

**STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS  
BABEŞ-BOLYAI**

**Historia**

---

**Volume 63, Number 2, December 2018**

---

**Semestrial Review edited by  
The Babeş-Bolyai University  
Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

**STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS  
BABEȘ-BOLYAI**

**Historia**

---

**Volume 63, Number 2, December 2018**

---

**Semestrial Review edited by  
The Babeș-Bolyai University  
Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

# **Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai**

---

## *Historia*

### EDITOR

Ovidiu Ghitta, The Dean of the Faculty of History and Philosophy

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

Marius Bucur

Ionuţ Costea

Gelu Florea

Sorin Mitu

Toader Nicoară

Valentin Orga

Virgiliu Țărău

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Cesare Alzati (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano)

Francesco Guida (Roma Tre University, Rome)

Konrad Gündisch (Bundesinstitut für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa, München)

Keith Hitchins (Urbana University, Illinois)

Alexandru-Florin Platon (University of Iaşi)

Laurenţiu Vlad (University of Bucharest)

*Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia* is published biannually in June and December by the Babeş-Bolyai University.

Manuscripts and books for review should be sent to  
The Executive Board, *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia*,  
Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of History and Philosophy,  
1 Mihail Kogălniceanu Street, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

This issue is coordinated by Vlad Popovici & Lucian Turcu.

ISSN 1220-0492

© 2018 Babeş-Bolyai University. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-973-109-850-0

ARGONAUT PUBLISHING

Desktop Publishing, Print and Distribution

# Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia

Volume 63, Number 2, December 2018

doi: 10.24193/subbhist.2018.2

## Articles

- IOAN BOLOVAN, The Romanians' Ideals of Liberalism and Nationality in 1918 ..... 1
- OVIDIU IUDEAN, Making the Man of Law in Dualist Hungary: Alexa David's Career Strategies and Personal Networks on the Eve of the Twentieth Century ..... 16
- VLAD POPOVICI, ASTRA's Membership in the Early 1900s ..... 36
- JUDIT PÁL, The System of Government Commissioners during the First World War and the organization of the Government High Commissioner's Office in Transylvania ..... 62
- LUCIAN TURCU, Dynastic Loyalty, Morality and Family Values among Romanians in Transylvania during the First World War ..... 99
- PHILIPPE HENRI BLASEN, De la nomination du cabinet Goga au coup d'État du roi Carol II (28 décembre 1937 - 10 février 1938) ..... 111
- IONUȚ VIDA-SIMITI, The Arrest of the Basilians Atanasie Maxim and Gheorghe Marina in the Attempt to Incriminate the Greek-Catholic Bishop Alexandru Rusu ..... 158

## Book Reviews

- Documenta Pragensia XXXIII: Město v převratech konfesionalizace v 15. až 18. Století*, Praha, Scriptorium, 2014 (Sever Oancea) ..... 178
- Andreas Holzem, *Christentum in Deutschland 1550-1850. Konfessionalisierung, Aufklärung, Pluralisierung* (Band 1 & Band 2), Paderborn, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2015 (Sever Oancea) ..... 181
- Joachim Bahlcke, *Gegenkräfte. Studien zur politischen Kultur und Gesellschaftsstruktur Ostmitteleuropas in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Marburg, Verlag Herder-Institut, 2015 (Sever Oancea) ..... 183
- Catherine Horel, *De l'exotisme à la modernité. Un siècle de voyage français en Hongrie (1818-1910)*, Montrouge, Éditions du Bourg, 2018 (Lucian Turcu) ..... 186

Silvia Marton, „ <i>Republica de la Ploiești</i> ” și începuturile parlamentarismului în România, București, Humanitas, 2016 (Diana Georgiana Lutz) .....	189
Marius Turda, <i>Eugenism și modernitate. Națiune, rasă și biopolitică în Europa (1870-1950)</i> , Iași, Polirom, 2014 (Andrei Dălălaşu) .....	192
Jana Osterkamp (Hg.), <i>Kooperatives Imperium. Politische Zusammenarbeit in der späten Habsburgermonarchie</i> , Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018 (Luminița Popescu) .....	196
Hrvoje Baričević, Danijela Marjanić (coords.), <i>Prvi Svjetski Rat. Vodič kroz fondove i zbirke Hrvatskoga državnog arhiva</i> , Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2016 (Filip Katanić) .....	200
Liviu Maior, <i>Doi ani mai devreme. Ardeleni, bucovineni și basarabeni în război, 1914-1916</i> , Cluj-Napoca, Editura Școala Ardeleană, 2016 (Timea Longaver) .....	204
Florea Ioncioaia, Leonidas Rados (coord.), <i>Fragmente de pe un câmp de luptă: studii în istoria universității</i> , Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2018 (Mădălina Elena Braeș) .....	207
Martin Puchner, <i>Lumea scrisă. Povești care au schimbat oamenii, istoria și civilizația</i> , Iași, Polirom, 2018 (Bianca Maria Glăvan) .....	210

# The Romanians' Ideals of Liberalism and Nationality in 1918\*

**Ioan Bolovan**

*Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University*

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

*The Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch*

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

E-mail: ioanbolovan62@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The Romanians' Ideals of Liberalism and Nationality in 1918.* The goal of the present paper is to show how both in the autumn of 1918 and before the Union of Transylvania with Romania on 1 December 1918, liberalism and nationalism steered the course of the Romanian nation in Transylvania as it entered the modern era. Romanians had accumulated democratic experience over several decades, with effective results in managing ecclesiastical, educational, cultural, social and economic problems. In the autumn of 1918, when the Great War was nearing its end and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was on the brink of breaking apart, they were able to assume the responsibility of detaching Transylvania from Hungary and providing fair and efficient governance in a province that had been devastated by 4 years of war and was now on the verge of collapse. Our attempt at reconstructing the destiny of the church and of Romanian civil society in the process of laying the democratic foundations of the Union of 1918 has revealed the complex political, economic and social transformations of the Habsburg monarchy from the 1848 revolution to the First World War.

**Keywords:** Austro-Hungarian Empire, Transylvania, Romanian civil society, liberalism and nationalism

**Rezumat:** *Liberalism și naționalitate la români în anul 1918.* Scopul acestui articol este acela de arăta cum în toamna anului 1918, dar și în deceniile anterioare Unirii, liberalismul și naționalismul au jalonat parcursul națiunii române din Transilvania în epoca modernă. Prin urmare, românii au acumulat o experiență democratică pe parcursul mai multor decenii, cu rezultate eficiente în gestionarea problemelor bisericești, școlare, culturale, sociale și economice. Ei au fost capabili

---

\* Parts of the Romanian version of this article were published under the title "Antecedentele democratice ale Unirii Transilvaniei cu România" [The Democratic Antecedents of Transylvania's Union with Romania], *Analele Bucovinei*, XXV (2018), 1 (50), pp. 51-61, and „ASTRA și Marea Unire (naționalitate și antecedente democratice)” [ASTRA and the Great Union (nationality and democratic antecedents)], *Arhivele Bistriței*, III (2018), 2 (10), pp. 13-20.

## 2 Ioan Bolovan

în toamna anului 1918, când Marele Război era spre final iar Imperiul Austro-Ungar la un pas de dezmembrare, să își asume responsabilitatea desprinderii Transilvaniei de Ungaria și a guvernării eficiente și corecte a unei provincii devastate de patru ani de război și aflată în pragul colapsului. Demersul nostru de a restitui, într-o încercare sintetică, destinul bisericii și al societății civile în prepararea democratică a societății românești pentru Unirea de la 1918 a relevat complexitatea transformărilor politice, economice și sociale din monarhia habsburgică între revoluția de la 1848 și Primul Război Mondial.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Imperiul Austro-Ungar, Transilvania, societate civilă românească, liberalism și naționalism

The centennial anniversary, this autumn, of the formation of Greater Romania compels the researcher to interrogate both the antecedents that led to the exceptional achievement of 1 December 1918 in Alba Iulia, and the international context from the end of the First World War. This international context encompassed the military realities, political-diplomatic circumstances and ideologies of those times. The end of the Great War made way for the (re)affirmation of new ideologies - for instance, Bolshevism in Russia - or favoured the reinforcement of other ideologies of liberal or democratic inspiration. Thus, at least in 1918, liberalism and nationalism merged to provide the peoples of Central and South-East Europe, which had been incorporated in autocratic multinational empires, with the ideological support they needed in their struggle for the restoration of their statehoods (in the case of the Poles, Czechs and Slovaks) or for the achievement of the unity and integrity of their nation-states (in the case of the Romanians, Serbs, etc.). It is the goal of the present paper to show how both in the autumn of 1918 and before the Union of Transylvania with Romania on 1 December 1918, liberalism and nationalism steered the course of the Romanian nation in Transylvania as it entered modern era.

What the name of *Transylvania* means for most people today is a part of Romania that is composed of a few regions which shared, over the centuries, an almost identical destiny: historical Transylvania or *Ardeal* (which was an autonomous principality from the mid-sixteenth century until 1867, when it was annexed to Hungary, first under Turkish suzerainty, and under Habsburg rule after 1699), Banat, Crișana and Maramureș. These territories that comprise Transylvania in the broader sense were successively conquered by the Kingdom of Hungary (starting from the eleventh-twelfth centuries), partially by the Turks (after 1541), and fully by the Austrians (after 1699). Until the First World War,

Transylvania was ruled almost exclusively – both at the level of central power and at that of the local administrative units – by Hungarians, Germans, and Szeklers. Romanians, who formed the autochthonous population that represented also a majority from a demographic point of view, had been gradually eliminated, starting in the fourteenth century, from political, economic and cultural entitlements in the state in which they lived. According to the Census of 1910, the total population of Transylvania included 5,225,618 inhabitants. From the point of view of the ethnic composition of Transylvania, in 1910 Romanians predominated (2,827,419 – 53.7%). They were followed by Hungarians (1,662,180 – 31.6%, although it must be said that Jews had been almost exclusively recorded as Hungarians because the criterion of the mother tongue, or the most frequently used language, was employed for meting out the citizens into various ethno-linguistic communities), Germans (564,359 – 10.7%), Slovaks, Ruthenians, Serbs, Roma, and so on, all of the latter amounting to about 5%.<sup>1</sup>

Ever since the revolution of 1848 but especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, mostly in the German area of the Habsburg Empire, middle-class men and women had formed a political movement that questioned the legitimacy of the central and local government system, which was based primarily on the nobility, on bureaucracy and the Catholic Church. This protest movement offered an alternative system of liberal values and cultural practices. Organized into hundreds of voluntary professional and cultural associations, supported by the efforts of their members, the associationist movement generated a political and civic culture which became a powerful means for the construction, coordination and control of the people's participation in the public and political life of the empire.<sup>2</sup> In 1848 and especially after that, liberalism appealed to a broader spectrum than those who were traditionally associated with the category of the *bürgertum*/bourgeoisie. Thus, membership in the new *bürgertum* was extended to other social groups, in particular to the educated ones, the liberal professions, etc. The new political movement needed educated citizens, able to look beyond the narrow horizon of local provincialism and to understand the interests of the national community within a global frame. The value

---

<sup>1</sup> *Istoria Transilvaniei, vol. III (de la 1711 până la 1918)* [The History of Transylvania, vol. III (from 1711 to 1918)], coords. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Magyari András, Thomas Năgler (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română – Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2008), p. 496.

<sup>2</sup> Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries. Liberal Politics, Social Experience and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 1.

placed now on the abstract idea of education reflected the economic and cultural accumulations that had been made possible by liberalism in Central Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Liberalism was not the only movement of political contestation in Central Europe. The national emancipation movements of the modern era incorporated culture in their ideology as a decisive element of the process of building national solidarity. National culture was an active and dynamic catalyst of unity, rising above artificial political barriers and serving as an effective weapon in the arsenal of political militancy.<sup>4</sup> This nationalism, which was cultural in the first place, became another form of social and political mobilization among the peoples of the Habsburg Empire. Nationalism helped to mediate the attempt at transforming the policies promoted by the traditional liberal elites into a mass-oriented policy, predicated on the involvement of broad social categories. Such a transformation was nonetheless permanently under control and closely monitored by the bourgeois elites.<sup>5</sup> Of course, the focus was on the involvement in the liberal-national movement of the consolidating and expanding middle class, a class that enjoyed financial independence and an appropriate level of education.

The premise from which we start in this research is that the union of Transylvania with Romania in 1918 had its origins in the joint efforts of several generations, which included individuals, but also associations that had managed, in time, through constant and complex actions, to maintain the national individuality of the Romanians in Transylvania, as well as to educate the masses in a liberal-democratic and national spirit. The actions of the Romanian bourgeois elites from Transylvania showed, in exemplary manner, that they deployed a strategy advanced by all the institutional components of any modern civil society: the civic and political education of the masses in order to turn groups of citizens into actors on the stage of the community's public life. All the cultural, economic, religious, professional, youth associations and institutions, etc. developed after the revolution of 1848, that is, after the emergence and consolidation of the Romanian civil society in

---

<sup>3</sup> Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Josef Chlebowczyk, *On Small and Young Nations in Europe. Nation-Forming Processes in Ethnic Borderlands in East-Central Europe* (Wroclaw-Warszawa-Krakow-Gdansk: Wyd P A N, 1980), p. 150; Peter Brock, *The Slovak National Awakening: an Essay in the Intellectual History of East Central Europe* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Crearea identităților naționale în Europa. Secolele XVIII-XX* [The Making of National Identities in Europe. 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries] (Iași: Polirom, 2002) etc.

<sup>5</sup> Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, p. 4.

Transylvania, were supported exclusively by private donations and through membership fees. They were forms of association based on ethnic, social and professional criteria. They relied on volunteering and on the people's desire to become involved in the community for promoting material, social, cultural and, not least, national progress. In short, the massive integration of most of the Romanian social categories in Transylvania in the dialogue of society-culture-nationality, achieved by means of hundreds of associations, is an irrefutable proof of the political-national dynamism of all the socio-professional structures of the Romanian nation in Transylvania, from the second half of the nineteenth century until around the outbreak of the First World War.<sup>6</sup>

In general, in the decades before the war, not only in Transylvania, but also in the extra-Carpathian Romanian territories, at the end of the nineteenth century there was an increase in the social categories related to industrial-commercial, bank loaning occupations, etc. In parallel, the share of the population that was active in the primary production sector decreased. It is a commonly acknowledged fact that, in general, representatives of socio-professional categories other than the peasantry were involved in the civil society. A considerable role in the socio-professional transition process of the population of Transylvania from a quasi-agrarian model to an agro-industrial one was played, in the decades preceding the Union, by the education system and by the progress achieved through the spread of literacy and by raising the population level of instruction. Without going into details, we can state that while in 1869 311,847 inhabitants, representing 13%, could read and write in the province, in 1910 823,053 inhabitants (28.3 per cent) possessed these intellectual skills.<sup>7</sup> Within four decades the educated population had doubled in Transylvania (of course, people had different levels of training). This ensured the framework that allowed the adoption and multiplication of professions specific to the open, capitalist economy: officials in the justice, military, administrative, banking, trade and health systems, intellectuals, etc. Implicitly, the base of recruitment for those employed in various organizational structures of the civil

---

<sup>6</sup> Liviu Maior, Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan, "Cuvânt-înainte" [Foreword], in *Asociaționism și naționalism cultural în secolele XIX-XX*, eds. Liviu Maior, Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română. Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2011), p. 8 sqq.

<sup>7</sup> Ioan Bolovan, *Transilvania între Revoluția de la 1848 și Unirea din 1918. Contribuții demografice* [Transylvania Between the Revolution of 1848 and the Union of 1918. Demographical Contributions] (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane. Fundația Culturală Română, 2000), p. 235.

society was broadened. On the eve of the outbreak of war, with all the discrepancies still existing in the province, Transylvania had irreversibly embarked on the road to a modern society, with an occupational structure that evinced the remarkable progress registered in the six decades that had lapsed since the breakup of feudal relations. As such, the Romanian civil society reflected that evolution. In any case, the peasantry, illiterate for the most part, continued to provide consistent support to the liberal and democratic elites in their efforts to promote a different political culture in society.

In the national institutional system at work in the Romanian space, regional cultural associations (The Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People - ASTRA, created at Sibiu, in 1861, as well as the national cultural associations founded in Sighet or Arad in the following years) held a special position. Their importance was attested by at least two aspects: on the one hand, due to their regional character, they imprinted a dynamic pace to cultural activity across a rather large geographical area, favouring in time the access of village communities to culture. On the other hand, by concentrating the political and intellectual elites of all the Romanians within the Habsburg Empire, these cultural societies supported and launched particularly fertile activities for the assertion of Romanian national individuality. All the associations mentioned above had a democratic character. Most of all, they had common concerns and aspirations, as they were all aimed at the development of the nation and of the liberal-national spirit, fuelling the Romanians' aspirations to unity.<sup>8</sup>

When regional cultural associations were set up, the leaders of the national movement took account of the new imperatives that historical evolution had placed at the forefront of debates in the second half of the nineteenth century, namely the democratization of the nation and the reconciliation between the elites and the masses.<sup>9</sup> The circulating annual general meetings of ASTRA, the concerns for the organization and progress of peasants and craftsmen, the various cultural

---

<sup>8</sup> Ștefan Pascu, *Făurirea statului național unitar român* [The Making of the Romanian National Unitary State], vol. I (București: Editura Academiei R.S.R., 1983), p. 165; Vasile Netea, *Conștiința originii comune și a unității naționale în istoria poporului român* [The Conscience of Common Origin and National Unity in the History of the Romanian People] (București: Albastros, 1980), p. 194.

<sup>9</sup> Arad County Branch of the National Archives, *Fund ASTRA*, File 6/1863, f. 28: "The new association [from Arad - B.I.] belongs neither... to democrats, nor to aristocrats ... The new association aims to provide a new direction to the education of the masses, an education that will steer all of them towards morality."

dissemination activities on the social agenda of ASTRA, etc., poignantly reveal these new meanings that the cultural-national movement had acquired. The establishment of the cultural society from Sibiu was the result of a "compromise" between the scholarly-elite and the democratic-popular trends. The cultural activities of ASTRA had a better chance of disseminating political projects, contributing greatly to education of the Romanian public in Transylvania in the national spirit. The subsequent evolution of events in Transylvania and the strategy of the national liberation movement from the decades before the 1918 Union fully validated the legitimate orientation of ASTRA. Actions taken pursuant to the principle of nationality led to minimizing the gap between the national movement elite and the people, making it possible to achieve cultural unity and national solidarity beyond temporary political-administrative borders.

The annual general meetings of ASTRA represented a particularly important form of cultural action. Besides promoting valuable national culture elements and launching major initiatives for the defence of the Romanians' individuality, the general meetings provided a legal framework for the coming together of all the leaders of the national movement. Thus, they could debate issues related to the political-national struggle, safeguarding the unity of the regional associations' national cultural strategy, whose model and focal point of resistance against Austro-Hungarian dualism was the cultural association in Sibiu, at least until the creation of political parties in 1869. After 1869 ASTRA created branches in almost all of Transylvania (there were about 60 of these on the eve of the outbreak of war). The periodic meetings of the management committee in Sibiu and the annual general meetings held in various cities or localities all over Transylvania provided many occasions for the political leaders to come together and discuss a political-cultural strategy. Socialization during these general meetings, the regular contacts between the elites and the basis of the political-cultural-national movement led to the accumulation of a solidarity that was specific to the institutional forms of the modern civil society. Romanian political leaders strove to achieve the formation of a middle class, to support the political struggle and encourage the educational and cultural institutions, which did not receive any material aid from the Hungarian state. Romanian banks, founded starting with the eighth decade (Albina, Victoria, Someșana, etc.), supported predominantly the Romanian middle-class and the wealthy peasantry. Analysing the content and character of the associations set up by the Romanians in Transylvania, Ioan Slavici remarked in *Românii din Ardeal*

[*The Romanians in Transylvania*], published in 1910, that “the hallmark of all these cultural establishments is the peasantry’s participation in them. An association, of whatsoever nature it may be, is not successful unless the peasants are sufficiently well represented in it, for everything is envisaged so as to tighten the bonds between the different sections of the people, and in Transylvania the nation means the peasantry, and national is only that which reflects the ways of the peasantry”.<sup>10</sup>

The annual general meetings of ASTRA were one of the fundamental forms of activity for the regional associations. In the general meetings, the members discussed issues of Romanian interest, organized public conferences, held theatrical performances, etc. Meeting once a year, the members of regional associations had the opportunity to meet each other, to exchange ideas, and to analyse the strategy of the national liberation movement. These types of activities and forms of socialization were specific to all the associations set up in Central Europe in the modern era.<sup>11</sup> Through the large participation of the members and some wider social categories, the general assemblies became genuine democratic bodies in public life, expressing the ideas of the Romanian civil society. It should be noted that some leaders of the association in Sibiu were members of the governing boards of many other cultural societies and local institutions. Mutual participation in annual general meetings or in the monthly meetings of the management committees were great opportunities for strengthening the unity of the national strategy. The expression of Vasile Netea, according to whom these committees, consisting of representatives of all the Transylvanian Romanians, were “a great parliament of Romanian culture, preparing the way for a political parliament”,<sup>12</sup> suggestively captures the entwinement between politics and culture in the Romanian national movement during the period of dualism.

In Transylvania, according to the electoral law of 1874, the number of the inhabitants who had the right to vote was narrower than in the counties of Hungary proper. According to estimates, in the elections held in the last decade of the nineteenth century the number of

---

<sup>10</sup> Ioan Slavici, *Românii de peste Carpați* [The Romanians on the Other Side of the Carpathians], ed. Constantin Mohanu, foreword by Dumitru Micu (București: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993), p. 166 sqq.

<sup>11</sup> Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> Vasile Netea, *Spre unitatea statală a poporului român. Legături politice și culturale între anii 1859-1918* [Towards the Statal Union of the Romanian People. Political and Cultural Links between the Years 1859 and 1918] (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979), p. 74.

voters amounted to 75,000 citizens,<sup>13</sup> the majority of whom were Hungarians and Saxons. Compared to the entire Romanian population of the province, this number was relatively limited. ASTRA nonetheless developed a democratic laboratory with “electoral value” because the elections of the Central Committee, of the branches’ management committees, and the fact that the members of the association could exercise their right to vote in each general assembly contributed to the civic-democratic education of the Romanians. Thus, the nearly 2,400 members of ASTRA (in 1911) increased the number of Romanians who regularly exercised their democratic rights. Here we need to add several other hundreds of thousands of Romanians who were included in the associationist system all over Transylvania, through reading societies, economic self-help societies, funeral or social assistance associations, choral groups, teachers’ associations etc.<sup>14</sup> Romanians had thus created a kind of *parallel state* to that in which they lived officially, an alternative state in which they had managed to become acquainted with liberal, democratic principles and values and to practice communal self-government skills.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Orthodox Church of the Romanians in Transylvania represented another framework conducive to democratic life and to a liberal-constitutional experiment. In 1868, the Orthodox Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna obtained from the Hungarian authorities in Budapest and from the Court in Vienna approval for organizing a National Church Congress which was to debate a draft constitution for the organization of the church. At the end of this Congress, a document with constitutional value was adopted, entitled *The Organic Statute of the Greco-Oriental Romanian Church in Hungary and Transylvania*, which sanctioned the issue of the separation of powers (legislative, executive and legal) in the Orthodox Church, the principle of the autonomy of the church in relation to the Hungarian state, as well as the representative and elective system, with the participation of the laity in the leadership of church life and religious

---

<sup>13</sup> Eugen Brote, *Un memoriu politic. Cestiunea română în Transilvania și Ungaria* [A Political Memoir. The Romanian Question in Transylvania and Hungary] (București: Tipografia „Voința Națională”, 1895) p. 89.

<sup>14</sup> Pr. Maxim (Iuliu-Marius) Morariu, *Asociaționismul cultural din zona Bistriței și a Năsăudului (1850-1918)* [The Cultural Associationisms from the Area of Bistrița and Năsăud (1850-1918)] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2017).

communities.<sup>15</sup> The proportion of representation in all legislative bodies at the level of parishes, protopresbyterates, dioceses and the metropolitanate was two-thirds laymen and one-third members of the clergy. Synods at the parish, deanery, diocesan and metropolitanate levels were normally held once a year, but elected executive bodies (parish and protopresbyterial committees etc.) met more often. The fact that starting at the level of parish, ordinary people, sometimes illiterate peasants, participated regularly in the election of these executive bodies represented a tremendous electoral experience, which was essentially democratic, liberal. In the Greek-Catholic Church of the Romanians in Transylvania things were not always the same as in the Orthodox Church. Here the situation was a little more complicated due to its hierarchical subordination and direct affiliation to the Roman Catholic Church. However, the two churches acted as “surrogates of the state” for the Romanians in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They massively contributed to the acceleration of the process of securing their autonomy from the state, from the executive power. Under the Organic Statute of 1868, the Orthodox Church of Transylvania began a process of “institutional democratization”, to use a phrase that belongs to the sociologist George Em. Marica. This fully contributed, alongside associationism, to the formation and development of a political and civic culture among the Romanians in the decades prior to Union of 1918.<sup>16</sup>

Besides the elective democratic mechanism offered by the *Organic Statute*, this regulatory act also contained a few provisions intended to ensure the proper functioning of institutions in the Orthodox Church. Thus, from the level of the parish synod to the central governing bodies of the metropolitanate, only citizens of age who were “untainted and fulfilled their duties in the parish” could participate in the elections. Also, to deter nepotism and conflicts of interest, it stipulated that close relatives should not be included in the executive bodies. In the parish committee “father and son, grandfather and grandson, brothers, father-in-law and son-in-law cannot be at once members of the committee... Church wardens are to be elected by the parish Synod from among the most deserving men in the parish and they may not be related, up to the sixth degree of blood kinship and the

---

<sup>15</sup> Paul Brusanowski, *Reforma constituțională din Biserica Ortodoxă a Transilvaniei între 1850-1925* [The Constitutional Reform in The Transylvanian Orthodox Church between 1850 and 1918] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Liviu Maior, “Despre asociaționism și autonomizare în Transilvania secolelor al XIX-lea și al XX-lea,” in *Asociaționism și naționalism cultural*, p. 23.

fourth degree of matrimonial alliance".<sup>17</sup> Of course, the reality was not always consistent with what the *Organic Statute* prescribed. The way in which elections were made by synodal deputies, both clergy and laity, was often a cause of concern for those responsible for the ecclesiastical life of the Orthodox Romanians. For example, Vasile Mangra, an important theologian from Arad (the future metropolitan in 1916) stated in the 1880s that he upheld the importance of the quality of the synod members in the Diocese of Arad, suggesting that Bishop Ioan Mețianu should pay more attention to the selection of these members in the future. Bishop Mețianu was also quick to point out the inability of various deputies or members of the parish, protopresbyterial and diocesan committees to deal with the problems of the church. To discourage the perpetuation of upstartism, he reiterated the conditions of admissibility to the electoral act in the church. Thus, at a conference held at the Theological Institute in Arad, Ioan Mețianu advised those present to elect "synodal deputies only from among men raised in the law of God, men devoted to the causes of our church, zealous men, able to contribute with advice and wisdom to the regulation and prosperity of affairs in our national church". Mangra did not hesitate later to express his concern about the future of the church. He drew the attention of the high prelate to the fact that "people need to learn, once and for all, the rules and order in the church. Because constitutionalism is not a system of anarchy, but one of order and stability!"<sup>18</sup>

What was extremely important was the cooperation between the two Romanian churches, at the level of the hierarchs but also locally, at the level of mixed villages inhabited by Orthodox and Greek-Catholics, in spite of the existence of partisanships that could be damaging to the national community. This was reflected in the Romanian civil society in Transylvania. The organizational-functional structure of ASTRA was regulated by the statutes of the institution, which remained relatively stable, although there were some attempts at amending the statutes over time. The governing body of the society was the annual general meeting, which elected a Central Committee of ASTRA, consisting, as a rule, of about 40 members (president, vice-president, notary, cashier, secretaries, controller, etc.). The position of president of ASTRA was occupied, for

---

<sup>17</sup> Ioan-Vasile Leb, Gabriel-Viorel Gărdan, Marius Eppel, Pavel Vesa, *Instituții ecleziastice. Compendiu de legislație bisericească (secolul al XIX-lea)* [Ecclesiastical Institutions. Compendium of Church Law (19<sup>th</sup> Century)] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2010), pp. 251, 253, 255.

<sup>18</sup> Leb et alii, *Instituții ecleziastice*, p. 26 sqq.

tactical reasons, by both Orthodox and Greek Catholics, starting with Orthodox Bishop, then Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna (1861-1867), the Greek-Catholic Vasile Ladislau Pop (1867-1875), the Orthodox Iacob Bologa (1875-1877), the Greek-Catholic Timotei Cipariu (1877-1887), the Greek-Catholic George Barițiu (1888-1893), the Greek-Catholic Ioan Micu-Moldovan (1893-1901), the Orthodox Alexandru Mocsonyi (1901-1904), the Greek-Catholic Iosif Sterca-Șuluțiu (1904-1911) and the Orthodox Andrei Bârseanu (1911-1922). The same alternation occurred at the level of the vice-president: if the president was Orthodox, then the vice-president was Uniate. As Nicolae Iorga rightly remarked in 1905, "from the beginning the Association was both Șaguna's and Șuluțiu's, it belonged both to the Romanians in Blaj and to those in Sibiu, both to the Uniates and to the non-Uniates. And this represents its chief and most precious characteristic".<sup>19</sup> Not coincidentally, the confessional duality and balance were preserved for the 6 members of the Central Romanian National Council (Vasile Goldiș, Aurel Vlad, Aurel Lazăr, Teodor Mihali, Ștefan Cicio Pop, Alexandru Vaida-Voievod), the national political body that ruled Transylvania until the Great National Assembly held in Alba Iulia on 1 December 1918.

Therefore, Romanians had accumulated democratic experience over several decades, with effective results in managing ecclesiastical, educational, cultural, social and economic problems. In the autumn of 1918, when the Great War was nearing its end and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was on the brink of breaking apart, they were able to assume the responsibility of detaching Transylvania from Hungary and providing fair and efficient governance in a province that had been devastated by 4 years of war and was now on the verge of collapse. In Oradea, on October 12, 1918, the Conference of the Executive Committee of the Romanian National Party (PNR) adopted a *Declaration* expressing the desire of the Romanian nation from Hungary and Transylvania to decide its fate in a great national assembly. The conference held in Oradea, on 12 October, had a special significance also because it adopted a resolution to formalize the resumption of cooperation ties between the PNR and the Transylvanian Romanian Social-Democrats. The document drafted in Oradea, read by the deputy Alexandru Vaida-Voievod in the Budapest Parliament, on 18 October 1918, was a political statement of principles, sanctioning the independence of the Romanian nation and its desire of secession from Hungary. The Central Committee of the

---

<sup>19</sup> Ioan Lupaș, "Înființarea Asociațiunii și conducătorii ei," *Transilvania*, XLII (1911), 4 (jubilee issue), p. 332 sqq.

Romanian Section of the Social Democratic Party in Hungary (PSDU) formed a delegation, consisting of Ion Flueraş, Iosif Jumanca, Enea Grapini and Ion Mihauş. The delegation met, on October 28, 1918, with members of the PNR in the parliament in Budapest. They decided the establishment, on parity basis, of a body that would coordinate the national emancipation struggle of the Romanians in Hungary, called the Romanian National Council (CNR). The council, formed on the night of 30 to 31 October in Budapest, was made up of six representatives of the PNR (Vasile Goldiş, Ştefan Cicio-Pop, Teodor Mihali, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Aurel Vlad, Aurel Lazăr) and six members of the Romanian Section of the PSDU (Ion Flueraş, Iosif Jumanca, Enea Grapini, Bazil Surdu, Tiron Albani, Iosif Renoiu). Leading the council was Ştefan Cicio-Pop, a politician from Arad. After the Declaration of independence on October 18, the setting up of CNR – the national sovereignty body of the Romanians in Hungary, including the major Romanian political forces – represented a major step on the path to national self-determination and prepared the union of Transylvania with Romania.<sup>20</sup>

At the beginning of November, the CNR moved its headquarters to Arad, in the house of PNR leader Ştefan Cicio-Pop, becoming a genuine *provisional government* of Transylvania. For maximum efficiency, it was decided that only 3 representatives of the two parties should stay in Arad, while the others were to be active in the territory, in different areas of Transylvania or in Budapest. Wherever needed, they were to best serve the national cause. Thus, in Arad, in the house of Ştefan Cicio-Pop, 3 members of the PNR (Ştefan Cicio-Pop, Vasile Goldiş, Aurel Lazăr) and 3 Social-Democrats (Ion Flueraş, Iosif Jumanca, Enea Grapini) carried out their activity. During the month of November, there was a comprehensive process of setting up Romanian national councils on the entire territory of Transylvania, in parallel with the organization of national military guards, designed to introduce and protect the new Romanian administration in the province. Particularly important for the evolution of events was the meeting of the 6 CNR members held in Arad on 9 November, where the issue of this council taking over the whole administration on the territory inhabited by Romanians in Hungary and Transylvania was raised. At the proposal of V. Goldiş that a memorandum to that effect should be submitted to the Hungarian government, which was respond within 15 days, Enea Grapini and the other two Social-Democrats answered that “gone is the era of memoranda” and that Romanians, now on top of the

---

<sup>20</sup> Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan, *Istoria Transilvaniei*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. and complete ed. (Cluj-Napoca: Şcoala Ardeleană, 2016), p. 372.

situation, needed to talk “on equal terms” with the old masters. “We need to impose an ultimatum” and “within 48 hours, we need to have an answer to that ultimatum”. The consequence of this ultimatum, sent to Budapest on 10 November, were the negotiations between Romania and Hungary held in Arad, on 13-14 November 1918, in keeping with all the diplomatic rules between equal partners, more precisely between the CNR and the Hungarian revolutionary government, represented by Oszkár Jászi. At the end of these negotiations, the CNR stated unequivocally its willingness to let the Romanians decide their own fate, in the name of the principle and the right to national self-determination. The position of the Romanian Social-Democrats both in Arad, and, a few days later, in Budapest was very strong, in the sense of the necessity of recognising the right of the Romanian nation, which represented the majority in Transylvania, to decide their state membership. On November 16, 1918, in front of the members of the Central Committee of the PSDU, Ion Flueraş, who had been called to exchange some views with the Hungarian Socialists, declared without reservation that “the Romanian people have suffered too much from the rulers of the empire to be stopped from achieving their dream of union and the Socialists can’t and won’t prevent this, nor leave them under the dominion of those to whom they were enslaved in the past. They will be at the forefront of the people, leading them on the best path possible, until freedom is attained”.<sup>21</sup>

In the second half of November 1918, preparations for the union entered a straight line. On 16 November, the CNR issued the manifesto *To the Peoples of the World*, bringing to the attention of public opinion from around the world the intention of the Romanian nation to set up “its free and independent state” on the territory on which it lived. In the document, the CNR called on the international community to support the democratic endeavour of the Romanian nation in the effective enforcement of its self-determination. Then, on 20 November, a call was launched for convening the National Assembly of Alba-Iulia, on Sunday, 1 December 1918. It showed the democratic ways in which Romanians, the majority population of the province, were to delegate power through elected deputies (delegates), who were to decide on their future in Transylvania. The election of the local delegates was held in national assemblies. The representatives of all social categories (professors, teachers, priests, peasants, clerks, lawyers, students, military, etc.) were designated to express the adhesion to the union with Romania of people

---

<sup>21</sup> Sorin Radu, *Ion Flueraş (1882-1953). Social-democrație și sindicalism* (București: Nemira, 2007), p. 56 apud Pop, Bolovan, *Istoria Transilvaniei*, p. 373 sqq.

from thousands of villages across the whole of Transylvania. So were the delegates of political organizations, ecclesiastical, cultural and professional associations and institutions, etc.

Our attempt at reconstructing the destiny of the church and of Romanian civil society in the process of laying the democratic foundations of the Union of 1918 has revealed the complex political, economic and social transformations of the Habsburg monarchy from the 1848 revolution to the First World War. In the autumn of 1918, when the entire Romanian nation in Transylvania was preparing to proclaim the achievement of national state unity, ASTRA and the churches of the Transylvanian Romanians were at the forefront of events. Along with other cultural institutions that had selflessly served the interests of the nation, the cultural society from Sibiu sent two representatives to Alba-Iulia,<sup>22</sup> and the two churches elected their representatives for consecrating, together with the masses, the fulfilment of a desideratum that had driven the entire activity of the Romanians' cultural-national associations.

---

<sup>22</sup> Vasile Curticăpeanu, *Mișcarea culturală românească pentru unirea din 1918* [The Romanian Cultural Movement for the Union of 1918] (București: Editura Științifică, 1968), p. 242.

# Making the Man of Law in Dualist Hungary: Alexa David's Career Strategies and Personal Networks on the Eve of the Twentieth Century\*

**Ovidiu Emil Iudean**

*Centre for Population Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University*

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

E-mail: ovidiu.iudean@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *Making the Man of Law in Dualist Hungary: Alexa David's Career Strategies and Personal Networks on the Eve of the Twentieth Century.* The present study focuses on the educational and professional pathway of Alexa David, one of the law graduates hailing from the land of Năsăud/Naszód, in the final decade of the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century. David's experiences exemplify one of the area's nation-building strategies aimed at establishing a body of individuals trained in law, who could defend the interests of the Romanian nation in Hungarian courts, and contribute to its betterment in all domains. At the same time, because of his kinship ties to the uppermost political echelon in Dualist Hungary, through his uncle Ion Ciocan, a parliamentary representative in Budapest, the Romanian man of law saw himself in a privileged financial position, and was introduced into a wide-ranging network spanning many counties and social-professional levels. He made use of this network in his personal efforts of advancement, and then gave back when he had managed to establish himself as part of the administrative system of the Hungarian, and later on, Romanian state.

**Keywords:** Austria-Hungary, Transylvania, law students, legal professionals, nineteenth century, marriage strategies

**Rezumat:** *Formarea juristului în Ungaria Dualistă: Strategiile de carieră și rețelele personale ale lui Alexa David la începutul secolului al XX-lea.* Studiul de față se concentrează asupra traseului educațional și profesional al lui Alexa David, unul dintre absolvenții de drept din ținutul Năsăudului, în ultima decadă a secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX. Experiențele lui David exemplifică una dintre strategiile de construcție națională utilizate în regiune, care ținea constituirea unui corp de indivizi educați în domeniul juridic, care puteau să apere interesele națiunii române în tribunalele maghiare, și care să contribuie la dezvoltarea sa în toate domeniile. În același timp, datorită legăturilor de rudenie cu cel mai înalt eșalon politic al Ungariei Dualiste, prin

---

\* This paper was supported by CNCS-UEFISCDI through the research project *Nation-Building Strategy or Bourgeois Choices? Romanian Graduates of Law in Dualist Hungary*, project code PN-III-P1-1.1-PD-2016-1468.

unchiul său Ion Ciocan, deputat în Parlamentul de la Budapesta, tânărul jurist s-a văzut plasat într-o poziție privilegiată din punct de vedere financiar, fiind de asemenea introdus într-o rețea vastă, întinsă pe multiple comitate, și cuprinzând indivizi din diferite categorii sociale și profesionale. A reușit să se folosească de această rețea în eforturile sale de avansare, returnând ajutorul primit după ce a reușit să se erijeze ca parte a sistemului administrative al statului maghiar, și apoi al celui român.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Austro-Ungaria, Transilvania, studenți la drept, juriști, secolul XIX, strategii matrimoniale

On August 6<sup>th</sup> 1892, in his application for one of the scholarships offered yearly by the Administrative Commission of School Funds in Năsăud (Hu. Naszód), Alexa David expressed his wish to receive a stipend of 300 Gulden in order to “study [at] the medical faculty – or perhaps at the law faculty – of the University of Cluj.”<sup>1</sup> His application would be approved in the meeting of the Administrative Commission of August 20<sup>th</sup> 1892, though in a procedurally uncharacteristic manner. In pursuing the goal of fashioning a Romanian elite in the area of the former military border regiment of Năsăud,<sup>2</sup> the Administrative Commission was guided by local social-professional and national necessities. The need to establish a local legal elite, which had already been voiced by the Greek Catholic vicar Macedon Pop around the mid-nineteenth century,<sup>3</sup> would remain a constant factor in the policy governing the granting of scholarships to young Romanians who descended from a former border guard family and wished to pursue a higher education. Very often, although young applicants expressed an affinity or interest in several fields of study, and law was sometimes among the least favoured, the Administrative Commission conditioned the granting of a scholarship with the compulsory study of law. If one takes into consideration the costs involved by a higher education, as well as the limited resources of applicants’ families, the mandatory study of law appears as a justified compromise.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Bistrița-Năsăud County Branch of the National Archives (hereafter SJANBN), Fund *Administrația Fondurilor Grănicerești Năsăud* (hereafter AFGN), folder 1493, f. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Lazăr Ureche, *Fondurile grănicerești năsăudene: 1851-1918* [The Border Guards Funds from Năsăud] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2001), pp. 68-83.

<sup>3</sup> “Monarchia austriacă” [The Austrian Monarchy], *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, Brașov, XIV/20, 8 March 1851, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Ovidiu Emil Iudean, “Elite strategies of minority nation-building in dualist Hungary. Law graduates supported by the Năsăud Border Regiment scholarship funds,” *Banatica*, 27 (2017), pp. 517-533.

In Alexa David's case, the Commission would prove to be much more permissive, leaving the choice of field to the scholarship recipient. Most likely, the fact that the young student was the nephew of Ion Ciocan (a sister's son), the principal of the Romanian Gymnasium in Năsăud and a former president of the Commission,<sup>5</sup> likely played a significant part in the Commission's attitude towards Alexa David. Nevertheless, the young protégé's choice would be agreeable to the Commission, as he embarked upon the study of law. His entire activity would be heavily influenced by this choice, as David would consequently guide his professional activity by the principles he revealed in an early letter to his uncle, when he began working as a lawyer: "[...] the social element nearest to me will be the people. So long as my powers allow me, I will therefore strive and work toward covering their needs with honest efforts".<sup>6</sup>

David would enjoy the opportunity to demonstrate his professional skills both as a lawyer, when he defended various co-nationals in numerous trials, and as a royal judge (Hu. királyi járásbírák),

---

<sup>5</sup> Ion Ciocan (1850-1915) was likely the most significant political figure of the land of Năsăud at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was part of the first generation to graduate from the Romanian Higher Gymnasium of Năsăud, where he finished his studies "eminently" in 1871. He pursued studies in theology and philosophy in Vienna, Graz, and Budapest. He taught at the Gymnasium and then became its headmaster for almost two decades, and during his tenure the institution's main building was constructed. He headed the Năsăud Border Guard Funds, one of the region's most important institutional frameworks. In 1886 he won his first parliamentary mandate, running on the lists of the Hungarian Liberal Party, which was governing at the time. The network of close relations he established with various Hungarian authorities, both at county and at central levels, imbued him with a high degree of influence in regional decision-making. This was also evidenced by his lengthy political career, spanning almost two decades, with a brief pause in 1901-1903, a career during which he represented as parliamentary deputy the constituency of Năsăud. His rich correspondence reveals the essential role Ciocan played in resolving the matters brought to him by the inhabitants of Năsăud. He distinguished himself through his intervention activity in the service of the inhabitants of Năsăud, regardless of ethnicity, mediating between the people and the central or county authorities. From 1898 he became a professor at the department for Romanian language and literature at the Budapest University, heading it until 1908. He died on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1915, but not before solving many of the problems faced by his co-nationals throughout Transylvania as a result of the onset of the First World War. For a detailed biographical sketch, see Gavrilă Tomi, "Ion Ciocan - La 90 de ani de la trecerea sa în neființă," [Ion Ciocan - 90 Years after his Passing], *Arhiva Someșană*, 4 (2005), pp. 285-291.

<sup>6</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 185, f. 1.

during the First World War. His career pathway was most likely not exceptional for the time, but rather similar to those of other thousands of Romanians in Dualist Hungary who embarked on the study of law and later on worked in various fields where such training was required or advantageous. Nevertheless, there are few works in Romanian historiography dedicated to the study of the educational and professional pathways followed by these Romanian jurists,<sup>7</sup> even though they comprised a considerable segment of the Romanian elite in Dualist Hungary. Precisely for this reason and owing to the existence of a rich and revealing archival material, we decided to draft a biographical sketch of Alexa David, focusing on the stages of the legal educational pathway upon which he embarked, the career strategies he embraced, and the personal ties he established, as one of many Romanian law graduates in Transleithania on the eve of the twentieth century.

### Family Background

Between 1761 and 1851, the village of Mocod (Hu. Szamosmakód) was a part of the second Romanian border guard regiment of Năsăud, 12<sup>th</sup> company. After the military border was dissolved in 1851, and the Romanian District of Năsăud was established, the village became part of this new administrative unit. Following the 1876 union between the Saxon district of Bistrița and its Romanian counterpart of Năsăud, Mocod would be integrated into the Bistrița-Năsăud County.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> With the exception of a few monographic works such as Vasile Petrica, *Teologul și juristul Dr. Moise Ienciu (1881-1953) – o viață uitată într-o arhivă* [The Theologian and Jurist Dr. Moise Ienciu (1881-1953) - a forgotten life in an archive] (Caransebeș: Editura Episcopiei Caransebeșului, 2003), or various dictionaries such as that dedicated to this group's participation at the Great Assembly of Alba Iulia on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918, Lazăr Gruneanțu, Mirel Ionescu, *Contribuția avocaților din Transilvania și Banat la Mare Unire* [The Contribution of Lawyers from Transylvania and Banat to the Great Union] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2018), Romanian historiography has generally passed over this elite segment. A cursory analysis of the cultural and national activity of the Romanian jurists can be found in Ioan Bolovan, Dorel Moțiu, "Contribuții la cunoșterea activității cultural-naționale a avocaților și funcționarilor români în cadrul Asociației naționale din Arad (1863-1870)," [Contributions to the Knowledge on Romanian Lawyers and Clerks's National Cultural Activity within the Arad National Association (1863-1870)], *Crisia*, 17 (1987), pp. 31-38.

<sup>8</sup> Nestor Șimon, *Schițe monografice ale localităților din fostul Regiment II românesc de graniță de la Năsăud* [Monographic Sketches of the Settlements of the Former Romanian 2<sup>nd</sup> Border Guard Regiment from Năsăud], eds. Adrian Onofreiu, Mircea Prahase, Claudia Septimia Sabău (Cluj-Napoca: Eikon, 2014), pp. 65-66, 68, 132-137.

Alexa David would be born in Mocod on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1870, as a descendant of an old border guard family, of Greek Catholic confession. His father, George David, who stemmed from a peasant background, would not advance on the social ladder, but rather retain his parents' status.<sup>9</sup> Pelagia, his mother, was the daughter of Andrei Ciocan, a wealthy peasant from Mocod, who also served as the parish cantor and teacher at the confessional school. Pelagia's younger brother was Ion Ciocan, the future political leader from Năsăud.<sup>10</sup>

The young Alexa would remain an orphan at a young age, as George David passed away in 1875, leaving his son's education to the care of his mother and her relatives. He would pursue a primary and secondary education at the Romanian Gymnasium of Năsăud. In 1889, prior to the completion of his secondary studies, Alexa David would also lose his mother. In the summer of 1892, he would nevertheless manage to pass his maturity examination (baccalaureate) with the highest qualification.<sup>11</sup>

### **Educational Background**

Lacking in financial resources, an orphan of both parents, but eager to continue his education, Alexa David shared in the fate of many young men in late nineteenth-century Hungary, seeing himself compelled to seek out other avenues of financing his university studies. As a great many other descendants of former border guard families, he enjoyed the opportunity of applying for one of the scholarships offered by the Năsăud Border Guard Funds. However, unlike his peers, he also enjoyed the support and guidance of Ion Ciocan, his uncle, who had already established himself as one of the most influential figures in the area by the early 1890s.

Despite his privileged ties, Alexa David's scholarship application for the financing of university studies did not lack any of the typical documentation for this kind of endeavour. It contained a certification of his descent from a former border guard family, an extract of his baptismal record from the local parish priest, a medical certificate, his maturity examination, as well as a document provided by the local authorities of Mocod, attesting to his exemplary moral behaviour and his material standing. Although many of these documents were drafted with the

---

<sup>9</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 78, f. 25.

<sup>11</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 7-9 and *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 3, f. 1-4.

purpose of aiding the young applicant in his pursuit of a scholarship, despite their teleological quality, they manage to convey a detailed and nuanced image of Alexa David's accomplishments. In August 1892, the applicant had already reached 21 years of age, was in good health, and had graduated from the gymnasium with distinction. He had managed the feat of earning the highest mark ("eminent") not only for his maturity examination, but also throughout his secondary education, regardless of discipline: he excelled both in humanistic disciplines (classical languages, Romanian, German, Hungarian, etc.) and in the study of sciences (mathematics, physics, etc.). What is more, as the certificates issued by the local lay and parish authorities indicate, he had distinguished himself through his morality and good behaviour, as an upstanding member of local society. The entirety of the land he had inherited from his parents was under the administration of his maternal uncle, and therefore, the young applicant was justified in stating that he "had no wealth" in his request for a scholarship. Although at first glance, his material situation appears to have been precarious, we learn from his correspondence with his uncle that Alexa David was constantly supported in his endeavours by Ion Ciocan, who provided his nephew with monthly sums of money, which could reach the amount of 160 Gulden.

As has been noted, David had petitioned the Commission in charge of granting scholarships for a stipend that would allow him to study in one of two fields: medicine or law. This stipend, amounting to 300 Gulden, was granted to the applicant for the university year 1892/93. David's choice was to pursue law studies at the University of Cluj (Hu. Kolozsvár). His personal file as scholarship recipient suggests that he attended the courses of the law faculty successfully, for the entirety of the school year. On the basis of the documents issued by the University of Cluj certifying his attendance and good track record, Alexa David petitioned the Administrative Commission again on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1893, asking that his scholarship be renewed for the coming school year of 1893/94. Shortly afterwards, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1893, the Commission would approve his renewed application.<sup>12</sup>

The annual stipend of 300 Gulden, to which were added the sums he received monthly from his uncle, enabled the young law student to transfer to the more prestigious university of Budapest. Student life in the Transleithanian capital opened up a myriad of opportunities, especially from an academic standpoint: David could attend the lectures of the most renowned law professors in the

---

<sup>12</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 10-16.

Hungarian part of the Dual Monarchy, and had access to extensive specialty works, which could not be found in other university libraries. However, a considerable material effort was required to finance one's stay in Budapest.

Ion Ciocan received periodic updates from his nephew regarding his educational progress, in which the student also detailed his material situation, emphasizing the challenges faced by this educational category in the Hungarian capital. Alexa David found himself in a very privileged circumstance, rarely shared by Romanian students from the Dual Monarchy, which allowed him to prioritise his comfort and his study environment over his financial resources. This was visible in his choice of accommodation,<sup>13</sup> as the young student elected to rent a room in a family home, where all of his needs were catered to, although the costs of such an abode were higher than average. Certainly, David knew how to argue in favour of his choices so as to persuade his uncle of their pragmatism, emphasising their beneficial effects on his education, and consequently on his future career in the field of law:

“Having previously written to you regarding the quarters (Ro. cartelul) that I have rented with all its provisions, I failed to mention how much I was paying, as I find it too expensive. However, I took this step in the hope that, by raising my budget with 5 Gulden more than what I would have paid, should I have accommodated myself in a different home, I will be repaid through the convenience I thusly enjoy; moreover, I have prospects to improve my knowledge of the language. I pay 46 fl.<sup>14</sup> each month, a sum for which I receive every provision, except for washing, which will cost me up to 2 fl. 50 cr. monthly, and so it would be 48 fl. 50 cr.”<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, beyond personal comfort, the opportunity to improve his knowledge of the Hungarian language by conversing with his hosts

---

<sup>13</sup> The search for quarters was, most often, the first step young students had to take once they arrived in Budapest. For a more detailed account of similar experiences of Romanian students see Cornel Sigmirean, “La belle époque: studenți români din Transilvania la universitățile europene,” [La Belle Époque: Romanian Students from Transylvania at European Universities] in *Viața cotidiană în Sibiu secolelor XIX-XX* [Everyday life in 19<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> century Sibiu], eds. Mihaela Grancea, Ioan Popa (Sibiu: Astra Museum, 2015), pp. 55-60.

<sup>14</sup> “Fl.” stood for Hungarian florins, or Gulden, at the time. We have elected to use the form “Gulden” throughout the text, but maintained the shortened “Fl.” where it appeared in original passages from letters. “Cr.”, when it followed “Fl.”, denoted Kreuzer, a sub-unit of the Gulden.

<sup>15</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 448.

and fellow tenants also weighed heavily in this arrangement, warranting the extra financial efforts:

“I will be living alone in a single room (Ro. *chilie*), therefore I think I will also have convenience for my studies. [...] we are some 6 persons in that place, of whom many are young people; graduated, but young; there is a d[octo]r. in medicine, a professor, an engineer, two other university students, with whom I think I will be able to converse during my hours of leisure, and thus to fully become acquainted with the language.”<sup>16</sup> The need to overcome linguistic lacunae, which Alexa David seems to have felt dearly, might seem odd given the law student’s prior educational track record, and especially his “eminent” qualification in the Hungarian language courses at the *Gymnasium*. It should however be mentioned that one would have had little chance to practice Hungarian in daily conversation in the Land of *Năsăud*, an area predominantly inhabited by Romanians. Additionally, as a law student, David would have encountered an increasing number of specialty terms, which he likely would not have met with during his secondary studies. In fact, many Romanians hailing from the same region and studying in Budapest encountered similar challenges, as Alexa David’s wide-ranging correspondence attests to.

Part of the funds received by David were meant to purchase specialty works of law. Although the price of such volumes was quite high, especially if one opted to buy newer editions, rather than those supplied in antique shops, the young student again found persuasive arguments in favour of this more expensive choice: “[...] I bought myself a copy of commercial law with 7 fl. 20 cr. I could have procured an older edition, but on the occasion of a public examination, I saw that on account of only one question, not contained in the older edition, a student was failed.”<sup>17</sup> What is more, once he had reached Budapest, he also joined the local Romanian students’ society “*Petru Maior*”,<sup>18</sup> for which the membership fee amounted to 3 Gulden.

Given that most of the university year coincided with the cold seasons, one also needed to purchase adequate clothing in order to brave the gales on the Danube. Buying cold-weather clothing required a significant financial effort even for a student the likes of Alexa David: “[...]”

---

<sup>16</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 454.

<sup>17</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 448 v.

<sup>18</sup> On the society see Eugenia Glodariu, *Asociațiile culturale ale tineretului studios român din Monarhia Habsburgică: 1860-1918* [Cultural Associations of the Romanian Student Youth in the Habsburg Monarchy: 1860-1918] (Cluj-Napoca: Muzeul Național de Istorie a Transilvaniei, 1998), pp. 51-64.

from the remaining 62 fl. I purchased a change of winter clothes; however, I picked a good fabric so that I could be ensured for at least 2 years. I am in dire need of a winter overcoat. My shoes, I think, will hold.”<sup>19</sup> The high costs of items, as well as his preference for higher-quality fabric, persuaded him to lease the purchase of a good winter overcoat, which “would last some 4 to 5 years”, at a total cost of 45-50 fl. Owing to this investment, David saw himself compelled to write his uncle to ask that his monthly allowance be “supplemented”, especially seeing as he had also unexpectedly needed to buy a pair of shoes as well: “I am lacking a hat, which I cannot buy from the sum I have received this month. [...] when I received 70 fl. I paid for my shoes, as I had nothing to walk with; I am still making regular payments towards my winter overcoat.”<sup>20</sup> Despite spending some not inconsiderable sums on clothing items, Alexa David would write to Ion Ciocan that he did not “[...] seek luxury in apparel”, but rather that he “would procure some juridical tomes.”<sup>21</sup>

What is clear is that Alexa David made the most out of the facilities he was privileged enough to enjoy and wholly devoted himself to his studies. According to the certificates issued by the University of Budapest, during the course of the first semester of 1893/94, the student attended a wide variety of courses: public Hungarian law (Hu. magyar közjog), theory of law (Hu. jogbölcészlet), private Hungarian law (Hu. magyar magánjog), national economy (Hu. nemzetgazdaságtan), ethics (Hu. az ethika), and finally Hungarian bankruptcy law (Hu. magyar csődtörvény). He had the opportunity of learning from the best Hungarian specialists in the field, among which we note Ágost Lechner, Ágost Pulszky, Benő Zsögöd, Imre Pauer, and Mihály Herczegh. During his second semester, he continued to hear lectures in public and private Hungarian law, the theory of law, national economy, while also adding to his schedule classes in financial law (Hu. pénzügytan), concerning the executive powers in Hungarian public law (Hu. a végrehajtó hatalomról a magyar közjog szerint), political economy (Hu. közgazdasági politika) and even in medical jurisprudence (Hu. törvényszéki orvostan). He could therefore expand his knowledge of law and his acquaintance with late nineteenth-century Hungarian law specialists with such names as Vilmos Mariska, Mihály Goszthony, Béla Földes, Gyula Pikler, Zoltán Ráth or the physician Lajos Csatóry.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 454 v. – 455.

