South, thus, this province will shelter for almost a millennium the native Romanized descendants, to whom it will protect from the assimilation only their social isolation. Also in Dardania apparently remained in full and in Praevalis only in part. The rest is found beyond the old frontier of the Balkans Romanity, in Rhodope, in the valley of Marita and on the Black Sea shore, and even those around Sofia are subsequent floods, especially because of the life style of the Vlach pastors and but also due to the Slav and Bulgarian penetration. This is the case of the Vlachs and Morlacs from the hinterland of the Dalmatian coast, from Bosnia and Croatia“ (Dragomir, 1959: 161).

The very careful investigation made by the author, who went even to the privacy of Vlach communities, revealed the existence of major differences depending on the geographic configuration of the space inhabited, by populations they had contact with, as well as their number. Starting from the social diversity and from the occupation of the Vlachs, Silviu Dragomir wrote the following: „The certain conclusion that emerges from these exposures is, therefore, that the picture of the geographical spread of the Balkan Vlachs, seen in the 12<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> century, is very old and dates back long before the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Their particular social evolution, as well as the total disappearance of the city class, destroyed in the first race of the conquering Slavs, and even of the agricultural population, almost assimilated in the following centuries, confirms this conclusion. Another finding that is required, under the made investigations, is that the range of the Vlach element in the Balkans should be seen as a result of a long process“ (Dragomir, 1959: 165)<sup>19</sup>. From the

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<sup>19</sup> The same space was given also to the Romanians from the Balkan Peninsula by Petre P. Panaitescu, in the following terms: „In this era, the Romanians of the Balkan Peninsula, Balkan Roman followers, once formed continuous cloth covering the north and central Balkans, but then designate four large groups that would remain permanently separated

researched documents, the author reconstructs many population movements from inside the Balkan Peninsula to its edges, movements confirmed by further investigations (Cazacu, 1996: 87). Silviu Dragomir, after the conclusions of Skaić, considered that the Vlach shepherds' road in search for pasture served later also as migration routes from east to west. He also sought documents issued by the chancelleries of the Serb and Croat kings, the names of persons, which were compared with the name of Vlachs from the areas outside of the peninsula. The presence or the absence of hamlets, the presence of the "hamlet" or the "villager", the presence or the absence of the village or of the hamlet were useful clues for the author. These researches convinced him that neither the Vlachs from the Cetine Valley, nor those from Istria did not follow the shortest road, which would have led them through Bosnia, until the coast of the Adriatic, but they made a long detour through the mountains of Herzegovina and along the northern Dalmatian coast along to their new homeland.

Abandoning the view set out in the previous works, the author establishes the main reason which led the Vlachs to leave their old territories: „the lifestyle and social conditions among which they had to care their livelihood. The Vlachs from the Slavic countries of the Balkan Peninsula belonged to the lower class throughout those related to a master and deprived of their liberty. Therefore they seek refuge from a master to another, taking pastoral roads, known by them. Good pastures and the more favorable living conditions will always be decisive“ (Dragomir, 1959: 172; Puşcariu, (1926), II: 29).

The analysis of the Albanian toponymy convinced Silviu Dragomir that the Vlachs and the Albanians came in contact since the era before the slaves' entering the area, as the Vlachs had transmitted to the Serbian population in Montenegro the local Preslav toponymy (Illyrian and Roman). But in his view, the region of Scutari and Raguza is not a center of irradiation for the Vlachs, but the most extreme point of the line followed by their pastoral migration. In other words, the historian contested the possibility of the formation of the Romanian people in Prizren Scutari Dubrovnik area, all indications placing this territory farther east (Dragomir, 1959: 174). Silviu Dragomir answered to those who put the formation space of the Romanian people in the southern Balkans, from where, then, it would have been moved to the areas in north of the river. Moreover, he considered that "the Vlach settlements in the regions where the Albanians have come into contact with, are very old. They can date from the era that preceded the flood of the Serbian element in the region of Scutari - Prizren and Raguza (the 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> century)“ (Dragomir, 1959: 173).

The researcher has clarified that, with the help of linguistics, the relationship between the Vlachs and Macedo, between the Vlachs and Daco -

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in the XIII century by the denationalization of some intermediate categories “ (Panaitescu, 2000: 111).

Romanian population of the northern river in the Middle Ages. Silviu Dragomir considered that „the Vlachs described by us differ from the Macedo (macedo - Romanians, in Serbian *cincari*) through the language they spoke both in medieval Bulgaria and Serbia as well as in Bosnia and through the Dalmatian coast. It seems that in the more distant decades there was no wide separation zone between these two groups. [...] It is noteworthy that in the XIVth century the Aromanian expansion to north quickens, and crosses with the wave of migration of the Albanians, who takes an even opposite direction to the south. It is beyond doubt that the Macedo met the element of the northern group, both in the ancient era, and just before the full Slavicization of the Vlachs in Serbia“ (Dragomir, 1959: 1974-1975). Although he clearly does not act on either of the theories on the origin of the Aromanians, the author considers them as locals in the territories they live so far<sup>20</sup>. On what concerns the differentiation between the Macedos and Vlachs through the spoken language, he considered the different dialects of the Romanian language, respectively the Aromanian and Daco - Romanian ones<sup>21</sup>. In favor of some intense relations between the proto - Romanians between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains or the proto-Romanians from the north of the Danube speaking "the identity or, in any case, the great similarity between the dialect spoken by the Vlachs depicted by us with the new Daco-Romanian dialect“ (Dragomir,

<sup>20</sup> „There are two main positions on the Aromanian origin: a) One who admits that they are locals in the sense that they continue the old Romanized population of Antiquity. This is the opinion of the most historians, Romanian and Greek, as well as Western, from the founder of this research, J. Thunmann (1774). Special tints, such as that from local populations (primarily Greek), or if they are only soldiers and settlers brought in from other parts of the empire are both false if taken as absolute, true, in part, if combined. b) The second that they came from the North, from a region adjacent to Dacoromanians. This thesis is supported by all Romanian linguists, excepting Th. Capidan and Tache Papahagi from the old generation, of Matilda Caragiu-Marioțeanu, N. Samarandu and the signatory of these lines. In Greece, the linguists are more especially those who supported the thesis of the natives, and among them, primarily those of Aromanian origin“ (Poghirc, 1996 : 17-18).

<sup>21</sup> „In general, the Daco-Romanian dialect, spoken by the large mass of the Romanians (in 1930, by the official statistics, 13,180,936, now over 15 million in Romania, plus half a million across the Nistru river, in Soviet Russia, some 500 000 across the Danube in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria - they should not be confused with Aromanians from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria - about 150 000 in America and tens of thousands in Hungary) is characterized by a relatively high unit. [...]. Large differences, which make a deal to be difficult, there are only between the Daco - Romanian dialect and the Istro-Romanian and Megleno-Romanian dialect. Although the structure of the four Romanian dialects is the same, that they have been developed for many centuries separated from each other by foreign nations or in regions without communication, produced the differences between them“ (Pușcariu, 1976: 216-217).

1959: 178). We note that Sextil Puscariu believes that the Romanian population between the Balkan Mountains and the Danube and that from the northern part of the river speak the Daco - Romanian dialect. In this regard, the author oscillates between identity and similarity, which is not the same thing. The similarity of the two dialects of the Romanian language does not mean, in his opinion, that compulsory it was produced a massive population shift from the Upper Moesia to the north east, in Banat and Oltenia. On the contrary, written witnesses speak about movements started from the region of the Danube to the south and from Morava to the west, during the penetration period of the Slavs in the Balkan Peninsula, as well as in the following centuries. The documentary sources do not record the Vlachs' movement between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains to the north of the river. In order to get a complete picture of this phenomenon, Silviu Dragomir compares the existing social structure at the Vlachs in Serbia and Bulgaria and at the Romanians and the Daco-Romanians and the Middle Ages<sup>22</sup>.

The historian considered the chapter on the interdialectal relations as incomplete; therefore, soon after, he turns back to it in a study entitled *The Relations between the South Danubian Romanians and the Daco - Romanians in the Middle Ages* (Dragomir, 1998: 206-236). An overview of the Proto-Romanians offered a better understanding of the fate of this population, after the settlement of the Slavs in the south of the river. Consequently, Silviu Dragomir reconstituted, based on toponymical material, but also on the historical evidence, the formation area of the ethnic called Proto-Romanian: „This area could be delimited on one part through the line that starts from the Visitor Mountains, surrounds the region of the Șar Mountains and the city of Scoplje and goes until close to Pautalia (today Velbužd) and Serdica (Sofia); from here it takes north to cut the extending to westward of the Haemus Mountains, living in the territory of the Proto-Romanians all the region of Remesiana (today Bela Palanka) and touching the Danube somewhere close to Ratiaria

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<sup>22</sup> „But against such a hypothesis, for it is only a hypothesis, the special social and political aspect talks, under the Romanians from the north of the Danube appear, from the moment when we see them in the light of history. The organization of the patriarchal life of the Romanians in the Romanian Country differs fundamentally from what we saw at the Vlachs of Serbia. What seems identical is reduced to ancient forms of primitive life: *Juzji* and *judecia* is undoubtedly the oldest type of organization of the Romanians and the habit of making the income tax after the sheep should also be considered as a remnant of primitive organization; *the Vlachs law* from the Serb Kingdom has a total different meaning from the *Wallachian right* in Banat and Transylvania (in the first case *the law* includes the register of feudal obligations that were imposed to the Vlachs, and, beyond the Danube, the *Wallachian right* is a valid legal norm in the inner relations of the Romanian community, thus representing the remains of an ancient customary right)“ (Dragomir, 1959: 179).



(today Arcar), or, if we agree with the conclusions of Vl. Georgiev, a little to east, at the outpouring of Iscăr. In the west, goes beyond the known frontiers of Upper Moesia, stops on the Drina and over the mountain Durmitor and Visitor“ (Dragomir, 1998: 212). Unlike the synthesis dedicated to the Vlachs between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains, here, Silviu Dragomir states on the origin and living space by the Macedo. He believed, contrary to the views expressed by linguists that the Macedos came from the former provinces of the Inferior Moesia, Scythia Minor and from the eastern part of the Dacia Ripensis<sup>23</sup>. The specialist from Cluj was inconsistent with the view expressed by the most Romanian historians, and philologists like Tache Papahagi<sup>24</sup>. For Silviu Dragomir, elucidating the conditions under which appeared the three Romanian dialects in the Balkans and the relations with the Daco-Roman population would clarify the status of the Romanian and Vlach population from the north of the Danube<sup>25</sup>. If for the period of the presence of the Byzantines in the Lower Danube the author

<sup>23</sup> „We suppose that this latter area was the home of origin for the Aromanians and their withdrawal, happened under the Byzantines, may have occurred at 679 or later than the first half of the eighth century, when the vigorous Bulgarian state manages to submit west and take the Danubian bank to Okop, where the Avar border was. Nowhere in the northern half of the Balkan Peninsula, there is another area in which it can be assumed with some reason, the ancient homeland of the Aromanians. The fact that we do not count them local in Thessaly and Epirus, and even in Macedonia, is due to circumstances well known that none of these provinces has not been Romanized. The Aromanian population colonized character it is highlighted from the role they have after Kekaumenos in Niculița's uprising in the first half of the eleventh century “ (Dragomir, 1998: 212-213).

<sup>24</sup> „We can not stop to think that the Aromanian origin, from the geographical point of view, could be from north, as it could be due to displacements of Romanian masses from Vlasin planina of Moesia Superior, dislocation which had been caused by the invasion and settlement of the Slavs in southern regions, from the seventh century. [...]Being like this, the Dacian Thracian Illiryan Romanity we highlight - when it comes to formation of the Romanian people from the north and south of the Danube from this Romanity - in the following geographical aspect: on one side we have the northern Balkan Romanity - the Romanity of the northern slope of the Balkan Mountains and the Carpathians, Romanity that was, therefore, mounted on the Danube and from which came out the Daco - Romanian branch –, and on the other side we have the south western Romanity - ithe Romanity between the Adriatic, the south western Balkans, Aegean and Thessaly, Romanity of which came the Aromanians “ (Papahagi, 1932: 23).

<sup>25</sup> „Dacoromanians do not meet in the historical record of the slave only from the second half of the Middle Ages. Their relationship with Romanian dialects from the south of the Danube can not be proved only using the language and toponymics. It is the responsibility of linguistics. Judging, however, the formation of the language and the Romanian people, according to the results obtained by studying the Balkan Romanians, some of the discussed issues are better explained “ (Dragomir, 1998: 226).

had documentary sources which highlighted the relations between the Romanians from the north and south of the Danube, after the placing of the Slavs, he gives arguments related to the historical logic - for example, the fact that the Bulgarian Tzarat controlled also the north of the Danube, therefore, the relationships between the two sides of the Roman could not be interrupted. While accepting the Romanian population movements from north to south of the river, Silviu Dragomir exclude the possibility of moving in reverse, aspect denied in some recent studies (A.N.-D.J. Deva, *Fond Silviu Dragomir*, dosar 94, p. 47-48).

The appearance of the work *The Vlachs from the north of the Balkan Peninsula* brought a new spirit in the research of the Romanian population between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains and in the Romanian historiography of the moment. Silviu Dragomir managed to impose a new theme and conclusions that, after 1947, became taboos in Romania of that time. Released from the prison in Sighet after six years, the scholar and intellectual put his intellectual capacity in the service of science, understanding that the political regimes are ephemeral and that only the interest of his nation is eternal. Together with the historians who survived the Stalinist camp system, he returned to the scientific work from where he has been brutally pulled from the political regim of the time. In the new circumstances, he resumed his scientific work at the Institute of History in Cluj. He continued to serve his country with devotion, as he had done during the crucial events of 1918, during the inter-war period and during the serious events that preceded the World War. He took part in the discussions that led to the beginning of de-Stalinization of culture, knowing that a professional research was the chance to resist the Stalinist roller.

As a scientist, as a historian of the national phenomenon, Silviu Dragomir resumed the investigation of Romanians in North Western Balkans, the fundamental issue in a more unfavorable political situation for the utterance of the truth. In this sense, the scientist, with the support of his former collaborators and students, some of them are currently in senior positions, proposed to the leading fors of the time the research of a fundamental theme in Romanian history. It was investigated by the author between the two world wars, but the time period elapsed, as well as the political situation in Romania complained the resume of the subject. Between 1955 and 1959, Silviu Dragomir fought for the manuscript sent to the publisher to not suffer major changes from the communist ideology. The publication of the work in 1959, in full Stalinism, was a huge win for the historical science in general and for the Romanian culture. The authorities of that period initially agreed to its publication in French, in order to enter the European scientific circuit (A.N.-D.J. Deva, f. *Silviu Dragomir*, dosar 16: *Les Roumains*).

Unfortunately, the initiative was discontinued in circumstances unknown to us. The further scientific research on Romanians or Vlachs established between

the Danube and the Balkan Mountains are tributaries of this work. *The Vlachs from the north of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages* is now a fundamental work being often cited by experts.

The teacher took an interest in the history of Romanians in North Western Balkans of the Middle Ages, after the occupation, at the Dacia Superior University of Cluj, the chair of the history of the peoples of Southeast Europe. Preparing the academic lectures put him in touch with a rich bibliography on the history of the Serbs, Bulgarians, South Slavs in general, which included many information about the people of Romanian origin from the north of the Balkan Peninsula. The knowledge of Slavic languages was an advantage because it had the opportunity to make a direct link to the source of history and the works of the Austrian, Serb, Croat, Czech and Bulgarian historians.

Silviu Dragomir followed in the first instance, the history of Vlachs of Serbia, of those placed along the Dalmatian coast and the Istrian peninsula. The research developed, then, in a first synthesis and morlăcii called *The Vlachs and the Morlacs. Study from the History of the Balkan Romanianism*, published in 1924. He returned to the theme, after nearly two decades in the middle of World War II, amid the emergence of foreign works that call into question the continuity of the Romanized population at north of the Danube after Aurelian's withdrawal. Political changes produced in Romania after 1945 affected Silviu Dragomir directly. He was removed from the Romanian Academy, was retired from the university and later convicted and imprisoned in Sighet and Caransebes between 1949 and 1955. After the release from detention, his concerns were directed also on the scientific and historical investigation of Romanians in North Western Balkans. The political situation in Romania of that time was not favorable to resuming this theme. The insistence of the author, the support received from colleagues, beginning amid all the political thaw in Romania, have allowed the emergence of new syntheses *The Vlachs from the North of the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages*. The work was meant to be a complement to the inter-war synthesis by taking advantage of the latest research results on the population of Romanian origin from the northern Balkans and including in the recalled analysis of the Vlachs from the medieval Bulgaria.

Silviu Dragomir, a specialist formed in the Austrian universities atmosphere in a period of domination of positivist historiography, remained faithful and consistently to the critical method. Consequently, in both papers, the official documents were the main sources of information about the Vlachs. He did not exclude the data from the medieval chronicles, the accounts of foreign travelers who crossed the southern Danube space. To documentary sources, the historian has shown great attention, critically analyzed them, taking only the information deemed to be reliable. Although most sources used were edited, this value does not drop anything in the works. The author has mastered

and known like no other the foreign historical literature<sup>26</sup>. He accepted many of the conclusions of the Serbian, Croatian and Czech historians, formed in the severe Austrian school. He rejected the opinions of historians who either believed that the Vlachs, since the XIIIth century, migrated to the north of the river, or contested to Balkan Romanians their Romanic origin.

The research method used by Silviu Dragomir approaches him to the positivist historiography. Retrieving information from the source material after a previous critic, but also the use of the linguistic studies, especially of those published by Sextil Pușcariu and Theodor Capidan, puts him through the descendants of Ioan Bogdan. In order to get answers to questions on the number, occupations, causes of movement and the followed the directions of the Vlachs particularly to the west of the Balkan Peninsula, he appealed to geography, anthropology, ethnography and demography. The interdisciplinary research allowed him to reach to solid conclusions about the origin, language and destiny of the northern Balkans Vlachs.

Silviu Dragomir's contribution to the research of the Balkan Romanity entered into the patrimony of the Romanian historiography. His ideas were fully accepted, in essence, by all those who, led by Sextil Pușcariu, have leaned on this field of study (Tanașoca, 1994: 49).

The historian has provided answers to many problems that sparked disputes among the experts of the time. His concept regarding the Vlachs or Romanians from the north of the Balkan Peninsula remained the same. The fact that they spoke Romanian, more precisely the Daco-Romanian dialect, made the history to call them, in most cases, Romanians. The language of the Vlachs was, reportedly to the medieval chroniclers, confirmed by the results of the linguistic research, a dialect of the Romanian language, identical or close to that spoken by the Romanian population from the north of the Danube (Dragomir, 1959: 155-156).

The historian revealed, better than any Romanian specialist, the social structure, occupations and relationships of this population with the dominant political forces of the moment. The Vlachs hadn't been only nomadic herdsmen and flocks, as some wanted to submit them. The Romanian population also dealt with agriculture, where the territory allowed. There were turmari and chirigii as well as successful traders. The specialist reconstructed, based on records, the status of the Vlachs in the Kingdom of Serbia and Croatia. Those

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<sup>26</sup> „One of the great merits of Silviu Dragomir, Slavist with serious studies, is precisely that of assimilating the entire scientific literature - historiography, linguistic and anthropogeography – referring to the Balkan territories on which had been developed the southern slave states and cultures and to be valued everything what decades of scientific activity abroad could provide the researcher the lost northern Balkan Romanity, both as documentary information and as a result of interpreting it and also as a method“ (Tanașoca, 1994: 49).

documents issued by the royal chancelleries, the so-called laws of Vlachs, emphasize the obligations to the political authorities and the autonomy of this population, different in origin and occupations of others living in the Slave kingdoms (Georgescu, 1960: 233). In other words, the Vlachs were a community that had economic and military power. The territory inhabited, and their occupations were influenced by the massive settlement of some populations that dominated the Balkan space. If in what concerns the mentioned conclusions Silviu Dragomir was confirmed by the latest research on the Vlachs of Northern Balkan Peninsula, there are many problems that spark discussion, even controversy among the specialists of the phenomenon. There are issues of space or territory of origin inhabited by the Romanian population in the south of the Danube, meaning the territory occupied by Romania before the settlement of the Slav population. Likewise, the timing and causes that displaced the people of Romanian origin from the original space mentioned above. The relationship between Vlachs, Macedos, Meglenos and Aromanians is a controversial chapter in the history of Romanian historiography. Silviu Dragomir considered the Macedos a Romanian population, which lived in the area of former provinces of Moesia Superior and Schytia Minor. Currently there are voices that consider them as locals in territories where there are in the present. The future investigations will clarify the causes and the final time in assimilating the people of Romanian origin from the former kingdoms of Bulgaria, Serbia and Croatia. For the historian, the settlement of foreign populations, respectively Slavs and Bulgarians, with all the political, economic, demographic consequences, then the small number of populations of Roman origin were some of the causes of the assimilation of the Vlachs. Silviu Dragomir considered that the end of the process of assimilation is for the Vlachs in Bulgaria the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and for those of Serbia, the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Recent studies show that remnants of the Vlachs of the mentioned states had been kept until the time of modernity and even today.

The researches on Romanian history in the North West of the Balkan Peninsula led to the clarification of the role played by the population of Roman origin in the Middle Ages. The specialists from the early twentieth century were aware that the investigation of the history of the Balkan Romanians from the Middle Ages offered better understanding of the population from the north of the Danube. Silviu Dragomir's researches represent a definite contribution to the history of Romanians in northwestern Balkan Peninsula, validated by further research. His work has provided and provides, through the documentary information in circulation, as well as by his interpretations, a solid starting point for new horizons.

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# NATIONALISM, MULTICULTURALISM AND MINORITIES' RIGHTS IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ROMANIA. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Cătălin TURLIUC\*

**Abstract.** *The paper is focused on very important research topics in the field of majority-minority relationship in Modern and Contemporary Eastern Europe, dealing mainly with theoretic and methodological approaches as these was developed during the last Century in Humanities and Social Sciences. First, Nationalism and its different meanings throughout the last Century is discussed and analyzed in an attempt to pinpoint how this ideology & doctrine, cultural artefact, was and still is istrumentalized in political decision making. Second, Multiculturalism as ideology is discussed and explained in its practical consequences in the European environment, including the Romanian one. In the third place, I stress on the contorted evolution of the minority rights in the 20-th Century Romania, as is the case in Europe as a whole, dealing with the reality according which the Human Rights evolved as a new, powerful ideology in the globalization context. The paper addresses this theoretical complex in order to clarify how different ideological perspectives contributed and strongly influenced the “real”, daily life, in multiethnic societies, using the Romanian example. The paper has in my opinion a highly heuristic value and it is a contribution to the efforts made in order to accommodate the Romanian research in this field with the latest worldwide theoretical and methodological acquisitions in this domain.*

**Keywords:** *Ideology, Doctrine, Cultural artefact, Globalization, Human Rights, Multiethnic societies, Cultural relativism*

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Often referred to as “the short century” and having as starting points the beginning of the First World War and the end of the Cold War, or the Century of the Extremes, of the barbed wire or of the internment camps, the recently ended century registered a few processes that took place at a worldwide scale and which originated in past centuries and continued today, like modernization and globalization. Having these as background, we have witnessed total wars, the birth and the disappearance of ideologies and totalitarian regimes, the disappearance of the classic colonialism and the notable multiplication of the international subjects, the massification of the politics and the ascend of some democracy forms, as we know and understand them today, homogenization and assimilation through bureaucratization and social engineering, the ideologization of the human rights and the appearance of their new generations (the third and the fourth) and, finally, the complication of the in-group rapports and relations and also of those between different groups, communities and societies that have and exponential increment of the interdependency. Moreover, the picture was complicated by the situation of the demographic processes, by the rapports with the natural environment and the resources offered by it, rapports that are nowadays misunderstood. Romania has also been under the influence of all these processes and phenomena, its last century history being profoundly influenced by all of the above mentioned.

In the following we shall shortly analyze the way in which, from the perspective of the majority - minority rapports in last century Romanian area, nationalism, multiculturalism and the minorities' rights (national and ethnical) have directly and, sometimes, heavily or more subtly influenced living together or/and the cohabitation of the Romanians and the ethnic groups that lived in the Romanian area in the above mentioned span of time. The objective of this work, which has a strong theoretical and methodological character, is to establish potential features of a model that has heuristic value regarding the interpretation of the rapports of the majority with the ethnic groups in the already mentioned chronotopic sequence. In this way, we want to get rid - to the extent to which it is possible - of the altered ideological background of the discussions and of the analytical works on the problem regarding the minorities and their rapports with the majority, by introducing, among the arguments, elements that have often been occulted, like: a contrastive analysis on a synchronic dimension, the relation with the functional normative acts on an international level in a certain chronotopic sequence, the public - private interaction, the often perverted rapport between modernization and democratization etc., all the above mentioned generated by the need to contextualize, in the spirit of the time (*Zeitgeist*), the discussed majority - minority rapport. Naturally, we are not interested only in the institutional - juridical framework (which is generally well researched and documented) but especially in the reality of the living together and/or of the cohabitation

concretized in day to day life, present in the social memory of the communities. We end this introductory part with the natural underlining of the fact that our theoretical and methodological interpretation may fall itself under the subjectivity, the quality and the quantity of the available information and that our immediate purpose is to critically analyze and reflect upon our work. The structure of our intervention comprises the analysis and the interpretation of nationalism, of multiculturalism and of the rights of the minorities within a Romanian and general context, followed by a series of necessary conclusions.

Nationalism continues to be one the most controversy political nowadays currents. After more than two centuries have passed since its genesis and crystallization, nationalism still is appealing both in the countries with a democratic and liberal tradition, as well as in the post-communist ones, which do not have a lot of experience as far as the Parliament is concerned. What does this attraction consist of, given all the tragic experiences in the last century?! In order to find an answer to that question, at least a partial one, we must have a distinction between nationalism as ideology, as political movement or as the one manifested as a cultural idea. Although connected with each other, these aspects require a specific analysis which will highlight the fact that there is no unitary phenomenon called *nationalism*. Also, we must approach different types of nationalism and the historic contexts they appeared within, in order to discover which the structure of specific discourses is. Ever since it has appeared in history, there were numerous attempts to define it. It has even been said that the number of definitions is equal to the number of those who dealt with it (Peter F. Sugar, 1981: 67). The debate, beyond the political, diplomatic and geopolitical implications, is a conceptual and normative one.

After the end of the Second World War, many social and human disciplines have tried and managed to develop theories and investigation methods of the nationalism. These are: sociology, the study of the international relations, politology, cultural anthropology, social psychology, geopolitics, political philosophy (normative theories), international law and, last but not least, history. The result of these attempts was the elaboration of a whole set of theories regarding nationalism. In order to better highlight our position, in order to avoid certain confusions, we shall present the main categories that include the theories on nationalism:

a) The normative theory (M. Walzer, 1983), which was elaborated within politic philosophy and which is especially used by politologists and some historians;

b) Theories on nationalism seen as political extremism (C. Mudde, 1986: 225). These theories consider nationalism as associated or sometimes interchangeable with ethnic hatred, militarism, expansionism, aggressive secessionism etc. We mostly see nationalism being opposed to the concepts of liberalism, constitutionalism, even patriotism. This type of perspective on

nationalism is often associated with the studies on the right extreme of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

c) Theories that connect the appearance and development of the nationalism with the process of modernization. These theories are of a majority in the field of present research and are used both by historians and sociologists;

d) The primordialist theories that are against the fact that nation and nationalism are modern historic realities;

e) Theories of the civilization cycles where nationalism is explained as being transitional, perishable as a historic reality. The theories often have as finality the idea of the global statute;

f) History theories that identify nations as being fundamental - preexisting - units and which consider nations as being primary elements of development and / or involution;

g) Social integrative theories that regard nationalism as a surrogate of religion;

h) Theories on the formation of the state which explain nationalism as a product of the centralization and uniformization politics;

i) Theories of the global order (K. A. Rasler, W. R. Thompson, 1989) which, usually, do not take into consideration the internal evolution of the states but theorize on nationalism.

One well known scholar (James Goodman, 1996) has realized the following taxonomy regarding the theories on nationalism: the ethno-national perspective, of the modernization, of the state centralization, of the affirmation of the new social class and, finally, of the unequal development. Other authors, we only mention here Daniel Weinstock (2010), operate the distinction civic nationalism - ethnic nationalism (ethnonationalism) and formulate judgments based on it. Philip Gerrans (2010), talks about the offensive and the defensive nationalism. It only takes this short attempt which synthesizes the theories on nationalism to be a good reason for the question: Why all these theories and *thus* definitions of nationalism? The answer can be only one: nationalism is not necessarily a particularism. It is universal as ideology and vision, it is the basis of the present world order and anyone who would try to imagine today a non national world would soon realize how stable the nation states world is, created in the last centuries. Yet, despite being so general, nationalism manifested itself - and still does - in particular forms. That is why it is easier to talk about nationalisms with different determinations, contents and aspects, chronotopically layered at the modern and contemporary history. The concept of nationalism does not have an easily identifiable close class, which would allow only for one definition to exist. It is proteiform and thus difficult to fix within immutable boundaries. Moreover, nationalism has an inner regeneration force which makes it autonomous as a social force and, at the same time, self sufficient. Essentially, nationalism exists by always underlining the national

identity that it constantly enhances, giving it an anti-entropic, centripetal, stabilizing force. Still, what is at the basis of this historic form of social agglutination that is the nation and which generated this globalizing vocation of nationalism? The main characteristic of nations, which is to be found in most definitions of the nation, is transgenerationality (Anthony D. Smith, 1990, 1991). The feeling of continuous transgenerationality, common memories and the feeling of sharing the same destiny are, reunited, the image of the purpose of the nation. Nations exist in order to project the past (as it is collectively remembered by the community) into the future. They are continuous future projects and have the right to self determination especially for being able to organize and administrate their future. "The nation is an ideal and a memory at the same time, a history and a prophecy, too, a creative prophecy" wrote Henri Hauser (1916: 15) in the second decade of the past century. This is the world order which we live in, and which was forged by history. At this level, nationalism is proteic and has always new shapes, changing just to prevent and stop a change at a general worldwide level.

