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Transylvanian Review continues the  
tradition of Revue de Transylvanie,  
founded by Silviu Dragomir, which  
was published in Cluj and then in Sibiu  
between 1934 and 1944.

Transylvanian Review is published  
quarterly by the Center for Transylvanian  
Studies and the Romanian Academy.

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(Center for Transylvanian Studies)  
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The Evolution of the Ethnic and Political Romanian-Hungarian Border As Reflected in Sources

Introduction

The Romanian-Hungarian border was set after the First World War along the line that separates the ethnic Romanian bloc in Transylvania from the Hungarian one in the Tisza Plain. The borderline became a legal provision of the peace treaty between the Allied and Associated Powers and Hungary, signed at Trianon (Versailles) on 4 June 1920, and was reconfirmed in the Treaty of Understanding, Cooperation and Neighborliness between Romania and the Hungarian Republic, signed in Timișoara on 16 September 1996. The total length of the border is 448 km (out of which 415.9 km territorial border and 32.1 km water border), which means 14.2% of Romania’s state border length.

The research for this paper was conducted under the research plan of the Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy “Geographic Studies on the Population Dynamics in Romania.”
Immediately after signing the Treaty of Trianon, an intense revisionist media campaign was launched, claiming the Hungarian rights over the territories lost in 1920. Thus, in 1896–1899, Hungarian historian Benedek Jancsó propounded a theory whereby the large number of Romanians in Transylvania was allegedly due to the massive immigration of Wallachians from the two extra-Carpathian principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia) in the 17th and especially 18th centuries, who tried to escape the excessively high taxes imposed during the Phanariot period. This theory was taken up, after the treaty had been signed, in an English-language work on Transylvania (Ajay et al. 1921), in A román irredentista mozgalmak története (The history of Romanian irredentist movements) (1920), and in Erdély története (The history of Transylvania) (1923), all these writings being refuted with scientific arguments and following field research undertaken by the Romanian geographer Ion Conea (1941; 1942 a, b).

Another representative work on this subject (Ethnographical Map of Hungary Based on the Density of Population) is authored by Count Pál Teleki, geographer and former prime-minister of Hungary, who presented it at the Paris Peace Conference (1920). Later on, at the Second Vienna Arbitration (1940), where they decided on the annexation of Northern Transylvania to Hungary, István Tarnóczi presented a map of Hungarian territories annexed by Romania on the basis of the Trianon decision (Deică 1999, 36). Within the same context, András Korponay (1941) showed that border tracing is not a question of surface area, but of population, launching an appeal to a rapid birthrate growth (Golopenţia 1942, 25–33). Along the same lines we can also mention Péter Vida’s title, “The Carpathian Basin Should Be Populated by Hungarians” (1941), the author suggesting both an increase in birthrate and the return of the Hungarians living abroad. These ideological theses lay at the basis of the reprisals taken against the Romanian population during September 1940–October 1944. That same period witnessed the studies produced by András Ronai, the author endeavoring to justify Hungary’s rights over the territories lost at the end of World War I (Deică 1999).

The end of the Second World War and the instauration of Kremlin-loyal communist regimes in Bucharest and Budapest brought Hungary’s revisionist demands to a standstill, concealing them behind a policy of understanding and neighborly relations between the two friendly countries (Berend and Bugarcic 2015). However, as of 1970, Hungary’s geopolitics became ever more vocal against the Central European “border opening” concept. It is the period in which writings re-substantiating the ideas of the “Carpathian Basin” relying on “Greater Hungary” and of Hungarian-inhabited regions started being published. This concept would later (1993) be used in outlining the Carpathian Euroregion (Deică and Alexandrescu 1995; Deică 1999–2000), the Hungarian ethnic bloc and the Hungarian community in Transylvania (Kocsis 1994 and 1997).
In 1990, with the collapse of the communist regimes, interethnic tensions would surge in both countries, reactivating political and social nationalistic movements (Nedelcu and DeBardeleben 2015). As early as the 1990s, the first civic political organization, the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania, came into being with the aim of representing the interests of the Hungarian community in Romania. In order to counteract the Hungarian activists, a cultural organization, Vatra Românească (The Romanian Hearth), was founded, and after a month they set up its political wing, namely, the Romanian National Unity Party. In the first months of 1990, these organizations kept agitating the spirits by organizing a rally in Târgu-Mureș City, which ended up tragically in violent street clashes (19–20 March 1990). The result was six dead and scores of wounded, seriously affecting Romania’s image in the world, especially through the international press reports (Gallagher 2005).

Romania’s nationalists witnessed the foundation of the Greater Romania Party (Partidul România Mare) in June 1991 and of the center-right Hungarian Civic Party (Magyar Polgári Párt), which advocated for more minority rights and the autonomy of the Szekler Land (January 2008). After long negotiations and public debates (Andreescu 1998, 79–86), the basic bilateral treaty with Hungary was eventually signed, as both countries were seeking membership in the Eu. The Treaty of Understanding, Cooperation and Good Neighborliness between Romania and the Republic of Hungary (signed at Timişoara on 16 September 1996) came into force on 27 December 1996 after the exchange of the instruments of ratification. It was a turning point in the relations between these countries, the nationalistic movements having to comply with European provisions on this issue (Niculescu 2004). Nevertheless, divergent views persisted, as indicated by the proposal of regionalization on federal principles, according to ethnic-minority criteria outside the Romanian constitutional framework,1 or by some statements and actions meant to destabilize the situation (illegal use of symbols, chauvinistic, racist positions or declarations at public meetings, sporting events, etc.) and raise the tension between the two ethnic communities, especially in regions with a majority Hungarian population (Harghita and Covasna counties, also partially Mureș County) (Głowacka-Grajper 2018).

Aims, Data and Methods

Unlike the works published in Hungary, many of them translated into international languages, based on data and interpretations that fundamentally distort the scientific reality (Deică 1999), the Romanian geographical literature is very poor in approaching this subject and illustrating

---

1. Except for Transylvania.
the real situation with historical, ethnic and geographical data. In this way, false scientific arguments, views hostile to the Romanian geopolitical and geostrategic interests, come to the forefront.

We intend to shed some light on the historical documents, cartographic and statistical, produced over time, but more or less willfully ignored by historians and authorities, because they illustrate the evolution of the ethnic structure of Hungary and of Transylvania (18th, 19th centuries and the beginning of the 20th century) which clearly demonstrates the correctness of the consequences of that treaty for the northwestern border of Romania.

The study relies on Hungarian and German documentary sources dated 1750–1918, on Romanian, Hungarian and international sources from the interwar and contemporary periods, as well as on the processing of official statistics. The methods used were both deductive and inductive.

Results and Discussion
The Romanian-Hungarian Ethnic Border between 1750 and the End of the First World War

In a geographical study on Hungary, Matthias Bel (1753, 214, 259, 265, 281, 284, 311, 313) devotes a very important part of his presentation to the area inhabited by Romanians on the territory of Hungary. In 1763, Adam Kollár described Hungary as an ethnic mosaic. He admitted that, of all its inhabitants, the Hungarians had the lowest population percentage (Hunfalvy 1876, 415).

Karl Gottlieb von Windisch (1780, 137, 143, 148, 188, 199, 213, 221) described the ethnic composition of the counties on the border between what were then then Hungary and Romania, counties in which Hungarians and Romanians lived, saying that the latter were the majority in the Timiş Banat (Temesi Bánság, Temescher Banat), also accounting for a high proportion in Ugocsa, Szabolcs, Békés, and Csanád.

Hungary’s geographical lexicon, authored by János Mátyás Korabinszky (1786, 41, 57, 70, 90, 108, 274, 535, 643, 652, 715, 823), indicated a compact Romanian ethnic group in the villages of Nagykálló, Nyíradony, Bedő, and Sáránd, on the present-day territory of Hungary.

Representative for the ethnic structure of Hungary in the late eighteenth century are the works of András Vályi (1796–1799, vol. 1: 15, 142, 153, 462; vol. 2: 36; vol. 3: 80, 117, 213, 300, 616, 628) and Márton Schwartner (1798,
The first is important because it enumerates the villages in which Romanians were in the absolute majority: Bedő, Darvas, Körösszakál, Méhkerék, Sáránd, Sarkadkereszttúr, Zsáka (all remaining part of Hungary), Battonya (Csanád County), Porcsalma (Szatmár County), and Nyíradony (Szabolcs County). Statistician M. Schwartner analyses the different development phases of the Hungarian state, saying that “Hungary is a country with the highest mix of peoples (nationalities) on Earth” and that the “Hungarians do not constitute a population group, but are mixed up with the Jasses (Jazygs) and the Cumans and occupy only the central part of the Tisza Plain, while at the periphery of the depression, towards the hills and the mountains, one meets other-language populations, forming compact ethnical lands.”

According to Johann von Csaplovics (1821, 396–399; 1829, vol. 1: 204–205, 207), the Romanians were in the absolute majority in the counties of Arad, Torontál, Krassó, and Temes, and accounted for the relative majority in Szatmár, Maramaros, Ugocsa, Szabolcs, Csanád, and Békés, while the Hungarians were a compact ethnic bloc in a few counties in the center of the Tisza Plain, being scattered among other nationalities in the rest of the country. Maramaros (Maramureș) was a frontier area between the Ruthenian population of the Wooded Carpathians and the Romanians in Transylvania and Hungary. In a geographical and statistical study, Pál Magda (1832, 46–47, 50, 409, 421, 430) shows that Hungary’s population was made up of several nationalities. Most of the Hungarians were settled in the plains, in 40 counties, but only few had an absolute Hungarian majority. The Hungarians were the dominant population in 23 counties, while in the other 17 they were in the minority. The Romanians accounted for the absolute or relative majority in the counties of western Romania, being dispersed in Hungary, near the border. At that time, on the present territory of Hungary, mention was made of 5 Romanian villages in Szabolcs County, 3 in Békés County and 4 in Csanád County.

Among the outstanding works describing the ethnic situation in mid–nineteenth century we find those of Fényes (1842, 1: 60, 63–64, 76), Stricker (1847, 45–46), Kautz (1855, 21, 75, 78–79, 80), Prasch (1852, 8, 78–79), Ritter von Heufler (1856, 3: 17–19, 92), and von Czoernig (1857, 1: 65, 67–68) (Manciulea 1938).

In his studies and publications on the ethnic structure of Hungary, E. Fényes (1842, 1: 60) affirms that Hungary is “a little Europe, because we can count 18 distinct nations, which differ among each other in speech, customs and attire, who have been living together for centuries and, with very few exceptions, have not borrowed any other language or customs, everyone stubbornly preserving their own.”
### Table 1. The evolution of the ethnic Hungarian population (1869–1910)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hungarians</th>
<th>Germans</th>
<th>Slovaks</th>
<th>Romanians</th>
<th>Ruthenians</th>
<th>Croatians</th>
<th>Serbs</th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>6,156,421</td>
<td>1,820,922</td>
<td>1,817,228</td>
<td>3,470,069</td>
<td>469,420</td>
<td>206,651</td>
<td>267,344</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>11,295</td>
<td>13,229,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>6,445,487</td>
<td>1,953,911</td>
<td>1,864,529</td>
<td>2,405,085</td>
<td>356,062</td>
<td>2,352,339</td>
<td>2,352,339</td>
<td>624,826</td>
<td>264,689</td>
<td>15,642,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>7,426,730</td>
<td>2,107,577</td>
<td>1,910,279</td>
<td>2,592,905</td>
<td>383,392</td>
<td>1,554,000</td>
<td>1,057,264</td>
<td>707,961</td>
<td>318,251</td>
<td>17,349,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>8,679,014</td>
<td>2,114,423</td>
<td>2,008,744</td>
<td>2,785,265</td>
<td>427,825</td>
<td>1,670,905</td>
<td>1,042,022</td>
<td>826,222</td>
<td>394,142</td>
<td>19,122,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>10,050,575</td>
<td>2,037,435</td>
<td>1,967,970</td>
<td>2,949,032</td>
<td>472,587</td>
<td>1,833,162</td>
<td>1,106,471</td>
<td>932,458</td>
<td>469,255</td>
<td>20,886,487</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Seşașanu 2000, 120.

The author admitted that the Hungarians lived in the central regions, while the peripheral mountains and hills were populated by other nationalities. In his opinion, based on statistical data, the Hungarians held the greatest share in Csongrád County, followed by Heves, Győr, Borsod, and Szabolcs counties, by the Land of the Cumans and the Jasses and in the towns of Hajdú, while in the counties of Vas and Sopron the Hungarians represented almost half of the population. Referring to the Romanian minority in Hungary, the author stated the following:

> in Hungary, after Hungarians and Slovaks, the Romanians are the most numerous ethnicity, because in 1,423 villages with 1,211,544 inhabitants, 907,693 were Eastern Greeks (Orthodox Christians), 301,813 Greek Catholics and 2,035 Roman Catholics. Together with the Transylvanian Romanians, they number 2,203,542 persons. No county has a population formed only of Romanian ethnics, but they are in the majority in the counties of Krassó, Temes, Zaránd, Middle Szolnok, and Kraszna, in the Kövárvídekl district and in regions of the Banat border guards province; they make up almost 1/3 of the population in the counties of Bihar, Szatmár and Maramaros, 1/4 in Csanád, 1/6 in Ugoasa and Torontál, some of them living also in Békés and Szabolcs. (Fényes 1842, 1: 63)

The same results from the statistical data presented by W. Stricker in 1847, according to which the percentage of Hungarians, compared with that of other nationalities, was very low. They were also in the minority in Transylvania and in the border guard regions in the south of Hungary.

Commenting upon the Austro-Hungarian census of 1850–1851, Gyula Kautz recognized the heterogeneity of the Hungarian population, comparing it ethnically with a miniature Europe. The same author considered that the Roma-
nian population, who lived mostly in Maramaros, Bereg and Ugocsa counties, in the central part of Szatmár and Bihar counties, held the greatest share in the Timiș Banat and Arad County. At the time, the Hungarians were a relatively homogeneous population only in the lowlands on the left-hand side of the Tisza River and between the Danube and the Tisza, but even in these places they lived in mixed pockets alongside German and Slavic populations.

In 1852, V. Prasch described the Hungarian ethnic bloc as confined to the lowlands in the central part of the country, populated by numerous ethnic minorities. This bloc was surrounded by foreign nationalities: “Ruthenians and Slovaks in the northeast and northwest, Serbo-Croats and Slovenians along the Drava River, Serbs and Romanians in the southeast.” According to his data, the majority Romanian population in Transylvania lived in the border guard region of Banat, and in the eastern counties of the Tisza Plain (Arad, Bihar and Szatmár).

In Ludwig Ritter von Heufler’s statistical, geographical and historical study about Hungary, the Hungarian ethnic bloc occupies the central plains area of Hungary, in contact with the Slovaks and the Ruthenians to the northeast, with the Germans to the west and southwest and with the Romanians to the east “along the border with Transylvania.” On the territory of Vojvodina and of the Timiș Banat there were only 241,000 Hungarian inhabitants (17% of the population).

Particularly important is the great ethnographical study on the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy authored by Karl Freiherrn von Czoernig in 1857. According to him, the limit of the Romanian ethnic bloc

started from the Bereg and Ugocsa counties, went through Bătărci [Batarcs, Batartsch] and Turț [Turc] villages, up to the border with Szatmár County, and farther on, through the villages of Botiza [Batiza], Pâulești [Szatmárpálfalva] and Domânești [Domahida]. This limit was winding through a German and German-Romanian-Hungarian ethnic island, met on its way. The borderline went from the villages near the border westward of Szatmár and Szabolcs, reached the Penészlek area, continuing parallel to the Szatmár and Bihar border counties, up to Valea lui Mihai [Ermihályfalva]. Near Cheț [Magyarkéc] village, it entered the territory of Bihar County, reached Marghita [Margitta] and passed over the Barcău [Berettyó] River up to Crestur [Apátkeresztúr], then followed the river as far as Sfârnaș [Berettyósarnos] village. The border route crossed Tăuții-Mâgherăuș [Miszmogyoróș] and Susütorogi [Siterrölgy], reached Oradea [Nagyvárad, Großwardein], then continued westward parallel to the Crișul Repede [Sebes-Körös] River up to Cheresig [Körösszeg]. Here it left the Criș River and moved farther on westwards up to Zsáka and Darvas villages, presently in Hungary, then went south again, reaching the border with Arad County in the Crișul
Negru [Fekete-Körös] River. From here, the border between the Hungarian and the Romanian ethnic blocs ran southward to Chișineu-Criș [Kisjenő], then made a turn westwards to Gyula–Vârșand [Varsánd]. Here it reached the German-Hungarian ethnic island, up to Curtici [Kürtös] town, advanced south through Pilu [Nagypél] and Cherechiu [Kerek] villages up to Micălaca [Mikelaka] [Arad City], separating the Romanian ethnic bloc in the Arad Plain from the German ethnic island. (Manciulea 1938, 31–34)

The largest ethnic Romanian “island” was Bihar County, near the present-day border, up to Santâul Mic (Kisszántó) village. The second Romanian ethnic island was in the Mélkerék village area. In Békés and Csanád counties, the villages of Torony (Turnu) and Battonya (Bátania) had a Romanian majority population. The Romanian population continued westwards in a patchwork distribution, to Deliblat, being scattered near the Tisza and the Danube (Turda 2013).

Another ethnographic study, published in 1860 by Adolf Ficker, situated the Hungarian ethnic bloc in the central region of the Tisza Plain, in five counties with over 90% of the total population, with over 80% in six other counties, the Hungarians being in the minority in the rest. At that time, the Romanians occupied “the same regions as Decebalus and Trajan had, i.e. the Timiş Banat, the western side of the Western Carpathians, up to the Tisza Plain” (Ficker 1860, 43–44).

The ratio between the Romanian and the Hungarian populations in the border counties is appended to this paper: Krassó: Romanians over 90%, Hungarians 1–2%; Temes: Romanians over 50%, Hungarians 1–2%; Torontál: Romanians 10–20%, Hungarians 10–20%; Csanád and Békés: Romanians 10–20%, Hungarians over 50%; Arad: Romanians over 50%, Hungarians over 10%; Szabolcs: Romanians 1–2%, Hungarians over 50%; Szilágy: Romanians 50–60%, Hungarians 20–30%, and Maramaros: Romanians 20–30%, Hungarians 5–6%.

That the Hungarians formed a compact ethnic bloc only in the center of the Tisza Plain is also confirmed by the geographical study of Károly Szász (1862, 27). According to this author, the Romanian population represented the majority in Transylvania and Banat, in Arad, Temes and Krassó counties, and also in the so-called Partium² (Kóvárvidek, Kraszna, Middle Szolnok, and Zaránd counties).

On Heinrich Kiepert’s map, published in 1869, the limit of the Romanian ethnic bloc started from the Vyshkovo (Visk) village, near the Tisza Valley, went on to the southwest and west, passed through Szatmár, Carei (Nagykároly, Großkarol) and Oradea, then led westwards to Komádi in Hungary, southwestwards—to Salonta (Nagyszalonta) and Gyula—and westwards of Arad. The census of 1870 confirmed both the heterogeneity of Hungary’s population and the fact that the Hungarians formed a compact ethnic bloc only in the center of Hungary, with other nationalities around it (Keleti 1873, 77–78).
Table 2. The ethnic structure in the Romanian-Hungarian border area (1865)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Romanians</th>
<th>Hungarians</th>
<th>Germans</th>
<th>Ruthenians</th>
<th>Slovakians</th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maramaros</td>
<td>177,000</td>
<td>57,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>* 1,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szatmár</td>
<td>248,000</td>
<td>72,000</td>
<td>145,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugocsia</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>* 2,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szabolcs</td>
<td>221,000</td>
<td>* 186,000</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>* 16,000</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>290,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- 7,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Békés</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>96,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Csanád</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>* *</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>240,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>* *</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temes</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>195,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>94,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- - 14,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torontál</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>62,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>88,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- - 124,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krassó</td>
<td>219,000</td>
<td>195,000</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>* *</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border guard land</td>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>- 27,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>- - 85,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Present in small numbers: in Torontál County: Bulgarians—10,000; French—6,000, the remaining Greeks and Jews, in Arad County: the Greek minority, in the border land, the Croatian minority.

Source: Szász 1862, 107, 109, 111, 113, 117, 119, 122, 124, 126, 128, 163.

The policy of colonization and of denationalization of Romanians and the systematic attempts to falsify the data in the Hungarian censuses organized after that date, based on mother-longue interpretations, led to an artificial increase in the proportion of Hungarian population, in an attempt to create the impression that the Hungarians were ethnically homogeneous (Grünwald 1876, 7). Even so, the Romanian ethnic bloc exerted a strong westward pressure on the Hungarians. This was acknowledged in a paper published in Hungary in 1884 (Láng and Jekelfalussy 1884, 126). Thus, based on the 1900 Hungarian census, the boundary between the Romanian and the Hungarian ethnic blocs was set almost on the same line as the one set by the Treaty of Trianon: from the Tisza River, through Turulung (Túrterebes, Turterebe), Livada (Sárvíz), Remetea Oașului (Kőszegremete), Culciu Mic (Kiskolcs), Culciu Mare (Nagykolcs), Amați (Amac), Ambud (Ombod), Păulești, Satu Mare, Vetiş (Vetés), Dara (Szamosdara), Boghiș (Csengerbagos), Domănestești, Ghilvaci (Gilvács), Moffinu Mare (Nagymajtény, Großmaitingen), Ghenci (Gencs), Pișcolț (Piskolt), Irina (Irinî, Hirrin), Chereușa (Érkőröös), Petea (Pete), Pâțal (Patal, Vișoara), Cheț, Marghita, Abram (Érábrány), Terebești (Krasznaterebes, Terebes), Petreu (Monospetrei), Crestur, Olosig (Érolaszi, Schwäbisch Wallendorf), Poclusa (Pokloșelek), Sâniob (Szentjobb), Sălard (Szalárd), Cetariu (Hegyközcsátár), Sâldabagiu de Munte (Hegyközszáldobagy), Fughiu (Fugyi), Oșorhei (Fugyivásárhely), Sânmartin (Váradszentmárton), Oradea, Episcopia Bihorului (Biharpuspoki), Târian (Köröstarján), Varsány, Geszt, Salonta, Ghioroc (Gyorok),
Vântâtori (Vadász), Adea (Ágya), Chișineu-Criș, Pădureni (Erdőhegyi), Zerind (Nagyerénd), Iermata Neagră (Feketegyarmat), Ant, Gyula, Irațoșu (Nagyiratos), Zimandu Nou (Zimândújfalu), Livada (Fakert, Baumgarten), Arad, Pecica (Pécска), Peregu Mic (Kispereg), Mezőhegyes, Csanádpalota, Kövegy, Apățfalva, Makó, Kiszombor, Pordeanu (Porgány, Porgau), Cherestur (Pusztakeresztúr), Beba Veche (Óbéba, Altbeba), Kübekháza, Rabe (Novi Kneževac), Majdan, Szöreg, Martonoš, Kanjiža, Zenta, Čoka, Bački Monoštór, Sajan, Padej, Ada, Bačko Petrovo Selo, Bečej, then farther on into the region between the Danube and the Tisza (Balogh 1902, 933–935).

The ethnographical map of Hungary, drawn up by Count Pál Teleki on the basis of the 1910 census data, used a new geographical method of representation, shifting the lower density of population in mountainous regions (under 20 inh./km²) and the greater densities in the large cities, average density areas. In this way, large mountain and tableland regions remained blank, creating the false impression of a kind of “ethnic voids.” This false representation of regions, with a compact Romanian population spread out over larger urban areas, Magyarized through colonization, distorted the reality of the Romanian-inhabited areas to lower values, simultaneously exaggerating the Hungarian-inhabited surface-area and creating a “corridor” to connect the Szeklers from the Harghita-Covasna area with the Hungarian ethnic bloc (Cociu 1993, 3: 32).

In a comprehensive commentary on this cartographic work, Romanian geographer Vintilă Mihăilescu concluded: “Count Teleki’s map must be decisively refuted and denounced—at least by specialists—as an deliberate attempt at mystifying reality” (Mihăilescu 1940, 152).

It was not long before the political value of the so-called “ethnic corridor” could be seen in the Vienna Arbitration of 30 August 1940. The “ethnic voids” created by Count Teleki in the Carpathian regions would be later seen in a Hungarian cartographical representation done by Kocsis (1997), in an erroneous interpretation of the 7 January 1992 census data (Deică 1998).

The Romanian-Hungarian Border in the Interwar Period (1918–1945)

The end of the First World War and the dissolution of the multinational empires in Europe (German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian) created the premises for the union of all Romanians, providing the opportunity for Bessarabia (on 27 March 1918), Bukovina (on 28 November
1918), and Transylvania (jointly with Banat, Crișana and Maramureș) (on 1 December 1918) to unite with the Kingdom of Romania. In this way, Romania’s western border was set at the boundary between the Romanian and the Hungarian ethnic blocs, and internationally recognized at Trianon on 4 June 1920.

At the time of the First World War, the ethnic Romanian-Hungarian border appeared to have moved eastwards, following the pressure put on the Romanian ethnic bloc by the denationalization policy3 pursued by the Hungarian authorities. In addition, false interpretations of the 1910 census were used. Based on these interpretations, homogeneous regions inhabited by Romanians appeared to have radically changed their ethnic profile in just 10 years. The limits of the Romanian ethnic bloc (M. Kiss 1915, 1918) included the following settlements: Korolevo (Királyháza), Tarna Mare (Nagytarna, Gross-Tarnau), Chornotysiv (Feketeardó), Dyula (Szolósgyula), Băbești (Kisbánya), Turulung, Adrián (Adorján), Orașu Nou (Avasújváros), Viile Apei (Apahegy), Seini (Szinérváralja, Leuchtenburg), Berindan (Berend), Sátmaré (Szatmárzadány), Satu Mare, Ardud (Erdőd, Erdeed), Beltiug (Krasznabéltek, Bildegk), Bogdán (Bogdád, Bogendorf), Hodod (Hadad, Kriegsdorf), Lelei (Lele), Uliciug (Völcse), Mânău (Monó), Arduzel (Szamosardó), Biusa (Bősháza), Cehu Silvaniei (Szilágysceh, Bömischdorf), Deja (Désháza), Verveghiu (Vérvölgy), Sâncraiu Silvaniei (Szilágyszentkirály), Crestur, Zalău (Zilah, Zillenmarkt), Călălu (Mesejenii de Sus, Oláhkecel), Petenia (Horoatu Crasnei, Krasznahorvát), Crasna (Kraszna, Krassmarkt), Ratin (Ráton), Şimleu Silvaniei (Szilágyosmyó, Schomlenmarkt), Nuşfalău (Szilágyragyfalú), Zăuan (Szilágyzovány), Ip (Ipp), Leșmir (Lecsmér), Suplacu de Barcău (Berettyószéplak), Aleșd (Élesd), Felcheriu (Felkér), Poșoloaca (Pósalaka), Tileagd (Mezőtelegd), Fughiu, Oșorhei, Sânmartin, Seleuș (Szóllős), Oradea, Sântion (Bihárszentjános), Tărian, Berekbőszörmény, Körösszegapáti, Magyarhomorog, Biharugra, Geszt, Salonta, Ghioroc, Satu Nou (Kügypuszta), Vânători, Zerind, Adea (Agya), Vârșand, Zimandu Nou, Livada (Fakert), Arad, Pecica, Peregu Mic, Csanádpalota, Kövegy, Apátfalva, Kiszombor, Pordeanu, Cherestur, Novi Kneževac (Majdan), Čoka (Egyházaskér), Crna Bara (Feketető), Kanjiža (Kanizsa), Toba (Tóba), Hetin (Tamásfalva), Răuți (Aurelhaza), Sânmartinu Maghiar (Magyarszentmárton), Otelec (Ötelek), Mihajlovo (Magyarszentmihály), Becicherecu Mare (Nagybecskerek, Großbetschkerek, Zrenjanin), Lukino Selő (Lukácsfalva), and Novi Bečej (Törökbecse) (Bolovan 2001).

However, the border set eight years before at Trianon followed without major deviations the ethnic limits set by Count István Bethlen and by Gyula Varga, a member of the Hungarian Academy, while seeking a compromise between the variants proposed by the experts present at the negotiations (Fig. 1).
FIG. 1. VARIANTS FOR THE ROMANIAN-HUNGARIAN BORDER PROPOSED AT TRIANON (1920)


Although the border set at Trianon did not give any square meter of Hungarian territory to Romania, but only confirmed a historical reality, the signing of this treaty triggered a massive campaign in the Hungarian political mass media, challenging it as based on false scientific arguments.

A representative propaganda volume titled *A történeti Erdély* (Historical Transylvania), published in Budapest in 1936, stated the following: “moving the Carpathian frontier is not only an act of violence against the Hungarian nation, but also an actual offence against God” (Asztalos 1936, 23) and the mountains which had been a borderline until 1918 were now “une chaîne tout à fait fermée et puissante” (Rónai 1936, 39). Commenting upon these assertions, Ion Conea (1942b) quoted the German geographer Walther Vogel (1922, 33–34) who set the natural frontier between the Romanian and the Hungarian ethnic blocs along the Tisza floodplain, which until several scores of years ago had been a natural borderline unsurpassed even by the Pripet marshes. It was a geophysical barrier unique in Europe, nearly 500 km long and 50 km wide, and when the snow melted and it rained heavily in spring and writer a real freshwater sea would overflow and separate Hungary from the Carpathian regions. Based on ethnic, historical and toponymic arguments, the Romanian author demonstrated that the Carpathian Mountains “are far from having the attributes of a so-called natural frontier,” forming the backbone of the Romanian land and people (Conea 1942b, 64).

In order to counteract the Hungarian revisionist stance, Czeckoslovakia, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (named Yugoslavia since 1929) concluded an alliance—the Little Entente. Take Ionescu, the then prime minister of Romania, accounted for the signing of that alliance as follows: “A war does not end with the signing of peace treaties. It goes on in the very hearts of peoples, and statesmen should create and maintain a state of things liable to convince those who hope to destroy a stable order as senseless and even dangerous” (Cârstea and Buzatu 2011, 37). This alliance was successively reinforced (on 27 June 1930 and 16 February 1933), eventually becoming an “international organization open to other countries, as well” (Article 1). It was dismantled on the eve of the Second World War, when German troops invaded Czechoslovakia, Nazi Germany annexed Bohemia and Moravia, and Slovakia became independent (1939–1945) (Mantu 1924; Campus 1997).

Drawing on a solid documentation, a man contemporaneous with these events, Milton G. Lehrer (1944/2013, 185), wrote: “If an injustice was committed in 1920, it is not for the Hungarians to complain about it, but for the Romanians, because beyond the political borders, several islands inhabited by Romanians were left in the Hungarian territory.” Lord Balfour told the House of Commons meeting of 12 February 1920 that the border between Romania and Hungary was set by the committee of experts of the main Allied and As-
associated Powers “as a result of thorough and well-thought research and with the sincere wish to create a fair border for all parties” (apud Seişanu 2000, 169).

Analyzing the population structure of Transylvania by nationality and residence, Emmanuel de Martonne, who knew Romania very well (Bowd and Clayton 2015) said on 6 June 1921, at a conference held at the Romanian Society of Geography:

> It is a very strange phenomenon the urban character of the Hungarian population in Transylvania, one of the factors that caused most difficulties for Romanian rights defenders . . . The ethnic composition of urban centers in mixed population regions is an artificial phenomenon: it depends on the nationality of governance, basically the army, the government, the banking, and trade sectors. If you add deliberately-caused pressure to someone’s benefit it is easily understandable that the Transylvanian cities became almost entirely Hungarian. It is equally understandable that this pressure can no longer continue now. Naturally, cities need to get a Romanian physiognomy. I knew old Cluj at a time when one had to be a careful listener to catch a word in Romanian; now, in Union Square, in the streets, everywhere Romanian is heard. During my stay of only two months, I had the impression that the Romanian language made notable progress. It is a natural and necessary phenomenon. In a country where the villages and the government are mostly Romanian it is not possible for cities not to become Romanian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counties</th>
<th>Romanians</th>
<th>Hungarians</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satu Mare</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sâlaj</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihor</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td><strong>317,895</strong></td>
<td><strong>161,338</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Seişanu 2000, 170.

Hungary’s revisionist claims resulted in the Second World War, given the absence of firmness and unity of the states allied against Hitler’s fascism, which led to a change in the balance of power in favor of the aggressor countries, supporters of the revisionist and territorial invasion policy. Thus, the Vienna Arbitration of 30 August 1940 changed the border to the benefit of Hungary.

Border change was supported by an ethnic map of Transylvania and Eastern Hungary, which left the impression that the ethnic structure of Transylvania had
been changed by the cartographical process used, whereby the Hungarians were shown in deep red, the Germans in orange (the similarity between these colors leading to confusion between the two ethnic groups, creating a visual perception of more Hungarians), the Jews were deemed to be Hungarians, while the Romanians were colored in a pale violet shade, appearing to be dominated by the Hungarians. However, despite guileful representation “the mass of Transylvanian Romanians, with the exception of the Szeklers—an island in the midst of Romanians—is so obvious that only ill-will can deny the Romanian character of this province” (Cociu 1993, 3: 18).

Romania lost 42,243 km² and over 2.6 million inhabitants, more than half of them Romanians. In the territory occupied by Horthy’s Hungary there remained 702 large-and-medium-sized industrial enterprises with a vested capital of nearly 4 billion lei, workshops, and small enterprises (Tribuna newspaper of 2 April 1941 and Transilvania newspaper of 29 October 1944). The transport systems were disrupted, as entire sectors of national roads and railways, the postal service, telegraph and telephone companies passed under Hungarian administration (Popa-Vereș 1941). Agriculture lost 1,303,002 hectares of arable land, 1,074,466 hectares of pastures and hayfields, 57,693 ha of vineyards, plus 685,508 ha of fallow land (roads, water, human settlements) (Gazeta de Turda newspaper of 16 March 1941).

Romania’s territorial losses were accompanied by a harsh repression against the Romanian population in these territories, in an effort to artificially change the ethnic composition in favor of the Hungarian population and to justify the perpetuation of that regime as much as possible.

Commenting on the repressive actions of the Hungarian Horthyist authorities, Sándor Kelemen and László Szenczei, contemporaneous with the events, wrote: “Most military commanders had a fascist and chauvinistic orientation. . . . The most important task of the military commanders were the ‘cleansing’ operations” (Kelemen 1946, 12–13). “Soldiers, imbued with fascist theories, arrived in northern Transylvania, committed heinous atrocities against the helpless people of the Romanian villages” (Szenczei 1946, 161).

On 25 October 1944, the liberation of Northern Transylvania from Horthy’s domination, with the sacrifice of Romanian soldiers, restored the Romanian administration over these territories. The Vienna Arbitration of 30 August 1940 was declared null and void by the Armistice Convention of 12 September 1944, and by the Paris Peace Treaty of 10 February 1947. Consequently, the legal basis for the state border between Romania and Hungary remains the Treaty of Trianon. This was confirmed by the Treaty between Romania and Hungary, signed in Timișoara and ratified by both sides in 1996.
Conclusions

The analysis of the historical documents on the ethnic structure of the Romanian-Hungarian cross-border area highlights three major aspects.

1) The inconsistency of the Hungarian authorities’ discourse. Until 1918, based on statistical data, historical documents and scientific works drawn up mainly by Hungarian authors, they recognized Hungary’s heterogeneous ethnic structure and the absolute majority of Romanians in Transylvania, with the exception of the Szekler zone in the area of the present-day counties of Harghita, Covasna, and Mureș. After the First World War, as the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was dismantled and Transylvania passed under Romanian administration, the Hungarian discourse suffered a radical change, challenging the Trianon decisions and claiming, on the basis of false scientific reasoning and cartographic procedures that distorted the reality, that the Hungarian ethnic element was more numerous in Transylvania. Consequently, several Romanian geographers of the interwar period produced lots of writings highlighting the reality of an opposite situation. Since during the Second World War (September 1941–October 1944) Northern Transylvania came under Hungarian administration, the stage was set for the outburst of the chauvinistic frustrations of the then Hungarian authorities, leading to bloody conflicts and ethnic cleansing. In the communist period, interethnic tensions simmered down, masked by the friendship among the peoples of the Soviet bloc. However, after 1989, the first interethnic tensions in the Romanian counties with a majority Hungarian population (Harghita and Covasna) were rekindled in extremist-nationalist speeches by some representatives of the political class. The signing of the basic political treaty between the two neighboring states, followed by their integration into the European Union (2004 and 2007, respectively), and the adoption of the EU legislation on matters pertaining to the ethnic minorities, dampened the extremist manifestations, which nevertheless continued on the occasion of public meetings or sporting events. At the same time, they developed concepts intended to reintegrate the territories that had belonged to the Hungarian state before 1920, either in the form of a “Carpathian Basin,” or of a “Carpathian Euroregion” (Deică 1999–2000, Deică and Alexandrescu 1995), territorial structures later proved devoid of substance.

2) The eastwards shift of the boundary between the Hungarian and the Romanian blocs, in the wake of the colonization policies promoted by the Austro-Hungarian authorities until 1918.