<sup>20</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 405 v. – 406.

<sup>21</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 517.

<sup>22</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 20, 24.

During his first two years of study, Alexa David successfully passed all his exams, and therefore the Administrative Commission granted his request of July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1894, and continued to award him a stipend for the university year of 1894/95.<sup>23</sup> Like many of his peers, Alexa David saw himself compelled to interrupt his studies on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1894, as he was mustered to “regular military service.” Consequently, he petitioned the Commission to postpone awarding his stipend to the following university year, when he was set to complete his military duties.<sup>24</sup> While his service would be completed sooner than hoped, lasting only a few months, at the end of 1894 the student took ill, and needed to admit himself to medical supervision for some time in Cluj. Although in February 1895 his health had somewhat improved, the physicians advised him to “sacrifice some months to recover.” Taking advantage of these circumstances, he petitioned to be released from compulsory military service, and in early 1895 his health was repeatedly assessed by military physicians. As they did not find his illness to be serious enough to preclude service, Alexa David needed to resume his military duties until July 1895.<sup>25</sup> Following their completion, he would return to his studies in Budapest, benefitting from the stipend granted by the Năsăud Border Guard Funds. At the end of the university year 1895/96 he passed his final examination, and on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1896 he was certified as a graduated jurist. Shortly afterward, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 1896, the graduate submitted a new application for a 300 Gulden scholarship in order to continue his studies, this time as a doctoral student at the University of Budapest. His petition was approved in August of the same year, so that in the autumn of 1896 Alexa David began to prepare his doctorate in law in parallel to working as a legal trainee.<sup>26</sup> It would be the beginning of a lengthy period of training that would ultimately enable his entry into the legal profession as a full lawyer.

### **Becoming a Lawyer: Career Strategies**

Between the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1896 and the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1898, Alexa David worked as a legal trainee at the royal court of Subotica (Hu. Szabadka),<sup>27</sup> where he earned a monthly wage of 41 Gulden 66 cr.,<sup>28</sup> thus

---

<sup>23</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 21, 22 v.

<sup>24</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 29.

<sup>25</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 526-527, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 32.

<sup>26</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 34-38, 46-52.

<sup>27</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 9, f. 1.

<sup>28</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 6, f. 2-3.

completing his mandatory traineeship after finishing his studies. It was in this town in the North of Vojvodina that he learned the news of his uncle's victory in the parliamentary elections for the constituency of Năsăud. In a congratulatory letter addressed to Ion Ciocan on November 6<sup>th</sup> 1896, Alexa David pondered on the responsibilities taken on by a Romanian politician with his accession to a deputy's seat on the Budapest Parliament: "I see in you an unbeatable fighter for the interests of your nation of the same blood", for which "you will not ignore any moments that concern it, nor will you put aside any chance to contribute to its improvement in all fields."<sup>29</sup> These were the thoughts expressed by a young jurist, who only a few weeks before had sworn an oath of entry into public service in the Hungarian state. Although the administrative judicial activity was demanding, in December 1896 Alexa David successfully passed the first *Rigurosum* in the course of doctoral studies, an accomplishment he mentioned to the Administrative Commission, also sending his certificate as proof.<sup>30</sup> He had therefore fulfilled the requirements of the forum granting him the scholarship for the university year of 1896/97, and was therefore awarded another stipend for the coming university year of 1897/98.<sup>31</sup> According to the statutes, this would be the last year in which Alexa David could be granted a stipend, as he had enjoyed this financial support for four years of study.

Earning a doctor's title would however prove more difficult than the young jurist from Năsăud had expected, although law was regarded as one of the most accessible fields of study at the time.<sup>32</sup> His activity at the royal court in Subotica, as well as the fact that during the school year of 1897/98 he "was for the most part ill" prevented Alexa David from taking his other examinations. Under these circumstances, his scholarship for the second semester was suspended, and only partially reinstated for half the regular amount after interventions were made with the president of the Administrative Commission. The situation was only clarified at the end of 1899, when Alexa David submitted the documents certifying that in June of 1899 he had successfully passed his second exam, and therefore received the remaining sum from his

---

<sup>29</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 212, 33 v. - 34.

<sup>30</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 53, 62.

<sup>31</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 60 - 61 v.

<sup>32</sup> Cornel Sigmirean, *Istoria formării intelectualității românești din Transilvania și Banat în epoca modernă* [The History of the Formation of Romanian Intelligentsia in Transylvania and Banat in the Modern Age] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000), p. 108.

original stipend granted in 1897.<sup>33</sup> Eventually, David would pass all of his necessary examinations, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 1900, the University of Budapest awarded him the degree of “*Doctorem Iuris Universi*”.<sup>34</sup>

The satisfaction of having obtained a doctoral degree would however be clouded by the premature passing of his aunt, Ion Ciocan’s wife Amalia Ciocan (née Piciu), on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 1900.<sup>35</sup> Having lost their only daughter, Leon and Ana Piciu would adopt their son-in-law’s nephew. Alexa David thus became the adoptive son of the former head of the Land Registry in Năsăud, a man who enjoyed a considerable respect in the former border regiment area, where small land owners predominated.<sup>36</sup> Having already completed his traineeship, earned the title of doctor in law, and as the sole heir of the Piciu family, Alexa David was well prepared for a lawyer’s career in Năsăud.

In order to become a lawyer, he needed to pass an examination in front of a commission at the Chamber of Lawyers of Târgul Mureş (hu. Marosvásárhely).<sup>37</sup> So as to better prepare for this examination, Alexa David would relocate to Târgu Mureş in the autumn of 1900, where he would dedicate his time to study and, following his uncle’s advice, he would try to establish ties that were necessary to the accomplishment of his professional goals. As a deputy in the Hungarian parliament, Ion Ciocan had recommended his nephew to various distinguished figures in the public life of Târgu Mureş: “A few day ago I met here the deputy Bernády Gy.<sup>38</sup> I recommended you to him on this occasion as well, and he told me to tell you that you should visit him again. Go therefore and

---

<sup>33</sup> SJANBN, Fund AFGN, folder 1493, f. 62-72.

<sup>34</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 4, f. 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Obituary for Amalia Ciocan, née Piciu*, in SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 14, f. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Tomi, “Ion Ciocan,” p. 286.

<sup>37</sup> The license to practice as a lawyer was granted by a Chamber of Lawyers. Such an institution existed in each of the 27 judicial districts of Dualist Hungary. See Mária M. Kovács, *Liberal Professions and Illiberal Politics. Hungary from the Habsburgs to the Holocaust* (Washington – New York – Oxford: Woodrow Wilson Center Press – Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 14-15.

<sup>38</sup> György Bernády (1864-1938) was a Hungarian politician, parliamentary representative of the urban constituency of Târgu Mureş (Hu. Marosvásárhely) II between 1896 and 1901, and the mayor of Târgu Mureş between and 1902 and 1912. For his biography and activity see Imola V. György, *Bernády György és kultusza Marosvásárhelyen: a lokális történelem mint narratív identitás* [György Bernády and his Cult in Târgu Mureş: Local History as Narrative Identity] (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2018).

see him, even if you have no work with him; visit him from time to time, because it can only be of use to you from many perspectives.”<sup>39</sup>

After a year and a half spent in Târgu Mureș, Alexa David enrolled to take the examination that would allow him to enter the Bar. The examination fees and “everything else you might need” were covered by Ion Ciocan, who had provided his nephew with the necessary financial support for the duration of his stay in Târgu Mureș. However, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 1902, Alexa David would telegraph his uncle that he had failed the examination, “a great blow” for the young jurist, as he himself confessed. The letter Ion Ciocan sent to his nephew shortly after having learned of his lack of success reveals both the young jurist’s despondency as well the affection his uncle bore him: “I believe that you are distressed, and that in this occurrence you see a great blow. Anyone would be the same when something unwanted happens, something that one could not accept, that perhaps had not even occurred to them; [...] I know that you did your duty, and even maybe exerted yourself more than was necessary. You may at least be consoled in this [...] Others had the same happen to them, and still they crafted for themselves, although later, a good future. God will also help you.”<sup>40</sup> The uncle’s forecast would come to fruition in only a few months. After spending some time in Năsăud, in the home of his adoptive parents, Alexa David would overcome the despondency elicited by his failure and resume preparing for the examination, this time successfully. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 1902 he would again find himself in front of the examination commission, whose members he would persuade of his knowledge and aptitude, and who would grant him the “requested formal qualification”, enabling him to begin practice as a lawyer.<sup>41</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Alexa David opened a lawyer’s practice in Năsăud, in a rented space located in the building of the Năsăud Border Guard Funds, the institution that had contributed so much to his educational pathway. The practice however needed to be furnished, while the newly-made lawyer had to purchase a new wardrobe, appropriate to his new social-professional status, as he wrote to his uncle on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 1902: “As far as the furnishing is concerned: some printed items I had already procured in Oșorhei<sup>42</sup>, now I only wait [for some] from the “Minerva” institute in B[uda]pest;

---

<sup>39</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 135, f. 2.

<sup>40</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 135, f. 11-12.

<sup>41</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 9, f. 1.

<sup>42</sup> Târgu Mureș.

the first I paid for, the latter will cost 42 Crowns; I can pay for them as well. I ordered in Bistrița 3 dressers for books, archives, and clothes, a writing desk, 6 chairs, a clothes stand and a washing table, which I expect [to be delivered] these days. Everything is of good quality and enough for me. I paid 100 Crowns, and the rest will be paid in monthly instalments of 20 Crowns. [...] A bed I will bring from home, and a long table I shall order here, with less than 20 Crowns I think I shall also manage it, but I can last without it for another half-year. I ordered winter apparel with 70 Crowns. [...] Up to this point therefore there is no monumental need of money, except what I will still require for: footwear, a hat, and other smaller items; then some other necessities for setting up: an index, a day-book, etc. which I can be purchased for modest prices.”<sup>43</sup> Although he assured his uncle that he required no other funds, the deputy replied to his nephew’s letter noting that “from the money deposited at the Aurora<sup>44</sup> you may withdraw up to 300 Gulden.”<sup>45</sup> Most likely, the security offered by his uncle’s financial resources enabled Alexa David to craft his own financial strategy by prioritising the need to firstly establish himself as a respected professional, to be followed some time later by setting higher fees for his services: “now, at the beginning, until I gain trust I cannot start with higher prices than what is required to cover direct costs, because, as I know the people, and as I see them, they need to be raised [to know] that if they come into trouble and cannot help themselves, they will seek advice from those who deal with such issues specially.”<sup>46</sup>

### Marriage Strategies and Personal Networks

Having opened his office and begun his activity as a lawyer, professional objectives to which he had devoted his entire energy for a decade, ever since his enrolment as a student at the law faculty of Cluj, Alexa David, then at the age 32, could finally take the time to seek out personal and familial fulfilment. He was as pragmatic in this endeavour as he had been before: he wished to contract a marriage that would enable his

---

<sup>43</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 185, f. 1-2.

<sup>44</sup> The credit and safe-keeping society “Aurora” of Năsăud. Established in 1873, according to its statutes, it had the purpose of “procuring for the peasant people the necessary capital means to maintain and develop its economy” On its role and activity see Nicolae Drăgan, *Monografia societății de împrumut și păstrare “Aurora” din Năsăud: 1873-1923* [Monograph of the Aurora Credit and Safe-Keeping Society of Năsăud: 1873-1923] (Cluj: Imprimeria Dr. Sebastian Bornemisa, 1923).

<sup>45</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 135, f. 23.

<sup>46</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 185, f. 2.

social and material advancement, while also giving him the satisfaction of a perfect conjugal living. He would first seek to marry one of the women stemming from the most respected families in the land of Năsăud, but, as he revealed to his uncle, he had found none to conform to his expectations: "Regardless of how many acquaintances I have, I am unable to find the person with whom I could start a home - and I do not wish to make ties with persons without means."<sup>47</sup> Given his requirements, Alexa David needed to seek further than his native county to neighbouring areas, and it was only in the summer of 1908 that he could state that he had "heard of a woman from Marmația", who was said to correspond to his expectations. He had most likely learned of her existence from Dumitru Hodor, a young Romanian jurist from Maramureș (Hu. Máramaros), who had obtained his doctoral degree at the University of Cluj and had undertaken his training in Alexa David's practice,<sup>48</sup> with whom he had maintained close ties. Irma Maria Raț, the woman in question, was Hodor's maternal aunt.

Greatly interested in Irma Raț, David would make use of the pretext of fulfilling various juridical duties in Sighetul Marmației (Hu. Máramarossziget) in September 1908, and travel to visit her relatives as well as acquaintances in the area, who he hoped could provide more information about the woman. During his first visit he was also able to meet Irma herself. She was located at the time in Dragomirești (Hu. Dragomérfalva), living in the home of her brother, George Raț, who was gravely ill and whom she was caring for. Their meeting was brief, as David spent the night in the home of Demetriu Hodor's parents, in Strâmtura (Hu. Szurdok), where Irma was living most of the time. On the second day of his trip, he visited one of his uncle's close friends, Tit Bud, the Greek Catholic vicar of Maramureș, in Sighetul Marmației. He took the opportunity of this discussion to bring up his plans for marriage, and, among the "8-10 women, as well as some girls, and a widow" the vicar mentioned in this context as potential spouses for David, Irma had also been included. Without divulging his real intentions, David managed to obtain from the vicar the information he needed: "regarding herself, this is all I learned: that she has been split from her husband by the courts for a long time, and that in the past years the vicar recommended three men to her, but she refused to wed any of them."<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 90.

<sup>48</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 135, f. 36; Sigmirean, *Istoria formării*, p. 541.

<sup>49</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 89.

Following his matrimonial “voyage” to Maramureș, Alexa David wrote to Ion Ciocan, notifying him of “the steps of my marriage”, emphasizing his preference for Irma Raț. His potential spouse’s father had been a parish priest in Cavnic (Hu. Kapnikbánya) and then the Greek Catholic dean of Copalnic-Mănăștur (Hu. Kápolnokmonostar). Irma had been married for a year with a certain priest called Mihalca, the son of the former county commissioner (Hu. alispán) of Maramureș, but had divorced her husband after he became mentally ill, and needed to be admitted to a sanatorium. She was about 35 years of age, had no children, was “brunette, full-figured [...] cultured enough”, and would bring a dowry of “16000 Cr.[owns] which she would be compensated with by her father-in-law.” The fact that Irma had been previously married was not an impediment in Alexa David’s eyes, but rather on the contrary: he had “reached the belief that I might start a home only with a woman of at least 30 years of age, and if she has already been married once, then all the better, because she will have been acquainted with this way of life and there will be no need for schooling in this regard.” Although he confessed to his uncle that “she made a good impression on me”, he urged Ciocan to enquire with the elite hailing from Maramureș, then located in Budapest, “particularly in regards to the family, the life [she has led] after her separation, and anything else you might find necessary.”<sup>50</sup>

Eager to aid his nephew in this matter, Ciocan first contacted his colleagues in Parliament who represented the constituencies of Maramureș. He did not manage to obtain too much information as “most of them are of another nation, and perhaps that is why they are not that knowledgeable”, while one of the Romanian deputies for Maramureș, Petru Mihalyi, had been ill for a lengthy period, and was missing from Budapest. After having consulted other acquaintances from Irma’s county, Ciocan would write to his nephew that “I heard no disagreeable talk, neither of the family, nor of the person; and I have been told satisfactory words regarding both.”<sup>51</sup>

Consequently, at the end of October 1908, persuaded that “only with such a woman will it be appropriate to make this tie”,<sup>52</sup> Alexa David married Irma Raț. His wedding was witnessed in Church by Ioan Gheție,<sup>53</sup> the headmaster of the Năsăud Gymnasium, and a close friend

---

<sup>50</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 89-90.

<sup>51</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 135, f. 48-50.

<sup>52</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 98.

<sup>53</sup> On the life and activity of the professor and parliamentary representative Ioan Gheție see Ovidiu Emil Iudean, *The Romanian governmental representatives in the Budapest Parliament: 1881-1918* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2016), pp. 143-144.

of his uncle's.<sup>54</sup> David's choice of spouse was fully in accord with his expectations, as the marriage would allow him to advance socially and materially, to establish a series of new personal and professional ties in the county of Maramureş and to deepen existing ones, and finally, to enjoy a fulfilled personal life that would last until his wife's passing on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 1931.<sup>55</sup>

### **Career Changes and Personal Networks during the First World War**

Professionally accomplished and personally fulfilled, Alexa David would remain active as an attorney in Năsăud for more than a decade. During this time, he pled in hundreds of trials, in causes such as murder, forced executions, calumny, debt recovery or inheritance, defending the interests of both particular individuals and organisations.<sup>56</sup> He distinguished himself as an able lawyer, and the income he derived from his activity had led him to believe that he could pursue the same line of work until retirement.

The outbreak of the First World War would however bring about significant changes in his and many others' career pathways. Only one year after the War had begun, the inhabitants of Năsăud found themselves in a precarious situation, facing various material hardships and lacking food, and feeling acutely insecure due to the fighting occurring nearby between the Austrian-Hungarian and Russian troops.<sup>57</sup> This situation also had repercussions on Alexa David's practice. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1915, the lawyer wrote to his uncle in Budapest about his intention to join the corps of state judicial clerks, thus renouncing the freedom as well as the uncertainty of a liberal profession: "Ever since the war had begun in the summer of the previous year, the business in my practice has been drastically reduced and I started to make an inventory [...] I cannot predict the situation after the war, but I think that only

---

<sup>54</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 208, f. 91.

<sup>55</sup> *Obituary Irma Dr. David née. Raţiu* in SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 14, f. 7.

<sup>56</sup> The *David Alexa* personal collection from the SJANBN contains almost one hundred folders (no. 15 to 111) including case files from the lawsuits where he served as an attorney.

<sup>57</sup> On the dire circumstances in which the Romanians in Năsăud found themselves see Ovidiu Emil Iudean, "Bridging the Gap: Romanian Parliamentary Elite in Aid of their Communities during the First World War," in *World War I. The Other Face of the War*, eds. Ioan Bolovan et alii. (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2016), pp. 95-107. For the situation of the fighting on the Eastern front see Dennis Showalter, "War in the East and Balkans, 1914-18," in *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 66-81.

through strenuous work would I be able to evaluate and collect what is owed to me. I have thus reached the conviction that by occupying the office of royal judge in Năsăud I would more easily be able to attain my goal and would also be ensured for the future.”<sup>58</sup>

In early 1915, it seemed that Alexa David’s wish could have found fulfilment: the royal judge Németh had been transferred to Dej, and therefore the royal judge’s seat in Năsăud had become vacant. This office was vied for by many local jurists, no fewer than 14 candidates submitting their applications for the seat.<sup>59</sup> As he himself confessed, Alexa David was “determined to enter the office of judge”, and to this purpose, to appeal to his personal network in order to enable this change of position, especially seeing as “at the local court, at the tribunal and at the court of Cluj my activity [as a lawyer] has been praised many times. I have a spotless image [in the eyes of] of the Chamber of Lawyers.”<sup>60</sup>

Expectedly, David’s main supporter was his uncle. As a governmental representative in the Budapest Parliament, he was able to intervene with the Minister for Justice Jenő Balogh, to whom he conveyed his nephew’s situation and wish, and from whom he obtained the promise of a favourable resolution. However, at the same time, Ion Ciocan also notified David that a position of public notary in Năsăud had become available. The notary occupying the office, Schreiber, had requested his transfer from Năsăud to an area farther away from the frontline and had also asked Ion Ciocan to intervene with the central authorities in his favour. Discussing Schreiber’s request with his close friend, Vasile Hossu, the Greek Catholic bishop of Gherla (Hu. Szamosújvár), Ion Ciocan had been advised to make all necessary arrangements so that in Năsăud “a Romanian public notary be appointed”, an office for which his own nephew had been recommended.<sup>61</sup>

Alexa David thus saw himself compelled to choose between two public offices that could have offered him the solution to the material problems caused by the war. Thinking that “the office of notary might be better, because this office would gain a different traction under my tenure”, but maintaining the intention to occupy the position of royal judge, Alexa David decided to travel to Budapest to solve the matter of

---

<sup>58</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 98, f. 136.

<sup>59</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 98, f. 136, 140.

<sup>60</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 98, f. 136.

<sup>61</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 135, f. 112-115.

his future employment.<sup>62</sup> While in the Hungarian capital, he took all necessary administrative steps to fulfil this goal, but in the meantime the office of public notary no longer represented an option, as Schreiber had withdrawn his transfer request from Năsăud.<sup>63</sup> However, the only remaining option, that of royal judge, did not seem to materialise either. Beyond financial constraints, the possibility of being mustered in the Austrian-Hungarian army constituted a further reason for concern. Expressing his unease, Alexa David would write to his uncle on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1915 that he would “be glad to see the matter resolved because – as I see – our mustering is near, and if other reasons will not be able to help me, then the job will spare me many troubles.”<sup>64</sup>

Under these circumstances, despite being in precarious health, Ion Ciocan made use of all the relations established during a lengthy political career in order to seek the fastest resolution of his nephew’s situation. The efforts were not for naught, as at the beginning of July 1915, Alexa David wrote to his uncle to thank him for “the exertion in his cause”, notifying him that he had been appointed as a royal judge.<sup>65</sup> Thus ended Alexa David’s career as a lawyer, and began a new professional chapter in the jurist’s life, in the public service of the state, a chapter that would be continued after 1918, in the service of the Greater Romanian public.<sup>66</sup> Ion Ciocan’s interventions with the Minister for Justice in Budapest in the first half of 1915 would be the final testament of the support and care that the political figure had provided his nephew with throughout his lifetime. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1915, Ion Ciocan would pass away,<sup>67</sup> leaving the greater part of his estate to Alexa David.

## Conclusions

For national minorities, who were permanently struggling for rights in the framework of multi-ethnic empires – the situation of the Romanians in Dualist Hungary –, the fashioning of a legal elite would become a fundamental necessity over time. The case of Alexa David, though not perhaps typical, owing the privileged circumstances he enjoyed through the connections established by his uncle and his significant financial support, conveys a highly revealing image of the

---

<sup>62</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 185, f. 4.

<sup>63</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 98, f. 143.

<sup>64</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 185, f. 5.

<sup>65</sup> SJANBN, *Ion Ciocan* personal collection, folder 98, f. 148.

<sup>66</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 9, f. 1.

<sup>67</sup> *Obituary of Ion Ciocan*, in SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 14, f. 5.

formation and professional ascension of a Romanian law graduate in early twentieth-century Transylvania.

His career strategies, coupled with his constant preoccupation to enlarge and deepen his personal network depict the challenges faced by those who were active in the field of law. His professional activity undoubtedly brought with it a significant social capital at local level, which was attested to by the rich correspondence he received, in which his help in various matters outside the boundaries of legal activity was required. The jurist had become a *de facto* broker, mediating between the inhabitants of the land of Năsăud and their parliamentary representative, Ion Ciocan.

However, his entry into the service of the state would significantly alter the Romanian man of law's image, if the accusations lodged against David by Romanian veterans from Năsăud in the autumn of 1918, after their return from the frontline, are given credence: "That whore David who sold his body and soul to the Hungarians and Jews, [you] made him distribute brandy, so that he could take more for himself, and to us who were in the fire, not give us anything? Why?"<sup>68</sup>

Despite these tense and polarising experiences at the end of the war, the knowledge and the expertise of Romanian jurists who had earned their education in Dualist Hungary were sufficient recommendation after 1918 for them to occupy administrative and judicial positions in the newly-formed public service framework of Greater Romania. Many of them acquitted themselves of their responsibilities honourably during the interwar period as well, as was the case of Alexa David, who would be awarded the "Steaua României" Order to the degree of officer on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 1922."<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> Vlad Popovici, "Notes on the Romanian Civil Servants from Beszterce-Naszód/Bistrița-Năsăud County during World War I and its Aftermath (1914-1921)," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "George Barițiu" din Cluj-Napoca. Series Historica, Supplement*, 55 (2016), p. 175.

<sup>69</sup> SJANBN, *Alexa David* personal collection, folder 9, f. 2.

## Astra's Membership in the Early 1900s\*

**Vlad Popovici**

*Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University*

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

E-mail: vlad.popovici@ubbcluj.ro

**Abstract:** *Astra's Membership in the Early 1900s.* The study continues and develops the research initiated by V. Moga at the beginning of the 2000s regarding Astra's members in the period of 1913-1920, through a chronological extension towards the beginning of the century and a more detailed analysis of the evolutions during the First World War. After the Association went through a period of stabilization of the number of its members in the first years of the 20th century, starting with 1906, partially as an effect of the festive moment represented by the inauguration of the "Astra Museum" in the previous year, a period of growth followed, reaching its peak in 1912, one year after the 50 year jubilee. The combined effect of the extinguishment of interest after the festive moment and that of the breakout of the war caused a consistent recoil, which ended only in 1916, as a result of the efforts of the Association's leadership at all levels, however only the year of 1919 brought a return to the pre-war situation. From the point of view of the composition and of the profile of the body of members, it is obvious that Astra has mobilized the individual and institutional energies of all of the Romanian socio-professional layers, a significant share being held by the clergy, lawyers and banking institutions, followed by teachers and professors, "owners" (of mines, of farms, etc.), the body of petty functionaries, the doctors and pharmacists, officers, craftsmen and merchants, and, definitely, the peasants - the latter dominating a particular lower category, that of the "helping members", which included several thousands of persons. Women represented a relatively discreet presence within Astra, their number and percentage remaining low before 1919, and seeming to be often linked to the presence of their male partners.

**Keywords:** cultural associations, Transylvania, Hungary, early 20th century, civil society, prosopography

**Rezumat:** *Membrii Astrei la începutul secolului al XX-lea.* Studiul continuă și dezvoltă cercetările inițiate de V. Moga la începutul anilor 2000 privind corpul membrilor Astrei în perioada 1913-1920 printr-o extensie cronologică spre începutul secolului și o analiză mai detaliată a evoluțiilor din perioada Primului Război Mondial. După ce în primii ani ai secolului al XX-lea Asociațiunea a trecut printr-o perioadă de

---

\* This paper was published within the framework of the project PN-III-P1-1.1-TE-2016-0432, *Romanian Officers in the Habsburg Army and their Involvement in Civil Society (late 18th century to 1918)*.

stabilizare a numărului membrilor, începând cu anul 1906, parțial ca efect al momentului festiv reprezentat de inaugurarea Muzeului Astrei în anul precedent, a urmat o perioadă de creștere, ce și-a atins vârful în 1912, anul imediat următor jubileului de 50 de ani. Efectul combinat al stingerii interesului după momentul festiv și al izbucnirii războiului a cauzat un recul consistent, care s-a oprit abia în anul 1916, ca urmare a eforturilor conducerii Asociațiunii la toate nivelurile, însă abia anul 1919 a adus revenirea la situația antebelică. Din punct de vedere al compoziției și profilului corpului membrilor, este evident că Astra a mobilizat energiile individuale și instituționale ale tuturor straturilor socio-profesionale, o pondere semnificativă având instituțiile de credit, avocații și clerul, urmași de învățători și profesori, „proprietari” (de mine, agricoli etc.), funcționăria măruntă, medici și farmaciști, ofițeri, meseriași și comercianți și, bineînțeles, țărani – aceștia din urmă dominau o categorie aparte, cea a „membrilor ajutători”, care includea câteva mii de persoane. Femeile au reprezentat o prezență relativ discretă în rândul Astrei, nu-mărul și ponderea lor rămânând reduse înainte de 1919 și apărând legate, de multe ori, de parteneri masculini.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** asociații culturale, Transilvania, Ungaria, începutul secolului al XX-lea, societate civilă, prosopografie

A few years ago, we opened a research workshop dedicated to the prosopographic analysis of Astra's members, whose first results focused on the starting period of the Association.<sup>1</sup> The present study shifts the focus towards the last two decades before World War I and its immediate aftermath, following in the footsteps of V. Moga's analysis of the 1913-1920 period,<sup>2</sup> to which a cross-sectional analysis of the 1901

---

<sup>1</sup> Vlad Popovici, "Astra's Founders. A Prosopographical Study," *Transylvanian Review*, 20 (2011), 2, pp. 88-97. Romanian version: "Fondatorii Astrei. Studiu prosopografic", in *Asociaționism și naționalism cultural în secolele XIX-XX*, eds. Liviu Maior, Ioan Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română. Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2011), pp. 151-160; Vlad Popovici, "Prosopografia membrilor Astrei – o necesitate istorică și un atelier de cercetare," [The Prosopography of Astra's Membership – a Historical Must-Do and a Research Workshop] in *Astra și românii. Memorie istorică și realități contemporane*, eds. Mircea-Cristian Ghenghea, Iulian Pruteanu-Isăcescu (Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași, 2015), pp. 51-64.

<sup>2</sup> Valer Moga, "Astra și societatea. Membrii instituției în deceniul al doilea al secolului al XX-lea" [Astra and the Society. The Members of the Institution in the Second Decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century], *Apulum*, XXXVIII (2001), 2, pp. 193-205; Valer Moga, *Astra și societatea: 1918-1930* [Astra and the Society: 1918-1930] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2003), pp. 164-175. Hereinafter, in order to avoid confusions, the reference Moga, *Astra* will refer exclusively to the most recent title (the book).

membership, and a closer look at the war period have been added. The objective of this paper is to analyze the socio-professional composition and the geographical distribution of Astra's members in its most flourishing period before the war, to compare the profiles of the members of the Association with the general profile of the Romanian society from Transylvania and Hungary and, last but not least, to identify the effects of the war on the interest towards the main cultural and scientific association of Romanians within the Habsburg Empire.

The nominal identification of the members has been based on annual detailed lists published by *Transilvania*, the official journal of the Association,<sup>3</sup> although it is necessary to mention that another account is kept in Astra's archives.<sup>4</sup> To our knowledge, the two accounts have not been thoroughly and globally compared, at least for the pre-war period.

Astra - "The Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People" ("Asociațiunea Transilvană pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român") - is one of the most intensely researched Romanian cultural institutions of the last one hundred and fifty years, competing at the level of interest with the Romanian Academy. It occupies a well-defined place in the historiography of the Habsburg Empire, next to the similar societies that were developed in the Central-European area,<sup>5</sup> partially as a result of the

---

<sup>3</sup> *Transilvania*, XXXII (1901), 5, pp. 66-101; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1902, 4, pp. 63-100; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1903, 4, pp. 67-87; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1904, 4, pp. 98-118; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1905, 4, pp. 101-123; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1906, 4, pp. 88-113; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1907, 3, pp. 79-105; *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1908, 2, pp. 33-59; *Transilvania*, XL (1909), 4, pp. 223-252; *Transilvania*, XLI (1910), 4, pp. 207-237; *Transilvania*, XLII (1911), 4, pp. 499-535; *Transilvania*, XLIII (1912), 5, pp. 315-353; *Transilvania*, XLIV (1913), 5, pp. 211-249; *Transilvania*, XLV (1914), 7-9, pp. 340-383; *Transilvania*, XLVI (1915), pp. 178-210; *Transilvania*, XLVII (1916), 7-12, pp. 136-166; *Transilvania*, XLVIII (1917), 7-12, pp. 142-170; *Transilvania*, XLIX (1918), 1-12, pp. 40-67; *Transilvania*, L (1919), 1-12, pp. 70-98,

<http://documente.bcucuj.ro/web/bibdigit/periodice/transilvania/>, last accessed at 30.11.2018. When not referenced otherwise, all data and calculations throughout the paper are based on the information extracted from the abovementioned sources and detailed in Tables 1, 2a and 2b.

<sup>4</sup> Sibiu County Service of the National Archives, Fund: ASTRA-Sibiu Administrative situation, inv. 433, files 30, 32, 33, 35.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley B. Kimball, "The Austro-Slav Revival: A study of Nineteenth-Century Literary Foundations," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society. New series*, 63

emergence of nationalisms and their cultural-scientific dimension,<sup>6</sup> partially as an effect of the development of civil society in its associative forms.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, as underlined in a previous study,<sup>8</sup> despite the existence of several well written monographs and some thoroughly compiled and truly valuable collections of studies,<sup>9</sup> the historiographical interest, materialized in a plethora of small and medium sized articles, although consistent in a quantitative dimension, remained unbalanced from the point of view of the research fields, of the geographical or chronological coverage, and, last but not least, of the social structure of the Association. Various factors have contributed to this situation, such as the general level of the Romanian historical writing at the moment of the elaboration of certain texts, the ideological conditionings, and the aggressive nationalistic rhetoric of certain periods, the personal profile and the professional capacity of the historians that approached the subject, and, last but not least, the situation of the archives supporting the research of the topic.

---

(1973), 4, pp. 1-83; Peter Herrity, "The Role of the Matica and Similar Societies in the Development of the Slavonic Literary Languages," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 51 (1973), 124, pp. 368-386.

<sup>6</sup> Zsuzsanna Török, *Exploring Transylvania. Geographies of Knowledge and Entangled Histories in a Multiethnic Province, 1790-1918* (Leiden - Boston: Brill, 2016), especially pp. 107-230.

<sup>7</sup> Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Civil Society, 1750-1914* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), pp. 1-7.

<sup>8</sup> Popovici, "Prosopografia," pp. 51-53.

<sup>9</sup> Gheorghe Preda, *Activitatea Astrei în cei 25 de ani de la Unire (1918-1943)* [The Activity of Astra in the 25 Years Passed from the Great Union (1918-1943)] (Sibiu: Institutul de Arte Grafice „Dacia Traiană”, 1944); Eugen Hulea, *Astra. Istoric, organizare, activitate, statute și regulamente* [Astra: History, Organization, Activity, Statutes and Regulations] (Sibiu: Editura Astrei, 1944); Corneliu Dragoman, *Asociațiunea „Astra”. Activitatea editorială la Sibiu* [Astra Association - Editorial Activity in Sibiu] (Sibiu: s.n., 1973); Victor V. Grecu (coord.), *Astra 1861-1950* (Sibiu: Academia RSR. Secția de științe istorice, 1987); Pamfil Matei, *Asociațiunea transilvană pentru literatura română și cultura poporului român (Astra) și rolul ei în cultura națională (1861-1950)* [The Transylvanian Association for the Romanian Literature and the Culture of the Romanian People (Astra) and its Part in the National Culture (1861-1950)] (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1986); Dorin Ilie Goția, *Astra în anii primului război mondial (1914-1918)* [Astra in the Years of the First World War (1914-1918)] (Cluj-Napoca: Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai”, Ph.D. Thesis, 1998); Moga, *Astra*; Cornel Petroman, *ASTRA în Banat până la Marea Unire* [Astra in Banat before the Great Union] (Timișoara: Eurostampa, 2006); Dumitru Tomoni, *Regionala „Astra bănețeană”. Monografie istorică* [The Regional Branch of Astra in Banat. A Historical Monograph] (Timișoara: Eurostampa - Zamolsara, 2006).

The history of Astra in the pre-War Transylvania still remains a history of general assemblies,<sup>10</sup> of festive or watershed moments, of departments, and of personalities. The overall cultural, scientific, artistic and publishing activity of the Association is also represented; however, solid monographs of the departments are scarce, while a social history of Astra is lacking almost entirely. One of the important and also necessary steps in this direction is represented by the recovery, categorizing, and study of the human capital of the Association, namely of its members, through the methods of biography (when the sources allow it) or of historical prosopography.<sup>11</sup> As a cultural society with social and national goals, Astra was nothing but the sum of the activities and the interests of those that have established it and of those that have joined over time, either when mentioning leaders or simple ordinary members. Getting to know its composition represents the first step towards the understanding of its functioning, but mostly of the impact of this cultural society on the Transylvanian Romanian world. Historiography has presented and analyzed the activity of the Association in almost exclusively eulogistic terms, especially for the period before 1918, but it is worth raising the question of why did the number of its members, although it has known an exponential growth starting with the 1890s, prove to be unable to reach the number of at least 3000 persons until 1914,<sup>12</sup> given that just the number of Romanian priests and teachers in Hungary sensibly exceeded this figure? In order to answer this question a comparison between the general structure of the Romanian society in Transylvania and Hungary at that time and of the socio-professional structure of the Association is required.

### **The characteristics of the recruitment pool: the Romanian society from Transylvania and Hungary at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Referring to the Romanian society from Transylvania and Hungary during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the author of Astra's most thoroughly written monograph views and analyzes it from the

---

<sup>10</sup> Elena Macavei, *Asociațiunea Astra și adunările generale (1861-2011)* [Astra and its General Assemblies] (Sibiu: Editura Asociațiunii Astra, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," *Daedalus*, 100 (1971), 1, Winter (*Historical Studies Today*), pp. 46 sqq; Koenraad Verboven, Myriam Carlier, Jan Dumolyn, "A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography," in *Prosopography Approaches and Applications. A Handbook*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research. Linacre College. University of Oxford, 2007), pp. 36-46.

<sup>12</sup> This figure does not include the so called "helping members," whose situation will be addressed below.

perspective of the 'public' of the Association, as a target and recipient of its activities.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, V. Moga provided one of the best-drafted synthetic pictures of the social metamorphosis of the Romanians in Hungary between 1900 and 1930, while simultaneously linking it to Astra's fields of activity. The main reason why we will briefly get in touch in our own turn, in the lines below, with the same subject, is related to the fact that this target-group, well ethnically circumscribed, shared a second essential quality: that of recruitment pool for the members of the Association (as V. Moga also briefly acknowledges it).<sup>14</sup> Or, given that the public interest rate converted into the acquirement of membership status has been, for the cultural Romanian Association, lower than for other similar associations in the Monarchy,<sup>15</sup> any quantitative and qualitative analysis of its body of members needs to take into account all the more the social realities in which it was rooted.

The 1900 census registered in Transylvania and Hungary a number of approximately 2.7 million Romanians, and that of 1910, 2.9 million. Following the confessional criterion, the figure seems to be somewhat increased: 1.8 million people of Orthodox faith and 1.3 Greek Catholics in 1910. In total, on the eve of the First World War, over 3 million Romanians lived in Hungary, relatively equally split between the two confessions (with a slight increase of those of Orthodox faith) and relatively equally distributed between the former Great Principality of Transylvania (with a slight increase) on one side, and the Banat region and the counties of Eastern Hungary on the other side. A small part of this population lived in cities: 118,097 (4.2%) in 1900, respectively 133,759

---

<sup>13</sup> Moga, *Astra*, pp. 28-52. See also Vasile Dobrescu, *Elita românească în lumea satului transilvan 1867-1918* [The Romanian Elite in the Transylvanian Rural World] (Târgu Mureș: Editura Universității „Petru Maior”, 1996), pp. 15-22 (pages from pdf, at <http://www.bjmures.ro/bd/D/001/02/D00102.pdf>, last accessed 30.11.2018).

<sup>14</sup> Moga, *Astra*, p. 40.

<sup>15</sup> Comparative figures of the membership in Ioan Bolovan, "Societate, biserică și cultură în epoca modernă. Aspecte privind asociațiile culturale regionale românești și slave din Monarhia Habsburgică" [Society, Church and Culture in the Modern Era. Aspects Regarding the Romanian and the Slavic Regional Cultural Associations from the Habsburg Monarchy], in *Lucrările celei de-a XV-a sesiuni a Comisiei bilaterale a istoricilor din România și Rusia: (Cluj-Napoca, 6-11 septembrie 2010)*, ed. Ioan-Aurel Pop (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană - Academia Română. Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2011), pp. 80-81; Ioan Bolovan, *Asociația Națională Arădeană pentru cultura poporului roman 1863-1918* [The National Association from Arad for the Culture of the Romanian People 1863-1918] (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia XXI, 2011), p. 102.

(4.5%) in 1910,<sup>16</sup> also partially on the backdrop of some historic exclusivist traditions. As V. Moga observed, it was easier for Romanians to enter large rural communes, having between 5,000 and 10,000 inhabitants,<sup>17</sup> which has also left its mark on the administrative structure of the Association.

The largest part of the Romanian population was made up by peasants (approximately 86% in 1910), with over half of them owning properties that were smaller than 20 holds.<sup>18</sup> To these masses of peasants navigating the shallow waters at the borders of poverty, one should add the ones that lacked any land, the day laborers, the servants, and other categories of the rural *lumpenproletariat*.<sup>19</sup> Under the conditions of a constant pauperization of the rural inhabitants, emigration became at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a mass phenomenon: between 1899 and 1913 almost 100,000 people from Transylvania (regardless of ethnicity) emigrated, mainly into the United States of America.<sup>20</sup> Only 5.7% of the properties over 500 ha were owned by Romanians, the majority of them belonging in fact to the church or to different foundations. In the case of small properties (under 2.5 ha), 70.5% of owners were Romanians.

The craftsmen, merchants and laborers were socio-professional categories poorly represented among the Romanians in Transylvania, amounting to, in absolute figures, 26,376 people in 1910.<sup>21</sup>

Less than 5% of the Romanian population in Hungary came from families where the head of the household exercised liberal professions, worked in public service, or carried out entrepreneurial activities in the fields of commerce or industry. Among them, using the statistical sources of the time, K. Hitchins estimates the number of that segment of the Romanian middle class formed by “professional and white collar workers” to be of only 11,500 heads of household in 1910, among which approximately 6,500 were priests and teachers.<sup>22</sup> This figure represents a starting point, but has to be regarded with caution while permanently taking into account the way in which the ethnic assignment has been

---

<sup>16</sup> Keith Hitchins, *A Nation Affirmed: The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania 1860/1914* (Bucharest: The Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1999), pp. 104-105.

<sup>17</sup> Moga, *Astra*, p. 32.

<sup>18</sup> 1 hold = 0,57 Ha.

<sup>19</sup> Moga, *Astra*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>20</sup> Liviu Maior, *Mișcarea națională românească din Transilvania (1900-1914)* [The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania (1900-1914)] (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1986), pp. 20-22.

<sup>21</sup> Moga, *Astra*, p. 38.

<sup>22</sup> Hitchins, *A Nation*, pp. 106-107.

made during the census of the population. Previous research made by C. Sigmirean identified for the period between 1867 and 1918 approximately 7.000 Romanian graduates of higher education institutions in Hungary, Austria, and other European states, originating from Transylvania and Hungary.<sup>23</sup> Recent estimations indicate however that this figure was definitely bigger. C. Sigmirean's sample, out of which a large part became "professional and white collar workers" does not include teachers, whose number also reached some thousands, neither does it include communal notaries, a specific category of the rural elite, with a very high influence at the local level, formed in great part by graduates of short-term special courses. Besides, not even at the level of the Romanian bank clerks were they all graduates of higher education.

The first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century meant, for the Romanian society in Transylvania, the moment of the accelerated development of a "national" banking system, which did not maintain but the minimum of necessary technical relations with the banking systems from Hungary and Austro-Hungary and which was primarily directed towards the support of the agricultural credits destined for the middle peasantry and the great landowners. The number of Romanian banks grew from 66 in 1901 to 168 in 1914, being joined by over 100 rural credit unions.<sup>24</sup> Although the increase is spectacular, it shouldn't be overlooked that this Romanian credit system represented a very small part of the ensemble of the credit system in Hungary. Romanian banks formed only 2.85% of the total number of banks in historical Transylvania and 7.86% in Banat and the counties of Eastern Hungary.<sup>25</sup> Their social capital represented, at its turn, only approximately 2% of the social capital of the credit institutions from dualist Hungary.<sup>26</sup>

The first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also represented the moment of the quantitative explosion and diversification of the

<sup>23</sup> Cornel Sigmirean, *Istoria formării intelectualității românești din Transilvania și Banat în epoca modernă* [The History of the Formation of Romanian Intelligentsia in Transylvania and Banat in the Modern Age] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2000).

<sup>24</sup> Hitchins, *A Nation*, p. 245.

<sup>25</sup> Maior, *Mișcarea*, pp. 30-31; Dobrscu, *Elita*, pp. 118-134.

<sup>26</sup> Vasile Dobrescu, *Funcții și funcționalități în sistemul de credit românesc din Transilvania până la Primul Război Mondial* (Târgu Mureș: Editura Universității „Petru Maior”, 2006), pp. 8-26 (pages from pdf, at <http://www.bjmures.ro/bd/D/001/01/D00101.pdf>, last accessed 30.11.2018); Marin Balog, "The Clergy's Involvement into the Romanian Credit System from Transylvania during the late Nineteenth and the Early Twentieth Centuries. Case Study: The Greek-Catholic Clergy," in *Recruitment and Promotion among the Romanian Greek-Catholic Ecclesiastical Elite in Transylvania (1853-1918)*, ed. Mirela Popa Andrei et alii (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2014), pp. 163-180.

Romanian press, which succeeded, after 1890, in finally truly reaching the villages via the gazettes specially intended for the rural public. Still fighting with the chronic illiteracy of the time (whose eradication became one of the main targets of the Association), the press represented the primary means of political activation and of stimulating the national consciousness of hundreds of thousands of Romanian peasants, whose force, although considerably diminished by the lack of experience of the elites, by the censitary franchise and by the frequent abuses, supported the post-1905 neo-activism.

This is the raw socio-professional sketch of the world that Astra was trying to nationally mobilize through culture, to educate it, and from which it could hope to attract members and supporters.

### **Astra's membership - quantitative evolutions**

According to the stipulations of the statutes published in 1897, "the members of the Association are: founders, lifelong, ordinary, helpers, correspondents and honorary".<sup>27</sup> The hierarchy of the members was based on the sum that they paid to the Association's budget, as follows: founding members paid a sum of minimum 200 Gulden (400 Krone) only once; the lifelong members paid a minimum of 100 Gulden (200 Krone) only once; the ordinary members paid an annual tax of 5 Gulden (10 Krone); the helping members paid an annual tax of 1 Gulden (2 Krone). The correspondent members, later the members of the literary and scientific sections, and the honorary members did not pay taxes, but they were expected to support Astra's goals.

This hierarchy also implied different duties for each category of members: "the rights and the duties of the founding members, of the lifelong members and of the ordinary members are for them to cooperate by all means towards the furthering of the goal of the society, they have the right to make proposals in this sense during general assemblies; they have the right of initiative and casting vote in general assemblies; and they receive the organ of the Association for free. The helpers can vote only in department assemblies."<sup>28</sup> According to the statute, the helping members were therefore exclusively involved in the local activity, at the departmental level, without being able to influence in any way the decisions and the general orientation of the Association.

Beyond these statutory stipulations, the practice of mentioning the members and the payment of taxes in the official press organ of

---

<sup>27</sup> *Transilvania*, XXVIII (1897), 7, p. 170.

<sup>28</sup> *Transilvania*, XXVIII (1897), 7, pp. 170-171.

*Astra, Transilvania*, paints even more obviously the delimitations between the founding, lifelong and ordinary members, on one hand, and the helping members, on the other hand. The ones from the first category were almost always mentioned nominally, with information regarding their profession, domicile, and the value of the tax they paid. The ones from the second category appear as simple figures, followed by the quantum of the sums they have paid, even if they sometimes exceeded the minimum of 1 Gulden per year (without usually exceeding, however, 1-1.5 Gulden). At this point, the very fluctuating dynamic of this category of members has to be underlined, which decidedly differentiates them from the others: in 1907, when we identified the first of their statistics, only 735 people were registered as helping members. Between 1909 and 1910, their number sharply increased from 770 to 2,197, to reach 10,598 in 1911 (the year of the 50 years jubilee) and a maximum of 11,851 in 1912. Starting with 1913, their number decreases, again in a sudden manner, to 7,664, while in 1915 there were only 6,202 such members. In all of the cases, over 80% of these members were "plowmen" (peasants).<sup>29</sup>

If the number of helping members was recorded annually for several years (at the peak of their involvement), on departments, their socio-professional structure was more seldom detailed. One of the few exceptions dates from the year 1914, when statistics indicate a number of 6725 helpers, originating from 565 communes. Among these, 5519 (82%) were "plowmen," 144 (2.1%) priests, 299 (4.4%) teachers, 512 (7.6%) craftsmen, 29 administrative clerks, 63 bank clerks, 14 students, 11 servicemen, 20 lawyers, 12 doctors, 26 "privates," and 79 institutions.<sup>30</sup>

The question justly arises: to what extent does this particular category of members have to be taken into account when analyzing *Astra's* membership, given that not even the official statistics of the Association would keep accounts of them, most of the time? Numerically speaking, they represented nearly a double of the members from the first categories, almost four times their numbers in 1911 and 1912, and according to the statutes, they officially formed a category of members. According to the same statutes, they had considerably reduced duties and rights: they were expected to activate exclusively at the local level,

---

<sup>29</sup> *Analele Asociațiunii pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*, 1908, 2, p. 88; *Transilvania*, XL (1909), 4, p. 278; *Transilvania*, XLI (1910), 4, p. 263; *Transilvania*, XLII (1911), 4, p. 593; *Transilvania*, XLIII (1912), 5, pp. 407-408; *Transilvania*, XLIV (1913), 5, pp. 317-318; *Transilvania*, XLV (1914), 7-9, pp. 310-311; *Transilvania*, XLVI (1915), 7-12, pp. 150-151.

<sup>30</sup> *Transilvania*, XLVI (1915), 7-12, pp. 150-151.

and they did not benefit from voting rights or rights of initiative other than in the communities in which they activated, even there only with consultative purposes. From this point of view, Astra seems to be organized similarly to the National Romanian Party. There was an elite at the central level, formed by the members of the executive board and, in the case of Astra, of the literary and scientific sections too. There was also a second echelon, formed by the representatives of the committees from the counties, respectively from the departments, at the national congresses / general assemblies (founding, lifelong and ordinary members in the case of Astra). Finally, at the base of the pyramid stood the great majority of the voters that supported the party, respectively the helping members in Astra's case. Neither one nor the others could be politically / culturally activated in the absence of the second echelon. However, on the other hand, they both represented the main propaganda agents at the grassroots level for the great mass of the rural Romanian population, which did not have the right to vote / to participate actively in Astra's actions.

Within this layered system of politically or culturally institutionalized frames, the base of the pyramid, formed in Astra's case by the helpers, represented an essential link between the top and local elite and the more or less amorphous great mass of the Romanian population. In their absence, the propaganda activity, the conferences, the literacy courses, and generally the effects of Astra's actions at grassroots level would have probably been diminished a lot. Seemingly prestige-indifferent, not interested in decision-making, or too financially burdened to afford the status of ordinary member, their great majority being farmers or small craftsmen, the helpers' presence and activity allows a better understanding of the Romanian rural population's integration within the institutionalized civil society of the time. The existence of this category certainly represented an important factor of Astra's penetration within the rural world, but signals, in equal measure, through their limited rights and implication, an elitist conception concerning the mission of the Association and of the Romanian middle class in general in the process of nation-building. Their socio-professional structure transforms their prosopographic research into a matter of micro-history at the level of departments, circles and local agencies, and in the present research they will be included only in comparative instances, which does not diminish, however, either their importance as propaganda agents, or the necessity of future more detailed analysis, which has the potential of nuancing the understanding of Astra's actions in the rural world and especially of the latter's feedback.

Table 1. Evolution of Astra's membership, by type of members (1901-1919)<sup>31</sup>

Year	Found- ing	Life- long	Ordinary	Honor- ary	Sect- ions	Correspond- ents	Total	Help- ers
1901	83	204	1219	7		20	1533	
1902	86	212	1237	6	25	14	1580	
1903	79	215	1192	6	23	14	1529	
1904	83	227	1208	6	25	14	1563	
1905	86	233	1226	8	25	17	1595	
1906	90	252	1347	8	25	20	1742	
1907	95	255	1393	10	25	22	1800	735
1908	101	263	1319	8	24	22	1737	886
1909	103	274	1478	8	25	21	1909	770
1910	112	289	1579	8	25	23	2036	2197
1911	118	316	1939	9	25	24	2431	10598
1912	142	406	2101	12	25	40	2726	11851
1913	149	445	1902	12	25	165	2698	7664
1914a	144	492	1732	12	40	284	2704	6725
1914b	156	548	1211	12	40	284	2251	6202
1915	150	506	1271		319 (H+S+C)		2246	
1916	156	497	1026				1679	
1917	167	516	1079	8	37	276	2083	
1918	181	584	1083	7	37	276	2168	
1919	237	690	2033	7	36	276	3279	

The table above conveys the statistical evolution of the number Astra's members in the period of 1901-1919 and includes the following categories: the honorary members, members of the sections and corresponding members, founding members, lifelong and ordinary members of the departments and outside them, and on a distinct column, the helping members. The allegiance of the first three mentioned categories to the Association was, naturally, very strongly motivated by

---

<sup>31</sup> Data extracted from the yearly statistics referenced in footnote 2 and 29 above. Some different (most probably miscalculated) figures regarding the ordinary members for the years 1907 and 1909 can be found in *Transilvania*, XLII (1911), 4, p. 407.

the prestige associated to their status, obtained in the virtue of their scientific and intellectual achievements. Certainly, both the quality of being a member of the departments and the internal differentiations implied a dose of prestige, but in this case the impulse and the personal decision played a much more important role. The honorary members, the members of the sections and the correspondents constantly grew in number from fewer than 50 at the beginning of the century, to over 300 on the eve of the First World War, when they formed, therefore, approximately 10% of Astra's membership.

It has to be mentioned from the beginning that these figures (taken from the official publication of the Association) do not have to be considered as being absolute. Firstly, they do not always include, obviously, the helping members (whose dynamic, as much as it is known, has been presented previously). Secondly, a comparison between these figures and the members nominated by the same periodical (*Transilvania*) leaves room for differences, since the members were usually registered in August, on the occasion of the general assemblies, while the annual statistics would sometimes convey the records at the end of the year, therefore including the taxes paid subsequently, until December. Thirdly, we do not know in what measure do they include or not the members that have passed away during that year, nominated separately. Fourthly, it has to be taken into consideration that the figures reflect annual cross-sectional situations that do not take into account the fluctuations and the renewal rate of the members. Taking as an example the department in Blaj, one of the oldest and largest, built around the ever so active cultural, economic and political environment of the Greek-Catholic Metropolitan Church, we ascertain that among the 44 members at the level of the department (therefore exempting the honorary members and those that were part of the sections and resided in Blaj) in 1901 and 1905, only 26 are the same. If we also eliminate the deceased members (4), we are left with a fluctuation rate of 32% on a span of 4 years, which signifies that a considerably more extended segment of the Romanian population has been at a given moment part of the Association. In another example: the Caransebeș department from Banat registered 67 members in 1900, 29 in 1912, 35 in 1915 and 39 in 1918; however, in the 1900-1918 interval, a number of 109 people had the quality of being a member, for longer or shorter periods.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Dumitru Tomoni, *Societate, cultură și politică. „Astra” în Banat (1896-1948)* [Society, Culture and Politics. Astra in Banat (1896-1948)] (Timișoara: Arhiepiscopia Timișoarei, 2009), p. 476.

Moving over the slight relativity of the figures, it can be noticed that, in the evolution of Astra's membership, there are some moments of quantitative leaps that peg the process of doubling the number of members between 1901 and 1919. The period of 1901-1905 registers among 1500-1600 members and was characterized by slight annual fluctuations of some tens of people. The first susceptible qualitative leap took place in 1905/1906, and starting with 1909 the growth has become more accelerated. Where did this increase come from in the first place, given that the number of departments remained roughly the same? In 1906, 19 out of the 44 departments registered declines of the number of their members (-68), other five registered stagnation (which, as we have shown earlier, does not exclude nominal fluctuations), and growth has been due to, in great measure, the newly-coopted members in the other 26 departments (215). Among these, some departments have been highlighted: Sibiu, with 57 new members, Brad (with 18), Făgăraș (with 17), Caransebeș (with 12), and Agnita (with 11). Most probably, the 1905 general assembly of Sibiu determined the strong growth of the number of members within this department, while the inauguration of Astra's Museum, on the same occasion, generated a wave of enthusiasm at the whole level of Transylvania, metamorphosed into new adherences.<sup>33</sup>

In 1912, also partially as an effect of the previous year's jubilee, the number of 2,649 members has been reached within the departments and 77 within the sections, the maximum of the pre-1919 period. It is now that the helping members also reached their peak number. This was followed by a recoil, accentuated by the tough conditions during the war years, although the period between 1916 and 1918 brought slight comebacks, so that in 1919, for the first time, over 3,000 members were registered. The general evolution of the number of Astra's members has been, therefore, a stable and slightly fluctuating one between 1900 and 1905, constantly increasing between 1905 and 1912, regressive between 1913 and 1916, low but stable between 1916 and 1918, and it exploded again starting with the year of 1919. The importance of festive moments for attracting new Astra members, already highlighted in the literature,<sup>34</sup> is obvious: both major leaps (1905/1906 and 1911/1912) have succeeded such events. Just as obvious is the diminishing of the interest in the following period, especially after 1912. At this point we should also highlight that, despite the chronological overlapping with the break-out of the new activism, in 1905, the growth in Astra's membership has, in

---

<sup>33</sup> *Transilvania*, XLII (1911), 4, pp. 457-475.