Starting from this rich theoretic lead, we must underline what appears as being, generally speaking, accepted by most of the specialists in the field:

a) Nations are relatively recent historic realities, which appeared during The Age of Enlightenment or as a consequence of the transformations that generated the new world (capitalism).

b) Nations do not derive from the "natural" order of the world; they are created and create, in their turn. It is obvious that nations are created based on the civil rights, on the common language and religion, on an administrative tradition etc., just like nations themselves can sometimes create such solidarities.

c) Nationalism represents the ideology of the modern state, being the result of the ideas and of the doctrines that created legitimized the new political reality of governing and administering a given territory. In other words, nationalism can be described as a philosophy of the book, the instrument through which the new bureaucrats legitimized their power and ruling in the post-Enlightenment Europe, stating the existence of an identity between elites and masses, the elites having the responsibility of governing the society.

d) Nations are "imagined communities", as Benedict Anderson used to define them. That means that they are, partially, the result of the image on themselves, aside from the other objective "communities", that were historically created (territory, language, culture etc.). Thus, nations include members that have nothing in common, except for their perception of members of the same nation, participants into a common destiny, generated by their belonging into the national group.

e) Nationalism has become an autonomous social force during the last centuries, proving an impressive ability to survive. By means of a true *ars*

*combinatoria*, it interfered and combined with all the great ideologies of the modern world, which it has transcended.

f) We cannot talk about nationalism in general, but only as an element of the nowadays world order - which is built on nation states - without risking an *ad infinitum* debate. Yet, we can analyze and talk about nationalism in different chronotopic sequences. This is also the most likely explanation of the taxonomic and semantic “disarray” that the specialized literature offers.

We shall draw a conclusion about the concept-term nationalism, underlining, again, its proteic character and its versatility.

In the case of the last century Romania, we can easily distinguish a few steps and transformations that nationalism went through, yet without clearly defining the boundaries between these steps and without neglecting the reminiscences and the inertial extensions that are normal in such cases. Still, before going into these steps and into some of their distinctive features, let us mention that, throughout most of the period we are talking about, we can identify a type of nationalism with ethnic valences, if we use the type of taxonomy initially proposed by Walker Connor (1994) and later used by others.

The period before the First World War is that of a militant ethnonationalism that was motivated by the desire to achieve both the ideal and the national interest (unification of the Romanians’ borders into one state), with rough aspects regarding the most numerous minority within the borders of the time - the Jews - almost most of them being deprived of their rights, especially the political ones.

After the unification of Romania, we deal with what Dimitrie Gusti has called, at the time, “the integral nationalism”. We must underline the fact that the national problem and the one connected to it were the ground on which there were ideological battles and scientific debates. Also, the inter-war period coincided with the period when the study of nations and nationalities - now enhanced in number and quantity after the unification of Romania - was systematically and carefully conducted. The triumph of the principle of national self-determination, the new realities and the new order generated by the Peace Conference in Paris have now brought new, strong conceptual connotations, have identified the problem of the national minorities as being one of the most important throughout the world. From a sociologic perspective, the problem of nation and nationalism had all the constant attention and effort of Dimitrie Gusti - obviously influenced by the historicist perspective - and of the sociologic school in Bucharest, of Petre Andrei, Eugeniu Speranția, Nicolae Petrescu, George Emilian Marica, Traian Brăileanu, Nicolae Roșu etc. Achim Mișu identified in a study (A. Mișu, 1984: 518) three main sociological directions which existed in the mentioned period as opposed to the national problematic: the reformist national direction represented by Dimitrie Gusti and his followers; the national cultural direction illustrated by Petre Andrei and Nicolae

Petrescu and the right, legionnaire direction, represented, among others, by Traian Brăileanu and Nicolae Roșu. Dimitrie Gusti identified sociology with the science of the nation, considering the latter to be of a spiritual and voluntary nature. Petre Andrei was the follower of a nationalism that was not xenophobe nor exaggerated. Traian Brăileanu, influenced by Vilfredo Pareto and Vasile Conta - in the first place - sustained the idea of a national autarchy, being the exponent of a nationalism that we can classify as being totalitarian. Aside from many other aspects that could be highlighted, the practice and use of nationalism in politics, economy, society, culture etc., it must be mentioned the fact that the Romanian inter-war nationalism was on the same wavelength as the European general one, becoming increasingly worrying as far as its particularities are concerned, under the overwhelming development of the totalitarian regimes on the continent. Thus, the problem of the change of the juridical institutional framework arose, which stated the statute of the minorities after the altering of the regime that has been established by 1923 Constitution and by the 1924 law on obtaining and loosing nationality (C. Turliuc, 2010: 41).

At the same time, the period just before the Second Worlds War was one for the affirmation of an intransigent, exaggerated nationalism, which had clear racist connotations, generated by the specific conditions of the time.

The post war period also has more stages: one just after - and influenced by - the war and which has a tendency to return to the constitutional regime in 1923, then another one generated by the communist influence dominated by the soviet practice and ideology in the field (with the exception of allowing some minorities - especially Jews - to emigrate during certain periods) and later the after 1965 period until the collapse of communism, when nationalism began to be used as the main instrument for generating legitimacy of the regime (with the so well known influences on minorities).

The last decade of the century is dominated by the attempt to detach from the previous forms of nationalism (with sometimes notable extensions after 1990), by aligning with the European realities regarding the rights of the minorities and with the fresh Western multicultural vision.

Multiculturalism, which is more and more seen as dying (the recent opposition in the West against this ideology has become common and more widely accepted while the results expected by the followers of multiculturalism have proven to be mere illusions. One by one, The United States, Australia, Great Britain, Germany, Holland and France have announced the failure of multiculturalism. Pope Benedict the XVI<sup>th</sup> started his pontificate by denouncing the “dictatorship of relativism”. See a good comment in Bogdan Duca, 2011), is an ideology based on interculturality and mutual understanding, generated by the cultural relativism (Cultural relativism is the theory that says that there are no weaker or stronger civilizations and cultures, but only ones that can be separated by their aggressiveness. Multiculturalism has the role to stop the civilizations

considered to be aggressive from assimilating the civilizations and cultures considered to be peaceful<sup>1</sup> that was claimed and promoted in the Western world during the last decades of the past century. Its connection with the structuring of the power relations (D. Brandt, 1993; D. Rieff, 1993), with the movement of the civil and political emancipation of certain ethnic and racial groups, at first over the ocean and later in the rest of the developed capitalist world, its transformation into an cathartic antidote used by the minorities that had been oppressed in order to avoid the stereotype of their so-called inferiority have interfered with its assumed perennality and have eroded its validity and appeal. Multiculturalism is about the existence of multiple cultures that recognize each other and has a tendency towards a massification of the processes regarding the acculturation, trying to transcend the cultural imperatives of a group by attempting to accommodate all of them. Thus, multiculturalism has become a favorite instrument for finding a balance between the rights of the majority and of the minorities in different societies. Multiculturalism excludes *ab initio* nationalism, patriotism and the affective rapport with the national history, proposing a set of values that are potentially accepted worldwide, but which are also “weak” (European citizenship is a good example). This is how certain phenomena appeared: political correctness, positive discrimination, “relativized” rewriting of the history (sometimes integrated) which has to make room for the defeated but which also has to blame the winner, the attacks on the church, on the family and on the school as fundamental sources for the formation and education within a national dimension. However, like we have seen when talking about nationalism and we identified the fact that it has transcended all ideologies with which it has ever been combined and survived them, when talking about multiculturalism we can plead that national identity is natural and, moreover, which is certainly more powerful than an assumed ideological identity. The theory of the categorical imperative (what goes around comes around), aside from the influences of the magical thinking, opens the way not necessarily towards egalitarianism and homogenization, but, most likely, towards the idea of an acceptable equity in a certain historic context, in our case the fluctuations and meanings of the process of democratization in the context of modernization in the last century. In multiculturalism, all cultures have an equal chance to be known and give a chance to whoever may study them to find themselves in one or more of them. In fact, this calls for tolerance in the name of the rational spirit that has to absolutely dominate. The fact that things are not really like that is obvious. On one hand, tolerance is an unequal relation and, on the other hand, the pure rational spirit exists only in theory, we all represent affect, feeling, emotion and thinking, all at the same time. In conclusion, multiculturalism has consumed its fuel and its potential to attract when confronted with the realities that we see in many ethnically inhomogeneous areas, like the large Western capitals (London, Paris, Berlin are clear examples). The “multicultural soup” is

not easily digested any further and multiculturalism is not a cure for the contemporary world any more.

Last century was not a favorable and gentle one for minorities, as it was not gentle for those who believed, in 1919 - 1920, that, through self-determination and forming national states in the Center and in the East of Europe, an important chapter of their history had received a happy permission, which would be uncontested in the future. It seemed then - after the Peace Conference in Paris - that a whole century, called "of the nationalities", would be kept as a closed chapter in history, after it had functioned as a true melting pot of the modern nations. Yet, those who were in a rush to close the topic generated by this century blinded by the Wilsonian liberal internationalism and by their immediate interests, had forgotten that, besides the "pure" product of the nation states, the deep problem of the national minorities would "poison" the new world order. The inter-war period has clearly proven that, "the twenty years long truce" being the witness of the theorizing of the national minorities' problem (D. Young, 1932), of some serious beginnings in the theory and practice of international law (the activation of the League of Nations and of some great jurists that lived in that time is a strong evidence in this sense), of the first timid attempts to practically solve the problems brought by this delicate issue. The Second World War meant, for Central and east Europe, among other things, the hiding of the real problem of national minorities by covering it with the red veil of Moscow communism, a profoundly antinational and ideology based dystopia. The result of this reality, that covered more than 50 years, was represented by the explosion of the new contemporary nationalisms and of the processes of state dissolution, which intervened in this geopolitical area after the dissolution of communism. Last century Romania was no exception from this itinerary described above in general terms. The evolution of the statute of the minorities in our country intertwined in a feedback relationship with the way in which nationalism in its various forms manifested itself in the political, social and economic life. The last decade of the last century generated a new reality, profoundly influenced by our "return" to Europe, by the above mentioned multiculturalism ideology and by the mimetic effort we made to adapt to the principles and values known as "Euro-Atlantic". As a member of the European Council since 1993, Romania created its own organisms for protecting national minorities. In 1995, our country was the first to sign the Convention regarding the protection of the national minorities, assuming the famous recommendation 1201 (included in the treaty with Hungary). Today we can state that Romania and Croatia are the European states where the system of protecting national minorities is the most advanced on the continent.

Regarding the methodological aspect, a few highlights seem relevant and important to me, in the context of my approach. If we regard nationalism - without the anthropological perspective which brings its xenophobe, exclusivist



sides - as a form of mass sovereignty and we understand and explain its proteic character, we can accept its coexistence with the processes of modernization and democratization. But if we regard nationalism as being simple, just like any other *ism*, we can only see the inherent contradiction between this and the values perceived today as being democratic. Anyway and under any circumstances, as long as the minorities are not ready to perceive themselves more like citizens, rather than persons that belong to an ethnic group that is distinct from the majority one, the potential of a civil conflict is not out of the way. We underline here the implicit value of the distinction made between ethnic and civic nationalism. Is this a vision that makes things clear, which is at the basis of both the theoretical scaffolding of the present principle of subsidiarity - practiced within the European Union - as well the formulation, in the international law of the fourth generation of human rights (including collective rights)? It is obvious that all the European states, before becoming members of an organization (The European Council) or entities with transnational tendencies (European Union), are the result of national projects that had been followed for a long time. The collapse of communism and the altering of the political map of the last decade of the last century continent prove that Europe has become, more than ever, a Europe of nations, within which all nations have reached, at a satisfactorily level, the fundamental objective of having a state of their own. The history refuse in front of an ideological project (the European construction) creates a tension which, as we have seen, leads towards failure soft identities and condemns multiculturalism to an obvious disappearance. Suppressing the national, patriotic discourse, making history relative, blurring national identity leads to an accumulation of “social and national ammunition”, ready to explode with the first opportunity. When in the international public law there is no definition of nation, but only the right of national self-determination, it is hard to accept the idea of a Kosovo or Transnistria-like “nation”. The minorities, in their turn, on the territory on which they hold a majority, often have an inappropriate behavior with the majority, as seen in many situations. The patriotic message that defends the dignity and integrity of a country was not and cannot be considered extremist, like, unfortunately, it happens sometimes. From the perspective of the above mentioned, we suggest, as a possible methodology in the analysis of the rapports between majority and minority the content analysis and the synchronous comparative method. Definitely, the analyses made from the perspective of the principles and values nowadays, overlapped on past realities, even from recent past, only function as gigantic deflectors which constantly take us away from the “core” of the problem.

We can conclude by stating that the study of the rapports majority - minority is still profoundly influenced by the competing ideologies, that, between nationalism in all its forms and multiculturalism, also in all its variants

(liberal, descriptive, normative, critical) there is an inherent tension that is politically determined and that, in fact, ideological cleansing offers us the model of the content analysis and of synchronous comparativism as possible instrument with a higher degree of neutrality in the analysis of these rapports.

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# NOTIONS OF BELONGING IN 20TH-CENTURY ROMANIAN-GERMAN LITERATURE

Orsolya NAGY-SZILVESZTER\*

**Abstract.** *Language and literature have an essential role in determining and conserving ethnical identity. German minorities and German literature from Romania have received great interest in the last few decades, although the ethnical groups denoted by the coined term “rumäniendeutsch” (Romanian-German) consisting of Banat-Swabians (Banater Schwaben), Transylvanian Saxons (Siebenbürger Sachsen), and Bukovina Germans (Buchenlanddeutschen), have been experiencing dramatical decrease in population due to the burdensome heritage of the past. The mass-murders, the deportation, enforced exodus or chosen emigration has had a deep impact on the regional literary creation: a great number of German writers, poets, literary critics born in Romania moved to the Federal Republic of Germany, the German cultural and literary activity in Romania has shrunk extremely and writing the obituary of the Romanian-German literature has been a sore subject of debate. Following some traces of historical and socio-political contexts this paper aims at the investigation of identity-related notions in the field of Romanian-German literature of the twentieth century, trying to elucidate and exemplify notions of minority literature, concepts of island, periphery, border, center, “volksdeutsch”, home or “Heimat” and notions of belonging, the experience of migration and displacement in the literary vision and creation of some German authors born in Romania.*

**Keywords:** *Romanian-German literature, identity, migration, periphery, center*

## 1. Introduction

Literature and language play a central role in forming and conserving ethnic identity. Richard Wagner affirmed that the mirror of a certain minority is their language (Motzan, 1997: 95).

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The German minorities and Romanian-German literature have become the focal point of investigations, this heightened interest resulting in numerous socio-historical studies, articles and books published in the field of literary history and criticism. The present paper proposes an investigation of the identity-notions regarding Romanian-German literature, without having the ultimate goal of creating a round and very detailed panorama.

## **2. An insight into historical background**

In order to review the different terms applied to Romanian-German literature in the domain of literary theory it is necessary to make a short sketch of the historical context regarding the German ethnic groups on the territory of today's Romania. The historical retrospection needs to cover briefly the significant events of immigration and emigration, and the phenomena of forced emigration and deportation as well. The notion of German minority in Romania usually refers to the three main emigrant groups of Germans on the territory of Romania: the Banat-Swabians, the Transylvanian Saxons and the Bukovina Germans, although throughout history other smaller German communities populated some regions of Romania too, such as the Zipser Germans in Maramureş, the Regat Germans and the Dobruja Germans and others. These three large communities in the Romanian space differ from each other through essential elements, for example their historical roots, origins, the time of their emigration process and the target location, the stratification in social classes, religion etc.

The Saxons, the colonists arriving the earliest, emigrated mostly from the Mosel-Rheine region and from Luxembourg in the 12th century. The „German guests” responded to the invitation of the Hungarian king Géza II, and settled down in the province of Sibiu/Hermannstadt. The colonization of the Saxons was justified through economical and military strategies applied in this region. The colonists didn't arrive as one single homogeneous community, but in time these smaller groups formed into a single ethnic group in Transylvania, the language spoken by the Saxons underwent a unification process as well.

In 1224 king Andras II of Hungary issued the Andean Diploma (*Der Goldene Brief der Sachsen, Andreanischer Brief*, referred to as the *Goldener Freibrief*), a document acknowledging the German population's territorial-administrative, juridical and religious autonomy, but also stipulating their duties towards the king. In order to persuade the Saxons to settle down in Transylvania, the king had to offer them more rights and privileges as compared to those in their native land. During the upcoming centuries the privileges of the Saxons were reinforced several times, their rights were gradually extended, as the kings had significant interest to assure the stability of

Saxon community which paid substantial taxes and played an important role in defending the southern border of Transylvania.

Due to this process the Universitatea Săsească (*Universitas Saxonum, Sächsische Nationsuniversität*) is founded which was an autonomous territorial-administrative entity of the Saxons. In 1781 Joseph II introduced the concivility, he took actions of reform, resulting in the dissolution of the Universitas Saxonum. The 19th century represented for the Transylvanian Saxons a period of major changes in political, social and administrative domains, which had a decisive influence on the future course of evolution of this ethnic minority in Transylvania (Vogel, 2002: 11-12).

The history of the Swabians in Banat began a few centuries later than the settlement of the Saxons in Transylvania. These settlers, constrained by the social and economic context, arrived from the west and southwest of the German Empire (Deutsches Reich) being on the search for better living circumstances. In 1718 the Ottoman Empire lost in favor of the Habsburg Monarchy, after this event the great immigration of the Swabians, the so-called “Schwabenzug”, takes place in several stages. During the reign of Charles VI the first wave of immigration to the Banat territory took place, the colonists were granted privileges in order to attract them. The colonization policy was applied further on during the reign of Mary Theresa and Joseph II. As a result of these immigration waves a Swabian population was formed on the territory of Banat (Motzan, 1980: 15).

The Germans arrived to Bukovina starting with the beginning of the 18th century. They were mostly peasants, handicraftsmen and miners, emigrating from Zips, the Rheine-Main region and Baden-Württemberg. The colonization process undertaken by Austria was similar to that in Banat; the multicultural region came to be populated by representatives of different nations and nationalities (Guțu, 2004). Multilingualism was characteristic of this region; the German language was generally acquired by everybody with a higher social rank, becoming a lingua franca to some extent. In 1875 the Franz Joseph University was founded in Czernowitz. The Germans and the Jews were the representatives of intellectual life (Motzan, 1980: 19).

The German minorities didn't form a homogeneous ethnic group at the beginning of their immigrant history, they were later considered to form a rather cohesive community only due to a historical unification process during the 20th century. From a historical point of view the region of Banat became part of Romania only after the collapse of Austro-Hungarian Empire, when Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina formed a union with Romania. These three regions had further on a dense German population. In 1920 it was estimated that approximately 713000 Germans lived on the territory of Romania (Motzan, 1997: 76). It was only after this unification that the term “minoritate germană în România”, “Rumäniendeutsch” Romanian-German was introduced. The term

generally refers to the different German-speaking minority groups in Romania, without making any distinctions among the Saxons, Swabians or the Bukovina-Germans, although these communities had a specific and differenced identity (Motzan, 1980: 10).

After the Second World War the German minority in Romania was dramatically affected due to the fact that many of them had supported the Nazi regime. Being accused of a collective guilt, “Kollektivschuld”, they were persecuted, expelled and deported in labor camps in the Soviet Union. Starting with 1985 approximately 80000 minority Germans were sent to labor camps, many of them never returning home alive. After long years of forced labor in Siberia, those who survived and returned into their villages or towns, found themselves expropriated, being considered enemies of the Romanian people. Those Germans who had enrolled in the Romanian army were not persecuted, nor considered to be a threat to the welfare of the country. Being monitored and tracked by the informers and the agents of the Securitate – the secret service of Communist Romania - throughout long years meant another kind of affliction, these interventions having the ultimate goal of denouncing and eliminating the opponents of the communist regime. In order to manipulate and to daunt the citizens of German ethnicity, and not only, in 1959 the writers’ trial took place in Brasov, numerous representatives of literary and cultural life were inquired, and five German writers were found guilty in conspiring against the communist regime and condemned: Andreas Birkner, Hans Bergel, Wolf von Aichelburg, Harald Siegmund and Georg Scherg (Glajar, 2004: 115-116).

After the Second World War the German population in Romania suffered a drastic decrease. In August and October 1944 were approximately 100000 Germans evacuated, although the majority of Transylvanian Saxons and Banat-Swabians remained. At the beginning of 1945 around 75000 of them were deported into labor-camps in the Soviet Union (Kossert, 2008: 37). If in 1954 there were 385000 Germans in Romania, the census in 2002 marked a population of 60000 individuals of German ethnicity. In between 1977 and 1989 240000 Germans<sup>1</sup> emigrated from the country (Wassertheurer: 56-57) in exchange for money due to an agreement between the German Federal Republic and Romania: “most of them, (...), were ethnic Germans with foreign citizenship, whose ancestors had left the German speaking realm generations or even centuries earlier. Acknowledgement of these Aussiedler as Germans had to do with the long ethnolnational tradition of the one-sided German citizenship law based solely on jus sanguinis, as well as the German law dealing with late consequences of the Second World War (Kriegsfolgenrecht).

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<sup>1</sup> Wassertheurer Peter, *Geschichte der deutschen Volksgruppen in Südosteuropa. Ansiedlung, Nationales Zusammenleben, Vertreibung, Integration*, Verband der volksdeutschen Landsmannschaften Österreichs, Wien, [http://www.donauschwaben.net/download/Deutsche%20Volksgruppen\\_Langfassung.pdf](http://www.donauschwaben.net/download/Deutsche%20Volksgruppen_Langfassung.pdf), accessed on 2 May 2011

Prerequisites for being granted German citizenship were, first of all, proof of German descent and a ‘commitment to Germanness’ as manifested by one’s life history. (...) In Romania, the migration business assumed the character of outright human trafficking worth thousands of millions” (Bade, 2003: 302-303).

From 1988 to 2001 Romania was the third most important country of origin for ethnic German Aussiedler after the Soviet Union and Poland (Alba, Schmidt, Wasmer, 2003: 40). After the fall of Ceausescu’s regime the emigration process from Romania was not as strictly controlled as before and as a consequence approximately 110000 German ethnics left for Germany in 1990. “While Germans (...) may not have become the victims of racism, they did suffer during the twentieth century as a result of nationalism, epitomized in the ethnic cleansing (...). In the case of the Germans, the peace treaties reached at the end of the Second World War meant that German civilization in Eastern Europe, which had evolved over a thousand years, virtually came to an end in the space of just a few years. (...) At the end of the twentieth century two of the ubiquitous minorities, Jews and Germans, have, as a consequence of the above processes, disappeared from large parts of the European continent” (Panayi, 1999: 18-19).

### **3. Investigation of denoting and identification concepts**

In socialist Romania the use of the term minority was avoided as it implied a sense of inferiority or inequality, which contradicted the communist principle of equality. This way the term cohabiting nationality was preferred in order to refer to the non-Romanian ethnic groups.

Eduard Eisenburger (Motzan, 1980: 10) affirmed that the cohabiting nationality is a relatively stable ethnic community with specific characteristics of language, culture, tradition, with a well defined notion of identity, which dwells with other nations or nationalities on the same territory, being integrated in the same economical, political and state organization. The German speaking ethnic groups made up a substantial population on today’s territory of Romania, which could be considered diasporic communities which maintained their relation with Germany in order to strengthen their cultural identity, historical continuity and sometimes even the political influence.

After the union in 1918 the notions “rumäniendeutsch”, the German ethnicity in Romania, or the German minority in Romania came to be applied, terms reflecting a sense of common identity of the different German speaking groups on the territory of a new state, without making any distinctions among the Saxons, Swabians and the Bukovina-Germans, even though these communities didn’t share much before the unification.

The German minority in their country of residence has been often simply referred to as Germans, whereas in Germany they called them emigrants,



Aussiedler, ethnic Germans, Volksdeutsche or alien Germans, fremde Deutsche, terms functioning more or less as alternatives for foreigners, Ausländer. The term emigrants, Aussiedler, are quite paradoxical, denoting the Germans as being the descendants of the emigrants to east, who endeavored to return to Germany during and immediately after the cold War (Glajar, 2004: 1-2).

The term German abroad, Auslandsdeutsche, denoting the Germans in a foreign country, referred to the image of the individual being part of a cultural diaspora outside Central Europe, being connected to the imaginary community of the Germans “living at home” through bonds of language, ethnicity and cultural heritage. The term ethnic German, Volksdeutsch, being a concept often used in the German Empire during the second World War and having a racist connotation, referred to those individuals whose culture and native language had German origins. This term is rooted in the Hitlerian ideology, the German ethnic groups living on the territory of other countries being considered compatriots, the German policy encouraging them to take active part in the Second World War supporting the Nazi troops, than being welcomed as immigrants in Germany (O'Donnell, Bridenthal, Reagin, 2005: 62). After the fall of the Iron Curtain, when the Germans who were ex-citizens of other countries immigrated to Germany, they weren't considered to be the long-lost brothers, but rather contemned as East-Europeans. The German minorities, who struggled hard to keep their historical identity throughout the centuries on Romanian territory, were considered in their homeland as strangers, even intruders.

#### **4. A special kind of literature**

Alfred Kittner (Motzan, 1980: 10) emphasizes the differences of historical development when he defines the Romanian-German literature as the unification of the German literatures from Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina. Starting with the unification in 1918, but especially from the Second World War, the socio-historical context intensifies the sense of shared identity of the German minorities, which facilitated the appearance of a unitary German literature in Romania.

The Romanian-German literature is considered in the domain of literary research to be the fifth German literature next to the literature of the German Federal Republic, that of the German Democratic Republic, Switzerland and Austria. Romanian-German literature generally comprises literary texts written in German starting with 1919 by the representatives of the German minority in Romania.

A remarkable characteristic of the Romanian-German literature in the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is that the majority of its representatives immigrated to Germany, but they are generally still writing about Romanian themes. “This massive migration from East to West also included German-speaking writers who tried to establish themselves

in German-speaking or other West European countries. Although these authors have often been marginalized by mainstream criticism as Easterners and foreigners to Western realities, minority criticism has rarely included or analyzed literature written by German-speaking authors from East Central Europe. Many German critics do not wholeheartedly consider this literature German, because its “Germanness” is defined within the Eastern European cultural and political context; nor is minority criticism addressing the “foreignness” of these authors appropriate, given that their ethnic heritage is German” (Glajar, 2004: 1). The West-German critics have ignored the Romanian-German literature for quite a long time, as they considered these works to be regional, provincial and without real literary value. “The refugees and expellees had to integrate into the post-war polity, economy and society without their memories and experiences receiving a proper place in a common narrative of the areas which received them” (Schulze, 2011: 59).

From a cultural-geographical point of view the German literature in the Romanian space in the interwar period can be seen as a literature being composed from three smaller German literatures with their own cultural centers: Sibiu and Cluj Napoca in Transylvania, Czernowitz in Bukovina and Timișoara in Banat. The communication among these regions was realized through cultural collaboration, the activities of different associations, cultural and political communities, journals and periodicals. The literary life was characterized by regionalism, relative autonomy and differentiated rhythm of development. These interwar German literatures (Motzan, 1997: 80) are approached from the perspective of multicultural regions of transition.

After the Second World War the German communities were forced to endure several measures of repression, among which the mass deportation to the Soviet Union, alienation of properties, withdrawal of civic rights. These measures resulted in a lacerated minority with a decreased number of members. After 1948 the German regional literatures started forming a unitary German literature in Romania, a literature which reached its maturation only in the late 60es, being characterized by two dominant literary trends: traditionalism and modernism.

The concepts of margin, periphery and center were introduced by Gerhardt Csejka in order to refer to the Romanian-German literature. The place at the margin, *Ort am Rande*, refers to the scene of minority history, and the main characteristic of this kind of literature is its heightened dependence on the center. The language of creation, the vehicle of literature is German, and Romanian-German literature has developed certain relations to the German literature. This way it appears as a phenomenon of periphery, which is indebted to a distant German cultural center. Its periphery status becomes even more emphasized as the themes covered by the Romanian-German literature are deeply rooted in the Romanian history; moreover, this literature depended on the interventions and the decisions of the Romanian state (Motzan, 1997: 98-100).