3) The righteousness of the borderline set at Trianon along the ethnic frontier was demonstrated by the analyzed historical sources and confirmed by the international experts who drew up the treaty.
In view of the above, one century after the union of Transylvania with Romania and on the eve of a century since the signing of the Treaty of Trianon, we consider that a scientific approach, based on documentary sources, likely to help elucidate the circumstances in which the political boundary between Romania and Hungary was set, is an imperative necessity.

Notes

1. Article 1(1) in the Constitution of Romania reads: “Romania is a national, sovereign and independent, unitary and indivisible state.”
2. Partium (Partes reapplicatae) grouped the four counties that Hungary planned to transfer from Transylvania, but which eventually remained in Transylvania, having been returned by Emperor Charles VI in 1732.
3. The denationalization policy of the Romanians undertaken by the Hungarian state began in the second half of the 19th century and lasted until the Great Union. This resulted mainly in colonization (especially in the big cities), and denationalization through the church, school and administration (Manciulea 1938, 47, 77).

References


**Abstract**

The Evolution of the Ethnic and Political Romanian-Hungarian Border As Reflected in Sources

The 100th anniversary of the union of Transylvania, Bukovina and Bessarabia with Romania (1918) and of the signing of the Treaty of Trianon (1920), which meant international recognition for Romania’s western border, is an opportunity to analyze impartially the historical documents justifying that process. This is all the more necessary because the Hungarian side strongly criticized it. The paper deals with the establishment of the Romanian and Hungarian nation-state borders. It analyzes Hungarian, German, Romanian, West European and American historical documents which outline the evolution of the boundary between the Romanian and the Hungarian ethnic blocs previous to the year 1918, the basis for the current political frontier, as well as inter- and postwar documents challenging the recourse to false scientific arguments on the union of Transylvania with Romania. To conclude, from 1750 to 1918, the ethnic boundary between Romanians and Hungarians constantly shifted eastwards as a consequence of the Hungarian authorities’ political decisions, the present political borderline running along the ethnic one of 1918.

**Keywords**

ethnic structure, political border, Treaty of Trianon, Transylvania, Hungary, Romania
Undoubtedly, the contemporary interest in diaries of yore is based largely on their human and historical nature. As historical documents of their time, diaries raise the great issue of the meaning of history within the personal narrative. The individual who communicates with history via a diaristic voice moves away from the autobiographical space sensu stricto, as the experience of personal history (small-scale history) and the history of the epoch (large-scale history) becomes a fact of consciousness and a memento of having lived the two. Thus, turning existence into conscience and biography into destiny means that the diarist’s voice narrates while encompassing the contents of History in a privileged and conscious experience.

However, being considered subjective literature, given the constant association of the intimate event with the historical one they imply, diaries have been used reluctantly as historical documents proper. The reason behind this is a skepticism stemming from the overpowering importance that diarists...
might place on their image capital. Yet, as signs of a destiny in the making, especially in the case of people who take on the characteristics of the times they live in, diaries become complex indirect historical testimonies, at times more subtle than a detailed chronicle. Those who wrote history, being credible witnesses to history, such as Queen Marie of Romania (1875–1938), Jeana Fodoreanu (?–?), Alexandru Averescu (1859–1938) and Gheorghe Bâgulescu (1890–1963), embraced their role adamantly. Their diaries from the First World War can be read as refined chronicles of their century. Silent witnesses to the Great War, the diaries of a queen (Queen Marie), a woman-soldier and Red Cross physician (Jeana Fodoreanu), an active-duty general (Alexandru Averescu), and a captain of the mountain infantry troops (Gheorghe Bâgulescu) complete with significant details the events recorded in history books. Such diaries have been and are still read as mere “timelines” of individual destinies. However, they do depict nationally and internationally relevant historical times, which is why we believe they should be re-read as a “chronology” of a collective destiny, where the time of the events almost overlaps with the time of the confession narrative. In other words, in these diaries, where a name and social status are associated to the narrator, history or the narrative past dwells in simultaneity with the writing of history or the analytical present.

Queen Marie of Romania starts her regular diary entries on 14/27 August 1916, when Romania enters the First World War, and she writes continually, showing great discipline, until her death in 1938. Although Queen Marie’s first attempt to keep a diary of her privileged and conscious experiences dates back to two years earlier, to the death of King Carol I of Romania (1839–1914) and her coronation as queen of Romania, she gave up after just a few days. Nonetheless, she resumes her diary entries the day she feels that her personal history blends with her people’s history to the point of coalescence. The 101 notebooks written in English constitute probably the most extensive diary known in Romania. Queen Marie understands that being a royal is not merely a destiny, but a capital that needs to be nurtured and put to use. Shaken to the core by the greatness of the historical events she witnesses not just passively and metaphorically, but also literally and actively, Queen Marie illustrates the uniqueness of an individual on the cusp of centuries trying to capture the way in which historical time has shaped the diarist’s destiny as well as the role played by the diarist in history.

The first 14 notebooks cover the war and Queen Marie later turns them into a three-tome memoir titled The Story of My Life, first published in English in London–Toronto–Melbourne–Sydney (Cassell & Company), between 1934 and 1935, and in New York (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1934, 615 pp.). The book is then translated into Romanian by Mârgârita Miler-Verghy under the title Povestea vieții mele. The memoir was published in three volumes between 1934
and 1936 and subsequently reprinted multiple times after 1989, among the first editions being those of Moldova Publishing House (Iaşi, 1990–1991) and Eminescu Publishing House (Bucharest, 1991). The third volume is different from the first two from a narrative point of view, as it mainly includes a selection of personal diary notes from between 1916 and 1918. The diary excerpts Queen Marie chose to use at the end of her memoir start on 14/27 August 1916. These notes are subject to a self-censorship meant to silently eliminate or mitigate the sincere outbursts, impressions or discontent concerning the king’s, the Crown prince’s or the Romanian political elite’s attitude, which she deemed unfit to be made public at that time.

The recent publication in three volumes (vol. 1, 1916–1917; vol. 2, 1917–1918; vol. 3, 1918) of the Romanian translation of Queen Marie’s diaries written during the war under the title *Jurnal de război* (Wartime diary) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2014–2015) complements the Queen’s portrait with “passionate pages” teeming with the “life,” “spiritual turmoil” and “tension” of those days. Previously, the Queen was chiefly seen as a nurse, an image she herself turned into a symbol, but which solely linked her to the humanitarian and medical efforts of the Red Cross, thus overshadowing her missions as a soldier and diplomat, as well as her roles of wife, mother and friend during the war.

The notes in her personal diary were written as the events unfolded, abiding by the rules of simultaneity and *calendarity*. Consequently, the times she experiences and describes in the text provide the background for the narrator’s view on World War I in particular and on history in general. Recognizing that nothing is immutable, that everything is subject to change, that human beings are enslaved by the passing of time in a perpetual becoming that is itself subject to the times that wear, alter, and transform, Queen Marie lends a pathetic note to her gestures. She does not look for theoretical tools to define a moral, but has the power to turn the common moral into a royal political practice that gives her a strong touch of heroism and gains her the title of “the last romantic.”

In March 1910, when she begins the autobiography that will later become her personal diary, Queen Marie confesses in the very first lines her desire to write down her memories, thoughts, and experience, lest she might forget them. She thus hopes that such an exercise in mnemonics will help her later recall them. It is, however, only on the morning of 14/27 August 1916 that she becomes acutely aware of the individual and collective memory loss brought about by a two-year discontinuity of the diary due to the death of King Carol I on 2/15 October 1914. Henceforth, as history rushes into her life—“today I can think of nothing else but the fact that there is going to be a war”—neither listlessness nor other concerns can keep her from writing daily, thus bestowing immortality upon fleeting moments.
Colonel Jeana Fodoreanu of the medical staff, who, in 1913, fights alongside Queen Marie against the cholera epidemic during the Balkan Wars, also writes a wartime diary between 1916 and 1919. She only publishes it in 1928, under the title *Femee-soldat* (Woman soldier), to honor the memory of the heroes and fellow-soldiers killed in battle. The volume is dedicated “To H.M. Queen Marie, a homage of devotion, faith and love.” The late publication of the wartime notes is explained in the Foreword as the result of the discontent following a fruitless wait and a wish that “others, more capable people and better writers, would speak about and remember those who carried out their duty under the flag of the Red Cross.” Therefore, after ten years of futile hope, Jeana Fodoreanu considers it appropriate to “reveal the almost daily recollections” written during the war, all the more for having “actively” and “directly” participated in the Great War, “from the first to the last day of the conflagration,” acting as a “living example” on duty, “animated” by Queen Marie’s advice and exhortation.

During the same period, General Alexandru Averescu also publishes a wartime diary titled *Notițe zilnice din războiul 1916–1918* (Daily notes from the 1916–1918 war)], first as a feuilleton in the *Îndreptarea* (The Right Way) newspaper and a few years later as a book. In its 1935 Foreword, the author feels compelled to justify his own diary: being aware from the outset of the “huge extent of the drama that was starting to unfurl in front of the whole of humanity,” and directly involved in the military operations on the front, he starts putting down the events as they are happening. His interest is sincere; on the one hand, he is up to date with the “real state of affairs” both inside the country and abroad and, on the other hand, he is able to realize without fear of mistake “how bloody events are going to ensue.” Moreover, upon reading other memoirs of the time, he realizes that the latter are full of “inaccuracies” regarding circumstances he himself is well acquainted with for having been a direct participant. Therefore, as a soldier and out of respect for the accuracy of historical information, Alexandru Averescu deems it appropriate to restore the truth by publishing diary notes written in the midst of the events. He knows, nonetheless, that, given the rules of the genre, diaries eventually sacrifice beauty for the sake of the truth—told with “absolute sincerity” and “untainted honesty”—in order to serve “future scholars” and become “teachings from other people’s experience.”

Captain Gheorghe Băgulescu also publishes a book that can be read as a wartime diary, in 1918 (in the town of Târgu-Neamț). Its title is *Zile de energie: Impresii și povestiri de pe front 1916–1917* (Days full of energy: Impressions and accounts from the battlefield) and it tells of the Romanian army’s victories in the “death triangle,” in order to “let it be known” to contemporaries and descendants alike what sacrifice the army made to fulfill the ideal of the unification of all Romanians. In the Foreword, the author admits that the lines about the “times
full of energy” were written when the “maelstrom of the battle” offered some respite. A footnote to the Foreword of the book’s second edition, published in 1919, mentions that the Foreword was initially written on 22 February 1918, when Romania was completely isolated from its allies, surrounded by enemies or treacherous allies and forced into an unfair peace. Nevertheless, the author does not shy away from speaking about “the Greater Romania of tomorrow,” a creed for which Romanian soldiers continued to fight until the final victory: “In the years to come, the children of those who carried out their holy duty to the end, the future citizens of tomorrow’s Greater Romania—great indeed, for great was our sacrifice, and great is our soul—may wish to be acquainted with the epic of our times.”

With their on-the-spot writing, diaries anchor the personal time in the social, daily time, thus giving rise to the pair personal time/historical time, which translates as an opposition between memory and oblivion, a paradoxical association of historicism and amnesia. Aware of the ephemeral character of “historical reality,” the diarist’s self turns the narrative not into a mere “storage space,” but into a “conservation space” for emotional memory. While it is usually an “archive” of one’s interiority, the diary now becomes a silent witness to history. If we consider that the addressee of the diary’s message is its very author, then Queen Marie seems to have set a rendezvous between her future self and her daily notes. She reads them to her close friends right after she writes them, but subsequently goes through the diary again and re-writes the text. It is as if she envisions either lifetime or posthumous publication, which means that the message is now endowed with the pragmatic intentionality of a discourse made available to the public, whom we believe to have been the addressee in the first place. An ego-document, interesting to historians who want to evoke “the atmosphere” of the times, the personal diary has often been said to be a genre relating to situations of crisis or existential changes that have fractured the inner balance of the diarist. Consequently, the notes in Queen Marie’s diary on Sunday, 14/27 August 1916, inform us that, following two years of neutrality and a few weeks of secret preparations, the “big day” has come for the country, a day full of emotion, hope and fear. The daily note then reveals the “painful ordeal” nestling in King Ferdinand’s soul as he places the “honor” of being King of Romania first, before his Hohenzollern name, “at an overwhelming time of supreme sacrifice for the country.” He officially acknowledges the Romanian entry into the war alongside the Triple Entente, which is regarded as a vital decision in the pursuit of the Romanian people’s national ideal. The following day, Queen Marie notes that on St. Mary’s Day the whole country received the important news and that it was met with sober and not boisterous enthusiasm, as the Romanian people felt that it was going through “a solemn moment—a dreadful moment, a great moment.”
Jeana Fodoreanu begins her wartime diaries on the same day, 15 August, when she jots down, like any good Romanian would, the emotion she felt: “An emotional day! A shattering day! The moment has arrived for Romanians to show who they are, what they are capable of.”

General Averescu, appointed commander of the 2nd Army by a decree on 14 August, starts his personal diary, subtitled Războiul nostru (Our war), on 21 August 1916, when he takes command. On 23 August, he copies the 2nd Army’s Orders for Day 1, whose addressees are his officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers. When writing, he has “in mind the holy image of GREATER ROMANIA”:

The cause for which this country takes her sons into battle is just and holy and it will give us the strength to come out victorious. For centuries a desire has been felt throughout all the territories inhabited by Romanians to merge the Romanian spirit into one and single body. What was for our fathers and forefathers but a beautiful and distant dream is meant to become for us a reality accomplished by us.

The fragmentary character of the diary, which acquires an epistemological status in the Romantic aesthetics, seems to suit very well the diarists we analyze. They manage to seize the meandering movements of the history they witnessed and the disparate fragments eventually coalesce in a layout resembling a mosaic, a tapestry, a musical variation.

Queen Marie is born on 30 October 1875, as the first daughter of Prince Alfred, the second son of Queen Victoria, duke of Edinburgh and later duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and of Mary, grand duchess, daughter of Tsar Alexander II. She marries Prince Ferdinand of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (1865–1927), crown prince of Romania, in 1893. In 1914, she becomes Queen of Romania. With the memory of a happy childhood alive in her heart, Queen Marie begins her “oriental adventure” with naive innocence and spontaneity, without fear or anxiety, ready to love the new country. A great lover of nature, she roams through the country, wanders off the beaten paths, both in order to discover places that few have ever seen before and to become familiar with her adoptive homeland: “I love these places in the countryside, they comfort my soul and their perfect tranquility heals me.” She believes in the mission of monarchs, but also in their rights. Confident and cheerful, she sees the good, the bright side in everything; she is royal in every sense of the word.

However, Marie becomes Queen of Romania in a time of global crisis. Under the pretext of a new world hegemony, she is informed of “a cynical political plan,” a plan with greedy objectives and based on family relationships. Yet, the Queen has the courage to counter it by betting on one idea: the national
idea along the lines of the revolt of those risking being humiliated and of the natural national claims that followed. And perhaps it is her extensive diary, virtually accompanying her life from a certain moment on, which turned her into a legend by providing a self-portrait in motion. This self-portrait reveals not only the love and respect she enjoys, but also her moral energy, great stability, confidence in the natural justice of time, in fair reward. The diary also reveals physical injuries and grief (the death of her youngest child, the disappointment with the crown prince’s behavior, the impotent humiliation during the forced peace, etc.). Hardships are also confirmed by other diarists of the time. Jeana Fodoreanu, for example, often refers to Queen Marie in her war diary; she recalls gestures and situations illustrating the Queen’s aura. The days of 29 and 30 August 1916 are days full of “disquiet” for this diarist, Jenica, as she is called. Among the wounded in the hospital is her brother Puiu (Petre), injured when the troops crossed the Olt River. Queen Marie visits the hospital and brings him a bouquet of roses with two branches, oak and green laurel, tied together with a tricolor ribbon. She hangs it to the patient’s bed and, “without any reluctance,” kisses the bandages that covered his head. The diary recounts the Queen’s gesture but, unable to suppress her emotion, her full admiration, the author adds a personal comment: “When you see so much compassion from such a Queen, you can face the cannons and the machine guns like a madman.”25 The days go by, the war continues, and Jeana Fodoreanu writes again about the Queen’s behavior, this time during the truce at the beginning of 1918. She describes the way in which the monarch becomes the “moral foundation”26 of the dynasty she’s building: “This woman, our Queen, endured so much, she cried so much, she prayed so much to the God of triumphs! When I see her big blue eyes gazing towards the horizon, I have the feeling that she has already seen! Far, far beyond Bucharest, to the west... from where we all expect salvation.”27

Moreover, during the offensive of the German army led by Field Marshal August von Mackensen on the Siret front, Queen Marie goes to the battle front, ignoring the bombs. Her silhouette wearing the white uniform of the Red Cross mobilized the living and alleviated the suffering of the wounded.28 And, although the Russian army betrays its allies and the Treaty of Bucharest is the beginning of a “disastrous” peace (24 April/7 May 2018), the Queen does not give up for a second the hope of victory. On 28 April 1918, she writes in her diary: “Officially, they all try to put a smile on a mask of absolute tragedy; because of this, I slowly creep into despair. At least we should be honest with ourselves and face the circumstances.”29

Amidst a prolonged tragedy that gripped the entire world, her personal notes complement, at a different pace, her contemporaries’ writings in testifying the direct experience of history, either on the front line, where military operations
were taking place, or at the Red Cross. Romania’s entry into the war—true, in
the name of a great ideal—proves from the very outset to be tough for the royal
family and the army, as well as for civilians. In the midst of the storm, Queen
Marie tries to remain calm and objective. In her diary, she notes very discour-
aging news from the recently opened front and, for several days, her attention
is focused on the Tutrakan frontline, eagerly awaiting the news. While, on 22
August 1916, she writes about the resistance of the Romanian army in the area,
the next day the Queen mentions that bad news pours in from this very endan-
gered line of the front, then the following day she writes that the news is worse
with every hour that passes and then, inevitably, that Tutrakan has fallen. As a
sort of epilogue to the event, on 25 August the diarist considers it important to
jot down a detail from the area that is hard to believe: the Bulgarians are said to
have killed all the Romanian prisoners in Tutrakan.30

Jeana Fodoreanu, now at the head of the Despina Doamna Institute, turned
auxiliary hospital, lists in her diary the important news of the day. On 22 August
1916, she describes the “terrible disaster” at Tutrakan in terms of the number
of injured people admitted in the hospital and with... frightening non-official
information from the battlefield:

Such torment! Such pain! The terrible disaster at Tutrakan is announced in Bu-
charest! What could I say? It’s madness; it is horrible to hear what people say—the
word betrayal is quite often used . . . 28 of these poor wretches arrived at the hospital
from Tutrakan. 17 are not severely injured, 5 are blind, and the others have pneu-
monia, among the latter there are those who escaped by swimming across the Dan-
ube. The blind were found wounded, crushed, lying in ditches; Bulgarian women
pulled out their eyes with savage cynicism. Among these poor people, there’s a major,
a handsome, strong, big man, whose eyes are now... two bleeding holes.

He’s asking me, poor man, to give him poison. If anyone could satisfy his wish!
And there are so many others are like him!31

Even though General Alexandru Averescu did not participate directly in the
military operations in the area, on 25 August 1916 he describes in his wartime
diary the bitter outcome of the first confrontation between the Romanian Army
and the Bulgarian-German army. As a military man, he would like to have ex-
planations, to know who is responsible for this: “There has been a real disaster
at Tutrakan: forces the size of an army corps were partly slaughtered, partly
captured. Only the wounded escaped as they were evacuated in the early phases
of the battle. Who will pay for the loss of so many lives and this shame? Who?”32

Of course, the objective presentation of a historical event should contain
strict timelines, topographic details, a numerical inventory of mobilized person-
nel, losses, etc. Therefore, the battle of Tutrakan as a historical fact is recounted in the specialized literature as follows: “The bridgehead of the Romanian army on the right bank of the Danube, across the river from Oltenița, was the scene of a bloodbath between September 1 and 6 (new style), 1916, and ended with a crushing victory of the Bulgarian-German forces. More than 6,000 Romanians died and were injured and nearly 30,000 were taken prisoner.”

However, any historical event inevitably involves an atmosphere that can be revealed and recovered through and with the help of diaries. This would complete the objective presentation of the historical moment in which people were involved; it would recover its subjective side: it seems, for example, that in the darkest despair caused by the Tutrakan defeat of 1916 the Romanians found the optimism and heroism which allowed for the victory at Mărăști in 1917. The battle of Mărăști went down in Romanian history as the first victory of the Romanian army 11 months after the country’s entry into the war. Such an event could not miss an entry in the wartime diaries of the time.

With unconcealed joy, Queen Marie writes on 25 July/7 August 1917, about the “wonderful determination” of the Romanian troops, which so amazed the German troops “that they fled in all directions, officers first.” To highlight this piece of information, she adds a brief ironic comment: “which Germans seldom do.”

General Averescu, commander of the army between 1916 and 1918, still remembered today as the architect of the victory at Mărăști, provides expert and precise details about the preparation of the attack. On 30 June, he is unhappy that an operation prepared for 6 months, for which orders were issued more than 2 months in advance, is still postponed. On 9 July, he confesses in his diary that he firmly believes his troops will be successful: “I am convinced that the action starting today will be a title of glory for our soldier and a reason of pride for our country.” The next day he exhibits the same confidence in success: “I am perfectly confident. We will win.” On 11 July, the general celebrates the victory: “The explosions of our projectiles covered the entire attack sector, from Mărăști to Încărcătoarea. An incredible, truly emotional scene.” On 12 July, he notes with delight that “the enemy is running for his life” and, on 13 July, he concludes that it has been “a brilliant victory.” The results of the battle of Mărăști are recounted by Averescu in the foreword to the volume published by Gen. G. A. Dabija in 1935, Armata română în răsboiul mondial (The Romanian army in the World War). There, the general mentions all the operational instructions given to the 2nd Romanian Army, the purpose and assignments of the mission, the technical details and military tactics, but not the emotion of victory.

The atmosphere on the battlefield of Mărăști, the state of mind of the soldiers who wrote this Romanian page of glory in the Great War can be found in G.
Bagulescu’s volume *Zile de energie*. This “soldiers’ Bible” written by someone who “knows things from within and is emotionally involved” can be easily read as a wartime diary. The notes of 12 July to July 17 complete the information about the event in Márași with details from the front. After talking about the “proper” bombardment—which “took the Germans out of their lair” and chased them in their slippers and vests, the diarist stresses the reaction of civilians when they realizes that the soldiers are Romanians (“Our boys have arrived!” they shout) and puts emphasis on the collective emotion sparked by the joy of the encounter. “Our boys have arrived! I cannot anticipate what the old man is about to do, but he takes my hand in his trembling hands and leans forward to kiss it. His tears drip into the dust of the road. My eyes flicker, the road starts to go up and down, moving before me; two strips of fire roll down my cheeks and more and more drops fall into the dust of the road.”

Unlike General Averescu’s wartime diary, which strictly observes the rules of the genre and describes in detail the moments of waiting between bombings, the preparation of the attacks and the events that followed the clash on the front line, Gheorghe Bagulescu’s stories are closer to the literary-subjective genre of the wartime diary, sometimes hidden behind a narrative told both in the third person and the first person: “I have tried to depict some moments of the times of energy, determination, bravery and sacrifice the Country has been through, to describe, here and there, just a few of the countless deeds of bravery of this holy ground’s sons, as well as emotional impressions, reflecting the hopes and pains of an entire Nation.”

General Alexandru Averescu was decorated immediately after the success at Márași by King Ferdinand, and his feats on the battlefields of the First World War turned him into a sort of “national hero,” an image that also contributed to his recognition as a politician. He is prime minister in January–February 1918, 1920–1921 and 1926–1927, and in 1930 becomes Marshal of Romania. As for Gheorghe Bagulescu, the former mountain infantry captain on the battlefields of Márași and Oituz, he also enjoys a well-deserved recognition: on 1 December 1918, he is sent as a delegate of the Romanian Army at the Alba Iulia Assembly and is in charge of taking to Bucharest the official act of the Great Union. Between 1935 and 1939, he is sent by the Romanian government to Japan, first as a military, naval and aeronautical attaché, then, a few years later, once he becomes a general, as a plenipotentiary minister (1941–1943).

The main tense used in the diary is the present, and sometimes a detail accurately described by the narrator’s self can metonymically recreate an entire atmosphere or event. Thus, once Romania’s “Golden Dream” becomes true, on the train taking her back to Bucharest, Queen Marie recalls in her diary the
tragedies, the suffering, the misfortunes, but also the hope of the previous two years. She understands the lessons learned in exile, the love of work and charity, she also realizes that it is total dedication to a creed that has made it possible to return home with the “great dream” of a United Romania fulfilled. Sunday, 18 November/1 December 1918, is described by the Queen in notes full of the joy of triumph, which still seems unbelievable, though true. The festive atmosphere on the streets of Bucharest is rendered in the diary in vivid words which try to convey the emotion of the moment: “The town had gone absolutely mad. It was as though the houses as well as the pavement were cheering with the crowd. We passed through a great deal of deafening cheers.”

For Jeana Fodoreanu, however, 1 December means, first of all, a heartbreaking personal toll: she has lost her brothers and father on the battlefield, and in the meantime her mother has died in the capital occupied by the Germans. She is back at her home, but she does not attend the parade celebrating the return of the royal family to Bucharest and honoring the glory of the “victory” flags. As she explains in her diary, it’s because she’s convinced she has fulfilled her mission towards the country:

_There’s nothing left for me to see. Go see that magnificence, you, who have suffered under the enemy’s yoke, go see the smiles of our proud Queen and our Great King. I saw how many tears they shed as a price for the magnificence of today. I know how much it cost them to make our country, their country, great. I cannot say Country without saying They, I cannot say They without saying Country. This is because the two images are closely linked in my mind and heart: Country and They._

Queen Marie awarded Mrs. Jeana Fodoreanu (born Ioana General Dr. Ştefănescu) the decoration Queen Marie Cross, 1st Class for her service at the Despina Doamna auxiliary hospital and on the medical train no. 3 during the First World War (1916–1919). But, apart from the details in her diary, we do not have any other biographical information about this woman-soldier, who served the country and the Queen with such courage and devotion. Since in a wartime diary the author’s voice is both a real person and the source of a discourse, the “self” possessing its own name, although initially unknown to the reader, becomes known thanks to the discourse produced. Through the monologue, the diary gives the author an identity, and the hope of being published (during his/her lifetime or posthumously) betrays the diarist’s desire to become known to the others, to explain himself/herself in all liberty. Colonel Jeana Fodoreanu’s wartime diary can also be read as a personal example of the spirit of the “emancipated woman” present in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century and, as such, it has saved at least part of the biography from the anonymity whose victims must have been
many who served, under the leadership of Queen Marie, the Red Cross organization during the Great War.

It is unanimously acknowledged that eras of collective restlessness stimulate written confessions and create a horizon of expectation which favors the intimate diary. Thus, this literary genre is defined less by formal elements and more by a “reading contract.” Therefore, through this reading pact, the wartime diary can be read as a subjective version of the narrator’s own experience and acquires the validity of a historical document. And, while in the confessional writings it is not truth but authenticity which is of the essence, the voices in the wartime diaries under consideration assume not only the responsibility of the writing and its public appearance but also the truth of the narratives. In a diary of this kind, the narrator takes the liberty of telling history from his/her point of view, and the self-character is always accompanied by the events of history. In times of war, the personal diary turns into a wartime diary and, if kept regularly, besides a social function, it also has a spiritual and apotropaic one: “It is the way s/he presents the facts of history that determines his/her credibility as a witness and his/her credibility as a character in a narrative that wants to put history in a story and transform a life into a destiny.”

And, if the past survives today, the choice of a diary during history’s turning points can be justified by the fact that this fragmentary writing makes it possible to concentrate on details, fugitive shades and instant impressions, all guarantees of authenticity. While the diary is not coherent per se, a “subtle coherence” is nevertheless present, due to the writer who transforms his/her biography into destiny. The diary plays a reminder role, recording deeds (acta), thoughts (cogitata), feelings (sentita), preserving them for the use of both the author and the reader. A wartime diary can even become of interest to an entire nation. “I received two Transylvanians who have come to help us achieve the union. The fulfillment of Romania’s golden dream is such a wonderful thing that I do not dare consider it certain,” as Queen Marie, for example, writes on 8/21 November 1918.

As it is a time of war, the diary has the appearance of an external chronicle interwoven with intimate notes. The diarist’s voice does not obscure the reality s/he is living. The author approximates it through the details and suggests it by using snapshots, fragments of the global truth. The small time lapse between the event and its recording, in which the emotion of the experience lived is still preserved, as well as the fact that the narrator ignores the outcome of the story s/he is writing gives uncertainty to the text. The ambiguity of life condemns the author to always have a partial and relative vision of things. A chronicle of the events of the inner and outer person, the wartime diary is not “paral-
“lel” to history, because personal time overlaps and constantly intermingles with historical time, the two overlapping sometimes until they become one and the same. Although the distance between historical time (social, national, European) and subjective time is considerable in an ordinary personal diary, it seems suppressed in wartime diaries. The Great War diaries authored by Queen Marie, Colonel Jean Fodoreanu, General Alexandru Averescu and Captain Gheorghe Băgulescu testify, between the lines, about the narrators living their own time as a historical event and about the way their destinies became one with the meaning of history. Through these diaries, they seem to have built a refuge self, making it possible to internalize the crisis of the time as one of collective identity. While fully assimilating the national idea, narrators use this subjective literary formula as if to live the same experience twice; they take control of the memories they keep, catalogue, and analyze by writing beautiful pages of historiographical collective memory.

Notes

5. The two dates correspond to the Old Style (Julian) and New Style (Gregorian) calendars.
9. Ibid., 101.
12. Ibid., 6.
13. Ibid., 9.
16. Ibid., 88.
18. Fodoreanu, 11.
19. Averescu, 14.
20. Ghiță, 130.
24. Ibid., 59.
25. Fodoreanu, 19.
26. Iorga, 64.
27. Fodoreanu, 70.
28. See Iorga, 79.
31. Fodoreanu, 15.
32. Averescu, 18.
34. Ibid., 107.
35. Averescu, 143.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., 145.
39. Ibid., 146.
40. Iorga, apud Băgulescu, 2.
42. Ibid., 171.
43. Ibid., 7.
45. Fodoreanu, 73.
46. See Le Rider, 21–22.
47. Cf. Ghiță, 54.
Abstract

Wartime Diaries from the First World War: The Chronology of a Collective Destiny

The present paper focuses on the wartime diaries written by Queen Marie of Romania, Colonel Jeana Fodoreanu, General Alexandru Averescu and Captain Gheorghe Băgulescu between 1916 and 1918, in the attempt to capture how historical time shaped the diarists’ destiny, as well as the role diarists played in history. Our hermeneutical approach puts forward an interpretation of the pair personal time/historical time. It further focuses on this pair’s modulations when it comes to the diaries written by individuals who created or actively participated in the creation of a given period’s history. Our research also points to how wartime diaries can be interpreted as historical documents that complete with significant detail the events of World War I as depicted in history books. This analysis posits that paying attention to the polyphony of voices in wartime diaries may result in their becoming a benchmark for a collective destiny’s chronology, thus raising the great issue of the meaning of History. When read as a text that doubles as a parameter of one’s own interpretations, the wartime diary is complementary to the diarist’s “classical” biography, and by interlacing small-scale and big-scale history it also illustrates how an individual’s career may influence the fate of a whole nation, as the general, objective history encompasses the personal one.

Keywords
wartime diary, World War I, personal time/historical time, collective memory, Queen Marie of Romania, Col. Jeana Fodoreanu, Gen. Alexandru Averescu, Capt. Gheorghe Băgulescu
C i volle circa dieci anni dalla caduta del regime comunista in Romania perché nella storiografia italiana apparisse una prima riflessione sul regime di Nicolae Ceaușescu, il ceausism. In precedenza informazioni e valutazioni soprattutto sugli ultimi giorni del regime, ma anche su alcune sue caratteristiche avevano trovato spazio, naturalmente, sulla stampa di attualità e su riviste politologiche o sociopolitologiche piuttosto che di storia. Il quadro che in quello studio si cercò di delineare aveva le sue radici soprattutto in testi “interni” al regime, cioè era basato su riviste che ne esprimevano la linea politica e di politica economica, come *Era socialistă* (già *Lupta de clasă*) e *Revista economică*, oltre agli scritti dello stesso dittatore che erano ampiamente pubblicati in Italia, come in altri Paesi occidentali. L’analisi e il giudizio che ne sortivano erano sufficientemente in linea con le pubblicazioni storiografiche di altri Paesi occidentali e in parte della stessa storiografia romena. Senza riprendere per esteso quello scritto, sia consentito almeno ricordare l’attenzio-
ne che vi si prestava alla politica “nazionale” del ceausism. Per farlo basta rileggere alcune parole dello stesso leader romeno che vi erano citate:

Noi comunisti riteniamo un dovere studiare, conoscere ed onorare nel modo dovuto coloro che hanno contribuito alla creazione della nostra nazione, che si sono immolati per la liberazione sul piano nazionale e sociale del popolo romeno. Noi comunisti siamo i continuatori di tutto ciò che il popolo romeno ha di migliore. Il partito comunista in Romania non è nato per caso. Esso è il risultato di un intero processo storico di sviluppo economico-sociale che ha condotto alla maturazione della classe operaia, della lotta rivoluzionaria e alla costituzione del Partito comunista romeno. Come sarebbe possibile che un partito che si prefigge di dirigere il popolo verso la realizzazione di un ordinamento più giusto, socialista, non conoscesse il suo passato di lotta? Immagino che un partito del genere sarebbe povero, sarebbe privo di vigore e, senza alcun dubbio, non beneficerebbe né del sostegno né della fiducia del popolo.³

Naturalmente il lettore attento non prende per buono il concetto che viene illustrato con tali parole. Va ricordato infatti come il sentimento nazionale avesse una funzione strumentale per creare consenso intorno al regime comunista e, soprattutto, che tale linea politica non significava affatto rinunciare agli aspetti meno efficaci e più odiosi del regime stesso.⁴ La colorazione nazionale non significava renderlo più liberale e meno dogmatico, nonostante alcune affermazioni di esponenti del partito che sembravano consentire qualche evoluzione sul piano ideologico.⁵

Anche successivamente l’argomento non divenne una scelta comune per gli studiosi italiani, poco attenti – con le dovute eccezioni – alla storiografia romena e alla stessa storia romena. Ceaușescu non ha avuto ancora ad oggi il suo biografo italiano, dopo aver avuto in vita tanti ammiratori e clienti. Somigliava a una breve biografia lo smilzo libro La Romania di Ceauşescu 1965-1989 di Santi Alessandro Panebianco,⁶ ma senza particolari spunti critici, sebbene ormai lontana dai testi apologetici degli anni Settanta e Ottanta.⁷

L’analisi del regime comunista contenuta nel volume Comunismo, comunismi, dedicato a un periodo storico temporale più ampio dei 24 anni dominati dalla figura di Ceaușescu, tra molti scritti di studiosi romeni ne include alcuni di autore italiano. Andrea Carteny ha avuto modo di presentare alcune considerazioni sul regime ceaușista,⁸ mentre Giuseppe Motta ha ricostruito i giorni del dicembre 1989 che portarono alla morte del leader romeno e di sua moglie.⁹ Nessuno dei due saggi si spinge a sciogliere l’enigma più in voga nella storiografia romena (ma anche nella politica) riguardante la natura degli eventi del 1989: colpo di Stato/complotto oppure rivoluzione, però ambedue sembrano propendere per la prima interpretazione. Solo in parte attiene al personaggio Ceaușescu lo scrit-
to che, sempre nello stesso volume, Daniel Pommier Vincelli ha dedicato ai rapporti tra il Partito comunista romeno e quello italiano, utilizzando documenti dell’archivio del Partito comunista italiano, conservato presso l’Istituto Gramsci, e definendo quelle relazioni “un incontro tattico” su cui ancora investigare. Esse furono infatti caratterizzate da notevole varietà, con alti e bassi. Si ricorda tuttavia che un saggio di notevole livello scientifico su un tema quasi identico (salvo l’arco cronologico) fu pubblicato nel 2007 da Stefano Santoro. Lo stesso Santoro allargò l’oggetto di quello studio, sottolineando che il confronto con alcuni partiti al potere del blocco sovietico (non solo quello romeno, ma anche quello polacco) servì ai dirigenti del PCI per elaborare e sostanzialmente mutare le proprie convinzioni di partenza.

Nonostante gli “assaggi” di cui si è detto fin qui, sostanzialmente da parte della storiografia italiana non è stata avvertita per anni l’esigenza di riprendere in esame la storia di un regime che aveva goduto di attenzione e simpatia per non pochi anni, quando era in corso. Si potrebbe dedurre che alcuni dei laudatores di Ceauşescu non lo desiderassero o lo abbiano impedito, ma è tesi poco credibile: la disattenzione o la scarsa conoscenza dei più ha pesato in modo incomparabile rispetto all’esistenza anche sulla piazza politica ed economica italiana di alcuni di quei laudatores, come Giancarlo Elia Valori, i quali avevano interesse a che non si tornasse a parlare della recente storia romena.