<sup>34</sup> Moga, *Astra*, p. 164.

our opinion, very little to do with the political developments of the time – unlike a decade before, after the Memorandum law suit.

An analysis of the differences between the years of 1912 and 1915 reveals the fact that, at the level of the departments, even in centers such as Sibiu, Blaj, or Braşov, important decreases of the number of members have been registered, while overall, two thirds of the departments have been affected. The dropouts have hit especially the departments from large and medium cities, many of them having traditions of over several decades, but they did not bypass some large Romanian communes either (Braşov -65, Blaj -59, Făgăraş -49, Şimleu -49, Târgu Mureş -47, Sătmar and Ugocea -47, Sibiu -46, Reghin -33, Abrud -29, Beclean -28, Dej -28, Gherla -24, Târnăveni -23, Lăpuş -21, Timișoara -20, Zărneşti -20). The recoil has been obviously more powerful in the large cities, due probably to the existence of a larger number of Romanians that have registered here in 1911/1912, given the festivity of the moment. Between 1900 and 1912, the departments of Blaj (+69), Sibiu (+68), Sătmar and Ugocea (+67), Gherla (+58), Beclean (+48), Târgu Mureş (+44), Braşov (+43), Sălciua (+43), Făgăraş (+38) have been counted among the most active in the attraction of new members, so that the wave of dropouts after this date is perfectly explainable. Besides, the same departments have also registered the largest losses until the end of the war; nevertheless they have also had spectacular comebacks in 1919.

Among the 24 departments that have succeeded in keeping a positive trend in registering new members between 1912 and 1915, Jibou (+34), Viştea (+30), Orăştie (+23), Şercaia (+21), Biserica Albă (+21), Băseşti (+21), Baia Mare (+18), and Chioar (+17) were the most successful. The only large city in which Astra kept a positive membership trend between 1912 and 1915 has been Oradea. The majority of the departments that have registered significant growth (with the exception of Orăştie) were however newly established, which means that, overall, the combination of the diminishing of the post-jubilee enthusiasm and the outbreak of the First World War has brought the Association, from the point of view of the number of members, to the pre-1910 situation, in order for the new wave of enthusiasm of 1919 to bring an increase in the number of members, again. V. Moga's conclusions regarding the existence of a core characterized by real interest towards the activity of the Association, around which the members with fleeting interest were attracted, seems therefore completely validated, sketching the image of an association that is dependent on the real activity of less than 1,500- 2,000 people at the scale of the whole Transylvania.

This situation has been pointed out even better in the last years of the war. At the end of 1914, the statistics registered a decrease of almost a third of the number of ordinary members, so that in 1916 their number reached less than 1100 people, namely half of the 1912 figure. At the same time, the contraction of the general number of members ends in the same year of 1916, while in 1917 a slight increase recommences. In 1917 and 1918, 25 founding members, 87 lifelong members, and only 57 ordinary members entered or re-entered the Association. The fact that the first two categories, which paid substantially higher taxes, register a double increase compared to that of ordinary members in this period, marks the effort of that core interested in the Astra's proper functioning, formed in great part by members of the local Romanian bourgeoisie, of assuring the proper functioning and the funding of the institution and of setting an example for the other categories of members.

### **Astra's members – the socio-professional structure**

In his analysis, V. Moga offered a well-built image of the socio-professional structure of the Association's members, in its peak moment before the war and in the first years of Greater Romania. What we propose in the following section is to try to capture the evolutions of the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by also adding to his data a sample from 1901. For a greater accuracy of the comparison, we have followed the socio-professional structure used by V. Moga, with slight modifications: we have merged a series of ecclesiastical positions under the title of "ecclesiastic elite" (in general, the positions superior to that of archpriest, both the hierarchical ones, and the ones in the Church administration), we have slightly restructured the categories of public officials, we have added the religious communities to the ecclesiastic institutions, we have added other lay communities alongside the communes. Even so, the comparison can be here and there suspected of slight inconsistencies, which we believe do not affect, however, the overall conclusions.

The socio-professional category that clearly dominated Astra's local organizational structures was represented by the clergy. From the priests and archpriests to the ecclesiastical elite (metropolitans, bishops, vicars, canons, consistorial assessors, etc.), regardless of the category of members, the clergy formed, in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, approximately a third of the number of members. From this point of view the situation was identical to that of the 1860s and it strengthens our hypothesis regarding the persistence of a 1/3 to 2/3 clergy/lay ratio among the "elite" of the Romanian national movement until close to the

First World War.<sup>35</sup> Research conducted by M. Balog on the Romanian credit system of the time strengthens this hypothesis too,<sup>36</sup> which implies the necessity of a more thorough analysis in the future. If, at the beginnings of Astra, archpriests formed the greater part of the clergy members, thirty years later priests had an overwhelming presence: a fifth of the total number of Astra's members in 1901 and a quarter in 1913 were priests. Priests have also known an ascending trend in the period between 1913 and 1920, but their percentage, likely to that of the entire clergy sector, has decreased susceptibly (down to 18.79%), on the background of the massive enrolment of other categories following the establishment of Greater Romania. The presence and influence of the church within Astra is also highlighted by the presence among members of various institutions, from the Metropolitan Greek-Catholic Chapter in Blaj (member since 1861) to various parish communities, most probably influenced by the priests.

Table 2a: The socio-professional distribution of Astra's members (1901-1913-1920) according to the categories of members<sup>37</sup>

Profession	FM 1901	FM 1913	FM 1920	LM 1901	LM 1913	LM 1920	OM 1901	OM 1913	OM 1920
Priests	5	8	30	19	80	136	292	533	559
Archpriests	3	3	3	6	18	25	74	95	88
The ecclesiastical elite	6	11	8	5	8	12	30	11	11
Religious communities and institutions	2	2	2	6	7	10	9	20	20
<b>Total Church</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>678</b>
Lawyers	15	14	55	23	78	93	115	224	84
Judges		4	7	5	1	12	10	9	42
Notaries public			2	2		1	2	2	8
Others	2		1			5	6		17
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>151</b>

<sup>35</sup> Popovici, "Astra's Founders," p. 91.

<sup>36</sup> Balog, "The Clergy's Involvement."

<sup>37</sup> Data for 1913 and 1920 from Moga, *Astra*, pp. 167-169, slightly corrected according to *Transilvania*, XLIV (1913), 5, pp. 211-249; *Transilvania*, LI (1920), 5-9, p. 631 and Annex 6 pp. I-XLIV. Data for 1901 from *Transilvania*, XXXII (1901), 5, pp. 66-101.

<b>Law/Justice</b>									
Banks and credit institutions	4	25	31	9	36	38	11	20	23
Bank directors		3	7	3	23	27	10	23	16
Bank clerks				3	11	6	44	44	10
<b>Total Banks</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>49</b>
High civil servants	2	4	5	1		2	6	1	
Notaries (local levels)	3	1	5	6	15	41	71	76	95
High Sheriffs / Praetors <sup>38</sup>			6	1	1	19	9	2	24
Other			20	5	12	8	34	94	388
<b>Total Civil service</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>507</b>
Communes and other lay communities	16	16	19	34	35	112	8	7	37
Other various institutions	1		10		7	14	5	6	40
Industrial enterprises			4	2			1		
Professors	2	1	6	5	27	53	70	31	153
Techers			1	1	15	42	76	138	298
Doctors	1	6	15	4	22	27	33	22	46
Pharmacists			2	1	3	4	3	7	4
Engineers			2	2	8	10	6	8	15
Officers	2	5	14	2	8	24	7	12	280
NCOs									33
Owners	11	13	18	29	35	58	71	77	168
Peasants				2	3	20	20	9	385
Craftsmen			2		1	17	17	15	98
Merchants	1		13	4	15	31	64	73	86
Industrialists						4	1		3
Women <sup>39</sup>	2	13	34	5	22	52	23	49	180

<sup>38</sup> *Főszolgabíró* and *szolgabíró* before 1919, *protopretor* and *pretor* after 1919.

<sup>39</sup> Following the original methodology of Moga, *Astra*, pp. 167-169, the category of Women only includes those women that did not have a distinct profession mentioned and who only appeared as wives/widows of certain male members. For the complete figures see the respective discussion below.

Others	2	6	5	1	2	18	21	6	91
Profession not recorded		11	15	9	2	54	66	118	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>1043</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>1732</b>	<b>3426</b>

Table 2b: The socio-professional distribution of Astra's members (1901-1913-1920) - totals and professional percentages

Profession	Total 1901	Total 1913	Total 1920	% 1901	% 1913	% 1920
Priests	316	621	725	21,21%	26,17%	15,07%
Archpriests	83	116	116	5,57%	4,89%	2,41%
The ecclesiastical elite	41	30	31	2,75%	1,26%	0,64%
Religious communities and institutions	17	29	32	1,14%	1,22%	0,67%
<b>Total Church</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>30,67%</b>	<b>33,54%</b>	<b>18,79%</b>
Lawyers	153	316	232	10,27%	13,32%	4,82%
Judges	15	14	61	1,01%	0,59%	1,27%
Notaries public	4	2	11	0,27%	0,08%	0,23%
Others	8	0	23	0,54%	0,00%	0,48%
<b>Total Law/Justice</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>12,08%</b>	<b>13,99%</b>	<b>6,80%</b>
Banks and credit institutions	24	81	92	1,61%	3,41%	1,91%
Bank directors	13	49	50	0,87%	2,06%	1,04%
Bank clerks	47	55	16	3,15%	2,32%	0,33%
<b>Total Banks</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>5,64%</b>	<b>7,80%</b>	<b>3,28%</b>
High civil servants	9	5	7	0,60%	0,21%	0,15%
Notaries (local levels)	80	92	141	5,37%	3,88%	2,93%
High Sheriffs / Praetors	10	3	49	0,67%	0,13%	1,02%
Other	39	106	416	2,62%	4,47%	8,65%
<b>Total Civil service</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>9,26%</b>	<b>8,68%</b>	<b>14,16%</b>
Communes and other lay communities	58	58	168	3,89%	2,44%	3,49%
Other various institutions	6	13	64	0,40%	0,55%	1,33%
Industrial enterprises	3	0	4	0,20%	0,00%	0,08%
Professors	77	59	212	5,17%	2,49%	4,41%
Teachers	77	153	341	5,17%	6,45%	7,09%
Doctors	38	50	88	2,55%	2,11%	1,83%

Pharmacists	4	10	10	0,27%	0,42%	0,21%
Engineers	8	16	27	0,54%	0,67%	0,56%
Officers	11	25	318	0,74%	1,05%	6,61%
NCOs	0	0	33	0,00%	0,00%	0,69%
Owners	111	125	244	7,45%	5,27%	5,07%
Peasants	22	12	405	1,48%	0,51%	8,42%
Craftsmen	17	16	117	1,14%	0,67%	2,43%
Merchants	69	88	130	4,63%	3,71%	2,70%
Industrialists	1	0	7	0,07%	0,00%	0,15%
Women <sup>40</sup>	30 (42)	84 (105)	266 (368)	2,01%	3,54%	5,53%
Others	24	14	114	1,61%	0,59%	2,37%
Profession not recorded	75	131	193	5,03%	5,52%	4,01%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1490</b>	<b>2373</b>	<b>4811</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Beyond this, a matter that has been left unstudied especially because of the difficulty encountered in accessing a large number and variety of sources is that of the number of confessional professors and teachers that activated within the Association. In 1901, the professors and teachers amounted together, in equal proportion, to 10.35% of Astra's members. Their number slightly increased in 1913 and more in 1920 (the number of teachers, for example, tripled between 1901 and 1920), but their percentage diminished on the background of the diversification of the socio-professional structure of the body of members. Many of them were, however, employees of the confessional education system, patronized by the two Romanian churches, which raises, in fact, the percentage of the church presence among Astra toward 40% in 1901 and 1913, respectively 30% in 1920. This percentage speaks for itself about the role of the two churches within the national movement, especially at the grassroots level, about the enormous influence that they had, and of their role as opinion makers and trend-setters in a society whose defensive identity position offered fertile ground for conservatism.

---

<sup>40</sup> Following the original methodology of Moga, *Astra*, pp. 167-169, the category of Women only includes those women that did not have a distinct profession mentioned and who only appeared as wives/widows of certain male members. The complete figures regarding women are mentioned between brackets.

The following three important socio-professional categories, in the order of their quantitative presence, were of jurists, of public officials, and of the representatives of the banking system. Each had its own specificities. Among jurists, the most active category was represented, before 1918, by lawyers. At that given moment, they dominated the central leadership of the National Romanian Party<sup>41</sup> and shared with the clergy the leading positions in the leadership of the Romanian banking and credit systems.<sup>42</sup> Their presence, as V. Moga observed, has been considerably diminished after 1918, both numerically and as ratio. Among the hypothesis that he has put forward, we support the one that highlights the transition of the Romanian lawyers before 1918 in administrative offices at county and sub-county level, but we believe that we also have to take into consideration a shift in mentality, which has driven away some of them from their pre-war national-cultural involvement, on the grounds that the most daring of the political ideals and hopes that have been uttered before the war have been fulfilled. All of the other juridical categories represent, in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an absolute minority among Astra's members, a part of them being former judges, now retired.

The public officials of all levels, formed an especially heterogeneous category, in which we have included the mayors and communal notaries, High Sheriffs / praetors, high county officials, but also members of the Parliament. Their number almost doubled between 1901 and 1913, but their percentage witnessed a regress, on the same background of the extension and diversification of the socio-professional structure of the body of members. Leaving aside the necessity of a future more accurate delimitation within this group, we underline here the fact that their presence within Astra relativizes one of the common places of the era and of historiography, which underlines the obstacles raised by the Hungarian state in the way of Romanian functionaries that were members of Romanian cultural associations. There have certainly existed teasing and interdictions, but they have never been analysed in the particular context in which they took place, and the numerical growth of this category in the researched period indicated the fact that the explanations are probably more nuanced. Moreover, our previous research has highlighted that it is possible that the option of becoming a member of Astra has more likely been conditioned by the socio-professional position

---

<sup>41</sup> Vlad Popovici, *Studies on the Romanian Political Elite from Transylvania and Hungary* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2012), pp. 71-89.

<sup>42</sup> Balog, "The Clergy's Involvement," pp. 169-180.

and the income of the Romanian civil servants, rather than by the formal or informal pressure exercised by the authorities.<sup>43</sup>

The Romanian banking system and its social profile, whose development in the studied period has been well-highlighted in the literature,<sup>44</sup> is represented both through institutions (banks and credit institutes), and by their personnel. The growth between 1901 and 1913 is obvious, in all of the delimited categories (institutions / presidents / bank clerks) and can be attributed to the general flourishing of this field. It shouldn't be forgotten, however, that given the large percentage of clergy and lawyers in the leadership structures of the banks, it is normal for the involvement of the banking system as a whole in the Association's activity to be stimulated by these two categories so well represented within Astra's members. After 1918, the percentage of this sector has diminished, on the background of the general growth of the number of members, but the sudden decrease of the number of bank clerks has to be remarked, especially given that the number of banks and of bank directors registers slight increases. The explanations are connected, most probably, to the pecuniary effort required by membership in the difficult years after the war, but also to the possible change of generation among the bank clerks, out of which many have entered into the new Romanian administration.

A category with a particular route was represented by the military. Among 1901 and 1913, the number of Romanian officers that were members of Astra grew, but their percentage remained minor (0.75%-1%). However, in the first years after 1918 their numbers explode and, for the first time, in the lists of members also appear the non-commissioned officers, a situation unprecedented before 1918. In 1920, the servicemen went from 1% to 7% of Astra's members, being present in the number of over 350, this attitude change being very well explained by V. Moga, both through the change of environment (from the multinational army to the national one), and through the example set by their superiors.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> Vlad Popovici, "Considerații privind funcționarii publici români din Transilvania. Studiu de caz: Comitatul Sibiu și scaunele săsești care l-au format (1861-1918)" [Considerations regarding the Romanian Civil Servants from Transylvania. Case Study: The County of Sibiu and the Saxon Seats from which it was formed], *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie 'George Barițu' al Academiei Române din Cluj-Napoca*, LV (2016), pp. 174-175.

<sup>44</sup> Dobrescu, *Elita*; Dobrescu, *Funcții*; Balog, "The Clergy's Involvement."

<sup>45</sup> Moga, *Astra*, pp. 88-91.

Other categories, such as medical or technical professionals have known at their turn slight increases in number and percentage among 1901 and 1913, remaining however at a much lower level compared to their general percentage in Romanian society and to the growing interest towards these fields of study.<sup>46</sup> Doctors, especially, seemed to be slightly less interested in being members of *Astra*, maybe because their profession was much more time-consuming, but also because it simultaneously offered them social status and prestige that was sufficiently raised so as to inhibit the tendencies of increasing it by taking part of cultural associations. It is not impossible, also, that the specifics of the profession have made them more “science oriented” and “nationally indifferent”<sup>47</sup> than other co-nationals.

The situation of the “owners,” a very heterogeneous group, has been discussed by V. Moga,<sup>48</sup> and their category has not known but a slight increase between 1901 and 1913, exploding after 1918. The peasants and craftsmen were present in small numbers before 1918 (we have seen that they formed the bulk of the category of “helping members”), but explodes quantitatively immediately after the 1918 union. Merchants were somewhat more numerous and surpassed even the representatives of the medical sciences, a sign of the increasing growth of the Romanian petty bourgeoisie.

Among the institutional actors that have opted for membership in *Astra*, only those from the church and banking spheres, already mentioned, have known notable increases between 1901 and 1913. The administrative communes and the various associations have remained at the same level during this period. The presence of the institutional members, inaugurated even from the moment of *Astra*’s establishment in 1861, highlights the existence of a yet under-researched network within the framework of the Romanian civil society from Transylvania, in which the relations and personal options were converted into institutional support for and through collective actors. In other words, when and if it was possible, people acted through institutions.

Finally, a separate discussion should focus on the presence of women within the membership of the Association. As we have mentioned previously, the tables above only register those women that

---

<sup>46</sup> Sigmirean, *Formarea*, pp. 160-165.

<sup>47</sup> Tara Zahra, “Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis,” *Slavic Review*, 69 (2010), 1, pp. 93-119 for a theoretical approach, as well as a literature overview of the concept.

<sup>48</sup> Moga, *Astra*, p. 173.

have not been associated with a profession, but mentioned through their kin relationship with a man, usually a member or an ex-member (deceased) himself. In 1901, 42 women (2.8%) have been registered as members of the Association, among which only half exercised one of the mentioned professions. Approximately a quarter of them were professors or teachers, other registered professions being of "owner," merchant, or governess. Among those mentioned as wives of the male members, the wives of priests/archpriest or of lawyers are the most numerous. In 1910 their number was of 75, among which at least 48 appear as wives/widows, for other 16 the profession was not mentioned, while the rest had the same occupations as in 1901. The situation was in large part the same in 1913: although their number grew to 105 (4.4%), 84 of them (80%) appear as wives/widows. In 1920, according to V. Moga's calculations, among the 368 women that were members (8%), 266 (72%) were mentioned as wives/widows, among the others the majority of them being professors (32), teachers (13), functionaries (27), owners, students and a merchant.<sup>49</sup> Although the increase of the number and percentage of women among Astra's members has been constant, even exponential after the First World War, their professional situation and the way in which their large majority are registered reflects very well the overall situation of a traditional, conservative society, in which the woman's condition is situated in an altering process, but in which the pace of progress remains slow.

### Conclusions

In what measure did Astra's composition reflect the socio-professional structure of the Romanian ethnic body from Transylvania and Hungary and the relations within it at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

Related to the overall situation, it is certainly unrealistic to expect from a cultural and scientific association, essentially elitist as structure and composition, in spite of its generous aims of social and national pedagogy to reflect *in nuce* the nation that it represented and which forms the object of its actions. The structure and composition of the Association reflected, in a much better organized manner, but based on the same principles and mentalities, the model of the National Romanian Party, in which the mass of voters was (or was not) part of the political act, but never of the decisional process. The elitism of Astra's membership is highlighted by the almost complete absence, until 1918, of peasants, craftsmen and workers from the ranks of the founding,

---

<sup>49</sup> Calculations based on data referenced in footnote 2 above.

lifelong, or ordinary/active members, namely those that formed the majority with decision-making powers at the level of the departments and in general assemblies. The socio-professional structure of Astra also reflects the unshakable presence of the church within the Romanian society of the time. The clergy quantitatively dominated the local leadership organisms, while the association with the confessional didactic personnel and the relations with the banking system offered it the role of main actor and of unalienable mediator between the rural population and the national elite that wished to educate it. Regarding the didactic personnel, its adherence in a much reduced number compared to that of the clergy has to be taken into account, a lack of interest whose explanations have to be searched for probably in financial reasons, but also in the higher personal autonomy of the teacher, even of the confessional teacher, compared to that of the priest.

Leaving aside these quantitative imbalances that highlight however the power relations and prestige options of a society caught between the necessity of modernizing and that of preserving and constructing its national identity, we observe that Astra hosts representatives of the largest part of the socio-professional strata that formed the middle class / the Romanian bourgeoisie of the time. Next to clergymen and pedagogues we find jurists (primarily lawyers), the public officials (more numerous than the specialty literature is accustomed to see), the representatives of the banking system, different categories of small entrepreneurs, retired officers, more and more women and a network in continuing development of partnering institutions and communities, a sign of a functional and active civil society. The reduced presence of doctors is surprising, but even more so the small number of press people (integrated into the "Others" category), explicably through the still ambiguous condition of the journalist and through their relatively modest earnings.

But only when to these categories, more or less interested in the cultural act, in its national goal or in the associated social prestige, we add the almost completely ignored category of "helping members," their immense majority being peasants and craftsmen, we obtain the image of the relation between Astra's body of members and the society that it wished to refine. The existence of some thousands of peasants willing to get directly involved in this process, as equal intermediaries, probably closer to their fellow villagers than even the priest or the teacher, shows the measure in which the Association was capable of transmitting its message in the rural space and explains, partially, the explosion of its number of members, including peasants and craftsmen after 1918.

To conclude, taking into account the stage of this research workshop, that has yet been assumed as a main direction of study only in a primarily quantitative manner and which did not furnish but results with a high level of generality, we believe that a series of methodological observations are welcomed. Because, as our research points out, the renewal rate of Astra's membership can vary between 30% and 60% according to the department and period, in the future the analysis using cross-sectional sections will have to be complemented by in-depth sociological analyses. To this end, Astra's members from 1901-1918 have been already added to the historical data base Historical Data Grinder, whose public release is scheduled for Summer 2019. The diversity of the professional titles of the members and of the typology of institutions having the quality of member necessitates a mandatory process of standardization (currently in development), both by using an international coding system (e.g. HISCO)<sup>50</sup>, and through a more careful ranking of the professional positions. Criteria such as the administrative level at which the officials activate (central, county, sub-county, commune), the differentiation between the confessional or state teachers/professors, the particular situation of the retirees or even the level of salary or income can help us move forward from the general conclusions towards the nuanced understandings of the success or failure of Astra in the attraction of the different socio-professional categories.

---

<sup>50</sup> <https://socialhistory.org/en/projects/hisco-history-work>, last accessed 30.11.2018.

# The System of Government Commissioners during the First World War and the organization of the Government High Commissioner's Office in Transylvania\*

**Pál Judit**

*Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University*

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

E-mail: paljudit@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The System of Government Commissioners during the First World War and the organization of the Government High Commissioner's Office in Transylvania.* The study presents the establishment and usage of the system of state commissioners during the First World War. Related to this topic it also presents the establishment of the institution of the regional commissioner's office for Transylvania and of the Government High Commissioner's Office for Eastern Hungary created in December 1918. The appointment of state commissioners and the organization of state commissioner's offices impaired local governments, and the research analyses how this process unfolded and how the transition to the circumstances that developed after the war took place.

**Keywords:** state commissioners, First World War, Transylvania, Government High Commissioner's Office of Eastern Hungary, parallel authorities in 1918, extraordinary situation

**Rezumat:** *Sistemul comisarilor guvernamentali în timpul Primului Război Mondial și organizarea Înalțului Comisariat Guvernamental în Transilvania.* Studiul prezintă înființarea și utilizarea sistemului comisarilor statului în timpul Primului Război Mondial, inclusiv înființarea instituției comisariatului regional pentru Transilvania și a Înalțului Comisariat Guvernamental pentru Ungaria de Est în decembrie 1918. Numirea comisarilor statului și organizarea acestei instituții a afectat sistemul administrației locale, iar cercetarea analizează evoluția procesului și modul în care s-a desfășurat tranziția înspre situația de după război.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** comisari guvernamentali, Primul Război Mondial, Transilvania, Înalțul Comisariat Guvernamental pentru Ungaria de Est, autorități paralele, situație excepțională

---

\* The research was supported by CNCS-UEFISCDI, project PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2016-0390 „Change and Continuity: the public administration and the civil servants' corps from Transylvania before and after the First World War (1910–1925)”.

The institution of State Commissioners has been used for centuries in Hungary, but the outbreak of the First World War brought about a completely new situation, requiring special measures, which also affected the civil service based on local autonomy. In the study hereby I present the establishment and usage of the system of state commissioners during the First World War, and the establishment of the institution of the regional commissioner's office for Transylvania and of the Government High Commissioner's Office for Eastern Hungary. In relation to this I analyze how the appointment of state commissioners impaired local governments, how this process unfolded and how it created a transition to the circumstances that developed after the war.

### **Extraordinary Situation and the System of Government Commissioners**

The institution of the royal commissioners, respectively state/government commissioners roots back in Hungary to the Middle Ages, however the model, which was adopted all over Europe, originates from the Roman Empire. Initially it was the power of judging that was given over to commissioners, but later this was extended to various administrative and other tasks. Commissioners were appointed in extraordinary situations, e.g. natural calamities, plagues or task coordination for greater works of public interests. But the need to curb powers acting against the central power was also considered such extraordinary situation. Examples to this latter situation would be the liquidation of the county governments and the appointment of royal commissioners in the time of Joseph II, or the appointment of county administrators before the Revolution of 1848, since 1845, to ensure the strengthening of central power.

During the Revolution of 1848 the institution of first royal commissioners, then, since September 1848 of government commissioners was widely used. Among the many tasks the royal and government commissioners had to fulfil was occasionally strengthening the central power, observation of the organization of national movements, prevention of the danger of civil war, respectively restoration of public safety, tasks related to recruiting for the national army, providing weapons and supply for the army and other tasks. Since October 1848 the system of state commissioners was differentiated, various types were created. As far as the paper hereby is concerned we mention only the plenipotentiary national commissioners or government commissioners and the plenipotentiary municipal commissioners. The former had jurisdiction over several municipalities and they were primarily commissioned to organize the defense, but they had the power to act also in political and administrative matters; the latter – among

whom we find also lord lieutenants, deputy lord lieutenants and parliamentary representatives as well – had plenipotentiary powers within a single municipality. Even though the system of state commissioners suffered frequent and sudden changes, it is interesting that in the spring of 1848 – when the government hoped to consolidate the situation – Bertalan Szemere, the minister of the interior managed to gain authority also over the government commissioners and even though the system of state commissioners remained in place in the bordering counties; in the other municipalities in general the former commissioners were appointed as lord lieutenants.<sup>1</sup> A state/royal commissioner was appointed to execute the union with Transylvania both in 1848 and in 1867.<sup>2</sup>

Also in the Dualist Period state commissioners and rarely royal commissioners were appointed to execute special tasks or to handle situations created by natural calamities or plagues, but these appointments were meant for special situations and the government tried to reinstate the regular administration as quickly as possible. The system of state commissioners was used during the great government crisis at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when a “national resistance” was created against the Fejérváry government, considered illegitimate and the local governments of the counties refused to subordinate themselves to that government. Government commissioners were appointed to curb the resistance movement, but finally the ruler ordered new elections and in 1906 the former opposition came to power.

The system of state commissioners was used even more widely during World War I. Shortly after the outbreak of the war government commissioners were appointed based on §4 of Law no. LXIII of 1912 regarding special measures in case of warfare.<sup>3</sup> The Law was created as a result of the tempestuous period at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when tensions between the great powers, the annexation or Bosnian crisis of 1908 and the Balkan wars projected the possibility of an eventual armed conflict. However the idea was raised earlier, as it is formulated in the motivation for the law: “It is a long felt need that in case of war or

---

<sup>1</sup> Róbert Hermann, “A kormánybiztosi rendszer 1848–49-ben” [The System of State Commissioners in 1848–49], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, 111 (1998), 1, pp. 28–78; Sebestyén Szócs, *A kormánybiztosi intézmény kialakulása 1848-ban* [The Establishment of the Government Commissioner Institution in 1848] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1972).

<sup>2</sup> See Judit Pál, *Unió vagy „unificáltatás”? Erdély uniója és a királyi biztos működése (1867–1872)* [Union or ‘Unification’ The Union of Transylvania and the Work of the Royal Commissioner (1867–1872)] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Along with Law no. LXVIII of 1912 regulating army services.

imminence of war the government should have at its disposal a special force by which it would be able to enforce extraordinary measures.”<sup>4</sup> The issue of regulation by law of the case of extraordinary situation was raised several times, first in 1848-49, later in 1868 and several times after; generally as an initiative of the Common Ministry of War.<sup>5</sup> However this process was hindered by the “fear of the domination of the ‘common’ armed forces coming from Vienna”.<sup>6</sup>

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the issue was becoming more urgent also on the agenda of the government and during the rule of the so called coalition government several bills were created regarding this matter – one of them was drafted by the Common Ministry of War –,<sup>7</sup> until finally in 1912 the bill passed (Law no. LXIII. of 1912 regarding the extraordinary measures in time of war). The Austrian model where the civil administration was transferable to the military commanders was rejected already in 1909 during a preliminary meeting organized by the Ministry of the Interior, since “the preparation of such a measure is impossible in our country for political and public law reasons”.<sup>8</sup> The idea of the appointment of state commissioners was also rejected at the time, it was preferred that the

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=91200063.TVI&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D46>, last accessed 14.08.2018, for the text of the law.

<sup>5</sup> The issue was raised after the Russian–Turkish war of 1878, ten years later the bill was already signed even by the ruler, but it was still not advanced to the rank of a law, probably due to the disagreements between the Hungarian government and the Common Ministry of War. The latter considered the bill inappropriate to the scope and wanted to subordinate civil authorities to the army already at the beginning of mobilization, but the Hungarian government disagreed. The Common Ministry of War pushed in 1893 for another proposal, but this time another disagreement occurred between the minister of the interior, Géza Fejérváry and the minister of justice. The debate continued until 1900, and after several years of neglect the issue was raised again. Árpád Tóth, “A kivételes hatalomról szóló 1912. évi LXIII. tc. létrejöttének előzményei 1868-tól a századfordulóig” [The Precedents of Adoption of the Act LXIII/1912 on Exceptional Power from 1868 until the Turn of the Century], *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila József nomitae. Acta Juridica et Politica*, 11 (1964), 6, pp. 3-32.

<sup>6</sup> Árpád Tóth, “A kivételes hatalom jogi szabályozása Magyarországon az első világháború előestéjén” [The Legal Regulation of Exceptional Power in Hungary on the Eve of the First World War], *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila József nomitae. Acta Juridica et Politica*, 50 (1996), 13, pp. (3-95) 3.

<sup>7</sup> The Common Ministry of War sent in 1906 to the Hungarian government the collection of exceptional laws elaborated for Austria and requested that it would elaborate similar measures for Hungary as well. Tóth, “A kivételes hatalom,” p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Tóth, “A kivételes hatalom,” p. 4.

lord lieutenants would be given special power, although the elaborated bill permitted in principle the appointment of any other civilian as state commissioner. Finally another bill was presented to the ruler, one that was elaborated at the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, but that did not gain the approval of the Ministry of War. The proposal of the Ministry of War had several points that the Hungarian government(s) found disquieting, one of them was precisely related to state commissioners. Since it was undesirable for the Hungarian governments that the army should become too influential, it was decided upon already in 1909 and it was included later also in the law that only "Hungarian citizens established in Hungary" could be appointed.<sup>9</sup>

Finally the bill was passed during the rule of the Lukács-government, after several preliminary sessions held in October 1912. The detailed negotiations took place this time in the Ministry of the Defense and the secretary of state of that Ministry was presiding the meeting. This mere fact shows how much the position of the Hungarian government changed towards accepting a greater military influence (e.g. allowing the extension of military justice to civilians as well, contrary to their former opposition in this matter). Another sign of the increased influence of the army was the provision of the law stating that state commissioners "have to act in accordance with the plans of the military commanders". A new debate formed in relation to the jurisdiction of state commissioners, for memories of abuses in this matter during the Fejérváry government were still vivid. For example, a representative of the Ministry of Defense pushed that not only civilians, but also officers of the Gendarmerie could be appointed state commissioners, but that proposal was rejected.<sup>10</sup> The bill was presented to the House of Representatives by the prime minister on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1912 and it passed only with small changes due to the fact that the opposition absented from that session. The opposition parties challenged the bill in a manifesto, but that had no impact. One of the popular representatives of the opposition, Dezső Polónyi objected for example, among others, that the bill provided only for government commissioners that they "must act in accordance with the plans of the military commanders," but there were no provisions to encourage military commanders to act in consensus with civil authorities.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Tóth, "A kivételes hatalom," p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Tóth, "A kivételes hatalom," pp. 23-26.

<sup>11</sup> Ferenc Pollmann, "Tersztyánszky Károly lovassági tábornok 1915 szeptemberi felmentésének háttéréhez" [The Background of Cavalry General Tersztyánszky Károly's Dismissal in 1915], *Hadtörténeti Közlemények*, 110 (1997), 4, pp. (79-102) 83.

The arguments for the necessity of the bill made reference to the circumstances of modern warfare and emphasized especially that in war it was necessary that the army would be supported by civil authorities and civilians and at the same time it was important that law and order and public safety would be maintained. However constraint on civil population in an extraordinary situation was tempered by the principle that “the government can exercise extraordinary power only at the extend of the emergency,” i.e. “every time it can exercise its extraordinary power only at the extent absolutely necessary in that situation in regard to the circumstances at hand”;<sup>12</sup> respectively the effect of the law was strictly limited to the state of war or to extraordinary situations created by imminence of war;<sup>13</sup> and it maintained the jurisdiction of the Parliament – even though with limitations.

Besides regulating many other issues, the bill<sup>14</sup> gave power to the government to appoint state commissioners with jurisdictions on one or several municipalities for the execution of extraordinary measures. State commissioners were subordinated to the government and were sworn into office by the prime minister, but in case they were appointed to support the activity of a certain military commander they had to act “in accordance with the plans of the military commanders” (§4). The law provided that it was the government commissioners’ duty to maintain public order and safety and to promote the interest of the army according to the intentions of the military commanders and to harmonize the administrative measures needed for such a purpose, although the creators of the law considered at the time that “jurisdiction and lawful operation of the regular public administration of the municipalities and townships was normally not affected [...] by the appointment of a state commissioner”.<sup>15</sup> Government commissioners had special powers such as disposing of the legal and state institutions in their region of operation if needed, including the military and border police. If these did not obey they could be suspended by the commissioner. Although one could hand in a complaint to the ministry

---

<sup>12</sup> Detailed motivation for §1.

<https://net.jogtar.hu/ezet-ev-torveny?docid=91200063.TVI&searchUrl=/ezet-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D46>, last accessed 21.08.2018.

<sup>13</sup> Detailed motivation for §3, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> The other paragraphs of the bill give an itemized enumeration of the extraordinary measures that can be taken, such as limitation of the right to gather, of the freedom of the press, of the transportation of people and ware or raising prices to the maximum. The bill also had an effect on the judiciary.

<sup>15</sup> Detailed motivation for §4, *ibid.*

of interior in order to prevent that. The same exceptional state made it possible for the ministry of interior – and in cases of emergency for the government commissioner – to prohibit establishment of certain associations, to order verification of some associations that had proved “suspicious,” respectively to approve people’s assemblies, demonstrations and to censor the press before issue. In extraordinary situations the minister of the interior could annul the resolutions of the local government bodies if these affected the interests of warfare, without the right for an appeal.<sup>16</sup>

Later the law was amended by several orders such as the one commissioning the government, respectively the government commissioners to order evacuation of the population in case of enemy attack. In these cases the commissioner had to provide also for the transportation of valuables. Elaboration of the measures started already after the bill passed, but it took until the outbreak of the war to finish. The collection of measures entitled “Bulletin of the extraordinary measures in case of warfare” was passed by the council of ministers on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1914, the day the ultimatum was sent to Serbia and it was sent to the lord lieutenants, the deputy lord lieutenants and the mayors of the municipal towns three days later.<sup>17</sup> Although the bill did not mention such an institution, yet at the urge of the Common Ministry of War the Bulletin already spoke of the creation of a “commission for military supervision” whose task was to supervise extraordinary measures and to coordinate the activity of the military and civil authorities. The commission functioned within the Ministry of Defense, but several other ministries delegated members to it.<sup>18</sup>

So events sped up in the days before the outbreak of WWI. Prime Minister István Tisza ordered the extraordinary situation to be inaugurated on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1914, only for the southern part of the country at the time, but with the possibility to extend it to the entire country. For example, the measure of stricter monitoring of the press was introduced for the entire country. In the southern and Transylvanian counties and in the municipal towns passport emission, the right to bear weapons and the right to gather was limited, obligation to report one’s arrival in a settlement was instituted and all municipal and township ordinances affecting the police were suspended. However on July 31<sup>st</sup> these

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=91200063.TVI&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D46>, last accessed 21.08.2018.

<sup>17</sup> Tóth, “A kivételes hatalom,” pp. 50-51.

<sup>18</sup> Tóth, “A kivételes hatalom,” pp. 90-91.

measures were extended to the entire country due to war with Russia being imminent. After the outbreak of the war extraordinary measures were put in force by the dozens.<sup>19</sup>

### **State Commissioners During the First World War: Miklós Betegh, the state commissioner for Transylvania**

In the Transylvanian region, which was the territory of the 12<sup>th</sup> Corps of the Austro-Hungarian Armed Forces, lord lieutenant of Torda-Aranyos (Turda-Aries) county, Miklós Betegh was appointed as government commissioner. Thus he received greater power and more duties than plain lord lieutenants. Betegh was born in 1868, which means he was 46 by this time. He studied law in Budapest, then looked for a position in the county administration and after a very quickly ascending career he held the position of deputy lord lieutenant for a long time – the highest ranking of the elected offices. After the former opposition came to power he resigned and managed his estates. Later, from 1910 he was appointed lord lieutenant.<sup>20</sup> Anyway, in 1910 there was a complete change in the political elite of Hungary,<sup>21</sup> since the former independent opposition, which came to power in 1906, was completely eroded and in 1910 the National Labor Party formed from the ruins of the earlier governing party came to power. Betegh remembered the years before the war as a period when neither the opposition, nor nationalistic issues posed any serious problems in the county he governed. The county was populated in majority by Romanians, just as most of the Transylvanian counties. Betegh spoke Romanian too and he had good relations with the Romanian intellectuals – at least in his own opinion. He condemned the policy of “threading on the minorities’ kibes” as Prime Minister István Tisza put it.<sup>22</sup>

The day after the ultimatum expired he was ordered to Budapest and the ministry of interior, János Sándor – who by the way was also a former Transylvanian lord lieutenant and land owner – communicated to him that he was selected to be the government commissioner for Transylvania. At first three government commissioners were planned to be appointed in the whole country: Viktor Molnár in the north (the

---

<sup>19</sup> Tóth, “A kivételes hatalom,” pp. 92-95.

<sup>20</sup> Hauf-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Kabinettskanzlei, Vortäge, Nr. 561/1910.

<sup>21</sup> Judit Pál, “The Survival of the Traditional Elite: The Transylvanian Lord Lieutenant Corps in 1910,” *Colloquia. Journal of Central European Studies*, 14 (2007), pp. 75-87.

<sup>22</sup> Miklós Betegh, *Erdély a háborúban. Néhány erdélyi adat az 1914–1917. évek történetéhez* [Transylvania in the War. Several Data on the History of the Years 1914-1917] (Dicsőszentmárton: Erzsébet Könyvnyomda, 1924), pp. 7-8.

territory of the 6<sup>th</sup> Corps),<sup>23</sup> Baron Béla Tallián in the south and Betegh in Transylvania. All three men were lord lieutenants and trustworthy people of Prime Minister István Tisza. Of the three men, Tallián was the closest to the prime minister, since he had been a minister in the first government formed by Tisza. The circle of government commissioners was however expanded, lord lieutenants of the border counties were also appointed government commissioners for the territory of their own county so that they would have more power if needed. In Transylvania the following lord lieutenants were appointed as government commissioners for the municipality they headed: count Ödön Bethlen for the county of Kolozs (Cluj) and the city of Cluj (Kolozsvár), László Mara for the county of Hunyad (Hunedoara), count Balázs Bethlen for the county of Szolnok-Doboka (Solnoc-Dăbâca), József Szász for the counties of Alsó-Fehér (Alba de Jos) and Maros-Torda (Mureș-Turda) and Friedrich Walbaum for the county of Szeben (Sibiu). At the same time the same appointments were made in the counties of Torontál, Bács-Bodrog and Temes (Timiș) and also the lord lieutenants of Croatia received the same commission.<sup>24</sup> Shortly after the circle was broadened with several northern counties.

At first the ministry of interior gave Betegh only one officer to assist him in his duties. Later the apparatus around the government commissioner expanded to 25 people. After he returned home, Betegh visited immediately general Herman Kövess, the commander of the 12<sup>th</sup> Corps at his headquarters in Sibiu (Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt). Contrary to his colleague, Tallián, Betegh formed a pleasant and good relationship with the general. The nature of the relations between military and civil authorities was depending on the persons fulfilling the positions. Some military commanders disregarded the civil authorities, but after cavalry General Karl von Pflanzer-Baltin was appointed as the military commander of Transylvania instead of general Kövess, Betegh created a decent relationship with him as well. At the general's request he intervened with Prime Minister Tisza to attempt to convince the ruler and the heads of the army that they would move him from Transylvania to defend the northern borders, although this tactic was unsuccessful as it later turned out. Pflanzer-Baltin was followed by lieutenant-general Viktor von Njegovan with whom Betegh had a conflict because of a

---

<sup>23</sup> Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára, MNL OL) K 27 Minutes of the Council of Ministers (Minisztertanácsi jegyzőkönyvek), August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1914.

<sup>24</sup> MNL OL K 27 July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1914.

bossy officer. Since the lieutenant-general was unwilling to conduct an investigation in this matter, Betegh filed a complaint at the Common Ministry of War via the Hungarian government.<sup>25</sup> At first Betegh performed his duties at the military headquarters in Sibiu, and later when most of the military forces left Transylvania he moved back to Turda, the former seat of his county. In Sibiu he was very keen on having a good relationship with the Romanians, among others with Orthodox metropolitan bishop Ioan Mețianu.<sup>26</sup>

From the very beginning there were tensions between administrative and military officials in both parts of the Monarchy. The supreme command of the army became a true center of power after the war broke out. They were convinced that the civil authorities were not firm enough in counteracting the sabotage work of the “inner enemy” (i.e. persons and groups disloyal to the Monarchy), respectively they were not doing everything in their power to help the army, which is why they aimed at taking over the control of several provinces.<sup>27</sup> The army arrested several Serbian notabilities in southern Hungary. The lord lieutenants reported this to the prime minister who took measures immediately, but such cases occurred later on as well despite the fact that Tisza intended to prevent such occurrences on the territory of Hungary also by issuing a law in this sense. The situation was similar also in the northern counties. Tisza backed up government commissioner Viktor Molnár and the civil authorities on that occasion as well and took the matter in front of the ruler ensuring Molnár that the military agents at fault will be held responsible and those offended without fault will be compensated.<sup>28</sup> Betegh mentions as well how much “worry and inconvenience” such army actions, “arresting anybody on the least credible report without making the necessary inquiries of the truth of the matter” caused him.<sup>29</sup>

The relationship of the civilians and the military had been ambivalent, to say the least, earlier as well: animosity against the

---

<sup>25</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, p. 41.

<sup>26</sup> Ioan Mețianu (1828-1916) was between 1875-1899 bishop of Arad, than from 1899 until his death Archbishop of Sibiu and Metropolitan of the Transylvanian Orthodox Church.

<sup>27</sup> Manfred Rauchensteiner, *The First World War and the End of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Wien - Köln - Weimar: Böhlau, 2014), pp. 426-433.

<sup>28</sup> Prime Minister István Tisza to Viktor Molnár sen., Sept. 21<sup>th</sup>, 1914. *Gróf Tisza István összes munkái* [The Complete Works of Count Tisza István], ser. 4, vol. II (Budapest: Franklin, 1924), Nr. 283, p. 151.

<sup>29</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, p. 17.

common army was continuously fed also by the independent opposition. And although the protective functions of the army were appreciated by the Hungarian population living near the borders and even more so the prospective profits coming from the provision of supplies for the army, yet the common army was never considered a true blessing. As the war broke out the army started to speak from an even higher horse and was unwilling to accept that in Hungary there were different laws to observe than in the other part of the Monarchy. For beyond the Leitha military commanders took over the control with the civil administration as well,<sup>30</sup> as they would – as we saw earlier – also in Hungary. And in those parts the system of the state commissioners was not introduced at all.

Another conflict was caused by the military calling out the civil population to do labor service. The same kind of conflict broke out in the autumn of 1915 between the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army serving in the Balkans, General Karl von Tersztyánszky and government commissioner Tallián regarding the fortification works of Fruška Gora. The case was brought to Tisza who made a matter of prestige out of it, since he reckoned that the chief command of the army (AOK) meddles in the duties of the Hungarian civil administration and in the common council of ministers he pressed for the resignation of the general. Even though the chief of general staff, Conrad von Hötzendorf tried to save him, finally the emperor consented that Tersztyánszky be replaced. However his military career did not fault, after occupying Belgrade and Serbia he received a high distinction in November 1915 and later he was promoted to commander of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army (where he was also replaced, this time due to a request coming from the German chief command). As also the analysis of Ferenc Pollmann reveals, this conflict was not merely between Tallián and Tersztyánszky, the real match was going on between the Hungarian prime minister and the chief command of the army. Beyond the debate at hand – in which the two parties intended to prove the total incapacity of the other – the AOK was attacking the system of state commissioners itself.<sup>31</sup>

It was not an easy task for the authorities to deal with the numerous rumors and the general tension of the population either. At

---

<sup>30</sup> Gernot D. Hasiba, "Inter arma silent leges? Ein Beitrag über die rechtlichen Grundlagen der österreichischen Verwaltung im I. Weltkrieg," in *Modell einer neuen Wirtschaftsordnung. Wirtschaftsverwaltung in Österreich 1914–1918*, eds. Wilhelm Brauneder, Fritz Baltzarek (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991), pp. 11-32.

<sup>31</sup> Pollmann analyzes the reasons thoroughly and points out that Tersztyánszky started to lose the ruler's trust earlier; there were some serious accusations against him even at the time when the war broke out. Pollmann, "Tersztyánszky," pp. 90-92.

the beginning of the war there was a rumor that the Entente intends to smuggle a large quantity of gold to Russia through Hungary and as a consequence there was a host of people hunting for cars that supposedly carried the gold.<sup>32</sup> But the spreading of rumors caused even greater problems. For the military situation did not have the outcome hoped by the command of the Austro-Hungarian army. And when Russian troops invaded Hungary from the North and occupied the county of Máramaros (Maramureș), panic broke out also in the neighboring county of Beszterce-Naszód (Bistrița-Năsăud). Both military and civil authorities headed by the lord lieutenant fled the county. The only one who stayed at his duty was the mayor of the town Bistrița (Beszterce, Bistritz). Government commissioner Betegh rushed immediately to Beszterce-Naszód county and tried to calm down the frightened locals.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile the news of the Russian invasion proved a mere hoax. The lord lieutenant was removed from his position due to this incident. Helping the refugees from Bucovina was also one of Betegh's duties who did this by helping the Austrian governor of Bucovina. Another of his duties was to investigate the various complaints, e.g. making the military pay the price of the horses confiscated by the army during mobilization. Since the military did not give any receipt for some of the horses and thus the peasants could be compensated only after long investigations.

In May 1916 the government removed every government commissioner from their positions justifying that the fronts were far enough from the borders by then.<sup>34</sup> However this proved a hasty decision, for in mid-August 1916, due to the Brusilov offensive part of the north-eastern counties were declared an internal theater of war and government commissioners were appointed again. Shortly afterwards the prime minister called Betegh to Budapest again and this time he was appointed government commissioner not only for the region of Transylvania, but also of Banat, i.e. for the territory of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> corps.<sup>35</sup> His seat was in Cluj at first and in Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely) from October. Again he had only two civilian helpers: two members of the Parliament, Miklós Vajna and Count Pál Bethlen and a captain from the border police.

In Transylvania there was practically no army in the summer of 1916. Colonel general Arthur Arz von Straussenburg, the commander of

---

<sup>32</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>33</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, pp. 27-32.

<sup>34</sup> MNL OL K 27, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1916.

<sup>35</sup> MNL OL K 27, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1916.

the 12<sup>th</sup> Corps introduced himself to Betegh as “the commander without an army”.<sup>36</sup> Betegh found himself in the most difficult position as a consequence of Romania entering the war in August 1916. Supposedly the military command inquired earlier about the expected reaction of the Transylvanian Romanians. In his response Betegh mentioned that there was a strong national feeling characterizing them. But he backed this statement up also with the rumor that the Russians are forming troops from the captured Romanian and Czech soldiers and officers, which later proved to be a false piece of information. The chief command of the army pressed for his resignation for this defamation and only Tisza’s consistent support could protect him.<sup>37</sup> Although according to Betegh the prime minister saw the matter differently. He trusted that the Romanians from Transylvania would be loyal to the Monarchy. Even though the army took into account a possible evacuation in the spring of 1916 they did not want to induce panic therefore at the end they did not perform the necessary measures of precaution.

Therefore the attack of the Romanians took the Hungarian authorities completely by surprise and they were utterly unprepared for it.<sup>38</sup> A typical example for this situation is that on the day when the declaration of war arrived from Romania (on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1916) and the border police informed the government commissioner that citizens of the Central Powers started to flee Romania at the news of a possible outbreak of war, Betegh reported this to the minister of interior, but he did not believe it to be true even at that moment. Late at night, after the declaration of war was handed over and nobody was in the office except him he had to inform of the news over the telephone the authorities of each county bordering Romania. But this was not an easy task, since it was quite difficult to reach any of the higher ranking officers who were authorized to receive such pieces of information at that hour, thus the government commissioner himself sat by the telephone the whole night.<sup>39</sup>

The following day, after the situation was somewhat clarified, the command of the army wanted to evacuate the entire southern and eastern region of Transylvania, up to the Mureș river and to even forcedly evacuate the civil population; but the Hungarian government opposed

---

<sup>36</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, p. 64.

<sup>37</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>38</sup> On the Romanian campaign see: Keith Hitchins, *România 1866-1947* [Romania 1866-1947], vol. 2 (București: Humanitas, 1998), pp. 264-280; Constantin Kirițescu, *Istoria războiului pentru întregirea României (1916-1919)* [History of the War for Romania’s Unification], vol. I-II (București: Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989).

<sup>39</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, pp. 67-68.

this vehemently. Finally the initial agreement was that only the war materials, the food, the animals and the part of the population that could be drafted will be evacuated from the counties near the border and all civilians who want to flee will be helped. The government ordered on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1916 the evacuation of 11 counties. However the authorities – neither the military, nor the civilian ones – did not manage to control the situation and panic broke out and the population fled in a mad rush – especially from the counties where the ethnic Hungarians lived. There were quite few railway carriages, anyway there were only lines with a single track and they were used mostly by the military, so the majority fled on carts causing huge jams on the main roads. The government commissioner attempted to organize somewhat the progression of the carts, he had them divided by villages and appointed them the routes they should take and the places where they could eat and sleep. After a few days committees were formed as well, these bought the animals from the refugees for a fair price.<sup>40</sup> The host of refugees lessened at a very slow pace, since as the Romanians advanced the population from other territories began to move away as well, although less madly than the first ones. People of Romanian origin usually stayed behind, while the Saxons – if they chose to flee – stayed within the borders of Transylvania, but over 200 thousand people moved to the inner parts of Hungary.<sup>41</sup>

*En masse* flight affected especially Székelyland, whose population was mainly Hungarian: in Miercurea Ciuc (Csíkszereda) supposedly only a few people stayed behind, while in Sfântu Gheorghe (Sepsiszentgyörgy), the seat of Háromszék (Trei Scaune) county, only about 500 inhabitants stayed behind from a total of 8 thousand. However in Braşov (Brassó, Kronstadt), a town with mixt population, most of the 40 thousand inhabitants stayed. But it is also true that Brassó (Braşov) county registered the most flights: 1/3 of its population. In two counties of the Székelyland (Háromszék and Csík/Ciuc) ca. 10-20% of the population left.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, pp. 69-75. On the difficulties encountered by the refugees see the studies of Szabolcs Pataki, Lajos Kocsis and Robert Nemes in: *Székelyföld és a nagy háború. Tanulmánykötet az első világháború centenáriuma alkalmából* [Székelyland and the Great War. Volume for the Centenary of the First World War], ed. Zsolt Orbán (Csíkszereda: Csíkszereda Kiadóhivatal, 2018), pp. 162-223.

<sup>41</sup> Csaba Csóti, "Az 1916. évi román támadás menekültügyi következményei" [The Results of the Romanian Attack in 1916 on the Issue of War Refugees], *Regio*, 10 (1999), 3-4, pp. 226-242.

<sup>42</sup> Szabolcs Nagy, "Az 1916-os román megszállás egy sepsiszentgyörgyi patikus szemével" [The Romanian Occupation of 1916 seen by a Pharmacist from Sfântu Gheorghe], *Acta Siculica*, 2011, p. (307-338) 312.

For functionaries of the counties affected by battles were given seats away from the battlefield, thus for example the administration of the bordering county of Csík was seated in the town of Debrecen, which was several hundred kilometers away. Part of the functionaries – especially the staff of the civil and customs police – returned to their original place of service only from mid-October. In the town of Cluj the same train that took refugees to Budapest brought back county functionaries to their place of service.<sup>43</sup> Târgu Mureş and Cluj were two main centers for the reception and distribution of refugees. Accommodation and feeding of the refugees and their livestock and helping them travel on was a heavy burden to the authorities. The refugees were usually accommodated temporarily in schools and other public buildings. Subsidies for the two hundred thousand refugees were also handed out slowly and the amount was ill-proportioned to their necessities, therefore refugees had to fall back on their own resources and the help of the society.<sup>44</sup>

Since the duties of the government commissioner multiplied, the number of people serving in the institution he lead increased as well. In October 1916 the staff was composed already of 25 people and Betegh was appointed also an assistant: MP Count Miklós Bánffy who became after the WWI the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs. MP Endre Vertán became the responsible deputy for public nutrition. Mandataries of the ministry of trade were in charge of maintaining the integrity of the roads and the post and telegraph services. The office of the government commissioner moved along the front line together with the military command and later moved as his own duties required it. In October it moved its seat from Cluj to Târgu Mureş, in November to Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely), in December to Sighişoara (Segesvár, Schäßburg), at the beginning of February 1917 to Târgu Mureş again, then in April to Braşov.

The government commissioner was assisted in his duties on behalf of the army as well by staff captain Gyula Gömbös who became prime minister later. The staff of the border police of Sibiu was also under Betegh's command. The ministry of defense gave the command of the 12.000 gendarmerie posts stationed in Transylvania to gendarme

---

<sup>43</sup> National Archives of Romania, Cluj Office (Arhivele Naționale Române, Direcția Județeană Cluj), F3 Cluj County (Prefectura Județului Cluj), Documents of the Deputy Lord Lieutenant (Documentele vicecomitelui/Alispáni iratok), Nr. 13405/1916.

<sup>44</sup> The Report of the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kolozs County to the Lord Lieutenant and the Administrative Committee, September 1916. Ibid., Nr. 1034/1916.

lieutenant-general Oszkár Ferry. Communication with the army was of key importance, but it proved a difficult matter. In September of 1916 there was a serious conflict between military and civil authorities related to the matter of the internation of the Transylvanian Romanian leaders. Finally Betegh succeeded in limiting this request of the army with the help of colonel general Arz. For Hungary war law provided that a person can be arrested only based on solid evidence and not merely the suspicion of committing a crime. Even so, civil authorities could only diminish the negative effects in the sense that part of those arrested were not taken to detention camps, but to another town from where they could return home within weeks.