The German publicist Gerhardt Csejka considers that the Romanian-German literature is a literature of a minority. The Romanian-German literature is not a regional literature; it manifests its typical minority relation towards the literature in Germany as regards the language and the literary form, and its relation to Romania with regard to the addressed subjects: the Securitate, the experiences under a communist regime, the question of identity and freedom. The literary topics pertain to Romania, but the linguistic outcome belongs to the German literary tradition, the German language offering the context for education, information and preserving identity. Concerning the classification of this literature the situation is not completely elucidated. In Germany the question has been often raised whether the immigrant Romanian-German writers are willing to write about Germany and the context, reality offered by this country. Herta Müller, an outstanding Romanian-German writer who immigrated to Germany, asserts that she keeps on carrying the topics of her writing, the experiences of her youth and she expresses these memories in German. She pronounces that those who are not interested in her literary creation should not read them at all. She confesses that she isn't able to write about the German reality because she doesn't feel Germany to be her home. Due to this rather complex situation Müller is not completely acknowledged to be a German author, she is rather considered to be a Romanian-German writer or even a Romanian writer of German expression<sup>2</sup> (Ardelean, 2011).

The Romanian-German literature represents a special, ambivalent situation of minority literature. The importance of this literature and the world references are changing, the national cultures as entities of reference don't play as a central role as they used to half a century ago. According to the present tendencies the status of a literature as being national, regional or that of a minority is not authoritative, this way it is not common that a minority literature occupies the central position (Ardelean, 2011)<sup>3</sup>

The cultural identity of such a literature is closely connected to the historical conscience and it is characterized through preservation of the self and the reception of the foreign. Being anchored in history, the constant processing of historical events in the literary texts is the peculiarity of the minority literature; history plays a central role in choosing the literary topics while literature becomes a means of expression of the collective identity (Rădulescu, 2007: 15-16).

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<sup>2</sup> Ardelean Adrian (ed) (2011), *Mein deutscher Nachbar. Vecinul meu german*, broadcast about the Minderheiten und Nationalliteratur conference, organized by the German Cultural Center in Timișoara on 29 March 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_Jbv8ZOmoE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_Jbv8ZOmoE), accessed on 2 May 2011

<sup>3</sup> Ardelean Adrian (ed) (2011), *Mein deutscher Nachbar. Vecinul meu german*, broadcast about the Minderheiten und Nationalliteratur conference, organized by the German Cultural Center in Timișoara on 29 March 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_Jbv8ZOmoE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_Jbv8ZOmoE), accessed on 2 May 2011

## 5. Identity issues and literary representations

The genocide generated by the Second World War was followed by several waves of migration and evacuation, and these historical events resulted in a radical change of the German literary landscape in Romania: Bukovina didn't function as a literary region of German and Yiddish language, a great number of writers and poets emigrated especially to Germany, leaving an extremely weakened German literature in Romania behind. The authors who managed to survive Ceausescu's dictatorship and the process of becoming uprooted are generally deeply affected by the totalitarian trauma. Today the Romanian-German literature indurated in the Romanian context can be approached as a literature of migration and of expression of the cultural identity.

Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn's name marks the beginning of a significant migration of German minority writers to the West. Being attracted to the cultural life in Vienna, he left the region of Banat considered by him to be rather provincial and undeveloped as early as the 19th century. His works are characterized by a constant fight between two forces: the desire to follow the modern literary trends and the need to express his own Swabian identity, his socio-cultural heritage. He himself being an embodiment of migration, Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn introduced the topic of migration in the Danube Swabian literature. From the theme of the Swabian immigration to Banat he created a myth of origin in his work entitled „Der große Schwabenzug”. Introducing the subject of migration in literature he created a crucial moment in shaping the Swabian national identity. The Swabian immigrants are portrayed as creators of culture in a barbarian space, the author expressing this way the missionary consciousness of the settlers on their way to find a new home (Balogh, 2009: 168-200). The colonization history of the Banat region plays an important role in the Swabian collective memory, this row of historical events and the Myth of Banat represents a central source of identity shaping processes (Balogh, 2009: 209-210).

Adolf Meschendörfer, writer, poet and publicist, is a classical personality of the German literature in Transylvania. He is the Saxon writer who expressed through his literary creation the cultural dimensions of the elementary need of different nations to cohabitate in the same space. Preserving his Saxon identity he stepped in the role of the mediator and trailblazer of communication with the culture of other nations. being convinced that the equilibrium among nations and the cultural openness cannot be realized without mutual respect, he becomes an important representative of Transylvaniam. In Meschendörfer's vision the Saxon community can preserve their specific identity only through their presence in the cultures of the neighbouring nationalities. Meschendörfer created the gloomy literary vision of the dissolution of the Saxon existence and of the gradual disappearance of the literature this German ethnic group developed throughout the centuries. Due to

certain national-socialist ideas, Meschendörfer's creation received a warm reception in The German Empire, being considered a great example of reinforcing the general German identity, but His attitude wasn't received correctly, as he emphasized the idea of Saxon immortality and identity through literature, in a wider context of multiculturalism. Realizing that he had been rather used as a propaganda instrument in order to exemplify the preservation of identity through language and creation, Meschendörfer took a refugee in an inner, spiritual migration (Balogh, 2009: 66-86).

Paul Celan and Rose Ausländer were outstanding representatives of Yiddish literature written in German in Bukovina, which as a consequence of the horrors of the Second World War came to be completely destroyed. They were forced to redefine their relation with the Germans and Germany after the Second World War. Celan couldn't reconcile himself to his birthplace and the horrors of history; he immigrated to France and continued to write poetry in German. Ausländer emigrated to the United States of America and later to Germany, realizing the need of a German context in order to write. Being on the search of a second homeland, Ausländer creates the „homeland of the words”, a universe of words in which the poet is able to experience human existence (Glajar, 2004: 2). Paul Celan, considered one of the greatest modern poets, introduced Bukovina as literary topos in the conscience of the present , his poetry centering on the themes of loss, trauma, exile, the destiny of Jewish people, temporality and evanescence (Colin, Rychlo, 2004: 58). The force of his hermetic poetry results from the necessity to express a confession in a language that never has enough words to reproduce what happened. He pushed the German language to the edge of silence, the way the Jews were pushed to the edge of perish (Watanabe O'Kelly: 2008: 449).

Hans Bergel, one of the condemned writers in 1959 in Brasov, is a German writer from Transylvania, who suffered tremendously due to the persecutions, became an embodiment of political tortures and enslavement of literary life in the 50es and 70es. Bearing the burden of the war crimes committed by the Romanian-Germans, he is preoccupied by the question of freedom in a communist era. After the multiple arrests and constant chase he immigrated to Germany, where he became the messenger of the Saxon community from Transylvania, searching for his place in a West-German and Saxon dimension at the same time. As a representative of these adverse poles in a unity, he is on his search to find European answers to Transylvanian problems (Balogh, 2009: 87-96). The European standards, the ideology of freedom and the West had lost to the eastern, Balkanic proceedings, Bergel this way correcting the False positive self-image of West-Germans. As a last representative of the Transylvanism he strongly believes that we all speak a shared, common language, that of anguish and ordeal (Rădulescu, 2007: 107-109). The characters in his novel entitled „Tanz in Ketten”, “The Dance in Chains” demonstrate the falsehood of national

stereotypes, according to which the Germans appeared as implementers of the civilized world with a sense of superiority, speaking a highly esthetic and elaborate language, while The Romanian and Hungarian people were considered barbarians (Balogh, 2009: 87-96).

Eginald Schlattner, priest and writer, represents a unique case in the Romanian-German literature. The literature of migration generally comprises the works of certain authors who decided or were forced to immigrate to a foreign country, in a different socio-geographical space. Schlattner's name stands for an unusual, conditioned, indirect migration: he remained in Transylvania, while his co-nationals and his Saxon congregation left. Schlattner was the main witness of the prosecution in the „German writers' trial”, and after long months of physical and psychic torture he gave in. He was condemned for two years for elision of denunciation of high treason. He was offered the possibility to immigrate to Germany, but Schlattner remained in Romania. He became a successful writer with a late debut on the literary stage; writing on an absolute periphery, the village Roșia in Romania, he made a spectacular entry in the German culture. His books written in German share an autobiographical trait and mirror different aspects of the Romanian-German's life in Transylvania.

In his first novel "Der geköpfte Hahn" (Cocoșul decapitat) The Beheaded Rooster recounts the events of a single day, 13 August 1944, from the Saxon point of view. Presenting the different cohabitating nations in Transylvania, Romanians, Saxons, Szeklers, Jews, Gypsies, Schlattner expresses his own vision about the destiny of the Romanian-Germans. Through the central metaphor of the beheaded rooster, spreading misery, the author reveals a specific approach in order to explain why the Saxons were forced to leave behind their chosen and much beloved homeland: this tragic historical process, the mass exodus occurred due to the fact, that the Saxons followed the Nazi propaganda and betrayed the neighbouring nations, with whom they had shared the same homeland for centuries. In his second novel entitled "*Rote Handschube*" ("Mănușile roșii") Red Gloves, Schlattner describes in a pointed tone his role and betrayal at the political trial in Brasov, which resulted in the condemnation of five Romanian-German writers in the late 50es (Balogh, 2009: 181-186). Schlattner himself confessed, that he couldn't have written his novels in Germany, because an emigrant is torn apart from the present of the country he left and writes only from his memories. "Aceste cărți nu le-aș fi putut scrie in Germania. Știți de ce? Un emigrant a terminat cu trecutul lui. El trăiește numai din amintiri, nu mai are o relație cu prezentul țării pe care a părăsit-o. Aici sunt încă pomii de atunci, soarele ca și acum 50 de ani, sunetele, cuvintele oamenilor, româneasca, săsească, mirosul pamântului... N-aș fi putut să scriu

acest roman într-un bloc din München... Nu, n-aş fi putut. Ar fi devenit un roman de nostalgie. Kitsch...” (Costea, 2004)<sup>4</sup>

In the German literary context Eginald Schlattner appears as a rather exotic character: he writes in German, but is a Romanian citizen, comes from a protestant church in a country with orthodox majority and he didn't emigrate as his co-nationals and members of his congregation did.

Herta Müller<sup>5</sup>, Oskar Pastior şi Richard Wagner, authors from Banat were active under the dictatorship of Ceauşescu, but due to the persecutions of the Securitate they decided to immigrate to Germany. Leaving Romania in 1987, Müller and Wagner expressed their wish to be accepted as political refugees and not as ethnic Germans. Herta Müller distempered not only the German immigration authorities, but also the German critics, who didn't have sufficient knowledge of the quotidian problems from Romania during the communist era. Settled down in Germany, Herta Müller continued to write novels and essays on Romanian topics, maintaining the distance from the contemporary German reality.

During a discussion in Marburg Wagner expressed his frustration caused by the ignorance of people in Germany concerning the Germans deriving from east-central Europe and the socio-political aspects. He finds it painful to have to explain constantly regarding his background, the Banat region and the historical context of the German minority in Romania: “Ich bin seit zweieinhalb Jahren hier und erkläre immer wieder, woher ich komme [...] und wenn ich sage, ich komme aus dem Banat, dann muß ich selbstverständlich anfangen zu erklären, was das Banat ist, wo das liegt. [...] Ich muß dann erklären, daß das zum Habsburgerreich gehörte. Ich wundere mich auch nicht, daß man nicht weiß, wie das mit dem Habsburgerreich war. Dann fange ich an zu erklären, wie das mit dem Habsburgerreich war. Dann fange ich an zu erklären, daß im 18. Jahrhundert aus dem südwestdeutschen Raum die Leute dorthin verschifft worden sind. [...] Die Leute sind sehr freundlich und hören mir zu, und nächste Woche bin ich dann bei einer Veranstaltung, und dort werde ich wiederum gefragt, wieso ich aus dem Banat komme”<sup>6</sup> (Glajar, 2004: 115-116).

Herta Müller's creation is characterized by an outstanding esthetic innovation and by the chosen topics: her works are literary documents of the political persecutions, the sufferings during the communist dictatorship. “Language is not a linguistic, but rather a cultural barrier; people in Germany express Western realities, which remotely correspond to those in Romania.

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<sup>4</sup> Costea Oana (24 April 2004), “*Din acest loc eu nu ma clintesc*”, <http://www.jurnalul.ro/special/special/din-acest-loc-eu-nu-ma-clintesc-69738.html>, accessed on 3 May 2011

<sup>5</sup> laureate of the Nobel Prize in literature in 2009

<sup>6</sup> Solms Wilhelm (1990), *Nachruf auf die rumäniendeutsche Literatur*, Hitzeroth, Marburg, cited by Glajar Valentina

Processing new information through the filter of the familiar Romanian experiences is part of the transitional period of adjusting to German society. The language is familiar, yet foreign. The Romanian *HINTERSINN* (deeper meaning) constitutes the deeper layer of Müller's cultural identity, which positioned her in a specific historical and political Romanian context. To understand Herta Müller's work, critics must accept and acknowledge all aspects of her cultural identity, because her uniqueness lies in the juncture of the Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German presence and the style in which she imagines and gives expression to them" (Glajar, 2004: 152).

Many of her characters are German ethnics, who leave Romania in order to return in the homeland of their ancestors. But when arriving to Germany they don't find the expected new home, but undergo a new search-process, mirroring historical moments, when their ancestors left Germany for the East in order to find a better place for living. The Banat-Swabians, who have been struggling to preserve their identity for more than two centuries, find themselves in a peculiar situation: at the moment of their return to their old homeland they are considered to be strangers.

The Swabian, Romanian and German dimensions reflected in Müller's works need to be received in their specific historical and geopolitical context. Her characters are fictional, but their lives well from the author's own experiences. The author draws attention to the cultural and political history of the Banat-Swabians, expressing her own critical approach towards their ethnocentrism, the patriarchal hierarchy and their collaboration with the Nazi Germany. At the same time she portrays the gloomy atmosphere and the fear generated by the communist regime, with the horrific consequences, even though Müller is distanced in time. "Well, I think that the heavy weight ... that literature goes to where the weight is. And I lived under this dictatorship for over thirty years and that is where the injuries and the theme are ... I did not choose this theme, the theme always seeks me out. This theme I shall not ... I am still not rid of this theme. And one has to write about the things that occupy one incessantly. And it's important, dictatorship ... for unfortunately that dictatorship was not the very last. Regrettably, there are still so many in the world"<sup>7</sup>(Müller, 2010: 7-8).

The cultural identity of the Swabians appears this way as an imposed identity by an outer political force and the conservative misconception of the Swabians to preserve their own identity through self-isolation, a fossilized archaic lifestyle and the negation of the need to change. "Leaving Romania for Germany Müller left a community in which she was a member of a linguistic

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<sup>7</sup> Part of a telephone interview with Herta Müller immediately following the announcement of the 2009 Nobel Prize in Literature, 8 October 2009. The interview was recorded by Marika Griehsel. minutes after the announcement and conducted in Müller's native German.



minority and entered a state in which her mother tongue was the common language. She thereby constitutes a counterpoint to the classic model of exile; her case exposes the limitations of the figure of the exile as outsider by reminding us that notions of belonging are elusive and often lose their consistency on closer scrutiny. Her ambivalent status as a critic of the conservative community of her birth, an exile from a country in which as a member of a linguistic minority and a victim of state persecution she was arguably never at home, and a cultural foreigner in her adopted country of Germany foregrounds the notion of the author in exile as a value-laden concept that borrows from and reinforces often competing narratives of belonging. Her work is a reminder that the conception of exile as a traumatic rupture from a unitary culture is to some extent a narrative that rests for its force on the construction (and thereby fictionalization) of this unitary culture, a process that separation enables” (Cooper, 2009: 475).

In her novel entitled „Atemschaudel”, Herta Müller writes for the first time about the concentration experience of the ethnic Germans from Romania, deported in 1945 to labor-camps in the Soviet Union. Müller presents in this novel of extraordinary poetics and intensity five years from Leo Augberg’s life, based on a process of meticulous investigations, including the discussions with Oskar Pastior, a compatriot who immigrated to Germany after being deported himself in a labor-camp to the Soviet Union. Pastior, who died in 2006, was a highly appreciated poet in Germany, through his poems and translations becoming a mediator between the German and Romanian cultures. He became an outstanding representative of experimental poetry, a dissector and architect of language, revolting in his poetry against the meaning of the words, creating a coded poetical language. He suffered enormously due to the pressures of the Securitate and was forced to become an informer of the Department of State Security from 1961 to 1968 under the cover name Otto Stein, after being persecuted for four years and accused of homosexuality and Anti-Soviet writings. His collaboration with the Securitate came to be discovered only after his death, leading to a multitude of scandals in literature circles in Germany. The general conclusion drawn proposes the task of a new interpretation of Pastior’s poetry, as the newly revealed dimension of his creation has been kept a secret so far.

## **6. Conclusions**

The Romanian-German literature is a mirror of a specific cultural and ethnic identity, revealing the numerous aspects related to the notion of Germanness in Romania. Being a highly controversial literature which is difficult to be classified, the reception and the interpretation process of these literary works undoubtedly needs a multicultural approach. The Germanness of

this literature is deeply rooted in an East-European cultural, historical and political context.

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## NATIONAL MINORITIES IN ROMANIAN PRESS FROM ORADEA. INTERWAR PERIOD

Gabriel MOISA\*

**Abstract.** *The theme related to Jews, as it is found in the Western Gazette, aims mainly at aspects of the Jewish community life of Oradea and the inter-ethnic and inter-confessional relationships between the three main communities of Oradea city: Hungarians, Jews and Romanians. The Western Gazette offered to the inhabitants of Oradea, among others, ample images on the existing divergences from the Hungarian and Jewish communities in Oradea and other cities in Transylvania, although the Jews from here were mostly of Hungarian culture. It can be observed a gradual spacing between the two communities under the conditions their interests began to be little by little others*

**Keywords:** *Romanians, Jewish, Hungarians, economic crisis, Oradea, the Western Gazette*

Since its very beginnings, the daily paper of Oradea the *Western Gazette* gave much attention to the Jews from Oradea and Bihor County, the more as that here there was a great number of representatives of this community. The Jew was an interesting character, with different habits of the other minorities. That's why he was carefully analyzed by the press of Oradea.

The *Western Gazette* offered to the inhabitants of Oradea, among others, ample images on the existing divergences from the Hungarian and Jewish communities in Oradea and other cities in Transylvania, although the Jews from here were mostly of Hungarian culture. It can be observed a gradual spacing between the two communities under the conditions their interests began to be little by little others. It is possible that the attitude of some of the Hungarian community leaders to have been influenced by the politics of some political parties in Hungary which had clearly anti-Semitic positions.

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On 18<sup>th</sup> March 1930, the *Western Gazette* published an article entitled “*The Hungarians against the Jews*”, pointing out that “*the Hungarians of race*”, i.e., those who had the Hungarian as mother tongue, were discontent because the Hungarian Party branch in Oradea was in Jewish hands. In front of the formation in 1930 there were to be found Eugen Kotzo, lawyer and owner in Cadea, President, and Gustav Kövér, Vice President, who had the *advantage* of a certificate of Hungarian nationality. They began the action of taking out the party of the Jews’ hands whereas they appreciated that they were not led by a real Hungarian feeling. The Kotzo-Kövé’s group was an intransigent and chauvinistic one what that provoked for many years a lot of animosities with the Romanians and Jews of the town (Zainea, 2007: 253-254).

Grouped around the newspaper *Magyar Szó*, part of the Hungarian population of Oradea began to militate to remove the Jewish community. This paper, presented as being the true body of the Hungarian party, got a serious anti Semitic mark and tried to take the importance of the Jewish-Hungarian press out of the Hungarian people’s life: “*The Jewish press was the tool of the Hungarian chauvinism in order to gain sympathies then when they were calling for an activity for the social harmony. The Jewish confreres have beaten their chest with fists blowing up their Hungarian feelings. Now other fists hit their chest. I do not commiserate with them. Maybe they will come to their senses!*” (Ungurii contra evreilor, 1930: 1) - the article editor’s conclusion was.

According to the *Western Gazette* the Jews of Oradea started not to show an unconditioned friendship towards the Hungarian people of Oradea. The paper has also presented amply this state of things. Thus, on the occasion of the Catholic Easter in the spring of 1931, the Jewish traders of Oradea kept their shops closed. This was in agreement with the demands of the Hungarian community’s leaders, but, according to the opinion of the Gazette’s editor of Oradea, Alter Scotus, contravened to the spirit of the Jewish traders who were “*self-restrained by the commercial interest*” (*Ibidem*). Closing the shops meant an insult for the Romanian people – mentioning that on the occasion of the Romanian Easter - this did not happen. As a response, a Jewish trader said that they did so, rather out of consideration for the Hungarians, who they lived with “*for a long time together*” (*Ibidem*). These attitudes were, however, increasingly rare, fact that could be observed in other positions displayed by some members of the community. Thus, another said that most of the Jewish merchants closed their shops during the Hungarian holidays under the pressure of the terror exercised on them by some powers of the “*Hungarian irredentism*” (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3). Moreover, on several occasions the paper presented threats addressed to the Jews of Oradea who - after the Great Romania has been carried out - began to align more and more to the new political realities. Not for a few times, the Jews have been warned about the return of the Hungarian domination “*that will punish all those who denied it* (Hungarian minority our note G.M.) *in one way or*

another” (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3). Alter Scotus, finding that most of the local Jewish traders have addressed a request to the Romanian Orthodox Bishopric of Oradea requiring to be allowed to keep the shops open during the Romanian paschal holidays, excepting the Sundays, because, they said, “*they can not put up with so many holidays: Jewish, Hungarian and Romanian, which cause them great damages*” (Ibidem), he flared up in an ample article accusing them that they despise the Romanians as they want to open their stores under the conditions that during the Catholic holidays that did not happen.

The *Western Gazette* consistently reflected the more visible divergences between Hungarians and Jews, either they were from Romania or from abroad. The same Alter Scotus, in the article of 20<sup>th</sup> January 1931 entitled “*A good lesson for the Hungarian Jews*” (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3), observed the protest of the Jewish parliamentarian of the Romanian Parliament, Ebner Mayer of Cernăuți, inserted into the pages of the newspaper *Népunk* of Oradea, directed against the fact that the Jews were kept under the Hungarian interests. The intervention was due to the presumed pressures that the Jews from Czechoslovakia would have been kept under during the census which had happened in this country on the purpose of declaring them as Czechoslovakians; pressures also reported by the Union of the Hungarian Jews in Budapest. Against this situation was the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia, sending a protest to the League of Nations. The Union of Jews in Budapest made common cause with the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia requires. The Senator Ebner Mayer criticized the attitude of the Jews in the Hungarian Jews Union: “*Mr. Senator Ebner Mayer draws a harsh lesson to the union of the Jews in Hungary, which is blindly and without reason serving the Hungarian maneuvers from Budapest. He, on the basis of the articles written by the president of the “Jewish National Council” of Czechoslovakia, remarks that the interferences attributed to the Czechoslovakian state are of a fantasy field and that in Czechoslovakia are very few those who are called Hungarian Jews. Then he says the followings: “I’d understand the irritation from Budapest, if the Czechoslovakian authorities would force the Jews to declare themselves Czechoslovakians. But, to protest against the fact that the Jews are declared Jews, this is the highest degree of Jewish humiliation”.*

“*This is the same with us in Romania*”.

The Senator Ebner Mayer continues:

“*Presuming that the Czechoslovakian authorities would have indeed exerted pressure on the Jews, as they declared themselves Jewish minority - this wouldn’t be an unbelievable and unacceptable thing. The census prescribes under punishment, that only the truth to be declared. So it is with us in Romania. Since the law has given us the permission to declare ourselves Jews, we must live with that right. The Hungarian Jews from Budapest throw their point of view that the Jews who have belonged to the former Crown of the Saint Stephen are Hungarians on the basis of the language, culture and sentiment. Giving as example the United States with a population of 120 million, the culture is English and although the people are not English. It belongs to a nation only by the virtue of origin. The Union*

*propagates the Hungarian assimilation and denies the existence of a Jewish people. In this case it should be demolished any dividing wall, which is to be found in the path of assimilation. The Union of the Hungarian Jews but just by its barren existence, bones up that for defending its special interests, the Jews must unite under the name of Jewry. We, the Jews in Romania, beside the recognition of Romanian citizens, are able to record as positive as against the government, that at the census we had the right to declare ourselves as belonging to the Jewish ethnic minority”* (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3).

Taking into account these realities, Ebner Mayer considers that *“The League of Nations should reject undoubtedly as inappropriate, the protest of the Union. The writers of the Jewish history in any case will not countersink this protest on the brilliant page of the history. On the contrary ... “* (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3).

Finally, Alter Scotus exculpates himself beware of the possible anti-Semitic cataloging of the self-person. Every time the arguments are offered by the Senator himself of Cernăuți: *“If I had written myself the above phrases, I would certainly have been immediately accused to be tendentious. But they are written by a senator, a name that plays a leading role in the Jewry’s life from us. Now, I should understand that he wrote them in the terms of the Jewish interests. But they are well received, firstly to show the calumnies launched by the Hungarians regarding the census, and secondly to show to his fellow countrymen that they are also citizens of the state where they live in and they are not allowed to put themselves in the service of the actions to denigrate the state, especially when they come from the outside enemies (and we have plenty of enemies inside). The Jews who play on the chord of the Hungarian chauvinism, in the opinion of the Senator Mayer, are totally erroneous. That when they play to be Hungarians are not honest, it is proved by their annoying when they are thrown in front an anti-Semite. Then they forget that they are Hungarians and Christians - as far as we know, the Hungarian people have been Christianized a thousand years before. They want however, to be both Hungarians and Jews, to speculate two situations - plus the Romanian citizenship. But that cannot be. As the Jews claim that their special interests to be protected, so we pretend also that their attitude not to be harmful to the state and therefore not to be attached to the work of black and undermining of our country. The Romanian state never needs Romanians spoofed by census and statistics or by statements grasped by terror. The Romanian nation possesses the figure that entitles it to master forever over this country and itself is in a position to state thoroughly before mankind. But the State must have in front of it a clear statement of its citizens of other nationality. This is firstly in the interests of the minorities, such as it will not be able to care about them as appropriate. For, when a father does not know his children, certainly he cannot care about them”* (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3).

Early in the June of 1931 there took place the parliamentary elections. On this occasion came again highlighted the problems existing between the Hungarians and Jews, as the Jews of Oradea and not only manifested more and more crystallization tendencies of an own political position. In an article appeared in the *Western Gazette*, on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1931, entitled *“Between Jews and Hungarians”* signed by the same Alter Scotus, he signaled that *“the Jewry*

*made itself a party and tried to break off from the Hungarian people*” (Alter Scotus, 1931, 5), this dividing the Jewish community into two. Some embrace this point of view while others consider that the Jews must remain further on loyal to the Hungarians’ political position. Strange is, in the opinion of Scotus Alter, the position of the President of the Jews Union in Romania, Dr. Wilhelm Filderman, who was asking the Jews of Transylvania to be close to the Hungarian minority. Despite of this position were enough Transylvanian Jews, including those of Oradea, who were saying themselves that “*if the Hungarians had the Hungarian party, why the Jews had no their Jewish party? They want to tear themselves away from the tutelage of the Hungarian chauvinism and to raise a separate organization, to represent only the Jewish interests as a minority distinguished from the Hungarian minority. To have their own Jewish representatives in parliament and be always presented as Jewish minority*” (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3).

The *Western Gazette* has allocated important spaces to this reality that seemed very interesting taking in view the excellent relations existing between the Jews and Hungarians before. The newspaper reflected the fears of the Hungarian minority in front of this situation. “*The Hungarians are desperate*”, it claimed. The cause should be “*the separation of the Jews from the Hungarian company, the number of Hungarians is sensible decreasing, as it is known that the Jews of Transylvania were considered by them as “Hungarians” and shown as often as possible the Hungarian cause wanted to prove the numerical importance of the Hungarian element from us. On the other hand, the “Hungarian” intellectuals waste their rows, because most of them are composed by Hungarian-Jews. Even the Hungarian chauvinism is threatened to weaken, because those who were fluttering it better were also Jews exaggerating their Hungarianism to gain the Hungarians’ confidence. Think about what would happen to the Hungarian press of Transylvania if the Jews separate from Hungarians, when it is known that the press is entirely in the Jews’ hands*” (Alter Scotus, 1931: 2).

Alter Scotus surprised very well the Transylvanian reality in this regard. The phenomenon was increasingly evident. In the Jewish community there weren’t any major currents well outlined in this regard? According to the opinion of the *Western Gazette* “*the Jews are at this time divided into two camps: a Jewish one and a Hungarian one. The last has the support of the Hungarians of race, so that it fights noisily. It is not known but if it will not weaken every day until finally the Jews will incorporate all in the Jewish party frameworks, as it seems the current was powered off. We will carefully watch this fight because it opens a new era in the minority life in Transylvania about we are interested very close*” (Alter Scotus, 1931: 2).