Una buona tesi di dottorato di Daniele Diviso, discussa nel 2011 e dedicata a un esame approfondito dei meccanismi interni al regime comunista romeno non si tradusse mai in un’opera pubblicata; tuttavia in essa le caratteristiche del ceauşism vi erano ampiamente descritte e giudicate. In quello stesso anno Alberto Basciani ebbe modo di parlare del regime ceauşista trattando dei rapporti italo-romeni negli anni Sessanta e Settanta. Nel suo saggio non esitò a usare il termine “neostalinismo”. Peraltrò lo stesso autore non aveva mancato di sottolineare già nel 2008 la grande differenza esistente tra il socialismo dal volto umano cecoslovacco rappresentato da Dubček e il punto di vista politico di Ceauşescu, nonostante nel 1968 i due sembrarono trovarsi dalla stessa parte della barricata. Anche in questo saggio si evidenziavano gli aspetti più autoritari, “stalinisti”, del regime romeno. L’opinione dell’autore italiano è condivisa da
ConCerti

ConCerti


Nell’ambito di quella pubblicazione, per Alberto Basciani “l’ufficio di Ceaușescu diventò anche un luogo di appuntamenti con affaristi di vario genere e personaggi legati in vario modo alla loggia massonica P2”. Un passaggio particolarmente interessante del suo saggio riguarda appunto l’ipotesi (da dimostrare, ma non infondata) che il leader romeno avesse rapporti con esponenti di quella loggia massonica e con lo stesso Licio Gelli, il quale l’aveva costituita facendone uno snodo per relazioni sospette e pericolose, tanto da essere sottoposta a indagine non solo dalla magistratura ma pure da una commissione del Parlamento italiano, costituita ad hoc. Basciani fornisce peraltro una rassegna delle varie forme che assunse in Italia una sorta di culto di Ceaușescu, attraverso le più diverse pubblicazioni, dignificate da prefazioni dovute a personaggi politici e culturali italiani di alto livello. Viene spontaneo osservare che in Italia gli intellettuali godevano di discreta libertà e certo non dovevano scegliere, riguardo al regime romeno, tra compromesso e resistenza come suona il titolo – in edizione romena – di un noto libro di Katherine Verdery. Sempre a Basciani si deve il saggio La storiografia romena postcomunista e la storia della dittatura comunista in Romania, in cui illustra un intero e più che robusto filone di studi dal quale i ricercatori italiani non possono prescindere nei propri studi sul periodo 1965-1989, non senza fare cenno alle opportunità materiali (il riferimento è essenzialmente agli archivi maggiori e minori) che si offrono agli studiosi anche stranieri in Romania.
Nel contesto editoriale già ricordato, Antonio D’Alessandri sulla base di un’attenta e larga analisi di articoli dei maggiori quotidiani italiani, ricostruì l’immagine sempre più periclitante che di Ceauşescu e del regime comunista romeno dava nel 1989 la stampa italiana. Lo studioso italiano, dopo aver narrato gli eventi del 16-25 dicembre 1989, giunse a concludere che “passata la fase gloriosa della rivoluzione, della morte al tiranno, riappropriatasi del suo posto nella storia, la Romania si preparava ad affrontare nuove durissime prove. Per i commentatori italiani tornavano le solite difficoltà nel tentativo di comprendere una realtà complessa, semplisticamente ricondotta entro il rassicurante schema degli stereotipi balcanici, fatti di violenza, morte e lotta per il potere”. Può essere utile ricordare alcune delle dichiarazioni raccolte dalla stampa italiana in quel tumultuoso scorcio del 1989.

Dopo gli incidenti sanguinosi di Timișoara del 16 dicembre 1989 e i fermenti dei giorni seguenti, le reazioni in Italia, come in altri Paesi, furono piuttosto vivaci ed è cosa nota che l’ambasciatore italiano a Bucarest Luigi Amaduzzi fu richiamato a Roma per consultazioni, mentre il presidente della Repubblica Cossiga fu duro parlando con l’ambasciatore romeno Constantin Tudor. Il ministro degli Esteri Gianni De Michelis auspicò non solo l’applicazione del principio del rispetto dei diritti civili e politici dei cittadini, fissato a Helsinki nel 1975 (a quegli accordi non era allora mancata la firma romena), ma anche la fine della dittatura di Ceauşescu. Né tacque papa Giovanni Paolo II. Il democristiano Flaminio Piccoli giunse a chiedere un intervento da parte di Gorbačëv e lo scrittore Claudio Magris negava che gli avvenimenti romeni dovessero essere guardati con sorpresa: la Romania viveva da tempo in una condizione intollerabile.

Una nota studiosa di letteratura romena, Rosa Del Conte, amica e traduttrice di Lucian Blaga e Tudor Arghezi, usò nei confronti di Ceauşescu parole durissime, soprattutto per una convinta cattolica quale lei fu: “La mia sensazione è che lo faranno a pezzi, che verrà ucciso con lo stesso odio, con la stessa spietata freddezza con cui ha governato per 24 anni. Si è macchiato di troppi delitti, troppi feroci soprusi per potere sperare ora in un briciolo di compassione.”

Sempre nel 2014 fu pubblicato uno studio particolarmente “fine” e approfondito di Francesco Zavatti: Comunisti per caso. Regime e consenso in Romania durante e dopo la guerra fredda, cui seguì Writing History in a Propaganda Institute: Political Power and Network Dynamics in Communist Romania. In questo caso si tratta di una ricerca di lunga lena che è andata a scandagliare aspetti particolari e importanti del regime comunista romeno poiché cercava di individuare quali fossero sia le tecniche da esso usate per guadagnare consenso, sia le potenzialità che gli consentivano di conseguire esiti positivi in tale sforzo. Comunisti per caso è nella stessa scia del già ricordato volume di Katherine Verdery, con una grande attenzione al ruolo dell’idea nazionale durante il regime comunista (e invero anche in epoca post-comunista). Quasi in apertura di questo scritto si sono già citate alcune parole di Ceaușescu riguardanti la continuità tra le lotte del PCR rispetto a quelle di altre forze e altri uomini del passato. Zavatti, da parte sua, ricorda opportunamente le conclusioni della Conferenza sull’Educazione politica e sulla cultura socialista tenuta nel 1976: per essa la storia era “un potente elemento nell’educazione patriottica e nel pensiero superiore” e serviva a coltivare “un sentimento di responsabilità verso l’eredità dei nostri antenati”.

Sia consentita ancora qualche nota sulla popularità del regime ceaușista in Italia. L’activismo di alcuni simpatizzanti per il leader di Bucarest ebbe certo un ruolo non secondario nel consolidare detta popularità. Però essa era scontata per il contesto internazionale in una fase ormai matura della Guerra fredda. È stato osservato che molti politici italiani di diversi partiti si prestarono a favorire il culto dell’immagine di Ceaușescu, dalla comunista Nilde Iotti (presidente
della Camera) al democristiano Giulio Andreotti (più volte presidente del Con-
siglio),\textsuperscript{34} al repubblicano Oddo Biasini, al segretario del PCI Luigi Longo.\textsuperscript{35} Al di là dell’eventuale debolezza umana dei singoli, non si può tacere che essi non potevano del tutto sottrarsi ad atteggiamenti benevoli verso Ceauşescu e il suo regime finché esso veniva ritenuto utile nell’interlocuzione tra i due blocchi contrapposti, oltre che alle relazioni politiche ed economiche tra Italia e Romania. In particolare i governi susseguiti a Roma da tempo avevano scelto di mantenere buone relazioni con Bucarest, ancor prima che fosse del tutto chiara la cosiddetta “eresia” romena e divenisse noto il suo leader e maggior rappresentante.

Lo dimostra la parte ultima del volume \textit{La Romania nella politica estera italiana 1919–1965. Luci e ombre di un’amicizia storica} di Giuliano Caroli,\textsuperscript{36} buon conoscitore della storia romena, che ricostruisce il ricco tessuto delle relazioni tra i governi di Roma e Bucarest, con una precisa attenzione al periodo seguito alla distensione avviata dall’avvento di Chruščëv al Cremlino. In particolare egli ricorda la promozione, nel 1964, della Legazione italiana a Bucarest al rango di Ambasciata (ambasciatore Alberto Paveri Fontana), così come avvenne parallelamente per la Legazione romena a Roma (ambasciatore Mihai Marin). Fu un segno chiaro di quello che Caroli definisce “definitivo miglioramento dei rapporti politici, economici e culturali tra Italia e Romania all’inizio dell’era Ceausescu”.\textsuperscript{37} L’autore avvertiva poi che “mentre Bucarest rilanciava prepotentemente la sua autonomia in politica estera, ancora non si avvertivano – in Italia come negli altri Paesi occidentali – le potenziali contraddizioni di tutto ciò con il mantenimento e lo sviluppo negli anni successivi del potere autoritario di Ceauşescu all’interno”. Va ricordato che lo stesso Caroli aveva pubblicato nel 1980 un opuscolo elogiativo del presidente romeno, ma l’impressione è che l’operazione editoriale, voluta dalla Rappresentanza romena, sia andata ben oltre i desideri dell’autore.\textsuperscript{38}

Naturalemente nel fare opera di popolarizzazione e omaggio a un \textit{leader} politico straniero contava anche lo stile con cui lo si faceva: esso non fu sempre dignitoso e sobrio per ognuno dei politici che si avventurarono per questa strada. In definitiva il governo e il mondo politico italiano non si differenziarono molto da quelli degli altri Paesi occidentali. La storiografia a questo riguardo è piuttosto omogenea nel giudizio. La benevolenza verso il regime comunista romeno fu ampia e significativa l’interlocuzione con esso anche al fine di trovare un buon mediatore in occasione di crisi politiche internazionali particolarmente gravi, come, ad esempio, quella del 1979 tra Washington e Teheran.\textsuperscript{39}

Maggiori dubbi è lecito nutrire per quanto riguarda alcuni intellettuali e studiosi di vaglia. Talora anche essi avevano ruoli parapolitici e quindi vale quanto detto per i politici di professione. In altri casi si deve supporre una reale convinzione o una grande miopia o una forte tendenza a non volere indagare a fondo in
un fenomeno politico, atteggiamento davvero strano per chi ha familiarità con la ricerca. È forse il caso di Carlo Salinari (1919-1977), già membro della Resistenza a Roma durante l’occupazione germanica tanto da saggiare il carcere, legato al Partito comunista italiano e direttore di un giornale di sinistra radicale quale “Il calendario del popolo”, nonché noto studioso e professore universitario di Letteratura italiana e preside della Facoltà di Lettere dell’Università La Sapienza di Roma soltanto per meno di un anno, essendo venuto a mancare in età non avanzata. Egli in occasione della crisi economica mondiale del 1973, quanto alla Romania lodò “lo spirito con cui questa crisi è stata affrontata, la visione illuminata del problema, la ricerca di soluzioni alternative e lo studio delle prospettive sul lungo periodo”. Inoltre volle fare un “raffronto con le soluzioni abborracciate e risibili, direi, che sono state adottate nel nostro Paese” per giungere “ancora una volta alla conclusione della superiorità del sistema socialista rispetto a quello capitalistico”. Se dovessimo escludere la convinzione ideologica, allora tali intellettuali non potremmo che allinearli con i laudatores che puntavano al vantaggio personale.

Trentacinque anni dopo nelle ricostruzioni storiche sia in Italia sia in Romania e altrove, simili accenti non si trovano più. Il giudizio storico negativo sugli anni di Ceausescu è nettamente prevalente, anche se progressivamente di essi si parlerà sempre più in maniera più neutra, senza più la sollecitazione della memoria e come un normale oggetto di studio. In questa direzione il contributo della storiografia per ora è stato limitato ma non disprezzabile – come queste poche pagine credo dimostrino – e non è possibile sapere quale sarà per l’avvenir.
Note


5. Ad esempio Ion Mitran su *Era socialistă* (1975, 12) affermava che “il socialismo non è una teoria finita, rigida, una collezione di tesi immutabili, bensì una scienza rivoluzionaria sempre viva e dinamica, permanentemente rigenerata in rapporto alla realtà, alle condizioni concrete, alle particolarità e alle richieste di ciascuna epoca storica”.


27. Ivi, pp. 86, 88. Chi scrive, trovandosi per ricerche a Bucarest nel settembre 1989, due mesi prima della fine del regime comunista, ricorda una lunga fila per acquistare prodotti alimentari nel pieno centro della capitale, cui facevano anche gente proveniente da altre località, oppure l’impossibilità di comprare vino romeno se non in valuta estera.
32. Huddingë, Södertörn University, 2016.
33. Francesco Zavatti, Comunisti per caso, cit., p. 140.
35. Erano in buona compagnia: tra gli uomini politici di rilievo che accettarono la stessa funzione laudatoria in altri Paesi si contano Arturo Frondizi, ex presidente democristiano dell’Argentina, il politico belga Willy De Clercq, i greci Andreas Papandreou, Konstantinos Tsatsos e Evangelos Averoff Tositsa, il presidente del Senato francese Alain Poher, e altri ancora. Anneli Ute Gabanyi, The Ceauşescu Cult, cit., p. 90.
37. Ivi, p. 475.

42. Tralascio il libro di Dario Fertilio, *Musica per lupi. Il racconto del più terribile atto carcerario nella Romania del dopoguerra*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2010, non solo per il taglio che l’autore ha voluto dargli (diverso cioè da quello di un saggio storico), ma soprattutto perché l’orrenda vicenda avvenuta nel carcere di Pitești all’inizio degli anni Cinquanta, non riguarda il periodo del Segretariato di Ceaușescu. Devo però osservare che, nonostante quella meritoria denuncia, il pubblico italiano colto (e non) continua a non conoscere quella storia drammatica. Per motivi del tutto simili resta fuori da questa rassegna il libro *Le catacombe della Romania. Testimonianze dalle carceri comuniste 1945-1964*, a cura di Violeta P. Popescu, Milano, Rediviva, 2014.

**Abstract**

Rethinking Communism: Ceaușescu, the Romanian Regime, and the Italian Historiography

The paper surveys the Italian historiography (various generations of authors) on the communist regime in Romania during the time of Nicolae Ceaușescu, from the apologists of the regime to its critical analysts. It could be argued that the negative historical judgments on the regime are definitely in the majority.

**Keywords**

communism, Nicolae Ceaușescu, Italian historiography, Romanian Communist Party, Italian Communist Party
In December 2019, Romanians commemorated thirty years since the fall of communism.\textsuperscript{1} With the ouster and execution of the perverse Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu, a new page in Romanian history was turned and an era of seemingly interminable transitions began, one that may or may not be continuing today. Indeed, while many fervently hope that Romania has emerged or will soon emerge into a more peaceful “normality,” others wonder if the new normal isn’t perpetual transition. Three years of transition can be exhilarating. Three decades, on the other hand, is proving at bit much, since if there is any quality that can be said to mark modern times it is lack of patience.

The purpose of this essay is to share some reflections on the Romanian 1989 based in part on having been present in Romania on a research grant from August 1989 to July 1990 and in part on having been engaged in Romanian studies since 1967.\textsuperscript{2} I should point out at the outset that direct experience of the Romanian 1989 taught...
me two things: the first is that often eye witnesses know less about what is going on than those who can observe calmly from afar, and the second is that the eye witnesses benefit from a good deal of unwarranted credibility merely from having been there. However, this essay is not concerned with the problems of historical memory.  

Why did the Romanian 1989 happen? This seems a good deal clearer than the “how it happened” question alluded to above. For starters, it has to be recognized that the tradition of dissent in communist Romania was among the most feeble in all of the communist bloc. The title of Cristina Petrescu’s book captures this well: *From Robin Hood to Don Quixote.*  

Following a brief era of armed resistance in the mountains by paramilitary groups (part of the Haiduk tradition), resistance in Romania was rather quixotic and generally ineffective. Again, I’m not going to go into explaining why this is so, but merely to note the fact.

The lack of an indigenous tradition of speaking truth to power in Romania, which has deep roots in the Romanian past and in Romanian Orthodox traditions, was directly abetted by Romania’s geopolitical situation: buried behind the Iron Curtain with the USSR literally on its doorstep. One result of this was what Adrian Marino has labeled “the myth of the irreversible situation,” the idea that the Cold War status quo/East-West standoff would last indefinitely. This was a profoundly demoralizing idea, and it fit perfectly with traditional Romanian fatalism derived from the *Miorița* myth which calls for realistic resignation, much like a reed bending in the face of a storm. The fact that Romania was ever more isolated from the West in the 1980s contributed to this sense of fatalism.

But before one is too critical of Romanian fatalism, we need to recognize that most Westerners accepted the same irreversibility thesis. Almost no Kremlinologists foresaw the collapse of communism (R. V. Burks, Alexander Shtromas, and Seweryn Bialer were honorable exceptions). How many specialists even talked about the potential difficulties of a transition from communist to free societies? Virtually none. Scholars and policymakers were caught unawares in 1989. And if academics, who speculate on the most unlikely things at the drop of a hat, seem to think that discussing decommunization is not worth raising, it is any wonder that the man in the street would agree that change was nearly impossible.

Our experiences in the fall of 1989 confirmed this. I recall a conversation I had at Nicolae Iorga Institute of History in Bucharest with my colleague the late Paul Cernovodeanu one day in November. It was abnormally cold and the temperatures in the reading room of the library was only slightly above freezing. (In fact, I had to wear gloves while working and every couple of hours would go out to my car to warm up.) Mr. Cernovodeanu sidled cautiously up to my desk bundled up in a bulky sweater and a heavy overcoat and whispered about the current situation “It’s as bad here as Africa.” He paused, shrugged his shoulders, and then interjected “No, it’s worse. In Africa at least it’s warm.”
It was our perception that the Romanian population was psychologically immobilized by its situation. And, though all around them changes were happening, there was no indication that any transformation would even be attempted in Romania, quite the contrary. A Securitate agent boasted to an imprisoned dissident that things would not change in Romania in a thousand years... and most Romanians would have agreed. The 14th Party Congress of 20–24 November 1989 passed all of Ceauºescu’s proposals unanimously while electing him, his wife Elena, his brother Ilie, and his son Nicu to various posts (thus further promoting the idea of “Building Socialism in One Family,” a parody of Stalin’s “Building Socialism in One Country”).

We were also impressed by the siege mentality of both Romanians and foreigners in Romania in 1989. This included diplomatic personnel, who in our previous two Romanian sojourns (1971–1973; 1982–1983) had been insulated from the misery of the locals since they had access to unrationed food, clothing, electronic goodies, heat, well-lit apartments, gasoline, and medical care that most Romanian citizens did not. I say most because there were some Romanians who had entrée to such things: the members of the upper nomenklatura. Most Romanians were aware of and resentful about “communists in a Mercedes,” but had no idea that they could do anything about it. The lack of dependable electricity (which was frequently turned off during the day), heat (ditto), darkened apartments (even when electricity was available, the maximum permissible wattage per light bulb was low), and increasing time spent standing in line to get the necessities of life were all demoralizing. And of these factors, cold seems to me to have been the most debilitating. That something was even more wrong in and with Romania than it had been in 1971–1973 and 1982–1983 was also obvious from the virtual disappearance of political humor. We had gotten used to such humor—however restrained it was. Now, sadly, humor was almost non-existent in Romania.

The political excesses of the later Ceauºescu years are well known: a megalomaniacal and egregious personality cult; demolition of much of the center of Bucharest (including numerous churches) to build grandiose new governmental buildings; the use of a vicious “systematization” scheme to raze hundreds of villages and move their populations to “agro-industrial centers” where they could be more easily supervised and controlled; increased pro-natalism including taxes on families with too few children and mandatory gynecological exams at factories and other work places; lack of basic medicines and medical care; escalating demands by service providers for bribes; and draconian schemes to pay off the huge foreign debt necessitated by its Stalinist developmental program.

And yet, all was not well for the regime. Perhaps the greatest factor was Gorbachev’s desire to pull the USSR out of a fatal tailspin by restructuring the
system (*perestroika*) and promoting more openness (*glasnost*). Gorbachev’s experimentation in the USSR, however, cut the ground out from under neo-Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe such as that of Romania. Though Gorbachev had no intention of undermining the Soviet system, the fact was that the Soviet system could not be “restructured” or reformed without destroying the Leninist model. It was a gamble, but one that in the end could not possibly have paid off. (On the other hand, it is doubtful that Gorbachev had any viable alternatives. Certainly the plotters of August 1991 could not have saved the day for Soviet Leninism.)

As for the events of late December 1989, when the crowds gathered in Timișoara, Iași, and Bucharest and began to actually protest against the regime, what Miodrag Milin wrote shortly afterward remains valid: “People were no longer ‘normal’; for all practical purposes the instinct of self-preservation . . . which had nourished and maintained the dictatorship for more than forty years had disappeared. The spell was broken...”

Those who had a deep and sympathetic attachment to the Romanian people and their culture were exhilarated: miraculously and at last our long suffering friends and acquaintances were free. They could now write, speak, and associate as they saw fit. Those interested in religion could follow their inclinations without fear of reprisal or repression. Given freedom, liberty, and new incentives, their talents and entrepreneurial abilities could now be channeled into positive entrepreneurial channels instead of being expended on black or grey markets.

There was a good deal of excitement in attending various rallies and assisting in the demolition of the statues of Petru Groza and Lenin. There was a good deal of fun in what we called “contemporary archaeology,” going around and scavenging ephemera discarded in trash dumps behind the Central Committee building and acquiring “souvenirs” at the *talcioc*.

As for the population generally, there was a collective sigh of relief that manifested itself across the spectrum of our acquaintances. As one of our dear elderly Romanian landladies told us in response to a question about potential economic hardships: “We are prepared to eat yoghurt and onions if we can keep our freedom.” My son, David, looking back on 1989, said

> Psychologically and spiritually, you could tell a difference in the way people felt. The oppression of the regime had to some degree been lifted. Economically and materially, people were just as bad off as they had been, though the borders opened up. It was clearly emotional for Romanians whom we knew who had lived before the communist takeover, especially Romanians who had been young adults or children during World War II and had pre-communist memories. They’d talk about how they’d been waiting for this and didn’t imagine they would get to see the fall of communist Romania in their lifetime.
This pretty well sums up how we all felt in January 1990. Ceaușescu was dead, people were free to come and go across the borders freely for the first time in more than half a century, and the promise of deciding their own futures seemed well in hand.

These illusions were relatively short-lived. Even a bad historian realizes that the past usually is prologue, though this is a little more difficult for those directly caught up in events. We were, of course, dismayed (and horrified and disgusted and appalled) at the seizure of power by Ion Iliescu and the National Salvation Front (FSN) in January of 1990, by the manipulation of national hatreds for political purposes, at the theft of resources by insiders, the continued deep state activities of the former and present security agencies, the shocking behavior of many intellectuals from whom we had hoped better, the violence of the Mineriate (my two children were deeply impressed by a couple of beatings of obviously innocent passers-by that they witnessed, as miners became the shock troops of FSN regime), and the electoral shenanigans of 1990.

One didn’t know whether to laugh or cry when, after one particularly alarming police action, Prime Minister Petre Roman explained that the violence was a product of the “fact” that Romania had fewer per capita police forces than any country in Europe. He offered no statistical evidence to back up this preposterous claim, and even General Victor Atanasie Stânculescu, sitting beside Roman, couldn’t keep a straight face at that point.

On the other hand, there were continuities with the past that we sort of took for granted, such as the use of petty bribes or bacğiş. I always carried a pack of Kent cigarettes with me even though I didn’t smoke; one never knew when a pack of Kents would be needed to resolve a problem. No one expected this “custom” to disappear instantly. Nor did we expect that the practice of pile, that is, the working of connections to maneuver through life, would just disappear, but we had anticipated that once people could deal freely economically there would be a lot less need to have to pull strings to get things done. This seems not to have been the case. Unfortunately, pile was and is still the way to get things done in Romania. Romania’s National Anticorruption Directorate is a huge step forward.

In retrospect, it is difficult to establish exactly when the grim realities of history, place, and human nature dawned on us. One telling moment came as we watched the trial of Nicu Ceaușescu and were astonished to see young women throwing flowers and otherwise reacting passionately toward a young man who had acquired a well-deserved reputation as a drunkard and rapist. My wife shouted at the television set: “They are responding as abused women in a dysfunctional family would respond.” This became the start for our subsequent work on what we came to call the Dysfunctional Society Syndrome as we tried to get a handle on what was going down in post-communist Romania.
Another telling moment came with the resignation and unresignation of Patriarch Teoctist (1986–2007). He had covered himself with glory by supporting the armed repression of the demonstrators in Timișoara and sending Ceaușescu a telegram praising his “brilliant activity” and leadership during a new Golden Age “properly and righteously” named after the genius of the Carpathians. He resigned in disgrace from the Patriarchate on 18 January, but on 3 April 1990, with unanimous approval of the Holy Synod, he returned as patriarch, saying that he had withdrawn “for health reasons” but that he had recovered. (He served until his death in 2007.) The Romanian Orthodox Church, instead of providing timely moral leadership, proved to be more a composite of Romanian society’s problems and deficits, seemingly mired in a sycophantic past, badly needing new blood, but not getting it, continuing to compromise with power.

Other institutions’ performances after December 1989 were equally dislusioning. The army, which stood high in popular opinion, was headed by the egregious General Victor Atanasie Stânculescu. His appointment in February 1990 abruptly derailed an incipient military reform movement and demonstrated clearly the new government was taking.

Key ministries, such as the Ministry of Education, though their ministers were often reformers, continued to be staffed by carryover personnel who systematically sabotaged their less-experienced superiors. A telling anecdote was shared with me by the American cultural attaché, Aggie Kuperman.

Good news and bad news. The good news is that the guy in the Ministry of Education that was putting roadblocks in the work of American exchange grantees is gone. And the guy in the Foreign Ministry that was a pain in the neck for Americans is also gone. The bad news is that the MinEd guy moved over to the Foreign Ministry and the Foreign Ministry guy moved over to the Ministry of Education, where both have resumed their obstructionist activities.

The Romanian Academy was no better. A noisy show was made of expelling Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu (along with Manea Mânescu and Suzana Gâdea) from their academy memberships and electing a few new members. However, it continued to be dominated by people who had made significant compromises under the communist regime, and, in general, proved to be a bulwark of obstructionism and docile servant of those in power.

The whole process of transitional justice constantly poked in the eye those who had naively believed a new page had permanently been turned. This included unsatisfactory trials of selected bad guys from the old regime, impeding lustration of major collaborators of the communist governments and security forces, blocking of access to the Securitate and other secret files (though, curiously enough, files were readily leaked when they incriminated opponents of the
FSN regime), to cumbersome and downright unfair property rights restitution. And this is just a sample. One couldn’t go more than three or four minutes in most newspapers without coming across half a dozen outrageous items that would make one’s head explode.

Another puzzle was the almost visceral loyalty that people had for the Iliescu–Roman regime. This was illustrated for us by a particularly frustrating discussion with the elderly mother of a close acquaintance. This was a woman who had relatives that were victims of communism, who herself as a devoutly religious person had personally suffered, and was, therefore, someone who would have been thought likely to oppose the atheist Marxists Iliescu and Roman. My wife and I were completely at a loss to understand this incomprehensible response. Later, someone suggested that what was going on here was a kind of parallel to baby animals (such as ducks) who imprint on the first thing they see after they are born. Romanians, born out of totalitarianism, and faced immediately by the smiling faces of Iliescu and Roman everywhere in the media simply imprinted on them. Perhaps this explains it; maybe not, but the entire scenario was and is a puzzle... and an eye-opener.

Does all of this lead, 30 years later, to optimism or pessimism? In post-communist Europe, the optimist/pessimist discussion has been a popular pastime: is the glass half empty or half full? Or is the glass just too big? The London Economist recently addressed this matter in an edifying fashion. As Europe prepared “to mark 30 years since the fall of communism,” given the advent to power of Orbán in Hungary, Putin in Russia, and Kaczyński in Poland, we must be prepared to hear “doeful references to Europe’s new east-west cleavage and sardonic asides about the predicted ‘end of history.’”

Yet, in the opinion of The Economist, “History is back . . . events of this summer prove many of the western European clichés about eastern Europe wrong. States scarred by communism are not incapable of producing strong civil-society movements.” The peoples of Eastern Europe “do not have some innately ‘Asiatic’ preference for authoritarian leadership.” Nor for that matter, when we look at what is happening in the rest of the world, are we forced to conclude that they have some kind of unique or unusual predisposition toward a nationalistic populism.

In the end, what we learn from history is that “Nothing lasts forever. History never ended.” After retailing a list of hopeful developments across the area—from the election of a liberal reformer as president of Slovakia to the election of moderate presidents in Latvia and Lithuania to the ouster of the oligarchs in Moldova—The Economist points out one other significant step forward: the increasing number of women who are significant in East European politics in their own right. After a few years of politically active women not named Elena Ceaușescu, additional barriers will go down for the better.
It remains to Westerners to support reformers and those who have risked their lives and livelihoods for freedom and civil society for nearly 30 years now.

To assume eastern Europe is all Orbans, Erdogan, and Putins is to do the region a grave injustice. This summer has proved that eastern Europe is in fact teeming with democrats and liberals willing to put their own interests on the line for their cause. If the EU stands for anything, if it truly values the promise of 1989, it will stand by them.28

There are a lot of reasons for maintaining an un-naive hope for the future of Romania. But we all need to continue to support liberty and free societies, to stand with and encourage those who contribute to building less dysfunctional systems, and to perpetuate the honest memory of those who heroically gave their lives and good fortune that others might have a better life.

Notes

1. I prefer to refer to 1989 as the fall or collapse of communism in Romania rather than a revolution because three decades later it is still unclear whether this event was a revolution, a coup, or a combination of both. In other words, the “backstory” of 1989 remains murky. Readers of this essay will also be perhaps disappointed that more is not said about this event, but that is because I have little to add to what others have said. I recommend Dragos Petrescu’s Explaining the Romanian Revolution of 1989: Culture, Structure, and Contingency (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedica, 2010) and Peter Siani-Davies, The Romanian Revolution of December 1989 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).


6. This may well have led to a kind of inferiority complex on the part of Romanians when compared to Wałęsa in Poland or Havel in Czechoslovakia as well as a lack of credibility with the Romanian masses after 1989.


9. His cautious approach was merited as my Securitate files show: my activities at the Institute were heavily monitored, at one point with a little map of the reading room, showing where I usually sat and who I might have occasion to speak with. The fact that the reading room was at icebox temperatures meant that hardly anyone else was ever there. In the end, the Securitate decided to monitor me less since I was evidently expending my efforts on my 19th century research... and keeping warm. Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității, Bucharest, Arhiva Fond Informativ: Michelson, Paul-Edwin, file 248548, copy in possession of the author.


15. For some of my meanderings at this time, see Apostol Stan, *Revoluția română văzută din stradă, decembrie 1989–iunie 1990* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2007).

16. Some of these materials were displayed in 1990 at the Hoover Institution in Stanford, California. A second and third exposition of these Romania 1989 memorabilia were held in December 2009 at the Gorgas Library at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and in 2019–2020 at the Heard Library of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.


26. This has been pursued by Lavinia Stan in a number of studies and excellently summarized in her Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Romania: The Politics of Memory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).


28. Ibid.

Abstract
Illusion, Disillusion... and Hope:
Thirty Years Since the Fall of Communism in Romania, 1989–2019

The article reflects on the Romanian 1989 based on having been present in Romania from August 1989 to July 1990. It presents reasons for viewing Romanian development since 1989 with optimism and with pessimism, how this era gave birth to both illusions and disillusionment, as well as reasons for hope.

Keywords
Romanian 1989, optimism, pessimism, dysfunctional society syndrome, end of history
A Motif from the *Pugillus Facetiarum* Painted Inside a House in Sibiu (1631)

The allegorical motif of “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements” painted in Sibiu reveals a previously unknown aspect of residential decoration in the early decades of seventeenth-century Transylvania.

The murals discovered in the urban patriciate houses of the Principality of Transylvania, dating from the early decades of the seventeenth century, reflect, at least in iconography, the strong connection of the local elite with Central and Western European late Renaissance and Mannerist visual art.\(^1\) The ensembles preserved in Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben), Brașov (Kronstadt, Brassó) and Sighișoara (Schäßburg, Segesvár) come from the time of Prince Gabriel Bethlen (1613–1629), a period extremely favorable for the arts, when, alongside the local talent, painters from outside Transylvania were invited to work on the princely residences, artists such as Johann Herlesperger, David Preckhell, Johann Spillenberger (1624), Michael Rubiner (1625), Stefan Székesfehérvári (1626), and Johann Medveczky (1629). This phenomenon continued during the short reign of his widow, Katharina von Brandenburg (1629–1630), and under his successor, George Rákóczi I (1630–1648),
who ennobled local painters, John Egerházi of Band (Mezőbánd) (1631) and Stephan Csengeri of Baia Mare (Frauenbach, Nagybánya) (1632). In the cities, very few painters are mentioned, though Hans Böhm, “a foreigner to the place,” painted a landscape on the outer façade of the Bürgertor in 1612, one Paul of Silesia was paid 57 florins for renewing the Biztrița (Bistrița, Beszterce) church tower decoration in 1635, and one John of Brașov is recorded as travelling between the princely residences of Oradea (Großwardein, Nagyvárad) and Cetatea de Baltă (Kokelburg, Küküllővár) in 1629.

The iconography of Transylvanian painting in the first part of the seventeenth century includes typical late Renaissance themes from Classical mythology, the Old Testament, and ancient and contemporary history, supplemented by new topics from the repertoire of international Mannerism, inspired by the life of the elite, such as banquets, hunting scenes and moralizing allegories for educating the young via exempla contraria, precisely in the manner of the contemporary anthologies of engravings, conceived on the model of emblem and friendship books. The figural scenes are generally associated with phytomorphic decorations specific to the “Transylvanian floral Renaissance,” as Jolán Balogh styled it.

One of the best known ensembles of pre-modern mural painting was discovered at Sibiu, within the old part of a house in Piața Mică/Small Square/Kleines Ring 22, decorating one of the rooms on the ground floor. The paintings are dated 1631 and were uncovered in 1957, being consolidated in 1968, but their present state of conservation is precarious. The murals comprise figural and decorative panels, separated by floral bands: on the southern wall, a judgment scene is painted, associated with the episode of Esther and Ahasuerus from the Old Testament, followed by a panel with flowers, birds and grotesques. On the opposite side, at the intrados of the northern side access, which today is walled up, two soldiers—Landsknechte, armed with muskets and spears—are represented. Above the main register, on the lateral walls, hunting scenes are depicted in frieze, while the semi-cylindrical vault is decorated with a wreath in the center, symmetrically framed by bunches of fruits and flowers, that in the entrance being later covered by a Baroque stucco heraldic cartouche in 1694, when the house was rearranged and enlarged.

On the northern wall of the room is an image which has undergone considerable deterioration, but in the center of which can still be made out a woman who stands with one hand on her hip and a handkerchief in the other, dressed in sumptuous vestments, framed by four men, two on either side. As I have discussed elsewhere, this motif is referred to in the literature as “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements,” and the men are shown searching for their fortune in water (a fisherman with a rod and the inscription: ich such’s i[m] Wasser), in
Fig. 1. “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements,” wall painting inside a room of the house in Piața Mică 22, Sibiu, 1631.

Fig. 2. “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements,” engraving in Pugillus facetiarum, Jakob von der Heyden, Strasbourg, 1608, https://archive.org/details/pugillusfacetiar00heyd/page/n67.

Fig. 3. “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements” painted in Sibiu and the Pugillus facetiarum engraving partially overlaid.
air (a nobleman hawking: *ich suchs inn der Lufft*), in earth and in fire. The last two figures are barely visible, but this portion of the design may be recovered by comparison with the graphic model, an engraving attributed to Jakob von der Heyden of Strasbourg (1608), with German and Latin verses below, which probably accompanied the Sibiu representation too, but are now almost invisible: *O, ihr narren alle vier/wasz ihr sucht das fint ihr hier* (Oh you fools, all four, /What you seek you’ll find right here), and *Aera perlustrant & aquas & viscera terrae /Et flammas fatui o coram quam quaeritis adsum* (They comb the skies, the waters, the flames, the bowels of the earth/Fools, what you seek is here right in front of you!). The allegory has, in the background, hills, a lake with a town on its far bank, and a cloudy sky.

The original motif is part of the anthology *Pugillus facetiarum*, a print-book published in Strasbourg by Jakob von der Heyden (1608), who also engraved almost all of the plates with their German and Latin captions, the present verses being signed by Angel P[hilips]. The new edition, *Speculum Cornelianum* (1618), more than doubles the number of sheets and comprises, in addition to those from the first edition, plates from Crispijn de Passe’s *Academia sive Speculum vitae scholasticae* (1612), and a number of blank pages at the end of the book, showing that the anthology was conceived on the model of the *alba amicorum* or friendship books. The moralizing verse captions at times contrast with the erotic suggestiveness of the images themselves.