Meanwhile since the Austro-Hungarian army was not able to intercept the advancement of the Romanian army alone, the 9<sup>th</sup> German army lead by colonel Erich von Falkenhayn, former minister of defense and chief of general staff helped it and rolled back the Romanians. Falkenhayn arrived to Deva on September 17<sup>th</sup> where the commanding staff of the army was appointed, but according to his reminiscence he did not receive any status report from either the county or the local authorities. Falkenhayn complained that even though the population was very cordial, functionaries were all the more distant, except those of German or Saxon origin. He mentions as exceptions from this rule the lord lieutenant of Brassó County, Count Zsigmond Mikes and the lord lieutenant of Fogaras (Făgăraș) county, József Széll.<sup>45</sup> It was typical although that in mid-September when Falkenhayn arrived, so three weeks after the Romanian attack there was no accurate status report on where the Romanian troops were exactly and whether there was any connection between the various units. The intervention of the German army brought along quick success, at the beginning of October they conquered back Sibiu and Brașov. Yet Falkenhayn complained in his memoirs that supply was tardy partly because of the overburdening of the railway and partly because of the attitude of the functionaries. Most of the Hungarians and Saxons fled and the Romanians reacted with passive resistance to the demands of the army even if they did not show any open resistance. Most of the authorities fled, and according to Falkenhayn those who stayed were not there for the army, but to defend the interest of the civilians.<sup>46</sup> Contrary to this fact Betegh states in his memoirs that he talked to general Falkenhayn regarding this matter and

---

<sup>45</sup> Erich von Falkenhayn, *Der Feldzug der 9. Armee gegen den Rumänen und Russen 1916/17* (Berlin: E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1921), pp. 14-15.

<sup>46</sup> von Falkenhayn, *Der Feldzug*, p. 99.

the general did not allow functionaries to return to the operational territories, for functionaries “work with paragraphs” and in the battle one cannot observe paragraphs.<sup>47</sup>

Settling back the population to their former homes meant quite a workload for the government commissioner and his office. Betegh mentions in his memoirs as well that: “Restoration after the war went quite slowly, slower than we wished. Functionaries could be put back in their places lengthily and having them take up the usual course of their work was an even lengthier matter.”<sup>48</sup> From September the most urgent duty was damage evaluation and reconstruction. In the first half of November the prime minister made a tour in Transylvania as well visiting the affected locations. Events brought greater losses to those who had little belongings, they usually lost all they had. One and a half thousand houses were destroyed, but due to plunder and wrecking – by both the military and the population who stayed behind – many families lost all their values and supplies.

On October 2<sup>nd</sup> the government gave the order for settling back, which provided that administrative authorities and agricultural workers return first to their posts. Yet this process could be only partially controlled, even if in theory one needed a special permit to access the evacuated territories from the end of October. Since October 17<sup>th</sup> it was organized for refugees to return home on railway, but this procedure had its own problems and in mid-December they even had to temporarily cease settling back of the refugees due to the unfavorable winter weather. Still most of the refugees were back in their homes by January 1917. Since the beginning of November 1916 it was the duty of the Transylvanian Relocation Committee organized under the common control of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Interior not only to organize the process of settling back, but also to create proper living conditions. But damage evaluation took a very long time and the sum of the subsidies could not compensate for the losses.<sup>49</sup>

Romania entering the war and Transylvania being transformed into a battle field worsened the internal affairs as well. The opposition made the government responsible for the series of events and also the internal “peace treaty” signed between the parties at the beginning of the war fell over. After the death of Franz Joseph, the position of Prime

---

<sup>47</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, p. 82.

<sup>48</sup> Betegh, *Erdély*, p. 84.

<sup>49</sup> Csaba Csóti, “Menekülés Erdélyből 1916-ban” [Flight from Transylvania in 1916], *Rubicon*, 27 (2016), 1, p. 74-81.

Minister István Tisza became more and more difficult, since the new ruler, King Charles IV was not sympathizing so much with the strong-minded prime minister as his predecessor and attempted to force him to reform election rights. But the government lead by Prime Minister Tisza resigned only in May 1917 and after that Hungarian internal politics became increasingly unstable. After a short period of transition one of the veterans of the Hungarian politics, Sándor Wekerle became prime minister. He had fulfilled this position two times before. However the difficult situation on the front and the increasing impediments in providing supplies for the army, radicalization of the poorer strata and increasing distrust towards the nationalities made governing more and more difficult. The fall of the government meant also that the post of the government commissioners ceased.

On June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1917 the new government accepted Betegh's resignation,<sup>50</sup> and József Széll, the lord lieutenant of Fogaras County was appointed in his place. At the beginning of July the government decided to reorganize "the system of state commissioners in Transylvania" as well, in order to "concentrate all the civil related tasks in the hands of one responsible executive agent during the war". The Prime Minister proposed that the Transylvanian Relocation Committee (*Erdélyi Visszatelepítő Bizottság*) and the agent of the National Public Sustenance Office (*Országos Közélelmezési Hivatal*) at Cluj would be ceased and the state commissioner's office would take over these tasks along with those of the office of the Ministry of Agriculture at Târgu Mureş. For this purpose he summoned a council inviting everybody who was interested in the matter. Széll became by this time "government commissioner for Transylvania," but his jurisdiction was extended also to the area commanded by the 7<sup>th</sup> Army, in the same manner as earlier Betegh.<sup>51</sup> Later further state commissioners were appointed, such as Baron Emil Petrichevich-Horváth, lord lieutenant of Nagy-Küküllő (Târnava Mare) county who was appointed state commissioner for "nationalization of the schools in the counties with a Romanian majority" – as a retaliation to the Romanian's attack.<sup>52</sup> Several people were appointed as regional commissioners to the National Institute of Military Hospitalization

---

<sup>50</sup> After the war Betegh stayed at home, but his career was destroyed. Obviously in the new Romanian State he could not fulfil any state position therefore he was active mainly in the ecclesiastical and social fields. He was the president of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic Popular Union. He died in 1945 at the end of the Second World War.

<sup>51</sup> MNL OL K 27, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 1917.

<sup>52</sup> MNL OL K 27, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1917; October 19<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

(*Országos Hadigondozó Intézet*). So people were appointed as state commissioners rather to fulfill certain tasks instead of regional state commissionership.

Due to the war difficulties and radicalization of the masses in January 1918 a new government was formed lead also by Wekerle. The new government proposed certain compromises to the nationalities, but wanted to be strong-minded regarding the claims of the Social Democrats. As a consequence József Széll was released from his office and was replaced in March by former minister of interior Gábor Ugron as royal commissioner “to manage the entire land policy of Transylvania, restore the Transylvanian parts and to perform all the duties necessary to compensate the population of Transylvania.”<sup>53</sup> Ugron had to conduct his activities according to the programme of the so called Transylvanian Union (*Erdélyi Szövetség*) as he himself was a member. The Transylvanian Union was created just before WWI and it became the most successful “political lobby group for the defense of Hungarian supremacy in Transylvania” “viewing regional interests as preservation and consolidation of the Hungarian’s geostrategic position”.<sup>54</sup> Therefore the Union lobbied that the governments at power would interfere into policies regulating propriety and urged the reform of the election system. The Transylvanian Union was created in December 1913 at Cluj and even though it was intended as a platform independent from political parties, the majority of its members came from the opposition – especially the independent opposition. Among the founders there were several university professors, among them István Apáthy, professor of zoology at the University “Franz Joseph” in Cluj, later state commissioner who participated also to the formulation of the programme. The programme, which was significantly altered by 1914, among many other problems dealt also with the issue of state administration. State administration was intended to be freed from the influence of the political parties and to be turned into a helper and a supporter of the local communities, in order to gain the approval of the population. Learning the language of the state was considered a matter

---

<sup>53</sup> MNL OL K 27, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

<sup>54</sup> Nándor Bárdi, “Az erdélyi magyar (és regionális) érdekek megjelenítése az 1910-es években. Az Erdélyi Szövetség programváltozatai” [Hungarian (and regional) Interests in Transylvania in the 1910s. Variants of the Programme of the Transylvanian Union], *Magyar Kisebbség*, 8 (2003), 2–3, p. (93-105) 94; see also: Ignác Romsics, *Bethlen István. Politikai életrajz* [The Political Biography of Bethlen István] (Budapest: Osiris, 1999), pp. 66-104.

of key importance.<sup>55</sup> It was this Union that István Bethlen, the well-known Transylvanian representative of the opposition who had brought forth similar questions earlier and later Hungarian Prime Minister became one of the presidents of in the autumn of 1917. Bethlen was convinced that “the final and true aim of the Romanians of Transylvania – regardless of what anybody said – was to unite Transylvania and Romania.” Therefore he wanted to strengthen economically, politically and culturally the Hungarians of Transylvania.<sup>56</sup>

Initially the appointment of Ugron was supposed to be more than a simple exchange of persons: on the one hand a royal commissioner was mentioned instead of a government commissioner, on the other hand the commissioner was supposed to have a broader jurisdiction and special reference was made to the execution of the programme of the Transylvanian Union. Describing precisely his jurisdiction was quite difficult. In February the council of ministers took the matter upon its agenda several times, finally it was decided that Széll would be released from office due to “the more efficient fusion of the jurisdictions,” but he will be released from office only after Ugron was appointed. The jurisdiction of Ugron’s position was established jointly by the Prime Minister and the minister of the interior together with the minister of agriculture, of justice and of public sustenance.<sup>57</sup> The bill of the ordinance was finished only by March and the jurisdiction of the government (and not royal) commissioner was far more restricted than the one initially proposed. The commissioner would receive a salary from the budget of the Prime Minister’s Office.<sup>58</sup> His headquarters were in Cluj and he had a jurisdiction over the fifteen Transylvanian counties and the county of Szilágy (Sălaj). His tasks were mainly reparation of the damage caused by the war, reconstruction, subsidization of the population and the “increased protection of the interests of the state”. He could issue ordinances if previously approved by the ministers. His ordinances could be appealed at the same ministers. And even though he had the rights stipulated in §4 of Law LXIII of 1912, it was emphasized

---

<sup>55</sup> Nándor Bárdi pointed out how similar the programme of the Union was to the programme of Iuliu Maniu in 1924. Bárdi, “Az erdélyi magyar,” p. 98.

<sup>56</sup> Romsics, *Bethlen István*, p. 81.

<sup>57</sup> MNL OL K 27, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

<sup>58</sup> The similarities with the centralization process after 1920 are worth noting: in 1920, the newly formed Central Commission for Unification of the new Romanian provinces, with branches in each province, was also headed by the Prime Minister.

that only pending the approval of the minister in charge. The issues that were not in his jurisdiction should be conducted in the regular procedural manner and the government commissioner could have a say in them only if they were directly affecting his tasks.<sup>59</sup>

Ugron was in office merely for several months, then he was released in August<sup>60</sup> and after that only complete disintegration of the old administration followed. All lord lieutenants appointed in November 1918, after the so-called Aster (or October) Revolution had government commissioner competencies as well, but the fall of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy could not be prevented. Anyway, after the Aster Revolution, government commissioners were appointed by the new government led by Mihály Károlyi by the dozen. Kázmér Batthány, the first minister of the interior in the Károlyi government depicts in his memoirs the situation ironically thus: "One of the 'revolutionary' specialties of the October Chaos was the obsession that every possible and impossible social class asked a government commissioner to be appointed for the settlement of their own grievances. The delegation asking for a government commissioner usually 'happened' to have the designated state commissioner among them and after the speaker finished his speech he was suddenly put forward from the rear row where he humbly stayed thus far and he was proposed to occupy the position."<sup>61</sup> Besides government commissioners for a certain county and town there were also state commissioners responsible with public sustenance, military and other problems or other branches of state administration, state commissioners for nationalities and even for each denomination.

### **Organization of the Government High Commissioner's Office in Transylvania**

Chaos was worsened by the establishment and operation of parallel authorities in the autumn of 1918. For national councils were created also in the rural areas – in every county, town and township, and sometimes district – following the appeal of the Hungarian National Council formed during the Aster Revolution. The scope of duties and jurisdiction of these national councils was unclear from the very beginning. Therefore it was no wonder that regular local authorities made frequent complaints that national councils demand to have a say in matters

---

<sup>59</sup> MNL OL K 27, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1918.

<sup>60</sup> MNL OL K 27, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

<sup>61</sup> Tivadar Batthány, *Beszámoló* [My Memoir] (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2017) (first edition: 1927), p. 339.

regarding the local administration and in several regions they abuse their power.<sup>62</sup> In Transylvania the situation was even worse, since in this region Romanians, Hungarians and Saxons usually had their own national councils and militias.

The Romanian National Council created at the very end of October at Budapest communicated to the Hungarian government already on November 10<sup>th</sup> that they will take over the entire power – including state administration – in Transylvania and Eastern Hungary, in 23 counties and in the regions inhabited by Romanians of other three counties (a total of 26 counties). Then, on November 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister Mihály Károlyi and minister of nationalities Oszkár Jászi – unsuccessfully – negotiated in Arad with the Romanian National Council. The Council's position was that they will completely secede from Hungary. The intention of Transylvania's union with Romania was then solemnly proclaimed on December 1 by the Romanian National Assembly at Alba Iulia. The National Assembly elected a Ruling Council functioning as an interim government – in alignment with the Romanian government in Bucharest.<sup>63</sup>

In November 1918 the situation was quite complicated: the old and new authorities functioned parallelly, the latter were just forming, and jurisdictions were unclear. The situation was further worsened by national and social conflicts. Clerks of the old state administration were locally removed from office or made to flee in many places. This process was concentrated mainly on notary publics and gendarmes, but in some areas even district judges' (or High Sheriff, Hung. *főszolgabíró*) offices were dysfunctional. Soldiers coming home in bulks from the front lines made public safety even worse. By the beginning of November complaints regarding high officials of the old administration being chased away, abuses, robberies and even murder were filed daily. In spite of the fact that the Károlyi government, considering the critical situation initially followed the proposal of Kázmér Batthyány, the minister of the interior and appointed everywhere state commissioners having greater jurisdiction than the lord lieutenants before them, the situation could not be controlled at all or only partially at best.

By mid-November Romanian troops crossed the Romanian and Hungarian border and occupied without any resistance an ever greater

---

<sup>62</sup> Tibor Hajdu, *Tanácsok Magyarországon 1918–1919-ben* [Councils in Hungary in 1918-1919] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1958), pp. 45-53.

<sup>63</sup> See Vasile Netea, *O zi din istoria Transilvaniei. 1 decembrie 1918* [A Day in the History of Transylvania. December 1<sup>st</sup> 1918] (București: Albatros, 1970).

part of Transylvania. In the occupied regions an extraordinary situation was instituted and the connection to Budapest was cut by thorough control over the channels of communication. As soon as it was established the Ruling Council considered one of its main tasks to take over state administration. On December 3<sup>rd</sup> it was decided already at Alba Iulia that wherever officials had fled power should be taken over. Shortly after, Romanian national councils of the counties were instructed to take over everywhere the control over state administration.<sup>64</sup> As the situation became increasingly serious, Mihály Károlyi made a declaration to the Hungarian nation on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918 in which he informed that part of the country is being occupied by Czech and Romanian troops with the accept of the Entente and they also take over state administration. Thus he admitted the incapacity of the government to act: “the government has no power to change claims and facts,” it has to accept them, but it can still declare that it does not give up its rights.<sup>65</sup>

In this situation the Hungarian government appointed at the beginning of December Professor István Apáthy<sup>66</sup>, the president of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania with headquarters in Cluj as government high commissioner for Transylvania. Apáthy was also delegated to negotiate with the commanding officer of the Romanian troops the observation of the Ceasefire Agreement of Belgrade. Apáthy and his team set up very quickly the new regional power, the short-lived Government High Commissioner’s Office (GHCO) with various departments. Therefore at a certain moment Transylvania had two

---

<sup>64</sup> Gheorghe Iancu, *Contribuția Consiliului Dirigent la consolidarea statului național unitar român* [The Contribution of the Ruling Council to the Consolidation of the Romanian National Unitary State] (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1985), p. 125.

<sup>65</sup> “Károlyi Mihály felhívása a magyar néphez” [The Appeal of Mihály Károlyi to the Hungarian People], December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918, in: *Károlyi Mihály levelezése* [The Correspondence of Mihály Károlyi], vol. I, 1905–1920, ed. György Litván (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1978), pp. 305–306.

<sup>66</sup> István Apáthy (1863–1922) became the Zoology professor of the University of Cluj at the young age of only 27. He modernized the Zoological Institute and had a new building built for it. He was a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a founding member in the Hungarian Society for Social Studies and a member in numerous other associations. He was active in politics; locally at the beginning, first in the New Party founded by Dezső Bánffy, then in the Independent and 48ths Party. He was one of the leading figures of the municipal committee, he was first a fellow, then the master mason of the Union Lodge. On his scientific career see: Bálint Markó, *A fejlődésnek nevezett átalakulásról Apáthy István emlékezete* [On the Transformation Called Evolution. The Memory of István Apáthy], <http://adatbank.transindex.ro/vendeg/htmlk/pdf7996.pdf>, last accessed 15.11.2018.

parallel regional governmental bodies, the Ruling Council in Sibiu and the GHCO in Cluj. The Hungarian government still wanted and the Romanian government already wanted to gain authority over it. The apparatus of the GHCO was in fact based upon the organization of the Transylvanian Committee of the Hungarian National Council (or as it was usually called: the Transylvanian National Council). Therefore I will briefly present how it was created.

It was established on October 26<sup>th</sup> at Cluj. Professor István Apáthy, the local leader of the Károlyi party was elected as president and as vice-presidents were elected Jenő Janovics, the manager of the (Hungarian) National Theater of Cluj, a member of the Radical Civilians' Party and Sándor Vincze, the head of the Labor Insurance Institute, a member of the Social Democratic Party. Apáthy was a well-known scientist and he had been one of the leaders of local and regional politics for a long time. However the leftists and the Romanians had some reserves about his person. "Apáthy's name is a provocation for the Romanians and if the National Council intends to play a historic role in Transylvania, such a goal is impossible to reach with Apáthy as a leader." – summarized the concerns later one of the collaborators of the GHCO.<sup>67</sup> For the plan was that the National Council of Cluj would act as the Transylvanian headquarters of all the national councils in that region – regardless of nationality. However the public could be made only partially to recognize its central role and its jurisdiction for all Transylvania. The fact that the Romanians did not recognize its jurisdiction became clear from the very beginning, but later they had to face also the fact that neither did the Saxons and what was more, not even the county authorities of some of the counties – mainly those of the Székelyland. The Council was nearly helpless regarding the never ending complaints and requests for help that came towards it. For on the one hand they did not have any armed forces except for the militia and on the other hand bloodshed would have had some serious consequences.

The Hungarian National Council of Transylvania – just as the other similar organizations – acted hastily, took *ad hoc* measures, while they had to face and solve problems that regular state administration hadn't had to deal with. One of the members of the Council remembers this as follows: "Naturally the huge number of telephones were

---

<sup>67</sup> Jenő Kertész, "A tíz év előtti Erdély napjai" [Everydays in Transylvania 10 Years Earlier], I, *Korunk*, 4 (1929), 1:  
[http://epa.oszk.hu/00400/00458/00239/1929\\_01\\_4738.html](http://epa.oszk.hu/00400/00458/00239/1929_01_4738.html), last accessed 15.08.2018.

constantly ringing. Everybody in Transylvania asked everything at Cluj." The rural national councils "desperately begged us for instructions in every possible and impossible case."<sup>68</sup> Apáthy confirms this. He recalls that initially they had no idea "that such great and heavy duties will befall us due to the collapse of the old state administration and the inertia of the new."<sup>69</sup> In order to cover costs of operation the Council took a loan of 250 thousand Korona from the financial institutions of Cluj with the members of the Council as guarantors. 50 thousand Korona out of this sum was given over at the beginning of November to the Romanian National Council (or Romanian Senate) in Cluj. Later the loan was repaid from the money allocated to the GHCO.<sup>70</sup>

Due to the general chaos the ties with Budapest became looser. „The government at Budapest is just forming, [...] on the brink of chaos and republic. These days Budapest was not likely to send any help: money, armed forces or directives. And – as I recall it – the National Council seemed to be enjoying this unexpected sovereignty.”<sup>71</sup> Vice-president Vincze explained the situation thus: although they constantly called the ministries in Budapest, there “our important questions were answered by unfamiliar people in a manner that we could neither interpret, nor use. We were completely cut off from the leaders of the revolution and of the party.”<sup>72</sup> He considered that contrarily to the Hungarians, the Ruling Council and the Romanian national councils were far more organized: “Unlike us they had a long term programme to follow and their central authorities gave them the necessary instructions for their courses of action in time.”<sup>73</sup>

By the end of November however the situation of the National Council in Cluj and of the Hungarian administration was becoming increasingly untenable. The day after the Romanian National Assembly

---

<sup>68</sup> Kertész, “A tíz év,” I.

<sup>69</sup> István Apáthy, “Erdély az összeomlás után” [Transylvania after the Collapse], *Új Magyar Szemle*, 1 (1920), 2-3, p. 154.

<sup>70</sup> Apáthy, “Erdély,” p. 163.

<sup>71</sup> László Passuth, *Kutatóárok* [The Researchers’ Trench] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1966), p. 221.

<sup>72</sup> Sándor Vincze, “Erdély forradalma 1918” [The Transylvanian Revolution, 1918], Archives of the Institute of Political History (Politikátörténeti Intézet Levéltára) Budapest. I would like to kindly thank Norbert Falusi for allowing me to use parts of the manuscript, who will publish selected parts of the manuscript in *Magyar Kisebbség*, March 2019.

<sup>73</sup> Vincze, “Erdély forradalma.” At another time he writes: “The Romanian national council was less loud and more efficient than the Hungarian one.”

of Alba Iulia, on the night of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, Apáthy travelled to Budapest in person to report the situation in Transylvania on the one hand and to “ask for proper instructions and material means from the government” on the other hand, and last, but not least to ask that he would be appointed government commissioner legally. Due to his illness he could meet the minister of the interior only on December 4<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting participated also the former minister of the interior and former government commissioner for Transylvania, Gábor Ugron. Supposedly it was his suggestion that they would create a Government Commissioner’s Office for the 26 counties the Romanians wanted to annex to Romania. The matter was on the agenda of the Council of Ministers on December 6<sup>th</sup>. During this meeting the minister of the interior reported the discussions he had with the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania and their request that “a central state commissioner’s office” for Transylvania be instituted. He ensured the other ministers that “this would be an organ with similar jurisdiction as the government commissioner’s office in Miklós Betegh’s time”.<sup>74</sup> A sum of one million Korona was allocated for the operational costs of the Government High Commissioner’s Office of Eastern Hungary. The Apáthy delegation reported also that tax offices in Transylvania do not receive any tax money, therefore war allowances would have had to be paid also from this money. Oszkár Jászi, the minister for nationalities supported the idea and Apáthy’s appointment having in view the situation of necessity created, but he considered that the Saxons should be consulted and that it should be emphasized that this is a measure “aimed at the defense of the Hungarian state”.<sup>75</sup>

On December 8<sup>th</sup> the council of ministers had the issue on its agenda again when they discussed what Hungary’s position should be in regard to the resolutions of the Romanian National Assembly of Alba Iulia. At this point the main motivation for creating the new institution was the defense of the Hungarians in Eastern Hungary. It was also the moment when Apáthy was officially appointed as government high commissioner. He was also voted a representation allowance of three thousand Korona. Jászi reported that the Romanian National Council protested against Apáthy’s person as commissioner, but that he responded that “Hungarians under pressure will elect as their trustful bodies whomever they trust and that is not for the Romanians to

---

<sup>74</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

<sup>75</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

decide.”<sup>76</sup> This shows that the government saw the situation realistically. And even though the GHCO theoretically had jurisdiction over the entire Eastern Hungary, it was clear from the very beginning that it can represent Hungarian interests at most.

In Hungarian papers of Transylvania claims for the regional autonomy started to appear as well. Yet the new GHCO was not meant to decentralize, but to deconcentrate the tasks of the government. The plan of a similar organ, with jurisdiction in the entire Transylvania was proposed earlier also by Oszkár Jászi, the minister for nationalities, but at that point the government had to reject it due to the refusal of the Romanians to accept it.<sup>77</sup>

Even though at the meeting of the council of ministers it was discussed that the jurisdiction and organization of the new institution will be elaborated by the minister of the interior in concordance with the minister for nationalities and other ministers affected by the matter, the proposal for jurisdiction and organization was in fact elaborated by József Pap, a former lord lieutenant of the city of Cluj, one of Apáthy's closest collaborators and Emil Petrichevich-Horváth, the former lord lieutenant of Nagy-Küküllő (Târnava Mare) county, the subsequent collaborator of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania.<sup>78</sup> The GHCO started to operate on December 9<sup>th</sup>. The High Commissioner's Office was supposed to have 18 departments, mainly featuring the ministries of the government, but sources mention only 14: the department of the interior was headed by József Pap, that of the armistice by Emil Petrichevich-Horváth, the other heads of department were mostly new people from the left parties. The department for culture was headed by Jenő Janovics, the one of public sustenance by Social Democrat Lajos Jordáki, the department in charge with relations with the Romanians was headed by another Social Democrat, Jenő Kertész. The presidential department was headed by Sándor Vincze. He did all the actual organization activity.<sup>79</sup> Apáthy himself described later the tasks and organization of duties thus: in the

---

<sup>76</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

<sup>77</sup> Zsolt K. Lengyel, “Niedergang, Wiederherstellung, Neugestaltung, Zusammenbruch. Ungarische Reform- und Zukunftsentwürfe für Siebenbürgen am Vorabend und während des Ersten Weltkrieges,” in *Umbruch mit Schlachtenlärm. Siebenbürgen und der Erste Weltkrieg*, ed. Harald Heppner (Köln - Weimar - Wien: Böhlau, 2017), pp. (53-112) 101-102.

<sup>78</sup> Apáthy, “Erdély,” pp. 165-166.

<sup>79</sup> Besides these there were departments for state administration, finances, public education, estate management, transport, press and propaganda, and a department for the Szeklers. Lengyel, “Niedergang,” p. 102.

departments “were working specialists with a practical sense,” the Office had “several legal advisors and state administration specialists with a good reputation in their fields”. “It was not the Government High Commissioner’s Office’s task to perform the duties of municipalities, deputy lord lieutenants and mayors, its task was the general and unitary political governance in view of the effective legislation. And that required more specialists than those of the state administration.”<sup>80</sup> Vincze remembered thus the operation of the High Commissioner’s Office: “All departments were controlled and governed by the presidential department, but every department had the right to act and solve in its own scope of duties. Every department was ensured the utmost autonomy. For in the end the right to decide in all the important decisions remained in the hands of the National Council.”<sup>81</sup>

While at Cluj the GHCO was organized and it was operating – as well as it could operate under the given circumstances – the government at Budapest had many other issues to deal with as well. The minister of the interior prepared the ordinance governing the organization and jurisdiction of the GHCO, urged by Apáthy, only one day before the Romanian troops entered Cluj. Apáthy’s request was that in case of extraordinary circumstances he would have more powers than those stipulated in paragraph 4 of Law LXIII of 1912, powers “equaling the jurisdiction of the people’s government”. In the ministry of the interior several points in Apáthy’s petition were objected against: it was considered that instead of giving extraordinary jurisdiction for the 26 counties claimed by the Romanians, his jurisdiction should be established gradually as the Romanian army proceeds; he was not given jurisdiction over legal courts in order to protect independent deliberation of the judges; at every instance they insisted that people should be able to appeal to the minister of the interior against his measures; and they also opposed that he would have the right to issue ‘complementary ordinances to the effective laws’.<sup>82</sup> It is therefore obvious that the government was unwilling to confer extraordinary powers that go beyond the prohibitions of Law LXIII of 1912, it was guarding its own

---

<sup>80</sup> Apáthy, “Erdély,” p. 166.

<sup>81</sup> Vincze, “Erdély forradalma.”

<sup>82</sup> The Proposal of the Government High Commissioner Appointed for the Regions Threatened to Be Occupied by the Romanian Army Regarding the Organization and Jurisdiction of the Government Commissioner’s Office by the Government, 23.12.1918. MNL OL K 148 Ministry of Interior, Presidential documents, Nr. 2869/1919.

jurisdiction and had no intention to create a regional “government” even in the last hours of its power.

Finally the jurisdiction of the “government commissioner appointed to protect Hungarian interests in the counties occupied by the Romanian army or jeopardized by such occupation and in the municipalities” was regulated in this spirit. The ministry of the interior was still willing to make it possible for him to use governing rights as stipulated in Law LXIII of 1912 in certain cases – in case the communication between him and the government was disrupted –, but even in such a case he would have had the obligation to later make a report of his actions during such a time; and he was also allowed to form further government commissioner’s offices.<sup>83</sup> But the bill was finalized too late and it was presented to the council of ministers only on December 28<sup>th</sup> when it no longer had any practical importance.<sup>84</sup>

By the time the GHCO was operational the Romanian troops occupied even Târgu Mureş and they were waiting for consent by the Entente to be able to cross the demarcation line. Apáthy’s tasks was largely to negotiate with the Romanian commander, General Constantin Neculcea. These negotiations were quite unilateral, they reflected accurately the relation of power between the two parties: practically Apáthy managed to obtain nothing but some promises. His relation to the Hungarian government was not every fruitful either. He could expect no practical help, but in the general chaos he did not always manage to obtain even that the government would appoint as state commissioners for the counties the persons that he wanted to be appointed. In his reports he underlined several times: “Appointment of utmost urgency.”<sup>85</sup> Despite of this fact his candidate for Kis-Küküllő (Târnava Mică) county was not appointed even after several attempts. Appointments created heated debates even within the government itself; in the above mentioned case, for example, the ministers of the Radical Civilians’ Party were opposing the appointment.<sup>86</sup> Due to the situation at hand the GHCO suspended the operation of the municipal committees

---

<sup>83</sup> Bill Regarding the Scope of Duties and Jurisdiction of the Government Commissioner for Eastern Hungary, undated. MNL OL K 148 Ministry of Interior, Presidential documents, Nr. 2869/1919.

<sup>84</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of December 28th, 1918.

<sup>85</sup> MNL OL K 148, Nr. 3787/1918.

<sup>86</sup> See Judit Pál, “Főispánok és prefektusok 1918–1919-ben: a közigazgatási átmenet kérdése Erdélyben” [Lord-Lieutenants and Prefects in 1918-19. The Issue of the Administrative Transition in Transylvania], *Századok*, 152 (2018), 6, pp. 1179–1214.

and of the town councils by mid-December<sup>87</sup> – and thus it took another step towards the elimination of the local autonomies, although the institutions of the local government were mostly frozen anyway.

Meanwhile the Ruling Council considered one of its most urgent tasks to take over state administration. Ioan Erdélyi, the plenipotentiary delegate of the Ruling Council for Budapest emphasized in his memorandum handed over to lieutenant-colonel of the staff Fernand Vix, the head of the military commission of the Entente at Budapest, that state administration should be taken over immediately, for „the usual operation of the state administration is at risk, since the Hungarian government having no authority on Romanian territories cannot solve public issues”.<sup>88</sup> Romanian troops were ordered to cross the demarcation line established in the Ceasefire Agreement of Belgrade.<sup>89</sup> At the same time the Romanian government summoned the Hungarian government to recall Hungarian troops from Cluj. Apáthy desperately asked the latter to intervene.

The Károlyi government addressed lieutenant-colonel Vix who on the one hand assured them that the Romanian troops occupy Cluj only as a strategic point, according to point 3 of the Ceasefire Agreement of Belgrade and on the other hand commanded the Romanian army not to disturb the Hungarian General Assembly summoned to December 22<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>90</sup> At the request of the Hungarian government a French liaison officer was also sent to Cluj to check the observation of the ceasefire agreement; and they insisted that the militia and the gendarmerie should not be disarmed. This was telegraphed also to Apáthy, but in reality the assurances had no value. The Romanian party considered the referred points of the Ceasefire

---

<sup>87</sup> The chief justice of Ocna Sibiului was notified of this fact by the lord lieutenant of Alsó-Fehér (Alba de Jos) County, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1918. MNL OL K 803 PTI 606 f. 3 Törvényhatóságok táviratai (Municipal Telegraphs), Alsó-Fehér County, No. 344.

<sup>88</sup> Cornel Grad, *Contribuția armatei la preluarea și consolidarea Imperiumului în Transilvania (noiembrie 1918 – iunie 1919)* [The Contribution of the Romanian Army to the Overtaking and Consolidating the *Imperium* in Transylvania (November 1918 – June 1919)], in *95 de ani de la Marea Unire. Volum omagial*, ed. Marius Grec (Arad: “Vasile Goldiș” University Press, 2013), pp. (215–261) 233–234.

<sup>89</sup> General Berthelot agreed to the crossing of the demarcation line already at December 12<sup>th</sup>, but he declared it publicly only on the 15<sup>th</sup> when the Romanian army already started its advancement. Berthelot motivated his decision among others with the alleged Bolshevik propaganda of the Hungarian government, fully adopting the Romanian arguments, while according to the Czechs the Károlyi government was a reactionary government. Mária Ormos, *Pádovától Trianonig* [From Padua to Trianon] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1984), pp. 114–119.

<sup>90</sup> MNL OL MOL K 27 Council of the ministers of December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1918.

Agreement of Belgrade offensive and did not recognize its obligation to observe them. Supported by General Henri Berthelot they intended to occupy the entire territory they claimed as soon as possible.<sup>91</sup>

Having in view the situation at hand the council of ministers allowed the high government commissioner to pay the officers and clerks an advanced payment for three months.<sup>92</sup> On December 24<sup>th</sup> the Romanian army occupied Cluj as well and not as a strategic point, but as a territory considered to belong to it.<sup>93</sup> Two days earlier Apáthy and his staff summoned a General Assembly to Cluj so that the representatives of the Hungarians of Transylvania would state their will as well. But that remained a mere symbolic gesture. On December 24<sup>th</sup>, Romanian King Ferdinand I declared in an ordinance the union of Transylvania and the other counties where Romanians lived to the Romanian state. State administration was taken over by the persons appointed by the Ruling Council. Romanian authorities had never accepted anyway the legitimacy of the GHCO, they merely tolerated it for the time being.

Therefore as a first step on December 27<sup>th</sup> some departments were united, for example the Department of Culture was ceased.<sup>94</sup> “Naturally we could soon determine that our territory of operation was minimal. Besides paper handling all the other departments were out of work, except the department for the relations with the Romanians. This department then started receiving daily urgent matters of larger or smaller consequence. But the official and authoritative issues of the department soon shrunk to the mere contact with the Division Commandment.” – remembered Jenő Kertész who was the head of the above mentioned department. Then he continued thus: „And it was at this time that the never ending bustle defending the interests of the civilians captured between the town-major’s office and the court-martial or the court-martial and the Citadel began, civilians who were twenty-fifth<sup>95</sup>, restricted access or otherwise offended in their rights. These

---

<sup>91</sup> In the background another dispute was going on, primarily between Berthelot and Vix. See regarding this matter Ormos, *Pádovától*, pp. 115-131.

<sup>92</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918.

<sup>93</sup> See Ignác Romsics, *Erdély elvesztése* [How Transylvania Was Lost] (Budapest: Helikon, 2018), pp. 142-164; Fráter Olivér, “Erdély román megszállása 1918–1919-ben” [The Occupation of Transylvania by the Romanians in 1918-1919], *Kisebbségkutatás*, 9 (2000), 2, pp. 242-263.

<sup>94</sup> Péter Sas, “Janovics Jenő feljegyzése 1919. február 27–28-i beidézéséről és kihallgatásáról” [Notes of Jenő Janovics on His Summon and Questioning on February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 1919], *Lymbus*, 10 (2012–2013), p. (293-308) 303.

<sup>95</sup> Sentenced to receive 25 strokes with a rod.

were the matters handled by the department I headed and this was all the operational ground the Government High Commissioner's Office for Eastern Hungary had."<sup>96</sup>

After he described the events of the last days of power Kertész also noted an interesting episode of how bureaucracy went on: "We were witnessing our ground of operation shrink to nothing day after day"; "at the Government High Commissioner's Office we handled documents all the more according to the provisions and mainly the others handled the documents. For my department could not handle documents since I considered it more important to solve the loads of complaints coming into my office – as well as I could, over the telephone for the rural areas and in person at the military authorities in Cluj." Vincze, the head of the presidential department resented this and criticized him at the last meeting of the heads of department. But Kertész had his answer ready for him: "I already stated that bureaucracy is a tragicomic act when the Government High Commissioner's Office for Eastern Hungary cannot dispose even of one of the streets in Cluj, not even the very building it functions in, let alone Eastern Hungary, for it is possibly a matter of days or hours that the Romanian army will do a perquisition on us."<sup>97</sup>

Although the GHCO was not eliminated immediately after the arrival of the Romanian troops, yet its existence was getting redundant by the moment. Prime Minister Károlyi offered Apáthy at the end of December the position of minister of education, but he refused it. On the one hand he did not want to leave Transylvania and his office, on the other hand he disagreed with the leftist views the Károlyi government had lately adopted. He continued to remain in Cluj, despite the fact that he was warned – even in anonymous letters – that he is no longer safe. Apáthy was at a hearing also with General Berthelot who passed through Cluj in the last day of December. Berthelot assured him that his fears have no real basis and no one will oppose to his activity as government commissioner and his telephones will not be listened to. Supposedly Berthelot declared: France will not tolerate that "the formerly oppressed ... would turn into oppressors".<sup>98</sup> It was in the general's presence that a controversial episode took place, i.e. the alteration of the Ceasefire Agreement of Belgrade. The alteration regarded the creation of a 15 km wide neutral zone on the

---

<sup>96</sup> Kertész, "A tíz év," I.

<sup>97</sup> Jenő Kertész, *A tíz év előtti Erdély napjai* [Everydays in Transylvania 10 Years Earlier] III, Kolozsvár, 1929, in: "Korunk" 4, 3.

<sup>98</sup> Apáthy, *Erdély*, p. 172.

Deva–Cluj–Baia Mare line, which would have separated the Romanian and Hungarian armies. Apáthy came to an agreement with generals Berthelot and Neculcea regarding this matter. Neculcea insisted that also the Hungarian gendarmerie would be withdrawn east of this line, but he agreed that civil state administration would continue to operate. Still the agreement was never signed, for general Neculcea first kept postponing it, then he informed Apáthy that General Traian Moşoiu prohibited him from communicating with Apáthy.<sup>99</sup> Therefore Romanian military authorities completely disregarded Apáthy. Thus the activity of the GHCO came to a halt. Next Apáthy tried to organize a passive opposition of the Hungarian clerks.

On January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1919 – after previous agreement – the delegation of the GHCO went to Sibiu to negotiate with the Ruling Council, among others the division of public administration based on the percentage of nationalities. The delegation was received by Iuliu Maniu, the president of the Ruling Council. Maniu was very polite with the delegation “and he gave the theoretical resolution on the twenty-eight counties only a slight mention,” but obviously the delegation failed in its mission.<sup>100</sup> While the delegation was participating at the negotiations in Sibiu the Romanian military authorities arrested Apáthy on January 15<sup>th</sup>,<sup>101</sup> motivating their action by the fact that the Romanian troops crossing the demarcation line had been attacked in village Crişeni (Cigányi) in Szilágy (Sălaj) county. This was the last chapter in the story of the institution: “It was on the day after we came back from Sibiu that the royal commissioner of the court-martial made his appearance at the offices of the Government High Commissioner’s Office of Eastern Hungary and I was summoned to his presence as well, so that as a secretary I would tell him my »secrets«. He could not believe for the world that we were in fact doing nothing. [...] At the same time and in our presence the post office was ordered that they should consider that the telephone line to Budapest was no longer at the Office’s disposal.” They still went to the office for several days, but their activity was completely void of sense: “And one day they confiscated our entire archive as well and with this act this latter

---

<sup>99</sup> Apáthy, *Erdély*, p. 172-175.

<sup>100</sup> Kertész, “A tíz év,” III, *Korunk*, 4 (1929), 3.

<sup>101</sup> The committal order is dated February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1919. Zoltán Mariska, “Apáthy István politikai szerepe és pere” [The Political Role and the Lawsuit of István Apáthy], *Korunk*, 17 (2006), 3, pp. 77-89.

formed department of public law was also ceased..."<sup>102</sup> Sándor Vincze left Cluj on December 30<sup>th</sup>,<sup>103</sup> the others withdrew.

When Apáthy was arrested he had theoretically been a private citizen for two days, since the council of ministers accepted his resignation.<sup>104</sup> The Hungarian government addressed General Berthelot when hearing about Apáthy's arrest; later lieutenant-colonel Vix promised them that the situation will be solved, but all attempts to improve Apáthy's situation failed.<sup>105</sup> At the end of February the military prosecutor summoned Jenő Janovics, the vice-president and others to gather incriminatory evidence against Apáthy. The authorities were interested in the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania, in how the GHCO was created, in the presence of the military in Cluj, in the Hungarian general assembly of December 22<sup>nd</sup>, but mostly in the issued brochures and flyers – the means for the alleged Bolshevik propaganda. And even if he was not asked about it, Janovics mentioned the accusation of the alleged Bolshevik conspiracy, for it was public knowledge that Apáthy was arrested with such accusations. He emphasized that he knew Apáthy very well, he is a man of conservative views and "nothing is further from him than Bolshevism," since he considered even the claims of the Social Democratic Party an utmost exaggeration.<sup>106</sup>

Apáthy was accused among others of high treason – against Romanian king Ferdinand I – and conspiracy. The main heads of the charge against him were that in the Szekler counties he urged recruitment – which he did in fact following orders from the Hungarian government –, that he attempted to turn the Romanians living in Transylvania against the Romanian army and state using manifestos, which also included facts that were offending to the Romanian king and last, but not least he was the scape goat also for the attack on the Romanian troops at the township of Crişeni where 6 soldiers died and 12 were injured. The defense on the one hand questioned the competence of the court, on the other hand it underlined that Cluj was a Hungarian territory before December 24<sup>th</sup>, therefore Apáthy acted as a Hungarian citizen and high official. He did not commit high treason; his measures

---

<sup>102</sup> Kertész, "A tíz év," III.

<sup>103</sup> Vincze went to Budapest, and was a commissar during the Hungarian Soviet Republic.

<sup>104</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1919.

<sup>105</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of January 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 1919.

<sup>106</sup> This part was not put down in the minutes at the order of the military judge, therefore we know of it only from Janovics's notes. Sas, "Janovics Jenő," p. 305.

intended to calm the general public and to maintain order. And as far as the attack at Crişeni of January 14<sup>th</sup> was concerned, even the court considered Apáthy had nothing to do with it.

Apáthy's case was discussed also by the Hungarian council of ministers – and not only regarding the objection to his arrest. At the end of January the French military commission of Budapest addressed the Hungarian government to clarify whether Apáthy had the right to sign alterations to the Ceasefire Agreement of Belgrade. The minister of interior stated that he had talked over the telephone with Apáthy at the time, but he told Apáthy that the Hungarian government does not approve signing a new agreement. The council of ministers considered that the French need to be told that Apáthy had no right to sign such an agreement. The agreement was not observed by the Romanian party anyway. The minister of the interior also mentioned that: even if Apáthy's life depends on this, the interests of Hungary require it.<sup>107</sup>

The epilogue to Apáthy's story is that he was imprisoned at Sibiu, Dej (Dés), Jibou (Zsibó) and Carei (Nagykároly), then at Sibiu again. Even if his circumstances of imprisonment were fairly good, the hustle and bustle undermined his health. Finally his sentence at the first degree of June 21<sup>st</sup> was five years of forced labor. He appealed the sentence and was acquitted, and then freed on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. After that – when he managed to get a passport – he settled down in Hungary at August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1920 and he was a professor at the “Ferenc József” University moved from Cluj to Szeged until his death.<sup>108</sup> The case of the GHCO was discussed in the Hungarian council of ministers last on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1919 when the council decided that “the Transylvanian government commissioner's office” which became available after Apáthy resigned “will remain unfilled for the time being”.<sup>109</sup>

## Conclusion

The institution of royal, respectively government commissioners had a tradition of several centuries. It was occasionally used also during the period of the Dual Monarchy when a problem transcending the competence of the regular state administration or a matter needing

---

<sup>107</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1919. For details see Ormos, *Pádovától*, pp. 112-131. Romsics considers that the agreement “was handled with reserves by both the Hungarian government and the French authorities, but they accepted it *de facto*”. Contrarily, the Romanian political and military leaders “completely disregarded it”. Romsics, *Erdély*, p. 157.

<sup>108</sup> Mariska, *Apáthy István*.

<sup>109</sup> MNL OL K 27, Council of the ministers of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1919.

urgent intervention (e.g. natural calamities) needed to be handled. But it started to be widely used only after the outbreak of WWI. The jurisdiction of the government commissioners was regulated in Hungary by Law LXIII of 1912. And even though the law extended the jurisdiction of the government commissioners at the expense of that of the local governments of the counties and towns, the Hungarian governments constantly made attempts to protect civil administration from the abuses of the military and to avoid the situation created in the other half of the Monarchy, where state administration was in fact "militarized".

When the war broke out regional state commissioner's offices were created – among them one in Transylvania – whose task was to maintain public order and safety and also concentration on performing military tasks in collaboration with the military commanders. The government commissioner's office ceased in April 1916 was reorganized after Romania entered the war. After that the government commissioner of Transylvania, Miklós Betegh had indeed to fulfill extraordinary tasks: organization of the evacuation of the war zones, movement of the public institutions, provision of shelter and food for the refugee population, then during the counterattack damage had to be evaluated, the population had to be relocated and partially compensated for its losses. However the state commissioner's office created at the time was an interim establishment which did not affect state administration at all or just in relation with its own tasks.

Appointment of government commissioners became a general practice as a consequence of the Aster Revolution (October 1918) when every lord lieutenant was appointed state commissioner and the institution pullulated. The Aster Revolution that broke out in Hungary at the end of the war, the declarations of independence of the nationalities living in Hungary and the chaotic circumstances created an entirely new situation. The Károlyi government attempted to solve this situation by appointing government commissioners. But the operation of parallel authorities initially did nothing but create an even greater chaos.

In Transylvania parallel nation building arrived at a new turning-point: this reality was expressed in the national councils and militias parallelly operated by the Romanians, the Hungarians and the Saxons, which were all headed by the Romanian National Council, respectively the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania and the German-Saxon National Council. A few days after the creation of the Romanian Ruling Council the Hungarian government established a new regional institution, the short-lived Government High Commissioner's Office of Eastern Hungary (Transylvania). But this institution could not

operate even as an institution representing Hungarians in Transylvania, let alone to counterbalance the activity of the Ruling Council. After the Romanian troops entered Cluj, the Office was eliminated merely a few weeks of operation. The increasingly frequent use of the system of state commissioners, the revolutionary movements and the establishment of the national councils as a consequence contributed to the partial dysfunctional state of the traditional state administration and it involuntarily created the circumstances favorable for the transition towards the elimination of the local governments in the subsequent period.

# Dynastic Loyalism, Morality and Family Values among Romanians in Transylvania during the First World War

**Lucian Turcu**

*Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University*

*Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

E-mail: [luciand.turcu@yahoo.com](mailto:luciand.turcu@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** *Dynastic Loyalism, Morality and Family Values among Romanians in Transylvania during the First World War.* It is known that the two Romanian Churches in Transylvania contributed over time to the loyalty of the Transylvanian Romanians to the House of Habsburg. Maintaining this high loyalty towards the Vienna Court was all the more necessary during the war when the Romanians, together with the other peoples of the Empire, had to prove their attachment to the homeland and to the Throne. The present study analyzes the attitude that the hierarchies of the two Romanian Churches in Transylvania had at the time of the outburst of the war and during its unfolding, with the emphasis on the messages transmitted to the pastors to maintain the enthusiasm of war. It shall not overlook the recommendations of the high prelates regarding the spouses' fidelity, social morality, the care for widows and war orphans, or the strategies concerning new wartime pastoral that amplified the religious sentiment, causing a rediscovery of perennial Christian values.

**Keywords:** messages, Church, Transylvania, loyalty, family, morality

**Rezumat:** *Loialism dinastic, moralitate și valori familiale la românii din Transilvania în timpul Primului Război Mondial.* Este cunoscut faptul că cele două Biserici românești din Transilvania au contribuit de-a lungul timpului la loializarea românilor ardeleni față de Casa de Habsburg. Menținerea la cote ridicate a acestei fidelizări față de Curtea de la Viena a fost cu atât mai necesară în timpul războiului, când românii, alături de celelalte popoare din Imperiu, au trebuit să dea dovada atașamentului față de patrie și Tron. Prezentul studiu analizează atitudinea pe care ierarhiile celor două Biserici românești din Transilvania au avut-o în momentul declanșării războiului și de-a lungul desfășurării lui, accentul fiind pus asupra mesajelor transmise păstoriților pentru a întreține entuziasmul de război. Nu vor fi trecute cu vederea recomandările înalților prelați în ceea ce privește fidelitatea soților, morala socială, grija față de văduve și orfanii de război sau strategiile privind noua pastorație adaptată contextului războiului, care a amplificat sentimentul religios, determinând o redescoperire a valorilor creștine perene.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** mesaje, Biserică, Transilvania, loialism, familie, morală

*SUBB – Historia, Volume 63, Number 2, December 2018*

*doi:10.24193/subbhst.2018.2.05*

It has become a commonplace to assert that the First World War was the event of the beginning of the 20th century (or, according to some authors, the end of the long 19th century) which intensively and irreversibly marked the way of being, thinking, and behaving of the people and communities who have experienced it.<sup>1</sup> Nothing would be the same as before. La Belle Époque seemed to be a paradise definitively lost, a beautiful memory of those who had lived those decades of calm, prosperity and cultural development that followed the establishment of the Third French Republic.<sup>2</sup>

The war that began in the summer of 1914 would provide a reality that was opposite to the world that had existed until then. The silence and order specific to the earlier period would give way to the agitation and disorder caused by the order of mobilization or by the refuge of civilians from armed confrontations; the generalized demographic growth until then would be disturbed by millions of deaths from the war and by those who found their end in the aftermath of the war but also because of the suffering it had caused; the economic and technological advance so far would be directed towards supporting the construction of war machines, improving military equipment, or discovering new combat weapons; finally, the development of the arts and culture in general was also affected by the tumult of the war, according to the dictum *inter arma silent musae*. There was no longer time and even less predisposition for art, the performance played to exhaustion on the stage of the world of those years having suffering and death as main characters. Thus, the experience of the war, as actors or spectators, meant for the people of those times the separation from a European world which seemed tired of the more than four decades of peace that had passed since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871.

Like the other European nations, the Romanians entered the whirlwind of the war. Some of them sooner, even from the beginning of the military confrontations (since they were either part of the state first affected by the attack from Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, either from the Empire of the Czars, who had decreed the general mobilization at the end of July of the same year, and thus calling under arms the

---

<sup>1</sup> Anne Rasmussen, "Mobilising minds", in *The Cambridge History of The First World War, volume III, Civil Society*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 390-395.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Michel Gaillard, Anthony Rowley, *Istoria continentului european. De la 1850 până la sfârșitul secolului al XX-lea* [The History of the European Continent. From 1850 to the end of the twentieth century], (Chișinău: Editura Cartier, 2001), pp. 129-153, 175-192.

Bessarabian Romanians as well)<sup>3</sup> and others later (those of the Old Kingdom, given the uncertainty among the political elite regarding the military camp to which Romania would join.<sup>4</sup> On those who had the experience of the war on the first day of the hostilities, and until the last day of the conflict (meaning, the Romanians in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Transylvanians more precisely), I intend to stop in the following study.

When they called under arms, the Transylvanian Romanians represented an ethnically well-formed ethnic block, strongly individualized from an identity point of view in the constellation of the Transylvanian nations and even in the dualist monarchy. They had gathered an important political experience in the last decade since they had adopted the activism, although the results of the elections remained rather modest regarding the candidates of the Romanian National Party for the Diet in Budapest.<sup>5</sup> Better results could display at that time the Romanian community in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in terms of its economic progress. It is emblematic in this sense the wide network of banks and banking institutions that supplied capital to the various social categories seeking additional resources for their development, the peasantry being one of the main beneficiaries of this financially favorable context.<sup>6</sup> However, the most powerful and visible aspect of the Romanian community's personality in the dualist state was the cultural one. A number of societies, associations, publications, etc., established in the last decades, testified in this respect, which had a special contribution to the activation of the Romanian society, giving it a well individualized cultural profile.<sup>7</sup> The best organized and active was ASTRA, a true

---

<sup>3</sup> Liviu Maior, *Doi ani mai devreme. Ardeleni, bucovineni și basarabeni în război 1914-1916* [Two years earlier. Transylvanians, Bukovinians and Bessarabians in the War 1914-1916], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Școala Ardeleană, 2016), pp. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> Glenn E. Torrey, *România în Primul Război Mondial* [Romania in the First World War], (Bucharest: Meteor Publishing, 2014), pp. 15-27.

<sup>5</sup> Liviu Maior, *Mișcarea națională românească din Transilvania, 1900-1914* [The Romanian National Movement from Transylvania 1900-1914], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1986), pp. 80-97.

<sup>6</sup> Iosif Marin Balog, "The Clergy's Involvement in the Romanian Credit System from Transylvania during the Late Nineteenth and the Early Twentieth Centuries. Case Study: the Greek-Catholic Clergy", in *Recruitment and Promotion among the Romanian Greek-Catholic Ecclesiastical Elite in Transylvania (1853-1918)*. A Collection of Studies, coord. Mirela Popa-Andrei, eds. Diana Covaci, Mihaela Bedecean, Aurelia Dan, Iosif-Marin Balog (Cluj-Napoca: Mega Publishing House, 2014), pp. 165-169.

<sup>7</sup> Ioan Bolovan, "Cultura românească" [The Romanian Culture], in *Istoria Transilvaniei, vol. III (de la 1711 până la 1918)* [The History of Transylvania, vol. III

academy of the Transylvanian Romanians, who assumed the role of a gendarme of their national identity.<sup>8</sup> A more important role on the field of preserving the national identity of the Transylvanian Romanians had only two Romanian Churches in Transylvania: the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Churches, together with their vast network of confessional schools that they owned.

But beyond these positive developments, the Romanian community in the Austro-Hungarian Empire felt, from the end of the dualism, as target of political pressures generated by the governors from Budapest, which sought to weaken its identity landmarks or even dissolve it in the single Hungarian nation project.<sup>9</sup> This project, considered by the Hungarian leaders not only vital for the survival of their state, but also as a means of raising the non-Hungarian nations to the standards and values of civilization of the dominant ethnic group in the Transleithanian half of the Empire,<sup>10</sup> urged a part of the Romanian community to question the formula of the dualist state itself, to put forward solutions for political recovery<sup>11</sup> or even to desire its separation from the Monarchy headed by the House of Habsburg. The failure of the political negotiations that started in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century between the Hungarian and the Romanian political elite<sup>12</sup> contributed to the consolidation of this latter opinion, a failure that made even stronger the voice of the Transylvanian emigrants in neighboring Romania, who

---

(from 1711 to 1918)], coords. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Năgler, Magyari András (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română/Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2008), pp. 553-569.

<sup>8</sup> Pamfil Matei, "*Asociațiunea Transilvană pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român*" (ASTRA) și rolul ei în cultura națională (1861-1950) ["The Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and Culture of the Romanian People" (ASTRA) and its Role in the National Culture (1861-1950)], (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1986), pp. 18-24.

<sup>9</sup> Zenovie Păclișanu, *Hungary's struggle to annihilate its national minorities. Based on secret Hungarian documents* (Florida: Romanian Studies, 1985), pp. 14-125.

<sup>10</sup> Melinda Mitu, Sorin Mitu, *Ungurii despre români. Nașterea unei imagini etnice* [Hungarians about Romanians. The Birth of a Ethnic Image], (Iași: Polirom, 2014), pp. 16-39.

<sup>11</sup> It is illustrative in this regard the work of Aurel C. Popovici, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich: politische Studien zur Lösung der nationalen Fragen und staatsrechtlichen Krisen in Österreich-Ungarn* (Leipzig: Verlag von B. Elischer, 1906). Its author was part, among others, of the so-called "Belvedere Circle", a group of intellectuals with reformist visions, gathered around the heir to the Throne, Archduke Franz-Ferdinand. The goal of the whole reformist effort was to transform the Habsburg-led Empire into a federal state, made up of a number of semi-autonomous regions, based on the ethnic and linguistic criteria.

<sup>12</sup> Maior, *Mișcarea națională românească din Transilvania*, pp. 125-143.

condemned the injustices made to their fellow citizens, feeding with great passion the ideal of the Romanians' union under the same political scepter.<sup>13</sup> The stronger were the arguments of the unionists that Romania was at that time a growing state, which provided the guarantee of stability due to the political ability of the wise King Carol I, while being a regional security provider whose diplomatic prestige had been unanimously recognized during the Balkan wars.<sup>14</sup> This tempting attraction towards the Romanian state had to be firmly annihilated in the troubled times of the war, and to achieve this important goal, the Hungarian politicians would not hesitate to use the most effective means of persuasion (in other words propaganda), among which the Church was one of the more important instruments, if not the most important.