In the same article there have been also presented the first tensions on this extremely sensitive issue between the Jews and Hungarians in Oradea:

“*How does the struggle go between the Jews and Hungarians in Oradea?*”

*In regard of the fight between the Jews, Hungarians and Hungarians and Jewish Hungarians of Oradea and Bihor County, we have noticed characteristic signs, that let us to visualize that it had come further than we could imagine. Among the Jewish- Hungarian*



*newspapers of the town only two of them took an accurate violent position against the Jewish party. Both of them belong to Mr. Hegedus Nándor who is directly interested in the matter, being the head of the list of the Hungarian party and the leader of this party. It is understood that he does not agree to lose the votes and the possibilities of deputation that currently he has. His newspapers accompanied by the Magyar Szó opened an angry campaign against the new Jewish party, labeling them as Jewish traitors who are standing away from the Hungarian party.*

*The other two Jewish-Hungarian newspapers have retained an impartial attitude. They have not carried away neither of the Hungarian party nor the Jewish's party, that were knocking its head against the other fluttering ones against the others. So, the Jewish public was allowed to adopt its attitude that it thinks it fit to" (Alter Scotus, 1931: 2).*

Interesting is that in this dispute have also occurred the national leaders of the Jews. Among them is to be mentioned Wilhelm Fildermann too, the president himself of the Jews Union in Romania and advocate in Bucharest. Being in Arad, at the end of May of 1931, Wilhelm Fildermann delivered an interview to the Hungarian newspapers in town, on that occasion he was surprisingly shown to be in disagreement with the position of some consanguineous of his who wanted to benefit in Transylvania of an own identity different of the Hungarian one. According to him, a party would be in the disadvantage of the Jews in Romania, illustrating his sayings with the example of the Jewish party in Greece and that one in Poland that have isolated the Jews from Greeks and Polishes so that the last were boycotting them.

Wilhelm Fildermann said: *"I do not find to be a beautiful thing that the Hungarian Jewry to deny that nation that lived centuries together with, participating to its joys and its pains"* (Alter Scotus, 1931: 2). The position of the leader of the Jewish community in Romania seems at least strange since he exhorted the Jews of Transylvania *to be Hungarians and not Jews*, as Alter Scotus underlined.

However, in the summer of 1931 in Oradea, was founded a local branch of the Jewish party, taking as presidents I. Mittelman and the lawyer Dr. Bárdoş Imre, and as general secretary the doctor Klein Ernő.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1931, were held parliamentary elections in Romania, which, according to the *Western Gazette*, *"they have thrown into the public opinion a trail of light on the mind of the Jewry of Transylvania that always seemed to be suspicious"* (Alter Scotus, 1931: 5). The Jews of Oradea, like others in Transylvania, tried on this occasion one's own political orientation by separating of the Hungarian party. This was clearly expressed by tabling of separate lists of candidates by the Jewish party. Consequently, the *Western Gazette* has seized the commencement of some tensions between Hungarians and Jews, especially between the Jews of the Hungarian Party and the Jews of the Jewish Party. The Hungarians saw their influence in the life of the town at risk because the votes of the Jews were divided Jewish votes, a significant part going to the Jewish party. The Hungarians were losing in this way, important positions in the Municipal Council. So, it was proved once again that a part of the Jews of Oradea wanted

to extort them from the Hungarian tutelage and found a separate organization to represent only the Jewish interests as a minority different from the Hungarian minority. It was that part of the Jewry willing to accept the political realities of the Great Romania.

The Hungarians' leaders have remained insensitive to this situation that could become dangerous for the Hungarian political pioneers who saw their positions threatened by then. They were entering a new stage of the disputes between the Jews and Hungarians in Oradea and Bihor County, the problem being exposed in the local Jewish-Hungarian newspapers, mainly in those patronized by Hegedüs Nándor, member of the Jewish community in Oradea, but still faithful to the policy of the Hungarian Party. Hegedüs Nándor was the most influent personality in the range of the Hungarian press in Oradea. He was the patron of the newspapers *Nagyvárad*, *Estilap* and later, after Fehér Deszö's disappearance of the *Nagyvárad* *Napló*. Hegedüs Nándor was also leading an enterprise of importing books including a bookshop. In the same local with the shop there was also working a press office owned by the same Hegedüs Nándor (I. Horváth, 1923: 186).

All the newspapers patronized by him harshly criticized the attitude of that part of Jews of Oradea and Bihor County who wished the political separation from the Hungarians by constituting an own political formation. The *Western Gazette* has reflected on this state of things by presenting the dispute in its pages to inform its readers. In the issue of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1931, the *Western Gazette* was cutting in one of its numbers one of the most violent attacks of the press patronized by Hegedüs Nándor towards the Jews who wanted the spacing from the interests of the Hungarian community. Those who have done this step were called "*Jewish traitors who stand away from the Hungarian party*" (Alter Scotus, 1931: 5). In fact, as the signatory of the article was seizing, Hegedüs Nándor had a direct interest in maintaining the Jewish-Hungarian block of Oradea and Bihor County who was the first on lists of the Hungarian Party at the elections from the beginning of the summer of 1931. In the conditions that the block was breaking, the Hungarian Party was threatened directly by reducing the number of votes sent to it as the Jewish Party submitted the lists separately. Thus, it is also explained the violent attitude of the press patronized by it directed to those who advocated the idea of a Jewish party to defend directly the interests of the community. That the things have not been like that was also confirmed by the attitude of the other Hungarian newspapers in Oradea which kept an impartial attitude giving to the Jewish public the opportunity to adopt its attitude that it thinks it fit to.

According to the *Western Gazette* the relations between the Jews and the Hungarians were not anymore as cordial as they were before World War I, whether it was about Romania or Hungary. The *Western Gazette* reflected this reality bringing as arguments a number of facts occurring even in the neighboring

country, Hungary. Thus, in its number of 17<sup>th</sup> September 1929, was given the example occurred in the Hungarian town Ráb where at the beginning of a new school year the Jewish students were excluded from the classes in which the Hungarian students were learning. According to the *Western Gazette*, the respective measure was taken by the school manager. He would have ordered the departure of the Jewish children from their Hungarian mates establishing a center with a special program for the former. Besides the first three primary classes there have been set up three special sections where all the Jewish students have been transferred. Thus, a total of 86 Jewish students have been separated from their mates. This measure has caused a great opposition among the Jewry of Hungary and was rejected by the Hungarian *progressive* press (Elevii evrei sunt excluși: 1929: 4). There was, however, according to the *Western Gazette*, also another part of the press in Hungary, which approved the gesture, asking the system to be expanded to other schools, too (Elevii evrei sunt excluși: 1929: 4). The manager motivated the measures that have been taken by appeal to the students' interest. It is about that "*the Jewish students would celebrate also other 6 holidays, so that they could remain behind with their studies related to the Hungarian students. In order to remove such a situation, it was necessary to change the program*" (Elevii evrei sunt excluși: 1929: 4).

We find another example of this kind in the *Western Gazette* of 16<sup>th</sup> November 1933. It would have happened, in accordance with the daily paper of Oradea, on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1933 in Debrecen, Hungary where the Hungarian students would have closed the gate of the Faculty of Letters, of the local University as for the Jewish students may not attend the courses. After the courses they opened the gate, and when the Jewish students have entered the University the Hungarians rushed on and beat them, so that "*the Jewish students could escape only with great difficulty, with their coats and hats torn*" (*Studentii evrei bătuti*: 1933: 5). The *Western Gazette* also remembered that the Rector of the University promised to take measures so that this situation not happens again. With all the promises, the Jewish students were incredulous into the Rector's words "*because lately these have been always subjected to ill-treatment by the Hungarian students*" (*Studentii evrei bătuti*: 1933: 5).

Finally, there have been also given other examples of this kind. One of them deserves to be mentioned, however, in the terms of the light that is substantially by the nature of the position held by Hegedüs Nándor as against the Jewish-Hungarian relations in Oradea and Romania in general. The *Western Gazette* speculated the trouble of Hegedüs Nándor's son who attended the courses of the Economic Academy in Budapest. Finding that he is a Jew, his Hungarian colleagues assaulted him and shouted in an unspeakable manner: "*out from the Hungarian universities of the slug Jews*" (*Băiatul fostului deputat*, 1934: 2). According to the *Western Gazette* the applied correction was so serious that he needed several days of hospitalization. The conclusion of this adventure, as

it was expressed by the signatory of the article, was a very harsh one: “*The student’s father, i.e., Mr. Hegedüs, former flagman of the Hungarian people of Oradea, went to Budapest and brought his kid home in this Romania blasphemous by him*” (*Ibidem*). Too harsh with the policy of the neighboring country as against the Jewish community, the *Western Gazette* concluded that “*out of the trouble of Mr. Hegedüs’ boy it can be noted that Hungary despises the Jews even when they play to be Hungarians in the successional states*” (Băiatul fostului deputat, 1934: 2). The assertion wanted rather is a warning for the former deputy and press employer Hegedüs Nándor as against his attitude in the dispute between Jews and Hungarians, and his position vis-à-vis the Romanian population of the city of Oradea.

Accrediting the idea that the relations between Jews and Hungarians are far from what they have been once, the *Western Gazette* published on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1931 under the title *A young Jew turns at Oradea the clouts received at Seghedin* (Asan, 1931: 4), a new material about “the old and cordial Jewish-Hungarian friendship”. The episode told by the editor of the *Western Gazette*, Asan, had taken place on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1931, participating two young people, a Hungarian and a Jew: “*The young man Paul Farkaș, the son of the President of the Commercial Hale of Oradea attended last year the courses of the university of Seghedin, in Hungary (you know: there is only there where he has future). There was also studying the young Csapo, the son of the local engineer Csapo. You can imagine what joy for these young men from Oradea, when they have met just in Seghedin, at the same university. Especially Csapo was very happy when he saw Farkaș, exclaiming: - What, you, Jewish boy, are you here, too? And, because of his joy he sprang at Farkaș – but, you can see that meanwhile they forgot that the joy of reviewing is manifested by embracing and kissing - and he has hit over his cheek several student hands. The young Farkaș wobbled a little but he has involved his trembling hands in his pocket. He had nothing to do. He had to declare to be happy about the beautiful demonstration of love that his compatriot did it to him. The day before yesterday, just one year after, the two young people met on the streets of their native town and wanted to celebrate well the last year meeting. But now there was the turn of Farkaș to give the honors. With the same joy Farkaș sprang at Csapo, gave back the gifts of the last year and he didn’t forget to add some more bruises of bat, as rate of interest.*

*I forgot to mention that this year the young Farkaș came back home as a licensed in pharmacy so that it was no longer necessary to return in autumn to the University of Seghedin, where he could meet Csapo or another Hungarian student who could have found about the enjoyment from Oradea. I also think that the reader has observed out of the above lines that Csapo is Hungarian and Farkaș is Jew. And, as because between the Hungarians and Jews there is an old and cordial friendship, it is also manifested certainly in this way a little bit more exuberant”* (Asan, 1931: 4).

Described with humor, especially with irony, the episode wanted to be one to argue once the dissensions clearer and clearer between the two communities, divergences that occurred by including the violent reactions of those involved. For the signatory of the article, Asan, it was very clear, as he

expressed in the final, that between the two communities there are irreconcilable positions generated, in fact, by opposite purposes, by the fact that a part of the Jewry of Transylvania wanted to promote the own interests through own political and economic forces, not by means of the Hungarians and of the Hungarian Party, as the Hungarians would manifest a certain contempt as against the Jews: *“I have always shown what in fact the Hungarians’ love for the Jews was reduced at, and as one could see of the present case, we were not cheated and we wouldn’t be refuted. The Hungarians use the Hungarian Jews only for Hungarian purposes, but ultimately they hate them and despise them. We don’t cry for the Jews as they themselves are guilty. On the contrary, we’d like to happen this to them more often so, finally to open their eyes or to forsake the speculation of the dissimulation. I suppose the young Farkaş will be so cavalier as to admit in the privacy of his thought, that I am right”* (Asan, 1931: 4).

Closely with the representatives of the Jewish minority of Oradea and Transylvania as well, Asan urged them to be more attentive to the Hungarians of the whole Transylvania in parallel with changing the attitude towards Romania, a state in which, unlike the popular one, Hungary, enjoyed a much better position. At the same time, he signaled that the Jews would have all interest not to declare themselves anymore Hungarians in Transylvania whereas this fact supports once again the Hungarian minority which gives the impression that it is more numerous than it is in reality, thus weakening the consistency of their communities: *“What moral can the Jews conclude from Farkaş’s happening? However, the episode (with repetition) can serve as a good lesson for the Jews of Transylvania, who do not cease to clap the spurs on the Hungarian chauvinism. Here, with us, they play to be Hungarians, but when they pass over the border, there in Hungary, they are slapped and howled down by the Hungarians. The young Farkaş, for example, didn’t want to pursue the university studies in Romania, as he was stopped, I’m sure about it, by his philo-Hungarian feelings. He went to Hungary, scurried by the Hungarian patriotic feeling, for which he received immediately the reward that he deserved. And how affectively are the Jews received in Hungary, we can infer it not only from the clouts the young Jewish of Oradea has caught, but also that that he had not the courage to revenge on the Hungarian territory, but only on the Romanian territory, under the protection of the domination that he despised in his Hungarian Jew’s conscience. You can see that the Jews in Romania, however, feel more secure, more at their ease. How can they say on the other hand, that in our country the Jews are persecuted? How can Hungary ride in front of the face of abroad on the shoulders of the Jewish Hungarians in Transylvania?”* (Asan, 1931: 4)

The anti-Semitic disorders caused by the Hungarian Christian students in Budapest and the anti-Semitic movement of the Hungarian students began also to take effect in the Jewish circles in Transylvania. It was known that a part of the Transylvanian Jews were among the most fervent supporters of the Hungarian cause, *“almost more chauvinistic Hungarians than the Hungarians”* (Alter Scotus, 1933: 3). *“You’d have the impression that the Jews and Hungarians in*

*Transylvania are good brothers and love each other so much that they can not be disunited. And look, here in Budapest the Judeans are beaten into fits on the streets and thrown out of the university halls by the Hungarian Christian students”* (Alter Scotus, 1933: 3), Alter Scotus noted in the *Western Gazette* on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1933.

It seems that something is changing, however, in the attitude of the Jews of Oradea towards what happened in Hungary to the address of the students came from their ranks and learned there. This fact was welcomed by the *Western Gazette* editorial by one of its most vehemence editors on the matter, Alter Scotus. He was referring to an article published in *Nagyváradai Napló*, a newspaper owned by Hegedüs Nándor, one of the leaders of the Jewish community of Oradea politically framed in the Hungarian Party. For Alter Scotus it was a sign that things are moving in this regard, too: *“The local Nagyváradai Napló published in the past days an article signed by Mr. Zoltan Leitner expressing his sadness towards the anti-Semitic atrocities from Budapest. The article was written carefully and in a style so devious, that somehow not to disrespect the Hungarian ears. We were talked about the Hungarian culture and other things, that in fact they have never existed, as the Hungarian culture is due to some non-Hungarian factors, i.e., it is the fruit of other co-inhabiting nationalities. But the author of the article points out an interesting letter of a young Jew from Budapest to another Jew who was fighting here in front of the Hungarian people to defend the Hungarian cause. The Jew over there shows to this one from here that while he is struggling for the Hungarian people’s interests here, the Hungarian people do want to know nothing about the Jewry’s interests over there. So that, while the Jewish-Hungarian politician from here shouts: “Long live the Hungarianism!” the Hungarianism from Budapest shouts: “Down the Judeans!” Well that this fact was finally observed in the Jewish-Hungarian editorial offices in Transylvania. But tomorrow, when they will be again engaged in activities put on the Hungarian irredentism service we will remember this and it could happen to shout them, us like shout the Hungarians from Budapest, because they would deserve it totally. Besides, mocking at them in Hungary is the most pertinent reward for their attitude of misleaders of the public opinion and of fishers in troubled waters.*

*The Jews believed that if they play to be Hungarians will get entirely the Hungarianism’s destinies. Today they wake up that their plan has failed. It’s too late and we are not willing to show them any credit. Each sleeps as his pen. We are curious to see if at least since now, the Jews of Transylvania will continue or not to ally with the Hungarian irredentism policy against the Romanian domination against this domination which nevertheless looked with eyes less sullen than the Hungarians from Budapest. We’d like to know what Mr. Ferdinand Hegedüs and the other Jews of the Hungarian Party think about the contesting of the civil rights of their brothers from Hungary and their bones are broken by those who are represented by the Hungarian Party and Mr. Hegedüs makes the game? The Nagyváradai Napló should ask this question to its Jewish readers and discuss the matter directly. Have the Jews of Transylvania reasons to consider to be engaged in the Hungarian politics and in the interests of the Hungarianism?”* (Alter Scotus, 1933: 3).

In front of this declared evidence Alter Scotus, through him and the *Western Gazette* asked the legitimate question why the Jews of Transylvania, if not everyone in Romania, do not take position against what happens to the Jews in Hungary. Alter Scotus found an explanation for this situation: *“Why the Hungarian Jews do not cry in front of the world? But Jews are also enrolled in the Hungarian party. Here the issue is changing. The Jew proves by that that understands to identify himself with the point of view of the Hungarian political. Or it is known that this policy dreams to a return of the Hungarian domination, to a really of Transylvania with Hungary. In other words, the Jew from here enrolls in a community of ideas and feelings with the Hungarian people which is found in a camp totally opposite and enemy of the Romanianism. You’d have the impression that the Jews and Hungarians in Transylvania are good brothers and love so much each other that they can not be disunited. And look that there in Budapest the Jews are beaten into fits on the streets and thrown out of the university halls by the Hungarian Christian students. Then you wonder: why the Hungarians from over there do not have the same opinion about Jews as the Hungarians from here? Or: Why the Jews from here associate against the Romanian domination just with the Hungarians who fight on the other hand against the Semitism? We have already asked these questions and our Jewish fellows acted that they did not hear them. Not only that they did not hear them, but instead to express their wonder about what’s happening in Budapest, they were screaming as loud as they could only against the Romanian anti-Semites although they have not managed yet to introduce “numerus clausus” in the Romanian universities, as it had been introduced in the Hungarian universities long time ago. And, the campaign of defamation of the Romanian state that the Jews from here had plotted and powered it abroad on the occasion of the anti-Semitic demonstrations in Romania, while there was nothing mentioned about the mistreatments very often suffered by the Jewry from Hungary on the part of the anti Semitic Hungarians, is very fresh in our minds “* (Alter Scotus, 1933: 3).

In the following period, the *Western Gazette* brought before the Jewish public of Oradea and Bihor County new data about the situation of the Jewry in Hungary. All had the undeclared intend to make the Jews to be in solidarity with the Romanian police and move away from the Hungarian one. It was a well known fact that in most cases, in Transylvania, there was a very good collaboration between Jews and Hungarians, what that has determined in several localities, including in the large cities, these two communities to dominate the political, economic and social life in the detriment of the Romanians or other communities. As the policy of the Hungarian minority, supported by most of Jews, was returning of Transylvania within the Hungarian borders, the examples given in the *Western Gazette* were meant to convince the Jews to think once again about their position in this regard, and the presentation of some real data about the Jews’ situation of Hungary had just this designation.

Thus, of an article published at the end of April 1933, entitled *Large anti-Semitic Movements in Hungary*, the inhabitants of Oradea found that at the beginning of April, the Hungarian parliamentary Mesko, the leader of an anti-

Semitic party in Hungary, paid a visit to the Chancellor Hitler. On that occasion Mesko made the pledge to the German Chancellor to lead the anti-Semitic movement in Hungary on the same coordinates with those of the German Nazi party. According to the *Western Gazette*, after his return from Germany, the number of the Hungarian anti-Semites increased from one month to another, so that in a very short time, they reached from 400 to around 10 000, the strongest anti-Semitic organization being founded in the city of Kecskemet. In the locality of Nagykőrös, situated near the above mentioned town, the leader of the anti-Semitic group was a student named Ladislau Lengyel-Kenyeres. The last had already been convicted three times for anti-Semitic iniquities. The student was frequently asserting in public that the Hungarians do not consider the Jews to be human beings and especially honorable men (Mari mișcări, 1933: 4). On 20<sup>th</sup> April 1933, a group of about 60 anti-Semites gathered in front of the police headquarters in Kecskemet demanded the Francis Szima's liberation, one of Hitler's leaders, who was arrested because together with other fellows has prevented the auction of a Jew to by a Christian merchant (Mari mișcări, 1933: 4). According to the information provided by the *Western Gazette*, the Hungarian authorities' intervention was extremely anemic, suggesting certain complicity with the protesters as only some of the agitators were detained at the police station.

The *Western Gazette* presented another example in this respect, considered to be more serious. It was about an anti-Semitic gesture of a representative of the state, the Hungarian Interior Minister Gyula Gombos, otherwise known as an exponent of the anti-Semitic current in Hungary. The Minister Gombos denied the issuing of the newspaper "*Egyenoseg*" the official of the Jews of Hungary, for two weeks (Mari mișcări, 1933: 4). In addition, it was retired to be distributed for three months. The Minister's of the Interior control was motivated by the fact that the newspaper attacked the policy carried by the German government headed by Hitler on Jews, a fact that has brought prejudices to the Hungarian-German friendship. This order caused great trouble in the Jewish circles not only from Hungary, but from other countries, too (Mari mișcări, 1933: 4).

Two weeks later, the *Western Gazette* published a new notice of the same category, with direct reference to the Jews of Oradea and Bihor County who had to observe so the large freedom of expression they had in Romania as Hungary. Thus, the reader learns that, on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1933, the *patriotic associations* in Hungary were requiring the removal of Jews out of the public services and affirming that all the Jewish societies of Hungary had to be dismantled. The Hungarian association Mőve, after a general meeting, "*voted a motion and a memoir addressed to the Prime Minister Gyula Gombos by setting and asking to dissolve all the associations with international character and to prohibit further activation of all those associations which do not have on their basis the Christian faith and are not composed of Christian Hungarians as the Hungarian race will not be able to escape from the certain*



death only if the Jews will be excluded from all the public functions and all associations, either cultural or professional. From this memoir results that the Hungarian officials are decided to go towards Hitler's policy and will begin to take action against the Jews, what that produced an unpleasant impression in the Jewish circles of Hungary (Asociațiile patriotice, 1933: 3). Gyula Gombos had already got the function of prime minister of Hungary and the country's policy was attached more and more to Germany as the revisionist objectives were common.

Ganging up the Hungarian policy on the Hitler's one was increasingly evident. The *Western Gazette* considered being suggestive in this regard the Hungarian government's position in the matter of the possible Jews hidden from Germany on the Hungarian territory. A number of Jews would have received shelter in the Sarkad region. Investigating this, the Hungarian Ministry of Interior gave a communication from which emerged that after the researches that have been done it has been established that neither in the region of Sarkad nor in other region of the country any Jew hidden from Germany hasn't been placed and the Ministry of Interior did not and will not give any authorization to enter the country the Jews refugees from Germany. The communication has produced concern among the Jews of Hungary, who were suspicious towards the government's policy, in Budapest (Guvernul ungar, 1933: 2), an increasingly close to that of Germany in this matter. It was another alarm signal of the *Western Gazette*, addressed to the Jews of Transylvania and of the non-concordance between their philo-Hungarian policy and their statute of Romanian citizens. On other occasion, the *Western Gazette* presented a resolution of the Communal Council of Czegled town in Hungary which forbade Jews to have a bath in the local swimming pool. As the largest part of the inhabitants of the town was Jews the swimming pool has suffered significant financial damages. By evidence of irony, the signatory of the article concluded that "*the mentality of the Hungarian neighbors is curious and we do not understand what interest they have that Jews should remain unwashed*" (În Ungaria, 1929: 4).

Finally, we'll mention another example of this category offered to the public opinion by the *Western Gazette*, a very suggestive one for the purposes of the government's policy in Budapest as regarding the Jews: the case of the military bishop Haas who has delivered at the radio station in Budapest a violent speech against the Jews demanding their exclusion from universities, trade and the Hungarian industry. The newspaper was presenting the point of view of the Jewish community in Hungary to this speech, they being surprised and outraged by the violent attack they received. The speech of the bishop Haas had serious anti-Semitic connotations, showing the Jews as being a *pestilence* on the back of the Hungarian people. The editor of the material concluded: "*The Jews play to be Hungarians up to chauvinism and the Hungarians despise them and work to discard their influence taking advantage only of their number in purely Hungarian purposes. I think that,*

*finally, the Hungarian Jews had the opportunity this time to convince themselves and I also think that they will cure of their Hungarianism”* (Alter Scotus, 1931: 3).

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# MIGRATION AND ASSIMILATION

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# ROMANIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE EMIGRATION OF THE BULGARIANS IN BESSARABIA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE BEGINNING 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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**Abstract.** *Actuality of theme is conditioned by the important changes which take place in modern society in the Republic of Moldova. Geopolitical, demographic and economic questions are important when decide taking into account historical experience, accumulated in preceding centuries. By the second half XYII in tsar's government were developed general principles on settling of outskirts of empire with different ethnic groups. During the first two third of the XIX century governmental institutes of Bessarabia regulated socio-political and socio-economical relations between immigrants and accepted their indigenous population.*

*In our opinion, that study of works which lighted up the policy of Petersburg on settling of territory of south of Bessarabia colonists in a historical aspect, analysis of migration as one of forms of dialog of the state and society with community of migrants, important for development of complex problem of national minorities, were exposed elements and dynamics of migratory population.*

*It was traced by us that published in different periods studies, about the migrations process affect at the beginning of XIX century, undoubtedly, involuntarily or purposefully reflected one or another predilections of authors, were though based on large-scale material based on real sources. We exposed and gave description in the survey plan of the basic stages of study of history of settling in Bessarabian edge, in Romanian historiography. In the process of prosecution of theme we exposed the basic problems of study of such as lack of material and at times subjective illuminations of event.*

**Keywords:** *Refugees, migration, colonists, historical aspect.*

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The actuality of this topic is due to changes that occur in contemporary society of South-East European space. It is known that at all times Bessarabia was a part of the so-called periphery of the great empires: the Russian and Ottoman. At the same time it must be noted that during the centuries all the known models of society were introduced here in order to form in the mentality of the native and foreign population a loyal society.

In historical science is shown the Romanian historiography attitude towards Bessarabia Bulgarians problem in the interwar period (Велики, 1973: 627-635; Нягулов, 1992: 160-172; Нягулов, 1995: 285-302; Нягулов, 1992: 160-172; Нягулов, 1999: 343-360; Нягулов, 2002: 201-228). So we can see that there is no any historiographical work that might indicate the approach of Romanian historiography on Bulgarian emigration to Bessarabia in the first half of the nineteenth century. In this paper we put goal to analyze Romanian historiography on the issue of migration and the settlement of the Bulgarians in Bessarabia and to establish the attitude of Romanian historians about this process.

Early nineteenth-century period in North-Danube territory is characterized by dynamical ethnic processes that were caused by a massive wave of migration from the Balkans. Migration process in the Romanian space can be divided into two periods. The starting point comes from the late fourteenth century, when, Bulgarian Czardom was conquered by the Ottoman Empire, this period continued until the middle of XVIII century. In general, Bulgarian migration in this period had an individual character and was determined by economic and religious factors. They mostly settled in the southern cities of the Russian Empire, so the city Nejin became the southern commercial center where the Bulgarian merchants found their shelter<sup>1</sup>. Reasons of emigration in the desert steppes of Budjak<sup>2</sup> can be explained by the fact that here, out of the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, the Bulgarians could hide from ethnic, religious and economic prosecution. The second period covers the second half of the XVIII

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<sup>1</sup> In the list of merchants from Nejin city, which was written down on April 3, 1769 we find the names of Bulgarians from Ianina city, the district of Veliko-Tarnovo and Constantinople, who were registered as Greeks: T̆vetcho Ivan, Ivan Iurcho, H. Petrov of Plevan, C. Yuryevich of Andiane, N. Ivanov, P. Dmitriev, A. Dmitriev born in Regina Macedonia (Сава, 1908: 1-14).

<sup>2</sup> *Budjak* - is a historical region lying along the Black Sea between the Danube and Dniester rivers, this multiethnic region was the southern part of Bessarabia. The region is bordered in the north and west by Moldova, in the south by Romania and in the east by the Black Sea. After signing the Bucharest Treaty on 16 / 18 May 1812 it became part of Russian Empire. In this region lived Turks and Nohai people, and Bessarabian Romanians. Russian imperial authorities evacuated Tatar population in the number of 30 000 people and part of the Moldovans to Dobrogea and Crimea (Сумароков, 1800: 23; Мурзакевич, 1837: 625-691; А.У., 1866: 256-269).

century and the second half of XIX century, and it is characterized by a massive emigration of the Balkan peoples to the north of the Danube, especially in southern Bessarabia, which was annexed by Russian Empire after 1812.

Tsarist policy of attracting Bulgarian tanners to Bessarabia became one of the subject of research for many historians, journalists and travelers. This brings to the development of studies and monographs dedicated to the phenomenon concerned in this article. Because immigrants settle in Romanian principalities and Bessarabia in Romanian historiography naturally occurred studies referred to this problem.