The *Pugillus facetiarum* has its origins in the comedy *Studentes*, written in Latin by Christoph Stymmel of Frankfurt (1549), and re-published by Albert Wichgreve in Rostock, under the title *Cornelius Relegatus* (1600). This satire of student life, extremely popular—for moral and educational reasons, allegedly—was translated into German by the pastor Johannes Sommer in 1605. The main character is an “anti-hero,” the archetype of the Bummelstudent, well-known in the university culture of the pre-modern age, for, as he puts it himself, *Cornelius bin ich genant, allen Studenten wolbekant*. The theme is based on the Biblical motif of the Prodigal Son, the most powerful rites of passage metaphor for youths in the seventeenth century, combined with elements of student life. *Cornelius* is sent by his parents to university, where instead of learning he falls prey to all vices and fails miserably. Because of his excesses, he is suspended, arrested and disinherited, his parents die, and he is presented with an illegitimate child. He tries to kill himself, but the rope breaks and a bag of money, hidden in the ceiling, falls on his head, whereupon he decides to change and live a new life, a course of reformation which leads to a happy ending.
The name *Cornelius* derives from the *depositio cornuum*, an academic initiation ritual that was common in German universities, this fictional *pseudostudiosorum* character appearing even on prize medals, such as those of the Altdorf Academy from 1615 (Nuremberg, GNM). In the student slang of the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries, *cornelius* was also used as a common noun which, like its derivatives *cornelizatio* and *cornelizantem*, denoted a negative mental and physical state, as well as the hangover caused by excessive consumption of alcohol. The term *cornelisatio* also appears in the *Siebenbürgische Chronik* written by Georg Kraus (1607–1679), a scholar from Sibiu who is known to have studied at Strasbourg (1626), the city in which the *Pugillus facietarum* was printed the previous decades.

**Jakob von der Heyden**’s print representing “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements” was also copied (in reverse) into the Dutch anthology *Jeucht Spieghel* (Arnhem, 1610, attributed to Zacharias Heyns) and in its developed form, *Nieuwen Jeucht Spieghel* (Arnhem, 1617, attributed to Jan Jansz), which includes the majority of the engravings from the first edition of the *Pugillus*. The title of the accompanying poem, printed on the opposite verso of the Dutch publications, *DES WERELTS LUST//DE MEEST ONRUST* (The world’s lust//gives most unrest), recalls the definition of *Cornelius* as it appears in the collection of humorous texts entitled *Facetiae facetiarum* (Amsterdam, 1645), which states that “Cornelium esse spiritum corporeum . . . qui certis exacerbatum causis hominem inquietam” (Cornelius is the spirit of the body . . . which certainly exacerbates the causes of men’s unrest).

In England, the reinterpreted motif, etched by Frederick van Hulsen, was “Sould by Hugh Perry” (c. 1628), and later, by Peter Stent, appearing in his advertisement of 1654 as part of the set of engravings, there entitled “12 Emblems.”

**This Allegory** that satirizes the battle between the sexes has its own history, appearing individually, in engravings, *alba amicorum*, on medals and *Humpen*. Malcolm Jones, who gave the title to the motif, mentions antecedent examples from the sixteenth century: an engraving of Hans Weiditz (c. 1521) in the Kupferstichkabinett der Museen der Stadt Gotha, and a print from the collection of Ferdinand Columbus (d. 1539), known only from descriptions. Balthasar Jenichen’s engraving (c. 1580), which was copied into the friendship book of *Bernardus Paludanus* (The Hague, KB 133 M 63, f. 375r), and also painted in enamel on a Bohemian *Humpen* dated 1584 (Bremen, Föcke Museum), reproduces the four men symbolizing the air (a falconer), the water (a fisherman with a net), the earth (a man digging), and the fire (a man at a forge), framing the woman at the center of the composition, who is entirely
naked, wearing only jewels around her neck. The inscription on the complicated scroll above her head clearly shows that the woman is what the men are looking for in the four elements: **HABT IR KEIN WEIBSBILT NIE ERKENNT/DAS IRS SVCHT IN DEN 4 ELEMENT?/SOLTS IO GSEHN HABN AN DEN KINDN/DRVM SVCHTS ALDA HIE WERT IRS FINDN** (Have you never known a woman/that you seek in the 4 elements?/You’re looking all over for it like these children/Though it’s here you will find it).

A different and somewhat more artistic approach to the theme is Johannes Wierix’s engraving of 1601, today known as the “Allegory of the Elements,” or the “Allegory of Lust,” because of its inscription. The four men are involved in the same occupations, but the one symbolizing fire is represented as an alchemist seated in front of his alembic.

The friendship book of Hanns Ludwig Pfinzing von Henfenfelden from Nuremberg (1570–1632), with contributions dated between 1580 and 1605, includes a painting depicting the same topic in which the nude young female is presented not centrally, but laterally, at the end of the row of figures; wearing only a mantle on her shoulders, she stands with her feet on an open coffer full of coins and jewels (Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Msc. Hist. 176, f. 77r). In this image appears for the first time, to my knowledge, the comment later ascribed to the woman in the *Pugillus facetiarum*: **Die Junctfraw—O, ihr Narren alle vier, was ihr sucht, das hab ich hier.** The following verses are different, however, and refer to the search for luck and not for a woman in the four elements: **Dieweil das Wetter ist so still/mein Glück ich in der Luft such/en will** (Since the weather is so still,/I search for my luck in the air). And further: **Erdt—Ich aber such es in der Erden/hoff es soll mir zutheilwerden/Feuer—So ichs durchs Feuer nicht bring rauss/So richt ich michts aus/Wasser—Ich aber suchs in Wasser grundten/Hoff ich wolls eh(e) r dann (b)i(e)r finden.**

In Peter Rollos’ *Philotheca Corneliana* (1619), the motif is a combination of the sixteenth-century representations and the *Pugillus facetiarum* type, with the woman in the center of the image, clothed but showing her legs, and standing on a coffer which is empty—for the treasure is herself. The caption again specifies that it is luck that the four men are looking for: **Weil das Wetter ist so still/mein glück ich auch versuchen wil** (Since the weather is so still,/I search for my luck). Two further but different lines are added: **In fewer, wasser, erdt und luft/Wirdt manches wunder ding gesucht/Seltsame sachen practiciert/Wie man bey dieser figure spürt** (In fire, water, earth and air/many wonderful things are sought/and strange activities practiced/as one may see from this image).

In the *Pugillus facetiarum* only (1608), the man symbolizing the earth is a miner, while the poem attached to the motif in the Dutch *Jeucht Spieghel* (1610) and *Nieuwen Jeucht Spieghel* (1617) compares the man representing fire to the alchemist (**De Vierd int blickerich Vyer, on d’Alghemiste tracht**), just as Wierix had represented him earlier (1601). The scholarly literature shows that during
the Renaissance, “the lines between metallurgy, mining, and practical alchemy are extremely difficult to draw,”34 while the analogy between alchemy and love became a recognized metaphor in contemporary English literature.35 Malcolm Jones shows that John Donne’s elegy XIII, “Love’s progress,” envisages “woman as the quintessence—etymologically, of course, the ‘fifth essence’—a supposed substance distinct from the recognized four elements.”36 As the “quintessence,” the “philosopher’s stone” or the “elixir of life” was the central goal of alchemy, this perhaps hints at a second level in the interpretation of the Pugillus facetiarum motif. The landscape in the background also has alchemical connotations, similar to Theodor de Bry’s Emblem XXXVI in Michael Maier’s Atlanta fugiens (1618): Lapis projectus est in terras, & in montibus exaltatus, & in aere habitat, & in flumine pascitur, id est, Mercurius (The Stone is cast upon the Earth, exalted on Mountains, resides in the Air, and is nourished in the Waters).37

The motif is differently transposed on the so-called Glückslöser or Glückstaler issued by Friedrich Ulrich, duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, prince of Wolfenbüttel (1613–1634), in 1622 and 1624, with the reverse divided into four equal compartments showing the men practicing hawking (air), fishing (water), agriculture (earth), and metallurgy or alchemy (fire).38 The explanatory inscription is: DER MENSCHEN IN DER WELT/TRACHTN ALSO NACH GELT (Men in the world/Strive thus for money). On the opposite side, the woman is substituted by FORTUNA, but with the Pugillus facetiarum text still preserved: O, IHR NARREN (sometimes replaced with LEUTEN) ALLE VIER, WASZ IHR SUCHT DAS FINT IHR HIER.

Fortuna, the Roman goddess who influences human destiny according to her whim, is personified in Renaissance art by an entirely naked woman, wearing only jewels around her neck, standing on a globe with a sail in the sea, as in the engraving in Theodore de Bry’s Emblemata Nobilitati (1592), which was also copied and colored into the abovementioned album amicorum of Hanns Ludwig Pfinzing von Henfenfelden (1580–1605, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, 7r),39 with the verses: Dem einen Licht der Sonnen schein/dem andern schlecht der Hagel drein/Und einer hatt viel Gutt und Geldt—einer die lehre Tasche beheldt/Das ligt nicht an Kunst und Verstandt/Das Glück hatt es in seiner Handt/Vertraust’u ihm so soll man auch/dich halten für ein grossen Bauch. “The empty bag”—die lehre Tasche—is literally held in her left hand for the unfortunate ones, while the cup of rewards, crowns and necklaces is offered to the fortunate, on whom she lavishes “many goods and money”—viel Gutt und Geldt—in the allegories painted by Frans Francken I (1615–1620) and Cornelis de Baellieur (c. 1650).40

The English literature of the period refers to “Dame Fortune” as a “strumpet,” “harlot” and “whore,” who gives her favors in exchange for money.41 In Urs Graf’s drawing now in Frankfurt (Städelisches Kunstinstitut), a work that strongly reflects the artist’s own fears and obsessions, “the prostitute Fortu-
na”—die dirne fortuna—is paid by a mercenary,\textsuperscript{42} who is also called a “soldier of Fortune”—Glücksritter—in order to secure her favors. The Christian prayer, “God give us luck”—GOT GEB \( V(N)S \) GLVK is followed by GLVK \((A)VF\ M(E)\) INER \( S(E)\) ITEN, “Luck by my side,” a paraphrase of the Classical maxim,\textsuperscript{43} and recalls Aby Warburg’s definition of the Fortuna personification as “an iconic formula between the medieval trust in God and the Renaissance trust in self.”\textsuperscript{44}

The \textit{Pugillus facetiarum} image of “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements” was also copied into the friendship books of Adam Schrmpf (1615)\textsuperscript{45} and Georg Geiger, the latter album lost during World War II.\textsuperscript{46} From the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, \textit{libri amicorum, alba amicorum, Stammbücher or Studentenalben}, spread outwards from Germany and the Netherlands, gradually becoming popular throughout much of Early Modern Europe, fostering the building of personal and professional relationships.\textsuperscript{47}

Small and portable, and often oblong in format, friendship albums enabled university students, merchants, humanists and others from north of the Alps to collect signatures, mottos, coats-of-arms and visual imagery as they moved between universities and other centres. Consisting of blank sheets, sometimes formatted with printed frames or interleaved with inspirational proverbs, \textit{alba amicorum} are repositories for an extraordinarily wide range of amateur and professional images, from regional costumes and foreign sites, to portraits and allegorical figures.\textsuperscript{48}

Professors, researchers, philosophers, scientists, artists and fellow students were invited to write a brief \textit{memento} of their meeting with the album owner, which frequently took the form of a message of encouragement for the professional future of the young man. These friendship books can also be considered \textit{miscellanies} which include original songs and poems, advice, opinions, and comments on the entries contributed by others, and, especially by the late sixteenth century, they are enlivened by paintings—deriving mainly from engraved prints—commissioned by contributors from professional manuscript painters or done by themselves. The quality of these paintings and drawings is often high, as skilled professional artists adorn the pages with the contributors’ family crests and other motifs. The growing popularity of such albums soon led to the publication of emblem books with interleaved blank pages, or, as in the case of at least one copy of the \textit{Pugillus facetiarum}, with such pages bound in at the end of the book.

The few \textit{alba amicorum} known in Transylvania are later than the mural painting of Sibiu and iconographically distinct. Anton and Paulus Schirmer’s friendship books, known together as the \textit{Schirmersche Familienbuch},\textsuperscript{49} have entries dated between 1651 and 1654, and between 1681 and 1685, respectively, from
the places where they studied and travelled, e.g. Wittenberg, Augsburg, Sibiu, and Cluj (Klausenburg, Kolozsvár).  

The allegorical motif of “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements” painted in Sibiu, inside the Kleines Ring 22 house (1631), after Jakob von der Heyden’s engraving (1608, Strasbourg), reveals a previously unknown aspect of residential decoration in the early decades of seventeenth-century Transylvania, being at the same time the only example of mural decoration known to be a literal copy after designs in the *Pugillus facetiarum*, and one of the very few of this kind in non-manuscript art. Published explicitly for the expanding *alba amicorum* market, the designs are indeed relatively common in seventeenth-century albums, but seem otherwise to have contributed only rarely to the applied arts. That this anthology exerted a considerable influence in Transylvania is suggested by the fact that a second motif from the volume inspired the murals of a contemporary house in the same city, on the former Fleischergasse 17 (1628), in which banquet scenes were painted.  

The identification of these motifs in the Sibiu murals and of their graphic source is important evidence both for their diffusion, and for its demonstration of the familiarity of the *Siebenbürgischer Sachsen* urban elite with the latest Western European art and culture.

Notes


8. Of “the two giants” in the façade decoration mentioned at the beginning of the eighteenth century by Georg Soterius, “Cibinium*: Eine Beschreibung Hermannstadts vom Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts, ed. Lore Wirth-Poelchau (Cologne–Weimar–Vienna, 2006, 41), only a fragment of a single figure painted on a monumental scale was recovered by the restorers in 2017. In 1775, after Florin Blezu, the owner of the house was Johann Czekelius von Rosenfeld (1739–1809), *Provinzial-Burgermeister*, then member of the Transylvanian *Gubernialrath*, the grandson of Michael Cekelius (1680–1770), Baron von Rosenfeld since 1722, and the son of Johann von Rosenfeld (1713–1789) and Anna Maria von Bausnern.


13. The other verses were signed by J[acob] a Bruck, M. Cas[p]ar Brülovius, J[ohannes] P[aulus] Crusius [I. P. C.], F[ranz] [Christoph] Caroli[us], [Matthäeus] Zuberfius, [Andreas] Saurius and Albrecht Schmidt, while most of the engravings are attributed to Jakob von der Heyden, but only two bear his monogram.


15. M. Alberti Wichgrevi, *Cornelius Relegatus, sive Comoedia Nova, festivissime depingens Vitam Pseudostudiosorum & continens Nonnullos Ritus Academicos in Germania*

21. Kraus (p. 16), used the word in describing the contradictory state of mind of a counselor of Sighişoara, during a mission at Prince Gabriel Báthory’s court, in 1611. After completing his studies in Cluj (1622), Sibiu (1624), Strasbourg (1626), Vienna (1627) and Padua (1628), and a longer journey through Italy, Kraus returned to Transylvania and settled in Sighişoara, where he became the city notary from 1646 until his death.
24. Köhler, 452–459.
26. Ibid., 320. I thank Dr. Malcolm Jones for his assistance generously offered in documenting “our motif” painted in Sibiu. His extremely rich Pinterest boards with images of non-religious European art from the late Middle Ages to c. 1700 (at malcm2557 and malcmjones), including the alba amicorum boards, are the source of the majority of analogues mentioned in the text.
27. Franz Carl Lipp, Bemalte Gläser: Völkstümliche Bildwelt auf altem Glas (Munich, 1974), 33, fig. 175.
32. I thank Maria Marin for help in the transcription, translation and interpretation of these captions.
33. Peter Rollos, Philotheca Corneliana: Sive Emblemata Novorvm hortus florentissimus (Frankfurt, 1619).
p. 107.
39. The globe on which she stands, expressing her fickleness, is clearly identified as the world in Nicoletto da Modena’s engraving of 1500–1510 (London, British Museum).
40. In Balthazar Nebot’s later painting (c. 1730), Fortuna on the globe is blindfolded and floats in the air.
42. Christiane Andersson, “Jungfrau, Dirne, Fortuna: Das Bild der Frau in den Zeichnungen von Urs Graf,” Kritische Berichte 16, 1 (1988): 35. “The picture satire is a weapon in the gender struggle, through which Graf not only disenchanted the power of the woman, but wants to distance himself from his own sexuality: his last salvation.”
43. Fortis Fortuna adjuvat (Pliny, Epistles 6, 16), Audentes Fortuna adiuvat (Terentius, Phormio, 203), Audentis Fortuna iuvat (Virgil, Aeneid, 10, 284). The text is written on the bed-frame on which Fortuna sits.
44. Aby Warburg, “Francesco Sassettis letztwillige Verfügung, in Kunstwissenschaftliche Beiträge August Schmarsow gewidmet zum fünfzigsten Semester seiner akade-

45. Copenhagen, Det Københavnske Bibliotek, M.S. Thott 420 8vo, along with many other albums it is available on the library’s website: http://www.kb.dk/e-
mat/mas/130019389767.pdf.

46. Piotr Oszczanowski and Jan Gromadzki, Theatrum vitae et mortis: Grafika, rysunek i malarstwo książkowe na Śląsku w latach ok. 1550–ok. 1650 (Wrocław, 1995), no. 333. Malcolm Jones notes that other representations of the motif are to be found amongst the dismembered album leaves in the Frommann collection in Stuttgart, and I add the Serresch Studentenalbum in the Stadtarchiv in Halle.


51. The use of designs from other similar contemporary print-books and single-sheet prints is well-attested in alba amicorum, and on Bohemian enamel-painted Humpen. Two such Humpen decoration are derived from the Pugillus facetiarum, for example, the popular Cornelius, now in Nuremberg, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, and the motif of the naked woman caught in the lobster-pot, in Wroclaw. Eugen von Czihak, Schlesische Gläser (Breslau, 1891), 108, fig. 28, and 237–238, available via archive.org.

Abstract
A Motif from the *Pugillus Facetiarum* Painted Inside a House in Sibiu (1631)

The article shows that inside the room on the ground floor of a house in Sibiu, Piața Mică/Small Square/Kleines Ring 22, the allegorical motif of “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements,” inspired by Jakob von der Heyden’s engraving from the *Pugillus facetiarum* anthology (1608, Strasbourg) was painted in 1631. This discovery reveals a previously unknown aspect of residential decoration in the early decades of seventeenth-century Transylvania, the motif being at the same time the only example of mural decoration known to be a literal copy after designs in the *Pugillus facetiarum* and one of the very few such in the non-manuscript art of pre-modern Europe. That this anthology exerted a considerable influence in Transylvania is suggested by the fact that a second motif from the volume inspired the murals of a contemporary house in the same city, on the former Fleischergasse 17 (1628). The identification of these motifs in the Sibiu murals and of their graphic source is important evidence both for their diffusion, and for its demonstration of the familiarity of the *Siebenbürgischer Sachsen* (Transylvanian Saxon) urban elite with the latest Western European art and culture, including the friendship books—*Stammbuch* or *alba amicorum*.

Keywords
Sibiu, pre-modern iconography, wall paintings, engravings, “Woman and the Men of the Four Elements,” *Pugillus facetiarum, alba amicorum*
Astra et les officiers roumains de Transylvanie avant et après la Grande Union (1910-1920)

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L’évolution des liens entre l’Association et le corps des officiers de 1900 à 1920 est illustrative des métamorphoses que subit la société civile roumaine de Transylvanie et de Hongrie après 1918, lorsque, d’un « non ami » d’un État multiethnique, elle devient l’un des principaux appuis du processus de consolidation d’un autre État multiethnique.

Avant 1918, mais aussi pendant l’entre-deux-guerres, l’Association pour la littérature et la culture du peuple roumain (Astra) a été l’entité institutionnelle la plus représentative de la société civile roumaine en Transylvanie et en Hongrie. Le nombre de ses membres, la couverture géographique, l’ampleur des programmes scientifiques, culturels et sociaux déroulés, ses relations avec les milieux culturels et scientifiques du Royaume de Roumanie l’ont imposée comme emblématique de l’associationnisme roumain.1 Malgré ses objectifs généreux et son orientation explicite vers l’éducation des masses, l’Astra conserve, pourtant, avant 1918, un caractère élitaire, conséquence tant de sa composition socio-

Cette étude a été menée dans le cadre du projet PN-III-P1-1.1-TE-2016-0432, Officiers roumains de l’armée des Habsbourg et leur implication dans la société civile (de la fin du XVIIIe siècle jusqu’à 1918), financé par UEFISCDI Roumanie, l’Unité exécutive pour le financement de l’enseignement supérieur, de la recherche, du développement et de l’innovation.

Bien que le sujet ait présenté de l’intérêt et ait fait l’objet de plusieurs études d’historiographie roumaine, la perspective diachronique fait toujours défaut, or, c’est une telle approche qui permettrait une comparaison entre ce que les officiers et le milieu militaire de l’Astra représentent pendant la monarchie dualiste par rapport à ce qu’ils représentent pendant les premières années d’existence de la Grande Roumanie. En essayant de faire cette comparaison, nous avons sélectionné, parmi la multitude de cas d’interaction ayant eu lieu surtout après 1918, ceux que nous avons jugés illustratifs de certains types de coopération. Le lecteur trouvera donc dans le présent article une analyse des changements induits par la nouvelle situation politique d’après 1918 dans les relations entre l’Astra et le milieu militaire, plutôt qu’un inventaire exhaustif des interférences personnelles et institutionnelles.

L’Astra et les officiers avant et pendant la Première Guerre mondiale

Des les débuts de l’Association, il y a des officiers dans ses rangs. Parmi les membres fondateurs de l’Astra, il y a en 1861 au moins trois officiers (le capitaine à la retraite Constantin Stezar et les lieutenants Nichita Ignat et Ioan Iftene), ainsi que la commune frontalière de Salva. En 1867, cependant, huit officiers sont inscrits, la plupart avec leurs impôts payés à jour ou avec un retard d’un an maximum. D’autres associations de l’époque comptent aussi des militaires. Au sein de l’Association nationale d’Arad, il y a 13 officiers en 1864. Une des premières conférences de l’Astra donnée par un militaire se déroule en 1876, dans la section de Sebeș, où le lieutenant Ioan Valer Bercian parle « des bénéfices du service militaire ». Pendant de longues années, le colonel David, baron Urs de Margineni fait partie du comité de l’Association, tandis que le capitaine Constantin Stezar est trésorier de l’Astra pendant presque deux décennies.

Malgré ces interférences, jusqu’au début du XXᵉ siècle, le nombre et l’impli-
cation des officiers restent à un niveau faible (11 membres militaires en 1901) et ce n’est que l’extension considérable de l’Astra au cours de la décennie précé-
dant la Première Guerre mondiale qui suscite une augmentation de l’intérêt (25
membres militaires en 1913, 37 en 1914). En outre, non seulement l’Astra ne compte parmi ses membres aucun sous-officier au cours de cette période, mais même les sous-lieutenants et les lieutenants constituent des exceptions. La plupart des officiers sont des colonels et des généraux, les majors, les capitaines et les prêtres militaires étant moins nombreux. Les épouses d’officiers membres de l’Association représentent elles aussi des exceptions, la présence de femmes dans l’Association demeurant d’ailleurs très faible même avant 1918.

Bien entendu, la question se pose de savoir si le nombre réduit des militaires et de leurs épouses est lié au caractère explicitement national de l’Astra et à la volonté d’éviter d’éventuels obstacles à la carrière. Il n’est pas exclu que certains des officiers roumains aient tenu compte de tels aspects ; néanmoins, la prépondérance des officiers supérieurs, le fait qu’ils soient pour la plupart des militaires actifs ainsi que les analogies avec d’autres segments socioprofessionnels mènent à des conclusions différentes.

Premièrement, le nombre de membres payants de l’Astra (membres à vie, fondateurs et ordinaires : moins de 2 800 au total avant la guerre) représente un faible pourcentage des classes bourgeoise et intellectuelle roumaines de Hongrie, donc on ne peut pas s’attendre à ce que le nombre d’officiers soit élevé. Deuxièmement, la comparaison avec d’autres groupes socioprofessionnels donne des résultats favorables. Tandis que les employés de l’Église et du milieu juridique sont surreprésentés – environ 40 % des membres de l’Association –, les autres catégories professionnelles sont certainement sous-représentées par rapport à leur poids social. Cornel Sigmirean identifie environ 1 350 diplômés roumains en médecine provenant de Transylvanie et de Hongrie dans la période 1867-1918 et pourtant l’Astra compte moins de 90 membres médecins et pharmaciens (épouses y compris) en 1914. Sur le nombre bien plus important d’instituteurs roumains, moins de 180 sont membres de l’Astra en cette même année.

À la lumière de ces chiffres, la situation des officiers roumains (37 sur 5-700) est plutôt bonne. Bien que leur nombre soit faible jusqu’en 1919, ils représentent dans leur groupe professionnel un pourcentage au moins égal à celui des représentants d’autres branches, théoriquement plus proches « intellectuellement » du profil de l’Association. Dans ces circonstances, nous pensons que l’impulsion de s’engager dans le mouvement associatoniste (ainsi que de s’en abstenir) est davantage déterminée par une série de conditions préalables individuelles et sociales – le penchant personnel pour l’acte de culture et pour les activités d’éducation sociale, le rapport au concept de prestige social conféré par la qualité de membre, l’intensité des sentiments d’identité nationale, les possibilités financières – que par la qualité de « serviteurs de l’État », soient-ils militaires ou civils. Cela explique à la fois l’absence des sous-officiers et le faible poids des officiers de rangs inférieurs.
Un autre indice qui peut aider à élucider les relations entre l’armée et l’Astra est le nombre très faible de militaires parmi les « membres auxiliaires », c’est-à-dire les abonnés de la « Bibliothèque populaire de l’Association ».

Ceux-ci constituent une catégorie à part, sans droit de vote. En 1913, sur plus de 7 600 membres auxiliaires, seuls six sont des militaires, une situation qui contraste de manière flagrante avec leur présence parmi les catégories de membres votants.

Le plus probablement, dans le cas des officiers, le prestige conféré par le statut de membre et la relation entre ce statut et le sentiment d’honneur, propre à l’ethos militaire, jouent un rôle important, à la fois pour les motiver à s’inscrire dans l’Association et pour les décourager d’assumer un statut inférieur. Dans le même registre symbolique dominé par le prestige, la position de l’Astra en tant que « navire amiral » de l’associationnisme roumain en Transylvanie et en Hongrie sert probablement elle aussi à attirer les officiers.

Une comparaison avec la deuxième association culturelle importante de l’époque, la Société pour un fonds de théâtre roumain, indique un intérêt considérablement moindre des militaires pour cette dernière, mais aussi des différences structurelles. Entre 1900 et 1914, le nombre annuel de membres militaires de la Société (donc payant la taxe annuelle) et de leurs épouses oscille entre deux et neuf, tandis que la structure des grades militaires est fondamentalement différente de celle constatée dans le cas de l’Astra : les capitaines et les majors sont prédominants et les sous-lieutenants et les lieutenants sont plus nombreux. En outre, aucun général ne considère nécessaire de devenir membre de la Société pour un fonds de théâtre roumain, ce qui n’est pas le cas pour l’Astra.

Un dernier argument en ce sens est le fait que, dans le cas de l’Astra, les années de guerre n’entraînent pas une diminution significative du nombre d’officiers inscrits, qui reste constant (environ 30 personnes par an), même lorsque le nombre total des membres diminue considérablement.

Il est évident que les officiers roumains dans l’Astra sont animés par un esprit civique auquel s’associent des sentiments nationaux, mais le prestige social des membres, renforcé par la mention annuelle dans les listes imprimées dans les pages du magazine Transilvania, joue probablement un rôle aussi. Dans certains cas, après des années de présence en tant que membre ordinaire, possiblement dans un contexte financier favorable ou simplement suite à une volonté personnelle, on passe à un statut supérieur. Le colonel Silviu de Herbay devient membre fondateur de l’Astra en 1911 et paie en une seule fois la taxe de 400 couronnes. Le sous-colonel Grigorie Trai lovici devient membre à vie et paie en une tranche la taxe de 200 couronnes en 1912. En 1913, Blanca Lupu, l’épouse du général Alexandru Lupu, règle intégralement sa cotisation de membre fondateur.

Au-delà de l’acceptation du statut de membre, l’activité des militaires est peu significative, ayant un caractère plutôt occasionnel. La conférence publique au
sujet de la bataille de Königgrätz, que Ion Mihaiu, officier à la retraite, donne sous l’égide de l’Astra le 25 février 1911, constitue une telle exception.\textsuperscript{20} Encore plus notable est l’initiative du lieutenant Bazil Barbul (4\textsuperscript{e} bataillon du 64\textsuperscript{e} régiment d’infanterie) d’organiser des cours d’alphabétisation à Abrud en 1913 et 1914 pour 60 soldats roumains chaque an.\textsuperscript{21} Parmi ceux qui contribuent à la collecte initiée par l’Astra pour l’achat des bustes de Mihai Eminescu et de George Baruțiu, on compte le lieutenant Ioan Rebega (10 couronnes), le lieutenant George Popovici (de Graz, 10 couronnes), le colonel Silviu de Herbay (20 couronnes) et le général Lupu (de Vienne, 50 couronnes).\textsuperscript{22} Ce dernier donne aussi à la bibliothèque de l’Astra la biographie du manuscrit du général Stratimirovici.\textsuperscript{23} D’autres dons mineurs ont également lieu pendant la Guerre : en 1916, Maria Krausz, l’épouse d’un major de Sibiu, donne 3 assiettes à la section de l’industrie artistique du musée de l’Association.\textsuperscript{24}

L’intérêt des militaires pour l’Astra a pour pendant l’intérêt de l’Association pour cette catégorie professionnelle. Le nombre réduit d’officiers roumains dans l’armée austro-hongroise et surtout le faible intérêt des jeunes Roumains pour la carrière des armes représentent un sujet de débat constant dans toute la presse roumaine de l’époque. Dès 1892, dans son dernier discours en tant que président de l’Astra et peu de temps avant sa mort, George Baruț mentionne parmi les priorités de l’Association la création d’un fonds de 400 000 couronnes destiné à soutenir les écoles roumaines de commerce et de sciences dures, censées garantir, entre autres, la formation des jeunes dans les domaines techniques et militaires.\textsuperscript{25} Le fonds n’est toutefois pas créé et la présence des officiers roumains dans l’armée de la double monarchie reste symbolique jusqu’à la Première Guerre mondiale.

La motivation de cette démarche n’est pas seulement de consolider une catégorie d’élite qui confère à la nation de la visibilité, du prestige et de l’influence, mais également de l’intégrer dans le système éducatif social et national conçu par l’Astra, grâce à l’accès relativement facile à de grands groupes de Roumains qui ont besoin de cette éducation :

\textit{Il y a plusieurs régiments majoritairement roumains, c’est-à-dire composés de gars roumains [soldats, n. n.], car le nombre d’officiers roumains est désespérément petit (infime). Ce constat doit nous faire réfléchir. Quiconque a déjà servi en tant que soldat sait à quel point il est difficile pour les pauvres gars lorsque leurs sous-officiers et leurs officiers ne connaissent pas assez leur langue. Comment peuvent-ils comprendre ce qui est enseigné à l’école des recrues et que retenir des nombreux enseignements et des bons conseils des supérieurs si on ne leur parle pas de façon à ce qu’ils comprennent ? Ce n’est qu’on parlant sa langue qu’on touche le cœur du simple soldat, qu’on gagne son affections, qu’on l’anime et qu’on le rend courageux.}
C’est pourquoi nous pouvons affirmer sans hésitation que non seulement l’intérêt de notre nation, mais aussi l’intérêt de toute la patrie exige un plus grand nombre d’officiers roumains.26

Ce n’est pas un hasard si, au début de 1910, le Comité central de l’Association demande au prêtre militaire Dr Virgil Ciobanu, qui est à Vienne en ce moment, des informations sur les méthodes de formation des soldats roumains pendant le service militaire.27 Pour sa part, le prêtre militaire demande à l’Association d’intervenir auprès du ministère de la Guerre pour permettre aux sous-officiers et aux officiers des régiments majoritairement roumains d’organiser des cours d’alphabétisation pour les soldats ordinaires.28 Il n’est pas exclu que l’initiative du lieutenant Barbul et les dons de livres (évidemment en roumain) pour les hôpitaux militaires, effectués par l’Association depuis 1912, trouvent leurs origines précisément dans ces efforts.29 D’ailleurs, la relation des prêtres militaires avec l’Astra a toujours été étroite, un exemple illustratif à cet égard étant le cas de Nicolae Togan, doyen grec-catholique, mais aussi un prêtre militaire de la garnison de Sibiu.30

Les sujets militaires à sous-texte national sont eux aussi présents, ne serait-ce qu’occasionnellement, aux conférences de l’Astra. Nous avons déjà mentionné la conférence au sujet de la bataille de Königgrätz, probablement choisie aussi en raison de l’héroïsme des régiments transylvains et des officiers roumains (anciens gardes-frontières pour la plupart), malgré le résultat final défavorable. Dans un registre similaire, en 1914, la section de Sibiu de l’Astra organise la conférence publique d’Octavian C. Tâslăuanu intitulée La guerre des Balkans. La campagne de l’armée roumaine. Le territoire conquis (avec projection).31

Le déclenchement de la guerre met l’Astra, en tant qu’institution, dans une position difficile. Son caractère national doit désormais s’adapter à des manifestations beaucoup plus prononcées de patriotisme et de loyauté dynastique, tant au niveau du discours que des actions. Heureusement, dans les décennies d’avant-guerre, malgré la radicalisation nationaliste croissante, visible chez tous les peuples de la monarchie, les deux types de loyauté ne sont pas antagonistes, mais plutôt complémentaires, de sorte qu’il en résulte une symbiose. Pendant la guerre, le discours du magazine Transilvania est loyaliste, soulignant le courage des compatriotes tombés sur les champs de bataille pour la défense de la monarchie, mais aussi les initiatives sociales et caritatives qui y sont associées, comme, par exemple, la création des orphelinats roumains à Sibiu et Blaj.32 L’Association encourage constamment ses membres à s’impliquer dans des activités caritatives et d’assistance sociale visant à aider les victimes de la guerre : dons de livres et de journaux à des soldats, vêtements chauds, nourriture (en particulier, du pain et de la viande).33
En outre, les bâtiments et les biens de l’Association sont mis à la disposition des autorités militaires à chaque fois que cela est nécessaire. Il ne peut en être autrement. L’antenne de l’Astra dans le village de Satul Nou (section de Pančevo), par exemple, permet à l’armée d’utiliser sa propre maison de la culture pour les bureaux et l’hôpital militaires. Pour les soldats des hôpitaux, près de 22 500 brochures d’une valeur de 6 500 couronnes sont envoyées jusqu’au début de la Guerre. En 1917, 1 000 livres de prières et 300 brochures diverses sont donnés pour les soldats de l’armée austro-hongroise. L’année suivante, 16 853 exemplaires de livres de la collection « Bibliothèque populaire de l’Association » sont offerts à l’armée. Jusqu’à la fin de la guerre, selon les estimations des historiens, l’Astra aura fait don d’environ 100 000 exemplaires de ses publications pour l’usage des soldats roumains de l’armée austro-hongroise.

Le soutien aux cours d’alphabétisation dispensés par les officiers roumains est probablement tout aussi important. Ceux-ci, en particulier ceux officiellement chargés d’instruire les analphabètes, adressent une lettre à l’Astra pour lui demander des abécédaires, car ceux disponibles sont insuffisants, étant donné qu’au niveau d’un seul régiment il y a environ 200 soldats roumains illétrés.

Le magazine *Transilvania* rend compte constamment des pertes humaines de l’Astra suite à la guerre, bien que la réduction du nombre de membres résultant du non-paiement de la taxe après 1914 ainsi que la cessation de l’activité de certaines sections rendent impossible une statistique rigoureuse. Parmi les membres les plus importants, le docteur Ştefan Chirilovici, directeur de la section d’Ilia, meurt en officier sur le champ de bataille et le docteur Dionisie Stoica, directeur de la section de Marghita, meurt au service de l’armée. Sont également publiées des notices nécrologiques concernant des membres et des intellectuels tombés au front, comme le lieutenant Vasile Micula, ancien enseignant au Collège de Brașov. L’Association prend également l’initiative de créer un album dédié aux membres décédés lors de la Première Guerre mondiale et demande aux veuves dès 1915 d’envoyer des photos et des données biographiques, mais le projet semble ne pas aboutir. En 1916, la section historique de l’Astra reçoit de la part du prêtre militaire Constantin Buracu de Debrecen la nouvelle qu’un officier roumain, qui n’est pas nommé, avait rassemblé des informations sur la décoration des soldats roumains de l’armée des Habsbourg pour leur courage. Il est décidé que la Section historique demandera au prêtre de Buracu d’envoyer ces données et que, à l’avenir, seront collectées les lettres et les poésies de guerre «car le temps viendra où elles pourront être étudiées, publiées et classées».
L’Astra et l’armée dans les premières années après la guerre

LA FIN de la guerre et le passage de la Transylvanie sous l’administration roumaine entraînent une série de changements importants dans la dynamique des relations entre l’Astra et le milieu militaire. Ce n’est pas un hasard si l’un des deux délégués du Comité de l’Association à la Grande Assemblée nationale d’Alba Iulia du 1er décembre 1918 est le lieutenant-colonel Corneliu Bardești (c’est vrai, nommé en raison de la maladie du président Andrei Bărsanu).45

Les liens officiels de l’Astra avec l’armée roumaine se manifestent tôt. Symboliquement, le 29 décembre 1918, le Musée central de l’Association reçoit de la part des volontaires transylvains de Bessarabie l’étendard de bataille du régiment « Avram Iancu »46 en présence des membres du Commandement de l’armée roumaine, qui visitent ensuite l’institution.47 Il est prévu que le musée ait en 1920 une section consacrée à l’armée, censée « contenir des armes, des cartes, des images des champs de bataille, des peintures représentant des scènes historiques, des portraits de grands militaires etc. »48

En 1919, sur proposition d’Ion Agârbiceanu, est lancée une série de listes de souscriptions pour le soutien financier de l’Association, listes envoyées, entre autres, aux commandements des corps d’armée de Transylvanie.49 C’est un signe de plus que l’armée rejoint les associations culturelles, religieuses et scolaires, assumant ainsi un rôle civique au niveau institutionnel et non seulement par la participation personnelle de certains officiers ou, occasionnellement, de certains commandants de garnison.50

Le rôle de l’armée dans la constitution de la Grande Roumanie et ses relations avec la mission culturelle de l’Astra sont constamment soulignés à l’époque dans les pages du magazine Transilvania : « Les soldats ont tracé les contours du nouvel État roumain, le travail culturel roumain est appelée à donner du contenu et à insuffler de la vie à ce nouvel État. »51 Dans la même lignée, sont publiées des notices biographiques de plusieurs intellectuels, officiers dans l’armée roumaine, tombés au cours de la Première Guerre mondiale.52 Ce type de textes perpétue la tradition instaurée pendant la guerre (voir V. Micula), seul change le sens du patriotisme qu’il exprime, au lieu de Vienne et de Budapest, ce sentiment étant maintenant dirigé vers Bucarest.