Of course, the Romanian Church, in its dual Transylvanian hypostasis (Orthodox and Greek-Catholic) had still enjoyed an important amount of prestige in the Romanian community, where the phenomenon of secularization was not as advanced as in the Western Europe, the great mass of Romanian population still expressing a strong attachment to the values professed by the Church and the Christian faith.<sup>15</sup> Under these conditions, the two Churches had an extremely important role in shaping the behavior of their parishioners in the times of the war. Hence the increased attention given by the Hungarian governors to the two Transylvanian Romanian churches, and especially to the public messages they disseminated among their believers. These messages were meant to serve both the state in which they functioned and themselves, meaning the teachings of faith and religious pedagogy they were professing. A primary interest that served the Viennese authorities and Hungarian governors at the time was maintaining the Romanians' loyalty to the political leaders and to the state in which they lived.

Without insisting upon the phenomenon of loyalty present among the Transylvanian Romanians (like other peoples of the Austro-Hungarian

---

<sup>13</sup> Valeriu Achim, Aurel Socolan, *Dr. Vasile Lucaciu, luptător pentru drepturile românilor și unirea Transilvaniei cu România* [Dr. Vasile Lucaciu, Fighter for the Romanians' Rights and the Union of Transylvania with Romania], (s.l.: Comitetul pentru cultură și artă al județului Maramureș, Muzeul județean Baia Mare, 1968), pp. 105-135.

<sup>14</sup> Nicu Pohoăță, *Politica externă a României în timpul războaielor balcanice (1912-1913). România și grupările politico-militare ale Marilor Puteri* [Romania's foreign policy during the Balkan wars (1912-1913). Romania and the political-military groups of the Great Powers], (București: Pro Universitaria, 2010), pp. 293-294.

<sup>15</sup> Doru Radosav, *Sentimentul religios la români. O perspectivă istorică (sec. XVII-XX)* [The Religious Feeling among Romanians. A Historical Perspective (17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century)], (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1997), pp. 48-62.

Empire), it is worth noting that the two Romanian Churches had a major role during the two centuries of Habsburg reign in Transylvania in affiliating the Romanians to the Throne, serving as instruments of policy of loyalty.<sup>16</sup> Since the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Habsburg religious policy in Transylvania stabilized in the sense of admitting bi-confessionalism among the Romanians, the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Churches engaged in the process of feeding the dynastic loyalty among the Romanians. From the pulpits of worship centers, the believers learned the content of the new laws governing the country or new imperial rescripts; every time the religious ceremonies marked the most important events in the life of the members of the ruling House, and the priests prayed for the health and long reign of the monarch every Sunday and holiday.<sup>17</sup> Considering the prestige of the Church and the priest in the Romanian society, rural in its great majority, immersed in illiteracy and orality, it is of no surprise that the word spoken in front of the altar was able to plant in the souls of the faithful feelings of devotion to the House of Habsburg and make Romanians loyal to the Throne. After 1867, the new pole of political power in the Empire tried to direct the Romanians' loyalism towards itself, but the results were rather modest.<sup>18</sup> With the exception of the upper levels of the hierarchy of the Romanian Churches, the mass of the rural priests allowed itself to have a more relaxed attitude, channeling its efforts after the end of dualism towards the cultivation of pan-Romanian loyalty.

Ever since the assassination of the heir of the Throne of Vienna, the Romanian Churches have adopted a firm condemnation of the act, bemoaning the death of Franz Ferdinand and his wife, and supporting the justness of the claims made by the Empire towards the aggressor state.

Through circulars, pastorals, sermons and press articles, the hierarchies of the two Romanian Churches supported the call for partial and then general mobilization launched by the authorities.<sup>19</sup> Moreover,

---

<sup>16</sup> Liviu Maior, *In the Empire. Habsburgs and Romanians. From Dynastic Loyalty to National Identity* (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy/Center of Transylvanian Studies, 2008), pp. 209-210.

<sup>17</sup> Maior, *In the Empire*, p. 222.

<sup>18</sup> Maior, *In the Empire*, pp. 217-218.

<sup>19</sup> An analysis of the role of circulars from the Church during the war at Diana Covaci, "'By Word and Example'. Mobilizing People through the Circulars Issued by the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in Transylvania (1915)", in *World War I. The Other Face of the War*, eds. Ioan Bolovan, Rudolf Gräf, Harald Happner, Oana Mihaela Tămaș (Cluj-Napoca: Romanian Academy/Center for Transylvanian Studies, Cluj University Press, 2016), pp. 346-348.

the Romanian priests from the North American continent were asked to urge their emigrant fellow citizens to return to their country of origin to fight for the Throne and homeland, ensuring that all of them having their travel expenses covered through the diplomatic representations of the dualist monarchy in the United States and Canada.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, all the fugitives, the deserters, the outlaws whose tracks had been lost, were called under arms in exchange for their amnesty. But the most important goal was maintaining the unity of the Empire around the figure of the old emperor Franz Joseph I and the Vienna Court. This is why the plea for the Romanians' fidelity and loyalty is omnipresent in the public messages of the hierarchies of the two Romanian Churches. Here are some examples: "For centuries our old church has been raising the Romanian people in the faith to the throne and homeland; and the way it responds to the call of mobilization is the natural consequence of this church growth and a new confession of our loyalty and faith so well proven during the most difficult days. His sons will do their duty, of course, on the battlefield, with the honor and bravery of their parents and ancestors, whose glorious deeds decorate the pages of history, that preserve the memory of the past. The forthright faith to the throne and the dynasty, the honor of the flag under which they have sworn, and sacrificing their life on the altar of the homeland, are the nourishment given by the Church and the well-doers of our people to the soldiers from the diocese, on the path to glory on which they have set out", says the Bishop of Caransebeş Miron Cristea, in a pastoral sent on the occasion of the holiday of the Saint Prophet Elijah in 1914.<sup>21</sup> Or: "[...] we all have the duty to join His Majesty's throne inspired by the faith and devotion to the homeland and the dynasty. The Romanian people especially have this duty because the emperors and kings of the Habsburg dynasty, in their mercy, have always fulfilled their legitimate needs and demands. That is why we invite you to prove through your deeds the love, faith and devotion that you are inspired by to our supreme emperor and apostolic king", was the message contained in another pastoral exhortation transmitted in those days.<sup>22</sup>

A turning point for the Transylvanian Romanians was represented by Romania's entry into war and the crossing of the Carpathians by the soldiers of the Romanian Army. In order to reduce the risk of the Romanians being removed from the status of loyal

---

<sup>20</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXII, no. 81/1914, p. 229.

<sup>21</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXII, no. 81/1914, p. 230.

<sup>22</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXII, no. 80/1914, p. 226.

subjects of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the messages transmitted by the hierarchies of the two Romanian Churches had to be as convincing as possible in the gathering of the Romanian community in Transylvania around the principle of dynastic loyalism.<sup>23</sup> Just one day after Romania had declared war to Austria-Hungary, the Consistory of Sibiu addressed the Archdiocese priests a call, asking them to urge their pastors “to avoid any talk and any facts that might cast a shadow over their love for their homeland”.<sup>24</sup> On the same day, the same Bishop of Caransebeș, Miron Cristea, addressed a pastoral to the faithful in his diocese, a gesture followed two days apart by the Arad hierarch, Ioan I. Papp.<sup>25</sup> The new context generated by Romania's declaration of the state of war to Austria-Hungary contributed to catalyzing the process of establishing the new Metropolitan of the Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania. More specifically, at the suggestion of the Budapest government, the Emperor hastened to confirm Vasile Mangra's election as the head of the Church of the Orthodox Romanians in Hungary and Transylvania, which was confirmed by the publication of the aulic decision in the Official Gazette of Budapest on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1916.<sup>26</sup> Just two days after his confirmation, the new Orthodox Metropolitan, together with the two bishops, issued a common circular addressed to all the priests and believers from the Transylvanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church, in which Romania's reckless gesture was categorically condemned.<sup>27</sup> The Greek-Catholic hierarchy did not hold back from transmitting to their parishioners any messages that were as firm as possible about maintaining their dynastic loyalty. But, strictly referring to the Romanian Army's entry into Transylvania, except for a loyalty address that Metropolitan Victor Mihályi of Apșa sent to the government from Budapest, the Uniate bishops did not express public messages as

---

<sup>23</sup> See in detail at Lucian Turcu, “Intrarea României în *Marele Război*: reacții, atitudini și mesaje publice din partea celor două Biserici românești din Transilvania” [Romania's Entry in *The Great War*: reactions, attitudes and public messages from the two Romanian Churches from Transylvania], in *Primul Război Mondial. Perspectivă istorică și istoriografică/The First World War. A Historical and Historiographical Perspective*, coords. Ioan Bolovan, Gheorghe Cojocaru, Oana Mihaela Tămaș (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane/Presă Universitară Clujeană, 2015), pp. 431-441.

<sup>24</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXIV, no. 85/1916, p. 344.

<sup>25</sup> Their text in *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXIV, no. 86/1916, p. 348.

<sup>26</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXIV, no. 85/1916, p. 343.

<sup>27</sup> The entire text in *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXIV, no. 85/1916, pp. 343-344.

harsh as their Orthodox colleagues.<sup>28</sup> This difference in behavior can be explained in terms of the context of those days, but also in the identity profile assumed by each of the two Romanian denominations.<sup>29</sup>

But beyond this duty to maintain the candle of the Romanians' loyalty lit towards the Vienna Court and the leaders of that time, the Church had to watch over the defense of the values that it preached, values that were threatened by all kinds of disturbances generated by the war.<sup>30</sup> A first value around which the Church has made a shield in the war years was the family. This was the first to be affected by the outbreak of war, by mobilizing all those capable of carrying a gun, which meant the departure of husbands, fathers and sons on the battlefields. Such a separation (which was supposed to be temporary) should not have harmed family life, which had to be based on mutual love, mutual respect among spouses, trusting one another, as it was deeply emphasized by the messages transmitted during this period to believers by the clergy of the two Romanian Churches. Of course, the emphasis of this discourse was on the virtue of the fidelity<sup>31</sup> of the wives who were left at home as well as the husbands who went to war. The war had to be seen as a chance for every husband and wife to demonstrate the sincerity of the feelings they had for each other, and the temptation of being unfaithful to the life partner had to be sent away whenever it appeared. Analyzing the clergy's appeals that made tangential references to this theme, it clearly appears that women - as spouses - assumed a greater responsibility for the durability of their families, being obliged not to ruin their dignity to the spouses left on the front through the sin of adultery.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, besides the fact that everywhere the war has put

---

<sup>28</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXIV, no. 85/1916, p. 345.

<sup>29</sup> Turcu, "Intrarea României în Marele Război", p. 443.

<sup>30</sup> Blaga Mihoc, "Instituția Eclezială în sprijinul Cetății (1914-1918)" [The Ecclesiastic Institution in help of the Citadel (1914-1918)], in *Biserica Română Unită cu Roma, Greco-Catolică: Istorie și Spiritualitate. 150 de ani de la înființarea Mitropoliei Române Unite cu Roma, Greco-Catolică, la Blaj* [The Romanian Greek-Catholic Uniate Church. History and Spirituality. 150 years from the Founding of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Uniate Metropolitan in Blaj], (Blaj: Buna Vestire, 2003), pp. 493-532.

<sup>31</sup> Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Paula Bolovan, "Impactul Primului Război Mondial asupra familiei din Transilvania" [The Impact of World War I over the family in Transylvania], in *Studia varia in honorem Professoris Ștefan Ștefănescu octogenarii*, eds. Ionel Cădea, Cristian Luca (București - Brăila: Editura Academiei Române - Editura Istros, 2009), pp. 786 sqq.

<sup>32</sup> The analysis of the moral behavior prescribed for women during war at Susan R. Grayzel, *Women and the First World War* (London-New York: Longman, 2002), pp. 62-64.

women in a position to assume some tasks in the family household and even in the economies of the states, tasks that they have not had previously, they also played the role of being actual agents of social morality; they had the duty to maintain the normality of the marital home in abnormal conditions.<sup>33</sup> The experience in social activism accumulated over many decades in the numerous women's reunions had to be fully exploited in the difficult times of war.<sup>34</sup> This was strongly emphasized by Metropolitan Ioan Mețianu at the Congress of the Romanian Women's Union in Hungary, an organization that had to surpass the objective of cultivating gender solidarity and to be involved in solving the urgent needs of society.<sup>35</sup>

But perhaps the most insistent and touching messages sent by the Romanian Churches in the years of war had children and elders in their center. Children represented a social category exposed to many vulnerabilities, which the war had multiplied and amplified. The risk of being orphaned by a parent or both parents meant most of the time condemning minors to a miserable life, a future full of hardships, and the need to manage on their own. Seen as a guarantee of the future and survival of the Romanian nation, children had to be urgently helped to overcome the difficulties generated by the war. This explains the repeated appeals launched by the hierarchies of the two Churches to help children, for which collections were organized, subscription lists were opened, families with material possibilities were urged to offer a home to children in need, providing them with food and shelter. But the most important project that united the energies of the two Romanian Churches (up to a certain point) was the foundation of a great orphanage, where all the minors remaining on the streets because of the war were to be received and raised in the spirit of Christian values. Disagreements at the top of the two Romanian Churches and fear of the corruption of confessional

---

<sup>33</sup> Ana Victoria Sima, "Cu gândul la celălalt. Cuplurile românești din Transilvania în anii Primului Război Mondial" [Thinking about the Other. Romanian Couples in Transylvania in the Years of the First World War], in *Nicolae Bocșan. Istoria sub semnul Generozității și Umanității* [Nicolae Bocșan. History under the Mark of Generosity and Humanity], coords. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan, Mihaela Bedecan (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018), pp. 113-120.

<sup>34</sup> Liviu Maior, "Modernizarea tradiției. Democratizarea confesiunilor" [The Modernization of Tradition. The Democratization of Confessions], in *Nicolae Bocșan. Istoria sub semnul Generozității și Umanității* [Nicolae Bocșan. History under the Mark of Generosity and Humanity], coords. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Ioan Bolovan, Mihaela Bedecan (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018), pp. 254-263.

<sup>35</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXII, no. 65/1914, pp. 265-266.

identity made the idea of an orphanage that was patronized by both Romanian Churches to be abandoned, and each of them were to open at the end of the war such establishments so necessary at that time.<sup>36</sup> For example, through the care of vicar capitular Vasile Suci, an orphanage, which provided protection and food for 70 children at first, began operating in Blaj in October 1918.<sup>37</sup> Planned by the former Metropolitan Victor Mihályi of Apsa, this “growth institute” founded within the Greek-Catholic Romanian Church was not singular at the time.<sup>38</sup> Bishop Iuliu Hossu as well made the decision to create a similar institution in his diocese, more precisely at the Bixad Monastery.<sup>39</sup>

Another category on which it was necessary to direct attention and charity was represented by the elderly. Left without the help of their children or grandchildren who were on the front, the elderly had to be helped by all those who were able. Whether it was the harvest of crops in the summer and autumn of 1914 (meaning after the laborers had been called in the army), whether it was donations of money or food, all became deeds of mercy that were absolutely necessary in those times of hardships.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> See Daniela Mârza, “Demografie și asistență socială în Transilvania (1916-1918): înființarea orfelinelor destinate orfanilor de război” [Demography and Social Assistance in Transylvania (1916-1918): the Foundation of Orphanages Destined to War Orphans], in *Mișcări de populație și aspecte demografice în România în prima jumătate a secolului XX* [Population Movement and Demographic Aspects in Romania in the first half of the Twentieth Century], coords. Sorina Paula Bolovan, Ioan Bolovan, Rudolf Gráf, Corneliu Pădurean (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2007), pp. 93-100.

<sup>37</sup> *Unirea* [The Union], year XXIX, no. 8/1919, p. 1; no. 14/1919, p. 1. Later, the orphanage was transferred to Obreja, in the castle of Count Wesselényi Miklós, purchased by the Greek-Catholic Church along with an 84 acres land for the sum of 430,000 lei. The money came from a donation of Pope Benedict XV in the amount of 150,000 Italian lira granted in the spring of 1921 to Metropolitan Vasile Suci, the sum having as specific purpose the helping of war orphans. See more at Lucian Turcu, *Între idealuri și realitate. Arhidieceza greco-catolică de Alba Iulia și Făgăraș în timpul păstoririi mitropolitului Vasile Suci (1920-1935)* [Between Ideas and Reality. The Greek-Catholic Archdiocese of Alba Iulia and Fagaras during the pastoral life of Metropolitan Vasile Suci (1920-1935)], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2017), pp. 308-313.

<sup>38</sup> Octavian Bârlea, “Biserica română unită între cele două războaie mondiale” [The Romanian Uniate Church between the Two World Wars], in *Biserica Română Unită – două sute cincizeci de ani de istorie* [The Romanian Uniate Church – Two Hundred and Fifty Years of Tradition], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Viața Creștină, 1998), p. 98.

<sup>39</sup> *Unirea* [The Union], year XXXI, no. 36/1921, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXII, no. 77/1914, p. 214: “[...] we have the duty, we who are closest to those left in misery, to give them the most urgent and necessary help, which can not suffer a delay, namely: not to leave in the

Finally, one of the redundant topics of the public messages sent by the Romanian high clergy concerned the fight against a scourge that was responsible for many dissensions between people and social tensions: alcoholism. “[...] keep away from taverns and all the places that have the power to heat up the heart, to darken the sound judgment of the mind, and thus to push man into sins” was just one of the many urges of this kind that the Romanians could hear from the priests during the war.<sup>41</sup>

Trying to draw a conclusion, we may say that the Churches of Transylvanian Romanians represented for the Romanian community in the dualist Empire both the support of its loyalty to the Court of Vienna and the defenders and propagators of fundamental Christian and social values in the troubled years of World War I. The messages insistently sent out by the hierarchies of the two Romanian Churches were meant to shape the behavior of their parishioners in the sense of preserving their attachment both to the state they were living in and to the Christian precepts they preached, whose implementation was so necessary in those times.

---

field, to destruction, the crops that they have, but to give them all the support and help, so that they can harvest them from the field“.

<sup>41</sup> *Telegraful Român* [The Romanian Telegraph], year LXII, no. 81/1914, p. 230.

# De la nomination du cabinet Goga au coup d'État du roi Carol II (28 décembre 1937 - 10 février 1938)\*

**Philippe Henri Blasen**

*Institute of History "A. D. Xenopol"*

Iași, Romania

E-mail: phb@soverin.net

**Abstract:** *From the appointment of the Goga ministry to the coup of King Carol II (December 28, 1937 - February 10, 1938).* The article deals with the history of the short-lived Goga cabinet and of King Carol II's coup. It focuses, first, on Carol II's reasons for appointing the cabinet. Second, it describes the government's populist anti-Semitic, anti-minorities and pro-peasant measures, as well as other steps taken to secure an electoral victory in the general elections of March 1938. The paper also discusses the stance of the British and the French governments towards the Goga cabinet in the context of a growing anti-Semitic atmosphere. Finally, it examines the relations between the Goga cabinet and the Iron Guard and shows how the royal coup was prepared and implemented.

**Keywords:** National-Christian Party, Iron Guard, history of Romanian fascism, history of Romanian anti-Semitism, history of international relations, Romanian Royal Dictatorship

**Rezumat:** *De la numirea guvernului Goga la lovitură de stat a regelui Carol al II-lea (28 decembrie 1937 - 10 februarie 1938).* Articolul se ocupă de istoria efemerului guvern Goga și a loviturii de stat a regelui Carol II. Începe cu o analiză a motivelor pentru care Carol II a numit guvernul Goga și descrie măsurile populiste antisemite, antiminoritare și dedicate țăranilor ale acestuia, precum și celelalte acțiuni pentru a-și asigura victoria electorală la alegerile din martie 1938. Mai departe, articolul cercetează atitudinea guvernelor britanic și francez față de cel român în cadrul atmosferei antisemite crescânde. Reconstituie relațiile dintre cabinetul Goga și Legiunea Arhangelul Mihail și arată cum lovitură de stat regală a fost pregătită și realizată.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Partidul Național-Creștin, Legiunea Arhangelul Mihail, istoria fascismului românesc, istoria antisemitismului românesc, istoria relațiilor internaționale, dictatura regală

---

\* This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Research and Innovation, CCCDI - UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.2-PCCDI-2017-0116, within PNCDI III

### La nomination du cabinet Goga

Lors des élections des députés et du sénat les 20 et 22 décembre 1937, le parti national-libéral, au pouvoir depuis 1933, ne réussit pas à atteindre le seuil de 40% qui lui aurait donné la majorité absolue, conformément à la loi électorale de 1926 (art. 90b).<sup>1</sup> À en croire l'homme politique Constantin Argetoianu (1871-1955), la défaite était telle qu'elle rendait impossible une retouche réparatrice des résultats. Ceux-ci furent publiés avec un retard inhabituel, le 30 décembre 1937 et le 5 janvier 1938,<sup>2</sup> et, toujours d'après Argetoianu, ajustés de sorte que Tout pour le pays, le parti-écran du mouvement d'extrême-droite Légion de l'Archange Michel, n'occupe pas la deuxième position après le parti national-libéral.<sup>3</sup> Selon les résultats officiels de l'élection de la chambre des députés, le parti national-paysan (centre-gauche) se classait deuxième avec 20,40% des suffrages. Il était suivi par Tout pour le pays avec 15,58% et le parti national-chrétien avec 9,15%.<sup>4</sup> Ce dernier était de même origine que la Légion, avec qui il était toutefois engagé dans une guerre fratricide.<sup>5</sup>

Le roi Carol II était dans l'embarras. En février 1937, suite à l'enterrement triomphal et à grand capital électoral des légionnaires Ion Moța et Vasile Marin à Bucarest, il avait offert la fonction de président du Conseil au chef de la Légion, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (1899-1938), en échange de la direction du mouvement. À en croire l'homme de confiance du roi, Ernest Urdăreanu (1897-1985), Codreanu avait décliné toute coopération en automne de la même année et s'était allié avec "le pire ennemi" de Carol, le président du parti national-paysan Iuliu Maniu (1873-1953).<sup>6</sup> En plus, sûr de sa victoire après les élections, Codreanu

<sup>1</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°71 (27 mars 1926), pp. 4273-4293.

<sup>2</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°301 (30 décembre 1937), pp. 9716-9835; n°4 (5 janvier 1938), pp. 31-81.

<sup>3</sup> Constantin Argetoianu, *Însemnări zilnice. 1 iulie - 31 decembrie 1937* [Notes journalières. 1<sup>er</sup> juillet - 31 décembre 1937], (București: Machiavelli, 2001), p. 295 (21 décembre 1937); p. 296 (22 décembre 1937); p. 297 (22 décembre 1937).

<sup>4</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°301 (30 décembre 1937), pp. 9717 ss.

<sup>5</sup> Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. Ascensiunea și căderea "Căpitanului"* [Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. Ascension et chute du "Capitaine"], (București: Humanitas, 2017), pp. 56 ss.

<sup>6</sup> Bundesarchiv - Abteilung Militärarchiv, RW 5/29, ff. 14-19: le ministre plénipotentiaire allemand à l'Auswärtiges Amt, 29 mars 1939; Rebecca Ann Haynes, "Reluctant Allies? Iuliu Maniu and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu against Carol II of Romania", *The Slavonic and East European Review*, n°1 (2007), p. 113; Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Căpitan Codreanu. Aufstieg und Fall des rumänischen Faschistenführers* (Wien:

avait annoncé pour cette éventualité l'alliance immédiate de la Roumanie avec le Reich,<sup>7</sup> ce qui contrevenait à la politique étrangère pro-française du Royaume.<sup>8</sup>

Dans son journal, le roi notait qu'en raison de sa mésentente avec Maniu (qui lui reprochait son train de vie), il en avait appelé à Ion Mihalache (1882-1963), le numéro deux du parti national-paysan. Cependant, compte tenu du succès de Tout pour le pays, qu'il interprétait comme le symptôme d'une tendance nationaliste généralisée, le roi avait insisté que Mihalache entre en coalition avec les nationalistes du Front roumain de l'ancien national-paysan Alexandru Vaida-Voevod (1872-1950). Toujours selon son journal, le roi avait espéré un refus du Front roumain et d'autres partis nationalistes que Mihalache aurait contactés subséquemment, ce qui aurait laissé ceux-ci sans l'argument qu'ils avaient été ignorés et aurait ainsi renforcé la position des national-paysans. Mais Mihalache se serait disputé avec ses collègues de parti, dont Maniu, n'aurait pas pris contact avec le Front roumain et aurait finalement abandonné sa mission.

À ce point, aux dires du roi, il ne lui resta plus d'autre solution que de s'adresser au quatrième en rang, le parti national-chrétien, même si ce dernier n'avait, selon les chiffres officiels, remporté que 281.167 suffrages lors de l'élection de la chambre des députés.<sup>9</sup> Le 27 décembre 1937 à 11h30, le roi reçut en audience le président du parti Octavian Goga<sup>10</sup> et, le lendemain, le nomma président du Conseil et le chargea de former le gouvernement.<sup>11</sup>

Carol II amena ainsi au pouvoir une formation tout autant germanophile que la Légion et qui jouissait en plus du soutien de

---

Paul Zsolnay, 2016), p. 234. À propos du soutien que le roi avait accordé les années précédentes à Codreanu dans le but de s'asservir la Légion, voir Schmitt, *Căpitan Codreanu*, p. 132; p. 147; pp. 148-149.

<sup>7</sup> Argetoianu, *1 iulie - 31 decembrie 1937*, p. 299 (23 décembre 1937).

<sup>8</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune. Însemnări zilnice 1904-1939* [Entre le devoir et la passion. Notes journalières 1904-1939], (București: Silex, 1995), p. 234 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937).

<sup>9</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, pp. 233-234 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937); Alexander L. Easterman, "Exclusive Interview With King Carol. Declares He Is Master of Rumania", *Daily Herald*, n°6834 (10 janvier 1938), p. 1; Le correspondant de *The Times* ne manqua pas de relever le parallélisme avec l'investiture de Franz von Papen par Paul von Hindenburg: "M. Goga's Mission. A German Parallel. From Our Central European Correspondent", *The Times*, n°47880 (31 décembre 1937), p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°300 (29 décembre 1937), p. 9670.

<sup>11</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°300 (29 décembre 1937), p. 9670; n°299 (28 décembre 1937), p. 9665.

l'*Aussenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP* [bureau pour affaires étrangères du parti national-socialiste des travailleurs allemands], qui venait de tenter vainement d'arranger une alliance électorale entre le parti national-chrétien et Tout pour le pays.<sup>12</sup> Le dirigeant de l'*Aussenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP*, l'idéologue national-socialiste Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946) nota avec satisfaction le 31 décembre 1937 dans son journal: "Ainsi Goga avait été investi, notre collaboration des dernières deux années avait obtenu le succès escompté".<sup>13</sup>

Le fait que le roi nomma président du Conseil le président du parti national-chrétien Octavian Goga et non pas son président suprême Alexandru C. Cuza (1857-1947) dénote sans doute sa volonté de tenir en échec l'aile radicalement germanophile du parti. Face à Cuza, partisan inconditionnel du ralliement de la Roumanie à l'Axe, Goga était perçu comme attaché à l'alliance avec la France et à la Petite Entente (entre la Roumanie, la Tchécoslovaquie et la Yougoslavie contre la Hongrie). Wilhelm Fabricius (1882-1964), le ministre plénipotentiaire allemand à Bucarest, avait même considéré cet attachement comme une entrave à un patronage allemand du parti national-chrétien.<sup>14</sup> Pourtant, toujours le 31 décembre 1937, Rosenberg était convaincu qu'avec l'avènement du gouvernement antisémite "la vitesse à laquelle se poursui (*vait*) la dissolution de la Petite Entente (*avait*) été augmentée de manière déterminante".<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Martin Broszat, "Deutschland-Ungarn-Rumänien. Entwicklung und Grundfaktoren nationalsozialistischer Hegemonial- und Bündnispolitik 1938-1941", *Historische Zeitschrift*, n°1 (1968), p. 57; Wolfgang Miegé, *Das Dritte Reich und die Deutsche Volksgruppe in Rumänien 1933-38. Ein Beitrag zur nationalsozialistischen Volkstumspolitik* (Bern, Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1972), pp. 215-216; Paul A. Shapiro, "Prelude to Dictatorship in Romania. The National Christian Party in Power. December 1937-February 1938", *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, n°1 (Spring 1974), pp. 52; 54; 56; Schmitt, *Căpitan Codreanu*, p. 248. L'*Auswärtiges Amt*, le ministère des Affaires étrangères allemand, s'était par contre abstenu de s'immiscer dans les élections, puisque le parti national-libéral, dont la politique devenait de plus en plus antisémite, lui avait fait entrevoir un rapprochement avec l'Axe: Shapiro, "Prelude", pp. 56; 57-58.

<sup>13</sup> "So kam die Betrauung Gogas zustande, unsere 2jährige Arbeit hatte den erstrebten Erfolg gehabt". Cité d'après:

<https://collections.ushmm.org/view/2001.62.14?page=191> (consulté le 13 juillet 2018).

<sup>14</sup> Shapiro, "Prelude", pp. 57-58; Gheorghe T. Pop, *Caracterul antinațional și antipopular al activității partidului național-creștin* [Le caractère anti-national et anti-populaire de l'activité du parti national-chrétien], (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1978), pp. 174-175.

<sup>15</sup> "damit (*ist*) der Rythmus zur Auflösung der kleinen Entente entscheidend verstärkt worden". Cité d'après :

<https://collections.ushmm.org/view/2001.62.14?page=191> (consulté le 13 juillet 2018).

Le roi imposa en plus aux national-chrétiens de coopter comme membres du gouvernement quatre apostats national-paysans, dont notamment Armand Călinescu (1893-1939). Selon les dires du roi, Călinescu était “une garantie” (*o garanție*) pour lui et cette “infiltration démocratique” lui servait de “frein contre certains excès qui étaient à craindre”.<sup>16</sup> C’était sans doute là une référence tant à différents hommes politiques national-chrétiens qu’aux troupes paramilitaires du parti national-chrétien, les Lanciers.<sup>17</sup> Comme Călinescu prit le portefeuille de ministre de l’Intérieur,<sup>18</sup> le roi garda le contrôle de la gendarmerie et de la police, y inclus de la police secrète Siguranța.

Vu cette présence national-paysanne, le gouvernement prit le nom de “gouvernement de l’union national-chrétienne-paysanne”.<sup>19</sup> Le cabinet n’en était pas moins dominé par le parti national-chrétien et notamment par le groupe de Goga.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 234: “Grație infiltrațiunei democratice, am putut obține o frână pentru anumite excese ce erau de temut, și foarte bine am făcut”; Le lendemain de sa nomination, Călinescu se vanta d’être “l’homme de confiance” du roi au sein du gouvernement: Argetoianu, *1 iulie - 31 decembrie 1937*, p. 310 (29 décembre 1937): “omul de încredere”.

<sup>17</sup> Il s’agit d’un jeu de mot: les LANCIERS étaient à l’origine les troupes paramilitaires de la Ligue de défense national-chrétienne d’Alexandru C. Cuza (Liga Apărării Național-Creștine, LANC): Shapiro, “Prelude”, pp. 80-81.

<sup>18</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°299 (28 décembre 1937), pp. 9665-9666.

<sup>19</sup> Argetoianu, *1 iulie - 31 decembrie 1937*, p. 309 (29 décembre 1937): “Guvern al Uniunii național-creștină-țărănească”; “M. Armand Călinescu rappelle aux préfets que le gouvernement Goga est un gouvernement d’autorité. La circulaire du ministre de l’Intérieur”, *Le Moment*, n°883 (3 février 1938), p. 6: “gouvernement d’union national-chrétienne et paysanne”. Après la dissolution des assemblées législatives le 18 janvier, le gouvernement se proposa de se présenter sous ce même nom aux nouvelles élections: “Neuer Listenname der rumänischen Regierungspartei”, *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro*, n°88 (20 janvier 1938).

<sup>20</sup> Le gouvernement Goga se composait de:

- Octavian Goga (national-chrétien), président du Conseil;
- G<sup>al</sup> Ion Antonescu, ministre de la Défense nationale;
- Gheorghe Banu (national-chrétien), ministre de la Santé et de la Protection Sociale;
- Armand Călinescu (national-paysan), ministre de l’Intérieur;
- Alexandru C. Cuza (national-chrétien), ministre sans portefeuille;
- Gheorghe A. Cuza (national-chrétien, fils du précédent), ministre du Travail;
- Stan Ghițescu (national-chrétien), ministre de la Coopération;
- Ion Gigurtu (national-chrétien), ministre de l’Industrie et du Commerce;
- Radu Irimescu, ministre de l’Air et de la Marine;
- Ioan Lupăș (national-chrétien, groupe de Goga), ministre des Cultes et des Arts;
- Istrate Micescu (national-chrétien), ministre des Affaires étrangères;

---

Ion Petrovici (national-chrétien, groupe de Cuza), ministre de l'éducation nationale;

Virgil Potârcă (national-paysan), ministre des Travaux publics et des Communications et (jusqu'au 8 janvier 1938), ministre par intérim de l'Agriculture et des Domaines;

Vasile Rădulescu-Mehedinți (national-paysan), ministre de la Justice;

Eugen Savu (groupe de Goga), ministre des Finances;

Aurel Baciuc (national-chrétien, groupe de Goga), sous-secrétaire d'État à la Justice;

Lucian Blaga (groupe de Goga), sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires étrangères;

Sebastian Bornemisa (national-chrétien, groupe de Goga), sous-secrétaire d'État à la présidence du Conseil;

Silviu Dragomir (national-chrétien, groupe de Goga), ministre secrétaire d'État sans portefeuille;

Ion D. Enescu (national-chrétien), sous-secrétaire d'État aux Finances;

Alexandru Hodoș (national-chrétien, groupe de Goga), sous-secrétaire d'État à la présidence du Conseil;

Tilică Ioanid (national-chrétien), sous-secrétaire d'État à l'Intérieur;

Vasile Prelipceanu (national-chrétien), sous-secrétaire d'État à l'Agriculture et aux Domaines;

Ioan Gh. Savin (national-chrétien), sous-secrétaire d'État à l'éducation nationale;

Leon Scridon (national-chrétien, groupe de Goga), sous-secrétaire d'État au Travail;

Dinu Simian (national-paysan), sous-secrétaire d'État à l'Intérieur;

G<sup>al</sup> Paul Teodorescu, sous-secrétaire d'État à la Défense nationale;

Constantin Tomescu (national-chrétien), sous-secrétaire d'État aux Cultes et aux Arts.

Après que le président du Front roumain Vaida-Voevod eut refusé le 4 janvier 1938 sa coopération au gouvernement Goga, le 9 janvier, sous l'impulsion du secrétaire général du parti D. R. Ioanițescu, plusieurs dirigeants du parti passèrent au gouvernement. La plupart des filiales du Vieux-Royaume suivirent leur exemple. Pour récompense, Ioanițescu reçut le 8 janvier 1938 le portefeuille de ministre de l'Agriculture et des Domaines.

Pour les décrets de nomination: *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°299 (28 décembre 1937), p. 9665; pp. 9665-9666; 9666; n°302 (31 décembre 1937), p. 9838; n°6 (8 janvier 1938), p. 102.

Pour les appartenances politiques des ministres et sous-secrétaires d'État: Sebastian Bornemisa, *Catechism național-creștin pentru lămurirea sătenilor români din jud. Cluj* [Catéchisme national-chrétien pour éclairer les villageois roumains du département de Cluj], (Cluj: Astra, 1936), pp. 12-13; *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°301 (30 décembre 1937), pp. 9716-9835; n°4 (5 janvier 1938), pp. 31-81;

Pour l'appartenance politique de Gigurtu, présenté par le légionnaire Petre Pandrea comme un national-chrétien qui finançait la Légion: Roland Clark, *Sfântă Tinerețe Legionară. Activismul fascist în România interbelică* [Sainte jeunesse légionnaire. Activisme fasciste dans la Roumanie de l'entre-deux-guerres], (Iași: Polirom, 2015), p. 181.

Lors d'une interview accordée le 9 janvier au journaliste écossais Alexander Easterman du *Daily Herald*, Carol II affichait la conviction qu'il contrôlait le gouvernement Goga. Il répondit ainsi à la question s'il approuvait la politique intérieure du gouvernement: "It is my Government and must have my approval. The day I am not satisfied with its conduct of affairs I shall require a change".<sup>21</sup>

Simultanément, le roi préparait ainsi le public britannique à un changement de gouvernement, voire de régime. En effet, comme le montre son journal, le roi avait pris un pari en nommant le cabinet Goga: "C'est sûrement une mauvaise solution, mais c'est quand même celle qui l'est le moins. Je suis parfaitement conscient qu'un gouvernement avec ces éléments, qui sont assez (sic!) décidément antisémites, ne pourra durer longtemps et qu'après cela, je serai libre de pouvoir prendre des mesures plus radicales qui nous libéreront, le pays et moi, de la tyrannie si souvent dépourvue de patriotisme [et] des intérêts mesquins des partis".<sup>22</sup>

### La politique du gouvernement Goga

Dans le paysage politique roumain de 1937, le parti national-chrétien était une petite formation, sans espoir sérieux d'accéder au pouvoir. Peut-être en conséquence, son programme était impropre aux

---

À propos d'Irimescu, qui gardait le poste qu'il avait occupé depuis le 8 janvier 1937 et qu'Argetoianu croyait être l'homme de confiance du roi: *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°5 (8 janvier 1937), p. 137; Argetoianu, *1 iulie - 31 decembrie 1937*, p. 26 (8 janvier 1937);

À propos d'Eugen Savu que l'historien Paul A. Shapiro décrit comme l'ancien directeur de la Banque nationale de Roumanie et l'associé de longue date de Goga: Shapiro, "Prelude", p. 71, note 123;

À propos du Front roumain et de Ioanițescu: Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie et la solidarité internationale 1919-1939*, (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry - Montpellier III, 2006), pp. 234-237 (doc. 92): Ernst-Christoph Schepky, représentant d'Alfred Rosenberg à Budapest, extrait de rapport, 22 janvier 1938; Mircea Mușat et Ion Ardeleanu, *România după Marea Unire. Vol. 2. Part. 1* [La Roumanie après la Grande Union], (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1988), p. 240;

Pour l'appartenance des ministres et sous-secrétaires d'État au groupe de Goga ou de Cuza: Pop, *Caracterul antinațional*, p. 178.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander L. Easterman, "Exclusive Interview With King Carol. Declares He Is Master of Rumania", *Daily Herald*, n°6834 (10 janvier 1938), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 234 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937): "Este desigur o soluțiune proastă, dar totuși cea mai puțin. Sunt perfect conștient că o guvernare cu aceste elemente, destul de hotărât antisemite, nu va putea fi una de lungă durată și că după aceea voi fi liber să pot lua alte măsuri mai forte, măsuri cari să mă descătușească atât Țara cât și pe mine de tirania adesea atât de nepatriotică, a meschinelor interese de partid".

responsabilités gouvernementales. Utopique, il était truffé d'idées aussi fantaisistes qu'extrémistes, dont l'expulsion des Juifs de Roumanie<sup>23</sup> était l'une des plus patentes. Pourtant, le parti national-chrétien accepta de gouverner en s'appuyant sur son programme électoral. Bien plus, il se créa une pression supplémentaire en se lançant dès sa venue au pouvoir dans une nouvelle campagne électorale. Selon l'*Auswärtiges Amt*, le ministère des Affaires étrangères allemand, "il (était) clair que (Goga), après avoir remporté seulement 9% lors des élections de décembre, devait sentir le besoin de s'assurer un soutien réellement solide parmi le peuple".<sup>24</sup> Après une première annonce de Goga lors d'un discours radiodiffusé le 31 décembre 1937<sup>25</sup> et une hésitation de la part du souverain,<sup>26</sup> le projet de décret de dissolution des assemblées législatives fut adopté le 18 janvier 1938 par le conseil des ministres<sup>27</sup> et le décret promulgué le même jour par le roi, les élections étant fixées au 2 et au 5 mars.<sup>28</sup> L'élection du sénat fut reportée le 22 janvier du 5 au 7 mars.<sup>29</sup> Lorsque Iuliu Maniu attaqua le décret devant la commission centrale électorale pour motif d'inconstitutionnalité, le gouvernement fit pression sur la commission pour qu'elle rejette le recours.<sup>30</sup> Pourtant, il paraît que ce recours (ou un recours similaire) parvint jusqu'à la cour de cassation.<sup>31</sup>

Jusqu'à présent, il n'existe pas d'étude approfondie de la politique nationale et internationale du gouvernement Goga. Les meilleures recherches à ce sujet restent celles de Paul A. Shapiro<sup>32</sup> et de

---

<sup>23</sup> Bornemisa, *Catechism*, p. 15: "îndepărtarea din țară a jidanilor și a altor streini veniți la noi după încheierea păcii și încetățeniți prin înșălăciune".

<sup>24</sup> *Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945. Serie D. Band V* (Baden-Baden: 1953), pp. 210-213 (doc. 179): Auswärtiges Amt, circulaire, 9 mars 1938: "Daß dieser das Bedürfnis haben mußte, nachdem er bei den Dezemberwahlen nur 9% der Stimmen erhalten hatte, sich einen wirklich tragfähigen Anhang im Volke zu verschaffen, ist einleuchtend".

<sup>25</sup> "Cuvântarea-program a d-lui Octavian Goga pronunțată aseară la microfon", *Timpul* (2 janvier 1938).

<sup>26</sup> Armand Călinescu, *Însemnări politice 1916-1939* [Notes politiques 1916-1939], (București: Humanitas, 1990), pp. 366-367 (13 janvier 1938); p. 367 (14 janvier 1938).

<sup>27</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 154: journal du conseil des ministres n°61 du 18 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 155: journal du conseil des ministres n°61 du 18 janvier 1938.

<sup>28</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°14 bis (18 janvier 1938), p. 245.

<sup>29</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°18 (22 janvier 1938), p. 314.

<sup>30</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 368 (23 janvier 1938).

<sup>31</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 374 (7 février 1938); p. 375 (7 février 1938).

<sup>32</sup> Shapiro, "Prelude".

Dov B. Lungu,<sup>33</sup> malgré des erreurs de fond qui les rendent problématiques. Dans le cadre de cet article, il ne peut être donné qu'un bref aperçu de cette politique, en insistant sur ses aspects moins connus.

Le gouvernement Goga prit surtout trois types de mesures, déterminées en partie par son programme et en partie par la nouvelle campagne électorale (qui, officiellement, ne commença que le 6 février).<sup>34</sup> Il s'agissait tout d'abord de mesures populistes antisémites et, en moindre mesure, généralement antiminoritaires qui provoquèrent une stagnation économique,<sup>35</sup> puis, de mesures essentiellement populistes en faveur des paysans, elles aussi marquées par un discours nationaliste<sup>36</sup> et préjudiciables au budget de l'État,<sup>37</sup> et, enfin, de mesures censées directement influencer l'issue des élections de mars 1938.

Les mesures populistes antisémites et antiminoritaires approuvées par le conseil des ministres comprenaient la suppression des journaux de gauche *Lupta* [La lutte], *Adevărul* [La vérité] et *Dimineața* [Le

---

<sup>33</sup> Dov B. Lungu, "The French and British Attitudes towards the Goga-Cuza Government in Romania. December 1937-February 1938", *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes*, n°3 (septembre 1988).

<sup>34</sup> Constantin Argetoianu, *Însemnări zilnice. 1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938* [Notes journalières. 1<sup>er</sup> janvier - 30 juin 1938], (București: Machiavelli, 2002), p. 102 (7 février 1938).

<sup>35</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, p. 309 (29 décembre 1937); "Bucharest, 30 December 1937", *The Times*, n°47880 (31 décembre 1937), p. 12; Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 370 (28 janvier 1938); Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 220-226 (doc. 86): le chargé d'affaires français en Roumanie au ministre des Affaires étrangères français, 17 janvier 1938; pp. 234-237 (doc. 92): Ernst-Christoph Schepky, représentant d'Alfred Rosenberg à Budapest, extrait de rapport, 22 janvier 1938.

<sup>36</sup> Ainsi, dans l'exposé des motifs du journal du conseil des ministres qui amnistiait les paysans qui avaient enfreint le code forestier, le ministre de la Justice soutenait qu'"une telle mesure est également nécessaire en raison du fait que les infractions les plus fréquentes sont commises dans les régions où les villageois souffrent d'une situation matérielle inférieure qui est due aux circonstances défavorables dans lesquelles les a plongés le non respect du principe de la primauté de l'élément national ; continuer les poursuites contre les condamnés aurait comme conséquence d'empirer encore plus la situation de l'élément national": Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 55: journal du conseil des ministres n°23 du 11 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs: "O atare măsură este impusă și de faptul că contravențiunile cele mai frecvente (sic!) sunt săvârșite în părțile unde sătenii sunt în situațiuni materiale inferioare, aceasta datorită împrejurărilor neprielnice în care i-au adus nesocotirea principiului primatului elementului național; o urmărire ce s'ar face împotriva celor condamnați ar avea efectul de a fi mai mult înrăutățită situațiunea elementului național".

<sup>37</sup> Voir plus loin.

matin] décriés comme organes juifs;<sup>38</sup> la création d'une commission de vérification des licences des tenanciers juifs des campagnes;<sup>39</sup> la révision des autorisations d'exercer accordées après 1919 aux médecins et pharmaciens diplômés à l'étranger;<sup>40</sup> la restriction de l'admission à l'examen de qualification de professeur de secondaire ès lettres et histoire roumaines aux candidats d'ethnie roumaine<sup>41</sup> et la révision de la citoyenneté roumaine des Juifs de Roumanie.<sup>42</sup> Cette dernière mesure provoqua le chaos dans les administrations communales et les tribunaux débordés par les demandes de documents et les dépôts de dossiers<sup>43</sup> et entraîna le gouvernement roumain et notamment le président du Conseil Octavian Goga et le ministre des Affaires étrangères Istrate Micescu (1881-1951) dans une bataille diplomatique avec le secrétariat de la Société des Nations, la France et la Grande-Bretagne,<sup>44</sup> puisque quatre organisations juives, en se fondant notamment sur le traité de protection des minorités signé par la Roumanie le 9 décembre 1919,<sup>45</sup> soumièrent des

---

<sup>38</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 451/1937, ff. 297-298 = *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°302 (31 décembre 1937), p. 9840.

<sup>39</sup> "Revizuirea brevetelor cârciumarilor evrei dela sate. Primele măsuri pentru ieftinirea traiului. Deciziunile consiliului de miniștri de Miercuri" [La révision des licences des bistrots juifs de la campagne. Les premières mesures pour rendre la vie moins chère. Les décisions du conseil des ministres de mercredi], *Glasul Bucovinei* [La Voix de Bucovine], n°5234, (9 janvier 1938), p. 3.

<sup>40</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 14 = *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°11 (14 janvier 1938), p. 175; n°9 (12 janvier 1938), p. 154; n°33 (10 février 1938), pp. 778-779.

<sup>41</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 52: journal du conseil des ministres n°120 du 27 janvier 1938.

<sup>42</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 217: journal du conseil des ministres n°88 du 20 janvier 1938 = *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°21 (27 janvier 1938), p. 612; n°18 (22 janvier 1938), pp. 314-316.

<sup>43</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 1377), ff. 245-248: le Congrès juif mondial aux président et membres du Conseil de la Société des Nations, 12 février 1938; Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938, f. 275: journal du conseil des ministres n°242 du 8 février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 276: journal du conseil des ministres n°242 du 8 février 1938.

<sup>44</sup> P. ex. Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 231-233 (doc. 90): note transmise au ministre des Affaires étrangères français, 20 janvier 1938.

<sup>45</sup> *Recueil des Traités et des Engagements Internationaux enregistrés par le Secrétariat de la Société des Nations. Volume 5* (Paris: Henri Dupuy et Cie, 1921), pp. 335-347 (n°140). Le nom complet du traité est: "Traité entre les principales puissances alliées et associées et la Roumanie, concernant la protection des minorités et les relations commerciales".

pétitions à la Société des Nations<sup>46</sup> et cherchaient à obtenir l'application de la procédure d'urgence à celles-ci.<sup>47</sup>

Les mesures susmentionnées étaient utilisées à fin de propagande, notamment lors des discours radiodiffusés de Goga le 31 décembre 1937<sup>48</sup> et du sous-secrétaire d'État à la présidence du Conseil Alexandru Hodoș (1893-1967) le 5 février 1938.<sup>49</sup>

À ces mesures s'en ajoutaient d'autres, prises par des ministères individuels. Ainsi, le 31 décembre 1937, la présidence du Conseil ne prolongea plus les abonnements de train gratuits de 105 journalistes juifs,<sup>50</sup> ce dont Goga se vanta le même jour à la radio,<sup>51</sup> et, au début de février 1938, supprima le journal russe de Chișinău *Бессарабское Слово* [*Bessarabskoë Slovo*, La Parole bessarabe].<sup>52</sup> Le 5 janvier 1938, le ministère de l'Intérieur convoqua les salariés de l'État, des départements et des municipalités à un enième examen de roumain.<sup>53</sup> Le 14 janvier, le ministère du Travail, de la Santé et de la Protection sociale, dirigé par Gheorghe Cuza (1896-1950), le fils d'Alexandru C. Cuza, interdit aux

---

<sup>46</sup> Archives de l'Office des Nations unies à Genève, R3944/4/13396/32626 = The National Archives, FO 371/22349 (R 4517), ff. 215-269: le Congrès juif mondial, pétition, 13 janvier 1938; Archives de l'Office des Nations unies à Genève, R3943/4/13396/32388 = The National Archives, FO 371/22349 (R 4517), ff. 269v-270: l'Alliance israélite universelle, pétition, 13 janvier 1938; The National Archives, FO 371/22349 (R 4517), ff. 270v-271: le Joint Foreign Committee, pétition, 14 janvier 1938; Archives de l'Office des Nations unies à Genève, R3944/4/13396/32508 = The National Archives, FO 371/22349 (R 4517), ff. 271v-312: le Comité pour la Défense des Droits des Israélites en Europe centrale et orientale, pétition, 23 janvier 1938.

<sup>47</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 857), ff. 137-138: Roger Mellor Makins, compte rendu d'une conversation avec Nahum Goldmann et Maurice Perlzweig, 26 janvier 1938; Archives de l'Office des Nations unies à Genève, R3943/4/13396/32402: Rasmus Skylstad, minute, 27 janvier 1938; The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 856), ff. 132-134: Lord Cranborne, compte rendu des conversations avec Nahum Goldmann et Adolph Brotman, 28 janvier 1938.

<sup>48</sup> "Cuvântarea-program a d-lui Octavian Goga pronunțată aseară la microfon" [Le discours-programme que M. Octavian Goga a prononcé hier soir au microphone], *Timpul* [Le Temps] (2 janvier 1938).

<sup>49</sup> "Le manifeste du gouvernement", *Le Moment*, n°887 (7 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> "Anularea permiselor gratuite pe c.f.r. ale ziariștilor evrei" [L'annulation des abonnements de C.F.R. gratuits des journalistes juifs], *Universul* [L'Univers], n°1 (1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1938), p. 21.

<sup>51</sup> "Cuvântarea-program a d-lui Octavian Goga pronunțată aseară la microfon", *Timpul* (2 janvier 1938).

<sup>52</sup> "Par ordre de la Présidence du Conseil des Ministres ...", *Le Moment*, n°886 (6 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>53</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Cluj, Fond *Prefectura Județului Cluj* (29, 37), dossier 36/1939: le ministère de l'Intérieur, circulaire 59, 5 janvier 1938.

Juifs d'avoir à leur service des servantes chrétiennes âgées de moins de 40 ans "vu les nombreux cas qui ont été signalés et où il s'est avéré que les patrons juifs qui engagent chez eux de jeunes femmes de service roumaines le font à des fins de trafic de chair humaine".<sup>54</sup> Ce fut la seule mesure antisémite à provoquer l'indignation du ministre plénipotentiaire britannique Reginald Hoare (1882-1954)<sup>55</sup> et à être suspendue sur ordre du roi.<sup>56</sup> Le même ministère licencia le 16 janvier les médecins juifs des assurances sociales<sup>57</sup> et interdit le 28 janvier aux établissements ouverts au public tels des restaurants, bistrotts, pâtisseries, etc., d'avoir du personnel juif.<sup>58</sup>

Concernant les mesures dédiées aux paysans, le conseil des ministres amnistia ceux d'entre ces derniers qui avaient enfreint le code forestier ou la loi du monopole de la vente de l'alcool et des boissons spiritueuses.<sup>59</sup> Il autorisa l'achat d'arbres fruitiers par l'État pour les vendre à crédit et à moitié prix aux paysans montagnards, voire pour les céder gratuitement aux paysans de la plaine, ainsi qu'aux écoles, orphelinats, églises et institutions culturelles, mesure qu'il présenta comme "grande et importante action".<sup>60</sup> Il déclara le sel article de nécessité

---

<sup>54</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°11 (14 janvier 1938), p. 176: "Având în vedere numeroasele cazuri când s'a semnalat și constatat că patronii evrei care angajează ca femei de serviciu în casa lor tinere, române, o fac în vederea traficului de carne vie".

<sup>55</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 473), f. 89: Reginald Hoare, télégramme n°12, 17 janvier 1938.

<sup>56</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 818), f. 124: Reginald Hoare, 21 janvier 1938; Ioan Lăcustă, *Cenzura veghează 1937-1939* [La censure veille 1937-1939] (București: Curtea Veche, 2007), p. 114 (20 janvier 1938).

<sup>57</sup> "Rumania Closes All Jewish Libraries in Bessarabia. To Purge Bucharest Theatres", *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, n°138 (16 janvier 1938); *Deutsche Zeitung* (Cluj) (21 janvier 1938), p. 3: Keine jüdischen Ärzte mehr bei den Krankenkassen.

<sup>58</sup> Archives de l'Office des Nations unies à Genève, R3944/4/13396/32508: le Comité pour la Défense des Droits des Israélites en Europe centrale et orientale au secrétaire général de la Société des Nations, 3 février 1938; "Nur Rumänen dürfen Kellner sein", *Groß-Kokler Bote & Schäßburger Zeitung*, n°3084 (6 février 1938), p. 5.

<sup>59</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 55: journal du conseil des ministres n°23 du 11 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 56: journal du conseil des ministres n°23 du 11 janvier 1938. L'amnistie générale publiée le 15 janvier 1938 étendit encore la rémission des infractions au code forestier: *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°12 (15 janvier 1938), pp. 190-191 (art. 6; 7).

<sup>60</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 224: journal du conseil des ministres n°92 du 20 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs: "mare și importantă acțiune"; f. 225: journal du conseil des ministres n°92 du 20 janvier 1938.

première, immédiate et générale<sup>61</sup> et en baissa le prix, amputant de 58 millions de lei le budget de l'État.<sup>62</sup> Il réduisit les taxes sur le pétrole lampant et le pétrole dénaturé et augmenta le volume de coton exempt de taxes et d'impôts, espérant compenser le déficit entre autres par "le renoncement de l'industrie (*du pétrole, PHB*) à une partie du profit".<sup>63</sup> Il baissa le prix des faisceaux de branches et permit à la population rurale de ramasser gratuitement du bois mort dans les forêts de l'État.<sup>64</sup> Il annula les amendes scolaires de la population rurale,<sup>65</sup> journal du conseil des ministres (c'est-à-dire arrêté gouvernemental) que le gouvernement suivant promulgua,<sup>66</sup> avant de suspendre son application.<sup>67</sup> Il réduisit le prix du tabac de 3<sup>e</sup> catégorie, estimant lui-même à 272 millions de lei la baisse des recettes qui en résulterait.<sup>68</sup> Il amnistia les paysans et les vendeurs en détail qui avaient contrevenu aux dispositions légales concernant le commerce du vinaigre,<sup>69</sup> permit aux producteurs de vin de vendre le vinaigre obtenu par accident et autorisa la vente en vrac.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 2: journal du conseil des ministres n°99 du 21 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 3: journal du conseil des ministres n°99 du 21 janvier 1938.

<sup>62</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, ff. 12-13: journal du conseil des ministres n°103 du 21 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 14: journal du conseil des ministres n°103 du 21 janvier 1938.

<sup>63</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, ff. 7 et 9: journal du conseil des ministres n°101 du 21 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs: "renunțarea industriei la o parte din beneficii"; f. 8: journal du conseil des ministres n°101 du 21 janvier 1938; *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°19 (25 janvier 1938), pp. 569-570.

<sup>64</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 94: journal du conseil des ministres n°141 du 27 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 95: journal du conseil des ministres n°141 du 27 janvier 1938.

<sup>65</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 153: journal du conseil des ministres n°148 du 27 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 154: journal du conseil des ministres n°148 du 27 janvier 1938.

<sup>66</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°34 (11 février 1938), p. 818.

<sup>67</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Suceava, Fond *Inspectoratul școlar al județului Rădăuți* (238), dossier 3/1938, f. 1172 = dossier 8/1938: le ministère de l'Éducation nationale, circulaire, non datée.

<sup>68</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938: journal du conseil des ministres n°230 du 4 février 1938, exposé des motifs, et journal du conseil des ministres n°230 du 4 février 1938.