In Romanian historiography up the interwar period, historians have not been particularly engaged in the research process of emigration of Bulgarians, and that is understandable, because in 1812-1918 Bessarabia was a consisting part of the Russian Empire. However it should be noted that the Bulgarian refugees had established their settlements on the right part of the Danube too, what led to the formation of the large diaspora of the Bulgarians in the Romanian principalities<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Because the historiography of Bulgarian emigration in the Romanian principalities in the first half of the nineteenth century is not covered in our study we will mention here only the main works on this problem: I. Bărbulescu. *Relationes des Roumains avec les Serbes, les Bulgares, les Grecs, et la Croatie*, Iași, 1912, 192 p.; N. Iorga. *Privilegiul lui Constantin-Vodă Brîncovianu pentru bulgarii coloniști* (în limba germană), in *Revista Istorică*, București, Anul IX, 1925, p. 305-308; I. Moga. *Știri despre bulgari în Ardeal*, in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională*, Cluj, V, 1928-1930, p. 513-519; P. Constantinescu – Iași. *Din relațiile artistice româno-bulgare*, Chișinău, 1928, 88 p.; Idem: *Românii și bulgarii*, Iași, 1945, 30 p.; Idem: *Raporturi culturale româno-bulgare*, București, 1946, 31 p.; Idem: *Despre români și bulgari*, Editura de stat, București, 1949, 107 p.; Idem: *Studii istorice româno-bulgare*, Editura Academiei RPR, București, 1956, 250 p.; Idem: *Rolul României în epoca de regenerare a Bulgariei*, Iași, 1919, 120 p.; Idem: *Contribuții rolul României în epoca de regenerare a Bulgariei*, in *Arhiva*, Iași, № 4 (aprilie), 1922, p. 8-23; Idem: *Contribuții la românii și bulgari*, in *Arhiva*, Iași, № 3-4 (iunie-octombrie), 1923, p. 3-19; V. Chelaru. *Noi contribuții la relațiile româno-bulgare în sec. al XIX-lea*, in *Arhiva*, Iași, XLI, 1934, p. 159-168; Idem: *Noi contribuții la relațiile româno-bulgare în sec. al XIX-lea. Relațiile culturale*, in *Arhiva*, Iași, XLII, 1935, p. 28-46; B. Дикюлеску. *Привилегии давани на българските заселници във Влашко 1803-1834*, in *Studia in honorem M. Drinov*, София, 1960, p. 399-415; Vl. Diculescu, *Privilegiul acordat negustorilor și meseriașilor bulgari emigrați în Țara Românească după războiul din 1828-1829*, in *Omagiul lui P.Constantinescu-Iași cu prilejul împlinirii a 70 de ani*, București, 1965, p. 394-396; D. Ionescu. *Așezarea coloniștilor bulgari în orașul Buzău și în împrejurimii între 1792 și 1838*, in *Romanoslavica*, Istorie, București, XI, 1963, p. 137-159; K. Велики. *Румыно-русская помощь оказанная болгарам эмигрировавшим в румынские княжества в следствии войны 1828-1829*, in *Romanoslavica*, București, II, 1958, p. 261-272; C. Velichi. *Așezămintele coloniștilor bulgari din 1830*, in *Romanoslavica*, București, III, 1959, p. 117-135; Idem: *Emigrarea bulgarilor din Sliven în Țara*



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First who began to research this problem was Zamfir Arbore, a native of Bessarabia. In 1898 he edited a fundamental work, which was dedicated to Bessarabia (Arbore, 1898). In the chapter on the population of this region, the author discusses the subject of colonization of this region, and put into scientific circulation first Bulgarians colonies formation chronology. Here the researcher shows the emigration process of Bulgarians back into the Ottoman Empire, a process, caused by "lack of shame of officialdom» (Arbore, 1898: 94). Using the methods of scientific criticism the author points out that, in order to show that the situation of Bessarabia region was stable, local authorities hid the tragic situation of the Bulgarians in their new places. Also, the author gives the definition of term that appears in this period – *bejenar* (tanner), in his opinion this means unstable social elements who enjoyed the lands and other privileges given by the princes of Moldavia<sup>4</sup>. Also in this work are observed which was brought criticism devoted to official statistics the population of Bessarabia, the author mentions that the data are too increased in order to hide the Romanian character of this region. Therefore, after him, in 1812 there were settled 2800 Bulgarian families (Arbore, 1898: 105).

Some contribution to the Bulgarians setting in Bessarabia study brought the historian Nicolae Iorga. In the work published in 1899 (Silberman, 1899), he mentions that when the nohai-people have left the Bugeac, the Russian government decided to populate the free territories by the Christian population, and this could be Bulgarians, who were seeking instead a way to escape of Ottoman terror. Analyzing the imperial decree of December 29, 1819 ordering to give to every family of settlers a 60 tithes<sup>5</sup> of land and benefits and release them from tax duties to the state for a period of seven years<sup>6</sup>, he concludes that the colonists had a more favorable status than the native population (Iorga, 1899: 265-266). Especially that many lands were taken from Romanian owners of large estates who fled to the left coast of the Prut river.

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<sup>4</sup> Meaning of the term approach that could meet foreign traveler in southern Bessarabia, aroused interest of Russian historiography representatives, A. Schalichovschii considers that Bulgarians used the privileges offered by the Moldovan princes, worked the lands where before they there have lived nohai-people, in Ismail, Kilia, Reni, Akkerman and Chisinau districts. But P. Svinin believed that this name was given to Bulgarians by native population, which separated in this mode those Bulgarians who came here first. (Скальковский, 1848: 13; Сви́нин, 1867: 175-320).

<sup>5</sup> Tithes - unit of measure equal to 1.09 hectares for land, used in Russia before the introduction of modern metric system. It represented a right parallelogram with sides of 80 and 30 (thirty) or 60 and 40 ("sorokovka") feet and was called state tithes (Энциклопедический Словарь, 1893: 496).

<sup>6</sup> See for more details: (Duminica, 2011b: 22-24).

Iorga's vision was fully supported and developed by the historian Dumitru C. Moruzi, with negative position towards Tsarist Russia, the researcher opens the real Tsarist plans, which, beyond the declarations to fight for the liberation of Balkan peoples from the Ottoman Empire, wanted, in fact, to conquest these territories (Iorga, 1905: 36). The author denotes that, despite the fact that Bessarabia was populated mainly by Romanians, the situation of its southern part was completely different. In Budjak there were brought foreign elements, as Bulgarians, which in Iorga's opinion have been recognized by Russian Tsar for their support and that's why they were more loyal than other people. He concludes that this caused the local population to leave the Budjak, but those who remained here became a minority (Iorga, 1905: 37).

From the other hand, the researcher M. N. Pacu, in his volume dedicated to Bessarabia, gives a special analyze on the supporting policy of the Russian Empire of the Christian peoples, which were caught under Ottoman yoke (Pacu, 1912). He writes that "Russia always liked to decorate herself with fancy name of a parent-releaser of states which are under the Muslim yoke and especially her beloved Bulgarians" (Pacu, 1912: 64). The author writes that the Bulgarians, were the most backward of the Balkan peoples, and by this fact they gained more attention, what has brought o support and protection of the people of the Russian Empire. One of these actions was a directed migration of this people in southern Bessarabia.

The author believes that the Romanians have done more to ensure the passage of the tsarist army through their principalities, but Russia in turn would not only wanted to give them nothing, but took what they had - Bessarabia.

In 1919 appears the work of C. Filipescu and E. Giurgea in which they, basing on statistical data of the population of Bessarabia during the Tsarist period, conclude that the massive colonization did not influence very much the number of natives, because those who settled with the living in Moldovan villages were mainly Romanianized (Filipescu; Giurgea, 1919). So we can see that the authors, paid a particular attention to the Russians in Bessarabia, but the subject of southern Bessarabia colonization were not researched deeply, stressing only that as the result of population movements we can denote that northern Bessarabia is mostly populated of Russians and Ukrainians, center – by Moldovans, but the south is mixed with different nationalities (Filipescu; Giurgea, 1919: 47-48).

After the unification of Bessarabia with Romania on 27 martie1918, there were edited some works based statistical data, which had a goal to show international society the legality of the union because Bessarabia was inhabited by Romanians. Many works from this period were devoted to the history of the region between the Prut and Nistru rivers. As they are made in terms on ethnographic research and mapping, but we find in them some informations about Bulgarian colonists. Such research was done by geologist G. Munteanu-

Murgoci (Munteanu-Murgoci, 1920). Comparing the previous statistics the author concludes that the number of Bulgarians in Bessarabia was always due to increased massive migration Bessarabia (Munteanu-Murgoci, 1920: 74). Ion Pelivan turns to explain the large number of Bulgarians in the south of Bessarabia by the fact that their migration was directed by Russian authorities, who wanted to show on the example of foreign settlers that Petersburg was loyal to all Balkan peoples (Pelivan, 1920). He found that by encouraging emigration of Bulgarians in southern Bessarabia, Russia aimed to construct a social basis, the population which will always be ready to help the tsarist army.

In the interwar period, when Bessarabia was a part of the Romanian Kingdom in the international arena this young State faced several problems that were related to the principle of nationalities. The treaties developed by the Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920), invoked large and deeply to this principle. These, together with the League of Nations decisions on the issue, form the so-called protection of minorities in language, race and religion, under the aegis of the League of Nations (1920-1938). To show good situation of minorities, in Romania began to study deeper the history of national minorities. In this period the first who investigated the situation of Bulgarians from Bessarabia was G. Dragomir. In the work devoted to the Bulgarian colonies in southern Bessarabia, the author, basing on field research carried out by visiting the settlements and discussions colonies chiefs, could find out the history of coming and establishment of Bulgarians in the Bessarabian lands (Dragomir, 1923). The author sees a special issue of attracting refugees to Budjak, in tempting to Christianize this territory that until the first half of the nineteenth century was inhabited by Tatars and nohai-people, who were muslims (Dragomir, 1923: 11). He also denotes that the lack of administrative control over the settlers favored emigration across the Danube. The author gives more details in assessing the role of Ivan Inzov<sup>7</sup>, which was a so-called tutor of the Bulgarians, in the organization of their colonies, and thanks to him each of them obtained "with great ease, and even without persistence a piece of land which one could work, and even more than that"(Dragomir, 1923: 13).

In 1924 appeared the book of Stefan Ciobanu about Bessarabia (Ciobanu, 1924). The author notes that after the annexation of Bessarabia by the Russian Empire began a systematic colonization of this territory. He writes that after more documents stored in archives, it is apparent that colonization

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<sup>7</sup> Bulgarian settlers considered general Ivan Inzov (1768 - 1845), appointed by the emperor on March 7, 1818 as chief curator of their colonies, like their most valuable protector and guide. He was Russian, although Z. Arbore, I. Nistor and G. Dragomir believed he was a Bulgarian, and was the illegitimate son of the future Emperor Paul I (1754 - 1801) and Countess Taracanova - which was a daughter of the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna (1709 - 1762) and her favorite man, Alexei Razumoschi (Duminca, 2011a: 44-59).

has caused discontent among the local population, because in 1815, they were obliged to allocate their carts to Bulgarians for those could bring wood to build 500 houses. But the peasants who lived in the Hotin region had to cut woods and send them in south regions (Ciobanu, 1924: 33). The author concludes that the Russian regime reduced the local ethnic element of the cities due to privileges granted to foreigners, colonizing the province and slaughtering the native population, which was despaired and forced to exile. By the rapid colonization the Russia aimed to replace the native Romanians - to change the ethnic population of the province by creating a new one.

Another native Bessarabian researcher, doctor by profession, Peter Cazacu, in his work dedicated to the history of Bessarabia during her occupation by the Tsarist Russia, followed to analyze statistical data in order to show that the migration of foreign settlers did not influence the number of Romanians from Bessarabia who have lived here since before 1812 (Cazacu, 1924)<sup>8</sup>. The author believes that the colonial actions of Russian government aimed to prevent the local population to populate the desolate steppes of the Budjak, so refugees from southern Danube were given - 527 608 tithes of land and other exemptions, which were distributed between 48 colonies (Cazacu, 1924: 81). The author believes that the Russian government had achieved its immediate aim – populated Budjak with hard working people, which developed the agriculture, viticulture and fruit growing, but did not introduced it<sup>9</sup>, the scope of creating of new generations by tying up the Moldovans, Russians, Germans, Bulgarians and Ukrainians was not reached, because Bulgarians have lived isolated without interfering with other peoples. The author concludes that the Bulgarians have suffered more Russian influence, because the richer elements passed to the Russians, but the situation of the masses did not change (Cazacu, 1924: 81).

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<sup>8</sup> In the preface to the work reprinted in Chisinau historian Anatol Petrencu believes that it was published in 1924 (Cazacu, 1992: 18).

<sup>9</sup> We must emphasize our disagreement with the wrong data brought by this researcher because the recent investigations has shown that, because Bulgarians have brought with them cabbage, cucumbers and beans, the native population of have borrowed this cultures from them for home use. It is known that Bulgarians just as the Romanians from Bessarabia, were raising small horned cattle, and as a result of interethnic communication in Budjak began to be raised a new breed of sheep - "Tigai." Widespreading of this breed of sheep with short wool is explained by the fact that it was not capricious the food and unstable steppe climate. Although the trans-Danubian immigrants have brought new varieties of vines, such as Dărjanca, Biala și Cerna Totba, Bosilkovo, Karavălceva, as a result of contact with Romanians from Bessarabia, in the colonies were planted the Grape varieties of local origin: Red Sashla, Golden Sashla, Rara Neagră, Galbena etc. Also thanks to the Bulgarians in Bessarabia, here was introduced and spread sericulture, which contributed to the fact that Romanians from Bessarabia began to use silk (See more detail: Duminica, 2011c).

G. Popa-Lisseanu researcher pays special attention to the phenomenon of denationalization of the Romanian element in Bessarabia (Popa-Lisseanu, 1924). In his opinion the process was produced by the administration, school, church, army and massive colonization. The author underscores that, for various reasons and different ways in Bessarabia were introduced foreign elements, some came as refugees from religious persecution - Bessarabia became for them a country with greater freedom, others have come here trying to escape from continuous wars (Popa-Lisseanu, 1924: 26). The author characterizes these processes negatively because he believes that this resulted in reducing of local population which was forced to leave their villages and to move to the Caucasus and Siberia.

In turn researcher in Chisinau L. Boga gives special attention to statistical data analysis on the population of Bessarabia to show the Romanianism of this region (Boga, 1926). Drawing attention to the census conducted in October 1811 by Divan of Moldavia, in order to calculate the income of the state treasury, the author concludes that Bulgarians as well as Romanians massively passed to the left side of the Prut. He shows that from 2487 families of Tanners that passed across the Danube and have established in southern Bessarabia 1008 families were Romanians mainly from villages of Dobrudja (Boga, 1926: 18). In 1929 saw the light of day the work of Al. Arbore, which brought new original material about Bulgarians from Bessarabia and Dobrudja (Arbore, 1929). The author uses a rich material from foreign sources and foreign diplomatic correspondence, to prove that the Bulgarians were forced to come in Budjak from Rusciuc (now the Ruse- I.D.) and Razgrad cities. However the researcher recognizes, first, that one main cause which led to the emigration of Bulgarians to the north of the Danube was "terrorizing by organized gangs of chirdjalii" (Arbore, 1929: 9). Secondly, he sees the strategic goals of Tsarist policy, pointing to the fact that the Russian Empire speculated with the idea of releasing Christian people from the Ottoman yoke, only in order to control Black Sea and Azov. From the author's point of view the Bulgarians played a key role in this policy, so they had to lead a policy loyal to Tsarist Russia. He brings new material related to Bulgarian colonies established in Dobrudja<sup>10</sup> region, for example he shows that refugees from the Silistra town created colonies Calarasi and Ialomnitsa (Arbore, 1929: 22).

<sup>10</sup> About emigration of Bulgarians in Dobrudja in the first half of the nineteenth century, see details in: Gh. Murgoci. *Țara Nouă. Dobrogea sudică și Deliormanul*. Scurtă descriere geografică completă cu o schiță și numeroase fotografii de Voinescu și Murgoci, «Minerva». Institut de Arte Grafice și Editură, București, 1913; Al. P. Arbore. *Autohtonismul bulgarilor în Dobrogea*, in *Gazeta română*, I, nr. 3, 16 mai 1916, p. 1; *Dobrogea. Cincizeci de ani de viață românească*, Cultura Națională, București, 1928, p. 236-242; *Autohtoni, bulgarii!?*, in *Legionarii*, I, nr. 33, 5 octombrie, 1929, p. 1-2; I. Neicu. *Între români și bulgari în Dobrogea*, in *Dobrogea jună*, Constanța, XXXII, nr. 164, 22 iulie, 1936, p.1; Alex. P. Arbore. *Caracterul etnografic al Dobrogei sudice din epoca*

Researcher Toma G. Bulat, first of researchers during the interwar period published a volume of documents under the title: "New information on the Bulgarians in Bessarabia" (Bulat, 1931: 213-230). The author brought 22 documents: letters and petitions addressed to Senator of Moscow about Bulgarian migrants arriving and their behavior in Bessarabia. From presented documents is clearly seen and denoted by Professor T. Bulat, that Bulgarians brought to Bessarabia from the Danube region during the war 1806-1812, "were kept in close attention of their patrons" (Bulat, 1931: 213). From texts of letters published by T. Bulat, we observe that the Bulgarians were not satisfied with conditions created in their settlements, and were willing to flee back across the Danube. In turn Divan of Moldova, which was responsible for the fate of emigrants, wrote to the Russian government, that he has no power to hinder those who wish to go back (Bulat, 1931: 215).

Bessarabian researcher T. Holban drew his attention to the number of Bulgarians in Bessarabia (Holban, 1937: 33-39). The author believes that Russian statistics intentionally showed the great number of Bulgarians and that they prevailed over the native population. He brings new data on the number of Bulgarians in Bessarabian towns up to 1917. Concerning the problem of Bulgarian colonies formation, he believes that they were founded in towns old Romanian from Bessarabia, where the last ones, as a result, have formed the minority. Speaking about the return of the Bulgarians in the south of the Danube, he believes it was caused by the "problem of lands" that they have faced in Budjak (Holban, 1937: 39).

Also in this period in the city Dobrich (a city in northeastern Bulgaria – I.D.) works a slavist Mincev D. (Mincev, 1938), the author shows that the massive migration of Bulgarians in Bessarabia led the Russian state to seek solutions for better control of its relations with refugees. The author believes that the first settlements of the Bulgarians in Budjak parts can be dated by 1752

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*turcească până la 1913*, in *Analele Dobrogei, Cernăuți*, XIX, vol. II, 1938, p. 118; C. Brătescu. *Dobrogea Regelui Carol I și colonizările dobrogene*, in *Analele Dobrogei, Cernăuți*, XIX, vol. III, 1938, p. 97; N. Iorga. *Istoria Dobrogei*, in *Dobrogea Românească*. Lucrare îngrijită de Elsa și G. Dimitriu-Serea, Editura „Acțiunea Românească”, București, f.a., 1940; P. P. Panaitescu. *Originea populației în Dobrogea Nouă*, f.e., București, 1940, 44 p.; C. Brătescu, *Românii și bulgarii*, in *Viața Deliormanului*, II, nr. 8-9, august-septembrie 1940, p. 2; Ст. Ласку. Южна Добруджа на на страниците на издаваното в Констанца списание „Analele Dobrogei”. Анотирано библиографско проучване. Превела от румънски проф. Антонина Кузманова, in *Добруджа*, София, XI, nr. 11, 1994, p. 268-318; Alex. Pindean, *Târziya așezare a bulgarilor vis-à-vis de autohtonismul românilor în Dobrogea de Sud*, in *România de la Mare*, III, nr. 3-4, 1994, p. 17-18; S. Lascu. *Geopolitică regională – Dobrogea de Sud în contextul anului 1913. Mărturii de epocă*, in *Analele Universității „Ovidius” Constanța, Seria Istorie, Științe politice, Relații internaționale și Studii Europene*, Vol. 4/2007. Constanța, 2010, p. 43-106.

when they established new villages or settled in the old villages abandoned by the Tartars. He shows that, in order to distinguish those who came here before and were known as "Old Bulgarians", Bulgarian colonists which were settled in Budjak between 1806-1812 were called "New Bulgarians" (Mincev, 1938: 8). The author explains the cause of emigration as follows: because of excesses and terror, they were exposed to from foreign invaders, Bulgarians decided to come in Bessarabia where they were invited by Russians, who gave to colonists the region of Budjak. Basing on sources researcher determined that Bulgarians founded here 72 colonies, most of which bore the names of their villages from Bulgaria (Mincev, 1938: 9). Also the author states that the number of Bulgarians in Bessarabia in 1830 was around 70,000 persons (Mincev, 1938: 16).

In the the University of Iasi, Department of Geography, which was created under the Faculty of Sciences worked Prof. G. Năstase. From the wide range of geographical domains that preoccupied Prof. Năstase, can be distinguished his studies on historical geography (studies on the ethnic composition of the population of Moldova, the lower Danube and southern Bessarabia in XVII century), geography of population (structure the population in the region of river Prut, the region of Soroca, the Gagauzians settlement), geography of human settlements (with a special emphasis on small urban settlements), economical geography and the geography of tourism. Bulgarians in Bessarabia, as the researcher explains, took refuge in Bessarabia because of tortures they had to endure from ottoman authorities and were called by Moldovan government "Bejenari", whom was given a temporal shelter (Năstase, 1939: 11). The author adds that, after 1812 the Russians exempt them from taxes and military obligations and gave them 500,000 hectares of land, and means to establish households. He concludes that these actions have brought the Bulgarians in flourishing condition: they were forehead and hardworking and could not be surpassed even by German settlers. Năstase points out that trans-Danubian immigrants lived in many large and rich villages in Cetatea Alba, Tighina, Ismail and Cahul districts and their administrative center was situated in Bolgrad (Năstase, 1939: 12).

Later, in 1941, when Bessarabia was reoccupied by the soviet army, the hypothesis that territory between the Prut and Dniester is Romanian was supported and further developed by C. Bratianu, who wrote that the policy of colonization of Bessarabia intended to decrease the weight of the Romanians in the south of this region (Bratianu, 1941). In another paper published by him in 1943, C. Bratianu analyzes in details the Bulgarian colonists, indicating that there were two massive waves of emigration from 1787 to 1791 and from 1806 to 1812 (Bratianu, 1943: 75). He indicates that Moldovans who have no idea what would happen at the end of the last Russian-ottoman war have made their census dates. He brings new data indicating that according to this census "Bejenari from the Danube" have formed around 1479 households, from which 10,218 persons were Bulgarians (Bratianu, 1943: 75).



An important role in bringing new information on this topic has historian from Bucovina Ion Nistor. In 1944 he published a volume, dedicated to the Bulgarian and Gagauz colonies (Nistor, 1944). Therefore we can conclude that he is the first Romanian researcher who distinguished Gagauz population from the mass of trans-Danubian migrants. Using unpublished material from archives he made up the statistics about Bulgarians from Banat and Bessarabia. The author identifies several reasons which led to the emigration of Bulgarians to the north of the Danube from which the most important are: fear of reprisals from the Turks, Bulgarians always helped to supply the tsarist army in period of the Russian-Turkish wars, and from the other hand he believes that famine caused the Bulgarians to seek fertile lands for building a new home. In this book we can observe negative attitude of the author about tsarist policy. So without giving concrete evidence he states that "Russians depopulated Bulgaria, in order to leave for the Turks wild territories" (Nistor, 1944: 11-12).

In the postwar period, by the issue in question was concerned Professor of Faculty of Theology from Chisinau P. Constantinescu-Iasi. At least the author in his work largely draws attention on Romanian-Bulgarian relations, from which we can point out some observations of the problem that interests us. In the article "New contributions to Bulgarians and Romanians in the nineteenth century" (Constantinescu-Iași, 1931, 7-19), he devotes a special place for Bessarabia Bulgarians. He stresses that due to antimoldovan and antiottoman policy at the same time Tsar Alexander I and his successors enabled the Bulgarians to come to a newly conquered province even before 1812, giving them a special status and some privileges (Constantinescu-Iași, 1931: 9). Analyzing the archive material, the author shows that the largest colony of Bulgarians in Bessarabia was in Chisinau, which proves the presence of Bulgarian suburbs and two churches of St. George and the Ascension of the Lord, which was known as the Bulgarian church. The researcher concludes that the Bulgarians settlers in Chisinau were a very important element that brought huge income in the treasury of this town.

In the last three decades the most active in the domain of researching of Bulgarian migration to the north of the Danube was a historian C. Velichi. In his book, he shows that the Russian government invited Bulgarians with the purpose of repopulating the territories in southern Russia (ВЕЛИКИ, 1968: 20). With economic reasons Tsarist administration's first did not intend to establish the trans-Danubian immigrants in Bessarabia, but instead the primordial target was Kherson region. Especially since the war has contributed to the massive arrival of cheap working force. Here we must note that the author shows that for attracting settlers in the Romanian principalities, there were formed a special deputation in which were included Bulgarians that came here earlier too (Velichi, 1963: 27-58; ВЕЛИКИ, 1987).

In 1990 his work appeared in Paris Eugen Holban the author believes that after 1812 the demographic situation in Bessarabia was distorted by the Russian statistics (Holban, 1990). He found that the figures regarding the population during the annexation of territory between the Prut and Nistru were not sufficiently asserted. He argues this with the fact that the tsarist government tended to show that when these territories were annexed they were deserted. At the same time in order to show that Bulgarians settled in the old Rumanian villages where dominated the local population E. Holban makes a comparative study. So comparing the names of over 13,500 settlements in the present territory of Romania with approximate 1900 settlements in Bessarabia, he found that 820 villages in Bessarabia have names identical or very similar to 2346 villages in Romania (Holban, 1990: 32). But we should mention that the author in some cases without detailed investigation on the origin of the village name makes wrong conclusions.

Knowing the name of the village in the Romanian language, we can not be sure that when trans-Danubian refugees came here, they met the local population. So indicating on Buda village in southern Bessarabia he notes that there is the same one in Alba County in Romania, the same situation we see in the case of village Valea Perjei in which the author saw the Valea Seaca village din Iasi (Holban, 1990: 25, 108).

In 1995 will be translated in English the work of Anton Crihan "Romanian rights on Bessarabia, according to some Russian sources" (Crihan, 1995), in it he devotes a chapter to the policy of colonization with foreigners. He sees the reason in bringing settlers in a scope to change the ethnical image of the newly annexed province. Comparing statistics from 1814 and 1816 the author mentions that the number of Bulgarians decreases what is due to the fact that Bulgarians fled from Russian authorities. Only when Russian tsarism granted Bulgarians several of privileges, their number increased again in Bessarabia. Important is that the author indicates that, by 1826-1827 Gagauz and Bulgarians founded 42 colonies in southern Bessarabia, which at that time included 4756 families or 24,404 people who had in use 607 793 hectares of land, in the same time Romanian entrants from the trans-Danubian territories included 1267 families or 6044 souls, and had in their use only 65 774 ha of land (Crihan, 1995: 58). From this, the author concludes that indigenous peasants in comparison with Bulgarian settlers have enjoyed little attention.

A special role in studying the phenomenon of migration and the role of Bulgarians in it has Siupiur Elena, the researcher from Iasi (original from the Albanian village Characurt, current Jovtnevoe village in Ukraine – I.D.). Author sets out the role of migration processes for ethnographic situation in Bessarabia (Cromop, 2004: 81-98; Siupiur, 2005: 493-521). The author states that the first half of the nineteenth century is marked by two phenomena that

have produced great etnodemographical changes in the space of Southeastern Europe. In her opinion these two phenomena are:

- a) Redistribution of territories between the three empires that dominated this part of Europe - the Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian Empire;
- b) The removal of huge communities of people between the three empires by military or civil actions and policies of immigration, or otherwise forced relocation of these communities (Siupiur, 2005: 493).

Historian finds that the space Budjak became the object of the action of both phenomena. E. Supiur recognizes that the policy of the Russian Empire caused large waves of mass migration from the Ottoman Empire to the north of the Danube to Budjak and Southern Russia. She sees in the policy intention the emptying of Ottoman territories of Christian population, migrants have been granted with some privileges, which, the opinion researcher, reinforced the migration flow. The author concludes that the results of this policy were hazardous for abandoned territories have changed the etnodemographical structure of Bulgaria (Siupiur, 2005: 495). Also in that context it should be noted that Supiur attempts to give statistical data of Bulgarians in Bessarabia after which we see that in 1819 there were 4512 Bulgarian families in Budjak equal with 24,000 people, in 1821 she indicates 6391 Bulgarian families - 32 000 persons, their number will increase with about 240 families during the ultimate big he wave of emigration from 1828 to 1829. It is interesting that she indicates 3000 families which went back in the Ottoman Empire (Siupiur, 2009: 48).

From what was stated above, we can conclude that Romanian historiography on the issue of Bulgarian emigration in Bessarabia during the first half of the nineteenth century was based on the principles of nationalism. In the historical work there is a clear tendency to show that the establishment of Bulgarians in Bessarabia was caused in large part by internal situation after the Russo-Turkish wars, the Ottoman yoke as well as by Russian propagandistic activity which aimed to attract plenty of Slavic people to the north of the Danube. Interestingly, that when discussing the emigration of Bulgarians in the left side of the Danube, Romanian historians talk about the important role of the Romanian principalities, which led to the subsequent revival of the Bulgarian state and when the discussion is concerned on Romanian-Bulgarian relations they state that those ones have had a very good and fruitful results; when the discussion is going about Bulgarians in south Bessarabia many historians, especially in the interwar and contemporary period look negative on the process of colonization of the region, addresses this issue by far and conclude in many cases without evidence, that the trans-Danubian refugees emigration affected very much the local population, although it is recognized that southern Bessarabia, especially its south-eastern part - Budjak steppe was previously populated by Tatars, and after leaving it remained almost deserted. However it should be noted that Romanian historiography has an important role in

addressing this problem, because the subsequent and recent researches have brought into the light new facts on migration and establishment process of the Bulgarians in Bessarabia.