La nouvelle relation se consolide rapidement au cours des années 1919-1920, ce qui se reflète aussi dans l’évolution numérique des membres. En 1919, l’Astra compte 157 soldats et, en 1920 déjà, 318 officiers et 33 sous-officiers.53 Les généraux Ioan Boeriu et Dimitrie Florian et le médecin militaire Gheorghe Moga font partie du Comité central de l’Association élu en janvier 1920. Le général Boeriu est à ce moment-là le commandant du Commandement géné-
ral territorial Sibiu, en conséquence, sa présence institutionnalisé les relations entre l’Astra et l’armée.\textsuperscript{54} Le nombre de militaires s’était multiplié par dix par rapport au maximum d’avant-guerre, tandis que le nombre total de membres de l’Association n’avait augmenté que deux fois et demi. Du point de vue de la répartition par rang militaire, les statistiques de l’époque indiquent la présence massive de lieutenants, sous-lieutenants et sous-officiers, qui représentent ensemble plus de 60\% des membres militaires. Du point de vue de la répartition géographique, si, avant 1919, les officiers et les associés militaires de l’Astra sont concentrés à Vienne, Brașov, Sibiu et dans les centres des anciens régiments frontaliers (Năsăud et Caransebeș), après 1919, les emplacements des garnisons de l’armée roumaine sont davantage concernés : Brașov, Sibiu, Alba Iulia, Deva, Orăștie et Dej (anciennes garnisons de l’armée impériale et royale).

À ce stade, la question se pose de savoir si, au-delà de l’enthousiasme nationaliste du moment, il existe des formes de persuasion ou de pression informelle, basées sur des considérations de prestige personnel et non pas sur des demandes directes. Nous devons garder à l’esprit que les officiers ont toujours été une catégorie professionnelle plus sensible au prestige personnel (entendue comme « honneur »), mais aussi tenir compte du contexte professionnel : à une époque où l’armée représente un métier sûr et, pour beaucoup de jeunes, une possible carrière, mettre en valeur l’esprit national en assumant le statut de membre du « navire amiral » des associations culturelles roumaines en Transylvanie pourrait être considéré comme un avantage. De toute évidence, l’exemple personnel, l’initiative et la persuasion de certains officiers contribuent à augmenter le nombre de militaires dans l’Astra. C’est le cas du lieutenant Ion Crișan, du 81\textsuperscript{e} régiment d’infanterie, basé à Dej, qui inscrit en tant que membres 34 officiers du régiment respectif et crée une antenne locale de l’Astra dans la commune de Mireșul Mare, pour la bibliothèque de laquelle il fait don de 100 exemplaires des publications de l’Astra.\textsuperscript{55} Le 5 septembre 1920, la section d’Alba Iulia de l’Astra tient une réunion extraordinaire à Ighiu, à laquelle se sont inscrits 5 membres à vie, 20 membres actifs et 50 auxiliaires. L’armée prend elle aussi part à l’événement, les militaires étant dirigés par le général Dimitrie Glodeanu, qui promet de s’impliquer lors d’autres assemblées similaires\textsuperscript{56}, une initiative bien accueillie par les dirigeants de l’Association.\textsuperscript{57}

Une situation spéciale apparaît dans le 1\textsuperscript{er} régiment de chasseurs de montagne de Brașov. Outre 32 de ses officiers en activité, la bibliothèque du régiment et la bibliothèque de la compagnie technique du régiment sont membres de l’Astra en 1920.\textsuperscript{58} Valer Moga suppose que les bibliothèques respectives aient été constituées en grande partie d’ouvrages donnés par l’Astra, ce qui soulignerait une fois de plus la manière dont les initiatives culturelles institutionnelles engendrent d’autres institutions, plus petites, qui deviennent à leur tour des piliers soutenant l’institution-mère. Derrière ce processus, se cachent probablement les décisions
personnelles de certains officiers, qui, par leur initiative et leur disponibilité, cautionnent ce cycle de transfert culturel.

L’habitude des officiers de donner des conférences dans le cadre de l’Astra, à divers sujets, pas nécessairement liés au milieu militaire, contribue elle aussi à renforcer les relations entre les deux institutions. Plusieurs de ces conférences font partie du cycle intitulé « La nécessité d’avoir une armée ». Les dons sont une autre forme de participation des officiers aux projets de l’Association ; ils sont parfois très consistants, comme celui que fait en 1920 le major Vasile Popa de Brașov, qui cède à l’Association de nombreux terrains urbains situés dans le village de Dumbrava, section d’Alba, pour la construction d’une « maison nationale ».

La qualité des relations entre les deux institutions-piliers du processus d’édification nationale en Transylvanie est soulignée officiellement par le président Andrei Bârseanu lors de l’ouverture de l’Assemblée générale de l’Association, organisée les 17 et 18 octobre 1920 à Oradea, en présence des généraux Ioan Râșcanu (ministre de la Guerre) et Traian Moșoiu, ainsi que d’une suite d’officiers distingués. Le modèle de collaboration institutionnalisée entre les sociétés culturelles nationales et l’armée s’inspire des réalités du Vieux Royaume de Roumanie. Un exemple auquel l’Astra fait explicitement référence au cours de cette période est celui des « Maisons nationales », un établissement socioculturel créé pendant la guerre par des officiers et dirigée, immédiatement après la conflagration, par le colonel Ion Manolescu. Ce n’est pas un hasard que le don de 3 000 lei fait en 1920 par le ministre de la Guerre, le général Râșcanu, serve en partie à payer la taxe qui incombe à l’Astra en tant que membre fondateur des « Maisons nationales » (1 400 lei).

Un aspect intéressant de la relation entre l’Association et le milieu militaire au cours de cette période est représenté par les forts accents francophiles au niveau du discours adopté dans la presse. Tandis qu’avant la guerre ce sont la culture et la civilisation allemandes qui constituent le principal modèle étranger, après 1919, l’intérêt concerne l’espace culturel et le paradigme culturel français. Suite à ce processus naturel de réorientation (facilité et fortement stimulé par l’influence culturelle du Vieux Royaume de Roumanie), la France devient une référence à tous les égards, y compris en ce qui concerne l’armée et son rôle de garant de l’État : « Un peuple ne peut exister sans armée, sans hiérarchie, sans respect des autorités, sans discipline (G. le Bon). » La visite du général français Henri Berthelot, à laquelle assistent le président et les membres du Comité, est l’un des événements majeurs auxquels les représentants de l’Association sont officiellement invités pendant cette période.

La collaboration entre l’Astra et l’armée roumaine se poursuit et s’intensifie même après 1920, tant dans le domaine culturel que dans le domaine de l’éducation sociale, y compris par la médiation entre le monde rural et le service militaire. Le vice-président de l’Astra, Gheorghe Preda, rend très bien l’essen-
tiel de cette relation : « L’Astra a vu et voit dans l’armée roumaine la grande et belle école du peuple ayant pour noble mission de former des soldats du pays qui soient non seulement les premiers à nous défendre en temps de guerre, mais aussi des citoyens conscients de leur grande mission en temps de paix. » 67

Conclusions

Avant 1919, le choix de devenir membre de l’Astra est déterminé par des facteurs tels que : le niveau d’éducation, le penchant pour l’acte culturel, la situation matérielle, la disponibilité à s’impliquer dans la vie de l’Association et la reconnaissance, manifestée de manière plus engagée, du sentiment d’identité nationale. La dépendance professionnelle de l’autorité de l’État a un impact beaucoup moins important que ne le suggère l’historiographie plus ancienne. Il est probable que cette dépendance ait influencé négativement les options de certains membres potentiels, y compris des officiers, mais les évolutions survenues de 1900 à 1918 indiquent clairement que la décision finale appartient à l’individu, qui peut connaître certains inconvénients professionnels, mais uniquement s’il est actif dans d’autres positions nationalistes, non pas seulement parce qu’il est membre de l’Astra et en aucun cas pour cette seule raison.

À partir de 1919, l’implication subitement plus importante du public roumain dans l’activité de l’Astra entraîne l’apparition parmi les membres de certaines catégories probablement moins intéressées par l’acte culturel en soi et davantage attirés par son symbolisme national et patriotique. Ce qui mène à l’augmentation spectaculaire du nombre de membres et, en particulier, du nombre de membres militaires, c’est la symbiose entre le sentiment national et l’identification à une entité de l’État perçue comme intégratrice et protéctrice. L’Astra et ses objectifs sont pour la première fois en plein accord avec le patriotism officiel, ce qui n’avait pas été le cas durant la période dualiste, où sa mission culturelle-nationale était opposable et en conflit avec le patriotism officiel de l’État hongrois. Il est donc naturel que les représentants des institutions d’État soient plus nombreux que dans les décennies précédentes.

Dans le cas particulier des militaires, le choix de devenir membre de l’Association est probablement dû à une impulsion patriotique sincère, à la nécessité de maintenir son prestige dans le groupe socioprofessionnel et à la persuasion de camarades plus impliqués, de même qu’à l’effet de la relation institutionnalisée entre l’Association et l’Armée, relation qui commence à se développer dès l’hiver 1918. Elle évolue d’après les modèles existant dans le Vieux Royaume de Roumanie et est stimulée par des officiers supérieurs, des commandants de garnison ou même des corps d’armée.
Si, avant 1919, l’éventail des activités de collaboration se limite à des dons de livres et à des actions de soutien aux cours d’alphabétisation (fruit des initiatives individuelles des officiers et non d’une collaboration institutionnelle), dans l’entre-deux-guerres, cet éventail se diversifie considérablement. Les cours d’alphabétisation et les dons de livres pour les soldats continuent, mais, en plus, des bibliothèques et des centres culturels sont installés dans les garnisons, les institutions militaires s’abonnent aux publications de l’Astra, les officiers deviennent beaucoup plus actifs en tant que conférenciers, mais également plus présents dans les organes directeurs de l’Association. Tous ces changements sont perceptibles dès les deux premières années après la fin de la guerre et se poursuivent tout au long de l’entre-deux-guerres. Bien que nous supposions l’existence d’un engagement personnel et la participation active de certains officiers, les deux dépendant essentiellement de leur attitude et de leur disponibilité, cette relation, une fois institutionnalisée, a des effets en cascade, grâce à l’apparition de petites bibliothèques ou de centres culturels au niveau local ou régimentaire, établissements-satellites de l’Astra. En outre, l’implication des prêtres militaires, eux aussi officiers, élargit et renforce les relations interinstitutionnelles.

L’évolution des liens entre l’Association et le corps des officiers de 1900 à 1920 est illustrative des métamorphoses que subit la société civile roumaine de Transylvanie et de Hongrie après 1918, lorsque, d’un « non ami » d’un État multiethnique (ainsi qu’elle était perçue), elle devient l’un des principaux appuis du processus de consolidation d’un autre État multiethnique. Le nouveau statut entraîne des changements importants, qui se reflètent dans l’évolution et la structure de ses membres militaires : l’intérêt accru de catégories plus larges de la classe moyenne, une relation institutionnelle privilégiée avec d’autres institutions fondamentales (l’armée, l’administration, l’Église etc.) et, enfin, la diversification et l’intensification des activités culturelles et sociales.

Notes


4. Acte privitoare la urdarea și înființarea Asociației Transilvane pentru literatură română și cultură a poporului român date în tipariu de insăși Asociația, Sibiu, Tipografia Diecesană, 1862, p. 54-62.

5. Transilvania, 1, n° 1-25, 1868, passim (la liste des membres ayant déjà réglé leur abonnement est présentée dans chaque numéro).


12. Il n’y a pas de statistique exacte concernant le nombre d’officiers roumains dans l’armée des Habsbourg, mais il est possible de faire des estimations. Selon István Déák, Mai presus de naționalism. O istorie politică și socială a corpului de ofițeri habsburgici 1848-1918, trad. Eugenia Bârlea, postface par Liviu Maior, Cluj-Napoca, Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2009, p. 214-224, en 1910, ils représentent 0,9 % des officiers actifs et 0,6 % des officiers de réserve, dans les conditions où, avant la guerre, l’armée austro-hongroise compte environ 50 000 officiers actifs et de réserve. Dans ces conditions, le nombre total des officiers roumains actifs, de réserve et à la retraite ne peut pas dépasser 500-700 personnes.

18. « Ședința a VII-a a comitetului central, ținută în 5 iulie 1912 », Transilvania, 43, no 5, septembrie-octombrie 1912, p. 476.
19. « Ședința a IV-a a comitetului central, ținută la 5 aprilie 1913 », Transilvania, 44, no 1-2, ianuarie-aprilie 1913, p. 91.
20. « Conferințele Asociațiunii », Transilvania, 42, no 5-6, septembrie-decembrie 1911, p. 775.
24. « Muzeul Asociațiunii », Transilvania, 47, no 1-6, iulie 1916, p. 79.
29. « Ședința a XII-a a comitetului central, ținută la 5 octombrie 1912 », Transilvania, 43, no 6, noiembrie-decembrie 1912, p. 562.
31. « Activitatea despărțămîntelor în cursul anului 1914. 74. Sibiu (Ioan Stroia) », Transilvania, 46, no 7-12, decembrie 1915, p. 137.
34. « Activitatea despărțămîntelor în cursul anului 1914. 64. Panciova (P. Stoica) », Transilvania, 46, no 7-12, decembrie 1915, p. 134.
35. « Din viața Asociațiunii. Cărți distribuite gratuit soldaților răniți și bolnavi », Transilvania, 47, n° 1-6, iulie 1916, p. 80-81.
36. « Cărți dăruiite din partea Asociațiunii », Transilvania, 48, n° 7-12, decembrie 1917, p. 174-175.
37. « Raportul general al comitetului central al “Asociațiunii pentru literatura română și cultura poporului român” despre lucrările îndeplinite și despre situația Asociațiunii în anul 1917 », Transilvania, 49, n° 1-12, decembrie 1918, p. 5.
38. Moga, « Astra în relațiile interinstituționale ale României », art. cit., p. 239.
40. « Raportul general al comitetului central al Asociațiunii pentru literatura română și cultura poporului român despre lucrările îndeplinite și despre situația Asociațiunii în anul 1914 », Transilvania, 46, n° 7-12, decembrie 1915, p. 103.
42. « Vasile Micula », Transilvania, 46, n° 1-6, iulie 1915, p. 84.
43. « Apel către familiile membrilor Asociațiunii căzuți pe câmpul de luptă », Transilvania, 46, n° 1-6, iulie 1915, p. 96.
44. « Raportul secționii istorico-etnografice către ședința plenară », Transilvania, 51, n° 5-9, septembrie 1920, p. 660-661.
45. Borș, Biblioteca centrală a Asociațiunii, op. cit., p. 156.
47. « Muzeul Asociațiunii », Transilvania, 50, n° 1-12, 1 decembrie 1919, p. 22.
51. « Un gest frumos », Transilvania, 51, n° 4, august 1920, p. 537.
54. Moga, « Astra în relațiile interinstituționale ale României », art. cit., p. 239.
55. « De la “Asociațiune” », Transilvania, 51, n° 12, decembrie 1920, p. 998.
56. Ibid.
57. Moga, « Astra în relațiile interinstituționale ale României », art. cit., p. 239.
Abstract

ASTRA and the Transylvanian Romanian Officers before and after the Great Union (1910–1920)

Before 1919, the involvement of the military personnel in the Romanian cultural-scientific associations in Hungary, and in particular in the ASTRA (the flagship cultural association), was limited to a small number of members, generally retired officers or officers’ spouses, and to a rather narrow range of activities. The First World War brought no changes, but beginning with 1919 their number increased steeply, reaching several hundred a year later, not only officers and their spouses, but also nCos—a professional category completely uninvolved with cultural associations before the First World War. The range of their cultural and social activities also widened significantly. Our paper follows the relations between the ASTRA and the officer corps before, during, and immediately after the war, aiming to explain the abovementioned change of attitude, whose origins seem to be linked, at first sight, with the enthusiasm generated by the Romanian political and military success of the years 1918–1919, but which we assume had deeper social roots. The findings highlight the fact that the key element in understanding the sudden interest shown by the officers in cultural associative life had to do with the development of a strong institutionalized relation between the ASTRA and the army, which started as early as December 1918 and was mediated both by the senior officers of the units garrisoned throughout Transylvania, and by enthusiastic junior officers who persuaded their comrades to join the association.

Keywords

ASTRA, officers, Transylvania, cultural associations, First World War
An Atypical Leader of the Petru Maior Student Center in Cluj

Maria Ghitta

I on I. M oţ a, a law student, became leader of the Petru Maior Student Center in Cluj under extraordinary circumstances even for an “ad hoc” or “provisional” mandate, as his certainly was. The event occurred on 30 April 1923, when the student organization was faced with an unprecedented situation: it had not one, but two leaders! One of them had been elected, but had meanwhile resigned. His name was George Alexa and his attendance at the festive event celebrated in the Aula Magna, in the presence of the heir to the throne, Prince Carol, had been a makeshift solution to the leadership crisis.¹ The other, Ion I. M oţ a, had proclaimed himself “ad-hoc chairman of the meeting” during an assembly of the Center’s members that endorsed the radicalization of the student movement.² The “old” chairman was strongly opposed to the “new” path the students had chosen to take.³ Consequently, like revolutions that devour their own children, the nationalist youth disposed, that academic year, of yet another of the Petru Maior Center’s leaders.⁴
The contentious issue was whether students should return to class (or not) after months of disputes with the university authorities and the government. Would they accept proposals that only partially met the demands they had been pressing since the very beginning of their protests or would they carry on with their strike until their sorest grievance, concerning the numerus clausus, was answered? The students chose the course of action that Moța himself preferred. He informed the rector about it two days later: “complete solidarity with the other universities,” “total abstention from classes and preventing the Jews (the Jewish students) from entering the University or any of its premises.”

However, this decision, coupled with the violent unrest that broke out at the University on the evening of 28 April (on the eve of Prince Carol’s arrival in Cluj), was not at all to the liking of the institution’s leaders, who would not budge an inch. Meeting in “plenary session” on 2 May, the professors decided “to continue classes even if the police were needed to restore order.” The Senate, meeting the next day (3 May), decided to expel the most dangerous agitators. The recently elected “ad-hoc” chairman of the Petru Maior Center, Ion I. Moța was among them. It was an entirely new and unprecedented situation. The University and the entire city of Cluj were under curfew. The provisional leader of the students was expelled. He could have shared the fate of his colleagues, as described in the students’ official publication:

*most of the seven students who had been expelled were escorted to the police station. On Friday evening, they were transported to Apahida railway station in a lorry. A train arrived and, after a sumptuous three-hour dinner with the agents, sergeants and sentries, each of the students, guarded by an agent and a police officer, was sent back to his native village or town and handed over to the local authorities, to be kept under surveillance.*

Moța was not one of those students. He remained in Cluj, sheltered by “some friends.” Quite a stormy debut as the Student Center’s chairman!

Between the day of the “election” and the day of his expulsion, Moța made time for a quick committee meeting, which he convened at his home. He informed his colleagues that “in yesterday’s plenary session” he had been elected “ad-hoc chairman of the ongoing meeting only,” “so, without further delay, we must proceed to the election of the new chairman.” However, there was neither time nor room for that. The situation was far from calm, and in the upcoming months, despite the holiday, the leaders of the committee of the Petru Maior Center had very busy agendas.

The dormitories were closed down on 15 May because the Senate no longer wanted to “saddle the public with the burden of bearing the maintenance
costs for those who, despite all the advice given to them, had continued for six months to receive accommodation without fulfilling any of their obligations” as students. A petition submitted by the Student Center, requesting that this measure be rescinded, was dismissed: it was considered “unwarranted,” “on account that it was signed by a person who does not have the status of a student.”

In other words, it was deemed that someone who was no longer a student could not act as a representative of the Student Center. Without any name being mentioned, it was clear that the reference was to the “ad hoc” elected chairman. The message, in any case, reached its intended addressee. Over the next period, until the beginning of September, Moța no longer signed any petition to the university administration, precisely to avoid rendering it null and void. Such requests were henceforth signed by the other two committee members, Pascu (usually with the phrase “on the chairman’s behalf”) and Ionescu (secretary-general of the Center). Emil Pascu was chairman of the Student Association of the Faculty of Law. By signing the petitions in this fashion, he showed that he had no intention of usurping Moța’s leadership. The latter’s authority was not recognized by the university officials, but that was not the case within the student organization. In other circumstances, for instance, in his rich correspondence with third parties, Moța had no qualms to introduce himself as chairman of the Center, having quickly relinquished his more tentative self-descriptions as “ad-hoc chairman of the ongoing meeting only” and as “provisional chairman,” a sign that he was feeling very comfortable with his role. He had no second thoughts.
that he might be interfering with the democratic process (the need for elections) and was firmly committed to the revolutionary ideals (the need for action).

Moța did, however, make an exception, in that he put his signature on a document submitted to the rector. He wrote to him to dismiss the rumor that the attack on the rector’s home (gunshots had been fired) had been perpetrated by students. He “strongly condemned” such acts, which “could only have been committed by individuals who did not act in the students’ best interests and simply wished to compromise them.”16 If, however, it turned out that students had been involved in the attack, the Committee would exclude them from the student association.

The violent episode that took place outside the home of Rector Iacob Iacobovici on the evening of 22 May shows how badly things had deteriorated in the few months since the conflict broke out. The unrest, which had clear anti-Semitic undertones (Jews should only dissect Jewish cadavers, the *numerus clausus*) and was accompanied by numerous social demands (dormitories, canteens, laboratories, books in Romanian), had paralyzed the entire academic year at the new Romanian university, severely undermining the famous solidarity between students and professors. The university authority was preparing to put an end to that situation in which an entire academic year had been wasted. “As for the total waste of an academic year at a time when Romania is facing a lack of people with higher levels of education, it seems to us that this very much resembles the situation of a ploughman losing whole bushels of wheat he has sown in the field . . . Thanks to this precious sacrifice, the harvest of tomorrow may bring a bountiful reward.”17 According to the new chairman of the Petru Maior Center, that was the very point of sacrificing an academic year. As for the harvest that sprung from the seeds sown back then, he was not mistaken. It’s just that this had less and less to do with education, and more and more with something else that was looming on the horizon: the dawn of a new nationalism. A radical nationalism, as Moța himself called it, in which the enemies were to be ruthlessly identified and treated, regardless of whether they came from outside or inside the country: “Kikes, Hungarian tycoons, Romanians with a rotten heart.”18

Under these circumstances, the activity of the Petru Maior Center neither subsided, nor ceased despite the upcoming holiday. On 23 May, having gathered for a meeting on “Mr. Moța’s premises”19 (that is, at his house), the members of the committee learned the news brought by the chairman following his delegation to Bucharest. The objectives of the “summer battles” and the “strategy for the autumn” were set. Nothing was to be shut down, nothing was to be suspended during the long summer holidays. The fight would continue. Two new projects were brought to the attention of the comrades. One of them concerned the “Directions and Principles of National Culture,” an organization
with an uncertain status at that point, which was to develop in the territory (counties, villages) and help underprivileged students to pursue their studies. It also envisaged a “Suprauniversity Council,” composed of professors who “will openly join us in our fight against the Jews.” For now, it was a dim foreshadowing of their future political plans, but it would materialize before long, albeit under a different name. The other work topic proposed by Moșa concerned a closer, more pressing issue, already known to the student body: a congress in August. Its venue was not yet specified, but over the next few weeks, arrangements were made to organize it in Cluj, even though the previous one had also been held there, or perhaps for that very reason. The university center in Cluj had organized the first Student Congress in Romania in the autumn of 1920 and it was there that the new student movement emerged two years later. The goals of the impending Congress had not yet been defined, but “a commission consisting of Messrs. Pascu, Mocanu, Vernichescu, and Moșa” was to determine “its thematic structure.”

Only during the next committee meeting, held on 10 July, could a date for the Congress (20 August) and a well-defined topic be set. Moșa came up with the following synopsis: protests against the new regulations; avoiding to make a commitment as regards the autumn semester; showing the doctrinal positions of our movement; never giving up on the *numerus clausus*; bring up material and political issues; proposing a unitary organization for all the students in the country; discussing every aspect of the Jewish question. An almost complete political platform, with a new priority at the top of the agenda: the rejection of the Operational Regulations, which no longer tolerated the “national struggle,” admitting only “sports, scientific and cultural activities within the university.”

The new topics and old failures fueled the juvenile struggle waged by these students and, with utmost intensity, by their self-proclaimed leader, Ion I. Moșa. Preparations for the congress that was to be held in Cluj drove him into a frenzy, almost to the point of paroxysm. He wrote letters across the continent, to universities in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Rome, Oxford, etc., asking for details about their internal regulations, “in order to prepare a comparative study between those European regulations and the new Romanian regulations.” He sent requests to institutions that could have helped him organize the congress and whose support he needed: the National Theatre, railways, banks, the City Hall, the headquarters of the Cluj Garrison, a stamp factory, which he asked “to make us a stamp with the text ‘The Central Bureau for Organizing the General Student Congress, Cluj 1923’.” As he informed his colleague in Bucharest (“Dear Râpeanu, the Delegation of all the centers—except for yours—has agreed to hold the Congress on 20 August”), that the Central Bureau “will prepare everything.” It would be tasked
to make lists of the students who had confirmed their participation in the Congress, obtain funds from the Ministry, discounted ticket fares from the Romanian Railways, open the dormitories, book the Hall of the National Theatre in Cluj and other matters that will be brought to your attention by our Central Bureau. We will send, without any delay, letters to the 150 most important (Romanian) banks in the country asking for funds, so you won’t have to do this for now . . . I’ll be in Bucharest in 10 days’ time at the latest, so we’ll discuss the more pressing issues then.

(It was a way of saying to him: we’ll do everything, so all you have to do is join us.) He informed him about the important guest speakers who would participate in the public meetings (unlike those to which only student representatives would have access): Goga, Cătuneanu, Amos Frâncu, Cuza, Paulescu etc. He added that “by the time of the Congress, I will have published my book Protocolul Înțeleptilor Sionului [Protocols of the Elders of Zion].”

There was still something to do for those in Bucharest: tidy up their own backyard, because not everyone in the management structures there had reacted properly. “You will still have to settle the Nazarie & Co. issue and get your hands on the minutes of the 1920 Congress.” He also had a personal, “heartfelt” request: “for the moral preparation of the congress, in our ‘Speech,’ you will write an editorial that will sweep everyone off their feet, won’t you? I would surely write it, with great pleasure, but having run completely out of time, my hands are tied.” At long last, he admitted, for once, that he was unable to cope with the workload...

This hyperactive, involved Moța, a jack of all trades, had already insinuated himself in the activity of other student centers in the country. He “coordinated” them with a view to ensuring the success of the congress that was ostensibly to be held in Cluj, in order to further centralize the tactics and objectives of the student movement for the autumn. As he himself had stated earlier, his aim was to discuss at the congress the “proposal for a unitary organization of the students in the country.”

While he had some reservations about those in charge of the student center in

Letter to the universities of Europe, 5 July 1923, Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 5851.
Bucharest (at least towards some), he had nothing but sympathy and courtesy for the young people in Iaşi. Among them he had found quasi-identical ideas and feelings. He showed them a more personal face, confiding in them in almost lyrical terms. He talked to them not only about the organizational, decision-making role of the congress, but also about its expiatory purpose. There they could “bare our souls, rethink our attitude and if possible, restore our full solidarity.” And he went on to say that

*I am writing and speaking to you [Grigorescu] but, in fact, I’m addressing your entire leadership committee. Oh, and please tell the brothers in Iaşi that, we, the committee in Cluj, are all so anxious to save the honor of our association, the life of the movement and that of the Nation, just like our colleagues in Moldova, so tried in battles: we will not, therefore, be party to a shameful compromise. We have so far held our heads up high and untainted. We will neither bow our heads, nor stoop to any defiling attempt.*

The summer reunion “we believe would bring joy to us all, as well as other major benefits. It will be a meeting of those who, spiritually, were and are one block.” The personal acquaintance and direct relationship between those leaders was highlighted as decisive for strengthening the unity of action.

The stylistic register and ideological content of Moşta’s thinking (at that time) is also illustrated by an excerpt from a text he sent to his colleagues at the Academic Society in Berlin, which had emboldened the Student Center in Cluj. They were thanked and reassured of the brotherly love of all the students in Cluj, with the promise that we will do our duty to the very end, to the last remaining ounce of energy in our bodies and souls, so often tormented and lashed by those who should be our loving and understanding parents. We ask you, gentlemen, to receive the warm wishes of the pure-hearted and self-confident students, hopeful for the destiny of their nation. Brushing away the sweat beads gathering on their foreheads as they are relentlessly pursuing their goals, they will gaze, for a brief moment, with love at you, before setting off again for the summit, where they will find either Golgotha or victory.

Notwithstanding the style that might seem antiquated today and the rather pathetic tone, what we can see here are topics and phrases that were to become more frequent in future articles related to the ideological stance of the political movement that Moşta and his colleagues would found: duty, identification with the suffering of Christ, ordeals and repression, the failure of the older generation
of parents and professors to understand them, as well as the purity of the youth and their sacrifice for the nation.

Despite all the remarkable organizational effort, despite all the intellectual energy spent in dozens of pages of draft texts, the expected congress never took place in Cluj. Although the rector’s office had allegedly approved hosting it in the city in a letter dated 5 July 1923—a surprising fact considering the way the academic year had ended—the other authorities dismissed the idea. Instead of the envisaged student congress, a congress of the delegates was to be held in Iași, in approximately the same time frame (22–25 August). “Ten members of the Committee” in Cluj were preparing to go to Iași, “considering that the travel expenses for a return trip, third class, would amount to 2,500 lei.” Moța was convinced that the Congress in Iași “will very successfully manage to reorganize the students.”

In spite of the complications with the authorities, who tried to prevent the occupation of the university and forced the congress participants to change their venue every single day, the meeting in Iași truly opened a few new possible pathways for the student movement. The first and most obvious contribution to the students’ “reorganization” was owed to the emergence of a strong centralizing and even authoritarian trend. “There will be only one Center in a university town, so as not to break down the power of the Romanian students.” Moreover, “the student Center cannot, under any circumstance, accept Jewish members.” As for “the centers remaining in a minority on an issue decided by the delegates’ committee, they shall have to comply with decisions taken by a majority of votes.” In other words, they were no longer entitled to their own decision in case their opinions diverged from those of the majority!

The day of 10 December 1922 (when students from all over the country showed their solidarity) became a “student holiday,” to be marked each year by “a suspension of classes and any other activities in universities.” In addition to participating in an official celebration, the students also received a festive uniform for the occasions “when the students will present themselves as a corporation”: “the Romanian national costume from each individual county.” For days “in which ordinary clothes are worn, the student badge with the letters S. C. (Christian Student), with the tricolor and a cross, is hereby declared as official.” The badge could be withdrawn from those who proved to be unworthy of wearing it. The student movement was celebrating itself and its members could now identify themselves by external, recognizable signs; they clearly formed a distinct body.

Compared to such novelties, the rejection of the new university regulations, the resumption of passive resistance in the autumn (refusal to attend classes, take exams and turn in papers) and the request for legislation to be passed on the nu-
merus clausus were already predictable, familiar things. To ensure the efficiency of the movement’s leadership, as many delegates’ congresses as possible were to be held. Delegates had gradually been turning into a decision-making superstructure that guided and led the national student movement. A list of the signatories of the delegates’ release\textsuperscript{39} gives us a glimpse into the foundations on which the future organization known as the Legion of the Archangel Michael was to be built. Still, there were a few more steps to go before they would get there.

Having returned from Iaşi, Moţa gave a “brief overview” of what had been discussed there before his colleagues in the committee of the Petru Maior Center. Telling them that they would find more details in the communiqué that would be published in the newspapers, he also revealed to them information that they would otherwise have been unable to come across. For example, the information, shrouded in secrecy, that “it has been decided that we should actively fight against the government and all our enemies.”\textsuperscript{40} On that occasion, Moţa made a rather suspicious statement: “Our committee will lead the students for as long as they obey and carry out our orders.” The continuing phrase—“which they themselves dictated to us”—was crossed out, corrected by a hand other than the one that had taken down the minutes, and replaced with: “in order for the mandate entrusted to us to succeed.” The intervention suggests that the person who had read the document felt that something was off. Indeed, the representatives of the students (at least some of them!) tended to turn into their commanders, expecting total obedience from them. A quasi-identical phrasing can be found at the beginning of a long list of names (dated Cluj, 30 April 1923, the day of Moţa’s self-appointment as leader: “We, the undersigned students, members of the Petru Maior Student Center in Cluj, hereby pledge our word that we will obey at any time and in any circumstance the decisions reached by the Petru Maior Student Center in Cluj and that we will follow them to the letter, and that we are in solidarity with all the students in the country” (emphasis ours).\textsuperscript{41} Slowly but surely, the democratic logic was being unfairly dislodged by an authoritarian one. However, this was not a safe bet and some members dared to confront the leader, as shown by an incident recorded at the same meeting on 1 September.

Speaking about the need to collaborate with a local (Cluj) newspaper in order to secure a few columns that would advocate the student cause, Ionescu, secretary-general of the Center, asked to be present at the discussion with the director of that publication. Moreover, having accurately remembered that the students of Cluj used to have their own gazette, he asked: “What about the Dacia Nouă newspaper? Mr. Moţa answers that the whole matter of the newspaper is recorded in the archives.”\textsuperscript{42} Still, Ionescu’s curiosity did not stop there, because he wanted to find out what had happened with the postcards issued by the Center or with the brochure entitled “The Demographic Situation of Ro-
mania,” all marketed “by students through the Center.” Moță answered, just as
evasively as before, that he was the manager of those funds and that some money
(10,000–15,000 lei) was still to be collected from the students.

The timing was remarkable. Ionescu pointed out that Moță was bound by a
custom that had survived in the Center: namely, the chairman himself could be
held accountable. He also shed light on a different side of Moță’s personality: his
entrepreneurial talent. As he had already demonstrated, Moță could not only sac-
rifice himself for the cause, but also make money for it. Besides the organizational
and intellectual skills he had placed in the service of the Center, he also had exper-
tise, acquired in the family, in another field: the use of printing with its twofold
aims, as a source of information and as a source of income. Along with the nation-
alist and religious education that the young man had received from his father,
the Orthodox priest Ioan Moță, and which informed his own writings, he had also
inherited the skill of using images and printed words in the pursuit of an ideal.

Newspaper articles, posters, manifestos, petitions to the authorities, post-
cards, leaflets and book translations (like the famous Protocols of the Elders of
Zion) benefited from Moță’s literary talent and entrepreneurship, coupled with
an outstanding compulsion to work. This was proved by the dozens of pages he
wrote, now included in the archive of the Petru Maior Center. That he was per-
fectly aware of the twofold value of printing is made clear by his report on the
management of the series of postcards entitled “Romanians, Help!” He stated
that “this operation was well-received, I gather, because, on the one hand, these
5,000 postcards made very good propaganda for our national cause, and on the
other hand, we can see that the Center had (or will have, after all the arrears are
collected) a profit of about 12,000 lei.” D. B. Vasiliu’s leaflet had also brought
net returns of 2,010 lei. These were just two examples of the fundraising orga-
nized for the Student Center during that academic year (donations for the poor
students, for those expelled from dormitories, for the sick, etc.). An academic
year in which students, through their representatives, often portrayed them-
seas as an imperiled category, outraged, oppressed and forsaken by the careless
authorities, but helped by the more compassionate pillars of society, from uni-
versity professors to opera singers, from doctors and lawyers to bankers.