<sup>69</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938, f. 176: journal du conseil des ministres n°236 du 8 février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 177: journal du conseil des ministres n°236 du 8 février 1938.

<sup>70</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond *PCM. Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938, f. 178: journal du conseil des ministres n°237 du 8 février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 179: journal du conseil des ministres n°237 du 8 février 1938.

À l’instar de ses mesures antisémites et antiminoritaires, le gouvernement national-chrétien utilisait celles en faveur des paysans à des fins de propagande électorale. Ainsi, le 14 janvier 1938, avant même que le gouvernement n’eût rendu les journaux du conseil des ministres nécessaires, le ministre de l’Intérieur envoya la circulaire suivante aux préfets: “Suite à un conseil économique présidé par S. M. le Roi, le gouvernement a pris les mesures suivantes: 1) la réduction de 25% des prix des titres de transport de train de 3<sup>e</sup> classe; 2) la baisse du prix du pétrole lampant; 3) la baisse du prix du sel; 4) la baisse du prix du coton paysan et, dans ce but et pour assurer le contrôle du commerce, le coton paysan sera monopolisé par l’État.<sup>71</sup> Par ailleurs on a décidé l’abolition de l’impôt agricole dès le 31 mars 1938.<sup>72</sup> Dans le futur, on ne percevra de taxes que sur les produits vendus. Ayez la bienveillance de prendre des mesures pour que la population prenne connaissance de ces décisions du gouvernement par la diffusion la plus large possible d’affiches et par d’autres moyens locaux”.<sup>73</sup>

L’affiche de la préfecture du département de Rădăuți promit d’autres mesures importantes dans les semaines à venir pour baisser le coût de la vie et supprimer la spéculation.<sup>74</sup>

Si le gouvernement Goga exploitait pour la propagande électorale tant ses mesures antisémites et antiminoritaires que celles dédiées aux paysans, il mettait l’accent sur les premières. Ainsi, dans son discours radiodiffusé du 31 décembre 1937, Goga commença par les points ayant trait aux minorités et par ceux que le journal *Timpul* [Le Temps] intitula

<sup>71</sup> Selon Călinescu, ce fut lui qui proposa l’instauration de ce monopole: Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 366 (13 janvier 1938).

<sup>72</sup> Dans son journal, Argetoianu accusa le gouvernement de lui avoir volé cette idée. Selon Călinescu, c’était le roi qui l’avait soulevée: Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, p. 37 (17 janvier 1938); Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 366 (13 janvier 1938).

<sup>73</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Suceava, Fond *Prefectura județului Rădăuți* (231), dossier 8/1938, ff. 1-2: le ministère de l’Intérieur aux préfets, circulaire, 14 janvier 1938: “În urma unui consiliu economic prezidat de M. S. Regele guvernul a luat următoarele măsuri: 1) reducerea cu 25% a tarifului călătorilor pe cls. 3 calea ferată; 2) reducerea a prețului petrolului lampant; 3) reducerea prețului sărei; 4) reducerea prețului la bumbacul țărănesc și în acest scop și pentru a asigura controlul comerțului bumbacul țărănesc va fi monopolizat de stat. De asemenea s-a hotărât desființarea impozitului agricol pe data de 31 Martie 1938 urmând ca în viitor să se perceapă taxe numai la produsele vândute. Binevoii a lua măsuri ca aceste hotărâri ale guvernului să fie aduse la cunoștința populației prin afișaj cât mai răspândit și alte mijloace locale”.

<sup>74</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Suceava, Fond *Prefectura județului Rădăuți* (231), dossier 8/1938, f. 3: préfecture du département de Rădăuți, placard.

“réparations immédiates d'ordre national”.<sup>75</sup> De même, lorsque le secrétaire d'État à la présidence du Conseil Alexandru Hodoș énuméra le soir du 5 février 1938 les (prétendues) réalisations gouvernementales, il commença par les mesures antisémites du gouvernement, celles en faveur des paysans figurant en fin de liste.<sup>76</sup>

En ce qui concerne les mesures censées directement influencer l'issue des élections de mars 1938, en plus de l'article 33 du décret de révision de la citoyenneté, article qui radiait des listes électorales les personnes entrant dans les dispositions du décret<sup>77</sup> et réduisait ainsi le nombre d'électeurs juifs, elles étaient elles aussi de trois types:

D'abord, le conseil des ministres renforça les forces de l'ordre, selon un plan convenu entre Călinescu et le roi.<sup>78</sup> Il autorisa la mobilisation temporaire de contingents de gendarmerie<sup>79</sup> et l'équipement de celle-ci.<sup>80</sup> En partie, les exposés des motifs faisaient explicitement référence aux élections et à l'agitation de l'électorat, l'un évoquant des circonstances “où même la population rurale se trouve dans un visible état d'effervescence et qu'on observe chez certaines organisations politiques un remous allant jusqu'au désordre”.<sup>81</sup> Comme on le verra plus loin, le gouvernement utilisait la gendarmerie pour brutalement réprimer son concurrent politique, la Légion. Selon le chef de cette dernière Codreanu, cette répression se solda par 52 blessés et 2 morts.<sup>82</sup> Comme le montrent les rapports des commissariats de police de

---

<sup>75</sup> “Cuvântarea-program a d-lui Octavian Goga pronunțată aseară la microfon”, *Timpul* (2 janvier 1938): “Reparații imediate de ordin național”.

<sup>76</sup> “Le manifeste du gouvernement”, *Le Moment*, n°887 (7 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>77</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°18, 22 janvier 1938, pp. 314-316.

<sup>78</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 368 (25 janvier 1938); pp. 370-371 (31 janvier 1938).

<sup>79</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 28: journal du conseil des ministres n°110 du 26 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 29: journal du conseil des ministres n°110 du 26 janvier 1938.

<sup>80</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 26: journal du conseil des ministres n°109 du 26 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 27: journal du conseil des ministres n°109 du 26 janvier 1938; dossier 454/1938, f. 3: journal du conseil des ministres n°171 du 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 4: journal du conseil des ministres n°171 du 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938; ff. 25-26: journal du conseil des ministres n°182 du 3 février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 27: journal du conseil des ministres n°182 du 3 février 1938.

<sup>81</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938, ff. 25-26: journal du conseil des ministres n°182 du 3 février 1938, exposé des motifs: “acum când și populația rurală se află într-o stare de vădită efervescență, iar la unele organizațiuni politice se observă o încordare cu tendințe de desordini”.

<sup>82</sup> Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste 1927-1938* [Circulaires et manifestes 1927-1938], (München: Europa, 1981), pp. 266-267 (11 février 1938).

Iași, les forces de l'ordre étaient aussi employées contre les autres partis d'opposition et, de manière générale, contre quiconque critiquait le gouvernement ou les national-chrétiens en public. Ainsi, toutes les réunions du parti national-paysan étaient surveillées.<sup>83</sup> En réponse à des dénonciations ou de leur propre initiative, les gardiens de la paix appréhendaient des personnes, l'une, pour avoir insulté (un national-chrétien) et crié: "À bas la croix gammée" (*Jos Svastica*),<sup>84</sup> l'autre, visiblement juive et désignée de "vide-gousset connu" (*cunoscutul pungaș de buzunar*), pour avoir injurié les drapeaux à croix gammées (d'un groupe de national-chrétiens) et le gouvernement,<sup>85</sup> une troisième pour s'être exprimée contre le gouvernement et contre (le journal national-chrétien ?) *Izbândă* [Victoire]<sup>86</sup> et deux dernières, de toute apparence toutes les deux juives, pour avoir dit à propos de "Lanciers qui marchaient en colonne" (*lănceri încolonați*) qu'ils leur lanceraient bien une bombe.<sup>87</sup> Par contre, les rapports ne consistent pas d'interpellation des national-chrétiens qui avaient défilé. Quant à deux personnes ramassées par un gardien de la paix pour avoir vendu aux Juifs une brochure *Les youpins démasqués* (*Jidanii Demascați*), en exigeant de l'argent pour les étudiants roumains, il est probable qu'il ne s'agissait pas de national-chrétiens, mais de légionnaires.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Iași, Fond *Chestura Poliției Iași* (846), dossier 12/1938: rapports des commissariats de police de Iași pour le mois de février 1938.

<sup>84</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Iași, Fond *Chestura Poliției Iași* (846), dossier 12/1938, ff. 18-19: le détachement des gardiens de la paix, rapport pour le 1<sup>er</sup> février, 2 février 1938; f. 17: le commissariat de police de Iași à l'inspectorat de police de Iași, à la préfecture du département de Iași et au parquet, rapport pour le 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938, 2 février 1938.

<sup>85</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Iași, Fond *Chestura Poliției Iași* (846), dossier 12/1938, f. 92: le commissariat de police de la 4<sup>e</sup> circonscription de Iași, rapport pour le 5 février 1938, 6 février 1938; f. 84: le commissariat de police de Iași à l'inspectorat de police de Iași, à la préfecture du département de Iași et au parquet, rapport pour le 5 février 1938, 6 février 1938.

<sup>86</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Iași, Fond *Chestura Poliției Iași* (846), dossier 12/1938, f. 89: le commissariat de police de la 2<sup>e</sup> circonscription de Iași, rapport pour le 5 février 1938, 6 février 1938.

<sup>87</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Iași, Fond *Chestura Poliției Iași* (846), dossier 12/1938, f. 156: le détachement des gardiens de la paix, rapport pour le 10 février 1938, 11 février 1938; f. 162: le commissariat de police de la 2<sup>e</sup> circonscription de Iași, rapport pour le 10 février 1938, 11 février 1938.

<sup>88</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Iași, Fond *Chestura Poliției Iași* (846), dossier 12/1938, f. 156: le détachement des gardiens de la paix, rapport pour le 10 février 1938, 11 février 1938.

En deuxième lieu, le conseil des ministres s'en prit aux conseils communaux et départementaux, ainsi qu'aux chambres de Commerce, sections commerciale et industrielle, d'Agriculture et du Travail, dont les membres élus, respectivement les membres tout court devaient élire une partie des sénateurs, conformément à l'article 4 de la loi électorale de 1926.<sup>89</sup> Le gouvernement adopta un à un des projets de décret de dissolution des conseils communaux et départementaux (3 janvier 1938),<sup>90</sup> des conseils d'administration des chambres du Travail (15 janvier),<sup>91</sup> des conseils d'administration des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie (18 janvier),<sup>92</sup> des chambres d'Agriculture (20 janvier)<sup>93</sup> et de leurs conseils d'administration (3 février).<sup>94</sup> Ces projets de décret, à part ceux qui concernaient les conseils d'administration des chambres du Travail<sup>95</sup> et des chambres d'Agriculture, prévoyaient en plus la nomination de commissions intérimaires et l'organisation d'élections.<sup>96</sup> Les délais légaux des élections des chambres d'Agriculture ainsi que des conseils d'administration des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie furent en partie écourtés. Si l'idée était sans doute de boucler les élections en question avant les élections parlementaires, ces réductions

---

<sup>89</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°71 (27 mars 1926), pp. 4273-4312.

<sup>90</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°5 (6 janvier 1938), p. 86.

<sup>91</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°18 (22 janvier 1938), p. 318; cf. *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°32 (9 février 1938), p. 766. Selon Argetoianu, le gouvernement avait d'abord forcé les membres de l'Union des chambres du Travail à démissionner: Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, p. 14, note 1 (4 janvier 1938); pp. 49-50 (21 janvier 1938).

<sup>92</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 208: journal du conseil des ministres n°86 du 18 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 209: journal du conseil des ministres n°86 du 18 janvier 1938; cf. *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°17 (21 janvier 1938), p. 295.

<sup>93</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 211: journal du conseil des ministres n°87 du 20 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 212: journal du conseil des ministres n°87 du 20 janvier 1938; cf. *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°17 (21 janvier 1938), p. 290.

<sup>94</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938, f. 96: journal du conseil des ministres n°204 du 3 février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 97: journal du conseil des ministres n°204 du 3 février 1938; cf. *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°32 (9 février 1938), p. 766.

<sup>95</sup> Le 8 février 1938, le conseil des ministres adopta encore un projet de décret de modification du règlement électorale des chambres du Travail: Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 454/1938, f. 182: journal du conseil des ministres n°239 du 8 février 1938, exposé des motifs.

<sup>96</sup> Voir les notes précédentes.

de délais se firent de façon inconséquente.<sup>97</sup> Le conseil des ministres recourut alors à une autre combine. Le 9 février 1938, la convocation du corps électoral des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie de Bucarest,

---

<sup>97</sup> La loi de création du Conseil supérieur économique et d'organisation des chambres professionnelles publiée le 29 avril 1936 prévoyait que les collèges agricoles communaux fussent convoqués par décision du ministère de l'Agriculture et des Domaines au moins un mois avant les élections (art. 22). Le projet de décret adopté le 20 janvier 1938 par le conseil des ministres et promulgué le lendemain par le roi réduisait ce délai à 7 jours. Le dépôt des candidatures ne se faisait plus 10 (art. 22), mais 2 jours ouvrables avant les élections. Les contestations (art. 23) devaient être introduites en 2 au lieu de 10 jours et les juges n'avaient plus que 5 au lieu de 15 jours pour se prononcer. Ainsi, les élections des comités agricoles communaux par les collèges agricoles communaux, au cas où les contestations étaient rejetées, étaient bouclées au plus tard 14 jours après la convocation de ces collèges. La convocation des collèges agricoles départementaux, composés en partie des membres des comités agricoles communaux (art. 26), ne se faisait plus au moins un mois (art. 29), mais 10 jours avant les élections, le dépôt des candidatures plus au moins 10 (art. 29), mais 5 jours ouvrables avant les élections, ceci non plus par décret, mais par décision ministérielle, et les listes électorales des collèges agricoles départementaux n'étaient plus établies et déposées dans le délai d'un mois à partir des élections des comités agricoles communaux (art. 27), mais de 5 jours, ceci non pas par le président du tribunal, mais par le préfet. L'établissement et le dépôt des listes électorales des collèges agricoles départementaux devaient donc être terminés avant l'échéance du délai dans lequel les juges devaient se prononcer sur les contestations des élections des comités agricoles communaux, comités dont, comme il a été montré, les membres faisaient partie des collèges agricoles départementaux. Cependant, le décret publié le 21 janvier 1938 ne modifiait pas les délais pour les nouvelles élections en cas d'admission de contestation (art. 23), pour les contestations des inscriptions sur les listes électorales des collèges agricoles départementaux (art. 27), pour les constitutions des chambres d'Agriculture ou les contestations des invalidations d'élections (art. 30). Quant au règlement d'élection et de constitution des conseils d'administration des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie, fondé lui aussi sur la loi de création du Conseil supérieur économique et d'organisation des chambres professionnelles (art. 101), il prévoyait à l'article 6 que le comité des directeurs de l'Union des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie se prononce dans un délai de 10 jours sur la validité des élections et, à l'article 8, qu'elle communique sa décision dans un délai de 5 jours à partir du prononcé. Le conseil des ministres adopta un projet de décret qui réduisait le premier délai à 5 jours et obligeait l'Union à communiquer sa décision sans délai après le prononcé, mais laissait les autres termes inchangés: *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°98 (29 avril 1936), pp. 3673-3710; Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, f. 211: journal du conseil des ministres n°87 du 20 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 212: journal du conseil des ministres n°87 du 20 janvier 1938; *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°17 (21 janvier 1938), p. 290; Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 15: journal du conseil des ministres n°104 du 21 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 16: journal du conseil des ministres n°104 du 21 janvier 1938.

Bălți, Cahul, Cernăuți, Cluj, Iași, Huși, Târgu-Mureș, Timișoara, Giurgiu, Turnu-Severin et Vaslui fut reportée au 29 mai 1938,<sup>98</sup> c'est-à-dire après les élections parlementaires, et, le 10 février, le conseil des ministres sous la présidence du roi adopta un projet de décret qui permettait que là, où les élections des conseils d'administration des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie n'avaient pas encore eu lieu, les membres des commissions intérimaires confirmées participent aux élections du sénat.<sup>99</sup>

En troisième lieu, le conseil des ministres s'attaqua à la loi électorale pour la chambre des députés et le sénat publiée le 27 mars 1926.<sup>100</sup> Le 18 janvier 1938, le conseil des ministres adopta un projet de décret qui modifiait les signes distinctifs des partis imprimés sur les bulletins de vote. Pour appliquer la loi électorale qui stipulait, à l'article 49, que ces signes ne pouvaient représenter des objets et "pour assurer une manifestation plus sincère et réelle de la volonté de l'électeur délivré de l'obsession ou de la mystique des images d'objets", le projet de décret prévoyait que la commission centrale électorale octroie à chaque groupe politique qui les lui avait sollicités un numéro d'ordre et un signe distinctif composé simplement d'un nombre de points correspondant à ce numéro d'ordre.<sup>101</sup> D'un pragmatisme allant jusqu'au cynisme,

---

<sup>98</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°32 (9 février 1938), p. 767.

<sup>99</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 455/1938, f. 15: journal du conseil des ministres n°257 du 10 février 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 16: journal du conseil des ministres n°257 du 10 février 1938. Le projet de décret se fondait sur l'article 139 de la loi de création du Conseil supérieur économique et d'organisation des chambres professionnelles, publiée le 29 avril 1936, article qui "prévoyait que les commissions intérimaires ont les mêmes attributions et prérogatives que les conseils d'administration élus, à part de contracter des prêts, d'aliéner ou d'acquérir des immeubles et d'engager ou de congédier du personnel": *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°98 (29 avril 1936), pp. 3673-3710: "Comisiunile interimare au aceleași atribuțiuni și puteri ca și consiliile de administrație, alese, în afară de dreptul de a contracta împrumuturi, a înstrăina sau achiziționa imobile și a angaja sau concedia personal".

<sup>100</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°71 (27 mars 1926), pp. 4273-4312.

<sup>101</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 452/1938, ff. 151-152: journal du conseil des ministres n°60 du 18 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs: "spre a asigura o mai sinceră și reală manifestare a voinței alegătorului degajat de obsesiunea sau mistica imaginilor de obiecte"; f. 153: journal du conseil des ministres n°60 du 18 janvier 1938; cf. Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 453/1938, f. 49: journal du conseil des ministres n°119 du 27 janvier 1938, exposé des motifs; f. 50: journal du conseil des ministres n°119 du 27 janvier 1938; *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°22 (28 janvier 1938), pp. 618-619. Le décret n°88 de 1938, dont le règlement d'application parut le 28 janvier 1938, n'a pas pu être repéré dans le *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel].

Argetoianu commenta le décret comme suit: "Telle qu'elle a été réalisée, la modification de la loi électorale est une bêtise puisqu'il s'agit d'une illégalité sans aucune utilité pour le gouvernement. [...] Si le décret n'avait pas limité aux groupes politiques le droit de solliciter l'inscription à la commission centrale et si le gouvernement avait pu de la manière occuper non seulement la première place, mais repousser à l'aide de listes camouflées l'opposition jusqu'à la dixième place ou plus, ç'aurait été quelque chose. Les électeurs se seraient embrouillés avec les nombreux points des différentes listes de l'opposition, ce qui aurait profité au gouvernement. Mais je ne vois pas comment, de la façon dont on a procédé, le gouvernement puisse bénéficier de l'illégalité qu'il a commise. La liste gouvernementale a été inscrite au n°1, celle libérale au n°2, celle vaidiste (*de Vaida-Voevod, PHB*) au n°3, celle gardiste au n°4. En octroyant aux listes de l'opposition un numéro et, par conséquent, une position fixe pour le pays tout entier - le gouvernement n'a fait que faciliter leur propagande".<sup>102</sup>

Ce commentaire souligne la légèreté avec laquelle le gouvernement Goga prit des mesures. Si Argetoianu ne peut pas être soupçonné d'indulgence à l'égard du cabinet national-chrétien, le 10 janvier 1938, Călinescu avait déjà constaté: "ils n'ont pas de conceptions, ils improvisent".<sup>103</sup>

### **L'attitude des gouvernements britannique et français face à la politique antisémite du cabinet Goga**

En tant que signataires du traité de protection des minorités du 9 décembre 1919 et en tant que membres capitaux de la Société des Nations, dont le Conseil était le garant du traité (art. 12 du traité), la Grande-Bretagne et la France étaient directement concernées par la situation des minorités et notamment des Juifs de Roumanie. Ceci

---

<sup>102</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 42-43 (19 janvier 1938): "Așa cum a fost făcută, modificarea legii electorale e o prostie fiindcă constituie o ilegalitate fără nici un folos pentru Guvern. [...] Dacă decretul n-ar fi limitat la grupările politice dreptul de a cere înscrierea la Comisia Centrală și dacă Guvernul ar fi putut lua astfel nu numai locul I-u, dar împinge prin liste camuflăte pe ale opoziției până la locul al 10-lea și următoarele - ar fi fost ceva. Alegătorii s-ar fi încurcat între multiplele puncte ale diferitelor liste de opoziție, în beneficiul Guvernului. Dar așa cum s-a procedat, nu văd ce foloase poate trage Guvernul din ilegalitatea comisă. Lista guvernamentală a fost înscrisă la nr. 1, cea liberală la nr. 2, cea vaidistă la nr. 3, cea gardistă la nr. 4 și cea național-țărănistă la nr. 5. Dând listelor opoziționiste un număr, și prin urmare un loc fix pe toată țara - Guvernul n-a făcut decât să înlesnească propaganda lor".

<sup>103</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 366 (10 janvier 1938): "nu au concepții, improvizează".

explique pourquoi, le 31 décembre 1937, le ministre des Affaires étrangères français Yvon Delbos (1885-1956) demanda à Adrien Thierry, son ministre plénipotentiaire à Bucarest, "d'indiquer nettement à M. Goga que la France ne saurait rester indifférente au développement d'une politique dirigée contre les minorités et qui par surcroît ne faciliterait pas les rapports de la Roumanie avec la Société des Nations" et d'exiger des actions et non pas des paroles.<sup>104</sup> Autour du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier, le Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden (1897-1977) donna à son tour des instructions au ministre plénipotentiaire britannique Reginald Hoare, instructions dont le ton était pourtant très conciliant: "[...] to take an early opportunity of reminding the new Rumanian Government, in the most friendly manner, of the interest which the British Government have always taken in the Minorities Treaty signed by Rumania on the one side and the principal Allies and Associated Powers on the other at St. Germain on December 9, 1919".<sup>105</sup>

Face à Hoare, Micescu<sup>106</sup> et Goga justifiaient leur politique antisémite par la menace que présentait selon eux la Légion. À l'issue d'une entrevue avec Goga le 4 janvier 1938, Hoare fit part au Foreign Office de l'impression suivante: "Chief impression made on me by the Prime Minister during long and rambling conversations was that he is already realizing practical difficulties of doing anything radical in Jewish problem without simultaneously doing grave injury to national economy, but that he is convinced that he must make an attempt to accomplish something, not only because he is prisoner of his past, but because he believes rightly or wrongly that (the) only way to defeat the Iron Guard (*c'est-à-dire la Légion, PHB*) is to steal its thunder in which considerable element is of course anti-semitism".<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>104</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 217-218 (doc. 83): le ministre des Affaires étrangères français à l'ambassadeur français à Londres, 13 janvier 1938; pp. 213-214 (doc. 80): le ministère des Affaires étrangères français à l'ambassade de Grande-Bretagne, télégramme, 10 janvier 1938; The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 270), f. 50: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 5 janvier 1938.

<sup>105</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, p. 212 (doc. 79): l'ambassade de Grande-Bretagne au ministère des Affaires étrangères français, 3 janvier 1938; "Minority Rights in Rumania. A British Reminder", *The Times*, n°47885 (6 janvier 1938), p. 12. La précision "in the most friendly manner" se trouve dans la version publiée par *The Times*.

<sup>106</sup> Bela Vago, *The Shadow of the Swastika. The Rise of Fascism and Anti-Semitism in the Danube Basin 1936-1939* (Farnborough (Hampshire): Saxon House, 1975), pp. 257-258 (doc. 63): Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 4 janvier 1938.

<sup>107</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 270), f. 50: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°2 Saving, 5 janvier 1938. Le ministre plénipotentiaire américain Franklin Mott Gunther partageait cette opinion, comme le montre le télégramme

Le Foreign Office était prêt à accepter cet argument, comme le montre un mémorandum du 24 janvier, dans lequel son Southern Department, qui était compétent pour la Roumanie, définissait les priorités du gouvernement britannique à l'égard de la Roumanie. D'une part, l'on voulait préserver le régime parlementaire en Roumanie et, de l'autre, éviter la venue au pouvoir de la Légion, dont on assumait qu'elle entraînerait d'une part la rupture de la Roumanie avec la Petite Entente, la France et l'Union soviétique et, de l'autre, son ralliement à l'Axe. Du point de vue du gouvernement britannique, une victoire électorale de Goga garantissait autant la survie du régime parlementaire que le maintien des alliances existantes. Croyant sur parole le ministre des Affaires étrangères roumain Micescu que les élections de mars 1938 tourneraient autour de la question juive, l'on concluait: "If therefore it is true that the present Government must put forward a fairly strong anti-Semitic programme if they are to beat the Iron Guard, then this is possibly the lesser evil of the two".<sup>108</sup>

Le ministre des Affaires étrangères français se montra lui aussi sensible à la menace d'une victoire électorale légionnaire comme le montre son acceptation, le 26 janvier, de l'argument de Micescu "que l'application de la procédure d'urgence (*aux pétitions des organisations internationales juives, PHB*) lui rendait la tâche difficile dans la lutte contre le parti de M. Codreanu et que dans ces conditions, la Roumanie serait amenée à envisager la dénonciation pure et simple du traité des minorités (*du 9 décembre 1919, PHB*)".<sup>109</sup>

Philip Nichols (1894-1962), premier secrétaire au Foreign Office, avait donc eu raison lorsqu'il avait noté le 6 janvier: "It looks very much as though the present Roumanian Government were going to use the Iron Guard as a threat with which to blackmail foreign Powers into acquiescing in a policy which is in itself reprehensible".<sup>110</sup>

---

qu'il expédia le 6 janvier au Secretary of State: "The change of government was so sudden that I do not think they had time to formulate any program other than to 'take the wind out of the sails' of the Iron Guard by seeming to be even more nationalistic than they": Franklin Mott Gunther au Secretary of State, 6 janvier 1938: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1938v02/d533> (consulté le 13 juillet 2018).

<sup>108</sup> Vago, *The Shadow*, pp. 272-273 (doc. 73): le Southern Department du Foreign Office, mémorandum, 24 janvier 1938.

<sup>109</sup> "Dans l'attente du discours du Führer. L'offensive des réformateurs du pacte", *L'Humanité*, n°14284 (27 janvier 1938), p. 3; cf. Lungu, "The French and British Attitudes", pp. 325; 333-334.

<sup>110</sup> Vago, *The Shadow*, pp. 257-258 (doc. 63): Philip Nichols, minute, 6 janvier 1938.

Par conséquent, les gouvernements britannique et français acceptaient l'argument de Goga et de Micescu qu'il fallait éviter la victoire électorale de la Légion et cédaient aux menaces de Micescu que le gouvernement roumain imiterait le précédent polonais de 1934 et ne rendrait plus compte au Conseil de la Société des Nations de l'application du traité de protection des minorités, voire déclarerait le traité caduc.<sup>111</sup> Pourtant, ce n'étaient là que deux des motifs pour lesquels les Britanniques et les Français n'exerçaient qu'une pression symbolique sur le gouvernement roumain au cours de janvier 1938 et appuyaient le rejet de la procédure d'urgence.<sup>112</sup>

En effet, suite aux démarches des ministres plénipotentiaires français et britannique au début de janvier, démarches qui, de toute apparence, avaient pourtant été délibérément faites au nom des minorités en général,<sup>113</sup> des journaux allemands avaient accusé la France et la Grande-Bretagne de préférer les Juifs aux autres minorités persécutées,<sup>114</sup> ce qui faisait craindre au moins au gouvernement britannique qu'une nouvelle intervention diplomatique puisse être à son tour instrumentalisée par la propagande national-socialiste et fasciste.<sup>115</sup> En plus, l'attitude des gouvernements britannique et français résultait du pragmatisme qui régnait à l'époque dans les chancelleries surtout de Grande-Bretagne, mais aussi de France. Par exemple, la sous-direction pour la Société des Nations du ministère des Affaires étrangères français, lorsqu'elle analysa le 22 janvier les prises de position de Micescu, en vint à la conclusion suivante: "[...] il ne semble pas que nous ayons intérêt à

---

<sup>111</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 231-233 (doc. 90): note transmise au ministre des Affaires étrangères français, 20 janvier 1938.

<sup>112</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 248-249 (doc. 97): René Massigli au ministère des Affaires étrangères français, 29 janvier 1938.

<sup>113</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 218): Archibald David Manisty Ross, minute, 8 janvier 1938.

<sup>114</sup> "Fragen über die 'Minderheiten'-Politik der Westmächte", *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro*, n°22, 7 janvier 1938; The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 219), f. 45: le chargé d'affaires britannique à Berlin au Foreign Office, télégramme n°3 Saving, 6 janvier 1938; Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 214-215 (doc. 81): l'ambassadeur de France à Berlin au ministère des Affaires étrangères français, 6 janvier 1938; The National Archives / FO 371/22453 (R 231), f. 46: le chargé d'affaires britannique à Berlin au Foreign Office, télégramme n°4 Saving, 7 janvier 1938; *Documents concerning the Fate of Romanian Jewry during the Holocaust. Volume 1*, ed. Jean Ancel (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, [1986]), p. 187 (doc. 18): Maurice Ingram à Neville Laski et Leonard G. Montefiore, 7 janvier 1938.

<sup>115</sup> Vago, *The Shadow*, p. 279 (doc. 78): Anthony Eden, compte rendu d'une conversation avec Charles Corbin, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938.

user notre crédit auprès du gouvernement de Bucarest par des interventions répétées pour une question qui, au fond, ne touche pas directement les intérêts français. Si l'on considère l'état d'esprit qui s'est généralisé en Roumanie, il est à présumer que de telles démarches resteraient vaines. Mais, en revanche, on ne peut s'empêcher de redouter les conséquences qu'une attitude roumaine, si elle est poussée à l'intransigeance, est susceptible d'entraîner pour la Société des Nations. Il semble que c'est sur ce terrain qu'il conviendrait de se placer et de chercher à agir, d'accord avec les autres Puissances intéressées, en évitant toutefois toute décision de nature à porter la Roumanie à quelque extrémité. On pourrait par exemple obtenir de M. Micesco que le Cabinet Goga ne procédât à la réalisation de son programme antisémite qu'avec modération et discrétion, moyennant quoi la Société des Nations pourrait envisager d'adopter une attitude assez réservée et quelque peu dilatoire à l'égard des pétitions dont elle pourrait être éventuellement saisie, tant que les faits invoqués ne revêtraient pas un caractère de gravité intolérable".<sup>116</sup>

La sous-direction donnait donc la priorité aux bonnes relations franco-roumaines et à la préservation de la Société des Nations et insinuait qu'une politique antisémite était tolérable tant qu'elle ne faisait pas de vagues, c'est-à-dire tant que la France et la Société des Nations pouvaient détourner les yeux sans perdre la face.

Il est cependant probable que, comme le souligne la minute de la sous-direction, une pression concrète de la part des gouvernements britannique et français en faveur des Juifs de Roumanie serait restée sans résultat déjà à ce stade. Le ministre plénipotentiaire britannique à Bucarest, d'habitude impassible puisque lui-même sujet à un certain antisémitisme<sup>117</sup> et convaincu que Goga n'était qu'un antisémite modéré, suggéra bien au Foreign Office de recourir à une telle pression au

---

<sup>116</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 237-240 (doc. 93): minute sur une note de la sous-direction pour la Société des Nations, 22 janvier 1938.

<sup>117</sup> Vago, *The Shadow*, pp. 257-258 (doc. 63): Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 4 janvier 1938. Les preuves les plus frappantes de l'antisémitisme de Hoare sont la facilité avec laquelle il accepta et appuya le point de vue de l'avocat juif de la légation britannique en faveur du décret de révision de la citoyenneté roumaine, bien qu'il ne fût pas représentatif, ainsi que le fait qu'il se sentit obligé de réagir seulement lorsque les patrons juifs furent accusés de proxénétisme ou lorsque des avocats et étudiants de médecine juifs furent victimes de violences: The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 473), f. 89; Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°12, 17 janvier 1938; Vago, *The Shadow*, pp. 280-281 (doc. 79): Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938; pp. 289-290 (doc. 85): Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 9 février 1938.

moment où le ministère du Travail, de la Santé et de la Protection sociale interdit aux Juifs d'avoir à leur service des servantes chrétiennes âgées de moins de 40 ans en les accusant de proxénétisme. Plus précisément, Hoare proposa de confronter le président du Conseil avec les effets qu'auraient des mesures antisémites formulées de la manière sur l'opinion publique britannique et, par conséquent, sur la future visite du roi Carol II en Angleterre, afin que Goga freine les "extremists" avant qu'il ne soit trop tard.<sup>118</sup> Ce faisant, le diplomate perdait pourtant de vue que le programme électoral du parti national-chrétien<sup>119</sup> était radicalement et fondamentalement antisémite et que le gros de ses électeurs provenaient du fief d'Alexandru C. Cuza.<sup>120</sup> Or, ce dernier pressait d'une part Goga de réaliser intégralement le programme du parti national-chrétien, y inclus l'alliance avec l'Axe, sans faire d'exception et sans attendre les élections, et, de l'autre, de lui accorder pleine liberté d'agir contre la Légion.<sup>121</sup> Goga se permettait bien de censurer l'aile cuziste du gouvernement en interdisant aux ministres de prendre des décisions d'intérêt national sans l'accord du conseil des ministres<sup>122</sup> ou de faire des déclarations individuelles,<sup>123</sup> mais les menaces de Cuza de quitter le gouvernement<sup>124</sup> montrent que Goga

---

<sup>118</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 473), f. 89: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°12, 17 janvier 1938; Franklin Mott Gunther au Secretary of State, 20 janvier 1938: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1938v02/d537> (consulté le 13 juillet 2018).

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Bornemisa, *Catechism*.

<sup>120</sup> Sur les 281.167 suffrages officiellement obtenus lors des élections de la chambre des députés, 155.003, c'est-à-dire bien plus de la moitié, provenaient de 20 départements de Moldavie du nord et de Bessarabie, qui constituaient le fief de Cuza, à savoir Bălți: 15.996 (38,10%); Baia: 9.983 (34,06%); Botoșani: 11.455 (27,64%); Dorohoi: 10.644 (27,25%); Hotin: 17.393 (26,87%); Lăpușna: 8.001 (24,36%); Orhei: 6.713 (22,90%); Sorooca: 11.064 (22,34%); Bacău: 9.800 (22,27%); Suceava: 5.413 (20,81%); Tighina: 6.983 (19,97%); Vaslui: 4.482 (19,50%); Roman: 4.438 (16,87%); Cetatea-Albă: 9.230 (16,06%); Iași: 7.357 (15,59%); Fălciu: 2.728 (13,80%); Tutova: 2.559 (12,51%); Rădăuți: 3.627 (11,56%); Putna: 3.725 (10,78%); Storojineț: 3.412 (10,33%); *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°301 (30 décembre 1937), pp. 9717 ss.; Shapiro, "Prelude", p. 65.

<sup>121</sup> Shapiro, "Prelude", pp. 80-81; Pop, *Characterul antinațional*, pp. 189; 191.

<sup>122</sup> Ancel, *Documents*, pp. 217-223; Neville Laski, rapport privé et confidentiel sur la situation juive en Roumanie, 17 janvier 1938.

<sup>123</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22349, f. 234: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°8 Saving, 21 janvier 1938; Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, p. 48 (21 janvier 1938).

<sup>124</sup> Shapiro, "Prelude", pp. 80-81; Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 366 (10 janvier 1938); Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 220-226 (doc. 86): le chargé d'affaires de France en

dépendait de Cuza - qui, de son côté, fut apparemment amadoué par l'Allemagne et l'Italie.<sup>125</sup> Călinescu avait parfaitement résumé la position de Goga lorsqu'il avait noté le 10 janvier 1938: "Goga n'a pas de parti".<sup>126</sup>

Le succès d'une pression concrète de la part de la Grande-Bretagne et de la France en faveur des Juifs de Roumanie devint tout à fait improbable après que le gouvernement Goga, par ses mesures et sa propagande populistes, démultipliées par ses préfets<sup>127</sup> et d'autres facteurs, dont l'Église orthodoxe roumaine,<sup>128</sup> eut provoqué en un temps record la généralisation de l'antisémitisme public. Celle-ci fut constatée le 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938 par le ministre plénipotentiaire français rentré de Paris: "Depuis mon retour à Bucarest, j'ai été frappé par l'ampleur prise en quelques semaines par le mouvement d'antisémitisme déclenché par l'avènement au pouvoir du parti national-chrétien. Même dans les milieux tzaraniques (*c'est-à-dire national-paysans, PHB*), personne ne paraît en mesure de résister au déchaînement actuel de la traditionnelle aversion de la population roumaine pour les Juifs".<sup>129</sup>

Lorsque Micescu refusa le 29 janvier de faire aucune concession malgré le rejet de la procédure d'urgence par le secrétariat de la Société des Nations, mais qu'il menaça de nouveau de dénoncer le traité de protection des minorités<sup>130</sup> et que la France et, à contrecœur, la Grande-Bretagne décidèrent finalement de recourir à des moyens de pression concrète,<sup>131</sup> leurs ministres plénipotentiaires à Bucarest se rendirent

Roumanie au ministre des Affaires étrangères français, 17 janvier 1938; The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 473), f. 89: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°12, 17 janvier 1938; Ancel, *Documents*, pp. 217-223: Neville Laski, rapport privé et confidentiel sur la situation juive en Roumanie, 17 janvier 1938; The National Archives, FO 371/22349, f. 234: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°8 Saving, 21 janvier 1938.

<sup>125</sup> Ancel, *Documents*, pp. 217-223: Neville Laski, rapport privé et confidentiel sur la situation juive en Roumanie, 17 janvier 1938.

<sup>126</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 366 (10 janvier 1938): "Goga nu are partid".

<sup>127</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 1377), ff. 245-248: le Congrès juif mondial aux président et membres du Conseil de la Société des Nations, 12 février 1938.

<sup>128</sup> Hans-Christian Maner, "Voraussetzungen der autoritären Monarchie in Rumänien", in *Autoritäre Regime in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa 1919-1944*, éd. Erwin Oberländer (Paderborn, etc.: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001).

<sup>129</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 250-252 (doc. 119): Adrien Thierry à Yvon Delbos, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938.

<sup>130</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 248-249 (doc. 97): René Massigli à Yvon Delbos, 29 janvier 1938.

<sup>131</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, p. 249 (doc. 98): Yvon Delbos à Charles Corbin, 31 janvier 1938.

compte que le cabinet Goga ne pouvait plus reculer face à un électorat enfiévré de l'antisémitisme qu'il lui avait inoculé.<sup>132</sup>

### **Le gouvernement Goga et la Légion de l'Archange Michel**

Après la venue au pouvoir des national-chrétiens, tant le président du Conseil Goga que le chef de la Légion Codreanu s'exprimèrent en public sur la possibilité d'un rapprochement. Interrogé par Alexander Easterman du *Daily Herald* s'il s'allierait avec la Légion, Goga, qui avait soutenu par le passé une coopération avec la Légion,<sup>133</sup> déclara: "I shall make no alliances. I shall stand alone".<sup>134</sup> Codreanu répondit de la même manière à Easterman: "Shall I combine with M. Goga? No, never".<sup>135</sup>

Le 12 janvier 1938, le ministre de l'Intérieur Călinescu nota dans son journal que Goga lui avait confié qu'il avait parlé avec le père Moța (sans doute Ioan Moța (1868-1940), le père du héros légionnaire Ion Moța), qui avait promis au président du Conseil qu'il s'emploierait à ce que le pacte de non agression entre la Légion et le parti national-paysan ne soit pas reconduit.<sup>136</sup> En l'absence d'autres détails, il ne peut être établi si Goga cherchait à ce moment un rapprochement avec la Légion.

Le 13 janvier 1938, Codreanu émit un communiqué, dans lequel il se plaignit des manœuvres et attaques des national-chrétiens lors de la

---

<sup>132</sup> Vago, *The Shadow*, pp. 280-281 (doc. 79): Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938; Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 250-252 (doc. 100): Adrien Thierry à Yvon Delbos, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938.

<sup>133</sup> Pop, *Caracterul antinațional*, p. 179; cf. pp. 165-166.

<sup>134</sup> Alexander L. Easterman, Iancu, "'500000 Jews Must Go'", *Daily Herald*, n°6831 (6 janvier 1938), p. 1.

<sup>135</sup> Alexander L. Easterman, "Rumania's 'Film Star' Hitler Reveals His Plans", *Daily Herald*, n°6832 (7 janvier 1938), p. 2.

<sup>136</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări zilnice*, p. 366 (12 janvier 1938). Pour les élections de décembre 1937, le mouvement légionnaire, le parti national-paysan et le parti libéral (Gheorghe Brătianu) avaient conclu un pacte de non-agression. Selon le texte du pacte, "on conclue entre les partis soussignés un accord en vue de défendre la liberté et d'assurer l'équité des élections. Ces partis concluent pour le temps des élections actuelles un pacte de non agression pour atteindre le but en question. Pacte de non agression signifie s'abstenir d'actes et de langage violents et dénigrants; mais il n'empêche pas d'affirmer l'idéologie propre et de discuter en bonne foi": "Acordul pentru apărarea libertății alegerilor" [L'accord pour protéger la liberté des élections], *Românul* [Le Roumain], n°8 (1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1937), p. 2: "Se încheie între partidele subsemnate o înțelegere cu scopul de a apăra libertatea și a asigura corectitudinea alegerilor. Aceste partide încheie pentru timpul alegerilor actuale în vederea scopului propus un pact de neagresiune. Pactul de neagresiune înseamnă înconjurarea actelor și limbajului de violență și denigrare; dar nu împiedică afirmarea ideologiei proprii și discuția de bună credință"; cf. Haynes, "Reluctant Allies?".

campagne électorale de décembre et, en particulier, de l'attitude de Micescu.<sup>137</sup> Il y annonça qu'il n'emploierait pas les mêmes méthodes à l'égard du gouvernement en place: "Nous dirons: de quelle façon et d'où que vous soyez venus, soyez les bienvenus. Vous êtes un gouvernement nationaliste. Je n'ai même pas le droit de mettre votre bonne foi en doute, même lorsque je ne comprends pas certaines choses ou si celles-ci me semblent erronées. Un homme correct ne saute pas à la gorge d'un autre homme dès la première heure, avant qu'il n'ait eu la liberté de mettre ses idées en application. Lorsque vous prendrez des mesures à caractère antisémite, qu'elles soient nombreuses ou non, autant que vous pourrez, je ne me retrouverai pas dans la situation de pouvoir vous frapper. Je ne me retrouverai pas dans la position de devenir l'instrument de youpins, de devenir leur espoir contre un gouvernement nationaliste. Le gouvernement est une meule placée sur les épaules de quelques hommes. Vous ne me verrez jamais, moi, sauter sur cette pierre pour appuyer encore davantage sur des épaules déjà suffisamment chargées. De même, vous ne me verrez pas crier, poussé par quelque basse jalousie: 'Voilà que ceux-là prennent et exécutent des aspects de mon programme et moi, que ferai-je?' Mais je dis maintenant et je dirai toujours: que Dieu vous aide à faire pour la nation roumaine tout ce que nous voulons, tout ce que nous avons voulu, tout ce que notre esprit a rêvé qu'il pourrait faire".<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Selon Argetoianu, Micescu, après s'être retiré des listes électorales de Tout pour le pays suite à la conclusion du pacte électoral entre le mouvement légionnaire et le parti national-paysan, s'inscrivit sur les listes du parti national-chrétien et accusa dans une lettre ouverte Corneliu Zelea Codreanu d'être vendu aux Juifs, lettre qu'il publia dans le journal "cuziste" *Porunca Vremii* [L'impératif contemporain]. Il se peut même qu'en tant que ministre, Micescu chercha à physiquement éliminer Codreanu. En effet, le prêtre légionnaire et professeur de la faculté de théologie de l'université de Bucarest Grigorie Cristescu (1895-1961) porta le 12 février 1938 plainte contre Micescu, affirmant que le préfet national-chrétien du département de Neamț lui avait confié la nuit du 10 février 1938 sur le train Bucarest-Cernăuți que Micescu lui avait demandé de liquider Codreanu. Le 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1938, le préfet en question confirma qu'il avait compris que telle était la volonté de Micescu, tout en évoquant un possible malentendu: Argetoianu, *1 iulie - 31 decembrie 1937*, p. 257 (30 novembre 1937); Clark, *Sfântă Tinerețe Legionară*, pp. 160; 162; Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studiarea Arhivelor Securității (ACNSAS), Penal 013241; Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, 127 (12 février 1938). Nous devons les informations du dossier de l'ACNSAS à Dragoș Sdrobiș.

<sup>138</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 234-237; Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, communiqué, 13 janvier 1938: "Noi vom zice: Oricum și oriunde ați venit fiți bine-veniți. Sunteți un guvern naționalist. Eu nu am dreptul nici măcar să vă suspectez buna-credință, chiar atunci când unele lucruri nu le înțeleg, sau mi se

Codreanu critiqua le projet gouvernemental de dissolution des assemblées législatives, présageant que le gouvernement ne remporterait pas plus de 30% et qu'il n'existerait donc toujours pas de majorité parlementaire. Il annonça que le but des légionnaires était de doubler les votes en leur faveur et que, si les assemblées législatives déjà élues étaient réunies, les légionnaires voteraient le budget et d'autres lois urgentes. Après avoir assuré, au début du communiqué, qu'il ne porterait jamais atteinte à la dynastie, à la fin, il taxa une éventuelle dictature de la couronne de "malheur" (*nenorocire*) et appela indirectement celle-ci à ne pas entrer "en conflit avec la nation ou Son destin".<sup>139</sup>

Lors d'une interview accordée à la presse italienne et publiée le 17 janvier 1938 par le journal turinois *La Stampa* [La Presse], Codreanu répéta l'essence de son communiqué: "Face au gouvernement Goga, la Garde de fer maintient une attente bienveillante. Même (*une attitude de, PHB*) collaboration."<sup>140</sup>

Le chef de la Légion insista pourtant que le cabinet Goga n'était "pas un gouvernement de la révolution nationale roumaine (*mais*) seulement un gouvernement nationaliste",<sup>141</sup> présentant ainsi par contraste son mouvement comme révolutionnaire et, par allusion implicite à la "révolution fasciste", comme équivalent au parti national fasciste. Codreanu continua par expliquer sa position à l'égard du gouvernement Goga de la même manière que dans le communiqué:

---

par greșite. Un om corect nu se poate năpusti asupra altui om din primul ceas înainte de a fi lăsat să-și pună în aplicare gândurile sale. Când D-vs luați măsuri cu caracter antisemit, multe-puține, câte puteți, nu voi ajunge eu în situația de a vă putea lovi. Nu voi ajunge eu în postura de a fi uneltă a jidanilor, de a deveni o speranță a lor în contra unui guvern naționalist. Guvernarea este o piatră de moară așezată pe umerii câtorva oameni. Nu mă veți vedea pe mine nici-odată sărind deasupra acestei pietre pentruca să mai apăs și eu umerii deajuns de încărcăți. Deasemeni, împins de vre-o invidie plină de josnicie, nu mă veți găsi strigând: 'Iată aceștia îmi iau și execută din programul meu și eu ce voi mai face?' Ci zic acum și voi zice totdeauna: să vă ajute Dumnezeu să faceți pentru neamul românesc tot ce vrem, tot ce am vrut, tot ce a visat mintea noastră că ar putea face".

<sup>139</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 234-237: "în conflict cu națiunea sau cu destinul Ei".

<sup>140</sup> "La nuova Romania. Ebrei e minoranze in dichiarazioni di Goga, Cuza e Codreanu", *La Stampa*, n°14 (17 janvier 1938), p. 1: "Verso il Governo Goga la 'Guardia di ferro' mantiene una benevola attesa. Anzi, la collaborazione".

<sup>141</sup> "La nuova Romania. Ebrei e minoranze in dichiarazioni di Goga, Cuza e Codreanu", *La Stampa*, n°14 (17 janvier 1938), p. 1: "Questo non è un Governo della rivoluzione nazionale romena; è soltanto un Governo nazionalista".

“Mais puisque je suis un nationaliste, je puis ni le frapper, ni le combattre. Qu’il fasse ce qu’il peut. Nous ferons le reste”.<sup>142</sup>

Le même jour où parut l’interview de Codreanu dans *La Stampa*, Laski consigna des informations qu’il croyait certaines et des bruits qui couraient à Bucarest: “It is definitely known in Bucharest that Germany is especially active not only to prevent a split in the present Roumanian Cabinet, but also in the direction of pushing the Goga-Cuza party to some kind of an understanding with the extreme anti-Semitic Iron Guard party which is receiving huge funds from Berlin. The Iron Guard party itself is at present not ambitious to come to power. The ambition of the Iron Guard is first to make King Carol resign in favour of his son, and to assume power then. As the young Michael is soon reaching the age when he will be eligible to be proclaimed as King, the Iron Guard is patiently waiting for the moment when King Carol will either retreat voluntarily or be made to retreat and hand over the crown to his son who is said to be very much under the Iron Guard influence”.<sup>143</sup>

Le 18 janvier 1938, le même jour où les assemblées législatives furent dissoutes, Codreanu donna des instructions confidentielles aux légionnaires concernant les élections à venir. Il leur demanda d’être dignes, de ne pas faire de basse propagande, surtout pas contre les “cuzistes”, et de ne pas se mettre en valeur en dénigrant les autres partis: “Vous ne direz pas : votez-nous parce que les cuzistes, national-paysans, vaidistes sont mauvais. Mais vous direz: Votez-nous pour ce que nous avons de bien. Votez-nous pour notre foi et nos sacrifices”.<sup>144</sup>

Le 20 janvier 1938, Codreanu, qui avait songé demander audience au roi, audience que Călinescu avait suggéré à Urdăreanu de lui accorder dans le but d’obtenir une promesse d’éloignement de Iuliu Maniu,<sup>145</sup> écrivit au ministre de la Défense nationale Ion Antonescu, membre du gouvernement qui jouissait de l’estime des légionnaires et qui leur

---

<sup>142</sup> “La nuova Romania. Ebrei e minoranze in dichiarazioni di Goga, Cuza e Codreanu”, *La Stampa*, n°14 (17 janvier 1938), p. 1: “Ma poiché io sono un nazionalista, non posso né colpirlo, né combatterlo. Faccia esso quanto può. Il resto lo faremo noi”.

<sup>143</sup> Ancel, *Documents*, pp. 217-223: Neville Laski, rapport privé et confidentiel sur la situation juive en Roumanie, 17 janvier 1938.

<sup>144</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 239-240: “Nu veți zice: Să ne votați pentru că cuziștii, țărăniștii, vaidiștii, sunt răi. Ci veți zice: Votați-ne pentru ce avem noi bun. Votați-ne pentru credința și jertfele noastre”.

<sup>145</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 367 (18 janvier 1938); Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, p. 284.

servait d'intermédiaire:<sup>146</sup> "Dans le cas présent, (*une audience, PHB*) ne me convient pas maintenant. En effet, je suis en train de négocier avec M. Maniu. Il est très possible qu'on ne conclura plus de pacte de non agression. Je ne voudrais pas que ce soit interprété comme une conséquence de ma réception au palais".<sup>147</sup>

Ceci pouvait signifier soit que Maniu cédait à l'opposition au sein de son parti,<sup>148</sup> soit que Codreanu fléchissait devant Ioan Moța ou l'Allemagne. Si l'initiative partait de Codreanu et non pas de Maniu, cela voulait dire ou bien qu'il se retirait de la course électorale, ou bien qu'il voulait y participer en solitaire, ou bien encore qu'il se réservait pour d'autres alliés. À en croire Argetoianu, le 27 janvier 1938, le chef légionnaire bucovinien Neagoe Flondor (le fils de l'homme politique bucovinien Iancu Flondor (1865-1924)) lui confia que les légionnaires espéraient que le gouvernement ne remporterait pas les 40% nécessaires pour obtenir la majorité parlementaire et que eux pourraient ainsi faire pencher la balance.<sup>149</sup>

Cependant, le gouvernement cherchait la confrontation avec la Légion, sans doute autant à cause de la campagne électorale de fait qu'en raison des tendances antilégionnaires dans le gouvernement. Codreanu chercha à éviter cette confrontation, tout en émettant des critiques. Le 28 janvier 1938, il s'en prit au changement des signes distinctifs imprimés sur les bulletins de vote et à l'attribution de 5 points à la Légion, accusant le gouvernement d'être de connivence avec le parti national-libéral. Se plaignant d'une décision du gouvernement de recourir à la force pour imposer l'ordre public, il annonça aux légionnaires qu'il avait décidé que Tout pour le pays ne participerait pas aux élections communales. Fuyant ainsi les affrontements violents sur le plan local, il leur demanda en même temps de s'atteler à la campagne pour les élections parlementaires en évitant tout conflit: "Ne répondez à aucune provocation. N'attaquez le gouvernement nationaliste dans aucune

---

<sup>146</sup> Selon l'historien Armin Heinen, Carol II avait désigné le général Ion Antonescu ministre de la Défense entre autres pour qu'il puisse exercer son influence sur la Légion: Armin Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhanghelul Mihail"*. *Mișcare socială și organizație politică. O contribuție la problema fascismului internațional* [La "Légion de l'Archange Michel". Mouvement social et organisation politique. Une contribution à la question du fascisme international], (București: Humanitas, 2006), p. 334.

<sup>147</sup> Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, p. 284: "În cazul de față, acum nu-mi convine. Căci sunt în tratative cu dl Maniu. Este foarte posibil ca să nu se mai încheie pactul de neagresiune. N-aș dori ca să se interpreteze aceasta ca o urmare a audienței mele la Palat".

<sup>148</sup> Heinen, *Legiunea*, pp. 336-337.

<sup>149</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 71-72 (28 janvier 1938).

réunion. Fermez les yeux sur ses erreurs, parce qu'il n'y a aucune gloire à voir toujours les erreurs d'autrui. Mais protégez vos droits garantis par les lois, autant de fois que quelqu'un cherchera non pas par erreur, mais par force à vous en priver".<sup>150</sup>

La circulaire contenait aussi l'indication de ne pas faire de prosélytisme parmi les "cuzistes", national-paysans et "vaidistes" convaincus, mais de chercher à gagner les suffrages des 700.000 électeurs qui votaient toujours avec le gouvernement.<sup>151</sup>

La politique de Codreanu coupa l'herbe sous les pieds du gouvernement. Le 31 janvier 1938, Călinescu nota dans son journal que Tout pour le pays, en renonçant à participer aux élections administratives, se déroba à ce que, lui, il avait préparé,<sup>152</sup> avouant ainsi entre les lignes qu'il cherchait de manière machiavélique la confrontation avec la Légion pour pouvoir la réprimer et en tirer du capital électoral. Le ministre de l'Intérieur se consola que, comme Tout pour le pays ne se présenterait pas aux élections communales, les gens apprendraient à vivre sans ce parti.<sup>153</sup>

Cependant, Călinescu obtint une réaction de Codreanu: face aux abus et violences du gouvernement le chef de la Légion décida le 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938 de réunir le 8 février le sénat légionnaire pour étudier des mesures de défense.<sup>154</sup> Réagissant peut-être à cette décision, le roi et Călinescu préparèrent la répression armée de la Légion. Le 2 février, selon ses propres dires, le ministre de l'Intérieur reçut l'autorisation du roi de faire usage de gaz et d'armes contre celle-ci.<sup>155</sup> Toujours selon Călinescu, il rencontra pourtant le lendemain l'opposition d'Antonescu, qui préférerait emprisonner les légionnaires dans les casernes.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 245-248: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 28 janvier 1938: "Nu răspundeți la nici o provocare. Nu atacați guvernul naționalist în nici o întrunire. Treceți cu vederea peste greșelile lui, căci nu e nici o glorie să vezi întotdeauna greșelile altora. Dar apărați-vă drepturile garantate de legi, ori de câte ori, nu din greșeală, ci prin silnicie cineva încearcă să vi le răpească".

<sup>151</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 245-248.

<sup>152</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 371 (31 janvier 1938): "Se derobează de la ce proiectasem eu".

<sup>153</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 371 (31 janvier 1938).

<sup>154</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 248-249: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938. L'agence de presse américaine *United Press* répandit un résumé plus ou moins fidèle de la circulaire: "Fascist Leader Attacks Decree", *The San Bernardino Daily Sun* (2 février 1938), p. 1.

<sup>155</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 373 (2 février 1938).

<sup>156</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 374 (3 février 1938).