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# THE PROCESS OF CONVERSION OF THE JEWISH POPULATION OF BESSARABIA, INTO CHRISTIAN FROM MOSAIC RELIGION, IN THE XIX<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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**Abstract.** *The problem of religious conversion has generated various studies in the western historiography. Unfortunately, this is not the case of Republic of Moldova. The phenomenon existed in the late XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, but the number of apostates increased only during “Russian period”. In Bessarabia, which was annexed by Russian Empire in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, there existed a special policy for the Jewish denomination, special laws developed by the Tsars. This became very hard for the Jewry for the reason that Jews were being a “tasty ingredient” for the Russian Empires “melting pot”. The number of Jewish population climbed from 20.000 in 1812 till approximately 200.000 people in 1897. This huge number gave a very specific color to the evolution of this region. The Tsars along the XIX<sup>th</sup> century tried to level Jewish population to other nations, in other words, to assimilate them. A great “machine” for this assimilation served the process of converting Jews into Christianity. It was a voluntary conversion, but it should be mentioned that Jews used to convert mainly due to some economic facilities and very rarely because of moral and religious causes.*

**Keywords:** *Tsarist autocracy, apostate, religious policy, legislative punishments, facilities.*

This article addresses the issue of religious conversion of the Jews in Bessarabia during the nineteenth century, a very delicate topic, providing multiple interpretations. We risk bringing up the discussion on a theme which became a taboo. On the one side, this aspect of the history of the Bessarabian Jewry is unpopular, in our opinion, for moral reasons. On the other side, it is not a subject that has awakened the interest of researchers in Moldova until

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now, this being connected with the sad reality that the history of Jews in Bessarabia, basically, knows a few special works dedicated to this segment of the historiography.

Studying this issue we have been “imposed” to address to an impressive amount of original documents (stored in the National Archives of Republic of Moldova), all of them haven’t been researched till now.

The purpose of the article is to establish what kind of legislation concerning the process of the religious conversion of the Jews existed in the Russian Empire in general and particularly the legislation that existed in Bessarabia. As we will see, there was established a specific legislation on that territory, a particular one in comparison with the entire Empire. Relying on concrete cases of conversion, we will try to establish some peculiarity of the process itself and the motivation of the apostasy of Jewish (from Judaism) in Bessarabia, to Christianity.

To be objective, we cannot overlook the passing of Christians to the Jewish religion. Although Jews do not use missionary practice, cases of religious conversion from Christianity to Judaism existed. A special case was the reconversion from Judaism to Christianity and back to Judaism<sup>1</sup> (Godo, 2002: 20). These cases have generated some laws prohibiting the development of such situations. For example, Christians were not allowed to work in Hebrew homes.

The idea that Conversion is a form of passage, a “turning from and to” that is neither syncretism, nor absolute breach (Buckser, Glaizer: 2003: 1), got out of date. The specialists in the topic consider thus, that to be converted is to re-identify, to learn, reorder, and reorient. This involves interrelated modes of transformation that generally continue over time and define a consistent course.

It has to be mentioned that not mere syncretism, neither conversion can involve a simple and absolute break with previous social life. Learning anew proceeds over time and requires a process of integrating knowledge and experience. Even in the context of conquest, the aspiration of another power to “know,” “domesticate,” “name,” and “claim” is difficult to accomplish. It is not a quest for utopia, but rather for *habitus* (Buckser, Glaizer: 2003: 2); a particularity of these theme being the fact that it is very hard to understand the phenomenon from the protagonist’s point of view.

As W. James considers, some persons, for instance, never are and, possibly, never and, under any circumstances, could be converted; religious ideas cannot become the centre of their spiritual energy. They may be excellent persons, servants of God in practical ways, but they are not children of his kingdom. They are either incapable of imagining the invisible, or else, in the language of devotion, they are life-long subjects of “barrenness” and “dryness.”

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<sup>1</sup> In Judaism this is called *Tshuva*- שׁוּבוּת, *stricto sensu* from Hebrew – return.

Such inaptitude for religious faith may in some cases be intellectual in its origin. Their religious faculties may be checked in their natural tendency to expand, by beliefs about the world that are inhibitive, pessimistic and materialistic beliefs, for example, within which so many good souls, who in former times would have freely indulged their religious propensities, find themselves nowadays, as it were, frozen; or the agnostic vetoes upon faith as something weak and shameful, under which so many of us to-day lie cowering, afraid to use our instincts. In many persons such inhibitions are never overcome. To the end of their days they refuse to believe, their personal energy never gets to its religious centre, and the latter remains inactive in perpetuity (James, 2002: 161).

What's more, the study becomes very difficult because of the empathy that the researcher involuntary brings in. Because of this, let's call it "personal factor", the study can be performed in a wrong direction, so the personality of the researcher is also an important issue. The background of this idea is that the motivation which gives the power to convert is a very interesting phenomenon, and it brings new elements in the research.

Even the terminology used at that time to define the phenomenon of conversion and neophyte nomination, there is a negative connotation of the labels that were applied to them. With the proliferation of the phenomenon of conversion of the Jews in the Russian Empire, these terms have become a means of stigmatization at the 'intra' and 'extra-community'.

The term most often used to describe Jews in the Russian Empire, meaning the new converts, was *Vykrest*<sup>2</sup> (*Vykrestka*-for a women); for the Romanian space analogous term was *Baptized Jew*; the Hebrew term used is *משומד* (*meshumad*)<sup>3</sup>. We should note that the Romanian variant is the most "harmless", all the others being "charged" with a negative connotation, at least. To make an analogy, we can bring the example of conversions, indeed forced, in medieval Spain. There Jewish Christians were called *Marran's* (Sjemjujels, 1990: 205), meaning "a pig" (from Spanish), in Portugal this social category was called *Converso* (Zelenina, 2010: 72).

The role of these deterministic denominational labels was to spread distrust of neophytes from the new and the former co-religionists and to make a strong religious segregation. In this case are illustrative Henry Heine's words set forth. A very interesting fact is that the Hebrew Encyclopedia (its Russian version) doesn't mention this term, not even the phenomenon itself.

The subterfuge "for the Jews everything is forbidden, only if it is not allowed by a special law" which arose when designing the Hebrew laws, led to

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<sup>2</sup> The dictionary of Ozhegov S.I. defines this term as – „a person who changed its religion to Christianity”.

<sup>3</sup> This in translation means “lost”, as a meaning “lost for the nation”.

serious consequences for social and political life. One could escape the "yoke law" by giving the status of Jew, of course baptism.

The first question which appears when you see this several cases of apostasy is why people use to do it. The general reasons for a man to convert, as Lewis Rambo shows, are:

1. Intellectual reason – it follows after reading and meditation.
2. Mystic reason – it is the case of historical patterns, well-known examples of conversion, like in the case of Saul from Tars.
3. Experimental reason – usually appears due to missionary activities.
4. Affective reason – (the most strong one – A. R.), follows some interpersonal relations.
5. Reborn reason – it's a philosophical cliché, its origins should be found in modern messianic doctrine.
6. Coercive reason – this is the case of Spain in the middle ages, and Nikolai I for the Russian Empire.
7. Pragmatic reason – it refers to the possibility to integrate in the society, and change the social status, in behalf of apostasy (Ungureanu, 2004: 13-14).

As for the case of Moldova<sup>4</sup>, the researcher M. R. Ungureanu, whose work on this theme is unique for the Romanian historiography, considers two essential reasons, which both come from the pragmatic and affective reason. They are, first of all, a personal strategy for social integration (Ungureanu, 2004: 6), and the second is the convinced apostasy because of a voluntary social status change, meaning divorce or marriage (Ungureanu, 2004: 10).

Conversion phenomenon has generated countless anecdotal situations, sometimes even grotesque. The next joke can be brought as an example: "or dress your pants Rabinovich, or hide the cross from the neck" (Zelenina, 2010: 73). There are many jokes about the religious conversion of the Jews and the Christians, which of course, reflect a certain historical reality.

History of the Hebrew religious conversion still has its beginning in the fourth century AD, followed by several "waves" of massive Christianization in the Middle Ages. Most often these were forced conversions. During the nineteenth century, as a rule, Jews used to convert Jews in order to escape persecution laws, sometimes to get some concessions. Another aspect of this conversion was its formality for often Jews were practicing their ancestral religion, but still using the privileges granted. Further we will try to discern the reasons for baptism on specific cases.

Harry Heine, the German philosopher, who had Hebrew origins, on June 28, 1825, was given the name Henrich. After the conversion he said "God will forgive me, this is his profession". Another phrase that belongs to him is

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<sup>4</sup>Meaning the territory of the Moldavian Principality.

"When I was a Jew-Christians hated me, but now the first and the last hate me" (Dorfman, 2005: 1). Another famous Jew who became a Christian was Baruch Spinoza. When he was baptized, he took the name Benedict. The fortuneteller Nostradamus came from a family of Hebrew converts as well. Heine did it because he wanted to enter the university; Spinoza became disappointed in mosaic religion. In case of Nostradamus and his ancestors, the conversion had place because of the persecution they suffered in the Middle Ages.

Lenin's biography also has some moments that we would be interested in. Here's what says D. Volkogonov about the origin of the Bolshevik leader: "Lenin's mother, Maria Alexandrovna, was the fourth daughter of Alexandr Dmitrievich Blank, a doctor and a baptized Jew from Zhytomyr. When he was baptized, he took the patronymic of his godfather Dmitri Baranov, instead of the initial Moishevich patronymic he adopted the Christian name of Alexandr (equivalent of Srul, the Yiddish name of *Israel*).

As it is clear from the research carried out by David Shub and S. M. Ginsburg, Lenin's grandfather was the son of Moses Itscovich Blank, merchant Jew from Starokonstantinov Province, who married a Swedish named Anna Karlovna Ostedt. Shub wonders how it was possible for a Jew to become a police doctor and then a landowner. Referring, among others, to the archives of the Holy Synod, Shub concluded that conversion to Orthodox Christianity removed many barriers to career in the state service. "During the reign of Nicholas I - he insists - there were some Jews which occupied more higher social positions than that of the police doctor ... Many of them were ennobled with all the rights and privileges of the caste" (Volkogonov, 1994: 38).

The example we gave, using Lenin's biography, sets prioritized directions for our investigation, confirming the fact that the conversion had had important implications for the social status of the apostate; beyond this it gives us the possibility to track the „assimilation press” in its activity after a Century.

There are some more exemplifying\_cases of conversion, but this article would not have any sense if we won't bring the example of "triumvirate" that was part of the *Committee for improving the situation of Jews* in September 1802, formed by the order of Alexander I. These were: Abram Peretz, Yehuda Leibben Noah (*Nevahovich*) and Rabbi Nathan Note (*Nota Haimovich Notkyn*). Catherine II in a letter in response to a question about foreign Jews in Russia stated: "There are in St. Petersburg three or four Jews set for a long time here, they are tolerated even though the law prohibits their staying here, everybody pretends not to notice" (Gessen, 1906: 78-90). The activity of these members of the committee will be a decisive one in the destiny of Russian Empire Jewry for over 115 years. Their destiny is very interesting. Not Notkyn died in 1804 (Gessen, 1906: 136), Nevahovich completely detaches from the Hebrew people both, literally (as a skillful theatre writer), and spiritually, becoming a Lutheran Christian. Peretz follows the example of Nevahovich (Gessen, 1906: 139) ;

apostasy of the two is confirmed by the researcher Ilya Trotsky (Trotsky, 2002: 353-354) and Jh. Doyle Klier (Klier, 2000: 209).

It's demonstrated that, even in the eighteenth century, in Moldova there were already Hebrew Christians. In censuses of 1772, 1773, 1774, baptized Jews appear as isolated cases, living in some localities between the Dniester and Prut (Sovetov, Dmitriev: 1975, 52-53). In the nineteenth century with the advent of stimulating legislation for apostasy, the phenomenon of conversion to Christianity was widely spread among the Jews.

As we see from Russian legislation, which was valid for Bessarabia from 1812, "Jews have the right, in its own desire to be baptized in one branch of Christianity tolerated in the Empire, but only with the permission of the Minister of Interior; permission is obtained by submitting a formal request by the claimants to religious authority" (Gessen, Fridshtejn, 1904: 200).

In the cases below we can see that this right was truly used by the Jews of Bessarabia, but we also see that afterwards the apostates were bringing the documents which could prove their apostasy, also they were verified several times by different state institutions. Haika Haimovicheva's life story shows us a perfect case of apostasy and also its social consequences.

From a report dated by May 23, 1838, sent to Pavel Ivanovich Fiodorov, the Governor of the Bessarabia, by the policeman Pologov (from Ismail City Police), - we reproduce its content, as follows:

"Moved to live here (in Ismail) from Chisinau, Haika Haimovicheva on May 9 this year (1838), submitted to the police a request to baptize to the Christian faith with her daughter Rivka, 11 years old. Police sent this approach the person vested with spiritual affairs, namely Ismail town rector Glizjan Nikita, but he said no one has the right to make a decision concerning this issue, and advised them to approach the High Priest directed dioceses. To explain this refusal by Glizjan, Haika Haimovicheva, she wrote to the police a petition on behalf of Archbishop of Chisinau and Khotin-Dumitru, confirming that together with her daughter she strongly wishes to receive Holy Baptism, following the canon of Greek-Russian Oriental Church. The appeal which was submitted to the Spiritual Consistory from Chisinau to His Majesty (Archbishop Dumitru) on 12 May (number № 5549) (NARM<sup>5</sup>, 1170: 1, 1 (reverse)).

At the same time, the spouse of the Hebrew, Chisinau inhabitant - Tenengolts Leiba, came here (to Ismail). On May, 13, he filled an explanation for the police. There he mentioned that he divorced his wife Haika last year (1837), and their daughter had to be given to his wife, together with all the property (meaning to Haika- A. R.) only for education, but since Haika has expressed her desire to become a Christian, he requested that his daughter and her property to be returned to him (NARM, 1170: 1(reverse), 2).

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<sup>5</sup> National Archives of Republic of Moldova.

So, we have here a perfect demonstration of the personage intentions to start a „new life” in a new city, new circumstances, new religion and at last a new identity. This is the most permanent reason to the apostasy; also a strong argument for the change of belief became the material aid. The following passage brings another case.

In response to the request to the police Haika Haimovicheva says vice versa. Thus, according to the decision adopted by the Hebrew clergy on divorce, their common daughter Rivka, should remain with her. When the girl was asked with whom she wanted to stay, she said that sincerely she would like to remain forever with her mother and together with her to change to the Christian faith. More of this, she doesn't want to return to her father (NARM, 1170: 2).

The law establishes that „once receiving the baptism, the neophytes, if their children are minor (up to 7 years), also should be baptized. If only one parent is baptized, in case of the father, also his sons are brought trough the rite. If it is mother, the daughters of the latter are baptized” (Gessen, Fridshtejn, 1904: 201).

In response to the interpellation of Pologov, on June 15, 1837, a letter is sent to the Spiritual Consistory from Chisinau, by Pastor Ioan Ostapov. The message is the following: "Those who wish to convert to Christianity in the Greco-Russian branch, must submit personally or sent by post to the Diocesan Hierarch all the necessary documents attached: the documents that from their places of origin and other documentation demonstrating their social and religious affiliation" (NARM, 1170: 5, 6, 5(reverse), 6 (reverse) ).

Alexander I proposed conversion of Jews to Christianity. In this connection he started boosting the transition to the new religion of the Judaist Jews. This was done by creating *Community of Christian Jews* in 1817(Tihonov, 2007: 136), the Tsar yet did not take into consideration the European experience in this issue. On March 25, 1817 the Law on the creation of a *Committee for Jews who convert to Christianity*<sup>6</sup> provides some facilities for those who are converted, the release of certain parcels of land in southern and northern lands (Levanda, 1874: 88-93). However, being not "profitable", in 1833, on March 30, the *Community of Christian Jews* was dissolved (Levanda, 1874: 327).

On November 28, 1830 appeared the law “*on the facilities granted to Jewish in the region of Bessarabia who accepted Christianity*” (Levanda, 1874: 286-287). According to this law, all Christian Jews in Bessarabia received the right not to pay any taxes or benefits throughout life. It seems that the Russian authorities understood that the climate of assimilation, particularly in Bessarabia, was very weak, and decided to give an impetus to improve it. Tihonov A. K. stated that Jews who converted to Christianity received an allowance from 15 to 30 rubles, children got half of that amount (Tihonov, 2007: 190).

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<sup>6</sup> The activity of the committee was more executive, dealing with the land division for the „Christian Jews”.

Although slow, the process of converting Jews from one of the many varieties of Christianity started. With the lapse of time, it was noted that this conversion was false. Even being baptized and receiving some concessions that were granted in this case, the Jews remained faithful to their religion. As a result, on October 14, 1830 appeared Law on prevention of the Jews to false conversion into Christianity (Levanda, 1874: 282), according to it they should have not only issued a certificate from a priest, confirming that they were introduced to the dogmas of the Christian religion, but also to have a positive feature of the local priest. It was recommended by the law that the baptism should be made on Sundays in public, all this in order to grow the impact of the conversion.

Another very interesting case had place in Chisinau District. A priest in the village of *Nisporeni de Sus*, Ion Foite<sup>7</sup>, reported on May 31 that, he baptized in Orthodox Christian religion a Jew - a widow from Leova - Reiza Fraimova Serebrenikova (aged 24) and her daughter Frima, 8 years old (NARM, 84: 1). On May 25<sup>th</sup>, they were given the baptismal names "Zinovia" and "Elizaveta". The villagers which witnessed the baptism were: Elena Stepanova, the wife of Gheorghie Grigore Motovilin, Paraskovia Ivanova, the wife of former soldier Gheorghie Petru Sokolovskii and Marya Stepanova who was Vasile Grigore Timofeev 's wife (NARM, 84: 1(reverse)).

Mysh M. considers that after December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1862, there occurred one new specification in the legislation on conversion of minors (up to 21 years)<sup>8</sup>. Thus, Jewish children under 14 needed a permission from parents to baptize. Those who passed this age could be baptized without the consent of parents (Mysh, 1914: 44). This was taken into consideration only in the case of Haimovicheva, only because of the husband's request, where the girl gave a statement that she truly wants to be converted. In the other cases converts did not give their commitments (in the case of children, because they were too little).

The peasants, Istratii Sofronie Crudu, Simeon Vasile Drumea, and Fyodor Profirt, from the village of *Nisporeni de Sus* confirmed the ritual of passage to baptism by family Serebrenikov. They also gave a short and characteristic for the Serebrenikov confirming their origin as well as the biography (NARM, 84: 2,2 (reverse)). The administration of the Province, at the ordinary meeting, called to find out if she, Serebrenikova, was born in Bessarabia, who was her husband and when he died, and since when she lives in the territory of Bessarabia (NARM, 84: 3,3 (reverse)).

Serebrenikova had even to write an explanation about the origins and descent to, which is known to have originated in Hyncheshty, being truly born in Bessarabia. Her parents were Reiza and Froim Aizenberg. They died when

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<sup>7</sup> Priest at the church "Mihailovskaya", in the village of Nisporeni de Sus.

<sup>8</sup> The age was established in connection with the case of Katzman, a child baptized at 11 years and who was reconverted to Judaism later.

the above-mentioned was at an early age, then some people took her to Leova, where she married with Iankel Serebrenikov, who died in 1870 (NARM, 84: 9).

Because the documents that confirmed the apostasy were true, Serebrenikova received an allowance in the amount of 10 rubles by 1876 (NARM, 84: 11(reverse)). Already on September 1, at the same year, after the marriage Serebrenikova becomes *Vrabie*<sup>9</sup>, thus receiving the compensation. She didn't calm down and asked for an allowance also for her daughter (NARM, 84: 12, 12 (reverse)). For this purpose – in order to provide allowance for her daughter, there has been issued a certificate confirming the act of baptism and her remarriage (NARM, 84: 13, 14, 15, 13 (reverse), 14 (reverse)). Still, it was denied, because she received compensation in September this year, and there were no more resources for such expenses (NARM, 84: 16).

The case of Leventon family gives us also a very good information, as a case study. On August 2, 1875 the priest Fiodor Baltaga, a member of the Consistory, notifies the Administration of Province Bessarabia that the priest from *Olishkanii de Sus* village (the county district number III in Orhei), Shtephan Chegorjan, the report № 22 of June 12 this year, informed the Diocesan that retired soldier's Shlioma Leventon daughter. Living in the village Myrzeshty, district Orhei, Marya Leventon, 16 years old, passed to the Orthodox Christian religion with the name "Elena" this fact being confirmed by the village priest, Reverend in Myrzeshty of district Orhei, Fyodor Barbosu. The witnesses of the passing of the rite were Alexandra Fyodorova and the peasant Ion Myrshko (NARM, 82: 1, 1 (reverse)).

A certificate dated with April 24, 1875 shows that the above mentioned from Orhei, Myrzeshty village, numbering 12 people, hereby confirm that Elena (Hebrew name Marya<sup>10</sup>) truly wants to go the Orthodox faith and is to be taught prayers by the priest Shtephan Chegorjan (NARM, 82: 2). After the documents were analyzed by the Consistory, it was ordered to be given a „ticket” for Leventon, for a 9 months period, to free choice of joining the social status she wants (NARM, 82: 7). Nine months later, after ones had been baptized, a Jew had to choose his "lifestyle", otherwise he would be punished according the law on vagrancy (Gimpel'son, Bramson, 1914: 152).

Elena Leventon, demonstrating that she has received baptism, requires providing an allowance payment, according to the legislation above, the cases of baptism from the Jewish religion to the Christian. The Administration of Province Bessarabia warns that for 1875 the Treasury Ministry of Interior there are no resources provided for this scopes. Elena does not quit and submits a biography of her father (at that time 42 years old), a soldier who was for 20

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<sup>9</sup> She received the cognomen from the son of a priest-Gheorghe Afanasie Vrabie, which had become her husband in the meantime.

<sup>10</sup> The daughter of a retired soldier Shlioma Leventon - a Jew, who lived till 20 years in the village.



years in Tsarist Army, thinking that the glorious past of her father would help her to run the case. She mentions that he received a decoration "for 20 years of impeccable military service", he was also decorated with a bronze medal for participation in military operations from 1953 to 1956<sup>11</sup> (NARM, 82: 8, 9, 8 (reverse), 9 (reverse)).

All attempts of Elena Leventon within two years have brought no result. In 1877 on April 8, she submitted a request to the Vice-governor of Bessarabia, with an apply to be granted the allowance for the fact that she was baptized (NARM, 82: 11, 11 (reverse)).

Vice-Governor requires a note on the Leventon case (NARM, 82: 12). After he gets it, he adopts a resolution that should provide to the above mentioned an indemnity in the amount of 15 rubles (NARM, 82: 12 (reverse)).

On September 6, 1827 it is allowed for Jews to pass into Christianity in the Lutheran and Roman Catholic branch. Until then there was only allowed to convert to Orthodox Christianity (Levanda, 1874: 200-201). In several sources we found out that in case of Lutheranism, converted Jews had the right to marry a Jewish woman (which practiced Judaism), may be this was the reason in case of Haskel Shpaizman<sup>12</sup> from Chisinau (presented below).

The case is also dated by 1875, March 27, when there was given a certificate by the bishop Faltik, confirming that after the proposal of Minister of Interior, from 15 of March, Haskel Abramovich Shpaizman, was baptized on 16 of March, and was given the name Rudolf-Pavel, after the ritual of the Lutheran Church (NARM, 83: 2). The case is important for us, first of all, because it happened in the capital of Bessarabia, meaning that the documents presented are the more correct and provides us an etalon of how the whole thing should be organized. So, the documents are:

1. A certificate from the bishop, confirming the baptism of the person (NARM, 83: 2).
2. The new passport, given for one year term (NARM, 83: 5, 9).
3. The „ticket”, for 9 month social status change (NARM, 83: 8).
4. A recite for paying a tax of 1/50 rubles (NARM, 83: 4).
5. Certificate of presence, meaning the registration in fiscal database of the town (NARM, 83: 6).
6. A certificate from the local Jewish Community, showing the number of the persons, family members (NARM, 83: 3).

Shpaizman also requested an allowance for the apostasy, but was refused for the same reason which was in the case of Elena Leventon. Thus, he did never have any subsidies, as far we see from the document.

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<sup>11</sup> The Crimean War (October 1853 – February 1856), conflict between the Russian Empire and an alliance of the French Empire, the British Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Kingdom of Sardinia.

<sup>12</sup> He was 25 years old at the moment of apostasy.

M. R. Ungureanu shows that in Moldova the biggest number of converts used to change their surnames in Botezatu, or, in some cases o the names and surnames of their god fathers (Ungureanu, 2004: 5, 20); this was not the case in Bessarabia, a, for all the converts remained under their initial surname, for instance, like we have seen in cases of Serebrenikov, Leventon, Haimovicheva, Shpaizman where the neophytes used to change only their first Jewish names to the Christian one. So, tracking the faith of these apostates, like in the case of Moldova becomes impossible.

We should conclude that almost every case of apostasy presented before was generated by some social reasons or by the loss of a member of the family, or by divorce, or after a new marriage with a Christian; the reasons being from the lexical field of how we called it “new life”.

The situation in which people accepted to baptize were mostly critical, as a matter of fact, the psychologist admit that people make drastic decisions in the crucial moment of their lives. From the point of view of a Jew from XIX<sup>th</sup> Century it was a chance to save his/her life, but from the point of view of the Russian autocracy it was a possibility to assimilate the Jewish population from the Russian Empire. We think it is inappropriate to talk about an integration of the Jews in the society, because, as Benjamin Nathans says, Jews had always only “selective integration” (Nathans, 2005: 635), and they always were divided into „useful” and “useless” Jews.

The opportunity given by the Tsars for the Jewish people had two particular scopes. One was to dissolve „the state in state”, as Jewish existence in the empire was labeled by Dostoevsky. The second one was to give to the Empire a “Russian face”. This was possible only by spoiling Jewish originality in culture, education, tradition, cloth, language and habits.

As far as Jews begun to convert Jewish society, divided in two “wings”, those who came to modernity (and often brought it), and those who remained faithful to a conservative vision, “if no change is needed then we need to leave everything unchanged”. The forced enrollment in the army and forced mass baptism did not give any results. Either, called “the victims of a historical tragedy” (Flisfish 1980: 222), military Jews did not assimilate, but their children did. The autocracy tried to make the change “from interior”, bringing to the administration Jewish scholars (even rabbis), called “Illuminated Jews” (Roitman, 2010: 16) but this still did not make any changes, for they were attached to all major state institutions (Ministries of Culture, Education, Provinces and Districts administration etc.,) trying to modernize the Jewry. All this complementary activities had had their effect only after the revolution in Russia.

We certainly could say that all the resources (byorocracy, mass media, army enrollment, conversion, etc.) involved into the initiative to solve „The

Jewish question<sup>13</sup> in the Russian Empire during the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century, were destructive for the Jewry from the Pale of the Settlement, but it could be seen only in Soviet Russia.

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<sup>13</sup> According to Berdyaev, the Russian philosopher, „The Jewish Question” is „A Russian question” first of all.

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## THE GERMANS FROM SOUTHERN BESSARABIA (BUGEAC). FROM COLONIZATION TO REPATRIATION

Arthur Viorel TULUȘ\*

**Abstract.** *The colonization of Bessarabia with German ethnics was part of an older and wider plan of the Tsar; the plan aimed at drawing colonists to exploit and ensure a more dense population of the border areas of Russia. Due to poverty or to various political and religious reasons, the Germans left their native country and, especially during 1814 – 1901, they settled in Southern Bessarabia (Bugeac), being allured by the promises and the facilities the Tsar Alexander I-st gave unto them. After Bessarabia became a part of Romania, the Germans, as a result of their demographical increase, founded some new villages. Between the two world wars, the German community amounted to about 3% of the inhabitants of the areas between Nistru and Prut (numbering 2.8 millions people). The conclusion of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact (23-rd of August, 1939) took into account the future of these German ethnics. The Fuhrer trumpeted his new politics of repatriating, within the boundaries of the Reich, the German ethnics from the East and the South-East of Europe. The Germans from Bucovina and Bessarabia, frightened by an eventual Soviet assault on Romania, rallied to the politics of the Fuhrer. When Romania lost Bessarabia and the North of Bucovina, more than 130,000 Germans found themselves included within the Soviet Union.*

**Keywords:** *the emigration, the Russian administration, the Romanian administration, the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact*

The colonization of Bessarabia with German ethnics was a part of an older and more general plan of the Tsars. This plan aimed at attiring colonists

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in order to exploit and consolidate the border areas of Russia. The first step was made by the Tsarine Ecaterina the Second, which, on December 4-th, 1762, launched a manifest informing whoever was interested that Russia was willing to accept any colonist on its territory, in the steppe area between Nistru and Volga, namely in the Russian peripheric area comprised between the Black Sea, the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspic Sea. The imperial manifest clearly stated that the offer was not addressed to Jews, even if originating from the German territory. The reaction of the Jews came without delay; through publications and viva voice, the Jews from the Western countries and, especially, those from Galitia, started a vast boycott campaign against the emigration. The mass-media of those times described the situation from Russia as disastrous and the local people were depicted as backward (barbarians), unwilling to socialize and always eager to plunder the foreigners that might have emigrate to their lands. The Jewish propaganda against Russia proved to be successful, the manifest of the Tsarine not engendering the desired result. On July, 22-nd, 1763, six months after the first call, the Tsarist authorities put forward a new manifest, granting more advantages to those willing to emigrate: „All those willing to settle in the land appointed for colonization are free to choose whatever place they consider appropriate; they will be given religious freedom and they will be exempted from all taxes; moreover, the Russian government will put on their disposal 60 hectares of land for each family, materials for construction and long-term loans, without interest” (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 1-2). Only as a result of these promises, in 1764, the first German colonists came to Russia, in the lower part of Volga river. Later on, German communities were constituted also in other areas of the Russian Empire: in Crimeea, Stavropol, Krasnodar, Habarovsk, in Ukraine, Azerbaidjan, Georgia, Bessarabia etc. (Caşu, 2006: 91).