Ionescu’s interpellation was effective. Moță would thereafter regularly report
on activities that he had previously kept under strict control. But it also turned
like a boomerang on Ionescu himself. At the end of the month in which he had
asked the questions, the secretary-general would also receive a more personal
answer. In an unknown committee of three, Moță dismissed him on the grounds
of his “gossip.” Moreover, much like a sovereign, Moță rejected his defense in
the committee meeting of the Center, when Ionescu claimed that his position
as secretary-general had been taken away without cause for blame. Moță, both
prosecutor and judge at the trial, “considers Mr. Ionescu’s defense as unfounded.” A summary execution, an unforgiving leader.

At the same meeting, in late September, Moța informed his colleagues that the previous meetings of the delegates organized in Iași and Bucharest had been very effective: some of the editors of Cuvântul studențesc (The voice of the students), who were found to be “unbefitting our movement,” had been removed and there had been “purges” in the Student Committee of Bucharest. The strategy, based on meetings of delegates (decided in the August congress), had worked. On that occasion, Moța made the announcement that there was an upcoming action that would help sort things out: “the next assault we will be making this fall will bring us either victory or honorable defeat.”

The whole agitation over the summer and Moța’s mandate as chairman of the Petru Maior Center were to bear fruit. The honor and integrity of the movement, so often invoked, would be restored by a miraculous, mysterious maneuver.

A simple handwritten receipt, like the countless ones previously signed by Moța (who was both a very efficient fundraiser and a lavish spender), contained terms that suggested the use of the amount of “4,000 (four thousand) lei for a 5 (five)-member delegation to Iași and Bucharest in the interest of certain supreme goals of the national student movement. The delegation will last about 10 (ten) days—Cluj, 2 October 1923, Ion I. Moța, Chairman of the Center.”

The frequent meetings with the representatives of Iași, his vigil and meditations together with Codreanu on Rarău Mountain, had helped Moța to find a solution to the crisis. Moța phrased it as follows: “let’s end the movement on a beautiful note, by sacrificing ourselves, but also by felling all those whom we will find guilty of having betrayed the Romanian interests.”

The plot they had planned targeted ministers, rabbis, bankers, journalists; Romanian traitors and Jews, in this order. It was not carried out, because several members of the group, selected from among the students from Cluj, Iași and Bucharest, were arrested on the evening of 8 October 1923.
Declaratia,

Sub semnaturi studentilor membri ai centralului studentesc "Petru Maior" din Cluj, declaram pe entunul de onoare ca ne vom ingajama in acea moment la o serie imprinata actiunilor aduse de central studentesc "Petru Maior" din Cluj si ne vom exercita intre noi apoi cu ne solidarism in intreaga studentura din tara.

Cluj, 30 IV 1923.

Mihciu Alexander

Chiriacs V.

Lucin Tudor adret.

Dincu Octavian adret

Popescu Ioan medicina

Daimang Augustine stiinte

Sahian Ioan adret

Mihciu Petru adret

Cipri Ioan adret

Boychian Liviu stiinte

Vasile M. acad. com.

Pavel Cornel adret

Paul Paul adret

Itera C. acad. com.

Tomea I. Marin stiinte

Sertan Victor adret

Cipri Ion adret

Balbian Augustine stiinte

Manin Fibertin stiinte

Tanga Jacob

Cima Evmil adret

Roman Timotei adret

Cipri Evmil adret

Bochild Mircea stiinte

Gherasim Ioan stiinte

Mihciu Ioan adret

Chiriacs A.

Lucin Ioan adret
Together with his comrades, Moșa made the newspaper headlines, which appended to his name the prestigious title of “chairman of the Petru Maior Student Center.” His mystical-ethical crisis did not end with his incarceration at Văcărești prison. During the ensuing trial, in March 1924, he fired several shots at the man he had identified as the group’s traitor, Aurel Vernichescu, his colleague from Cluj. The battle to regain student honor had reached its final stage.

Notes

1. “ASR Prințipele Carol la Cluj,” Înființirea (Cluj), 3 May 1922, p. 3.
3. At the committee’s meeting of 26 April 1923, George Alexa handed in his resignation because he did not agree with the path chosen by some students, who wished to “join Mr. Cuza’s organizations.” He believed that “taking the fight forward would entail compromising ourselves.” Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 6011, “Proces-verbal” (26 April 1923).
4. The first chairman was Adam Popa, who resigned on 30 November 1922, a few days after the riot broke out in the dissection halls of the Faculty of Medicine. See the article “Ultimele hotărâri,” Dacia Nouă (Cluj), 23 Dec. 1922, p. 4.
10. “Having therefore been expelled and placed under police surveillance, with a view to being deported home, I found refuge at my friends’ place in Cluj,” he stated in the petition he addressed to Vice-Rector D. Călugăreanu. Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 5851, “Memoriu Dsale Domnului Prorector al Universității,” Cluj (8 September 1923).
15 See, for example, the petition requesting the rector’s approval for holding a student congress in Cluj “in the first half of August” (Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 5851, no. 144) or the two petitions, submitted on 11 July 1923, asking the rector for explanations regarding the students who had been expelled and those who, “on account of the strike,” had been unable to show proof of their class attendance to the local authorities in order to be exempted from military service (Ibidem, petitions of 11 July 1923).


17 Ion I. Moța, “Ce am câștigat până acum?,” Dacia Nouă, 10 May 1923, p. 2.


19 Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 6011, “Proces-verbal” (23 May 1923). At the end of the minutes, it was stated that the committee’s meetings would henceforth be held with that frequency, namely “on every Thursday, at 3 p.m., on Mr. Moța’s premises.”

20 Ibid.


22 Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 6011, “Proces-verbal” (23 May 1923). This was the first time Aurel Vernichescu appeared as a committee member.


24 Ibid., “Proces-verbal” (19 August 1923).


26 Ibid. (10 July 1923), no. 157/1923.

27 Ibid. Moța had been preparing for some time now the publication of the Protocols, which appeared in serial format starting with the second issue of the periodical Dacia Nouă. He signed the translation (from French) with the pen name “Neodacus.” The book did see the light of print, containing comments by Cătuneanu and Vasiliu, two of the intellectuals who supported the student movement.

28 Ibid.

29 See note 23.


31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., “Scrieșoare către Societatea Academică Română din Berlin” (10 July 1923), no. 56/1923.

33 The information appears in a letter dated 10 July 1923, addressed to Răpeanu, the representative of the students in Bucharest. See note 27.

35. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Among the signatories were Simionescu and Răpeanu from Bucharest, Moța, Vernichescu, Georgescu and Mocanu from Cluj, Zelea-Codreanu, Gârneață, Mărgineanu, Filipescu from Iași, and Tudose Popescu from Chernivtsi.
41. Ibid., Declaration and list of names (without signatures); most likely the handwriting belongs to Moța.
42. Ibid., “Proces-verbal” (1 September 1923). Moța had been an editor of *Dacia Nouă* throughout its publication period, from December 1922 to May 1923. At one point during this time, the newspaper was shut down by the authorities.
43. Ibid.
44. There is a pithy saying about young Moța, namely that he “sucked nationalism with his mother’s milk.” Eugen Weber, *Dreapta românească*, transl., introduction and notes by Achim Mihu (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1995), 61.
46. Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 5993, “Dare de seamă” (15 September 1923). Moța was very familiar with the ins and outs of the printing business. This was proved by the answer he gave to the Student Society in Timișoara, which had asked him for such postcards: “I can provide you with propaganda postcards but only under the following conditions: you should order at least 1,000 pieces . . . at 3 lei apiece (wholesale price). Still, if you only want 500 pieces, we can meet your demand, but at 4 lei apiece. If you order 2,000 pieces, you can have them at 2.5 lei apiece. Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 5851, “Dlui Președinte al Societății Studenților Școalei Politehnice Timișoara” (177/1 September 1923).
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. An expenditure list, found in such documents: coffee, cheese, hansoms, telegrams, letters, trams, tips, gasoline, kolivas, memorial services, cockades, food. Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, coll. Petru Maior, Ms. 5993, “Bilanțul contabil al Congresului de la Iași” (4 September 1923).
Abstract

Ion I. Moța: An Atypical Leader of the Petru Maior Student Center in Cluj

The paper is intended to shed some light on the personality and actions of Ion I. Moța, a law student who, amid the massive unrest that gripped Romania’s universities in the year 1923, managed to become the (unelected) leader of the Cluj student center. In this capacity, he devoted considerable energy to the efforts meant to mobilize and radicalize the students, coordinate their activities across the entire country, secure funding for the movement, and force the authorities to concede to their demands.

Keywords

Cluj University, student unrest, far-right movements in Romania, anti-Semitism, nationalism
Introduction and Theoretical Background

We present here some of the research results of an international project (2014–2015), which brought together two research teams from Romania and Austria: one from the Faculty of Geography of Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, and the other one from the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Urban and Regional Re-

The research presented in this paper for the Romanian case study was funded by the Romanian National Council of Scientific Research in Higher Education (CNCS-UEFISCDI) and the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD), as part of the bilateral research project PN-II-CT-RO-AT-2013—1 “Contemporary Trends in Regional Economy and Community Development in the Rural Area of Romania and Austria,” 2014–2015.

The authors contributed equally to this work.
search, Vienna. The aim of the project was to identify sustainable development strategies in the rural areas of both countries. The project research team reported on its results also in previous papers.1

In this study, we focus on the results of the field trips done in Romania, to Rimetea (Torockó, Eisenmarkt) (Alba County) and Viscri (Deutschweißkirch, Fehéregyháza) (Brașov County), and on the relation between successful tourism strategies and cultural assets in the form of architectural heritage protection and commodification. The hypothesis was that local identity expressed through vernacular architectural heritage was one of the main resources supporting future sustainable development in the researched settlements.

As the purpose during the field trips undertaken within the research project was to identify viable development models for rural areas in Transylvania, the original architectural elements of this region were deemed important components of the local cultural landscape, because they were durable, standing the test of time. Traditional houses and their architecture are a result of combining different geographical elements, both physical and human, and they represent unique and original local identity features. For example, harsh winters with plenty of snow lead to houses with steeped roofs, while the locally available resources lead to the use of different building materials and techniques. Therefore, traditional houses contain a brief summary of the local geography and provide the answer to many problems of sustainable development.

At the international level, researchers have approached the preservation of the past (as reflected in spatial features) within the field of the geographies of memory.2 Practices in residential historic preservation were related with nostalgia and therefore integrated within geographies of memory and past geographies,3 where memory is considered “socially constitutive, something that is both socially situated and an agent of lived experience.”4 In this theoretical framework, researchers explored historic sensibilities, subjectivities, and their relation to places, the attentiveness to what is near,5 and the “everyday aesthetic of pastness, an embodied ethics of care rather than strict adherence to historic preservation codes and guidelines.”6

The built heritage, which is a historical proof of development, conveys to both inhabitants and tourists a sense of history, a “historic enchantment,”7 reflecting the creation of places. By perceiving the landscape of settlements in light of one of their main assets (i.e., architecture), the respective landscape “is positioned within its historical, geographical and socio-cultural context.”8 The architectural heritage (mainly the houses, in our case studies) presents a meaning which is part of the collective popular memory and of the cultural identity of the place.

Therefore, our research could be partly included in the field of the geographies of memory and it also draws on an architectural geography, indicating that
“both as a practice and a product architecture is performative in the sense that it involves ongoing social practices through which space is continually shaped and inhabited,” promoting an “active and embodied engagement with the lived building.”

Moreover, besides being products of their history, these iconographic landscapes were also seen as places of “resistance to urban speculation and economic globalization.” Other studies testify about a land-use conflict in the rural area: “agriculture is no longer the sole or principal activity in many hitherto rural areas, resulting in a redefinition of rural spaces which involves multiple actors and multiple variables, ranging from agriculture to tourism, forestry, nature conservation, landscape and heritage.”

Another study underlines what is relevant for creating and understanding “collective community ownership” and “the creation of a sense of solidarity and self-worth,” advocating for aesthetic activism and community empowerment, which are all vital for a sustainable development of our research areas as viable tourist destinations, providing plenty of benefits for their residents. The beneficial influences that the aesthetic of landscape improvements have on the citizens’ cultural and artistic education have been documented. In addition, researchers also advocate the need to preserve certain “conditions under which more sustainable and locally governed rural livelihoods and landscapes might be built.”

At the European level, local development and heritage (material or immaterial) in the rural area are discussed together from diverse perspectives, among which the following two are the most common: the approach regarding tourism and the one concerning the social capital, both closely related to the notions of competitiveness and sustainability.

On the other hand, R. During points out that spatial identity is more than a commodity (the other two types being the resistance identity and the social one) and it is formed by landscape, cityscape, region and political territory and, in this context, the tangible and intangible cultural heritage is a vector of identity, it underlies peoples’ identity because heritage is imbued with value and meaning, being a proof of their creativity.

Similarly, in the European Spatial Development Perspective (1999), the originality of cultural landscapes is underlined in relation to identity and human-nature interaction: “Cultural landscapes contribute through their originality to local and regional identity and reflect the history and interaction of mankind and nature.”

In Romania, recent research on territorial identity has focused on its relation with the impact of historical factors on the shaping of a community, especially on the local folkloric identities of the peasant communities in Transylvania during the 18th and 19th centuries, on revival initiatives in certain villages, among which Viscri was a case study on several occasions, with Rimetea following
suit, on methodological insights in the framework of interethnic relationships, and also on its relation to vernacular architecture.

In the context of territorial identity, the concept of cultural landscape was explored, underlining the need to make the local as well as the general population aware of the need to preserve and capitalize on the built heritage in a sustainable manner, with a special interest in the rural area of Romania. Many of these studies indicate that the community identifies itself through its built heritage. The architecture of the local dwellings is representative for their evolution; it is geographically, historically, socially and economically structured, and thus it is proof and symbolic of a certain way of life, it is an identity marker.

Moreover, in the Strategy for the National Cultural Heritage of Romania, landscapes are defined as “the link between the history of the past and that of the present, a history of identity,” while the recommended direction for action is to make the Romanian citizens at all levels (national, regional, and local) aware of the role that this heritage has in preserving the national and local cultural identity and also social cohesion. Again, in the Sectorial Strategy for Culture and National Heritage, preserving heritage as a cultural and social value and as an identity symbol is considered one of citizens’ legitimate needs, while maintaining their cultural identity and local specificity.

From a methodological standpoint, certain studies gave evidence of the importance of using visual material and methodology, for identifying and depicting the genius loci and for preserving its genuine features, or in searching for architectural authenticity.

**Problem Statement**

**Taking into account** previously documented examples of negligence and malpractice in restoring vernacular architecture in Romania, we consider as a problem the local authorities’ bad decisions in preserving and capitalizing on the architectural heritage and cultural landscapes in general. Secondly, one of the problems we noticed in the field was the discrepancy between the protected area requirements (the protection rules recommended by various organizations) and the local people’s needs (during interviews, the locals underlined that they wanted the comfort of the present century, not of the 18th). Moreover, a major problem they mentioned was that the current agricultural practices, involving intensive exploitation, generated conflicts between the locals, who were no longer encouraged to practice the agricultural activities that led to the cultural landscapes we researched and which their villages were famous for.
Research Questions

*Place identity* is reflected by traditional architecture, as the latter is based on local needs, the availability of construction materials, and illustrative of local traditions. Traditional architecture reflects the environmental, cultural, social, economic, and historical context in which it exists (it is heavily influenced by it and thus it is an expression of the influence of climate, geomorphology and geology, economy and technology, culture and history, and of demography and social features).

Considering this, our research questions were the following: How can local architecture be a source of revenue? What is the role of the local administration and of the NGOs in promoting and protecting the built heritage/cultural landscape? What can be done in the future for Transylvanian rural development (in terms of transferring knowledge and examples of good practice to other villages)?

Purpose of the Study

By analyzing the answers to these questions, the aim of this contribution is to provide decision-makers in the public administration in Romania (at all levels) and researchers in the field of geography, history, architecture, etc. with relevant information regarding the ways of improving the sustainable protection and capitalization of the vernacular architecture of other settlements, while considering the two case studies as development models having as the main resource the architectural heritage. A secondary purpose is to make the local inhabitants (from other settlements than the researched ones, but having a similar heritage) aware of the heritage they use for their present livelihood and to support them in using it in a sustainable way, while also preserving it, for their own benefit.

Research Material and Methods

The empirical part, which took place in July 2014, is based on case study evidence and qualitative methods (observation, interviews, and focus groups). The respondents in the interviews and focus groups were the local people (entrepreneurs, farmers, public administration representatives, etc.) and representatives of associations or NGOs (from within or without the two villages).

*The research material* includes the sketches realized and photos taken by the co-author of this paper, interviews and focus group material, and relevant sci-
entific literature from the fields of geography (especially cultural geography), architecture, and history. In addition, we analyzed our field trip impressions about the development of the respective villages.

**Procedures.** An original part of our research has to do with the fact that observation on the architectural heritage was processed and interpreted using drawings and was analyzed in relation to the findings resulted from interviews and focus groups, as well as to the relevant information from the literature. Therefore, the collection and analysis of data included the methods of observation, discourse analysis, and also visual ones (for images).

**Results and Discussions**

The social and economic reality after 1989 required that many rural communities in Romania find rapid solutions for their survival. The triggering factors of development for Rimetea (Alba County) were the free movement across borders and tourism (due to the new mobility), industrial redundancy, structural changes in agriculture (and therefore the need for economic growth), the built heritage, traditions (as a result of the new interest in the endangered culture and heritage), and a need for awareness raising. The last two factors were also true for Viscri (Brașov County), as the new freedom of movement after 1989 generated the exodus of the Saxon population.

**On the Identity of Rimetea**

Rimetea (Torockó, Eisenmarkt) (Alba County) is a Transylvanian commune with two villages (Rimetea and Colţeşti/Torockószentgyörgy, with about 600 inhabitants at the 2011 census), on the eastern fringe of the Western Carpathians. The village of Rimetea has an ethnic Hungarian majority (their ancestors being Austrian miners and Szekler border guards), with an economic background in mining, being close to Cluj-Napoca (Klausenburg, Kolozsvár) and Alba Iulia (Weißenburg, Gyulafehérvár) on the main thoroughfare between these two large cities.

The impressive and beautiful villagescape exists due to the protection of the vernacular architecture, and this made Rimetea one of the best promoted villages of Transylvania. Rimetea is famous for the traditional architectural ensemble in its main square. Initiated by a founder and former vice-president of ICOMOS, the restoration of the traditional houses (more than 180) has been done under the supervision of Transylvania Trust, since 1996, through a yearly conserva-
tion grant and with a sustained financial effort of the locals themselves. Nowadays a Conservation Area, as declared by the Romanian Ministry of Culture in 2000, the village also enjoys international recognition (it received the Europa Nostra\textsuperscript{38} Medal international award even earlier, in 1999).

The landscape, with a massive mountain and beautiful cliffs in the eastern part of the village, called by the villagers Szekler’s Rock, indicates the presence of a large Szekler population. The beautiful natural landscape combined with the great cultural heritage are the pillars of the new tourist activity.

The first question to be asked is “How did the villagers manage to keep the original aspect of the houses?” and “Why does Rimetea have such a big tourist appeal?” To these questions, we received the answers below.

The discussion with the local deputy mayor offered the first details about the village and the number of protected houses—more than 180 houses are under protection from any kind of modernization. More important is the fact that the inhabitants accept these restrictions (a quite rare case). There were cases in which the lower part of the houses was covered with stone slabs, but all the wrong changes to the original design were removed. Now, the inhabitants are competing for the beauty of their homes and proudly preserve the local architecture and history. The houses themselves have become a tourist attraction and the owners have learned to promote their homes by using old painted furniture in their guesthouses. One of the locals explained how much the tourists enjoyed to hear that they had slept in a 150 years-old bed. The mining and agricultural tools are successfully used in decorating the yards. From the yards of most houses one can see the wild landscape of the mountains. In addition, the water from private wells is used for consumption, as in the past. The region is rich in limestone and that is why one finds here the best fresh water sources.

Another important element is the number of guesthouses. Rimetea has more than 60, some of them with restaurants and other facilities. Even if the guesthouses are family businesses, a part of the local workforce is employed in this tourist activity, official data indicating that more than 50% of the villagers are now employed or working in tourism. One of the most important issues related to these guesthouses are the taxes, which are collected by the county council, not by the local council. Only a little part of the taxes are given back to the local council, and this slows down the administration in implementing their projects. Fortunately, the population is not strictly dependent on tourism.

Agriculture completes the other economic activities, as each house has a small vegetable garden and some families are keeping cows and goats for milk. The milk is collected in special places and sold to cheese producers. Animal breeding is in full revival, as an old traditional activity. Guesthouses use local agricultural products and that is why agriculture and tourism support each other as clean
sources of income. More important is the fact that the village produces enough flowers to export to Hungary.

Nevertheless, the village has some problems, like demographic aging, which are threatening the fragile ethnic structure (an enclave in this part of Transylvania), and also tourism itself, which is dependent on the Hungarian tourist market.

**On the Vernacular Architectural Heritage of Rimetea**

There are several original features of the local architecture and space organization (e.g., the metal ornaments upon the housetops in the shape of a chestnut, and the multifunctional fountain placed in the middle of the village square). The fountain indicates that in the village there is a large number of animals, among which the horses are indispensable, frequently used for traction. This was a typical landscape for the 20th century in Transylvania.

Near the market, a Baroque tower rises between old trees, belonging to the Unitarian Church built in 1670 (with expansions and renovations in 1780 and 1804, as the old inscriptions on the entrance wall testify). This is sufficient to indicate the ethnic structure of the population, in which the Szeklers hold a special place. A second obvious feature is the grouping of houses depending on the owners’ social status: the first row in the western part of the market, with beautiful mountain views and rich decorations for the wealthy families (Fig. 1),

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**FIG. 1.** Typical house in Rimetea, from the 19th century

*House of a wealthy family*

(Drawing by Zoltan Maroszi)

(a) Pent roof protecting the facade; (b) Pilasters and other ornaments on the main facade; (c) Raised house on brick basement; (d) Entrance to the basement; (e) Entrance stairs; (f) Entrance ornaments; (g) Summer kitchen and other annexes; (h) Stairs to the attic; (j) Chimney; (k) Vent windows; (l) Chestnut shaped roof ornament.
and the other row, with smaller but still beautiful houses, for the middle class families (Fig. 2). The fact that all the houses are similar and date back to the 19th century indicated that there was a reconstruction of the center after the Great Fire of 1870. All the houses were rebuilt in the newly adopted style, with some elements inherited from the previous houses, but also with some new unique features.

The villagers developed a thriving economy based on mining and agriculture. A regular family had revenues from the sale of iron objects and also from agricultural produce, which greatly increased the quality of life. This is to be easily identified in the architecture of the houses, with rich ornamentations (luxury items for that period). Thus, this place became unique, with original architectural features. Traditional shutters painted in green, the iron art lanterns (m), the entrances to the basement and other details, such as the ornaments with religious and cultural significance, suggest the development of a community operating as an enclave, separated from the rest of Transylvania. To sum up, a detailed investigation of the architecture reveals strong connections with nature and other socio-economic aspects.

**Description of the Architecture (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2)**

The roof, in this typical architecture given by its shape, slopes and structure (a), is a legacy of the wooden roofs built in the 17th century, with four slopes at the base and two slopes above, which were easier to build and much cheaper. This part of the pent roof (a) was preserved on the brick houses not just for aesthetic reasons, but also in order to protect the richly decorated house facade from

![Fig. 2. Typical house in Rimetea, from the 19th century (house of a moderately wealthy family) (drawing by Zoltan Maros)  
(a) Pent roof protecting the facade; (b) Pilasters and other ornaments on the main facade; (d) Entrance to the basement; (j) Chimney; (k) Vent windows; (l) Chestnut shaped roof ornament; (m) Oil lamp.](image)
heavy precipitations. The front wall above the facade has several important functions: it provides extra support to the roof burdened with heavy roof tiles (and also with snow in the winter) and enlarges the space required for storage under the roof. Vent windows are very common \((k)\) and can be opened in summer and closed in winter. The chestnut shaped ornament of the roof \((l)\) has several symbolic meanings and it is similar to those of the church, and it indicates that the family belongs to the same confession. The chimneys are characteristic only of the 19th century houses \((j)\), while the characteristic entrance to the basement \((d)\) was a change brought by the miners in the area who needed easier access to the basement, for loading and unloading heavy materials. These entrances imitate the entrances to the mines and are unique features. Often, above these parts of the basement entries there are inscriptions (“Ahol szeretet, jóság + ott az Isten,” in translation, “Where there is love and kindness + there is God”). The basement is an important part of the house, fitted with small ventilation windows \((c)\), and it raises the house, so the stairs to the entrance are another characteristic feature \((e)\). The wealthy homes have on the main entrance rich ornaments and sculptures \((f)\). The ornaments of the main facade of the house \((b)\) are carved in wood and are placed directly on the masonry and covered with whitewashed plaster, creating specific patterns (a technique taken from the houses constructed with wooden beams in the 18th century and whitewashed up to the level of the windows). The main building has annexes such as the summer kitchen \((g)\).

On the Identity of Viscri

**Viscri** (Deutschweißkirch, Fehéregyháza) (Brașov County) is a small village (about 450 inhabitants), located in Southern Transylvania, in a rural remote hilly area, near Sighișoara (Schäßburg, Segesvár) city, quite close to the main road between Sighișoara and Brașov (Kronstadt, Brassó). This village is renowned in Romania for its Transylvanian Saxon architectural heritage and authentic villagescape, transformed over the last 800 years, dominated by the UNESCO listed fortified church, still preserved, although it has lost almost all its former population, and for the numerous projects that the locals initiated and implemented, often assisted by NGOs (the Mihai Eminescu Trust for the built cultural heritage and training in diverse sectors related to heritage preservation and tourism, and ADEPT Transylvania Foundation focusing on the natural environment).

Viscri is considered a model for preserving the historical built cultural heritage in the context of the “Whole Village Project” rural development strategy (there are recent studies about Viscri and the “Whole Village Project” of the Mihai Eminescu Trust in Romania).39
The results were better living conditions, diversified sources of income (the main source of income in the village is subsidized agriculture; besides, the tourist potential is exploited through soft tourism), a strong social capital and a sense of pride of the present population (since the early 1990s, mainly Roma and Romanians).

Viscri has advantages such as natural pastures and meadows, extraordinarily rich in flowers, that increase the quality of the natural landscape. It has a strong image promoted at the European level, associated with the name of Prince Charles, it has a cultural heritage unaffected by modernization, and tourists are constantly coming and contribute to the wellbeing of the village.

On the Vernacular Architectural Heritage of Viscri

On the way to Viscri, the landscape changes to mark the entry into a specific area, which, at first glance, is defined by numerous monuments, fortified churches with towers and a diverse built heritage visible from the road, such as the fortified church of Saschiz (Keisd, Szászkézd) (Fig. 3) and the abandoned fortress with the same name that commands the whole village.

**NOTE:**

**FIG 3.** The fortified church of Saschiz, on the UNESCO World Heritage List (drawing by Zoltan Marosi)

(a) The massive church;
(b) Defensive level above the main hall; (c) Buttresses and arches hiding the machicolations;
(d) The parochial house;
(e) The massive defensive tower turned into a belfry in 1677.
Although in the past Viscri and Saschiz were not part of the same administrative unit, Saschiz currently plays an important role for the entire region, being the seat of the ADEPT Transylvania Foundation, which supports and promotes the natural landscape and especially trains farmers in more efficient and less invasive agricultural techniques.

Besides Saschiz, along the road, there are historical monuments representative for the region, the attention being drawn mainly by the church towers, which, in a natural way, compete in beauty and have been the pride of local (disappeared) communities, such as those of Criț (Kreuzdorf, Szászkereszttúr), Bunești (Bodendorf, Szászbuda) and many other villages hidden among the neighboring hills.

In the case of Viscri, the challenge was preservation rather than development. Compared to Rimetea, Viscri is a special situation of development, with a great story involving the drama of a large Saxon population leaving Transylvania, their home for the last eight centuries. After the Revolution of 1989, Viscri gradually lost the population that had shaped the village in the current form. This great and sudden change drove the village to poverty. But ten years later, the return of a Saxon family gradually managed to revive the village. Prolonged poverty and remoteness led to the preservation of the cultural heritage. In 2006, Prince Charles bought a house in Viscri and brought the village to the attention of the foundation he supported, the Mihai Eminescu Trust, a moment in which a new “Golden Age” really began, characterized by tourism and landscape conservation. From an invisible village, Viscri became a gem of Transylvania, a wonderful place. Agriculture was the source of income for the majority of the Saxon families and also the source of cultural heritage development in the last centuries.

On the Fortified Church of Viscri

According to the archaeological excavations at Viscri, on the site of the present church there was once a small rectangular chapel built in white limestone by the Szekler community that originally lived there and relocated after the Saxons colonization. At the time of the colonization, the Saxons found the chapel and used it, giving the name Deutschweißkirch (weiß = white and Kirche = church) to the small village. Later, the chapel was integrated by the Saxons in a single nave Romanesque chapel.

The present church has a unique architecture, well-preserved and valorized. The evolution of the fortified church followed the same steps as the village economy. Each growth period led to the addition of new features. At first, in the 13th
century, the Romanesque chapel was taken over by a noble family which built a tower dwelling (Fig. 4.k) for their purpose and an oval mantle crenelated wall that surrounded an old cemetery. This first stage of fortification was caused by the Great Mongol Invasion (1241–1243) that devastated Transylvania and triggered the defensive reconstruction of the whole Kingdom of Hungary. After the death of the lord’s family, the chapel returned to the community and a lot of new changes were made. In the 14th century, a trapezium-plan choir was added (Fig. 4.i) to the existing building, supported by seven buttresses. The choir was surrounded by another row of buttresses, connected on their upper extremities, meant to support a defensive floor above them (like in Saschiz, Fig. 3.b). It was an architectural mistake: because of this new type of vaulting, the great outward forces caused the Gothic ceiling to crack. That is why the Gothic ceiling was replaced with a coffered ceiling in the nave. The inscription on the arch acknowledges the meticulous demolition of the defensive floor above the nave. Still, in the 14th century, the mantle wall (Fig. 4.l) was reinforced and two towers next to the main entrance were built on the southeastern side (Fig. 4.d).

The Northern Tower (Fig. 4.g) was built in 1630 by architect Johan Hartmann, as it is attested in an inscription which also features the words *In pace de bello et in bello de pace cogitas* [“In times of peace I ponder war and in times of war I ponder peace”]. In that century, the Western Tower (Fig. 4.f) was also built, which provided protected lodging for the priest in case of siege.
Finally, in the 18th century, a second outer curtain wall (Fig. 4.m) was added to the fortification, of which some parts have survived to the present day and several new cereal storage rooms have been added along the inner mantle wall, replacing the old defensive passage. Since then, the fortification has been preserved in the initial form and only repairs following some storms or because of the building’s old age have been made. The most important renovation was in the 1970s. Later, the Mihai Eminescu Trust did many renovation activities, especially of the houses in Viscri, including the church, using only traditional and local techniques.46

One of the early features of Saxon villages, which made the inhabitants feel secure, is the compact and linear way in which the houses are placed next to each other, each house separated from the next only by the massive gate, as tall as the house. In this manner, the facades of the houses form a continuous alignment, like a colorful and ornamented defensive wall. Generally, the houses have an elevated ground floor (c), because of the basement and of the hilly terrain (which is predominant in the regions populated in the past by Saxons). Therefore, the access to the main entrance is by means of the stairs (e), creating the impression of a massive building.

The entrance to the basement is from the courtyard of the house, through a reinforced wooden door (d), and there food is preserved at constant and low temperatures. The facade of the house is richly ornamented (b), often with various colorful floral motifs (Fig. 6) and with large traditional windows with wooden frames, fitted with painted wooden shutters. The facade also includes, besides the ornaments, details about the construction of the house or about the people living in that house (e.g. the year of construction, of renovation, or even the name of the owners may be written in the plaster; in some cases, inscriptions or signs which show the religious confession of the family may appear either on the facade or on the roof of the house). Some houses may have a long porch (f) which offers access to all the elongated rooms of the house; sometimes this structure is made of wood.

Almost all houses have annexes, among which the most important ones are: the summer kitchen, where there might be an oven, the summer rooms where the owners live, the stables and the massive barn (sometimes taller than the house), for the storage of hay. The bigger houses have the annexes set parallel to each other (i.e. the big house on the left and the small house on the right, separated by the massive gate). Usually, the yard is paved with rolling stones and it hosts structures that support a grape vine, which, in certain cases, may cover the whole yard, providing shade in summer. Among the most underrated elements of the Saxon house is the bench near the gate, which in the past provided people
with a place to rest after a day’s work and especially with a place for socializing, where the news spread from.

Given the aesthetic value and their utility, the Saxon houses are unique, being a strict model for organizing the household according to the people’s activities.

**Recommendations and Conclusions**

In this part of our paper, besides the conclusions, we formulated a series of recommendations (or solutions) for enabling a sustainable future development of the rural settlements researched or elsewhere (at least in Romania, but also transferrable to other rural peripheries in the European Union), based on preserving and turning to good account their built heritage.
In Romania, because of the serious damage suffered by the material and immaterial patrimony (e.g. the crafts) in the rural area, more attention should be paid to restoration and to observing authenticity during this process (a conservative approach is recommended, observing the characteristic local features).47

A first possible solution could involve promoting the architectural heritage of these communities, and where possible, introducing the area on the UNESCO World Heritage list, or obtaining another kind of recognition and thus leading to a specific form of intervention.

Secondly, the offer of these rural settlements is part of the experience economy, a theory introduced by Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore: “Goods and services are no longer enough to foster economic growth, create new jobs and maintain economic prosperity. To realize revenue growth and increased employment, the staging of experiences must be pursued as a distinct form of economic output.”48 This was discussed in detail for the “land”-type units of Romania49 and can be easily transferred to such traditional communities like Rimetea and Viscri, thus making it easier to understand their present development and envision a sustainable future one. The only significant difference that one may find between the offer of the experience economy and the one of the two villages is that of the prices, which are rather low in the latter case, something that was invoked by the local entrepreneurs as a serious hindrance (i.e. tourism is not profitable enough to ensure their livelihood). On the other hand, through their tourist offer, such settlements may represent weekend retreats for the urban population and this could be one solution for decreasing urban sprawl.

Thirdly, a successful heritage preservation is heavily influenced by local attitudes towards that and towards its benefits for their wellbeing and for tourism-based development. This attitude can be reflected in their activities and in building a strong social capital (relationships among the locals, based on a strong local identity and trust, and on the creation of co-operation networks), and it is an advantage for preserving and at the same time promoting, by way of various economic activities, their cultural and natural landscapes and heritage.

For our two researched settlements, we underline that the work of the NGOs had a significant impact on the inhabitants’ cultural and civic education (reflected in their care for preserving their built heritage and its aesthetic value) and also on their moral and psychological wellbeing. The local administration had a rather passive role.

In this historical process of place-making and of the present place-led development, the benefits of great places that such settlements offer are the following: promoting a sense of comfort (visually pleasing, generally stimulating, a sense of belonging), nurturing and defining a sense of community (sense of
pride and volunteerism, perpetuation of integrity and values, greater community organization, self-reliance—less need for public administration control), social interaction (improving sociability, more cultural exposure, interaction, drawing in a diverse population, more women, elderly people and children, encouraging community creativity), building and supporting the local economy (small-scale entrepreneurship, economic development, higher real estate values, local ownership, local value, more desirable jobs, greater tax revenue).

Rimetea and Viscri are vernacular settlements characterized by the harmony between their built heritage and the natural landscape, easily identifiable in the uniformity characterizing the architectural features of the buildings. The protected built environment of Rimetea observes a series of rules meant for the preservation of an assembly of original buildings of historic value, which have a cultural and identity function for the respective community, inhabiting a vernacular settlement. Their landscape reflects certain livelihoods and the development experienced during a series of historic periods. These villages are good examples of the quality of rural livelihoods and of their sustainability, while social capital use and entrepreneurial activities are good ways to prevent the disappearance of rural localities.

Future development—tourism, at this moment, seems to be their safest solution for development—should make it possible to defend the local traditional architecture (in close relationship with nature and the social, economic and historic conditions), which itself represents the local identity and contributes to the wellbeing of the local population. These two case studies could be considered for knowledge transfer and good practice dissemination.

Notes


4. Ibid., 325.

5. Kitson and McHugh.

6. Ibid., 487.

7. Ibid.


10. Ibid.


12. O’Rourke, 29.


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29. Ibid., 36.
31. Ibid., 74.
33. Marosi, “Representations of Local Identity.”
36. ICOMOS is a non-governmental international organization dedicated to the conservation of the world’s monuments and sites. For further info please see: http://www.icomos.org/en/
44. Agrigoroaei, Sâlâceanu, Zamora, Jiga Iliescu, and Gruia.
47. Marosi, “Redrawing Historical Illustrations”; id. “Representations of Local Identity.”

Abstract
Transylvanian Cultural Landscapes Promoting Rural Development

We focus on the results of the field trips done in Romania, to Rimetea (Torockó, Eisenmarkt) (Alba County) and Viscri (Deutschweißkirch, Fehéregyháza) (Brașov County), during an international research project, and on the relation between successful tourism strategies and cultural assets in the form of architectural heritage commodification and protection. The hypothesis of our research was that local identity expressed through vernacular architectural heritage is one of the main resources supporting future sustainable development. The empirical part is based on case study evidence and qualitative methods (observation, interviews, and focus groups). An original part of our research is that the observations on the architectural heritage were processed and interpreted using drawings and analyzed in relation to the findings resulted from interviews and focus groups. We concluded that the two case studies could be considered development models for other settlements capitalizing on vernacular architecture.