Le 3 février, Codreanu donna une série d'instructions, dont celle que les légionnaires passent de la propagande publique au bouche-à-oreille, pour que leurs électeurs ne puissent pas être identifiés et empêchés de voter. Il demanda des rapports concis sur les attaques "cuzistes" et insista une nouvelle fois qu'il ne fallait "pas encore" (*încă nu*) réagir à celles-ci.<sup>157</sup> Le même jour, il répéta l'ordre de se retenir, tout en donnant des détails sur les violences commises par les Lanciers et les gendarmes.<sup>158</sup> Le lendemain, 4 février, il se plaignit que le gouvernement fit surveiller les légionnaires (et les communistes et sectaires), mais non pas "les dilapidateurs de fonds publics, tous ceux qui se sont enrichis par fraude, tous les youpins corrompteurs de l'armée".<sup>159</sup> Le même 4 février, il donna de nouveau des détails sur une attaque de la gendarmerie contre des légionnaires et appela une fois de plus les légionnaires à rester calmes.<sup>160</sup> Le 5 février, Codreanu répondit à une circulaire par laquelle le gouvernement ordonnait à la gendarmerie de créer des camps d'internement (*lagăr de internare*) pour les personnes qui faisaient de la propagande pour les anciens communistes en dehors de leur département. Sans doute pour motif que ceci pouvait se référer aux communistes passés à la Légion, Codreanu accusa le gouvernement d'enfermer les Roumains dans des camps et de laisser les Juifs indemnes.<sup>161</sup>

La situation s'envenima lorsque, le 6 février, jour du début officiel de la campagne électorale, les gendarmes abattirent un légionnaire à Măineasca, dans le département d'Ilfov, et en blessèrent mortellement un autre à Maia, dans le même département.<sup>162</sup> Malgré ceci, suite à des entrevues avec Codreanu le 7 février, les chefs légionnaires présageaient que ce dernier demanderait au sénat légionnaire de ne pas réagir. À en croire les mêmes chefs, Codreanu était convaincu que Cuza et Goga étaient les victimes des ministres de l'Intérieur Armand Călinescu, des Affaires étrangères Istrate Micescu,

---

<sup>157</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 249-250: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, instructions, 3 février 1938.

<sup>158</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 250-251: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 3 février 1938.

<sup>159</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 251-252: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 4 février 1938.

<sup>160</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, p. 255: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 4 février 1938.

<sup>161</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 255-256: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 5 février 1938; Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, p. 285.

<sup>162</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, p. 258: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 6 février 1938; p. 259: *idem*; pp. 259-260: *idem*; Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 374 (6 février 1938); Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 101-102 (7 février 1938).

des Travaux publics et des Communications Virgil Potârcă, ainsi que du sous-secrétaire d'État Gabriel (ou Gavrilă) Marinescu. Selon la police secrète Siguranța, qui recueillit ces informations, l'attitude passive de la Légion était déterminée par la peur d'un retour au pouvoir du parti national-libéral,<sup>163</sup> parti dont les deux branches (Dinu Brătianu et Gheorghe Brătianu) s'étaient réunies<sup>164</sup> et qui menait des négociations (difficiles) avec le parti national-paysan.<sup>165</sup> Une explication complémentaire est celle développée par Argetoianu: "Le principal objectif de la Garde de fer est d'arriver jusqu'aux élections. C'est aujourd'hui la seule formation politique qui ait de l'intérêt à arriver jusqu'aux élections puisque c'est la seule qui soit en mesure d'obtenir un véritable succès aux urnes. Pour y arriver, il faut d'abord que les élections aient lieu et, ensuite, que le parti 'Tout pour le pays' ne soit pas éliminé de la course. D'où les ordres stricts que Zelea a donnés à ses légionnaires de ne provoquer aucune violence. Il est évident qu'au premier acte de violence attribuable à Tout pour le pays, le parti sera dissous et sa liste radiée des bulletins de vote. Zelea Codreanu avale tout, à condition d'éviter ce revers, un revers qui sera d'autant plus lourd à essayer que le terme du dépôt des candidatures sera plus proche. Seulement, Zelea Codreanu commence à être dépassé par son mouvement et ne peut plus tenir ses partisans en bride et en passivité. La convocation des instances statutaires se fait dans l'espoir que le capitaine (*c'est-à-dire Codreanu, PHB*) pourra y trouver un soutien pour la sage attitude qu'il a adoptée et maintenue jusqu'à présent".<sup>166</sup>

---

<sup>163</sup> *Procesele lui Corneliu Z. Codreanu. 1938. Volum II* [Les procès de Corneliu Z. Codreanu 1938. Volume II], (București: Mica Valahie, 2013), p. 19 (doc. 9): Siguranța, note, 8 février 1938.

<sup>164</sup> Heinen, *Legiunea*, p. 336.

<sup>165</sup> "Les chefs des partis d'opposition déploient une grande activité", *Le Moment*, n°888 (9 février 1938), p. 3; Heinen, *Legiunea*, p. 337.

<sup>166</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 101-102 (7 février 1938): "Principalul obiectiv al Gărzii de Fier e să ajungă la alegeri. Ea este astăzi singura formațiune politică care are interes să ajungă la alegeri, pentru că e singura în stare să înregistreze un adevărat succes în fața urnelor. Ca să ajungă în fața lor însă, trebuie mai întâi ca alegerile să aibe loc și al doilea ca Partidul Totul pentru Țară să nu fie scos din luptă. De aci ordinele stricte de a nu provoca nici o violență date de Zelea legionarilor săi. E evident că la prima violență constatată pe socoteala Totului pentru Țară, partidul va fi dizolvat, și lista lui scoasă de pe buletinele de vot. Zelea Codreanu înghite tot, numai să evite această lovitură, lovitură cu atât mai teribilă cu cât va fi dată mai aproape de termenul din urmă pentru depunerea candidaturilor. Numai că Zelea Codreanu începe să fie depășit de curentul lui și nu-și mai poate ține partizanii în frâu și în pasivitate. Convocarea forurilor sale statutare e făcută în

Dans ces circonstances, le 8 février, le ministre plénipotentiaire polonais Miroslaw Arciszewski (1892-1963) intercédâ auprès d'Antonescu pour que ce dernier use de son influence sur Codreanu afin que la Légion adopte une neutralité bienveillante envers le gouvernement Goga pendant la campagne électorale.<sup>167</sup> Avec l'accord de Goga, Antonescu s'exécuta, expliquant à Codreanu qu'il ne tolérerait pas de guerre civile.<sup>168</sup> Pour les personnes informées, ce fut donc sans surprise que le sénat légionnaire, réuni le 8 février, ne rompit pas avec le gouvernement, mais adopta une neutralité absolue. Alors que le même jour la police fit enlever, puis ne restitua plus le corps d'un des deux légionnaires exposés devant le siège de la Légion à Bucarest, ceci sans doute afin d'éviter un enterrement triomphal à l'instar de celui de Moța et de Marin,<sup>169</sup> avec qui Codreanu avait comparé les deux morts,<sup>170</sup> le sénat légionnaire décida que la Légion ne répondrait ni aux provocations, ni aux attaques du gouvernement ou du parti national-libéral<sup>171</sup> et qu'elle arrêterait sa campagne électorale. Le communiqué de Codreanu s'adressa au gouvernement en ces termes: "Nous ne voulons pas entraver le gouvernement dans son activité gouvernementale. Voilà, nous nous retirons. Vous avez route libre. Personne ne vous fera aucun mal. Gouvernez en paix. Sachez pourtant que nous n'oublierons jamais, que vous chercherez en vain notre main, que nos yeux vous regarderont comme il faut. Le mouvement légionnaire n'a rien à vous demander. Il n'a rien à vous réclamer. Aux puissances ennemies en dehors et à l'intérieur de nos frontières, qui croient que les légionnaires peuvent faire leur jeu par un début de rébellion, je leur dis qu'ils se trompent".<sup>172</sup>

---

nădejdea că căpitanul va găsi într-însele un sprijin pentru atitudinea cuminte pe care a adoptat-o și a menținut-o până acum". À propos du danger d'insubordination des légionnaires, voir aussi: Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, p. 291.

<sup>167</sup> *Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik*, pp. 198-199 (doc. 169): Wilhelm Fabricius à l'Auswärtiges Amt, 10 février 1938.

<sup>168</sup> Heinen, *Legiunea*, p. 338.

<sup>169</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, p. 258: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 6 février 1938; Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 375 (7 février 1938); Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, p. 106 (8 février 1938).

<sup>170</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 259-260: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, circulaire, 6 février 1938.

<sup>171</sup> Dans une interview parue le 7 ou le 8 janvier dans l'organe du parti national-libéral *Viitorul* [Le Futur], Dinu Brătianu avait effectivement attaqué la Légion: "M. Dinou Brătianu et la Garde de fer", *Le Moment*, n°888 (9 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>172</sup> Codreanu, *Circulări și manifeste*, pp. 264-266: Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, résolutions du sénat légionnaire, 8 février 1938: "Noi nu voim să împedicăm guvernul în opera lui de guvernare. Iată noi ne dăm în lături. Calea vă este deschisă și liberă. Nimeni

Le 9 février, Argetoianu évalua cette décision de la manière suivante: "En renonçant à la propagande bruyante - puisque celle silencieuse continuera comme par avant - les gardistes n'ont rien à perdre. Le mouvement est en place et n'a plus besoin de rien. À la campagne, les automobiles chargées de militants et les coups de feu qui les accompagnaient nuisaient plutôt à ce mouvement puisqu'ils effrayaient les gens et les retenaient de voter. La mesure qui a été prise hier soir est bien calculée. La décision des gardistes de ne plus perturber la campagne électorale renforcera en apparence le gouvernement, qui n'aura plus à craindre de meurtre jusqu'au jour des élections. Par contre, en réalité, elle affaiblit sa position puisqu'avec le retrait des gardistes de la lutte (*électorale*, PHB) disparaît aussi le prétexte qui permettait aux autorités de réprimer les gens et d'empêcher toute propagande pour motif qu'il fallait empêcher la propagande subversive. Des barrières et des baïonnettes contre les libéraux et les national-paysans? Difficiles à justifier. Ces deux partis gagneront une liberté de manœuvre qui aboutira à de nombreux votes soustraits au gouvernement [...] et l'inactivité des légionnaires, qui ne sera d'ailleurs qu'apparente, ne privera pas ces derniers d'un seul suffrage. À la fin, le perdant sera toujours le gouvernement. L'absence de la Garde de fer sur le champ de bataille encouragera pourtant peut-être le roi à aller jusqu'aux élections et ce sera d'autant plus grave que la défaite du gouvernement est dès à présent certaine".<sup>173</sup>

---

n'ò sã vã facã nici un rãu. Guvernați în pace. Sã știți însã cã nu vã uitãm nici odatã, cã mâna noastrã zadarnic veți cãuta-o, cã ochii noștri vã vor privi așa cum trebuie. Mișcarea legionarã nu are nimic de cerut dela Dvs. Nu are nimic de reclamat. Puterile (sic) vrãșmașe din afara hotarelor sau din lãuntru, care-și închipue cã legionarii le pot face jocul printr'un început de rãșmeriță, le rãspund cã se înșalã". Comme le montre la citation dans le journal *Le Moment*, le texte original n'était pas "nu vã uitãm" (nous ne vous oublions pas), mais "nu vom uita" (nous n'oublierons pas): "Le parti 'Tout pour le pays' abandonne la propagande électorale", *Le Moment*, n°889 (10 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>173</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 110-111 (9 février 1938): "Renunțând la propaganda zgomotoasă - cãci cea tãcutã și ascunsã va continua mai departe - gardiștii nu pierd nimic. Curentul e fãcut și nu mai are nevoie de nimic. Automobilele încãrcate cu militanți și împușcãturile care le însoțeau fãceau mai mult rãu acestui curent, prin sate, cãci înfricoșau oamenii și îi rețineau de la vot. Mãsura luatã asearã a fost bine chibzuitã. Hotãrãrea gardiștilor de a nu mai tulbura campania electoralã va întãri în aparență Guvernul, care nu va mai avea omoruri de temut pãnã în ziua alegerilor. În realitate însã, ea-i slãbește situația cãci cu retragerea gardiștilor din luptã dispãre și motivul care permite autoritãților sã ținã calea oamenilor și sã împiedice orice propagandã sub cuvânt cã trebuie sã împiedice pe cea subversivã. Bariere și baionete împotriva liberalilor și țãrãniștilor? Greu de justificat. Propaganda

Si l'interprétation d'Argetoianu est correcte, Codreanu venait de mettre Goga, jusqu'alors si sûr de lui,<sup>174</sup> échec et mat.

Entretemps, dans la nuit du 8 au 9 février 1938, des événements avaient eu lieu, dont Argetoianu, d'habitude si bien informé, n'avait de toute apparence pas connaissance lorsque, le 9 février, il écrivit son journal. Ces événements sont connus à travers les récits de deux témoins directs: le légionnaire Mihail R. Sturdza (1886-1980) et le ministre de l'Industrie et du Commerce Ion Gigurtu qui, national-chrétien, était en même temps un sympathisant légionnaire.<sup>175</sup>

Selon les mémoires de Sturdza, après avoir rendu (le 7 février) les derniers honneurs aux deux légionnaires dont les corps étaient exposés au siège de la Légion à Bucarest, il se rendit à la présidence du Conseil et se fraya un chemin jusque dans le cabinet de Goga, pour lui demander s'il savait ce qui se passait sous son régime. Agité, Goga demanda s'il croyait que c'était sa faute, puis, s'il pouvait arranger une entrevue entre lui et Codreanu, afin que les deux mouvements nationalistes cessent de se combattre et de se détruire au profit de "l'adversaire commun" (*adversarul comun*). Selon ses propres dires, Sturdza s'enquit s'il pouvait communiquer à Codreanu que Goga souhaitait au plus vite le voir, ce que le président du Conseil confirma. Informé, Codreanu se déclara à son tour d'accord et ordonna à Sturdza d'organiser l'entrevue. Sturdza retourna alors à la présidence du Conseil pour proposer à Goga que la rencontre ait lieu à Tătărani, à 60 km de Bucarest, pour qu'elle reste secrète. Goga requit du temps de réflexion et suggéra le lendemain, 8 février, à Sturdza que l'entrevue eût lieu le soir même à 5 heures dans la maison de Gigurtu, laissant Sturdza avec l'impression amère qu'il se méfiait et craignait pour sa sécurité. Sturdza décrivait la suite en ces termes: "À 5 heures moins un quart, nous partons avec le capitaine du

---

acestor două partide va câștiga o libertate de mișcări care se va traduce prin multe voturi luate Guvernului [...] iar inactivitatea legionarilor, care dealtminteri va fi numai aparentă, nu va păgubi pe aceștia de nici un vot. În cele din urmă, cel care va pierde va fi tot Guvernul. Lipsa Gărzii de Fier de pe câmpul de luptă, în campania electorală va încuraja însă, poate pe Rege să meargă până la alegeri, și asta va fi, cu atât mai rău cu cât înfrângerea Guvernului e acum și mai sigură".

<sup>174</sup> Alexander L. Easterman, "500000 Jews Must Go", *Daily Herald*, n°6831 (6 janvier 1938), p. 1; "Minister Goga over de verhouding Roemenië-Nederland. 'Uw hulp aanvaarden wij gaarne'. Een speciaal interview". [Le ministre Goga à propos des relations entre la Roumanie et les Pays-Bas. "Nous recevons votre aide avec grand plaisir". Une interview spéciale], *De Telegraaf* (Amsterdam), n°17032 (16 janvier 1938), pp. 1-2.

<sup>175</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 366 (10 janvier 1938); Clark, *Sfîntă Tinerețe Legionară*, p. 181.

siège de la Légion à la maison de Gigurtu, à l'entrée de laquelle nous avons été reçus par deux agents de police. Un serviteur, peut-être lui aussi au service de Gavrilă Marinescu, nous a menés jusque dans la chambre où nous attendaient Goga et Gigurtu. Le capitaine et Goga se sont serré la main sans mot dire et sont passés seuls dans une pièce voisine. Gigurtu et moi avons attendu plus de deux heures, avalant des tasses de café et fumant cigarette sur cigarette. Gigurtu semblait sincèrement partager la joie et l'espoir que me causait la réconciliation attendue entre les deux dirigeants nationalistes. Quand, finalement, les portes se sont rouvertes, je n'ai eu besoin d'aucune explication : la réconciliation et l'entente se lisaient sur les visages de Codreanu et de Goga (et) dans la longue poignée de main qu'ils se sont donnée au moment du départ. En route vers le siège, brisant le silence et répondant à la question dont je ne voulais pas l'importuner, le capitaine m'a dit : 'Oui, bien sûr, nous sommes tombés d'accord'. L'entente s'était faite d'autant plus aisément que le capitaine ne voulait pas disposer du parti le plus puissant dans le futur parlement. C'était une situation qu'il évitait pour le moment et il était prêt à aider Goga à gagner (*la majorité?*, PHB) pour son gouvernement".<sup>176</sup>

Gigurtu se rappela les événements de la manière suivante : "Pour le rapprochement (*avec les légionnaires*, PHB), j'ai été chargé par Octavian Goga de prendre contact avec Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. Je suis entré en liaison avec Predeal et j'ai communiqué que Goga désirait se rapprocher de lui, en soulignant que les vues du gouvernement étaient les mêmes que les siennes en ce qui concernait l'Allemagne ... Ultérieurement ...

---

<sup>176</sup> Mihail R. Sturdza, *România și sfârșitul Europei. Amintiri din țara pierdută* [La Roumanie et la fin de l'Europe. Souvenirs d'un pays perdu], (Alba Iulia et Paris: Fronde, 1994), pp. 126-127: "La cinci fără un sfert plecăm cu Căpitanul de la sediul Legiunii spre casa lui Gigurtu, la poarta căruia am fost primiți de doi agenți de poliție. Un fecior, poate și el în serviciul lui Gavrilă Marinescu, ne-a condus până la camera unde ne așteptau Goga și cu Gigurtu. Căpitanul și Goga și-au strâns mâinile fără un cuvânt și au trecut pe urmă singuri într-o odaie vecină. Cu Gigurtu am așteptat mai bine de două ceasuri, înghițind cești de cafea și fumând țigări una după alta. Gigurtu părea a împărți sincer cu mine bucuria și nădejdea ce mi le pricinuia așteptata reîmpăcare între cei doi șefi naționaliști. Când, în sfârșit, ușile s-au deschis, nu am avut nevoie de nici o explicație ; împăcarea și înțelegerea le-am citit pe obrazul lui Codreanu și pe cel al lui Goga, în lunga strângere de mână ce și-au dat-o în momentul despărțirii. În drum spre sediu, întrerupând tăcerea și răspunzând întrebării cu care nu vroiam să-l tulbur, Căpitanul mi-a spus : 'Da, desigur, ne-am înțeles'. Înțelegerea se făcuse cu atât mai ușor cu cât Căpitanul nu vroia să fie partidul cel mai puternic în viitorul Parlament. Era o situație de care, pentru moment, se ferea și era gata să ajute pe Goga ca s-o câștige el pentru guvernul său".

Octavian Goga m'a annoncé que, pour des motifs de sécurité, il aurait l'entrevue avec Corneliu Zelea Codreanu dans ma résidence à Bucarest, rue Mussolini, n°36-38. Le soir du jour retenu, C. Z. Codreanu, accompagné du légionnaire Sturza (sic!), est venu chez moi et tout de suite après Octavian Goga est arrivé lui aussi et s'est entretenu plus d'une heure avec C. Z. Codreanu, seul à seul, pendant que moi et Sturza sommes restés dans une autre chambre. Lorsqu'il a pris congé, Octavian Goga m'a informé qu'il était tombé d'accord avec C. Z. Codreanu que les légionnaires ne participeraient plus aux élections, mais soutiendraient les candidats du parti national-chrétien".<sup>177</sup>

Ces deux récits posent un certain nombre de problèmes. Pour commencer, ils ne se corroborent pas complètement. Ceci résulte probablement du fait que chacun des narrateurs s'est attribué le rôle central d'intermédiaire entre Codreanu et Goga. Ce qui est important, c'est que, dans les deux récits, l'initiative part de Goga, même si, dans le récit de Sturdza, le légionnaire a déclenché l'action du président du Conseil. Dans les deux récits, l'action se déroule dans la maison bucarestoise de Gigurtu. La présence de deux agents de police dans les mémoires de Sturdza est suspecte, dans la mesure où, de ses propres dires, la rencontre devait rester secrète. La référence à Gavrilă Marinescu est d'autant plus invraisemblable qu'elle renvoie directement à l'entourage du roi. En ce qui concerne le déroulement et la conclusion des négociations entre Codreanu et Goga, les deux récits concordent grosso modo.

Sturdza évoque comme motivation de Goga le désir d'en finir avec la guerre fratricide qui ne profitait qu'à des tiers. Ceci suggère que le président du Conseil avait compris qu'il ne pouvait gagner les élections sans la Légion. Il se peut aussi qu'il ait pressenti que le roi voulait changer de régime politique<sup>178</sup> et que, par conséquent, les

---

<sup>177</sup> Cité d'après: Alexandru Gh. Savu, *Dictatura regală 1938-1940* [La dictature royale 1938-1940], (București: Editura politică, 1970), pp. 141-142: "Pentru a încerca această apropiere am fost însărcinat eu de Octavian Goga să iau legătură cu Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. Cu acesta am luat legătură la Predeal și i-am comunicat că Goga ar dori să facă o apropiere cu el, făcându-i cunoscut că vederile guvernului sînt aceleași cu ale lui de o apropiere de Germania... Ulterior... Octavian Goga mi-a făcut cunoscut că din motive de siguranță va avea o întrevedere cu Corneliu Zelea Codreanu în locuința mea din București, str. Mussolini, nr. 36-38. În seara zilei stabilite a sosit la mine acasă C. Z. Codreanu însoțit de legionarul Sturza (sic!) și imediat după aceștia a venit și Octavian Goga, care s-a întreținut timp de mai bine de o oră cu C. Z. Codreanu, singuri, în care timp eu cu Sturza am stat în altă cameră. La despărțire Octavian Goga mi-a comunicat că a căzut de acord cu C. Z. Codreanu ca legionarii să nu participe în alegeri și să susțină pe candidații partidului național-creștin".

<sup>178</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 376 (7 février 1938).

national-chrétiens devaient chercher des alliés pour rester au pouvoir. La décision de Codreanu par contre est difficile à comprendre. D'une part, le chef de la Légion avait le même 8 février exclu toute collaboration avec le gouvernement ("vous chercherez en vain notre main") et, de l'autre, il s'était trouvé dans une position de force: c'était le président du Conseil qui en avait appelé au chef de la Légion et non pas l'inverse. L'explication fournie par Sturdza paraît plutôt irrationnelle, à moins que Laski n'eût raison que les légionnaires attendaient la majorité de l'héritier du trône Mihai, c'est-à-dire le 25 octobre 1939. En tout cas, Codreanu avait visiblement une foi profonde en Goga, malgré les violences des jours précédents.

Si l'affirmation de Gigurtu que, pour ouvrir les discussions, il avait rassuré Codreanu que le gouvernement partageait ses vues sur l'Allemagne, correspond à la réalité, ceci était d'une gravité extrême. En effet, lors de son interview pour *Daily Herald*, Codreanu n'avait pas laissé l'ombre d'un doute sur la fermeté de ses intentions à l'égard de l'Axe et des alliances traditionnelles de la Roumanie (sans pourtant mentionner la Grande-Bretagne): "I maintain my recent declaration that when I come to power I shall make an alliance within 48 hours with Germany and Italy. That is my policy. I do not believe in the League; I do not believe in an alliance with France; I do not believe in a Little Entente; I do not believe in the Balkan Entente".<sup>179</sup>

### Le coup d'État de Carol II

Le roi, qui s'était toujours posé en défenseur des alliances traditionnelles de la Roumanie, avait cependant déjà abandonné Goga. En public, le monarque s'était montré confiant en janvier 1938 que son gouvernement gagnerait les élections.<sup>180</sup> Lors d'une entrevue le 25 janvier, Carol et Călinescu avaient même élaboré un plan d'action dans ce but.<sup>181</sup> Pourtant, rien ne permet d'affirmer que le roi était sincère. Son pari de décembre 1937 que le gouvernement Goga ne durerait longtemps et qu'il pourrait ensuite détrôner les partis<sup>182</sup> paraît plutôt prouver le contraire. Călinescu par contre allait non seulement afficher encore le 1<sup>er</sup> février la

---

<sup>179</sup> Alexander L. Easterman, "Rumania's 'Film Star' Hitler Reveals His Plans", *Daily Herald*, n°6832 (7 janvier 1938), p. 2.

<sup>180</sup> Alfred Rosenberg, journal, 29 janvier 1938:

<https://collections.ushmm.org/view/2001.62.14?page=195> (consulté le 13 juillet 2018).

<sup>181</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 368-370 (25 janvier 1938).

<sup>182</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 234 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937). Voir "La nomination du cabinet Goga".

certitude d'une victoire électorale du gouvernement,<sup>183</sup> mais la planifier encore le 7 février.<sup>184</sup> Pourtant, en parallèle, le roi et le ministre de l'Intérieur projetaient dès le 31 janvier un changement de régime, projet qui ne prenait nullement en compte la position de force dont aurait joui le parti national-chrétien en cas de victoire électorale, ce qui suggère que le changement de régime était prévu pour le cas d'une défaite du gouvernement aux élections ou de l'annulation de celles-ci.

Le roi et son ministre de l'Intérieur partageaient de la conviction que les partis étaient tous en crise et ramollis, à l'exception de la Légion, qu'ils rejetaient pourtant comme alternative: "La seule force populaire et dynamique est la Garde de fer. Mais celle-ci a un caractère révolutionnaire. Son triomphe serait à coup sûr une catastrophe pour l'État".<sup>185</sup>

Carol et Călinescu continuaient par relever tous les maux qui, selon eux, émanaient des partis, pour conclure que la solution qui s'imposait était un changement de constitution. De celle-ci, ils ne voulaient garder que "les droits individuels et le régime parlementaire", parce que ces éléments leur semblaient être la saine essence de la constitution et que, en les conservant, "personne ne protester(ait)".<sup>186</sup> Ils esquissaient une série de changements: 1) un gouvernement restreint, qui répondrait au roi et non pas au parlement; 2) de grandes préfectures à larges moyens, "la décongestion" (*decongestionarea*) (sans doute des administrations centrales), des conseils communaux élus et des maires nommés;<sup>187</sup> 3) un parlement limité à 250 membres, un scrutin uninominal (une idée légionnaire), un sénat corporatiste et nommé. Carol et Călinescu étaient d'accord qu'il fallait suspendre les partis, de sorte que la couronne soit "le seul élément qui saille et qui s'impose".<sup>188</sup> Ils estimaient qu'il n'y aurait pas de réaction tant qu'il existerait une perspective de normalisation, même si on donnait l'impression d'une

---

<sup>183</sup> The National Archives, FO 371/22453 (R 901), p. 163: Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, télégramme n°27, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1938.

<sup>184</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 375 (7 février 1938).

<sup>185</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 370-373 (31 janvier 1938): "Singura forță populară și dinamică este Garda de Fier. Dar aceasta are un caracter revoluționar. Triumful ei ar fi sigur o catastrofă pentru stat".

<sup>186</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 370-373 (31 janvier 1938): "Dacă se păstrează drepturile individuale și regimul parlamentar, nu va protesta nimeni".

<sup>187</sup> C'étaient là les principes de la loi administrative publiée le 14 août 1938: *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°187 (14 août 1938), pp. 3772-3832.

<sup>188</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 370-373 (31 janvier 1938): "singurul element care răsare și se impune".

dictature personnelle.<sup>189</sup> C'est pour cela que les deux hommes d'État convinrent qu'il fallait "aussitôt (*élaborer*, PHB) une nouvelle constitution bien esquissée, en secret. Mise à point. Puis (*nommer*, PHB) un gouvernement dirigé par une personnalité prestigieuse. Plébisciter la constitution et (*organiser*, PHB) des élections selon de nouveaux principes, en toute vitesse".<sup>190</sup>

Lorsque, suite aux événements dans le département d'Ilfov, Călinescu se rendit le 6 février chez l'homme de confiance du roi Urdăreanu, celui-ci lui glissa qu'il le tiendrait au courant, quoi qu'il arrivât. Călinescu comprit que Carol était en train de tramer un changement de régime.<sup>191</sup> Lors d'une entrevue le lendemain, 7 février, le roi demanda à Călinescu s'il fallait tenir les élections. Carol semblait inquiet que la cour de cassation n'invalide le décret de dissolution des assemblées législatives. Călinescu conseilla d'attendre le 25 février pour se prononcer sur l'organisation des élections. Les deux s'entretenaient alors sur la manière dont il fallait réaliser le changement de constitution. Selon le compte rendu de Călinescu: "Il me parle de la nécessité de changer de constitution et me demande quelle méthode j'emploierais. Il me dit qu'il a pensé à un gouvernement dirigé par des hommes de paille qui auraient le rang de ministres d'État, tandis que de jeunes gens feraient le vrai travail. Je réponds que, dans la situation actuelle et dans la mesure où les partis sont compromis, on ne pourrait éviter la Garde de fer. Au contraire, moi je recommande une formule sans les partis. La constitution [...] l'administration assurée par les militaires et ensuite un référendum. Je demande au roi s'il a une formule. Il me dit que non et que rien ne sera possible avant 10 jours".<sup>192</sup>

---

<sup>189</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 370-373 (31 janvier 1938): Ceci paraît être l'interprétation la plus plausible de la phrase tordue: "Reacțiunea nu ar fi dacă nu s-ar întrevede imediat o normalizare în viitor și dacă s-ar da impresia unei dictaturi personale".

<sup>190</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 370-373 (31 janvier 1938): "De aceea, imediat. Ocrotirea (*croirea?* PHB) unei noi constituții. Bine schițată, în taină. Pusă la punct. Apoi, un guvern sub o personalitate de prestigiu. Plebiscitarea constituției și alegeri pe baze noi, repede".

<sup>191</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 374 (6 février 1938).

<sup>192</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, pp. 374-375 (7 février 1938): "Îmi vorbește de nevoia de a schimba constituția și mă întreabă cum văd ca metodă. Îmi spune că s-a gândit odată la un guvern girat de oameni de suprafață ca miniștri de stat și având oameni tineri care să lucreze efectiv. Răspund că pe planul actual și al partidelor compromise nu se va putea împiedica Garda de Fier. Dimpotrivă, recomand o formulă în afară de partide. Constituție [...] administrația preluată de militari și apoi referendum. Întreb pe rege dacă are formula. Îmi spune nu și nu ar fi posibil înainte de 10 zile".

Le 7 février, Călinescu élaborait une série de propositions pour le changement du régime, propositions qui portaient surtout sur l'administration territoriale. Le même jour, Urdăreanu lui dévoila le plan d'action du roi, plan qui prévoyait 1) la nomination d'un gouvernement présidé par le patriarche de l'Église orthodoxe roumaine<sup>193</sup> et composé de tous les anciens présidents du Conseil, de Micescu, d'Antonescu, de Călinescu, ainsi que d'autres national-paysans et national-libéraux (Mihail Ghelmegeanu, Virgil Potârca, Ion Incuț et Mircea Canciov); 2) la création d'un conseil de la couronne; 3) une proclamation au pays; 4) la suspension des partis.

Le 8 février, à en croire Argetoianu, Călinescu donna sa démission pour motif que le gouvernement et le parti national-chrétien l'empêchaient de faire son travail et qu'il ne pouvait plus répondre des élections, mais suspendit cette démission sur les insistances d'Urdăreanu. Toujours selon Argetoianu, Călinescu s'était plaint des violences, y inclus celles antisémites, des national-chrétiens, de la désobéissance des gendarmes, dont la moitié seraient légionnaires, et même de Gavrilă Marinescu. Il avait déclaré qu'il devait trop se dédier à maintenir l'ordre pour pouvoir "se consacrer" (*a se consacra*) aux élections.<sup>194</sup> Comme il est peu probable que le ministre de l'Intérieur voulait faire de la sorte pression sur le roi, il faut conclure qu'il voulait se dissocier sur le plan interne et externe<sup>195</sup> du gouvernement avant les événements à venir et fournir les arguments nécessaires au souverain pour le changement de régime.

Finalement, l'après-midi du 9 février, de 3h15 à 6h30, Carol II, Armand Călinescu et l'ancien président national-libéral du Conseil Gheorghe Tătărescu préparaient le coup d'État<sup>196</sup> du lendemain, en commençant par établir la liste des ministres. Des colonels devaient être nommés préfets des départements, le roi devait adresser une proclamation

---

<sup>193</sup> Il est donc clair que le roi ne comptait pas offrir à Goga la présidence du futur gouvernement, contrairement à ce que présuma la diplomatie allemande: *Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik*, pp. 210-213 (doc. 179): Auswärtiges Amt, circulaire, 9 mars 1938.

<sup>194</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 107-108 (8 février 1938).

<sup>195</sup> En effet, les diplomates eurent eux aussi vent de cette démission: Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 270-272 (doc. 114): Adrien Thierry à Yvon Delbos, 14 février 1938.

<sup>196</sup> C'est le terme (*lovitură de stat*) qu'utilisa Călinescu le même jour dans son journal. Selon Argetoianu, Carol II admit dès le 10 février qu'il s'était agi d'un coup d'État. En tout cas, le roi allait employer le terme deux ans et demi plus tard dans son journal: Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 377 (9 janvier 1938); Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, p. 126 (12 février 1938); Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 184 (8 juin 1940).

au pays, l'état de siège devait être décrété et les partis dissous.<sup>197</sup> Dans son journal, Călinescu ne précisa pas si le coup d'État résultait de l'entente entre Goga et Codreanu. Nombre d'auteurs l'ont admis, probablement parce que c'était la version officielle du roi.<sup>198</sup> Comme le changement de régime fut planifié avant le 8 février, cette entente n'était clairement pas la cause directe du coup d'État du roi.<sup>199</sup> Par contre, elle contribua probablement à précipiter celui-ci, tout comme d'autres facteurs, dont les interventions des ministres plénipotentiaires français et britannique,<sup>200</sup> le recours contre le décret de dissolution des assemblées législatives devant la cour de cassation, l'affaire Butenko<sup>201</sup> et la nomination, le 4 février 1938, d'un ministre des Affaires étrangères allemand plus agressif dans la personne de Joachim von Ribbentrop (1893-1946).<sup>202</sup>

Le matin du 10 février 1938, le 45<sup>e</sup> jour du cabinet Goga,<sup>203</sup> rien n'indiquait l'imminence d'un coup d'État. À Cluj, le comité administratif du parti national hongrois, formation politique de la minorité hongroise, se réunit à 10 heures pour délibérer du pacte électoral proposé par le gouvernement.<sup>204</sup> Probablement le même matin, à Bucarest, le conseil

<sup>197</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 377 (9 janvier 1938).

<sup>198</sup> *Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik*, pp. 210-213 (doc. 179): Auswärtiges Amt, circulaire, 9 mars 1938.

<sup>199</sup> Haynes, "Reluctant Allies?", p. 124.

<sup>200</sup> Le ministre plénipotentiaire français attribua la chute du gouvernement Goga en premier lieu à son intervention et à celle de son homologue britannique auprès du président du Conseil. La volonté de Carol II de garder Micescu dans son nouveau gouvernement fait pourtant planer un doute sur cette interprétation: Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 270-272 (doc. 114): Adrien Thierry à Yvon Delbos, 14 février 1938.

<sup>201</sup> Fedor Butenko, le chargé d'affaires de la légation soviétique à Bucarest, fit le 6 février 1938 défection - comme il s'avérerait après la chute du gouvernement Goga, à l'Italie fasciste - offrant ainsi un prétexte à l'Union soviétique pour faire pression sur la Roumanie, pression qu'elle maintiendrait jusqu'en 1940: Hugh Ragsdale, "The Butenko Affair. Documents from Soviet-Romanian Relations in the Time of the Purges, Anschluss, and Munich", in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, n°4 (octobre 2001); Riccardo Maffei, "Fedor Butenko. One Man Against Bolshevism", in *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, n°3 (2010); Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 132 (29 mars 1940) ; p. 134 (2 avril 1940).

<sup>202</sup> Shapiro, "Prelude", p. 86.

<sup>203</sup> La population saxonne de Transylvanie se moqua de la courte durée du gouvernement (Cuza-)Goga en l'appelant "Ku' se, gou' se" [ils viennent, ils partent]. Nous remercions Paul Philippi pour l'information et Michael Astner pour la version écrite dans le dialecte d'Amnaș (all. Hamlesch).

<sup>204</sup> Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Cluj, Fond *Partidul Maghiar din România* (966), dossier 1, ff. 315-319: procès-verbal de la séance du comité administratif du parti national hongrois, 10 février 1938. La *Volksgemeinschaft* [Communauté du peuple], la formation politique la plus importante de la minorité allemande de

des ministres tint séance et approuva un projet de décret qui permit aux membres des commissions intérimaires confirmées des chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie de participer aux élections du sénat.<sup>205</sup> La préparation et la manipulation des élections suivaient donc leur cours. Toujours le matin du 10 février, Carol II reçut Goga en audience. Au cours de celle-ci, le roi demanda au président du Conseil de reporter les élections. Tombé du ciel, Goga donna sa démission et refusa l'offre du roi de participer à un gouvernement d'union nationale. Toute l'après-midi, Carol II reçut alors les anciens présidents du Conseil, à part Barbu Știrbei (1872-1946) et Goga. En parallèle, Goga réunit le conseil des ministres, dont, le soir, il présenta la démission au roi, renouvelant en même temps son refus de participer au nouveau gouvernement.<sup>206</sup> Toujours le même après-midi, Urdăreanu prit contact avec les dirigeants des partis (à part Codreanu, Goga et les dirigeants des partis minoritaires).<sup>207</sup> Le seul dirigeant de parti dont le témoignage ait pu être repéré est Argetoianu, dont la version des faits est la suivante:

Urdăreanu l'envoya chercher alors qu'il se trouvait au cinéma afin de le mettre au courant du projet du roi et pour lui proposer un portefeuille dans le gouvernement qui devait succéder à celui, transitoire, du patriarche. Comme Argetoianu suggéra celui de ministre des Affaires étrangères, il dut apprendre que ce poste était réservé à Micescu, ce contre quoi il protesta énergiquement. Après avoir quitté

---

Roumanie, avait déjà ratifié un pacte électoral le 3 février: "Wahlvereinbarung der deutschen Volksgemeinschaft mit der Regierung Goga. Anerkennung unseres Deutschtums als geschlossene Volkspersönlichkeit. Die deutsche Volksgemeinschaft seine alleinberechtigte Vertretung", *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Tageblatt*, n°19435 (5 février 1938), p. 1; *idem*, *Deutsche Zeitung* (Cluj) (11 février 1938), p. 1.

<sup>205</sup> Serviciul Arhive naționale istorice centrale, Fond PCM. *Jurnale* (784), dossier 455/1938, f. 16: journal du conseil des ministres n°257 du 10 février 1938; cf. note 97. La presse ne fait état que d'une réunion plénière du conseil des ministres l'après-midi du 10 février. Pourtant, il serait logique que le conseil des ministres ait décidé la manipulation des élections avant que le roi ait demandé à Goga de les reporter: "La crise de gouvernement déclarée hier après-midi a été solutionnée au cours de la nuit. Le nouveau gouvernement, présidé par S. S. le Patriarche Miron Cristea, a prêté serment à 1h. du matin", *Le Moment*, n°891 (12 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>206</sup> Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 377 (10 février 1938); Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 116-119 (11 février 1938); p. 126 (12 février 1938); p. 137 (18 février 1938); *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°33 bis (10 février 1938), p. 797; n°34 (11 février 1938), p. 802; "La crise de gouvernement déclarée hier après-midi a été solutionnée au cours de la nuit. Le nouveau gouvernement, présidé par S. S. le Patriarche Miron Cristea, a prêté serment à 1h. du matin", *Le Moment*, n°891 (12 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>207</sup> Savu, *Dictatura regală*, p. 151.

Argetoianu, Urdăreanu l'appela à 9 heures du soir par téléphone pour lui demander s'il acceptait le ministère de l'Industrie, ce qu'Argetoianu affirme avoir fait mi-figue, mi-raisin. Urdăreanu lui demanda donc de venir deux heures et demie plus tard, à 11h30, au palais pour prêter serment. Argetoianu arriva le premier, devançant de cinq minutes le patriarche, qui, à sa venue, ignorait encore qui allait faire partie de son cabinet. Pendant ce temps, le roi consultait encore les dirigeants des partis,<sup>208</sup> les futurs ministres n'étant convoqués qu'au fur et à mesure qu'ils étaient approuvés, ce qui prit du temps avec les prétentions de chacun, de sorte que les membres du futur gouvernement n'étaient réunis qu'après minuit. Sous la pression de Vaida-Voevod et du national-paysan Gheorghe Mironescu (1874-1949), le roi renonça finalement à Micescu. Du gouvernement Goga, il ne garda que les ministres Călinescu et Antonescu, ainsi que le sous-secrétaire d'État Paul Teodorescu. Après la prestation de serment, le roi lut sa proclamation au peuple roumain, demandant aux ministres d'en commenter la forme, mais non pas le fond. Par la suite, le nouveau conseil des ministres approuva l'arrêt de toute activité politique et l'ajournement *sine die* des élections. L'élaboration d'un manifeste du gouvernement fut finalement abandonnée au patriarche et reportée au lendemain. Le conseil des ministres adopta encore la généralisation de l'état de siège, la nomination de militaires comme préfets de département, ainsi que la dissolution des conseils communaux et, toujours à en croire Argetoianu, accepta à contrecœur que les ministres fassent une déclaration de patrimoine. Le conseil des ministres prit fin à 3h30 du matin.<sup>209</sup>

Le roi avait ainsi gagné son pari et raflé la mise.<sup>210</sup> Avec le cabinet Goga, il avait nommé un gouvernement qui avait déstabilisé le pays et qui s'était décrédibilisé, ce qui lui avait permis de se poser en sauveur de la Roumanie et d'imposer un régime personnel avec l'approbation des

---

<sup>208</sup> Selon la presse, à l'arrivée d'Argetoianu, le roi avait auprès de lui Vaida-Voevod et Mironescu: "La crise de gouvernement déclarée hier après-midi a été solutionnée au cours de la nuit. Le nouveau gouvernement, présidé par S. S. le Patriarche Miron Cristea, a prêté serment à 1h. du matin", *Le Moment*, n°891 (12 février 1938), p. 3.

<sup>209</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 116-119 (11 février 1938); cf. Călinescu, *Însemnări politice*, p. 377 (10 février 1938); *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°33 bis (10 février 1938), p. 797 (démission de Goga, nomination de Miron Cristea); pp. 797-798 (nomination des ministres); n°34 (11 février 1938), p. 802 (réception des anciens présidents du Conseil); p. 802 (généralisation de l'état de siège); n°35 (12 février 1938), p. 834 (annulation des élections).

<sup>210</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 234 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937).

puissances démocratiques.<sup>211</sup> Il est possible que, comme le suggère Argetoianu, il avait même pris en compte “une victoire réelle ou au moins morale” de la Légion aux élections de mars pour arriver à sa fin.<sup>212</sup> La clef de son dessein avait été l’antisémitisme. Celui-ci se trouvait au cœur de la politique catastrophique du gouvernement Goga, y inclus de la bataille diplomatique à la Société des Nations, bataille que le roi avait, du moins en partie, prévu.<sup>213</sup> Il était aussi au centre du discours de la Légion qui servait d’épouvantail pour les puissances démocratiques et qui devint vraiment le rival le plus dangereux du gouvernement Goga. Il est possible que le roi n’ait pas anticipé la généralisation de l’antisémitisme lorsque, en évoquant le projet national-chrétien de révision de la citoyenneté roumaine, il l’avait appelé “peut-être un délestage utile en ce moment”.<sup>214</sup> Pourtant, par calcul politique, il s’en était fait le coresponsable. En effet, jusqu’à son coup d’État, le roi n’avait, par opportunisme, point refréné l’antisémitisme du gouvernement, à l’exception de l’épisode de l’interdiction, pour les Juifs, d’avoir des servantes chrétiennes. Au contraire, en argumentant face à Hoare qu’il fallait lutter contre la Légion et que le seul moyen de ce faire était d’adopter des éléments du programme de celle-ci, il avait insinué qu’il fallait laisser libre cours à cet antisémitisme.<sup>215</sup> En conséquence, après son coup d’État, il se trouvait face à un antisémitisme effréné, qu’il était obligé de gérer. À cet égard, la réflexion que le ministre plénipotentiaire français fit le 14 février 1938 dans un rapport rétrospectif était de mauvais augure pour le nouveau régime et, vu la proclamation de l’État national légionnaire le 14 septembre 1940,<sup>216</sup> porte à réflexion: “L’impression générale confirmait en effet que, loin d’enrayer les progrès de la Garde de Fer comme ils se l’étaient proposé, les nationaux-chrétiens (sic!) avaient provoqué une recrudescence antisémite dont l’effet ne pouvait être que de porter le Capitaine Codreanu au pouvoir à plus ou moins longue échéance”.<sup>217</sup>

---

<sup>211</sup> Schmitt, *Corneliu Zelea Codreanu*, p. 282.

<sup>212</sup> Argetoianu, *1 ianuarie - 30 iunie 1938*, pp. 104-105 (8 février 1938): “o victorie reală sau cel puțin una morală”.

<sup>213</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 235 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937).

<sup>214</sup> Carol II, *Între datorie și pasiune*, p. 235 (2 novembre 1937 - 31 décembre 1937): poate, “o aruncare de lest folositoare în acest moment”.

<sup>215</sup> Vago, *The Shadow*, p. 268 (doc. 69): Reginald Hoare au Foreign Office, 19 janvier 1938.

<sup>216</sup> *Monitorul Oficial* [Moniteur officiel], n°214 bis (14 septembre 1940), p. 5414.

<sup>217</sup> Iancu, *Les Juifs de Roumanie*, pp. 270-272 (doc. 114): Adrien Thierry à Yvon Delbos, 14 février 1938.

# The Arrest of the Basilians Atanasie Maxim and Gheorghe Marina in the Attempt to Incriminate the Greek-Catholic Bishop Alexandru Rusu

**Ionuț Vida-Simiti**

*Faculty of Medicine, Iuliu Hațieganu University*

*Cluj-Napoca, Romania.*

E-mail: ionut\_jus@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** *The arrest of the Basilians Atanasie Maxim and Gheorghe Marina in the attempt to incriminate the greek-catholic Bishop Alexandru Rusu.* The present study analyses the beginning of the Communist regime's offensive against the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in competition with other Communist states in applying a Soviet pattern of mock trials. For this purpose, the object of the repression authorities at the beginning of 1948 was the staging of a high treason trial to the Metropolitan Bishop unrecognised by the Communist regime of the Romanian Church United with Rome, Greek-Catholic, the Bishop of Maramureș Alexandru Rusu. In order to create a criminal case, the Abbot of the Greek-Catholic Monastery from Bixad, Father Gheorghe Marina, was initially arrested and later was the Provincial Superior of the Order of St. Basil the Great, Atanasie Maxim. The legal indictment has changed many times, because neither with the gross violation of the criminal procedure sufficient rules of evidence could not be provided.

**Keywords:** Basilian monks, the Order of St. Basil the Great, Bixad Monastery, Gheorghe Marina, Atanasie Maxim, Alexandru Rusu, The Greek-Catholic Church.

**Rezumat:** *Arestarea bazilienilor Atanasie Maxim și Gheorghe Marina în încercarea de a-l incrimina pe episcopul greco-catolic Alexandru Rusu.* Prezentul studiu analizează începutul ofensivei regimului comunist împotriva Bisericii Greco-Catolice din România în concurență cu alte state comuniste în aplicarea unui tipar sovietic de procese spectacol. În acest sens, obiectul organelor de represiune la începutul anului 1948 a fost înscenarea unui proces de înaltă trădare Mitropolitul nerecunoscut de regimul comunist al Bisericii Române Unite cu Roma, Greco-Catolică, Episcopul de Maramureș Alexandru Rusu. În scopul creării unui dosar penal a fost arestat inițial Starețul Mănăstirii Greco-Catolice Bixad, Părintele Gheorghe Marina, și ,ulterior, Superiorul Provincial al Ordinului Sf. Vasile cel Mare, Atanasie Maxim. Încadrarea juridică s-a schimbat de nenumărate ori deoarece nici cu încălcarea grosolană a procedurii penale nu s-a putut constitui un probatoriu suficient.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** călugări bazilieni, Ordinul Sf. Vasile cel Mare, Mănăstirea Bixad, Gheorghe Marina, Atanasie Maxim, Alexandru Rusu, Biserica Greco-Catolică

The Order of St. Basil the Great is a Greek-Catholic monastic order whose rules are inspired by the work and spirituality of St. Basil the Great founded by the Metropolitan Rutzky and St. Jozafat at General Chapter in 1617; particularly, within the Romanian Church United with Rome, the Basilian Order was founded through the *Rationi Congruit* Bull of 1721. The impact of the Basilians' activity on Romanian society is impossible to estimate because starting with the hieromonks from Blaj, Leontie Mosconas, Gherontie Cotorea, Silvestru Caliani, Atanasie Rednic, also starts the revitalisation of the religious life in the right faith, until then atrophied in superstition, folklore and folk practices. The actual manifestation of religious living led to the cultural emancipation of Romanians through the Blaj Schools founded by the Basilian Petru Pavel Aron, Greek-Catholic Bishop of Blaj, whose result is the Transylvanian School of the Basilian clergy Samuel Micu-Klein, Gheorghe Şincai, Petru Maior. Also, the political-national action starts with the Basilian Inochetie Micu-Klein, Greek-Catholic Bishop of Blaj, author of the *Supplex Libellus* in 1743 and continues with the Basilian Ignatie Darabant, Bishop of Oradea Mare, author of the *Supplex Libellus Valachorum* in 1791. However, this effervescence is diminished by the anti-monastic politics of the Emperor Joseph II, which begins with the decree of 1781 regarding the Holy Trinity Basilian Monastery from Blaj.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, all the branches of the order were attacked by the Emperor Joseph II at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; and, despite their survival, all the reform attempts in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have stagnated<sup>2</sup> until after the Great Union on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1918 (an event in which the Basiliens Leon Iulian Manu, hegumen of the Greek-Catholic Monastery from Prislop in Haţeg Country, and Augustin Maxim, hegumen of the Greek-Catholic Monastery from Brixad, in Oaş County, were decisively involved).

---

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor. Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania sub conducerea episcopului Ioan Bob (1782-1830)* [A time of reforms. Greek-Catholic Church in Transylvania under the leadership of Bishop Ioan Bob (1782-1830)], (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2007), pp. 79-80.

<sup>2</sup> Ana Victoria Sima, *Affirming Identity. The Romanian Greek-Catholic Church at the Time of the First Vatican Council* (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2013), p. 339.

In 1947, the Ministry of Cults had a precise record of Greek-Catholic monastic orders and congregations<sup>3</sup> with a detailed description of the composition of each (monasteries, number of monks, if they have or not schools, etc.), subscribed by themselves or by the Greek-Catholic Dioceses, who responded to the Ministry's request<sup>4</sup> to sign up within the Register of Orders in compliance with Law no. 608/1940<sup>5</sup> amending art. 36 of the Law of Cults.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Order of St. Basil the Great is registered with 5 monasteries and a total of 98 monks (Obreja with 15 monks, Nicula with 9 monks, Prislop with 2 monks, Moisei with 4 monks, Bixad with 68 monks); the Order of the Assumptionist Fathers is also registered with 5 monasteries and 23 monks (the St. Nicholas Monastery from Hârșeni, Făgăraș County, with 5 monks, St. Augustin Monastery from Bucharest with 6 monks, St. Mary's Monastery from Beiuș, Bihor County, with 4 monks and Lord's House, the Gratitude Institute from Blaj, Târnava Mica County with 8 monks); the Sisters of Mary congregation is mentioned with 252 nuns, established in the House of the Nursing Sisters TB Sanatorium from Aiud, Alba County, the Central House in Cluj, Betania - House of the Nursing Sisters from the Academic Clinics in Cluj, Primary School from Cluj, House in Jucu de Jos Cluj County, the House of the Nursing Sisters from the State Hospital in Mediaș Târnava Mare, Primary School in Bucharest, House of Immaculate Heart from Blaj Târnava Mică County, St. Theresa Institute in Cluj; the Congregation of the Annunciation is recorded with 20 nuns in Moreni, Prahova County; and the Oblate Assumptionist Sisters of Congregation is mentioned with 50 nuns and 3 monasteries (St. Mary's Monastery from Beiuș Bihor County with 31 nuns, the girls' boarding school from Beiuș Bihor County with 10 nuns, Panduri Hospital in Bucharest with 9 nuns).

Yet, knowing the extent of the Greek-Catholic monasticism, the official public plan<sup>7</sup> (the incorporation of the Greek-Catholic parishioners in the Romanian Orthodox Church) and the secret plan (the interdepartmental action of Ministry of Cults - Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Information, the organizational department of the Romanian

---

<sup>3</sup> Serviciul Arhive Naționale Istorie Centrale [The National Historical Central Archive Service] (further SANIC), Fond *Ministerul Cultelor și Artelor* [Fund *The Ministry of Cults and Arts*], File 80, Volume 10, 1956, f. 17.

<sup>4</sup> SANIC, Fund *The Ministry of Cults and Arts*, File 86, Volume 11, 1948, f. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 230/02.10.1940.

<sup>6</sup> SANIC, Fund *The Ministry of Cults and Arts*, File 86, Volume 11, 1947, f. 24, 49, 64, 84-85, 100.

<sup>7</sup> SANIC, Fund *The Ministry of Cults and Arts*, File 86, Volume 3, 1948, f. 124-136.

Working Party Central Committee), detailed and in stages, of outlawing the Greek-Catholic Church through a forced incorporation within the Romanian Orthodox Church, has no provisions, neither as method, nor as objective, regarding the Greek-Catholic monasticism.

From the legal point of view, the legal and administrative anti-Catholic measures from the second half of the year 1948 (Decree no. 151/1948 denouncing the Concordat, Decree-Law no. 177/1948 regarding the general regime of cults), that have targeted the de-structuring of the Romanian Catholic Church, in general, and the Greek-Catholic Church, in special, (reducing the number of Dioceses to just two, retiring the Bishops, the dismissal of Bishop Alexandru Rusu, etc.) in order to facilitate the taking over of its lower structures (the Greek-Catholic parishes) by the Orthodox Church, in compliance with the new legal frame, it did not alter the legal existence of the Catholic orders and congregations (Latin, Greek, Armenian). The proof is represented by the Decision no. 810 given only in 1949<sup>8</sup> through which the Council of Ministers decided that: “the formations and the organizations of the following Greek-Catholic orders and congregations shall cease to function, with all the institutions depending on them in any way [...]”; but not because of the denouncing of the Concordat with the Holy See, and not because the Decree-Law no. 177/1948 didn’t allow their existence, but in compliance with art. 9, paragraph 2, letter b of the Law no. 11/1944 regarding the control of the non-profit legal persons. So, in autumn 1948 the Greek-Catholic monastic orders were existing legally (unlike some Dioceses that were no longer recognized), and for their component parts (monasteries) there was no legal frame for passing from one cult to another (like art. 37 of the Decree-Law no. 177/1948 for parishes). We could be witnesses of a legal loophole motivated by negligence; but things are not like that at all because in art. 1 of the Decree no. 358/1948 regarding the cancelation of the legal personality of the Greek-Catholic Church, the Greek-Catholic orders and congregations are not ignored, but disbanded distinctly and expressly.

The same paradox can also be noticed at the political-administrative level of implementing the official policies: “The actual plan regarding the return of the Greek-Catholic Church to orthodoxy”, initially suggested by the Ministry of Cults to an interdepartmental commission, offering details regarding the organization of a hierarchic structure with material and territorial attributes, that would practically work together with the state

---

<sup>8</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 51/29.07.1949.

authorities and Orthodox hierarchy in order to stage a three-step “reunion”<sup>9</sup>; it does not mention the orders or at least the monasteries.

It can be argued that this is not a negligence because, for example, the order of the Assumptionist Fathers, although in Romania was part of the Greek-Catholic Church, its members were not of byzantine rite to be able to enter the Orthodox Church, but they represented an exception, the Greek-Catholic monasticism being represented mainly by the Order of St. Basil the Great, the Sisters of Mary Congregation and the Congregation of the Annunciation. Again we can argue that the orders and the congregations are not structures compatible with the structure of the Orthodox Church, but their component parts – monasteries – could have been incorporated in the Orthodox Church just like after the disbandment of the Greek-Catholic Dioceses their component parts – the parishes – were included in the Orthodox Church, which didn’t happen because the Greek-Catholic monasteries were disbanded distinctly and expressly in compliance with art. 1 of the Decree no. 358/1948.