The Germans settled in Bessarabia represented one of the last waves of colonization involving this ethnical group. In 1812, the year when Bessarabia was included in Russia, the Southern part of this region, known by the name of Bugeac, was de-populated due to the fact that, starting with 1711, during the six Russian-Ottoman wars that took place, that area had been used as a passing and attacking corridor and none of the two armies refrained from destroying whatever they came across. This permanent threat prompted the Moldavian population to shift towards West or towards the Prut River; it also prompted the Tatars from Southern Bessarabia to accept their shifting to Crimeea. The first who shifted were the Nohai nomads living in the area of Akkerman (Cetatea Albă), also known as Edissan tribe or horde. Shortly after, approximately 12,000 Tatars belonging to the Nogai tribe, living in the steppes of Bugeac, on the present days location of the autonomous Gagauz territory, from the Republic of Moldavia, followed them. In 1806, in the Bugeac area,

there were about 5,000 Tatar families, but they also left the area in the years to come (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 2-3).

In 1812, the Tsar Alexander I realized that the annexation of Bessarabia by Russia could appease this territory and this newly established peace could favor the return of the Romanian population to Bugeac. Therefore, in order to prevent such an “evil”, the Tsar hastily encouraged the immigration of the foreign colonists to Bugeac. The unofficial propaganda of the Tsar – unofficial since Bessarabia was not a part of the Russian Empire in 1763, when the manifest of the Tsarine Ecaterina the II-nd was issued – immediately engendered several effects. A compact German group from the area of Wurttemberg left towards Bessarabia, but, taken by surprise by Napoleon Bonaparte’s 1812 campaign in Russia, they temporarily settled around Warsaw, waiting for a clarification of the international situation. Around 1813, the group decided to continue its way, heading to the South of Bessarabia (The Ministerial cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 3).

Due to poverty or to other political, economical or religious reasons, the Germans left their country and, especially, between 1814 and 1901, settled in the Southern part of Bessarabia (Bugeac), being tempted by the promises of the Tsar. Alexander I started to treat equally the German colonists from Bessarabia and those previously settled in other parts of Russia only starting with May, 21-st, 1816, when, through a decree (*ucaz*), he expanded the validity of the manifest from July, 22-nd, 1763, also upon the new Russian territories, comprised between Prut and Nistru. Later, on December, 22-nd, 1819, on the insistent demands of the general Ivan N. Inzov, the governor of Bessarabia between 1816 and 1823, the Russian government bestowed new advantages to the colonists, putting on their disposal land from the governmental property, that they could purchase by taking long-term loans from an institution known as “Farmers bank”. In most cases, the Germans received a very substantial support. They were exempted from all taxes and duties for a period of 10 years. They could take governmental loans, also for a period of 10 years. From the moment they settled in Bessarabia and until their first crop, they received a financial aid for food. They were exempted from any kind of military service. They were ensured the full freedom of religion (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 3-5).

Around 1814, several groups of German colonists came to Bessarabia and they established several colonies along the rivers: Cogâlnic, Ceaga and Sărata. The first Germans arrived are those left from Wurttemberg, which temporarily had settled in the county of Warsaw, forced by Napoleon’s campaign in Russia. The settlements founded by them in the Southern part of Bessarabia - Borodino, Tarutino, Maloiaroslaveț, Krasnoe, Leipzig, Kulm etc. – were named after the places where the Russian troops defeated napoleon. Seemingly, one third of the first emigrants died shortly after their arrival or during the first winter, due to the hardships endured along the journey or to the



poor living conditions. The situation improved only in 1818, after the creation of a Committee for social assistance (Schmidt, 2008: 25-30). Due to the new advantages granted by the authorities in 1819 and after the first Germans arrived started to form an organized community, the flow of colonists increased; later on, emigrants came in large numbers. The flowing of colonists took place periodically, as we can notice from the dates new villages were established: 1814 - 1815, 1834, 1860, 1862, 1864, 1880-1882, 1886-1890, 1892, 1895, 1897-1898 and 1901. After 1901, the number of immigrants coming from abroad considerably decreased (The Ministerial cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 4-6).

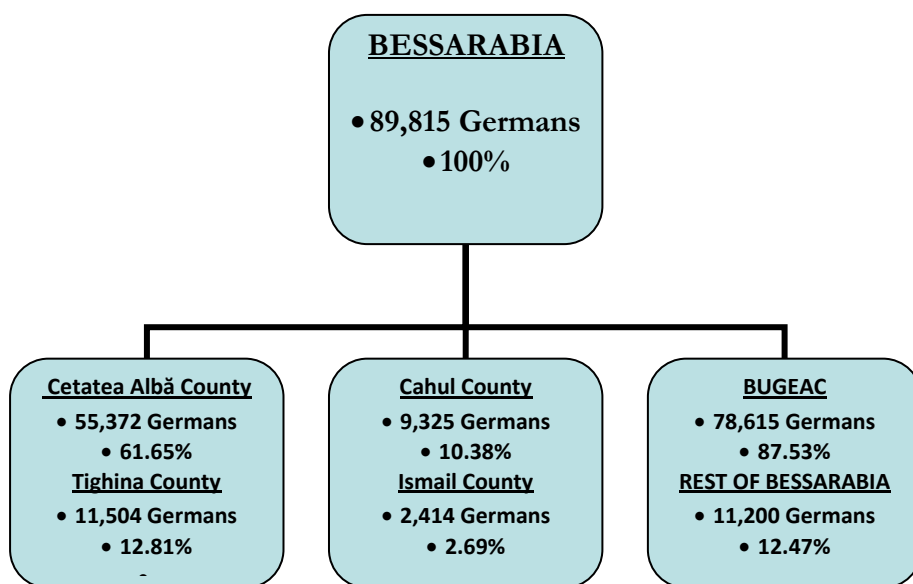
Except for the settlements founded in 1814, mentioned above, the oldest German colonies from Bessarabia are: Teplitz (Teplița) in 1817; Gnadenthal in 1833; Lihtenthal and Friedenthal in 1834; Denevitz, Hoffnungstahl, Gnadenfeld, Freudenfeld, Mariafeld etc., founded before 1842. Other colonists, French speakers, arrived to Bessarabia coming from Alsace and they founded Ferchampoise, Brieni, Paris and Arciz, in 1816. Other colonists arrived from the French areas of Switzerland, founding the villages of Șaba and Târgu-Șaba (Ploșniță, 2011: 127). Regarding this last group, the Germans from Bessarabia claimed they originated from Kehl (Baden), while the Swiss colonists themselves claimed they had originated from the area of Constantz Lake (Bodensee, in German) (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 12).

We can distinguish two stages in the history of the creation of the German community from Bessarabia: the settlement and the development of the German communities, under Russian administration (1814-1918) and the evolution of the community under Romanian administration (1918-1940). At its turn, the first period can be divided into two stages. The first stage lasted until 1871, as long as the privileges bestowed by the Tsar Alexander I were respected. Because of these privileges, during such a short period of time, the German community from Bessarabia laid its foundations. Being exempted from taxes to the government and from the military service, the German population knew an important demographical increase, both naturally and through uninterrupted migration. The statistics confirm this statement: 1826 – 6.412 persons; 1848 – 9.000 persons; 1861 – 35.422 persons (Stratulat, 1997: 235). The second stage started from 1871. Through the decree (*ucaz*) from May, 4-th, the Tsar Alexander the II-nd cancels the liberties and the privileges previously granted to the colonists, including their exemption from the military service. The Committee for social assistance, working for the German community from Southern Russia, was also dissolved. A process of russification started and it increased in intensity after 1881, when the German colonists were obliged to accept Russian citizenship and Russian language as education language (Ploșniță 2011: 128). Consequently, many Germans from Bessarabia emigrated to America, but their number didn't bring any substantial decrease in the overall population. Nevertheless, after 1871, the process of settling new German

colonists in Bessarabia slowed down, but without stopping; the German population increased in number mostly in natural ways. In 1833, between Prut and Nistru, the Germans founded 24 establishments and in 1850 they had around 70 colonies. These firstly founded colonies were called mother-colonies. The extra population from these mother-colonies led to the foundation of some children-colonies. This process clearly evinces for the period between 1906 and 1914, subsequent to the cease of the external emigration, by the Russian authorities, at the beginning of the XX-th century (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 6).

During the Romanian administration (1918-1940), the demographical increase of the Germans from Bessarabia continued. The agrarian reform from Bessarabia determined a new process of internal displacement, between 1919 and 1929 the Germans founding 21 new colonies-children. Therefore, in 1930, the German community of Bessarabia amounted to approximately 30% of the total population of the area comprised between Nistru and Prut (estimated at about 2.8 millions inhabitants). They lived in 143 settlements founded by themselves, as it results from the data furnished by the general census of the Romanian population, from 1930 (*Recensământul Populației României din 1930, 1938: XXIV-XXXV*).

The total number of the German population living in the colonies and towns of Bessarabia amounted to 89,815 inhabitants; their distribution by county can be seen in the below chart:



According to statistics, more than 87% of the total German population settled between Prut and Nistru, which lived under Romanian administration

(1918-1940) was established in the area of Bugeac (Southern Bessarabia), on the interbelic location of Cetatea Albă, Tighina, Ismail and Cahul counties.

Religion and church had a major importance in the daily life of the German colonists. In Bessarabia, the church didn't have only a confessional role, but also an educational and cultural one, through the organization of the primary education done in German language and through the perpetuation of the traditions. Most of Germans were Lutherans, followed by the Baptists and by a very small number of Catholics (Ploșniță, 2011: 128).

During the rule of the Tsar, the Germans from Bessarabia didn't show any interest in politics. Being wealthy and disciplined, the German colonists from Bessarabia were not influenced by the turmoil of the Russian revolution and were not mesmerized by the Communist ideology and movement (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 19-20). The liveliness of the interbelic Romanian politics stirred the political interest of the Germans. In August 1920, the German Popular Council for Bessarabia was founded and, between 1919 and 1937, the German minority was also represented in the Parliament from Bucharest (Ploșniță, 2011: 129). The German Popular Council ("Volksrat") was re-organized in 1923, consequent to a General Congress of the colonists, which took place in Tarutino. The organization was supposed to have administrative and political attributions, but, until the Nazi government was installed in Germany, the Volksrat had tight connections with the Lutheran Church from Bessarabia, the president of the Volksrat being the same person as the spiritual leader of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Bessarabia. Until 1933, the political activity of the Volksrat consisted in its association with the political parties at power in Romania; through the formation of some electoral cartels, the German community tried to get as many advantages as possible. Being aware of their electoral potential in the South of Bessarabia, the German leaders started to have more and more substantial demands, eventually claiming local autonomy, administration by German personnel, German language as official language in institutions etc. (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 19-20).

After the National-Socialist regime was installed in Germany, Fritz Fabritius, the leader of the Community of the Germans from Romania and a personality agreed by the Nazi authorities succeeded in replacing the leading body of the Volksrat (deemed as consisting of old and languid men) with a new one, consisting of young people, biased towards the National-Socialist principles. The newly appointed president was Bronetzchi Otto, a land owner from Tarutino. The previous leaders, gathered around Arthur Fink, created a local branch of the German National Party, led by Alfred Bonfert, based in Brașov, and opposing the authority of Fritz Fabritius. Until 1938, when, at Hitler's intervention, the two groups coalesced, in the areas of Bugeac and Bessarabia, the two German political parties had been involved in a lively competition for attiring supporters, the most

successful in this attempt being the radical group of Bronetzchi Otto (The Ministerial Cabinet, file 231/1940-1945: 21-27).

The conclusion of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, on August 23-rd, 1939, meant, for the German colonists, the beginning of the repatriation. The rumors regarding the imminent evacuation of these colonists started to spread after the speech delivered by Hitler at Reichstag, on 6-th of October 1939 (Bancoş, 2000: 107), shortly after the conclusion of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The Fuhrer trumpeted his new politics of repatriating, within the boundaries of the Reich, the German ethnics from the East and the South-East of Europe. Especially the Germans from Bucovina and Bessarabia, frightened by a possible Soviet assault on Romania, rallied to the politics of the Fuhrer. The general reaction of the German minority was depicted as one of “consternation” and “great distress” (Bancoş, 2000: 107). Later on, their fears proved to be justified, since, as a result of Romania’s submission to the Soviet ultimatum from June, 28-th, 1940, Bessarabia and the Northern part of Bukovina were ceded to the Soviet Union (Constantin, 1995: 41-100) and more than 130,000 German ethnics, against their will, were confined within the boundaries of the Soviet Russia. Berlin’s concern for the German ethnics living in the territories ceded by Romania to the Soviet Union prompted the quest for a rapid way to repatriate these people to Germany.

In the repatriation of the German ethnics from Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland and so on to the Reich, an important role was played by the Nazi ideology, grounded in a racial doctrine which, later, was taken on by the ideologists of the regime and, further, by the German law. According to this doctrine, the nation or the national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) didn’t represent the totality of the persons submitted to the authority of a particular state, as in the liberal individual theory, but a community of blood (*Blutgemeinschaft*), which included all the people of *German blood* (underlined by us), even if they lived outside of the German borders, being citizens of another country (Gherasim, 1943: 32). The politics of the German government towards the German minorities from Central and Eastern Europe was governed by the slogan *ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer*. A first concrete effect was the law given by Germany on June, 26-th, 1935, which stipulated the compulsion of working “in the service of the National-Socialist state” (Bold, Ciupercă, 1995: 130), incumbent to all the German youth, aged between 18 and 25 years, men and women, those living outside the borders of Germany and having foreign citizenship being included.

It is well known that the racist ideology of the National-Socialist Party originated in the German nationalism. According to this ideology, the problem of the Germans living outside of Germany had to be solved either through an expansion of the Reich upon the territories inhabited by such people, as a minority, either through the repatriation of the German ethnics. In case of the

Germans from Romania, the second alternative was preferred by the Nazi leaders (Șandru, 2003: 82).

In the summer of 1940, the main concern of the German Reich was the urgent repatriation of the Germans engulfed in the Romanian territories ceded to the Soviet Union. Among the causes for this urgent concern, there were the fear that the German community living in those territories might have been infected with Communist ideology and the significant number of these ethnics. In fact, the situation of the important number of German ethnics living in Bessarabia and in Northern Bukovina had started to be considered a long time before the end of June, 1940, when these territories were ceded to the Soviet Union. The problems of the German community started once with the conclusion, on August, 23-rd, 1939, of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, especially of its additional secret protocol, since “on the occasion of signing the Non-aggression Treaty between the German Reich and the Soviet Union, the plenipotents of the two parties discussed, during several strictly confidential meetings, the problem of delineating each party’s sphere of interest in the Eastern Europe. As agreed by the parties, point 3 of the Protocol states: “Regarding the South-East of Europe, the Soviet Union stresses its interest for Bessarabia. The German party declares its total absence of political interest regarding these territories” (Șișcanu, Văratec, 1991: 6-7). Nevertheless, on June, 25-th, 1940, Ribbentrop, the chief of the German diplomacy, through the German ambassador from Moscow, Von Schulenburg, communicated to the Commissary in charge with the external affairs of the Soviet Union, Veaceslav Molotov, that “on these territories (Bessarabia) about 100,000 German ethnics are living. (...) The government of the Reich reserves itself the right to make, at the proper time, some proposals to the Soviet government, regarding the repatriation of these *volksdeutsche*, as it happened in case of the German ethnics from Volânia. The claims of the Soviet government regarding Bukovina are something novel. Bukovina was a province of the Austrian Empire and it had a large number of German inhabitants. The fate of these German ethnics also represents a major concern of Germany (Moraru, 1995: 246-249).

According to Joseph Schechtmann, before the WWII, Romania had a German minority amounting to 740,000 persons, being the fourth most inhabited by Germans ethnics’ country in Europe, after Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and Poland. Among these, 320,900 people lived in Transylvania, 225,000 people in Banat, 81,000 people in Bessarabia, 75,500 people in Dobrugea, the others being strewn throughout the country (Schechtmann, 1946: 408). The most clear statistical demographical information regarding this ethnical group was offered by the General Census from December, 29-th, 1930, which revealed that the German community from Romania amounted to 745,421 persons (counted according to the nationality declared) or to 760,687 persons (counted according to the mother tongue), being concentrated in

several regions of the country, among which the Southern part of Bessarabia (*Recensământul Populației României din 1930*, 1938: XXIV-XXXV).

The negotiations between Germany and the Soviet Union, regarding the repatriation of the German ethnics from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina started at Moscow, on July, 25-th, 1940, and they resulted in an agreement signed on September, 5-th, the same year (Constantin, 1995: 10). According to this agreement, all German ethnics were granted the freedom to choose either to leave to Germany or receive German citizenship either to stay and get Soviet citizenship (Șandru, 2003: 84). Though, officially, the repatriation of the German ethnics was supposed to be based on their personal option, the reality was totally different, as it can be noticed from the correspondence between the Covurlui Prefecture and the central authorities from Bucharest, from the second half of July, 1940, which stated that the German refugees “cannot return to the occupied territories and they must be headed towards the German communities from within the country” (The Prefecture of Covurlui County, file 39/1940: 166). From the very beginning, we can notice a surprising fact, namely that these German ethnics from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, who had been Romanian citizens until the end of June, 1940, were not given the option to maintain their Romanian citizenship and to settle in Romania. Moreover, the evacuation of the German ethnics from the ceded territories started without the support of a treaty concluded between Romania and Germany, regarding the conditions of repatriation and of transit on the territory of Romania. Only on October, 22-nd, 1940, Romania and Germany concluded an agreement regarding the repatriation of the German population, but this agreement was effective only in regard to the German ethnics from several regions belonging to Romania, such as the South of Bukovina and Dobrugea (Hillgruber, 1994: 145), without stipulating anything regarding the Germans from the territories ceded to the Soviet Union, themselves former citizens of Romania. Ten days later, an additional act was supplied to this Convention. Through article 10 of this act, the Romanian authorities agreed upon the installation, at Bucharest, Gura-Humorului and Constanța, by the German detachment for repatriation, of several broadcasting stations on short waves frequency, with the aim of enabling the repatriation detachments to keep in touch with the German Legacy from Bucharest and with the authorities from Berlin (Prefecture of Covurlui County, file 39/1940: 191-192).

In fact, according to some German sources, the agreement from October, 22-nd, 1940, between Romania and Germany, was concluded in a moment when the evacuation of the Germans from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina was finished or about to finish. According to these sources, the repatriation of the German population from Bessarabia, counting 93,329 persons, took place between September, 23-rd - October, 23-rd, 1940; the repatriation of the Germans from Northern Bukovina, counting 43,641

persons, took place between September 26-th - October, 14-th, 1940. From the total number of German population, only 5,504 persons remained in the two regions - 2,058 in Bessarabia and 3,446 in Northern Bukovina (*Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa*, 1984: 46E). Similar accounts regarding the number of Germans repatriated from the two provinces are given by Joseph Schechtmann (Schechtmann, 1946: 184-186), Dimitrie Gherasim (Gherasim, 1943: 80) and Andreas Hillgruber. All three agree upon the number of 93,548 Germans repatriated from Bessarabia, there being minor differences regarding the number of those repatriated from Northern Bukovina. Hillgruber, analyzing the data offered by Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, showed that most of the repatriates from Bessarabia passed through the camp from Galați (Hillgruber, 1994: 339-340). Some other 15,000 Germans from the North of Dobrudja, 52,000 from the South of Bukovina and 9,000 from various other parts of the country were also repatriated passing through the camp of Galați. The Germans from the North of Bukovina, counting 43,538 persons, were evacuated by rail, through the East of Galitia, on the route Cernăuți – Premysl – Kracow (Hillgruber, 1994: 145).

Through its location, the town of Galați became the entry gate to Romania for the Germans from the South of Bessarabia, on their way to Germany. The institutions of the port were on alert and they had known, from before of August, 12-th, 1940, that 80,000 Germans from Bessarabia would be sent to Germany passing Galați. The operations were coordinated by “about 850 members of the German National-Socialist S.S. and by about 5-600 women, members in the N.S.V. assistance organization”, which received the right of “free circulation through all the ports on the Danube”. All this staff came to Romania during the second half of August, 1940 (The Commandment of the Port of Galați, file 15/1940: 53-58). In order to provide proper conditions of living, the officials from Galați took several measures to ensure the accommodation and supply of the German colonists passing through the town. On August, 27-th, 1940, the Townhall of Galați confirmed to the heads of the Communal Enterprises that, temporary, the town could accommodate about 10,000 persons (The Townhall of Galați, file 87/1940, 1-2). On August, 27-th, 1940, the Royal Resident of the Lower Danube County, Paul D. Goma, by telegraph, announced the institutions under his command that the Consulate of the Reich from Galați informed him that the Germans living in the South of Bessarabia would be repatriated through Romania, starting with September 1-st, 1940, and that they were supposed to spend several days in the town of Galați. Since the repatriation was expected to last for about two months, the German consulate required to the local authorities to give in rent, starting with September, 1-st, and for a period of two months, four pavilions belonging to the town. The Resident agreed upon the request of the Consulate (The Residency of the Lower Danube County, file 133/1940:

327). The Prefecture of Covurlui County was supposed to sell, on its own, the horses belonging to the repatriating Germans from Southern Bessarabia (The Prefecture of Covurlui County, file 20/1940: 44, 65-66).

The German authorities organized three transit camps, one in Galați and two others outside of Romania, at Prahovo and Zemun, near Beograd. For a proper deployment of the process of repatriation, the Southern part of Bessarabia, inhabited by Germans, was divided into four regions, each comprising about 30-40 villages. "Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle", the institution of the Reich that managed the repatriation operations, appointed, for each region, one commission in charge with the repatriation (Gherasim, 1943: 80). The Germans from Bessarabia traveled by train or by bus until Reni or Chilia, where they were boarded on Romanian ships, belonging to the Romanian Direction for Fluvial Navigation (N.F.R.), that took them to Galați (The Commandment of the Port of Galați, file 15/1940: 53). Some reached Galați by long caravans of chariots (Bancoș, 2000: 108-109). From the camp of Galați, the refugees traveled on the Danube, until the camps from Zemun and Prahovo, from where they continued their way by train, crossing Hungary and the South of Austria, until the annexed Polish regions. Some small groups were placed in the North-West of Yugoslavia and in Central Germany (Gherasim, 1943: 80; Schechtmann, 1946: 192, 199, 202-204). Their journey on the Danube, starting from Galați, was done by ships provided by the German Society for Navigation on the Danube D.D.S.G. (Deutsche Dampfschiffahrt Gesellschaft), which made available 28 ships for the transportation of the people and of their belongings (Bancoș, 2000: 109).

On the properties previously owned by German families, which emigrated according to the convention from September, 5-th, 1940, the Soviet authorities colonized approximately 6,000 Polish and Ukrainian families and some hundreds of families shifted from the left side of the Nistru river (Antonescu, 1941: 12; Șișcanu, Văratec, 1991: 105-106). The number of Germans which refused the repatriation at the end of 1940 and remained on the territories ceded to the Soviet Union was, according to the Census from July, 1941, of 2,058 persons in Bessarabia and of 3,446 persons in Northern Bukovina. Later on, at the end of WWII, these Germans were deported by the Soviet authorities to the Asian parts of the Soviet Union, along with people of other nationalities, especially Romanians (Șandru, 2003: 86).

At present, the memory of this large German community is still preserved in the South of Bessarabia through several toponyms, while the elements of their civilization and the living remembrance carried by those who came in touch with them are fading away.



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# THE EMMIGRATION OF THE MUSLIM ELEMENT FROM DOBRUJA

Cătălin NEGOIȚĂ\*

**Abstract.** *The Turkish – Tatar community in Dobruja was formed during centuries, after successive waves of volunteer and forced colonization. The Tatars were the first to appear in the Danubian region, a part of them remaining in the area, after the great invasion in 1241.*

*Between 1262 and 1264, the Byzantines colonize a group of Seljuk Turks in Anatolia, led by Sari Saltuk Dede, in Babadag. After progressively conquering Dobruja, in 1418, 1462 and 1484, the sultans promote an intense and systematic colonization with Muslim elements in this border province, thought to be a great strategic importance. With time, an extremely coherent Muslim wall is formed in the region and in 1878, after the Congress of Berlin, the most people in Dobruja were Muslims. Turkish – tatar denizens' situation did not get any better during the Romanian administration. Chronicle poorness, lack of equal opportunities, illiteracy, the tense situation in Southern Dobruja, comitadjis' attacks and corrupted clerks' insults made a part of this population immigrate. The mirage of Anatolia had risen and Kemal Ataturk' emissaries were traveling through Dobruja looking for colonists for the plentiful uncultivated territories in Asia Minor. In 1936, Romania and Turkey, sign a convention which brought under regulation volunteer emigration of the Muslim element from Dobruja, the first one of this type in a continent marked by deportations and massive displacements of population.*

**Keywords:** *Muslim, Dobruja, Tatar, Turk, Emigration.*

The history of the Tatar and Turkish community from Dobruja can be traced back to the Middle Ages. The first reference made to it was in 1229 when Ebruz Ata, a Tatar leader, received from Berke, one of his Batu Khan Brothers, a domain in Dobruja. This reference supports the idea that the Pontic region was controlled by the Mongols who defeated the Russian forces in the

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battle of Kalka River in 1223. Berke's name is also mentioned in connection with another essential event for the Tatar people in the Black Sea region: the division between Shia and Sunni, and the acceptance of the latter.

Being already under Mongol control, Dobruja does not suffer as much as the other Romanian regions after the 1241 Tatar invasion. Years after, the inhabitants in the Dobrujan region paid tribute to Emir Nogai whose descendants settle at Isaccea.

The strenghtening of the Tatar domination is attested by the discovery in Mihail Kogalniceanu village (Tulcea County) of a thesaurus containing 23 thousand coins from the reigns of three successive khans.

Ibn Batuta, an Arab scholar who passed through the region in 1330-1331, talks about Baba Saltuk as the southernmost town of the Tatars, and that on leaving it he had an eighteen's days journey before reaching the Byzantine dominion.

It is in the 13th century that the presence of the Selgiucid Turks in Dobruja is mentioned. Between 1262 and 1264, Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos allowed a group of Turks ruled by their spiritual lider Sari Saltuk Dede and their general Yzeidin Keykauz to settle in Babadag region (Rădulescu and Bitoleanu, 1998: 195).

One century later, the Ottoman Turks make their presence felt in this region. In 1387, Ivanko, Dobrotici's descendant, refused to support Sultan Murat in his battle against the Serbs and, therefore, he had to face an Ottoman attack who tried to conquer Varna. The Turks were defeated but the danger of a new attack against the Dobruja region became imminent.

In yet unknown circumstances, Mircea the Old takes over Dobruja in 1388. In 1394, Bayezid starts a military campaign against the Muntenian hospodar. Leunclavius, one of the most important historians of those times, calls Bayezid's campaign *expeditio pontica*, thus attesting Mircea's ruling over Dobruja region as far as the Black Sea.

The extent of power of Mircea the Old can be fully understood by reading the document issued on November 23rd, 1406, in which, among other titles, the Muntenian hospodar calls himself *ruler of both sides of the Danube to the Great Sea, and master of the citadel of Darstor*. Mircea also has the title of *terrarum Dobroticii despotus*, meaning he was despot over Dobrotici's lands (*Dobrogea. Cincizeci de ani de viață românească 1878-1928/ Dobruja. Fifty years of Romanian life 1878-1928*, 1928: 314).

After Musa lost the fight over the imperial throne, Mehmet, the new Sultan, starts a campaign against Mircea between 1416 and 1417. The Ottoman army invade Dobruja and take over Isaccea and Enisala, two of the most important citadels. The Sultan crossed the Danube and conquered the citadels on the left bank: Giurgiu, Turnu-Magurele and, probably, Severin as well. Mircea had no choice but to ask for peace. He lost Dobruja entirely, and the

citadels on the left bank of the Danube were turned into Turkish dominions. In 1418, the territory on the right bank of the Danube can be found once more listed as being controlled by his son, Mihail, but they represent only a memory, kept in the tradition of the Muntenian office.

Dobruja is entirely conquered by the Ottomans between 1445 and 1462, when Vlad Dracula and Vlad Tepes the Impaler fought against the Ottomans in this region. The Danube Delta is taken over by the Sultan, together with the adjacent areas only in 1484 when they manage to conquer Chilia and Cetatea Alba. Thus, Dobruja becomes part of the Ottoman Empire until 1878.

The region between the Danube and the Sea was fully assimilated in the Ottoman administrative system at the end of the 14th century, during the reign of Bayezid II, after the conquering of the Moldavian marine citadels. Up to that moment, the territories in Dobrogea, which were gradually occupied by the Ottomans, were administered by military leaders.

The land between the Danube and the Sea became a Dar al-Islam (House of Islam) territory and it was organized as udj (border province) and ruled by an autonomous bey (udj-bey) who had their residence inside the border citadels. All the inhabitants were considered subjects of the Empire, seen as raya (usually Christian subjects) in judicial terms and forced to comply to Islamic laws.