Keywords
vernacular architectural heritage, cultural landscape, local identity, rural development, Rimetea, Viscri
La formation de la communauté chiite en Belgique
Au carrefour de l’immigration, des dynamiques de conversion et des rivalités sectaires musulmanes transnationales

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Le cas de l’Islam chiite belge reflète tant les nouvelles recompositions religieuses et identitaires à l’intérieur des communautés musulmanes d’Europe, que le phénomène d’une croissance de l’influence du chiisme au niveau international, au plan religieux aussi que politique.

La structuration d’un Islam officiel en Belgique

Le cas de l’Islam belge a été l’un des meilleurs analysés, à la suite du développement de plusieurs centres académiques et groupes de travail, qui sont devenus, d’ailleurs, le noyau des études concernant l’Islam européen et qui ont été souvent sollicités afin d’élaborer des rapports et des recherches sur ce phénomène en pleine émergence. Ainsi, sans avoir l’amplitude des problèmes sociaux et sécuritaires à l’instar de la France, de la Grande Bretagne et de l’Allemagne, l’Islam belge représente, toutefois, un cas extrêmement intéressant, marqué de complexité et de plusieurs facettes. Son enjeu, plus ou moins symbolique, dérive du fait que, avec une population musulmane d’une démographie
ascendante et d’une visibilité politique grandissante, l’Islam belge se trouve juste dans l’espace où se sont groupées les institutions européennes. L’(in)succès de la conciliation de ses valeurs avec celles de la culture européenne et particulièrement avec les normes collectives élaborées au cadre du processus de la construction européenne, l’(in)capacité des États européens d’assimiler et d’intégrer une altérité religieuse, culturelle, identitaire, qui revendique le droit de la spécificité et celui de la pluralité, tout cela ont provoqué, depuis plusieurs décennies, d’innombrables questions parmi spécialistes et notamment dans les milieux politiques et décisionnels des États européens et au niveau de l’Union européenne, en tant que tel.

De nos jours, l’Islam belge, dans toutes ses formes juridico-théologiques, représente la deuxième religion en Belgique, après le christianisme. Selon une statistique de 2011, le nombre des musulmans, provenant de l’immigration ou convertis, serait d’environ 685 000, c’est-à-dire plus de 6 % de la population totale. En réalité, comme dans le reste des pays européens, ces chiffres sont provisoires, d’autant plus qu’ils ne prennent pas en considération la présence des personnes au statut illégal ou les mobilités, assez nombreuses, entre les différentes régions européennes. C’est pour cela que certains chercheurs considèrent que le nombre réel est plus grand : pour Jan Hertogen, environ 900 000 personnes peuvent être considérées comme rattachées à un statut religieux musulman, même si pas toutes s’assument la condition en tant que telle. Plus important, Bruxelles est la capitale, dans le cadre de l’UE, avec le plus grand nombre des musulmans – environ 25 %, ce qui mène, ainsi que nous l’avons déjà mentionné, à mettre en discussion le statut symbolique de la ville, et implicitement la philosophie de l’unification européenne, fondée initialement sur les raisons d’un européanisme qui puise ses origines dans l’histoire culturelle et politique de l’espace européen.

Malgré les difficultés, inévitables quand il s’agit de la situation des communautés musulmanes européennes, très hétérogènes, la Belgique est l’un des pays où l’Islam a réussi une très large accommodation avec l’espace public et une intégration dans les structures institutionnelles de l’État. La reconnaissance officielle du culte musulman dans le Royaume, par la Loi de 1971, a entraîné une série de conséquences positives, non seulement par le fait qu’elle permet une explicitation libre des normes islamiques, mais aussi parce que les instances officielles islamiques peuvent bénéficier du système des subventions et financements offerts par l’État belge. L’étatisation réalisée pendant les dernières décennies par les autorités belges, et qui résulte de la conviction d’accorder à l’Islam et aux communautés musulmanes le même statut qu’aux autres cultes reconnus, c’est donc le signe d’une politique pragmatique de la part de l’État de contrôler la situation de la gestion des structures et des comportements religieux. Il ne s’agit ici ni du
projet intégrationniste et égalitariste sur lequel se bâtit la laïcité française (et qui produit d’innombrables tensions à l’intérieur de la société française), ni du libéralisme communautariste de la Grande Bretagne où l’État cherche à conserver un rôle minimaliste, tout en permettant aux leaders religieux une très grande autorité de gestion du culte et surtout des problématiques communautaires.

Mais, d’autre part, le résultat inévitable de cette officialisation et libéralisation de l’Islam belge a été l’émergence d’une compétition acerbe entre les différentes tendances et organisations musulmanes, qui se disputent les places du culte et les institutions scolaires confessionnelles, notamment pour profiter des ressources fournies par l’État, dans la mesure où le ministère des Cultes assure les salaires de ceux qui fonctionnent dans le cadre des religions officiellement reconnues. Dans le cas de la majorité sunnite, l’Arabie saoudite a bénéficié longtemps d’une relation privilégiée avec les autorités belges, surtout par l’intermédiaire du Centre islamique et culturel de Belgique (CICB), mis en place en 1970 (fermé en 2019, à la suite de la décision prise par la Commission d’enquête parlementaire sur les attentats de Bruxelles, qui a considéré que le Centre « répandait le salafisme wahhabite »). Mais cette hégémonie exclusiviste a été fortement contestée par les autres organisations islamiques, Tabligh, les Frères Musulmans, les groupements islamiques turques ou celles en ligne chiite iranienne, qui ont essayé à s’imposer, à leur tour, comme interlocuteurs des officialités belges. Tout cela a compliqué constamment les interactions de l’État avec cette multiplicité des communautés musulmanes belges et notamment avec les difficultés de surmonter les rivalités entre celles-ci.

La fracture entre ces organisations, leurs rivalités et le fait que, parfois, elles arrivent de se soumettre à des agendas externes divergents, sont des raisons qui ont affaibli, au fil du temps, leur influence et leur image au sein de la communauté musulmane belge. Elles ont échoué dans les projets maximalistes visant la capacité de trouver des solutions efficaces aux problèmes socioéconomiques et identitaires des nouvelles générations nées et élevées en Belgique. Même si elles ont encore un rôle actif au niveau public, par leurs activités sociales et de mobilisation au niveau local ou national, par leurs prises de position par rapport aux différentes situations qui concernent la condition des musulmans en Belgique ou au niveau international, elles sont de plus en plus vues, par une part des jeunes musulmans modérés, comme manquant d’une efficacité réelle, comme étant trop dépendantes des protecteurs et des intérêts externes et trop concasses envers les autorités belges.

Cependant, après 1991, l’État belge essaye de concilier et de rassembler les différents courants musulmans et d’atténuer la forte ségrégation communautaire qui caractérisait l’immigration musulmane. Les nouvelles générations musulmanes, nées sur le territoire belge, s’identifient difficilement avec un Islam belge.
La démographie et les formes du chiisme belge


Tout comme le cas de l’Islam sunnite, une analyse du chiisme suppose une prise de conscience de la complexité doctrinale, sociologique et politique de celui-ci ; beaucoup plus que dans le cas du sunnisme, les identités et les fidélités dans le chiisme actuel se compliquent par l’existence de multiples réseaux transnationaux et trans-ethniques construits autour de chaque « source d’imitation » (marja’-e taqlid) et qui divisent la communauté chiite dans une pluralité de sous-communautés de fidèles – lesquels se retrouvent tous dans une unité qui transcende leurs identités ethniques et nationales, à travers les enseignements et les normes de la « source ».

De là, aussi, la dialectique compliquée des relations entre l’identité nationale et l’identité religieuse, laquelle se complique encore plus dans le cas des populations chiites de la diaspora, où intervient, en plus, le problème de l’intégration au sein de sociétés douées de valeurs différentes.
Actuellement, la structuration des communautés chiites en fonction des origines ethniques est inconnue, il en existe plusieurs chiffres approximatifs. La difficulté ne se limite pas au niveau sociométrique mais elle est, dans une certaine mesure, une conséquence d’un large courant, au sein de la majorité et des structures sunnites à l’intérieur de l’Islam européen, qui cherche à discréditer le poids et l’influence des chiites.7

La communauté marocaine (plus de 300 000 personnes) est la plus importante en Belgique et c’est dans son sein que se trouve, aujourd’hui, la plupart des chiites duodécimains belges, surtout à la suite d’un très large processus de conversion. La seconde communauté musulmane de Belgique est celle des Turcs (plus de 200 000 personnes). Comme dans le cas des autres communautés de la diaspora turque européenne (en Allemagne, France, Pays-Bas), il y a, en Belgique, une large expression des formes identitaires et culturelles-religieuses de l’Islam turc, depuis celles au caractère mystique aux variantes politisées. Ses formes sunnites, qui sont majoritaires, entretiennent d’étroites relations avec les structures religieuses, officielles ou pas, de la Turquie. Il existe une stratégie constante des autorités d’Ankara, cherchant à contrôler les milieux turcs d’immigration en Europe, y compris au niveau religieux, surtout par l’intermédiaire de la direction des Affaires religieuses (Diyanet). En ce qui concerne les communautés turques d’orientation chiite, celles-là sont représentées, au premier rang, par les alévis, les chiites duodécimains et les alaouites. Comme dans les autres pays européens, les alévis de Belgique représentent la communauté chiite la plus structurée institutionnellement, avec de fortes solidarités et avec un vif attachement aux valeurs religieuses et aux traditions collectives tellement spécifiques. Également, les alévis sont parmi les communautés d’immigration les plus visibles et les plus intégrés dans les sociétés hôttes. C’est, d’ailleurs, l’une des raisons qui explique l’intérêt accru que leur accordent quelques spécialistes et l’existence d’une littérature scientifique sur la situation de l’alévisme, tant en Turquie que dans la diaspora européenne.8 À leur tour, les chiites duodécimains turcs proviennent surtout des rangs des populations azéries d’Iğdır, tandis qu’il y a une petite communauté alaouite (musayyirî), de la province d’Hatay – à la frontière avec la Syrie, certains d’entre eux ayant des origines arabes. Discrets, ils ont été parfois suspectés de liasons avec le régime de Damas et, dans le contexte tendu de la crise actuelle en Syrie, ils essayent de garder un profil bas, ce qui n’a pas empêché l’intégration efficace de certains d’entre eux dans la vie sociale et même politique belge (le socialiste Nevfele Morçimen est devenu, dès 1999, le premier conseiller municipal, avec des origines turques, de Belgique.)9

La communauté iranienne est l’une des plus individualisée et actives, en croissance, son nombre étant estimé à plus de dix mille personnes.10 Beaucoup sont partis ou réfugiés durant la période postrévolutionnaire, surtout dans les années
1980, pour des raisons politiques ou même religieuses (particulièrement les baha’is) ; plus récemment, la diaspora iranienne d’Occident a surtout un caractère économique, résultant des flux migratoires des jeunes.11 Traversée par de multiples attitudes par rapport à l’État iranien et à ses politiques officielles, la communauté chiite iranienne assume son identité confessionnelle d’une manière complexe, en passant d’un chiisme plutôt intérieurisé et intellectualisé jusqu’aux formes militantes provenant du chiisme politique du Moyen-Orient. En fait, le chiisme belge commence à être structuré institutionnellement et à être de plus en plus visible et assumé du point de vue identitaire, surtout sous l’influence exercée par la diaspora iranienne et par la République islamique. En suivant l’exemple de l’activisme saoudien ou celui des institutions supranationales comme la Ligue islamique mondiale parmi les sunnites, le Téhéran et les différentes instances d’autorité chiites ont assuré la tutelle et ont appuyé, financièrement et du point de vue humain, une dynamique de réislamisation des comportements des populations chiites de la diaspora européenne – et belge. Des mosquées, husseïniyas, centres culturels, associations religieuses ont été créées, depuis les années 1980, dans une stratégie de contrôle et de gestion de l’Islam chiite belge. Téhéran a essayé de s’imposer comme interlocuteur officiel et comme protecteur des chiites du Royaume belge, auprès des autorités belges, dans une logique de rivalité avec les prétentions saoudiennes d’être reconnues comme acteur extérieur privilégié dans les problèmes concernant la situation de l’Islam belge. Le rôle des structures politiques et religieuses iraniennes est donc essentiel pour influencer les positions et comportements d’une partie importante de la communauté chiite belge tout en s’intégrant dans la stratégie générale de la République islamique d’exercer un leadership, à la fois religieux et politique, sur le chiisme international. Par contre, le nombre de chiites irakiens en Belgique est plus restreint par rapport aux iraniens : la plupart d’entre eux se dirige plutôt vers la Grande-Bretagne ou l’Allemagne. Jusqu’à 2003, il s’agissait surtout de réfugiés politiques, dans le contexte des politiques répressives baathistes anti-chiites ou sur fond d’émigration économique, la situation devenant de plus en plus difficile après 1991. À ces anciennes générations, en partie rentrées au pays après 2003, vont s’ajouter de nouveaux flux de réfugiés, qui ont fui l’Irak à cause des violences confessionnelles qui se sont succédées depuis la chute du régime de Saddam. En plus des influences exercées par ces appartenances nationales ou ethniques, qui sont un premier critère conditionnant la logique du regroupement et des solidarités chiites sur le territoire belge, les attaches envers les leaders religieux et les liens avec les réseaux transnationaux construits autour d’eux ont, à leur tour, un rôle important. L’existence de l’institution marja’iyya multiplie les centres d’autorité religieuse et, corrélativement, va structurer les fidélités des croyants dans une dimension transnationale. Les positions piétistes ou
activistes de la « source d’imitation », l’attitude envers le principe *velayat-e faqih*, l’acceptation ou non d’une influence ou tutelle iranienne, les rivalités entre les centres chiites (Najaf vs. Qom), la concurrence entre les grands ayatollahs et leurs réseaux (Ali al-Sistani, Ali Khamenei, Fadlallah, Makarem Shirazi, etc.), les connexions toujours plus étroites entre la religion et la politique dans les espaces chiites du Moyen-Orient, l’augmentation des tensions entre sunnisme et chiisme, les débats concernant la relation entre Islam et modernité sont autant de facteurs conditionnant les comportements des adeptes et des communautés chiites de Belgique et d’Europe de l’Ouest.\(^\text{12}\)

Depuis quelques décennies nous assistons à une bien plus large dissémination à l’échelle globale des thèmes doctrinaux du chiisme duodécimain, résultant des activités de propagande et prosélytisme de certains acteurs étatiques (Iran, Irak – après 2003) ou non-étatiques (Hezbollah, les associations situées dans le sillage des différents grands ayatollahs). Des chaînes de télévision par satellite comme Al-Manar et Al-Kawthar, des centaines de publications et de sites online, des mosquées et des centres religieux et culturels – font tous beaucoup plus aisé l’accès à l’Islam chiite, surtout dans les milieux musulmans européens et américains, dépourvus de pression politique et doctrinaire d’un sunnisme officiel, comme dans la majorité des États du Moyen-Orient et d’Afrique du Nord, où le chiisme est regardé avec réticence et, parfois, même rejeté avec violence (en Arabie Saoudite, Égypte, Maroc, Pakistan, Afghanistan).

**La géographie du chiisme en Belgique**

LES POPULATIONS de confession chiite se rencontrent surtout dans la région bruxelloise (Molenbeek, Schaerbeek, Bruxelles, Anderlecht) et à Anvers. Ce qu’on peut constater, dans les dernières décennies, en parallèle avec une tendance de sécularisation parmi les individus bien intégrés socialement et professionnellement, c’est également un processus de mobilisation et de résurrection des identités et des comportements confessionnels, et, simultanément, un activisme plus visible sur le plan public et au niveau institutionnel. Même si, numériquement, le nombre de chiites n’est pas très grand, il y a parmi eux une dynamique très mobilisatrice et une stratégie de *da’wa*, de diffusion des thèmes et des valeurs chiites parmi les autres musulmans et même parmi les autres confessions, et de leur attraction vers les modèles existentiels et spirituels développés par les traditions chiites. Ici se trouve, en fait, l’un des éléments les plus caractéristiques du chiisme belge : sa tendance de devenir un hub au niveau européen, de faciliter l’émergence de certaines structures associatives et des structures informelles d’adeptes, qui assomment visiblement l’éthos et les
symboles chiites et participent ainsi à leur promotion, surtout dans les milieux virtuels, mais aussi dans les espaces sociaux. Il existe déjà une tendance visible de migration, au niveau européen et international, vers Bruxelles ou vers d’autres villes belges, justement comme conséquence des interactions transnationales qui se développent entre adeptes et à la suite de l’image de plus en plus visible de la Belgique comme espace qui facilite la construction d’un communautarisme sur des critères confessionnels.13 Évidemment, cette tendance est facilitée justement par la politique religieuse si flexible des autorités régionales et fédérales belges, par le soutien accordé par l’État. Ainsi, le nombre de mosquées, de centres culturels, d’associations, et de groupes chiites, est relativement important, même si tout cela reflète l’extrême hétérogénéité et même les tensions à l’intérieur des populations de confession chiite.

En général, on peut observer un regroupement surtout sur la base des considérations nationales ou ethniques, mais la dimension transnationale structurelle du chiisme fait en sorte que ces critères sont de plus en plus dilués et la logique des appartenances ethno-confessionnelles devient seconde par rapport aux solidarités offertes par l’attachement au même marja’ (source suprême d’autorité religieuse) ou face aux différentes positions théologiques, politiques, etc.

chiites d’origine turque.16 Dans la région flamande, la principale mosquée – et centre religieux – chiite est *al-Zahra*, à Anvers. Toutes sont dotées de bibliothèques, de centres ou associations culturelles et de charité, en y déployant des activités de prosélytisme, de catéchisation, de soutenance des solidarités et des identités collectives parmi les fidèles chiites. Enfin, il faut aussi évoquer le Centre culturel islamique chiite Ahlou Al-Bayt, à Bruxelles (Laeken), filiale du réseau international de l’organisation Ahl al-Bayt, ayant son siège à Téhéran.

D’autre part, la communauté alévie possède ses propres lieux de culte et associations, étant caractérisée par un activisme et une visibilité assez forte, doublées par une traditionnelle propension vers une intégration efficace dans la société belge – comme d’ailleurs dans tous les autres pays européens. Les structures les plus connues sont, dans la région bruxelloise, le Centre culturel turc pour le respect de la personne humaine – Erenler, fondé en 1994, et le Centre socioculturel alévi de Bruxelles ; à Charleroi se trouve le Centre culturel alévi de Charleroi, à Anvers – Alevietische Kultureel Centrum Antwerpen, à Liège – Foyer culturel alévi de Liège, dans la province de Limburg – Samenwerking Limburgse Alévieten. Depuis 2003, une structure collective au niveau national a été créée pour grouper toutes ces associations, et dont le siège est actuellement à Bruxelles : Fédération unions des Alévis en Belgique.17

Un cas à part, qui reflète les représentations plus politisées et les ambitions militantes d’un segment des musulmans de Belgique, pas exclusivement des chiites, est celui du parti Islam, fondé en 2012 par Redouane Ahrouch, Marocain très visible et très actif dans les milieux chiites de Bruxelles dès le début des années 1990. Le parti s’assume une dimension islamique explicite et un message maximaliste, plaçant pour un plus grand respect, à l’intérieur de la société belge, des valeurs et des normes de la population musulmane et même formulant l’idée d’une implantation de la *Shari’a* en Belgique.18 Considérés comme étant proches ou même dans le sillage de Téhéran, les leaders du parti ont participé aux élections communales et provinciales de 2012, en y gagnant deux places. Pendant les élections fédérales et régionales de 2014, les candidats du parti, qui ont participé sur les listes de Bruxelles et de Liège, ont toutefois ressenti un échec cuisant, avec seulement 1,7 %, signe d’une très faible disponibilité de l’électorat musulman à s’identifier avec un programme politique et avec un parti qui suscitent de nombreux doutes. Toutefois, le parti a continué de nourrir des ambitions politiques et, pour les élections communales de 2018, il a annoncé son intention d’avoir des candidats tant pour les communes de Bruxelles mais aussi pour les autres communes, en dehors de la capitale, où se trouvent des communautés musulmanes.19 Mais les résultats des élections du 14 octobre 2018 ont confirmé, encore une fois, le manque d’un support réel au sein de la population musulmane, surtout dans un contexte interne très tendu à la suite des vagues d’attentats terro-
ristes d’inspiration islamiste qui ont traversé le royaume depuis 2016 : aucun candidat du parti n’a réussi d’entrer dans les conseils communaux.

Le phénomène des conversions

Ce que confère au chiisme belge une spécificité tout à fait à part, c’est une tendance très visible et consistante dans les dernières années, de conversion au chiisme parmi les populations sunnites ou chrétiennes du royaume belge. Il s’agit ici surtout de membres de la communauté marocaine : selon les différentes sources, le nombre des belgo-marocains chiites en Belgique se situe entre 5 000 et 10 000 fidèles. Cette dynamique, très visible et surtout presque scandaleuse pour la majorité sunnite, a suscité un plus grand intérêt, scientifique et notamment médiatique. Elle reflète, en fait, le processus d’une pénétration du chiisme dans les pays de l’Afrique du Nord, comme le Maroc, l’Algérie, l’Égypte ; pour certains, cette réorientation correspond soit à des retrouvailles identitaires, par rapport à un sunnisme de plus en plus rigide et appauvri de son potentiel spirituel, soit à un retour vers l’héritage chiite et ismaïlien médiéval du Maghreb.

Après les années 1980, l’impact mondial de la révolution iranienne et la figure charismatique de l’ayatollah Khomeini, qui a offert une dimension islamique aux vieux thèmes gauchistes concernant la justice et l’équité sociale, ont contribué significativement à l’augmentation de l’intérêt pour le chiisme, surtout dans les rangs des nouvelles générations de militants et intellectuels musulmans de la diaspora européenne et même parmi les non-musulmans, qui manifestent une fascination pour le discours contestataire iranien, qui combine l’anti-occidentalisme avec l’idée d’une suprématie, aussi spirituelle que politique, de l’Islam chiite.

Comme suite, les premiers noyaux de nouveaux convertis au chiisme sont apparus même dans la huitième décennie, dans le rang de certains belgo-marocains qui sont entré en contact avec des membres de l’immigration iranienne et avec des imams chiites envoyés par Téhéran pour garder le contrôle, religieux et politique, sur la diaspora iranienne européenne. Des influences seront exercées ensuite par des membres de la communauté chiite irakienne, refugiés en Belgique, pendant la neuvième décennie, dans le contexte des répressions anti-chiites du régime de Saddam Hussein, qui ont apporté avec eux une littérature de langue arabe et une histoire intellectuelle et militante, traversée par des personnalités prestigieuses du point de vue religieux et politique, dont le martyre et modèle exemplaire, de lutte contre la tyrannie du régime laïque de Bagdad, ont trouvé une résonnance importante dans les rangs de certains membres de
la communauté arabe de Bruxelles, en premier des Marocains. Enfin, à partir des années 2000, le Hezbollah et son leader, Hassan Nasrallah, ont gagné une audience internationale grandissante, y compris dans les rangs des populations sunnites, par le fait qu’ils s’hypostasient de plus en plus, dans le contexte d’un désistement des États arabes et d’un mouvement palestinien devenu bien plus inefficace, comme la seule structure disposée et capable d’affronter Israël.

Les conversions au chiisme, même si influencées significativement par ces dynamiques religieuses et politiques externes, sont tout de même l’expression des recherches intérieures de certains nouveaux modèles identitaires et religieux, dans le rang de ceux qui ne se retrouvent pas dans la tradition sunnite (ou chrétienne) et qui en souffrent, dans la façon classique des milieux d’immigration, les processus de déculturation et les crises identitaires emmenées par le contact avec les valeurs et la société occidentale. Dans son analyse faite au phénomène des conversions à l’intérieur de la migration marocaine, Iman Lechar parle d’un processus d’« authentification », c’est-à-dire d’une coupure d’une ancienne identité religieuse, considérée comme démunie de consistance sacrée, et l’assomption d’un nouveau corpus d’enseignements, normes et comportements considérés comme véridiques, authentiques. Ce besoin de sens, existentiel, spirituel, éthique et même politique est trouvé dans une tradition chiite, extrêmement riche et qui, hormis le fait qu’elle se fonde fondamentalement sur l’idée de la préservation de l’authentique orthodoxie islamique, fait constamment renvoi à sa longue histoire de résistance et de martyr face à un Islam sunnite, duquel la sépare une séculière dispute théologique et politique. « L’authenticité » réside donc à retrouver un Islam considéré comme celui qui hérite le message spirituel de la révélation coranique et qui se fonde sur la dévotion envers la famille du Prophète (Ahl al-Bayt), c’est-à-dire la lignée de ses descendants, les imams, les seuls à être considérés comme des dirigeants spirituels et politiques légitimes.

Les conversions ne sont spécifiques pas seulement à l’immigration marocaine mais aussi à d’autres catégories de la population belge, les musulmans sunnites, tout d’abord, mais également des anciens chrétiens. Tous ne sont pas issus de l’immigration, car certains d’entre eux sont des citoyens d’origine belge. Il y a, depuis quelques décennies, une certaine fascination pour le chiisme, tant pour ses aspects spirituels et philosophiques que pour une certaine prédisposition contestataire, militante, révolutionnaire, engendrée, au fil des années, par les dynamiques idéologiques et politiques en Iran, Liban, Irak et, plus récemment, en Syrie. Le phénomène des conversions au chiisme, tant parmi ceux qui viennent d’autres branches de l’Islam que surtout parmi ceux avec un passé non-musulman, reflète précisément ce besoin de sens et la quête spirituelle ou existentielle des individus qui ne se retrouvent plus dans leurs anciens modèles identitaires. Il touche aussi les aspects, très sensibles, concernant le statut de la femme et les manières dont le chiisme et, respectivement, le sunnisme, leurs offrent un champ d’action au niveau social et même politique – dans le cas du chiisme, contrairement aux préjuges très largement répandus, l’activisme public des femmes est beaucoup plus accepté et même stimulé par certains clercs et dirigeants religieux.

La situation de ces conversions dépasse cependant la simple dimension d’une recherche identitaire au niveau individuel : elle est de plus en plus projetée dans le contexte des rivalités géopolitiques des États et des structures qui se revoquent aux références sunnites ou chiites. Ainsi, elle prend une coloration politisée et même sécuritaire et les tensions sectaires, au niveau de tout l’espace musulman, arrivent à être transférées, par un processus d’induction tellement spécifique aux communautés musulmanes de la diaspora, à l’intérieur de l’Islam belge. C’est justement l’une des causes de la rupture des relations entre le Maroc et l’Iran, après 2009, lorsque les autorités marocaines ont accusé Téhéran de soutenir les dynamiques de conversion vers le chiisme parmi les populations du royaume chérifien mais aussi parmi les milieux marocains d’immigration – surtout en Belgique. Dans la mesure où la dynastie chérifienne s’assume également le rôle d’autorité religieuse sur ses citoyens, au nom d’un sunnisme malékite, et vu que la Constitution marocaine interdit expressément le prosélytisme, le problème des conversions a été perçu comme une menace à l’adresse des valeurs et des intérêts de l’État marocain, comme tel. La situation est compliquée par le fait que la plupart des Marocains de Belgique convertis au chiisme proviennent de la région montagneuse de Rif, dans le nord du Maroc. Or, depuis déjà longtemps, il existe de fortes tensions entre les autorités marocaines et les rifains, où se mélangent des raisons ethniques (les rifains sont très attachés à leur identité berbère) et socio-économique. En se convertissant au chiisme, les membres de la diaspora rifaine en Belgique – qui gardent encore des liaisons très étroites
avec leurs familles restées au pays, vient d’ajouter un autre élément de rupture avec le makhzen – le pouvoir royal marocain, qui se considère comme le garant de l’orthodoxie sunnite. Dans leur bras de fer idéologique et géopolitique avec l’Iran, les autorités marocaines développent une perception anxiogène envers Téhéran (mais aussi, plus récemment, envers Hezbollah), accusés de mener des actions de conversion au chiisme à l’intérieur du royaume, surtout parmi les populations berbères (et également de soutenir le front Polisario, dans le contexte des disputes sur le Sahara occidental – le sujet le plus sensible pour le Maroc contemporain). Au cours des dernières années, plusieurs interactions entre les institutions marocaines et belges, inclusivement au niveau des structures de renseignement, ont essayé de suivre de près la situation de ceux d’origine marocaine convertis au chiisme, ce qui a entraîné parfois des tensions à l’intérieur de la communauté marocaine en Belgique et aussi des interférences de la part de l’État marocain à la limite de la légalité.

Conclusions

Notre étude a essayé d’offrir une perspective générique pour faire intelligibles quelques caractéristiques générales de la situation du chiisme en Belgique, dans le contexte plus large de l’Islam belge et européen. Le cas de l’Islam chiite belge reflète, dans une mesure visible, tant les nouvelles recompositions religieuses et identitaires à l’intérieur des communautés musulmanes d’Europe, que le phénomène, beaucoup plus large, d’une croissance de l’influence du chiisme au niveau international, au plan religieux aussi que politique. L’originalité de la situation belge réside surtout dans le grand nombre de convertis marocains, un phénomène qu’on ne retrouve pas – du moins à une telle amplitude, dans le reste de pays européens avec des minorités chiites significatives (France, Grande-Bretagne, Allemagne, Pays-Bas). Comme nous l’avons vu, cela s’explique par la situation spéciale de l’Islam en Belgique, très hétérogène du point de vue sociologique et sectaire, mais aussi plus démuni d’un leadership sunnite unifié, rendent ainsi difficile une stratégie de contrôle communautaire. Par conséquent, les minorités sectaires se trouvent dans une situation de large autonomie et liberté en ce qui concerne l’assomption de leurs valeurs et références religieuses spécifiques, dans un climat public où les autorités belges manifestent une large permissivité et même indifférence face aux formes et stratégies des communautés musulmanes établies dans le Royaume.
Notes


27. Iman Lechkar, « The social and political potential of Shia Muslim Belgian women in the capital of Europe », communication présentée dans le cadre de ECPR Standing Groups, University of Lausanne, eCPG Conference, 8-10 juin 2017.


**Abstract**

The Formation of the Shi’a Community in Belgium: Between Immigration, Conversion Dynamics, and Transnational Muslim Sectarian Rivalries

The study aims to provide an analysis of Shi’a Islam in Belgium, following both its religious forms and its specific sociology. The research offers an overview of the values and the behaviors of various Shi’a communities, mapping their territorial presence and the manner in which they integrate the Islamic organizations and the Belgian public system. A special attention is paid to the phenomenon of conversion to Shiism among the Moroccan diaspora in Belgium, one of the most specific elements of Belgian and European Islam. The analysis is mainly placed in the general context of religious and geopolitical rivalries between the great Sunni and Shi’a state and non-state actors—primarily Morocco and Iran.

**Keywords**

Shi’a, Belgium, Islam, Europe, conversion, sectarianism
Laură Mesina
Uitarea Romei: Studii de arheologie a imaginarului
(Rome’s sinking into oblivion: Studies on the archaeology of the imaginary)
Iaşi: Institutul European, Academica 203, Litere, 2015

Laura Mesina is a doctor in philology and a member of the teaching staff at the Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest. Since 2001 she has been working as a scientific expert and a researcher at the Center for Excellence in the Study of Images (CESI), as project director or member within interdisciplinary teams. She is a corporate member of the Accademia di Romania in Rome. She is a published author of books, scholarly studies and articles both in Romania and abroad, in the field of philology, history and theory of images and of the imaginary.

From a structural viewpoint, the book comprises four main chapters, and, apart from the first chapter, the other ones also have subchapters. However, let us first observe that, although in most papers the photographic support is published at the end, or possibly spread throughout the paper, as an auxiliary method of emphasizing contextual assertions, Laura Mesina proposes another way of presenting photographs—at the beginning of the book, even before the introduction which could let the reader know the motivation behind the topic.

Starting with the title of the volume, Rome’s Sinking into Oblivion, we see that there is more than just a symbolic antithesis between the general title and the almost forty photos included by the author and illustrating fragments of Rome’s history, in general, from the legacy of the Eternal City to that of the “New Rome,” Constantinople, and finally to the different frescos on Romanian territories—those that also attest to Rome’s legacy. Therefore, Laura Mesina sends a powerful message through the photographic sets—that of not consigning Rome to oblivion!

In the introduction (pp. 47–54), the author makes a short overview of the history of Rome’s evolution, showing that the incipit of the “New Rome” (Constantinople)—in 330 a.d., when the Emperor Constantine I inaugurated the new imperial capital—was somehow also the end of the Eternal City, which would later be conquered by migrants, in 410. Laura Mesina writes that the emperor was forgetting about Rome, although the emperor’s forgetfulness should be ascribed to Constantine I’s political military strategies of renewing the empire by moving the administrative center. However, that “forgetfulness” led to the Roman Empire’s demise and, at the same time, to disorder in the political axis mundi. Moving on from the historical aspect of the events mentioned, the authors asserts that, by applying the “method proposed by Michel Foucault,” she is trying to bring forward the imaginary of the empire’s central power—the power of the emperor. We notice that the method is compared, more than just symbolically, to “an archaeology of the imaginary.” Therefore, the central topic studied here is the imaginary.
The first chapter (pp. 55–85) has no subchapters, in contrast to the others; however, it does present another peculiarity—it is structured in the form of a comprehensive answer that Laura Mesina gives to the question “Is an archaeology of the imaginary possible?” The question is the chapter’s title itself.

The second chapter, “Semantics and Ritual: From kolóssos to imaginē” (pp. 87–160), is rather substantial and it is made of three subchapters. Its substance comes not necessarily from its structure, but mainly from the quantity and quality of the information. As such, this chapter offers a historical linguistic itinerary of the ancient imaginary, presenting the transfer from the Greek kolóssos (the double, a material form of the abstract body—the materiality of the statue or of the stone bust) to the Latin imaginēs (the significance given by the Romans to the ancestors’ wax masks, either created to faithfully resemble their real faces, or created according to the community’s belief that their ancestors looked a certain way)—all filtered through memory.

The third chapter, “Greek Thought, about the Political and the Image” (pp. 161–194), is divided into two subchapters. As the title suggests, within the chapter there are various elements of political theory pertaining to Greek philosophy because, according to the author, political thought is a central topic both in the process of imagination, and in that of the symbolic representation of reality. Unlike the first subchapter, the second one is shorter, but much more dynamic, if we can call it that, in the way ideas are presented; the subchapter itself is suggestively entitled “Controversies of the image.”

The last chapter, “The Imaginary of the Byzantine Christian Power” (pp. 195–256) is, from a structural aspect, the longest, and is made of four subchapters. Unlike the preceding one, which proposed an analysis of the ancient philosophical imaginary, this chapter is focused on presenting Constantinopolitan power, mainly the imaginary of Byzantine Christian power. As such, in the first subchapter we are presented with the philosophical evolution of the image of the divine, from its ancient image to the basileus. The second subchapter also focuses on the basileus, but the analysis is into the imaginary of the autocrat’s Christian power, the one who held both the imperium and the sacerdotium—the two most important powers. We can observe a difference in approach between the first two subchapters and the last two; if in the first part the philosophical discussion focused on the imaginary of the Constantinopolitan emperor, in the last part the author analyses the two terms which may not be known to the majority of the readers of this complex work—we’re talking about oikonomia (the ensemble of means of reaching functional harmony and organic finality) and hesychasm.

As a consequence, Laura Mesina’s book is a complex exegesis approaching the imaginary of the empire’s central power in a historical philosophical perspective, be it of the pagan empire—the Roman Empire, or the Christian one—the Constantinopolitan Empire. Although the work is not extensive, it is however challenging, due to its subject and especially to the chosen lexicon, the author employing a professional language which, from the very beginning, makes a “natural” selection among the audience; those who want to read the work will notice a high register in the presentation of ideas, which differentiates the work from the others in the field of cultural history.

Robert-Marius Mihalache
Laura Mesina

Imaginariul medieval: Forme și teorii
(The medieval imaginary: Forms and theories)
Iași: Institutul European, Academica 204, Literă, 2015

Laura Mesina is a member of the academic staff at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bucharest, and in this role she has published books, studies and scholarly articles both in Romania and abroad, in the fields of philology, history, and the theory of images and of the imaginary.

At first glance, we notice that the present volume is, in fact, a continuation of the topic approached in the previous book, entitled Uitarea Romei: Studii de arheologie a imaginariului (Rome’s sinking into oblivion: Studies on the archaeology of the imaginary). We notice that the imaginary was and remains the axis around which the texts are structured. Nonetheless, there is a difference between the two works; the first approached the imaginary of the Roman Empire’s central power from a philosophical viewpoint, while the second book approaches the medieval imaginary, as shown in the general title. Therefore, the main difference between Laura Mesina’s two exegeses is the analyzed historical period.

In Rome’s Sinking into Oblivion, the author compared the working method with an “archaeology of the imaginary,” while in The Medieval Imaginary, Laura Mesina “dug up” information by using an important object in our everyday life—the mirror—and proposed the reflection technique as a method of storytelling. Thus, besides the different periods analyzed, the working method is the second difference between Laura Mesina’s two books.

The volume entitled The Medieval Imaginary is structured into four main chapters, of different lengths. The introduction (pp. 7–19) presents the author’s motivation for choosing the mirror (speculum) as the stylistic device employed in expressing ideas.

Following the “path within the mirror” we get to the first chapter of the paper (pp. 21–76), where we notice some reference points related to the modern theories on the medieval imaginary. It is a sizable chapter both in terms of its length—it consists of four subchapters—and in terms of the information contained.

The second chapter (pp. 77–97) is shorter than the previous one; some elements for a new reading of the medieval imaginary are presented here. If the titles of the first chapter contained the noun speculum (mirror), in a simple form, the second chapter takes up the metaphor in the title, under the form of speculum speculorum. Laura Mesina asserts that speculum speculorum—the image reflected by one mirror into another mirror—emphasizes here the distance between the interpretation constructed in connection to the imaginary and the known theories.

The third chapter (pp. 99–186) is the vastest from the viewpoint of the structure, containing eight subchapters. This chapter marks the passage from the general framework of the medieval imaginary towards the particular, concrete one about the medieval imaginary in the Romanian Principalities. There’s a selection of texts reflecting the Romanian medieval imaginary, beginning with the paradoxes of the establishment of the Romanian medieval states, continuing with the imaginary surrounding the prince, either founder of the state or crusader, the one who will eventually get from the throne to the “codes of vassalage.” At the same time, the texts also
reflect the imaginary of medieval everyday life, from daily domestic existence to the grave, as a chronotopic imaginary. We see this chapter as having a double role: first of all, an invitation to reflect, to “mirror” the Romanian medieval imaginary through an objective selection of the texts that capture the historical evolution of the region; on the other hand, the conglomerate of texts certainly constitute a historiography of the topic.

The fourth and last chapter (pp. 187–199) has the most appealing title: “The Hall of Mirrors: The Way out of Medievalism and the Paradoxes of the Imaginary.” From the reader’s perspective, we notice a pleasant contradiction between the low number of pages and the complexity of the ideas submitted for analysis. In fact, the analysis in the last chapter includes all the “mirrors” used by the author in the other chapters—speculum, speculum speculorum, speculum mundi, to the final “hall of mirrors.”

Laura Mesina’s book approaches once again the imaginary under a historical philosophical aspect—the medieval one. The working method that she proposes in the book—the reflection on texts with the help of the “mirror”—offers at the same time a new perspective on the Romanian medieval imaginary. Therefore, the work opens up various horizons of research not only for historians, but also for philologists, philosophers, and generally for all those interested in the mirage of the imaginary.

**ROBERT-MARIUS MIHALACHE**

**DIANA MARIA DĂIAN**

**Activitatea misionară ofensivă a ordinelor catolice în Transilvania secolului al XVII-lea în contextul Reconquistei catolice post-tridentine: Perspective asupra ordinului franciscan în Principatul calvin (1604–1690)**

(The missionary offensive of the Catholic orders in seventeenth-century Transylvania in the context of the post-Tridentine Catholic Reconquista: Perspectives on the Franciscan order in the Calvinist Principality, 1604–1690)

Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018

**ALTHOUGH THE** Catholic orders were banished from Transylvania (more or less violently) in the third quarter of the 16th century and they were officially not allowed to return until the end of the next century, these orders, especially two of them, the Jesuit and the Franciscan order, were present in the principality and had an impressive activity.

The Jesuits arrived in Transylvania in 1579, responding to the call of Stephen Báthory, king of Poland and prince of Transylvania. The same year they opened their school at Cluj-Mănăștur (Kolozs-Monostor), which, two years later, was moved to the city of Cluj (Klausenburg, Kolozsvár) and became the first university of the country (many claim that the school never reached university level). Although the Jesuit activity was interrupted several times (even violently), they continued their missionary activity throughout the 17th century. The Jesuit activity in Transylvania is well known, as has been the center of attention for several prestigious scholars: Ioan-Aurel Pop, Paul Shore or Júlia Varga.
The Franciscan presence, however, although very impressive (they managed to stay in the country without interruption), is less researched. This e-book written by Diana Maria Dâian (which is, in fact, an extended version of her doctoral thesis), tries to fill this gap.

The book is composed of nine chapters, a sizeable bibliography and several annexes. In the introductory chapter, the author presents some conceptual clarifications and the historiography of the subject, showing that she is well documented (although the lack of the familiarity with the Hungarian language is a minus—the Hungarian bibliography, although very rich, is generally absent throughout the book and many Hungarian names are misspelled).

The next part deals with Catholic missions in Central-Eastern Europe during the seventeenth century. Starting with the Council of Trent as a turning point in the European papal policy, the author guides us through the Thirty Years’ War and the Peace of Westphalia, presenting some interesting new directions in the interpretation of the Protestant Reformation and of the Catholic Reformation based on the latest bibliography in the field.

Chapter 3 presents Transylvania as a Catholic missionary territory, trying to explain the reasons of the quick dispersion of the Protestant ideas among the inhabitants of the country (except for the Romanians, who were and remained Orthodox) and presenting some of the main directions of the Catholic Reconquista for these territories.

In the 19th century Hungarian bibliography it became commonplace that Transylvania was the (only) land of religious freedom. Although in Transylvania there were no major religious conflicts (minor conflicts, even with casualties, did occur: in 1603 the Jesuits were banished from Cluj, their buildings were destroyed and a friar, Emmanuele Neri, was killed; in 1638, at Dej, the Sabbatarians and the Unitarians were the target of a judicial offensive—many of them being imprisoned, and one executed), so things were not as simple as they seemed. The Orthodox Romanians were considered “tolerated” and even the Catholics were discriminated against, not only de facto but also de jure, as shown by Dâian.

The fifth chapter presents the main theme of the book, the activity of the Catholic missionaries in the seventeenth century Transylvanian Calvinist Principality. The author discusses the activity of the Catholic vicars, the first of whom were members of the Jesuit order: Márton Fehérdi (1618–1626) and Miklós Fehér (1626–1634), and whose activity was essential for the survival of Catholicism in this period. The second section of this chapter is dedicated to the Franciscan missionaries themselves, to the activity centers and missionary supporters. The book offers important information about the activity of the Bosnian Franciscans in Transylvania, whose role has been previously overlooked, and presents the Franciscan residences of Transylvania: Şumuleu-Ciuc (Csíksomlyó), Călugăreni (Homoródremete), Albeşti (Fehéregyháza), Teiuş (Tövis), and Lăzarea (Gyergyószárhegy).

The next part deals with the so-called “missionary literature,” analyzing the discourse aimed at the “target group” (those whom they wanted to convert) and the internal correspondence (the Franciscans, just like the Jesuits, had the duty to report their situation and achievements to the su-
periors, thus providing important data to historians).

The seventh and maybe the most valuable chapter of the book presents the strategies of the Catholic orders in the seventeenth-century Transylvanian Principality. It outlines the “prototype” of the Franciscan missionary: a “good Catholic,” dedicated, educated, familiar with the local language and thus able to accomplish the goals of the order. We read here about the Franciscan activity at Šumuleu-Ciuc, probably the most important center in Transylvania, about the school and the printing press.

The last chapter deals with the impact of Catholic missions in the seventeenth-century. Pilgrimage is identified as one of the important elements of devotion in Transylvania. The pilgrimage to Šumuleu-Ciuc is very popular even today, and even Pope Francis attended an event there in 2019.

Overall, the author manages to fill a gap in the historiography of the post-Tridentine Catholic Reconquista, shedding light on a less researched element: the Franciscan order in Transylvania.

Ferenc Páll-Szabó

Ioan Popa

In the year 1922, on the initiative of Teodor V. Păcățian, historian and author of numerous articles, and under the guidance and supervision of the Transylvanian Association for the Literature and Culture of the Romanian People (ASTRA), local authorities supported by teachers and priests conducted an ample and thorough investigation of the impact of the First World War upon the Romanian population in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Sătmar, and Maramureș. One year later, Păcățian published in the Transilvania magazine a study titled “Jertfele Românilor din Ardeal, Bănăt, Crișana, Sătmăr și Maramurăș, aduse în răsboiul mondial din anii 1914–1918” (The sacrifices of the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Sătmăr, and Maramureș during the World War of the years 1914–1918) (20 pp.), in which he presented the centralized results of the data collected from over 3,700 towns and villages in all the Romanian counties of the Kingdom of Hungary. Păcățian’s study illustrated the Romanian population’s involvement in the war by means of the number of mobilized people, widows, and orphans per county, making the distinction between rural and urban areas.

In the context of the centenary commemoration of the Great War, Andreea
Dăncilă Inean and Ioan Popa published several studies that capitalize on and bring to light this source of information unique in Europe, thus contributing decisively to our knowledge of the impact of the war upon the Romanian population in Transylvania.

As a devoted servant of the muse Clio as the author of valuable works on the history of education, culture, and leisure in 19th-century Transylvania and in his capacity as history teacher at Samuel von Brukenthal National College and at Constantin Noica Theoretical High School of Sibiu, Ioan Popa has found the time and strength to work through the county, centralizing registers and “nominal tables” of the Astra investigation and making them available to Romanian historiography in the form of two massive volumes. I feel compelled to emphasize the fact that behind Ioan Popa’s research efforts and editorial work lies a double motivation of both scholarly and sentimental nature. On the one hand, he was driven by a researcher’s natural desire to process a historical source and capitalize on it from a historiographical point of view, and, on the other, by a history teacher’s and patriot’s loving desire to honor “the memory of all the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Sătmar, and Maramureș who suffered in some way or other during and following the First World War and especially to honor my great-grandfathers, Ioan Popa al Cacoveanului (1886–1915), of Apoldul Mic... killed on the Galician front in 1915, and Aurel Popa al lui Dănilă (1891–1983), of Șelcău,” who was mobilized throughout the duration of the war and went on to take part in the Great Assembly of Alba Iulia of 1 December 1918 (p. V).

The volume is prefaced by the reputed Cluj demographer and historian of Transylvanian modernity Ioan Bolovan, a correspondent member of the Romanian Academy, who places Ioan Popa’s work in the context of the historiographical literature of the centenary of the Great Union, describes its merits and salutes its conclusions, making the following points, among others: “The author’s restitutive efforts have been immense, not only in transposing into electronic format the raw database taken from the archives, but especially in critically editing that historical source, drafting explanatory notes, making comparisons and syntheses, etc. It is therefore appropriate to openly eulogize the intense and laborious work of Ioan Popa, Ph.D., who generously provides us with diverse information as to the number and percentage of Romanians mobilized in the war, dead, wounded, disabled, missing, of Romanian orphans, widows, refugees, detainees, etc.” (p. IX).

The author’s professionalism and comparative methodology are highlighted especially by the ample introductory study (pp. 1–108), titled “The Human Costs Incurred by the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Sătmar, and Maramureș during the First World War,” comprising the following subchapters: “Known and Unknown in Romanian Historiography,” “The Astra Report: A Critical Analysis of the Source,” “Mobilization, Victimization, and Reward” and “Conclusions.” In his study, the author explains to today’s readers the context in which the investigation was organized, its methodology and the way in which it took place, the centraliza-
tion of the data in Sibiu, the errors that occurred while filling in the standardized questionnaire—the so-called “nominal table”—and those in the county centralizing registers. We are informed that the astra Report employed two investigative tools: a standardized questionnaire called a “nominal table,” comprising 19 headings and looking into the situation of the Romanians directly involved in the events of the Great War, and an interview guide containing four questions, of which the first two referred to the material costs of the war and the last two were centered around the events in the autumn of 1918. The object of the research and of the volume are the nominal tables of all the Transylvanian towns and villages, preserved as part of the collection of the Sibiu County Services of the National Archives of Romania. After discovering them, Ioan Popa digitalized them and then built his own database based on the questionnaire headings, accompanied by the data extracted from the Hungarian Census conducted in 1910 and by the data gathered from the Christian Orthodox and Greek Catholic church records of 1880–1925. The tables distributed by astra in the field and filled in via a collaboration among notaries, mayors, primary school teachers, and priests, comprised the following headings: “1. Running number; 2. Last and first name; 3. Town/village of birth; 4. Civil occupation; 5. Rank within the militia; 6. Awarded the following medal; 7–10. Took part in the activities demanded by the war, being called to serve: for active duty, as a soldier on the front (7), for sedentary duty, in auxiliary services or stationary units (8), arrested or hospitalized (9); was a refugee in the Kingdom of Romania (10); 11–16. Fate suffered during the war: died on the battlefield (11), died in prison, exile, hospital, as a result of diseases or wounds (12); Returned home: as an invalid (13), wounded, ill, yet currently healthy (14), in full health (15); missing (16); 17–18. The deceased or missing person left behind: a widow (17), number of orphans (18); 19. Observations” (p. 3).

The thoroughness employed by Ioan Popa in processing his primary sources is also made apparent by the fact that he put together an inventory of the errors which made their way into these tables, as well as by his steadfast efforts to correct, through correlations and comparisons, the said mistakes when drafting the general tables for each county, sub-county, town and village, yet without omitting to render the erroneous or estimative figures given by Teodor V. Păcățian in his 1923 study. Ioan Popa starts by presenting the scope of the investigation, concluding that, after having invalidated 17 nominal tables which inventoried the entire population, as opposed to just the Romanian one, and with the tables for the towns of Brașov and Gherla lost, “the degree of coverage of the astra investigation amounts to 90.71% in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Sătmar, and Maramureș” (p. 15). As for making a record of the Romanian population, in spite of certain questionnaires being invalidated or not being dispatched, the investigation managed to attain a degree of coverage of 99.56%, 99.54% in the rural areas and 100% in the urban areas (p. 19) of all the five regions united with Romania in 1918. The analysis of the coverage of the investigation is conducted both at a central level and at county level, the resulting tables providing a very clear picture of the degree of coverage and non-coverage respectively in figures and percentages for
the sub-counties of all the counties, both rural and urban.

The second part of the introductory study consists of an in-depth demographic analysis of the number of individuals mobilized, fallen on the front, missing, of widows and orphans, of those arrested, and of refugees. The Astra investigation reveals the extent of the involvement of the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Sătmar, and Maramureș in the First World War with the aid of the following figures: 479,457 people mobilized, on the front and behind it (274,084 from Transylvania, 129,374 from Banat, 44,875 from Crișana, 31,124 from Sătmar-Maramureș), which constitutes 17.02% of the total Romanian population, 32.56% of the Romanian male population, and 56.88% of the Romanian men aged 15 to 59 (p. 62–75). Ioan Popa does not limit himself to merely commenting on the results of the Astra investigation with respect to the Romanians in Transylvania, but goes on to make very complex comparative incursions into the situation of all the belligerent countries, particularly the Kingdom of Romania and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, concluding that “the mobilization of the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, and Sătmar-Maramureș surpassed the average levels in Hungary and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as the Romanian communities in Transleithania were among the most heavily affected by the mobilization in comparison to the general situation of the main states engaged in the war” (p. 73).

The involvement of the Romanians in that armed conflict generated four categories of victims: 1) dead and missing; 2) invalids and wounded; 3) arrested or political refugees; 4) widows and orphans. For the first category, the inventory yielded 82,225 victims, which constitutes 2.92% of the Romanian population of the five regions covered by the investigation, and 17.15% of the total number of mobilized individuals, these figures and percentages being visibly higher than the ones recorded at the level of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, namely 2.37% of the total population and 17.14% of the mobilized population. The comparison with the statistics of the other belligerent states, particularly Romania and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, shows once more that “the results of the Astra investigation place the Romanians on Hungarian territory among the most affected populations, their situation coming fairly close to that of their fellow nationals across the mountains, who were the witnesses and victims of confrontations with military forces greatly superior in terms of experience, military equipment, and even numbers” (p. 83). In the second category, that of the invalids, 25,169 people were recorded, which represents 5.25% of all the mobilized individuals, with the number of people wounded reaching 37,534, i.e. 7.83% of the total number of mobilized individuals.

A comparison of the figure associated with this category to those registered by the other belligerent states indicates a much lower percentage of wounded individuals and invalids among the Romanians in the Apostolic Kingdom of Hungary at the end of the war than in all the other European countries. In France, for example, the records show 8.71% invalids and 23.53% wounded as compared to the total number of mobilized individuals. The explanation for these statistics, the author reveals, lies in the major difference between the culture and civic attitude of the overwhelmingly rural Romanian population,
which was accustomed to hardship and to not exhibiting their suffering excessively, as opposed to the more educated or civilized citizens of Western Europe (p. 93).

The third category, that of individuals who were arrested, hospitalized, or took refuge in the Kingdom of Romania, is of major interest as well, as it adds to the accuracy of this complex issue well known in the realm of historiography, especially with respect to the priests who experienced such situations. However, unlike the writings of the time and unlike ecclesiastical historiography, which has identified 400 arrested and deported priests and 136 priests who took refuge in Romania, the astra investigation brings to light a much greater magnitude of the repression conducted by the Hungarian authorities against the Romanian population in Transylvania and Banat after Romania joined the military campaign: 1,728 individuals arrested (1,594 in Transylvania, 87 in Banat, 8 in Crișana, and 39 in Sătmar-Maramureș), namely 0.62% of the total number of Transylvanian Romanians, and 3,431 refugees (3,381 from Transylvania, 43 from Banat, 2 from Crișana, 5 from Sătmar-Maramureș), amounting to 1.22% of the Romanian population (pp. 95–96).

Moreover, the results centralized by Ioan Popa show that the refugee phenomenon attained mass dimensions in 1916, at the time of the retreat of the Romanian army from Transylvania. For example, from Bălbor, in Ciuc County, 1,033 Romanians of the 1,161 recorded by the 1910 census became refugees, which means 88.98% of the commune’s Romanian population! The investigation results prove that the highest numbers of arrested individuals and of refugees were recorded in the counties of Brașov, Ciuc, Făgărăș, Odorhei, Sibiu, Trei Scaune, and Târnava Mare, with figures showing that between 1.11% and 10% of the Romanian population was arrested by the authorities. In addition, the data reveal the enthusiasm exhibited by the Romanian rural population in welcoming the Romanian troops in the second half of August 1916, an eloquent example thereof being that of peasant Toader Vasi of Mușcundorf/Grânari, Târnava Mare County, who was arrested for that reason and then died in the prison of Gherla, leaving behind a widow and six orphans (p. 94). In the final category, that of indirect victims of the war, there are 21,343 widows and 45,786 orphans.

Ioan Popa notes that the astra investigation places their numbers within the general European pattern, with a slight surplus regarding the orphan component among the Romanians of the former Kingdom of Hungary (p. 97). One final analysis is dedicated by the author to the statistics concerning decorated Romanian soldiers, whose number amounted to 43,651 (9.01%) of the total of 484,728 involved in the war. The surprise lies in the fact that the percentage of decorated Romanian combatants is inversely proportional to the sacrifices made on the battlefield, as the recruits from urban areas registered three times more decorated soldiers (23.98%) than the recruits from rural areas (8.5%), while the percentage of deaths was double in Romanian villages (pp. 102–103).

The study is followed by the rendition in table format of the data of the astra investigation for each county, sub-county, and town/village, with vol. I (pp. 109–450) containing the information regard-
ing intra-Carpathian Transylvania with its 16 counties, while vol. 2 (pp. 451–698) comprises the information regarding the counties in Banat, Crișana, Sătmar, and Maramureș. The manner in which the material is organized and the table headings clearly show that Ioan Popa did more than just edit the Astra investigation of 1922, but practically doubled the questionnaire headings by reproducing the results of the 1910 census, thus providing today’s readers with a much more complex in-depth picture of the demographic situation of the Romanians in Transylvania during the first two decades of the 20th century. The tables compiled by Ioan Popa comprise the following 32 headings: 1. Sub-county/Town; 2. Criterion number; 3. Town/village; 4. The Romanian population, according to the Astra Centralizing Register; 4a. The population of the town or village/sub-county/county, acc. to the 1910 census; 4b. The Romanian population acc. to the 1910 census; 4c. The percentage of the Romanian population in 1910; 4d. The Christian Orthodox population acc. to the 1910 census; 4e. The Greek Catholic population acc. to the 1910 census; 4f. The Christian Orthodox and Greek Catholic population acc. to the 1910 census; 4g. The percentage of the Christian Orthodox and Greek Catholic population in 1910; 5. Number of decorated individuals; 6. Mobilized on the front; 7. Mobilized for auxiliary services or stationary units; 8. Arrested or hospitalized; 9. Refugees; 6–9a. Total number of mobilized, arrested/hospitalized people and refugees; 6–9b. The percentage of people mobilized on the front relative to the total Romanian population reported in 1910 (of the total Christian Orthodox and Greek Catholic population recorded by Astra); 10. Killed on the battlefield; 11. Died in prison, exile, hospital, as a result of diseases or wounds; 12. Invalids; 13. Wounded, ill, yet currently (1922) healthy; 14. In full health; 15. Missing; 10–15a. Total number of individuals dead and missing in the war, 1914–1919; 10–15b. The percentage of the dead and missing relative to the total Romanian population reported in 1910 by Astra; 10–15c. The percentage of the dead and missing relative to the total Christian Orthodox and Greek Catholic population reported in 1910; 16. Widowed; 17. Orphaned; 18. Intellectuals who participated in the war; 19. Traders and craftsmen; 20. Ploughmen/Peasants.

Moreover, each county is accompanied by a varying number of “critical notes” written by the author, in which he provides explanations, adds nuances, expands on or amends the figures through various comments, comparisons, and historical, confessional, sociological, or percentage-related ideas, thus providing further proof of the reliability and thoroughness employed in processing the data in the investigation. Volume 2 ends with a series of final reflections, followed by symbols and abbreviations, an exhaustive list of documentary, archival, and bibliographical sources used in this scientific work, and two summaries in English and German.

Finally, I would like to publicly express my satisfaction at having read this new work by Ioan Popa, which I have no doubt will have a positive reception within the field of historiography and among the general public, as his efforts are fully deserving of the appreciation of specialists.

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Prêtre académicien Ioan Lupaș
Prăbușirea Monarhiei Austro-Ungare
și importanța istorică a zilei de 1 Decembrie 1918
(L’Écroulement de la Monarchie austro-
hungroise et l’importance historique
du jour du 1er décembre 1918)
Édition, étude introductive, notes et
index par Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan
Academia Română, Centrul de Studii
Transilvane, 2018

La Célébration du centenaire de l’uni-
nité nationale des Roumains et les signi-
fications des événements qui l’avaient ac-
compagnée continuent à représenter une
priorité sur l’agenda de l’écrit historique
roumain. L’intérêt des spécialistes de l’his-
toire moderne et contemporaine mais aussi
dauteurs attirés par ce sujet s’est concré-
tisé en une vaste production éditoriale, iné-
gale comme valeur pour la connaissance de
la vérité historique et éclectique sous l’as-
pect des paradigmes éthiques et idéologi-
ques assumés de manière plus ou moins ex-
plicite. La reprise de sujets fréquents par
l’écrit historique roumain de l’après-guer-
re est la publication de collections de docu-
ments appartenant à la catégorie des sources
historiques primaires coexistent avec des
contributions qui relativisent l’importance
de la réalisation de l’idéal national des Rou-
mains. Ce genre de travaux est le résultat
d’un cosmopolitisme clamé, d’inspiration
marxiste, d’un révisionnisme justifié par le
rejet des thèses anachroniques ou bien des
connexions avec la propagande patronné
par des forces intéressées. L’observateur
de ces controverses a ainsi l’occasion d’ap-
prendre la leçon de la modestie, étant don-
né que les interprétations qui se veulent
originales ne font en fait que réactualiser
des thèmes familiers aux participants aux
événements qui s’étaient déroulés un siècle
au-para-vant.

La publication par l’historien Mircea-
Gheorghe Abrudan de quelques textes de
l’académicien Ioan Lupaș (1880-1967)
constitue une contribution remarquable à
la connaissance de l’union en tant qu’évé-
nement historique concret mais aussi
comme résultat d’un long processus his-
torique d’évolution de l’identité nationale,
par l’appel au témoignage d’un historien-
participant. La démarche de l’auteur, pla-
cée sous les auspices du moment anniver-
saire, acquiert un profil distinct dans le
cadre des publications de spécialité grâce à
une série de traits éthiques et méthodolo-
giques. D’abord, cette restitution historio-
graphique est un hommage rendu à un his-
torien, un hiérarque de l’Église orthodoxe
et un homme de la Cité, un martyr des
prisons communistes, qui est resté jusqu’à
la fin de sa vie un promoteur des valeurs
chrétiennes de l’amour, du pardon et de
l’espoir. L’historien de l’an 2019 exprime
un engagement de loyauté envers les réalisa-
sions des prédécesseurs, tout en rendant
justice à un représentant de l’intellectualité
transylvaine de l’entre-deux-guerres ignoré
pendant les deux dernières décennies. La
légitimité scientifique de l’ouvrage réside
dans le choix du sujet. L’auteur des textes
publiés est un représentant de sa généra-
tion, des intellectuels qui avaient contribué
d’à la perpétuation et la diffusion des valeurs
identitaires des Roumains et à la réalisation
de l’union, mais aussi une personnalité qui
s’est fait remarquer parmi ses contempo-
rains transylvains par sa conduite et ses
opinions. Resté dans la mémoire historio-
graphique comme l’historien de l’union
des Roumains, il a adhéré aux thèses na-
tionalistes militantes des Jeunes vaillants,
est resté un ami fidèle d’Octavian Goga et
s’est dissocié de certaines attitudes du Parti
National Roumain. Les multiples affinités entre l’éditeur et l’auteur de ces écrits ne transforment pas la démarche du premier en un discours apologétique ou dépourvu d’objectivité, de sorte que les opinions de Lupaș sur la Monarchie des Habsbourg sont considérées comme étant influencées par le contexte politique des années 1930, marquées par le revirement du révisionnisme allemand et hongrois.

La section introductive respecte les rigueurs d’une restitution classique. Le premier chapitre fait un sommaire de la biographie de l’historien transylvain. Originaire de Mărșinimea Sibiului, une zone de résistance et de spiritualité roumaine orthodoxe, il avait fait ses études à l’université de Budapest, est l’auteur de plusieurs ouvrages historiques qui lui ont valu le statut de membre de l’Académie Roumaine à partir de 1914, a été victime des représailles et de la détention politique à cause de son implication dans le combat pour les droits de la nation roumaine de Transylvanie et de Hongrie, a été un participant actif dans la vie publique après 1918 et a subi la persécution idéologique après 1945, étant emprisonné pour des raisons politiques entre 1950 et 1955. Les notations biographiques sont suivies de l’évocation de sa participation à la réalisation de l’union, en qualité de guide spirituel de sa communauté natale de Săliște et, à partir de 1919, comme professeur de l’université Dacia Superioară de Cluj et mentor de toute une génération d’historiens. Les notations finales de cette biographie concise constituent la plus importante contribution de l’éditeur à l’approfondissement de la problématique, reconstituant la conception de Ioan Lupaș de l’union comme résultat d’un processus de formation de l’identité spirituelle et culturelle du peuple roumain. L’auteur rejette l’idée selon laquelle l’union serait le mérite d’un parti politique ou d’une génération, plaidant en faveur d’une évolution organique de la nation roumaine, depuis les affinités culturelles manifestées tout au long du Moyen Âge aux convictions révolutionnaires de 1848 et aux actions fermes de ceux qui avaient refusé le compromis politique avec les autorités austro-hongroises. Renonçant au critère chronologique en faveur d’une approche thématique, l’auteur passe en revue les nuances intervenues dans la conception de l’historien roumain, depuis le discours enthousiaste prononcé lors du premier anniversaire de l’union au moment tragique du Diktat de Vienne.

Le premier des huit textes choisis par l’éditeur pour illustrer le statut de Ioan Lupaș d’historien de l’Union, 1918 : notes historiques, résume l’évolution des rapports de forces durant la Grande Guerre et évoque des thèmes significatifs pour les différents aspects de l’union. S’avérant un critique acharné de ceux qui considèrent l’union comme le résultat exclusif du Parti National Roumain, il propose une réévaluation des mérites de ceux qui s’étaient engagés dans le combat national du côté de la Roumanie ou de ceux qui avaient refusé les compromis avec la Monarchie bicéphale. C’est dans le même sens qu’il approche la question de la proclamation d’Alba Iulia et les controverses liées à la liberté absolue des minorités, en soulignant que son application ad litteram serait l’équivalent de la négation de l’État national unitaire roumain.

L’ouvrage L’Écroulement de la Monarchie austro-hongroise et la République tchéque-slovaque (Vienne, 24 novembre 1928), prouve l’intérêt de l’auteur pour l’histoire régionale et constitue un éloge à l’adresse du combat national des Tchèques, dominé par l’esprit civique et le patrio
qui a abouti à la fondation de la République tchécoslovaque en une atmosphère non-violente. Le texte de la conférence L’Écroulement de la Monarchie austro-hongroise et l’assemblée d’Alba Iulia (Sibiu, 1er décembre 1928) approfondit la signification du moment historique accompli une décennie auparavant, en tant qu’œuvre de toute la nation roumaine, par-dessus les ambitions politiques et les orgueils individuels. L’ouvrage Le Morcellement de la Monarchie austro-hongroise et la libération de la Transylvanie (1938) résume l’opinion de l’auteur sur une question réactualisée par l’écrit historique roumain, les conséquences du rattachement de la Transylvanie à la Monarchie habsbourgeoise et le caractère oppressif du régime à l’égard des Roumains transylvains.

La publication de textes appartenant à un représentant de l’élite intellectuelle roumaine profondément impliqué dans la édification de l’histoire de son temps, qui s’avère un évaluateur des aspects positifs et négatifs du passé et du présent, constitue un contre-argument raisonnable aux opinions, très véhiculées le dernier temps, selon lesquelles l’union des Roumains serait le résultat d’un contexte politique de conjoncture, sans la participation des masses. Les réflexions de Ioan Lupaş, depuis sa conception de l’union comme parachèvement d’un processus identitaire évolutif à des opinions pertinentes sur des thèmes qui font débat de nos jours encore, représentent l’expression de la maturité de ceux qui s’étaient impliqués dans la décision politique de 1918 et l’accès à l’intimité d’un monde dont nous serions tentés d’ignorer les sensibilités sous l’impulsion de la suffisance de nos propres dilemmes.

**Florian Dumitru Soporan**

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**Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu**

**Un model polisistemic de analiză comparativă a textului dramatic din perspectiva traductologiei descriptive**

Bucureşti: Editura Universității din Bucureşti, Romanica 28, 2018

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**El libro de Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu, tal y como el título lo revela, es una propuesta de análisis comparado sobre los textos dramáticos, obras que más probabilidad tienen de ser leídas en voz alta e interpretadas delante de un gran público.**

De hecho, en la investigación de la autora, profesora titular en el Departamento de Traducción e Interpretación de la Universidad de Alicante, el tema aquí presentado no es una prueba singular de su interés por la restitución de una obra dramática en otra lengua y cultura. Le preceden *Duplicidad comunicativa y complicidad creadora en la traducción del teatro* (Universidad de Alicante, una colección bilingüe de artículos escritos por actores, traductores y profesores sobre la traducción, las nuevas direcciones en el teatro, pero también sobre la adaptabilidad de los actores a otro idioma) y *Teatro con voz de mujer* (Fundación Cultural “Camil Petrescu”, a través de la editorial Cheiron, edición bilingüe de Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu, que además de las traducciones de las obras de Gianina Cârbanaru y Laila Ripoll, incluye artículos sobre las obras de las dos dramaturgas). También ha traducido al español la obra *A treia țeapă* de Marin Sorescu (*La Tercera Estaca*, Editorial de la Universidad de Alicante), con un estudio introductorio y notas de la misma autora.

**Un modelo polisistémico se presenta como una imbricación de dos partes, la primera que describe el marco teórico (el modelo de Lambert-Van Gorp) y la segunda en**
que se utiliza la teoría mencionada para el análisis comparado de dos traducciones al inglés de *A treia țeapă* de Marin Sărescu.

En la Introducción se anuncian los objetivos (describir el modelo de Lambert-Van Gorp y demostrar su aplicabilidad a la investigación traductológica), la hipótesis (el modelo de Lambert-Van Gorp puede revelar aspectos de la traducción y de la intencionalidad de los traductores no expresados, partiendo de la premisa de que las traducciones no son nunca lo que pretenden ser), la metodología (análisis traductológico de tipo comparativo, descripción de los elementos investigados, tanto textuales como audiovisuales en rumano y en inglés, referencia a los traductores) y el corpus (el texto fuente *A treia țeapă* de Marin Sărescu y los dos textos meta – las traducciones al inglés realizadas por Andreea Gheorghităioiu con el título *The Impaler’s Third Stake* y por Dennis Deletant con el título *Vlad Dracula the Impaler*). En cuanto al corpus, cabe mencionar que la autora no tomó en cuenta sólo una versión impresa, sino las ediciones sucesivas de la obra, los fragmentos publicados en revistas, igual que las versiones manuscritas, una perspectiva compleja a la vez que necesaria a la hora de analizar las traducciones. También se debe especificar que, aunque ambos traductores proceden del medio académico, sólo Andreea Gheorghităioiu es traductora profesional, mientras que Dennis Deletant, autor de la segunda versión, es un historiador especializado en el comunismo rumano, al que, no obstante, le incumbe el mérito de considerar el contexto político en que se escribió la obra y de consultarse con el autor rumano mismo a la hora de traducir.

El segundo capítulo, titulado “El modelo de Lambert-Van Gorp en el marco de la perspectiva descriptiva de la traductología” contiene dos partes: el paradigma descriptivo de la traductología (con referencias a la escuela formalista rusa, al estructuralismo pragueño, a Leivy, Steiner, Holmes y Gutt, entre otros) y el modelo de Lambert-Van Gorp, influido por la teoría de los polisistemas, que contiene parámetros como la exposición, el vocabulario y el estilo, la pertenencia a una determinada época o literatura, la pertenencia a una determinada escuela o paradigma traductológico y el papel desempeñado por las traducciones en el desarrollo de una determinada cultura o literatura.

El tercer capítulo, “La descripción detallada del corpus” incluye referencias a la obra rumana (concebida inicialmente como parte de una tetralogía), al autor (que goza de un significante reconocimiento y de numerosas representaciones teatrales, gracias a su *singularidad* entre los dramaturgos), igual que antecedentes históricoliterarios del príncipe rumano como personaje (una de las figuras históricas más representadas en la literatura rumana e internacional justamente por su carácter controvertido).

El cuarto capítulo, el más extenso, “La aplicación del modelo polisistémico de análisis comparado del texto dramático traducido” contiene cuatro partes. La primera se refiere al análisis de los datos preliminares (la descripción de los documentos en la lengua fuente y en la lengua meta). La segunda representa el análisis del macronivel de las dos traducciones: la extensión de las variantes (por ejemplo, el número de réplicas), los elementos metatextuales (ausentes en la traducción propiamente dicha, incluidos por traductores o por editores para aclarar el significado del texto original), la teatralidad (vista como un conjunto de características que hacen una obra representable en los escenarios, pero también como habilidad de los traductores
de adaptarse a estos requisitos), el texto-base (con referencia al texto o a los textos fuente elegidos por los traductores y a los posibles criterios que determinan esta elección), el resumen del macroanálisis. La tercera parte es un análisis del micronivel de las dos traducciones, implicando las coincidencias de composición entre las dos traducciones y su distanciamiento hacia el texto de origen, las falsas diferencias (las particularidades que distinguen la segunda traducción de la primera), las diferencias de percepción y el resumen del microanálisis. La cuarta parte trata del análisis del contexto sistémico, es decir de la relación de convergencia entre el nivel macrotextual y microtextual de las dos traducciones.

Por las referencias cronológicas y por las observaciones de índole literaria, el tercer y cuarto capítulo pueden resultar de especial interés a los historiadores y también a los críticos literarios que analizan la figura de Vlad el Empalador o la obra de Marin Sorescu.

En la conclusión se hace un repaso de la funcionalidad del modelo Lambert-Van Gorp en el análisis de las traducciones, que permitió observar cuál de las dos respeta en mayor medida las alusiones culturales del texto original, las exigencias de la situación de comunicación y las convenciones de una puesta en escena.

Además de los capítulos mencionados, el libro contiene en anexo tablas sobre las diferencias de composición, las diferencias de percepción, las diferencias de composición que se distancian del texto original, las falsas diferencias que evitan la coincidencia entre las dos traducciones, un listado con referencias a entrevistas con los traductores, los directores de los espectáculos escenificados y otras personalidades relacionadas con la obra de Sorescu, igual que una bibliografía que incluye teóricos de la traducción, historiógrafos, críticos literarios y autores que ilustraron en sus obras la figura del príncipe rumano.

La inmediatez y el impacto de un texto dramático en comparación con la prosa o incluso con la poesía requieren una especial atención a la hora de traducir, por lo que el libro de Câtâlina Iliescu Gheorghiu es recomendable no sólo para los estudiosos del ámbito de la traductología, para los traductores que se propongan confirmar sus soluciones prácticas mediante una perspectiva teórica verificada como la de José Lambert y Hendrik Van Gorp, sino también para los historiadores y críticos literarios que investigan el reflejo de una figura histórica prominente en la creación artística.

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