Like in other newly conquered regions, the Turks started a complex process of colonisation. Dobruja was a mixture of various ethnicities: Romanians, Tatars (many of them being Romanized), Turks colonized by the Byzantines, Greeks, Venetians and Genovesi.

Due to the fact that Dobruja was a strategic region, the colonisation with Turkish – Tatar elements had a great impact. They needed men they could trust in a region that used to be a launching ramp for the punitive or conquering expeditions of the Ottomans. The Turkish and Tatar colonization, which became a constant preoccupation once this region was conquered, was preceded by the spontaneous settling of a large number of Tatars in the southern parts of Moldavia and the northern parts of Dobruja (Rădulescu and Bitoleanu, 1998: 412).

The region from “the Wave of Trajan” to the Balkans was colonized with Muslim elements between 1500 and 1850. The objective was fully achieved as a compact group of Turks and Tatars was formed in the southern part of Dobruja and, especially, in the land between the Balkans and the Silistra-Mangalia line, exercising a strong Muslim influence over the region. In 1877, 77% of the population of the Cadrilater was Turkish (Antonescu, 1990: 67).

The Muslim colonization of Dobroja isolated the region from the southern areas in the Balkans through a Turkish-Tatar barrier. Thus, the penetration of Christianity from south to north became very difficult. The situation was completely different on the Danube contact line between

Dobrogea, Wallachia and Moldavia where there was a continuous economic, human and cultural flow (Rădulescu and Bitoleanu, 1998: 222).

The colonization with Muslim elements affected the prairie region, the autochthonous Romanian population being forced to retreat to the highlands, the Danube or the sea shore (Rădulescu and Bitoleanu, 1998: 223).

In the second half of the 19th century, after the Crimean War, a new wave of migrants settle in Dobruja: the Tatars and the Circassians coming from Russia.

In 1850, Ion Ionescu de la Brad made an agricultural expedition on the Dobrujan plains. He left the posterity an ethnographic picture of Dobruja which had two counties, nine *cazales* and 46 villages, and 221 thousand inhabitants, most of them being Turks, Tatars Romanians, Lippovans, Cossacks, Bulgarians and Greeks (*Dobrogea - Repere istorice*, 2000: 74).

In 1878, Bielosercovici, the Russian general, ordered the military governor of Dobruja to conduct a census. The results proved that the Muslim population represented 56% of the total number of inhabitants, while the Romanians were only 22% and the Bulgarians 13% (Burnea, 1930: 5).

After the War of Independence in 1877-1878 and after Dobruja became part of Romania, the Romanian governor issued a proclamation in November 1878 which asserted the rights of the inhabitants but it also stipulated that all the Ottoman tributes would be abolished. There is a passage in this proclamation which is addressed to the Muslim population: *In Romania, justice does not make distinction between race and ethnicity. Embrace the flag and it will become a symbol of freedom and peace.* Nevertheless, there was a decline in the number of Muslim people in that period. The census carried out in 1879 in Constanta county records: 56% Muslim population, 15% Bulgarians and 12% Romanians (Schmidt-Rösler in Weithmann, 1993: 101). However, after the "Law regulating landed property in Dobruja" (1880) and "The Law Concerning Immobile Property in Dobruja" (1882), the 1902 census organized in Constanta county reveal that there were only 10.8% Muslim, 54.7% Romanians, 14.3% Bulgarians and 10% Russians and Ukrainians (Burnea, 1930: 5).

At first, Bucharest was preoccupied with the situation of the Muslim population. The Great Mosque of Melika was inaugurated on May 13<sup>th</sup> 1913 in the presence of the Romanian sovereigns, King Carol I and Queen Elisabeth, of Take Ionescu who was Minister of Internal Affairs and the interim Minister of Religion and Public Instruction at that time, and the local officials. The event was highly discussed in the press both in Bucharest and in the Ottoman Empire. Romania was also involved in supporting the Muslim Seminar founded at Babadag in 1892. Seven years later, Spiru Haret moved the seminar at Medgidia in a place offered by the Muslim community free of charge. Among other subjects, the seminar also had Arabic and Coran lessons in order to educate and preserve the traditions of the Turkish-Tatar minority. Those who graduated from the Muslim seminar could be appointed in the Muslim clergy.

Regarding Muslims, the Romanian authorities never intervened in religious matters. During the Ottoman Empire, there were four mufti: Constanta, Tulcea, Silistra and Bazargic. Their staff was paid with money from the state budget. The Mufti were appointed and dismissed by the Minister of Religion and approved by the Grand Mufti. The latter was the Muslim spiritual leader who also had judicial attributions. Moreover, the Muslim spiritual leader from Romania handled the religious matters of the Turkish-Tatar community together with the Romanian authorities in order to promote the interests of the Muslim believers.

According to Article 72 in the 1923 Constitution, the Muslim spiritual leader could be appointed senator, but due to internal misunderstandings, caused by differences in opinions, no Muslim representative had access in the Senate.

In 1928, the Islamic cult had 419 sanctuaries, 243 Hatip, 194 imams, 139 muezzins and 576 hogi.

The Bulgarian historians also confirm the predominance of the Muslim element in the region between the Danube and the Balkans. When talking about the Turks in Romania, Konstantin Josef Jirecek, an eminent Czech Slavist, who became the Minister of Education in Bulgaria, noted that from 517 692 Muslim inhabitants, the highest percentage was recorded in the Cadrilater and in the surrounding counties. The vast majority of the Turkish population settled in the Black Sea area. In Rusciuk county there were 65 679 Turks in 1881 and 68 659 in 1888; in Silistra county there were 65 920 Turks in 1881, compared to 71 367 in 1888, in Varna county (where Balchik is) there were 82 812 Turks in 1881, compared to 92 817 in 1888, and in Sumla county (where Bazargic is) there were 129 797 Turks in 1881, compared to 113 706 in 1888 (Panaitescu, 1946: 36-37).

In his notes, the Austrian ethnograph Felix Philipp Kanitz made the following remarks regarding the different nationalities in the Cadrilater: 1. *The northern mountainside of the eastern Balkans was mainly inhabited by Turks*; 2. *In the Silistra-Turtucaia-Razgrad-Şaitangic-Rusciuc region there were almost only Turks, and in Turtucaia region, out of 44 villages, only one was entirely Christian: the Romanian Calimoc village (there were Turks, Tatars and Circassians in 35 villages, and some Bulgarians and Muslims in eight villages)*; 3. *In the Balchik steppes, out of the 72 villages of the Cazala, only three were entirely Christian, in some there were some Gagauz people, mixed with Bulgarians, but the vast majority were Turks*; 4. *Between Silistra and Accadanlar there were few villages with Bulgarians: Calipetrovo, Babuc, Alfatar*; 5. *South of Bazargic, towards the Bulgarian Yeni-Bazar, out of 44 villages, only nine had Bulgarian population, and in the Eschi-Giumaia region, south of Yeni-Bazar, out of 45 villages, only eight had Bulgarian population, the rest being Turks, Tatars and Circassians (Cadrilaterul 1913-1938, 1938: 192).*

As such, most of the toponymy in Southern Dobruja was purely Turkish. Before 1878, in North Dobruja (Tulcea and Constanta counties) of



the 3409 names of cities, villages, valleys, hills, lakes, ponds, quarries, ruins, crosses, isolated fountains 61, 89% were Turkish – Tatar names, 33.34% Romanian names, 3.84% Russian names (especially in the Delta), 0.71% Slavic – Bulgarian names and 0.22% names of various origins. In contrast, in Southern Dobruja all toponymy was Turkish, apart from a few localities on the shore of the Danube (Calimoc, Popina, Tatars, Vetrina, Darste, Ostrov, Pârjoaia etc.) and some names of towns on the seashore: Caliacra, Kavarna, Ecrene (*Cadrilaterul 1913-1938*, 1938: 193).

In the Dobrujan area included in the Bulgarian state, the authorities started a comprehensive process of colonization with Bulgarian elements from other regions. After 1878, the Bulgarian authorities applied in Southern Dobruja the same pattern the Romanian ones used for their Danube-sea land, but more intense and faster.

Faced with the influx of Slavic population, many Turks and Tatars left their villages and emigrated. However, statistics from 1881, drawn up in the south of the Danube, found that Muslims had an advantage over Christians. Jirecek pointed out that one would travel “as if he was in Turkey” in Deliorman and throughout the region of Tarnovo, Şumla and Silistra.

The colonization was conducted in the two southern districts, Caliacra and Durostor where, up to that date, there were only a few Bulgarian settlements, namely villages of Sicovtz and Grebentz around Silistra. In particular, there was no Bulgarian house in the towns on the Black Sea shore. Balchik and Kavarna population consisted mostly of Gagauz, Greek and Muslim. After 1878, through the persecution and expulsion of the Muslims, the Bulgarian state managed to form, along the Romanian border, an area of Bulgarian villages, succeeding, thus, in gaining majority in the area (*Cadrilaterul 1913-1938*, 1938: 195).

Dr. Miletic, ethnographer and professor at the University of Sofia, stated that, in 1878, the population in Southern Dobruja consisted of 77.5% Tatar and Turks and 16.5% Bulgarians. Furthermore, Jirecek reiterated in his work, *Das Fürstenthum Bulgarien*, that in all Southern Dobruja, Rusciuc and Varna included, the Turkish population formed the majority (Antonescu, 1990: 73).

The recent colonization was proven by the tiny Bulgarian cemeteries, which contrasted with the huge Muslim ones. On no Bulgarian cross was there a date older than 1881 (Burnea, 1930: 7).

In 1888, statistical studies were conducted on the ethnic groups that inhabited Southern Dobruja. Even the Bulgarian authorities experienced difficulties when faced with realities in the field: the Turks were 63.8% of the total population while the Bulgarians were only 27.4%. (Antonescu, 1990: 73).

In parallel with the colonisation of Southern Dobruja, the Bulgarian government also started an intense process of denationalization. The policy

imposed by Sofia affected not only the Turks but also most Romanian villages in the region.

The Bulgarian authorities started to change the toponymy of the villages. Up to 1878, the toponymy in Southern Dobruja had been almost exclusively Turkish, except the few names of localities situated on the shore of the Danube or on the seashore which had a Greek origin, Slavic or Romanian. In the 35 years of Bulgarian rule, the Turkish names of 26 villages in the Caliacra County and of 14 villages in the Durostor County were changed (*Cadrilaterul 1913-1938*, 1938: 200).

As early as 1878, the Turks sent the sultan a memorandum in which they vehemently protested against the incorporation of South Dobruja to Bulgaria. In the memorandum, it was stated that: "Giving preference to a minority over the majority is a mistake any country in the world would denounce. The Varna sanjak, which is composed of the village with the same name and then, Balchik, Pazargic, Provadia, and Cuzelie, has a population of 84,000 people, of which 57,000 are Muslims, 12,000 Greeks, 2,000 Armenians and 100 Hebrew; Bulgarians form an insignificant minority as compared to the Muslims in a 1 to 10 ratio. Therefore, we do not want to give our assent to this grim arrangement" (Panaitescu, 1946: 32).

In retaliation, the Bulgarians would arbitrarily violate their lands and if Muslims were to demand justice from the authorities, they did it with no success because all trials were won by the newcomers. To remove the Turks, they often used the most primitive methods. Many Muslims fled their villages because, every morning, they would find pieces of pork in front of their houses and fountains. The Turks who were most disgusted with this situation disappeared at night without a trace and the authorities denied any involvement in those cases.

A census carried out by Bulgaria in 1912, in the Durostor and Caliacra counties, presented the following figures:

- 1288 Romanians in the first county, 5314 in the second, total: 6602;
- Bulgarians – 68.307, 53.618, total: 121. 925;
- Turks, Tatars – 67.824, 68.400, total: 136. 224;
- Gypsies – 6299, 4725, total: 11.024;
- various ethnic groups – 4502, 2501, total: 7003;
- Grand total – 148.220, 134.558, 282.778 (Ciorbea, 2005: 231).

In 1928, the situation of the population in Durostor and Caliacra was as follows:

- Romanians – 24.361, 25.622;
- Bulgarians – 72.720, 60,357;
- Turks and Tatars – 88,088, 49.351 (Ciorbea, 2005: 234).

In 1930, Romania published the results of the general census. Data for Southern Dobruja (Caliacra / Durostor) looked like this:

- Romanian – 37.640, 40.088;
- Bulgarians – 70.797, 72.412;
- Turks – 38.430, 90.595;
- Tatar – 4461, 2.085 (Ciorbea, 2005: 235).

According to the 1930 census, the Turks were 0.9% of the population, most of them living in Dobruja, where they represented 18.5% of the population.

The emigration phenomenon reduced to a great extent the Muslim population. Over 11,000 Turks left Romania in groups immediately after the end of the First World War. The Turks' emigration soon became a matter of national concern because the Muslim population was loyal to the Romanian state, being an element of equilibrium in Southern Dobruja, where there were few Romanians. The Turks were forced by the Bulgarians to sell their lands and to emigrate. There were subjected to different kind of oppressions: murders, beatings, throwing pieces of pork in the fountains.

The Turks from Southern Dobruja had other reasons to emigrate as well: the chronic poverty, not being included on the electoral lists, the fact that the villages were given Romanian names (in 1938, in the Caliacra county, there were 45 villages with Romanian names while in Durostor, there were 14 villages in this situation), the impossibility of some owners to prove their legal rights on their lands because they had no official papers (as a result the lands were taken from them).

After the Greek – Turkish war and, especially after the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923, the government in Ankara was interested in colonising the vast spaces from the Asian side of the country. The emigration of the Muslim population was supported by the newspapers “HacSor” from Silistra and “Ilderim” from Bazargic, both edited in Turkish (Ibram, 1988: 54–55). Thus, the so-called “mirage of Anatolia” appeared, emissaries of Mustafa Kemal's government coming to Dobruja to convince the Turks there to emigrate.

This propaganda campaign was very well received by the Muslim population in Southern Dobruja. The Turks started to sell their lands and use the money obtained to buy other lands in Anatolia. Those who emigrated in Turkey settled in Istanbul, Ankara, Polatlı, Corlu, Eskişehir, Kırklareli, Canakkale, on the shore of the Marmara Sea, Edirne, Tekirdag (Ibram, 1988: 55).

Up to 1927, the Turks' emigration movement was desultory and scarce. As early as 1924, the Turkish deputy, Selim Abdulachim tried to alert the Romanian government on the dangers of the Turks' emigration. According to him, the main reason of this movement was the Muslim's inferior status (socially and legally) as compared to the rest of the population in Dobruja. Eleven years later, Selim Abdulachim stated that another reason was “the lack of culture and organization and above all the lack of solidarity of the richer Muslims who allied themselves with the so-called government parties that took

no measures to satisfy our needs". (Dobrogea Noua/ The New Dobruja, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1935).

Among the reasons to emigrate, the Tatar Turks mentioned: poverty, lack of work places, high tributes, and the clerks' bad behaviour. (Curentul / The Current, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1936). This state, together with the promises of an easy and prosperous life in Turkey, made simple people sell everything they had at low prices and leave. The contemporary media, in Dobruja mainly, was writing about the fact that the customs officers were taking advantage of the Turks' desire to emigrate, asking them to pay 5,000 lei (Romanian currency) for a passport.

Sometimes, those who gave their last money to buy a ticket to Istanbul had to wait for months because others, who tipped the Turkish authorities properly, would take their place. To leave the country, the young Turks needed an administrative paper which exempted them from performing the military service. This document cost 20 lei (Romanian currency) but on the black market would cost up to 1,000 lei. It was the newspaper "The Current" which, once again, brought to the fore the misfortunes of the emigrating Turks who remained homeless during the winter of 1936 – 1937:

"At first, they remained in the harbour for days even though it was cold and it was raining. Not only did they lack shelter, they also did not have what to eat. They were banished from here. They would wander on the streets of Constanta, poorly dressed, suffering from the cold, begging from the passers-by. It was difficult not to take pity on them." (Curentul, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1936).

On March 9<sup>th</sup> 1934, Hamdullah Suphi Tanriover, the Turkish minister in Bucharest, sent a report to the government of Ankara regarding the Turks' situation in Romania. According to it, the state of the Turkish minority was deplorable. The poverty was acute in Southern Dobruja where the Turks were living. The report recorded this as the main reason for which the Muslims wanted to emigrate. Another problem was represented by the Romanian soldiers' thefts. They would enter the Turks' houses and take chickens, cheese, and bread and so on without paying for them.

The Romanian authorities gave assurances that these deeds would not be repeated. "From now on, these products will be taken by persons officially named by the town mayors. The peasants will be given money for these products on a weekly basis. The soldiers were prohibited from buying from the peasants. The war minister, general Uica, gave orders to supply the frontier guards only through couriers." (Dobrogea Noua / The New Dobruja, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1934)

Being afraid that the Turks' emigration would influence the demography negatively, the Romanian government started to show more and more interest in what happened with the Muslim population. In the Durostor County, there were 52 Turkish teachers, paid by the Romanian state. In 1394, there were 30 Turkish teachers more. Also, the Education Ministry granted a 30% rise in their salaries, the rise of the imams' salaries being under discussion as well. As far as

the mosques are concerned, 10 ha of land were given to them so as to exploit them and use the gains. The latter, however, were not used by the mosques but deposited in the financial sections. In order to use these funds, to decide where and how to invest, two authorized representatives were elected. One would represent the muftiate, other the local authorities.

With regard to the emigration process, the vast majority of those who wished to emigrate would express this desire by stating that they have sold their houses. The authorities would verify these statements and those who had filed the papers would be given support in obtaining the necessary documents for emigration. In 1934, a report concerning the Muslim population's emigration presented supplementary reasons for this process. One of these mentioned the clashes between the Muslims and the Macedonians colonisers accommodated by the Turks. The Macedonians would walk naked in the Turks' courtyards so that the Muslim women had to stay indoors.

Equally serious was the problem represented by the infiltrations of the Bulgarians within the Muslims. In 1934, the deputy George Pucerea, who represented the Durostor County in the Parliament, intervened in the matter of the Turks' emigration. Pucerea asked the government to take measures so that the massive emigration of the Muslim population in the border region would not endanger the national security: "the land left behind by the Turks (which in Durostor reaches up to 25,000 ha) must not be taken by foreigners. I suggest that the state or the National Bank creates a special fund to help us buy the real estates of those who emigrate" (Viitorul Silistrei/ The Future of Silistra, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1934).

The deputy also considered that the Romanian state had a moral obligation towards the Muslims as they were "peaceful and loyal citizens who must be protected against the cunning middlemen that want to take advantage of the Turks in search of a passport." (Viitorul Silistrei/ The Future of Silistra, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1934). Due to this intervention, the Romanian state allocated 10 million lei to buy the land of those who had emigrated, more money being given in the future.

A report of the Silistra police department commented on the fact that "the Turks in Southern Dobruja were immigrating to Anatolia on account of the Turkish government's promises to help them settle there. The Bulgarians have no legal right to buy land from the Turkish emigrants; however, they insist that the Turks accept false sales, that is, to give them the land in exchange for a presumed old debt. The Turks reject such proposals. Nevertheless, the deputy Ivan Anghelov bought the village Cazimir with all its lands and the Bulgarian Balkanski bought land and 40 households in the village Saulgeac, within Durostor County" (*The Central State Historical Archives Department, the Police Department records*, file 171/ 1935: 1).

While, in Southern Dobruja, the Komitadji were fighting against the Romanian and the Turks, in Bulgaria, a severe backlash against the Muslims was

unfolding. The Turks living near the borders would illegally enter Romania to ask the authorities in Bucharest to help them immigrate to Anatolia. The Romanian General Staff ordered that “the Turks who came in Romania from Bulgaria be grouped in the Durostor and Caliacra Counties where they will be protected until the Turkish Embassy manages to prepare the documents for their emigration” (Ciorbea, 2005: 242).

Meanwhile, the emigration of the Turks in Dobruja continued, as many as 5,385 of them leaving for Anatolia in 1935 alone. With reference to the Turks’ emigration, the well known publicist, D. Batzaria, stated: “Here, in Romania, nobody wants these peaceful, loyal and respectful citizens to leave. We are deeply sorry for their leaving” (Legionarii/ The Legionaries, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1933).

The newspaper “The Legionaries”, sponsored by the Aromanian Cola Ciumetti wrote at the time: “Who will be negatively influenced by the Turks’ unsystematic and sometimes hindered by the Romanian government emigration? The answer is of course, Romania. This is because the Turks are willing to give away the very few land they still own to whomever, Bulgarians included, regardless of the price, as long as they secure money for their voyage” (Legionarii/ The Legionaries, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1933).

The publication would reflect some more on the matter: “They are going to Turkey pushed by us, because we don’t want them here. This undeserved exodus was brought about by the administration of the two counties. They are leaving because we have made it impossible for them to stay. However, we should at least have the decency to ask for their forgiveness in these moments and ease the pain of their being expatriated” (Legionarii/The Legionaries, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1933).

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1936, Romania signed a convention with the Turkish state, regulating the emigration process. The document was different from all other conventions regarding the population exchange or transfer because this case applied to a voluntary emigration and not to an imposed transfer.

The emigrants were allowed to take with them all of their mobile goods, regardless of their nature, while their rural immobile goods would become state properties the moment the Turks presented their formal requests to the commission set up specially for this matter. On the other hand, the urban immobile goods would remain the emigrants’ properties. The obligation of the Romanian government was to pay to the Turkish one 6,000 lei for one hectare. Article VI in the convention stipulated that the money owed by the Romanian state for the Turks’ lands would be paid in annual instalments. This money was deposited in an account with The National Bank of Romania.

Furthermore, the emigrants were allowed to sell their mobile and immobile goods before leaving but they had to use the money obtained to buy Romanian merchandise to export in Turkey. According to the convention, a commission would be set up, with representatives of the Internal Affairs,

Finance and Agriculture ministry as well as representatives of the emigrants. This commission would set up lists with the names of the emigrants and the size of their lands. The emigration was done in stages over five years, from April 1936 to April 1941. At the beginning of each stage of emigration, the Turkish government informed the Romanian government about the number of persons they could receive (Gherasim, 1943: 159-160).

Although the agreement stated that emigrants can take with them their mobile assets, the latter were restricted at 5 cattle, 15 sheep or goats, jewellery (no more than a chain), 1,000 Romanian lei and the equivalent of 2,000 lei in Turkish currency. The Turkish Consulate in Constanta hinted that a selection of the colonisers would be made with the aim of rejecting the Turkish Gypsies, which contravened the spirit of the agreement signed between the two countries where there was no mention of any discrimination whatsoever. (The Central State Historical Archives Department, the Police Department records, file 205/1936, f. 52). About this selection, the Romanian authorities would say that it “will be a great disadvantage for Romania because the Turks rejected for emigration on account of their bad behaviour are likely to become criminals in the future” (The Central State Historical Archives Department, the Police Department records, file 205/1936: f. 100). In 1937, the number of immigrants who arrived in Turkey from Romania was 3600.

The five years emigration period had several successive phases. During the first year 15,000 Turks, who had already sold all their goods, would leave. The second year was for the Turks living within 8 km along the Romanian-Bulgarian border. During the third year, it was the turn of the Turks from Dobrich, Ezibei and Curtbunar to emigrate. The fourth year was for the Turks of Turtucaia and Acadânlar, while the last year was for the Turks in Silistra and the rest of Dobruja (The Central State Historical Archives Department, the Police Department records, file 205/1936: f. 4).

A document from the National Archives of the Republic of Turkey – the records of General Colonization Department within the Ministry of Health – described the manner of taking the money from the properties left by the emigrants who settled in Turkey. The document, dated 1938, showed that, during that year, 311 families, representing 1216 people, had immigrated, leaving behind properties whose value reached the sum of 1,316,846 lei.

After the Turks emigrated, the value of the houses left behind was about 16,805,892 lei of which 12,000,979 lei went to the Turkish government. The National Bank of Romania opened an account for the Turkish state, depositing the exact amount of 16,805,892 lei.

In Turkey, the Ministry of Health was the one empowered to solve the problem of emigration. On February 2th, 1938, the Official Gazette, Chapter 13, presented the manner in which they will bring in the country the money resulted from the sale of the Turkish houses and lands left in Romania. The document

made references to the agreements between the two countries, namely that the Turk government cannot accept cash but 25% timber, 25% animals, 10% oil, the remaining 40% being free of export products: nails, glass, bricks.

According to the statistics, between 1930 and 1937 period, 17,794 Tatar Turks emigrated from the Caliacra County and 28,264 people emigrated from Durostor between 1936 and 1938. According to other sources, between 1930 and 1938, 48 500 Tatar Turks emigrated from Southern Dobruja. From 1937 onward, the number of Turks who wanted to leave Southern Dobruja lowered considerably. After emigration, in 1938, the situation of the remaining Muslim population was as follows: 38, 686 inhabitants in Caliacra (21.55% of total population) and 58,183 inhabitants in Durostor (30% of total population).

After the Second World War, the Romanian government introduced the study of Turkish and Tatar in the areas with Turkish and Tatar populations. For the Tatars, they used textbooks from the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. Tatars (*tatarlar*) who immigrated in three waves in Dobruja, even nowadays form three subgroups, depending on the spoken dialect. The majority speak Crimean Tatar (*kırım Tili*); the second largest group are the Tatars who speak the Noghai dialect (*noghai Tili*) and along the sea coast is the group that speaks the so-called coast dialect or the Dobruja Tatar dialect (*yaliboyi Tili*).

In 1956, the Romanian communists introduced in the school curriculum the Dobrudja Tatar, which used, however, the Latin alphabet. The Tatar language was subsequently removed from the school curriculum which led to the closing of the Tatar Teacher Training School in Constanta. Moreover, in 1965, the Seminary from Medgidia, the only institution that still dealt with teaching Turkish and the reading of the Koran in Arabic so as to prepare clergymen was closed. During the 80s, Romania loosened its legislation towards the Muslim population. Thus, pilgrimages to Mecca began and the reopening of the *madrasahs* was allowed.

The fall of communism in Romania allowed the representatives of the Tatar Turkish minorities to freely express themselves. The small Tatar community can be regarded as a separate ethnic group due to very specific traditions, although towards the end of the twentieth century, it was subjected to an intense process of Turkization. Generally, Tatars are annoyed when they are mistaken for Turks. They stress the fact that they have the same religion but other language, that they are the followers of Genghis Khan, the one who terrified all Europe.

Turkish is optional in all schools in Dobruja where there are Muslim students (Turks, Tatars and Gypsy Muslims, called *cingene* or *xoraxane*). The Koran schools (*madrasahs*) function in parallel, being part of the mosques. After the fall of communism, in 1993, the Muslim theological seminary was re-established in Medgidia, becoming in 1995 the Muslim Theological and Teacher Training High School "Kemal Atatürk". Among its facilities one counts a



boarding house, a library with books in both Romanian and Turkish and a prayer hall. As such, the high school received important financial support from the Turkish Ministry of Culture. This high school diploma's is recognized both in Romania and in Turkey. In 2000, the high school became the National College "Kemal Atatürk".

Currently, the Muslim religion in Romania has 35 imams and hogi and owns 108 cemeteries. The material basis consists of voluntary contributions of believers, donations and subsidies granted by the Romanian and Turkish rule, religious fees, fees for visiting historical monuments etc. ([http://www.islam.ro/despre\\_musulmani.htm](http://www.islam.ro/despre_musulmani.htm)).

From the 1990s onwards, in Dobruja, the influence of the Muslim state, Turkey especially, has been increasing. With the financial support of the Turkish state there were built, in addition to the "Kemal Atatürk" high school in Medgidia, several mosques (one in Medgidia as well). The Turkish influence is felt in Dobruja even through those who go there to find a better paid job.

Currently, the following associations of Muslim population work in Romania:

- The Islamic and Cultural League in Romania (LICA) – set up in 1990, as an association of Muslim students, with branches in Bucharest (1999), Timisoara (1992), Iasi (1994), Cluj-Napoca (1996) and Constanta (1997);
- The Democratic Union of Turkish – Muslim Tatars in Romania (UDT\*IMR);
- The Democratic Union of Turks in Romania (UDTR);
- The League of Albanians in Romania (LAR);
- The Cultural Union of Albanians in Romania (UCAR, 1990).

An interesting fact is that a large number of Tatars work in The Democratic Union of Turks in Romania. One also remarks that approximately 3,000 Muslim Albanians work in the two associations in Romania, while Gypsy Muslims have so far, no association of their own. Both The Democratic Union of Turks in Romania and The Democratic Union of Turkish – Muslim Tatars in Romania have representatives in the Romanian Parliament (<http://www.tatar.ro/>).

Even from the inter-war period, the Turkish and the Tatar press was really important but its influence dimmed during the communist period. Currently, the most important newspapers of the Muslim community in Dobruja are "Hakses – the Voice" (in Romanian and Turkish, since 1998), "Karadeniz" ("Black Sea"; in Turkish and Romanian with articles in Tatar, since 1989), "Cas – The Young Man" (in Romanian and Turkish, with articles in Tatar, since 1997), "Genc Nesil – The Young Generation" (in Romanian and Turkish, since 1998, currently on hold), "Tuna Mektuplari" (in Turkish, edited in Galati) and the newspaper of the "Kemal Atatürk" High School, "Dobruca"

(in Turkish, since 2000). Among the publishers who published several books in Turkish and Tatar one should distinguish Kriterion.

Nowadays, there are 29,000 Turks (55,000 according to their own statistics) and 24,000 Tatars in Romania, living mainly in Constanta and Tulcea counties and in Bucharest.

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