For this purpose, it is extremely eloquent the answer given through Note 1649/949 by the Ministry of Cults to the Letter 2947/27.11.1949 of the Nunciature regarding the police aggression toward the nuns from the Congregation of the Annunciation Monastery in Moreni: “The Romanian police did not invade the monastery for the simple reason that in the R.P.R. [Romanian People’s Republic] there is no institution with that name and that with its disappearance, the customs of the old bourgeois police disappeared as well”.<sup>10</sup> At that moment all the monasteries belonging to the Sisters of Mary congregation had already been closed, none of them became orthodox. Thus, through the Decree 146/1948<sup>11</sup> the following had already been expropriated: the “Sisters of Mary” primary school and the kindergarten, in Bucharest, street Ghe. Palade no. 56, the academic Greek-Catholic girls’ high-school and St. Theresa regular school, in Cluj, str. Avram Iancu, no. 74, the Gratitude Institute in Blaj, and the nuns were regrouped in Jucu Monastery and Obreja Monastery. Both are disbanded and the nuns sent

---

<sup>9</sup> Ioan-Marius Bucur, *Culpa de a fi greco-catolic. Procesul Episcopului Alexandru Rusu (1957)* [The guilt of being greek-catholic. The trial of Bishop Alexandru Rusu (1957)], (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2016), p. X-XIV.

<sup>10</sup> André Kom, “Unificarea Bisericii Unite cu Biserica Ortodoxă Română în 1948” [The Union of the Uniate Church with the Romanian Orthodox Church], in *Studii de Istoria Bisericii* [Studies of Church History], coord. Ovidiu Bozgan (București: Editura Universității din București, 2000), p. 102.

<sup>11</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 177/03.08.1948.

to the Orthodox Bistrița Monastery in Vâlcea County, where on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1949 the superiors were already arrested and the others sent back to their families. Of course, they were offered the possibility to switch to orthodoxy, which they declined and their monasteries remained closed and they were dislocated in another region. This happened only because the return to orthodoxy was just the state policy, its essence being the destruction of the Greek-Catholic Church. In the case of the Greek-Catholic monasticism, the destruction was not meant to happen using the *soft* method of incorporation within the Orthodox Church, in compliance to the Ministry of Cults plan, but through total liquidation using the force institutions of the state.

This aspect is more obvious in the case of the Order of St. Basil the Great. Seen in perspective, the attack against the Order of St. Basil the Great seems as a general rehearsal of the campaign against the entire Catholic Church, in general, and against the Greek-Catholic Church, in special, right before drafting the Ministry of Cults' reuniting plan. The first Catholic clergy representatives ever arrested in Romania, until that moment, and the greatest representatives of the Church, in any cult, arrested in Romania since the arrest in 1866 of the Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop of Moldavia who had personally led the armed fights from Iasi of separation of Moldavia from the Wallachia and orientation towards the Russian Empire, were in April 1948 - the Provincial Superior of the Order of St. Basil the Great, Atanasie Maxim, and the Abbot of Bixad Monastery, Gheorghe Marina. Initially, in April, the Order was not the target, its members being collateral victims in the attempt to incriminate the Bishop Alexandru Rusu; but in October 1948, the victim in the attempt to incriminate was the new superior of the Bixad Monastery, and the main centre of the Order of St. Basil the Great - Bixad Monastery - was closed long before the withdrawal of the legal personality and before the disbandment of the order and the monasteries through the Decree 358/01.12.1948.

So, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1948, Andras Zakar, the secretary to Hungary's Primate Cardinal József Mindszenty, is arrested by the Hungarian secret police; and later, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1948 he's brought to the search carried out in the headquarters of the Esztergom Archdiocese to show the police where to look. After the search, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 1948, a new search is carried out at the headquarters of the archdiocese and the Cardinal Mindszenty is arrested under the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the Government and illegal currency

transactions.<sup>12</sup> What is most shocking in terms of proof is the fact that exactly the same scenario was applied, half a year before that, by the *Siguranță* (the old secret police) to the Greek-Catholic Bishop of Maramureș, Alexandru Rusu. So, exactly in 1948 after some searches, the collaborators of Bishop Rusu were arrested, under the same charge of currency traffic; however, without the cooperation of those arrested they could not take legal actions against the Bishop of Maramureș. The proof that it is not simply a coincidence is given by the informative note issued by *Siguranța*, in which a parallel was made between the role played by the Cardinal Mindszenty in the 1945 Hungarian elections and the importance of the future Metropolitan Bishop of the Greek-Catholic Church in the 1946 Romanian elections;<sup>13</sup> position to which one of the favourites was Bishop of Maramureș Alexandru Rusu with “his entire political activity enemy to democracy, to the Government, to the Soviet Union and to the rights of the co-habitant nationalities” for which a cross-examination commission led by priest Ion Vâscă considers “that it is absolutely necessary to put his Holiness and his Holiness’ main advisors in the impossibility to harm our country”.<sup>14</sup>

About the activity of one of the collaborators of Bishop Alexandru Rusu, the Superior of Bixad Monastery Gheorghe Marina, being the liaison with the Nuciature, *Siguranța* seems to have been informed by the theologian Ioan Nistor.<sup>15</sup> What is for sure is that based

---

<sup>12</sup> Ion Mihai Pacepa, *Dezinformarea. Un fost spion-șef dezvăluie strategiile secrete de subminare a libertății, de atac împotriva religiei și de promovare a terorismului* [Misinformation. A former chief spy reveals secret strategies of undermining freedom, attacking religion and promoting terrorism], (București: Humanitas, 2015), pp. 103-106.

<sup>13</sup> Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității [The Archive of the National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives] (further ACNSAS), File D 2322, f. 148-155, quoted by Ioan Marius Bucur, “Tentative de manipulare a Bisericii Române Unite. Sinodul electoral din martie 1946” [Attempts to manipulate the Romanian Uniate Church. The 1946 electoral Sinod], in *120 de ani de la nașterea Episcopului dr. Alexandru Rusu* [120 years from the birth of Bishop PhD Alexandru Rusu], coord. Romul Pop (Baia Mare: Scriptorium, 2004), p. 237.

<sup>14</sup> ACNSAS, File D 2322. From Annex 1 to Annex 5, quoted by Marcel Știrban, “Episcopul Maramureșului dr. Alexandru Rusu în notițele de informare al Siguranței și Securității (1945-1966)” [The Maramures Bishop PhD Alexandru Rusu in the informative notes of Siguranta and Securitate], in *120 de ani de la nașterea Episcopului dr. Alexandru Rusu* [120 years from the birth of Bishop PhD Alexandru Rusu], coord. Romul Pop (Baia Mare, Scriptorium, 2004), p. 255.

<sup>15</sup> ACNSAS, File I 151675, f. 200, quoted by Ioan Furtună, *Ordinul Sf. Vasile cel Mare și raporturile lui cu societatea (1918-1989)* [The Order of Saint Basil the Great and its

on exact pieces of information, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1948, the *Siguranța* Office in Baia Mare carried out a search between 22.45 o'clock and 01.00 o'clock in the house of family Berindean (where supposedly they have found 2980 dollars), after which the *Siguranța* Service in Satu Mare made another search on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April between 15.00 o'clock and 22.00 o'clock in Bixad Monastery (where supposedly they found 160 dollars, a machine gun and a pistol), and the Superior Atanasie Maxim, the Abbot Gheorghe Marina, the monks Emil Ajaki (as gardener who scared off the thieves with the reminiscence of a broken gun found in the search) and Pavel Petruța (because in his room were found the 160 dollars and it was him who brought from the army the pistol received as orderly), the Jesuit priest Otto Farencopf (with no connection whatsoever, except that he was in Bixad for spiritual exercises) were arrested. Following the investigation, *Siguranța* established the following state of affairs: in March 1948, Father Gheorghe Marina makes a couple of day's trip to Bucharest, with a stop in the Monastery from Obreja and Blaj Archdiocese, in the unconcealed purpose of picking up the help approved by the Nunciature. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Bishop Rusu sent with Father Marina a letter to the Nunciature and the amount of 6000 Swiss francs to be converted in lei. In Bucharest, Father Marina visits the Nunciature two times, first in order to personally hand in to the Nuncio O'Hara the correspondence from Bishop Rusu and to receive a refusal to the request to convert the francs, and the second to pick-up the correspondence for Bishops Rusu of Maramureș (to whom he also brings a letter from the Bishop Vasile Aftenie), Hossu of Cluj-Gherla, Scheffler of Satu Mare and the help consisting of 2980 dollars. On his way back, Father Marina figures it out that he is being followed and he changes the route (he does not stop in Satu Mare, but keep on going to Baia Mare) and he throws from the train (somewhere between Ilba and Cicârlău) the unofficial correspondence and the money covered in cloth. In Baia Mare, Father Marina hand in the official letter to Father Vida and he visits his sister, Ana Berindean, in order to obtain the help of her son, Vasile Berindean, in recovering the package thrown from the train. The next day, her son, in exchange for a promise of 10 000 lei or a new suit, recovers the package, and together with his mother they open the package and hide the correspondence (in the well in the courtyard under some rocks) and the money (packed in paper and cellophane, in a jam jar). After a week,

---

relationship with the society (1918-1989)], (Teză de doctorat [PhD Thesis], Cluj-Napoca, 2013), p. 123.

the Father Marina picks-up just the correspondence and the Swiss francs he returns to the Bishop Rusu.

In a paper<sup>16</sup> it was argued that this case “seen solely from the legal point of view in compliance with those times legislation, blames the monks of possession of guns and currency operations”. Nevertheless, from the legal point of view the things are exactly the other way around.

First, from a procedural point of view, in the report for the search carried out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1948<sup>17</sup> and in the telephone transcript (in writing)<sup>18</sup> police chief commissioner Iosif Pavlovici expressly states that they carried out the search in the house of Vasile Berindean because they had exact information that they would find there foreign currency, *i.e.* he was informed regarding the violation a criminal law, which means denunciation in compliance with art. 180, paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code. In order to comply with the law, either this denunciation should have been written by the denunciator, or the oral information should have been written down in a report and signed by the denunciator and the prosecutor, the instruction judge or the judicial police officer who drafted the report. This procedural act is not just a simple bureaucratic document, but a document with extremely important legal consequences because the General Directorate of State Safety (June 1947 - August 1948), founded through a simple Ministry order and not through an act with law power, had mainly (but not exclusively, because there was another Criminal Investigation Service) gathering information attributions<sup>19</sup> (not even its successor General Directorate for the Safety of the People didn't have, in compliance with art. IV, of its founding act, Decree no. 221/30.08.1948,<sup>20</sup> a general substantive competence, which would grant the attribute of investigating any crime, but only the crimes that “endanger the democratic regime and the safety of the people”, which means that legally they just took over from the judicial police attached to military

---

<sup>16</sup> Furtună, *Ordinul Sf. Vasile cel Mare*, p. 123.

<sup>17</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 11.

<sup>18</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Florian Banu, “‘Strămoșii’ Securității - Structuri de poliție politică din România în perioada 23 august 1944 - 30 august 1948” [‘Ancestors’ of Security - Political Police Structures in Romania between 23rd of August 1944 - 30th of August 1948], in *Clipe de viață. Comandorul dr. Ilie Manole la 60 de ani* [Moments of life. Comandor PhD Ilie Manole at 60 years], eds. Aurel Pentelescu, Gavril Preda (Ploiești: Editura Karta-Graphic - Printing, Publishing, Editing, 2007), pp. 456-484.

<sup>20</sup> ACNSAS, File DMRU, Volume 1, f. 8.

Courts a special material competence over the political crimes).<sup>21</sup> So that, if, as presented expressly and repeatedly by the police chief commissioner Iosif Pavlovici, he found about the committing of a criminal act involving possession of foreign currency, he would not have legal competence to investigate it (procedural non-urgent act filed by himself being void in compliance with art. 98 Criminal Code), but he had the obligation to send the case further to the competent authority: judicial police or the representative of the Romanian National Bank, who would, later, send the file to the Public Prosecutor's office attached to the Court of Appeal, the civil Court authorized in compliance with art. I from Law no. 28/1947<sup>22</sup> (amending art. 7, point 8 from the Law regarding the foreign currencies on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1932) - the law indicated by the report drafted on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 1948.

Proof of the fact that this was the legal procedure to follow is that in the criminal file, besides the search report drafted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1948<sup>23</sup> by the chief of the *Siguranța* office in Baia Mare himself, chief commissioner Iosif Pavlovici, in the same file appears a new search report drafted on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 1948<sup>24</sup> (after 4 weeks since the search) by Teodor Maidic, economical inspector (commission no. 58411-335 of 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1947 issued by the Romanian National Bank) ascertaining the existence of a crime in compliance with Law no. 285/1947 and stating that he had sent the report, through the *Siguranța* Service of Satu Mare County, to the Public Prosecutor's office attached to the Tribunal in Satu Mare. For the same purpose, the official propaganda underlined that the searches were carried out by the Police, and the Public Prosecutor's office in Satu Mare was to send the case to the Court of Appel in Oradea,<sup>25</sup> in compliance to the art. I from Law no. 285/1947.

It would be a great mistake to believe that an institution such as *Siguranța* (and later *Securitatea* - the new secret police), an institution centralized and controlled indirectly by the Soviets, took care of the small crimes regarding foreign currency or that it would have some subtle activity through which some monks were being under surveillance in a procedural way in order to be legally proven as committing common law crimes to

---

<sup>21</sup> Corneliu Pintilescu, *Mecanisme judiciare ale represiunii politice în România (1948-1956)*. *Studiu de caz: Tribunalul Militar Cluj* [Judicial Mechanisms of Political Repression in Communist Romania (1948-1956). Case study: The Military Tribunal in Cluj], (Teză de doctorat [PhD Thesis], Cluj-Napoca, 2010), p. 93.

<sup>22</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 186/15.08.1947.

<sup>23</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 11.

<sup>24</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 43.

<sup>25</sup> ACNSAS, File I 151675, f. 244.

dissimulate an ideological repression. The purpose and the methods of the *Siguranța* (and later *Securitatea*) were much more direct and brutal, and from the propaganda point of view the success of the ideological repression was a victory. Thus, the attributions of *Siguranța* (and later *Securitatea*) were related to political crimes and in exercising the attributions they acted according to some national plans in compliance with general policies of the regime, among which was the plan of eliminating the Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>26</sup> The method of reaching this target was equalizing the reports between the Greek-Catholic Diocese and the Apostolic Nunciature in Bucharest with an espionage network in favour of United States of America. For this purpose, in an informative note dating 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1948,<sup>27</sup> Regional Inspectorate of Safety in Oradea was bragging that the secret liaison between the Greek-Catholic Diocese from Oradea and the Nunciature regarding the American Mission in Bucharest was broken with the arrest of Father PhD Hirțea, who personally translated and took the secret correspondence from Oradea to Bucharest.

The current case is the sequel of that action since the Regional Inspectorate in Oradea had also jurisdiction in Satu Mare County and Maramureș County. Father Gheorghe Marina was not just a regular priest with local influence, but on one hand, he had an important position in a monastic order including monasteries from Satu Mare to Alba, from Maramureș to Hațeg; on the other hand, he was the secret courier taking the correspondence between Nunciature and the Catholic Bishops (Rusu, Hossu, Scheffler). For these considerations, the central structures approved the investigation and followed up the reports from the local and regional structures in order to classify it as a crime against the regime such as art. 184 Criminal Code 1948 (“The Romanian citizen committing a crime, meant to submit the State’s territory or part of the territory to the sovereignty of a foreign state, or to suppress or to prejudice the independence of the State, commits the crime of high treason and he/she will be sentenced with forced labour for life. With the same punishment shall be punished the crime committed with the purpose of destroying the unity of the State”) or art. 186 Criminal Code 1948 (“The Romanian Citizen plotting or agreeing with foreign Government or their agents, or with foreign parties, associations or

---

<sup>26</sup> Corneliu Pintilescu, *Justiție militară și represiune politică în România comunistă (1948-1989)* [Military Justice and Political Repression in Communist Romania (1948-1989)], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), p. 129.

<sup>27</sup> ACNSAS, File D 1222, Volume 2, f. 51, published entirely in Sergiu Soica, *Eparhia Greco-Catolică de Oradea și Securitatea în anul 1948* [The Greek-Catholic Diocese of Oradea and the Securitate in the year 1948], (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2014), p. 142.

groups, with political character, in order to declare war against the Romanian State, to facilitate or to bring foreign occupation, commits the crime of high treason and he/she will be punished with forced labour for life”) under the jurisdiction of *Siguranța*, to carry out a national plan against the Catholic Church by involving the Bishops and the Nunciature. Analysing the constitutive content of these crimes we notice why in the economy of the investigation the emphasis is on the 18 envelopes sent from America,<sup>28</sup> the American brochures regarding the war in the Pacific,<sup>29</sup> the meeting between Father Marina with Sam Buta from the “American military mission”,<sup>30</sup> the origin of the foreign currency from USA and from the Nunciature; not only because of an ideological adversity, but with a practical exact purpose: evidence for high treason crime (committed through “liaisons dangerous for the State safety with agents of foreign powers”)<sup>31</sup> in which the Bishop Alexandru Rusu is involved. Only for this purpose we can interpret the note drafted on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1948<sup>32</sup> in which it is suggested the exploitation for data of Father Gheorghe Marina, at a point in which the rules of evidence regarding the foreign currency was practically (although non-procedural) completed.

This aspect was realized by Bishop Rusu himself who presented the situation of the monks from Bixad to the Episcopal Conference in Oradea on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1948,<sup>33</sup> requesting the Conference to send a letter to the Government regarding this issue.<sup>34</sup>

In the end, the Bishop Alexandru Rusu was convicted exactly for the crime of high treason in compliance with art. 184 Criminal Code, but only in 1957,<sup>35</sup> but in 1948, *Siguranța* failed and against Bishop Rusu there was not even a criminal file. The proof that the source of this failure was the non-cooperation of Father Marina is represented by the Romanian

---

<sup>28</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676. Report drafted on the 04.04.1948, f. 1.

<sup>29</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676. Report drafted on the 03.04.1948, f. 15.

<sup>30</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676. Report drafted on the 18.04.1948, f. 28.

<sup>31</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 17.

<sup>32</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 38.

<sup>33</sup> ACNSAS, File D 1222, Volume 2, f. 64, published in full in Soica, *Eparhia Greco-Catolică de Oradea*, p. 148.

<sup>34</sup> Report drafted on the 17.06.1948. Arhiva Episcopiei greco-catolice de Lugoj [Archive of the Greek-Catholic Diocese of Lugoj], Fond *Dieceza greco-catolică de Lugoj* [Fund Greek-Catholic Diocese of Lugoj], published in full in Soica, *Eparhia Greco-Catolică de Oradea*, p. 151.

<sup>35</sup> Bucur, *Culpa de a fi greco-catolic*, p. XXXVIII.

language campaign<sup>36</sup> started against these two, which was projected as a subsidiary measure in case of Father Marina's refusal to cooperate, through the above-mentioned note. However, a simple denigration campaign is not a conviction and, thus, it was a great failure within an institution in which there were "socialist rivalries" between the Regionals, regarding the numbers and the results of the investigations reported to the plan that needed to be fulfilled.<sup>37</sup> As far as the analysed case goes, the plan exceeded the national frame, and the results needed to be compared with conviction in a mock trial of the Cardinal Stepinac in 1946 in Yugoslavia, of that of the Cardinal Mindszenty arrested right in 1948 in Hungary. The situation was extremely embarrassing because following the same purpose, with the same scenario, using the same methods, the Hungarian repression organs managed to obtain the criminal conviction of the Cardinal Archbishop-Primate, namely a person extremely difficult *to touch*, because having the highest ecclesiastic position within the Catholic Church of Latin rite, in a country mostly Catholic, very influent and visible in his country and abroad; unlike their colleagues from Romania, who didn't obtain anything, although their clergyman didn't have such a high position, officially he was one of the six Bishops of the Catholic Church of Byzantine rite, in minority in Romania. Hungary was already a big Soviet success due to counsellors Makarov and Likhatchev, who shared their experience with their Hungarian colleagues during the mock trial Rajk, copied by the Czechoslovakians in the Slansky trial and invoked by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej in 1949, in order to expressly request Soviet help in instrumenting the files.<sup>38</sup> The Romanian-Soviet agreement was concluded on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1950 and the results appeared immediately, because on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 1950, the Bishop of Timișoara Augustin Pacha was arrested, to whom, together with other 9 defendants among which the clandestine bishops Joseph Schubert and Adalbert Boroș, it is staged a mock trial for the "spies of the Vatican" between 10-

---

<sup>36</sup> Gavril Băle, "Figura episcopului Alexandru Rusu oglindită de ziarul 'Graiul Maramureșului' în perioada 1932-1950" [The image of Bishop Alexandru Rusu as mirrored by 'Graiul Maramureșului' newspaper in the period 1932-1950], in *120 de ani de la nașterea Episcopului dr. Alexandru Rusu* [120 years from the birth of Bishop PhD Alexandru Rusu], coord. Romul Pop (Baia Mare: Scriptorium, 2004), p. 407.

<sup>37</sup> Marius Oprea, *Banalitatea răului. O istorie a Securității în documente, 1949-1989* [The platitude of evil. A history of the Securitate in documents, 1949-1989], (Iași: Polirom, 2002), p. 108.

<sup>38</sup> Pintilescu, *Justiție militară și represiune politică*, p. 125.

17.09.1951 for espionage in favour of America and Vatican, and, of course, for the unflinching, currency traffic and possession of weapons.<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, in the analysed case, it was not possible to reach the mock trial for espionage and, in order to hide the failure; the emphasis was made on the currency traffic. But, this crime, taken separately, must follow the special procedure provided within the Law no. 285/1947 and, thus, within the investigation already closed, appears the economical inspector Teodor Maidic who participated in the search carried on in the house of the family Berindean on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 1948, although the search took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1948, and who gets the statement from Vasile Berindean<sup>40</sup> and his mother, Ana Berindean,<sup>41</sup> on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1948, *i.e.* three weeks before they committed the crime they were accused of. Moreover, within the documents drafted by the economical inspector Teodor Maidic there is no reference to the search made to the Bixad Monastery, namely the main action that stood at the base of the monks' incrimination; and this is because for the inspector Maidic, Vasile and Ana Berindean stated that they have no knowledge of the dollars found in their home, *i.e.* they did not incriminate Father Marina, so that there would be at least an excuse for the search carried out in Bixad Monastery. However, *Siguranța* placed on file two undated and unsigned statements<sup>42</sup> of Vasile Berindean, in which he described the origin of the foreign currency from Father Marina. The difference of the content of the three statements can be explained by the fact that, given that the files were secret, either due to a bureaucratic reflex, or to prove to the superior their effort, the investigators were keeping both the real documents (the statements given by the defendants), as well as the fictive ones (those which they got to possess during the investigation), result of the persuasive measures of the investigators. Such an example is the file, from the same year, 1948, of the Greek-Catholic priest Gheorghe Neamțu which contains two statements with identical content: first statement with the mention of the investigator that the priest states that "he does not keep the present statement because he had written it under duress" and the second statement, typed, with the signature of the same priest and the mention: "This is my statement that I support and

---

<sup>39</sup> Claudiu Călin, "Dr. H. C. Augustin Pacha (1870-1954). Succinct excurs biografic al primului Episcop Romano-Catolic de Timișoara" [PhD H. C. Augustin Pacha (1870-1954). Short biographical excursus of the first Romano-Catholic Bishop of Timișoara], *Banatica*, no. 19/2009, p. 254.

<sup>40</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 47.

<sup>41</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 48.

<sup>42</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 12, 30.

signed, not being under duress".<sup>43</sup> But there are contradictions even between the incriminatory statements, because in one of those Berindean shows that he had hidden the dollars and the francs in paper and cellophane in a jar with jam, and in the other one, he states that he had put the dollars and the francs in a cow's intestine and then put it in a pot of jam. It would be absurd to believe that a person cannot make a difference between a cow's intestine and cellophane, so, the logical conclusion is that Vasile Berindean not only that it wasn't him who hid the currency, but he didn't even know where the authorities had found it during the search in which he, presumably, took part.

Second, from the point of view of the substantive law, without a crime regarding the safety of the state, regime, etc., they tried to classify the actions in foreign currency traffic and possession of weapons.

What can be noticed from the first sight is the fact that, although within the procedural acts is mentioned the crime of *foreign currency traffic*, there are no references to a legal text, because there is absolutely no regulation that stipulates the *foreign currency traffic*. From the point of view of the propaganda, the term is a very efficient one through its despicable resonance, but from the legal point of view, it does not exist, and the monks cannot be hold guilty of a crime that is not regulated by any legislation. This does not mean that the facts could not have been legally classified, because art. 14 of the Law no. 284/1947<sup>44</sup> incriminated *lato sensu* the possession of foreign currency, and art. I of the Law no. 285/1947 (amending the art. 5 and 6 of the Law regarding the trade with foreign currency on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1932) incriminated *lato sensu* the transfer of any nature of the foreign currency from one person to another. And still, in the hypothesis of applying these laws, there is no guilt of the monks, because even the Romanian State adopted the Law 591/2004<sup>45</sup> amending the O.U.G. (Government Emergency Ordinance) no. 190/2000, admitting expressly the abusive character of the seizures carried out in compliance with the Law no. 285/1947 and the Decree no. 210/1960 (the successor of the Law no. 284/1947). Meaning that it cannot be argued the existence of a legislation applied, in general, correctly and, exceptionally, in the case of the monks, applied excessively for political reasons, but still within the law; because these laws were *a priori* abusive, by not trying to sanction guilty persons, but they represented a masked repression. Exactly because all the *offenders*, in general were not guilty,

---

<sup>43</sup> Pintilescu, *Justiție militară și represiune politică*, p. 293.

<sup>44</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 186/15.08.1947.

<sup>45</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 1224/20.12.2004.

but victims, the Romanian State adopted a reconstructive legislation (art. 26 and the following O.U.G. (Government Emergency Ordinance) no. 190/2000) and reimbursed everybody (those who requested it) the seized goods; which means that from the legal point of view, the Romanian State took civil responsibility towards its victims.

The Law no. 190/1947 incriminated the last crime, the possession of weapons.<sup>46</sup> This law, too, was considered, from the legal point of view, as a regulation with the sole purpose the political repression, because its enforcement was not meant to sanction the guilty persons, but directly repress some victims, even if, legally speaking, it was not classified as laws trying to protect the Communist regime; and, in consequence, in compliance with art. 1, paragraph 92, letter c of the Law no. 221/2009,<sup>47</sup> all convictions based on the Law no. 190/1947 are convictions with political character, and towards the convicted persons the Romanian State took civil responsibility – the obligation to remedy the damage. Still, strictly related to the legal provisions in force in 1948, the question to be asked is whether the Basilians were not guilty of possession of weapons? In order to answer this question we must make a difference between the propaganda that spoke, in the newspaper *Crișana* no. 137/12.06.1948, about “huge quantities of weapons and ammunition”,<sup>48</sup> the search report drafted by the *Siguranța* mentioning just a pistol with two cartridges and a military gun Steiner, model 95 (Austrian-Hungarian production) with 29 cartridges for other gun models (Russian),<sup>49</sup> and the exact evidence, *i.e.* what they really found in reality and photographed. Therefore, in this only photo, present in all files,<sup>50</sup> the Steiner 95 military gun (modern, recently produced in 1895) was missing the gunstock and the barrel.

The proof that the accusations were so obviously ill-founded is represented by the letter 15217/05.06.1948, sent by the General Director N. Popescu to the Oradea Regional in which it is stated: “In the event that they will be freed by the Justice, they could be held further on by the *Siguranța*, reporting immediately to this Directorate for decisions”.<sup>51</sup> So, on one hand, at the highest level it was seriously taken into consideration the fact that this file could not stand, not even in front of

---

<sup>46</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 34/16.06.1947.

<sup>47</sup> Published in the *Monitorul Oficial* [Official Gazette], no. 396/11.06.2009.

<sup>48</sup> ACNSAS, File I 151675, f. 244.

<sup>49</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 15.

<sup>50</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 16; File I 151675, f. 41.

<sup>51</sup> ACNSAS, File D 11715, f. 145. Annex 5 in Știrban, “Episcopul Maramureșului dr. Alexandru Rusu”, p. 273.

an obedient justice; on the other hand, regardless their innocence, the fate of the monks was already decided.

Probably, therefore, no official document could be identified to record any procedural act subsequent to the criminal investigation (the initial stage of the criminal proceeding) performed without substantive competence by the *Siguranță*. All the details regarding the trial can be inferred from indirect sources because the Court decision does not exist in the criminal file of Father Marina and not even in the next informative files, where there are made biographic references mentioning the execution of the custodial sentence by the person under investigation, no reference made to the number and the year or the Court that delivered the sentence.

Regarding the procedure, from the newspaper *Crișana* no. 137/12.06.1948 we find out only about the imminence of sending the file from the Satu Mare Public Prosecutor's Office to the Court of Appeal Oradea, and in the newspaper *Graiul Maramureșului* no. 28/19.06.1948 allegations are made regarding the search carried out at the two Bishops Rusu and Scheffler;<sup>52</sup> probably this is why the subject was taken over by the German media (*Temesvarer Zeitung* on the 24.06.1948) and the Hungarian media (*Magyar Nemzet* on the 11.07.1948).<sup>53</sup> We can infer only that, after more than a month from the reluctant order given by the General Directorate of State Safety to advance in the case, the justice system made no progress.

This aspect is expressly mentioned by the Prime-Minister himself Petru Groza in his speech on the 19.10.1948 in front of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, organised especially to calm down the orthodox superiors regarding the methods used against the Greek-Catholics.<sup>54</sup> In this speech, the Prime-Minister refers to the fact that he has confronted the Bishop Alexandru Rusu regarding a file and a report received from the Ministry of Internal Affairs in which 70000 francs (10 times the amount mentioned in the criminal file) had circulated round-a-clock between the Nunciature and the Baia Mare Diocese with the help of the archpriest courier (instead of prier) Martin (instead of Marina), who

---

<sup>52</sup> Bâle, "Figura episcopului Alexandru Rusu", p. 407.

<sup>53</sup> Furtună, *Ordinul Sf. Vasile cel Mare*, p. 127.

<sup>54</sup> SANIC, *Fond Președinția Consiliului de miniștri. Transcrieri, 1944-1959* [Fund *The Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Transcripts, 1944-1959*], File 10, f. 16-22, published in Cristian Vasile, *Istoria Bisericii Greco-Catolice sub regimul communist, 1945-1989. Documente și mărturii* [The History of the Greek-Catholic Church under the Communist Regime, 1945-1989. Documents and testimonials], (Iași: Polirom, 2003), pp. 74-79.

allegedly threw out from the train the money before the police caught him, but at the first train station, they followed the person accompanying the archpriest "Martin" and they caught him while he was recovering the money. Petru Groza would have intervened so that the Bishop Rusu would not share the same fate as the fate of the archpriest "Martin" who: "now is arrested and is waiting for the day of the trial, with no chances to defend himself". We can draw three conclusions from this. First, the file was fabricated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs not to be sent to Court, but to be sent to the Prime Minister Petru Groza to blackmail the Bishop Alexandru Rusu. Moreover, the Prime-Minister Petru Groza decided who should go to prison and who should not, practically who will be arrested and who will not and if they can defend themselves or not. This is not a matter of just establishing general politics, but about a direct decisive involvement in cases of punctual repression from the Prime Minister himself. The second conclusion was that in October, after 4 months since the letter no. 15217/05.06.1948, the case did not follow the normal legal-procedural course, but it was still under the decision of the political factor, concluding: "with no chance of defending himself". But, a very important aspect for our analysis is the fact that this case was considered so important to be chosen for presentation by the Prime-Minister himself in a speech regarding an on-going action in October 1948 (the unification pressure) in front of the Holy Synod of BOR (Romanian Orthodox Church), considered so important that Petru Groza went there personally. However, there are still flagrant disparities between the data in the criminal prosecution file and the data of the Prime Minister. Some of them, such as the name of "Martin" instead of Marina, can be simple errors, others, such as the amount 10 times bigger from 7000 to 70 000 francs, are simple exaggerations; but the fact that Petru Groza, son of an Orthodox priest, himself member of the Church Assembly of the Orthodox Metropolitan Church in Sibiu, did not know the difference between an archpriest and a prier is implausibly. This aspect led us to the conclusion that there was a scenario (the francs from the Nunciature for the Bishop Rusu, thrown from the train by the courier and recovered later) with several versions (one with the archpriest "Martin" and one with the prier Marina, one with the arrest of the accomplice at the recovery of the money, another with finding the money during the search carried out in the house of the nephew several days later), hence the procedural problems (the confuse rules of evidence, the delays in the process, etc.).

Later, the method of fabricating such files discreditable not by their content or by the solidity of the proof, but by the aberrant

accusation itself<sup>55</sup> was continued by Petru Groza to blackmail the Bishop Iuliu Hossu also, following the same scenario of a denouncement from a person within the Diocese, the priest Emil Iuga, who, unlike Father Marina, cooperated with fables the Prime-Minister did not believe, but used: "Afterwards Hossu needs to be removed for fraud, theft and immorality. Actually, if Hossu is confronted face to face with these facts, he, terrified, will remove himself".<sup>56</sup>

Regarding the fate of the file against Father Marina, it is more than confusing, because on the 02.01.1950 the Bishop Alexandru Rusu is picked-up from the camp-monastery Căldărășani and investigated until the 22.10.1950 directly by the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding the amount of money given to a monk for conversion in Bucharest.<sup>57</sup> From this it can be inferred that the investigation had not been completed even after two years since the imputed facts; although it is apparent from a statement given by Father Leon Manu that the Basilians had already been sentenced between 3 to 6 years, executed in a prison in Caransebeș.<sup>58</sup> Of these, Ioan Emil Ajaki, according to the letter no. 31/325/1951,<sup>59</sup> allegedly died of old age; and the Provincial Superior Atanasie Maxim died shortly after being released in 1951.<sup>60</sup> Father Gheorghe Marina was released in 1954,<sup>61</sup> so he must have got the biggest sentence of 6 years, of which he executed in Poarta Albă (from where he took news about Iuliu Erdei to his family).<sup>62</sup> Regarding the Jesuit priest

---

<sup>55</sup> Silviu Augustin Prunduş, Alexandru Nicula, "Episcopul Cardinal dr. Iuliu Hossu - un suflet pentru Cristos" [The Bishop Cardinal PhD Iuliu Hossu - a soul for Christ], in *Credința noastră este viața noastră. Memoriile Cardinalului Dr. Iuliu Hossu* [Our faith is our life. The memoirs of Cardinal PhD Iuliu Hossu], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Viața Creștină, 2003), p. 22.

<sup>56</sup> Cristian Vasile, *Între Vatican și Kremlin. Biserica Greco-Catolică în timpul regimului comunist* [Between the Vatican and Kremlin. The Greek-Catholic Church during the communist regim], (București: Editura Curtea Veche, 2004), p. 137.

<sup>57</sup> Ioan M. Bota, *Pagini de istorie creștină românească, 1940-2010* [Pages of romanian christian history], (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Grinta, 2011), p. 247.

<sup>58</sup> ACNSAS, File P 931, f. 489 quoted by Furtună, *Ordinul Sf. Vasile cel Mare*, p. 134.

<sup>59</sup> ACNSAS, File I 5376, Volume 1, f. 14.

<sup>60</sup> Atanasie Maxim, *Memorii* [Memories], (Baia Mare: Scriptorium, 2009), p. 117.

<sup>61</sup> ACNSAS, File I 151675, Volume 1, f. 3.

<sup>62</sup> Angela Costin, "O familie victimă a represiunii comuniste" [A family that fell victim to communist repression], *Analele Sighet* [Sighet Annals], *Volumul 2: Instaurarea comunismului între represiune și rezistență* [Volume 2: Communism coming to power between repression and resistance], (București: Fundația Academia Civică, 1995), p. 68.

Otto Farencopf, although arrested in Bixad, it is not known whether he was sent to Court or not, but certainly he was not convicted this time.<sup>63</sup>

Paradoxically, after the entire investigation effort and after all the media measures taken in this case, the victory of conviction itself is completely occulted even in the record of the *Siguranța* (and later *Securitate*). Absurdly, the criminal prosecution (the secret phase of the criminal trial) was presented in the media, but the trial (the public phase of the criminal trial) did not benefit of coverage.

In some works<sup>64</sup> it is mentioned the "Release note no. 138/1952" according to which Father Marina was convicted through sentence no. 1017/1949 by the Military Tribunal in Oradea for sabotage – crime that did not exist in 1948. The existence of this *release note* proves that the concern of the General Directorate of State Safety regarding the obtaining of a conviction was more than justified and that another pretext was required so that the detainees should be "further on arrested by the *Siguranței*". This would explain the lack of any concrete, direct and explicit mention regarding the success of the conviction for possession of weapons and currency, because a new failure occurred that needed to be hidden, just like the simulation of the currency case after the high treason case could not be built.

---

<sup>63</sup> ACNSAS, File P 50676, f. 62.

<sup>64</sup> Valentin Băițan, *Martiri și Mărturisitori ai Bisericii Române Unite cu Roma din Eparhia Greco-Catolică a Maramureșului (1948-1989)* [Martyrs and Confessors of the Romanian Uniate Church from the Greek-Catholic Diocese of Maramures 1948-1989], (Baia Mare: Editura Gutinul, 1999), p. 189; Ioan Timbuș, "Părintele dr. Gheorghe Marina (1908-1989)" [Father PhD Gheorghe Marina (1908-1989)], *Lumea Credinței*, no. 4/2013, p. 18.

## Book Reviews

*Documenta Pragensia XXXIII: Město v převratech konfesionalizace v 15. až 18. Století* [*Documenta Pragensia XXXIII: The Town in the Upheaval of Confessionalization between the Fifteenth Century and Eighteenth Century*], Praha, Scriptorium, 2014, 758 p., ISBN: 978-80-86852-67-6 (Archiv hl. m. Prahy); ISBN: 978-80-88013-24-2 (Scriptorium)

The confessionalization represents one of the mostly researched topics of Early Modern History during the last four decades. It is an offspring of the German historiography and it engendered acute discussions on its use and relevance for the historical research, it became a battle field between different universities and chairs from Germany (Heinz Schilling/Wolfgang Reinhard) and Switzerland (Peter Hersche), it succeeded to cross the Germanic academic border, sometimes even without a minimal analytical filter. Nonetheless all these discussions and approaches contributed to a better understanding of certain historical processes. After the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe the confessionalization paradigm conquered the historical discourse in Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and to a certain extent also Romania. Although the town enjoyed an important role within the confessionalization research in Western Europe, less has been said in East-Central Europe and therefore the present book is more than welcome: the thirty five authors focus on a large areal, the Czech Lands, Germany, Austria, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary, they cover a variety of topics from different perspectives.

As the timeframe suggests, the topics of this book exceeds the classical approach of Heniz Schilling or Wolfgang Reinhard, it suggests that the phenomenon went much further than 1730, a fact that leads us to the term, the longue Early Moden Era of East Central Europe. It is still triggering into the question, does this paradigm match to the Habsburg Monarchy, as some Austrian authors implied already years ago? A first answer is given by Olga Fejtová (“Město v převratech konfesionalizace”) whose article briefly describes its meaning for Germany by considering that certain acceptances are valid for Bohemia as well. Nonetheless, a deeper analysis of the Viennese school or Robert Evans’ conclusions would have certainly conducted to deeper questions and thus to question ourselves, the extension of this term for the Czech Lands.

Related to this is the article by Jiří Mikulec (“Koncept konfesionalizace a náboženské dějiny českých zemí”), whose analysis encompasses both the meaning of the term in the German lands and the mostly used concepts from the nineteenth century in Czechia. Its applicability for East Central Europe is further questioned by several authors and thus we can catch all the possible substitutes and several terms which may have a neutral meaning, although they do not totally eliminate the model of analysis promoted by the fathers of the paradigm: Catholic renewal, re-catholicization, confessional pluralism, proto-confessionalization.

Monika Frohnapfel (“Umbrüche der Konfessionalisierung im Erzstift Mainz. Die Beispiele Mainz und Erfurt”) brings into the discussion the survival of Catholicism in Mainz and Erfurt, by stressing out the importance of local actors in the process. It is a model of analysis which leads me to the question whether confessionalization is not re-catholicization in this sense? Is this not only a part of the phenomenon? Pavla Jirková (“Od Sperata ke Strobachovi. Jihlava v převratech konfesionalizace v 16. až 17. Století”) shows us how the life of the inhabitants of Jihlava changed over one hundred years, from conversions to Lutheranism to the come back into the Catholic Church. Annamária Kónyová (“Kalvinizmus ako neželaný fenomén v konfesionalizácii hornouhorských slobodných kráľovských miest”) describes us how Calvinism developed in several towns from Upper Hungary, also with the support of the Transylvanian Calvinist princies. It is an approach which in my view it shows us that the confessionalization may be addressed also from a different perspective, how a minority confession in competition with Lutheranism developed in a Catholic Monarchy. It is still questionable whether the term proposed by the author still matches the best into this context? The model proposed by the reputed Slovak scholar, Eva Kowalská (“Sila a slabosť uhorských miest v procese konfesionalizácie”) is very prolific in this sense, as the author regards how the local authorities reacted in the Reformation context, and how they supported the movement: the integration into the administrative structures of the Church, the role of the schools and teachers in the urban society. Martin Holý, (“Mezi mýtem a realitou. Konfesionalizace vzdělávání městech v zemích České koruny v 16. a 17. Století”) brings into discussion the education, and the model is very convincing: by means of education, we may see a paralelism in Bohemia, which straightened education in the context of confessional competition and desire to straighten their own dogmatic norms and power. Marie Ryantová (“‘Ti Sedlčanští, kteří tak v své urputnosti zůstávají...’ Město Sedlčany a jeho obyvatelé v centru

lobkovické konfesionalizace") brings into discussion a classical model of analysis, coercitive catholicization, Jesuits and norms. Similarly, Jan Bouček ("Zásahy Pavla Michny z Vacínova do konfesijních poměrů pobělohorské Prahy"), describes us the role played by Pavla Michny from Vacínova in the catholicization of Prague with the subsequent disputes between clergy and secular leaders.

Tomáš Malý ("Sociálněstrukturní předpoklady katolické obnovy: královská města 1550-1700") refers to post-tridentine Catholic renewal by mainly focussing on the Catholic identity in the Bohemian royal towns and local peculiarities. Marek Ďurčanský ("Rekatolizace v českých královských městech v prvním pobělohorském desetiletí. Pokus o srovnání") and István H. Németh ("Unterdrückung oder Reform? Die Rekatholisierung in den ungarischen königlichen Freistädten") refer to re-catholicization: Marek Ďurčanský brings into discussion the conversion process after 1620 with specific reactions, meanwhile István H. Németh focusses on the role of catholicization by the end of the seventeenth century and how new elites were created. This may be confirmed also in the case of Transylvania in the eighteenth century. The political role and confessional identity of elites is brought into discussion also by Josef Kadeřábek ("Proměny slánských měšťanských elit v letech 1610-1635. Sociální sítě, paměť, identita"), who stresses out the identity crisis born after the occupation of Letech. Helena Zimmermann ("Víra, nebo profit. Role vyznání ve sňatkové politice norimberské ekonomické elity v letech 1550-1650") reassess the topic of confessional identity through the Dutch and Italian migrants in Nürnberg. Thus, the author succeeds to depict how confession, ethnical appartenance and economic strategies lead to integration or isolation.

The confessional coexistence and conflicts are topics which cannot miss in such a book: Ondřej Jakubec ("Konfesijní spory v raně novověké Olomouci, jejich charakter, aktéři a vizuální stopy") discusses the conflicts from Olomouc, where Protestantism was strongly combatted by Catholicism, whereas Leszek Zygmunt ("Die multikonfessionelle Gesellschaft in den polnischen Städten des Spätmittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit") presents us the case of Poland, which according to the author, is unique. A separate section is dedicated to the discipline and piety. The reputed Viennese scholar, Karl Vocelka shows us how the two processes evolved: catholicization by force and the interiorization of Baroque piety. It is a model that may be applied to Hungary and Bohemia as well, although certain terms such as Counter-Reformation or Calvinist confessionalization require further investigations at local level. Iris Flessenkämper, ("Malum culpae et

malum poenae': Rechtskultur zwischen Sünden- und Strafzucht im frühneuzeitlichen Bremen"), addresses a similar topic and describes how the changes of punitive norms in Bremen brought about conflicts of jurisdiction between political and church authors. Liliana Lewandowska ("Zwischen der lutherischen Orthodoxie und dem Pietismus in Danzig im Ausgang des 17. Jahrhunderts") discusses the fight between Pietism and Lutheran Orthodoxy, a well known conflict in Europe.

This book answers several questions approached within the paradigm of confessionalization: confessional building, confessional uniformization, identity, conflicts. The authors show us several models of analysis, which provides us a general picture on Early Modern confessional reality in East Central Europe and not only. It is still to be remarked, that once we adopt a paradigm which mostly fit in another region of Europe, the historical may encounter methodological traps, if the local peculiarities are not taken into account. It is still an impetus for further research also in Romania, to integrate certain researches into the present academic debates.

Sever Oancea  
University of Frankfurt

**Andreas Holzem, *Christentum in Deutschland 1550-1850. Konfessionalisierung, Aufklärung, Pluralisierung* (Band 1 & Band 2), Paderborn, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2015, 1485 p., ISBN: 9783506779809**

It would be useless to assert that there is no other paradigm on Early Modern Era that engendered so many academic disputes over the last four decades in Europe: the confessionalization seems to represent a never-ending field of scholarly discussions. Its usage, periodization and features are eclectic in accordance with the university and confessional backgrounds, but certainly they all lead to challenging questions. The author of these two volumes denominated by many reviewers as an "opus magnum", Andreas Holzem is a Catholic theologian and church historian, who belongs to the confessionalization generation. Nonetheless, in this book he exceeds the conventional years 1648, 1730 or even the Early Modern borders, 1789/1800 by going far into the nineteenth century. Thus, as the title suggests, we are challenged to read an ample synthese, which nowadays represents a historiography rarity.

At the same time, we are entitled to demand ourselves, whether such an approach is heuristic and productive: is there any liaison between the Hectors' definition of confessionalization (Heinz Schilling, Wolfgang Reinhard) and the hitherto understanding of the nineteenth century confessional practices? "Very late" confessionalization?

The original approach of the author indicates that there is no doubt: instead of a top-down approach, Holzem's analysis comprehends the "negotiation" process. In this sense he provides empirical data to confirm it. Moreover, he understands the confessionalization as a "syndrome" with different reactions in accordance with the "body", *i.e.* confession and region. Holzem lets us understand that he is the adept of this term, as according to him, we may better understand the differences, meanwhile the modernization function is part of his acceptance. Nonetheless, he appreciates the different evolutions (including in terms of chronology), which is hardly not to acknowledge even for the most virulent enemies of this paradigm, although the general assessment in some cases could be contradicted by means of regional patterns, which he himself sometimes does. Thus, after a very comprehensive description of the research findings on the confessionalization period with its academic disputes, Holzem provides the reader with a generous contextual description of the Reformation period, which many authors nowadays neglect. Holzem addresses key topics in this book, he hardly omits a subject approached of this timeframe: The Peace of Augsburg with its subsequent Interim, the organization of the Protestant Church(es), the Council of Trient with its subsequent re-catholicization, the Jesuit innovation, conversions to Catholicism, norms, Protestant dogmatical disputes, Protestant clergy and the thirty years war. In the second volume, Holzem addresses almost all relevant topics of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century: Pietism, Enlightenment, revolution, secularization and eventually the fatidic year 1848. The analytical discourse seems to me very fruitful: besides a very good presentation of the concepts, the author's originality is sustained by a lot of peculiar and sometimes anecdotes, many of them being the offspring of his own historical research (notably Münster). Thus, he is also able to prove that 1648 or 1730 does not mean the end of a process, a reality which some Transylvanian historians working on the nineteenth century church history would fully confirm. Moreover, Holzem succeeds to integrate his findings into the current historical debates, by also acknowledging the conclusions of some historians who disputed the relevance of the confessionalization paradigm for many years. Moreover, he crosses the borders indicated in the title (Germany), which brings a more detailed

image of the epoch: thus, he refers also to the Reformation of Geneva or confessional practices in the Habsburg Lands. Still, had the author regarded the other parts of Europe such as Upper Hungary or Transylvania, it would have brought an even more comprehensive image of German Protestantism between Luther and 1848. Thus, he could have referred also to the (cultural) transfers from the German universities towards East-Central Europe, and maybe re-question the meaning of certain terms in some other German societies, which due to the academic connections to the German Protestant academic and theological world, they responded in a similar or different way, in accordance with the local realities and practices: the adiaphorum, Melancthon theology, Pietism or conversion practices are only a few examples.

All in all, these two volumes represent a new start. When many authors reflect on substituting terms or invent new ones in order to describe this epoch, Holzem shows the reader that the term is not “dead”, in my view it only needs to be adapted to the regional realities and to a certain extent it needs to be reassessed. Scholars, students or readers interested into the topic may use this book, as a comprehensive information source and good literature review, as an analytical and methodological guideline, and certainly not at least, as a reference for the most recent historical debates on Early Modern confessional practices.

Sever Oancea  
University of Frankfurt

**Joachim Bahlcke, *Gegenkräfte. Studien zur politischen Kultur und Gesellschafts-struktur Ostmitteleuropas in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Marburg, Verlag Herder-Institut, 2015, 481 p., ISBN: 978-3-87969-396-2**

Undoubtedly Joachim Bahlcke is one of the most prolific authors in the field of the political, religious, cultural and social East-Central European history of the last three decades. This book confirms it, as it groups several articles addressing what we know as “Gegenkräfte”, *i.e.* antagonistic or counter forces in East-Central Europe. Due to the fact that the articles were published without any literature update, my review will focus on a single comprehensive question: does the author bring into our knowledge new ways of understanding the East-Central European political, confessional and social history during the Early Modern Era?

In order to assess this, I will mainly go around the thematical and methodological approaches without neglecting the analytical discourse of the author. A simple search on the most popular library catalogues from Europe, Canada and USA will reveal that the “longue” Early Modern Era in East-Central Europe still suffers of an acute backwardness as compared to the other researched areas from Europe. Moreover, the regional research centers did not meet a uniform development, so that we may notice that some regions benefit of a major scholarly attention and reception (Austria, Bohemia, Hungary or Poland), meanwhile the others either are not fully integrated into the European scholarly debates - also due to language impediments (Transylvania, Croatia or the Baltic region) or simply, they do not exist at all on the research agenda. Thus, there is no surprise that since the books written by Robert J. W. Evans<sup>1</sup> and Thomas Winkelbauer<sup>2</sup> we miss a unitary and comparative vision of this region, which would include the Austrian and Czech Lands, Poland, Medieval Hungary and Transylvania. This book gives an impetus on this sense, as it provides a consistent, comparative and meaningful approach on East-Central European history. The author’s agenda comprises themes, such as political and confessional structures and ideas, church and political elites, institutional structures, confessional and political collective identities. Thus, thematically the book is very comprehensive. In the first part, the author brings into discussion the regional political, confessional and social peculiarities in Bohemia, Poland and Hungary, such as estates resistance, *libertas* culture along with related discourses, land constitutions, confederation ideas, confessional migration discourses, high clergy identity and church legitimation in Hungary by means of historiography. In the second part, Bahlcke provides an empiric approach. The focus is set on structures and systems, such as confessional solidarities and regional conflicts, cultural transfers, international Calvinism, *status catholicus* in Transylvania, the reception of the Augsburg peace in Bohemia and Silesia, political, national or confessional stances of the clerical estate in Bohemia and Hungary, church and state antagonisms and the role of confession in international politics (Croatia, Inner Austria or Silesia). The third part approaches a theme more related to self-assertion of different groups in the frame of

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert John Weston Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1550-1700. An Interpretation*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Winkelbauer, *Österreichische Geschichte 1522-1699. Ständefreiheit und Fürstenmacht. Länder und Untertanen des Hauses Habsburg im konfessionellen Zeitalter*, 2 Teilbände, (Wien: Ueberreuter, 2003, 2004).

society formation and exchange processes. The author regards the role of the Polish dynasty Piasti, German nobles in the Hungarian episcopate and the crystallization of new rapports between high clergy and the Court in the therezian age.

The structure of these articles starts in most of the times with a historiography analysis. The approaches are comparative and critical, thus the author desires to cover the gaps in the literature, which Bahlcke fills in by means of sources' analysis and through a better contextual interpretation, certainly in accordance with the existing scholarly debates. This approach refreshes firstly our knowledge with historical facts and phenomena that are useful not only for us, but also for those less familiar with East-Central European past. Secondly, the author succeeds to correlate events and phenomena in order to provide his personal view on the significance of the confessional age, counter-Reformation, confessionalization or absolutism in a comparative way. Bahlcke does not fill in pages with the concepts' polemics (*Begriffe*), he chooses an empirical interpretation by a description of the regional peculiarities or developments. The author presents his perspective on the terms significance less on a chronological exposure, but rather on a *longue durée* analytical manner, which comprehends historical backgrounds, specific attitudes during certain changes and consequences.

The analysis discourse of the author is centered on the political and church elites, which the adherents of micro analyses would consider as relevant only to a certain extent. Nonetheless, these elite discourses may represent an impetus for further researches in this area in order to confirm or maybe reassess certain interpretations. One example would be the confessional politics during the therezian era. Bahlcke considers that the conflict between the Catholic bishops Padányi Biró or Bajtay Anton and the Court was an expression of the politics changes at the Court during the second half of the eighteenth century. A more detailed analysis of the epoch decrees and Early Modern historiography at least in the Transylvanian case, would reveal that the interpretation of Bahlcke is open to further investigation, which may suggest that the deciphering of certain political and confessional behaviors on account of a single event may also lead to interpretative ambiguities: as Bahlcke suggested, Bajtay became antipathic in the Viennese circles, but on the same time the confessional strategy proposed by the high Catholic clergyman was a mirror of the Court practices in terms of catholicization politics. All in all, the articles published by Bahlcke represent for many of us a motivation to further investigate the issue and it encourages at

least me, to better define my findings and to look for alternative ways of interpretation and understanding of the East-Central European history.

Sever Oancea  
University of Frankfurt

**Catherine Horel**, *De l'exotisme à la modernité. Un siècle de voyage français en Hongrie (1818-1910)*, Montrouge, Éditions du Bourg, 2018, 225 p., ISBN: 978-2-490650-01-9

Catherine Horel is today a well-known name in researching the past of the Central-Eastern European space. The numerous works from this geographic area that have the French historian born in Paris in 1966 as their author or coordinator stand as testimony. Whether it is the history of the Jewish community in Hungary of the first half of the nineteenth century (analyzed at the intersection of the tendencies of identity assimilation and national emancipation) or we are referring to the history of Budapest or to the past of Central Europe in the period between the Congress of Vienna and the beginning of the third millennium or Admiral Horthy's personality or the Balkan wars of 1912-1913, all these (and others which are not mentioned here) demonstrate the variety of historical investigation sites that Catherine Horel has assumed over the years as a professor at the Panthéon-Sorbonne University in Paris and a researcher at the National Center for Scientific Research.

The book we are focusing on is an updated reedition of a volume published under the same title at the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Budapest in 2004. Structurally, it consists of three chapters, preceded by an introduction and followed by conclusions, a section dedicated to the sources and bibliography used, an index of names of people, and a table that explains the 13 illustrations that can be found throughout its pages.

Written using the *imagology* method, the paper analyses the impressions of some French travelers relative to Hungary as part of the Habsburg Empire, and then as the dominant half of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The chronological milestones of the travel notes presented in the work expand through almost a century: from the journey of the famous miner and geologist François-Sulpice Beudant in 1818 to the first tourist who visited the region by car, Pierre Marge, in 1910. The period considered is spectacular both from the point of view of the metamorphoses of the ideologies and political regimes that have

manifested in this part of Europe, as well as from the acceleration of the rhythms of modernization in nearly all the compartments of the societies of those times (the most obvious transformations being in the economic sphere, the industrialization of production, of technology development, public buildings and the diversification of the means of communication). Despite this important advance of change, the signs of the new often coexisted with those of the old, giving expression to the numerous contrasts specific to the transition phases from traditional to modern. In prolonging the curiosity and enlightenment interest for the quasi-unknown Central and Eastern European area, the romanticism of the first half of the nineteenth century had cultivated the fascination with this area (and not only), pushing many curious people to explore it. Of course, all these "adventurers" were referring to the realities they encountered in their way from the perspective of their own background, the value system they were attached to, and the inventory of the stereotypes they had about the world they had come to interact with directly. In other words, they were not simple tourists, they were travellers, which means they were exposing themselves not only to an experience of external knowledge but also to an inner experience, some event that happened along their journey or people with whom they had been interacting marking them irreversibly. These experiences, passed through the filter of the subjectivity of those who have went through them, have come to represent genuine "life stories" or, to be placed in a literary category, they have been called travel journals.

The first chapter of the book deals with the presentation of one of the basic components of the long duration (*longue durée*) concept, as theorized by historian Fernand Braudel. It is about the size of space. Impressions about the Danube are given, about the great Hungarian plain (*puszta*) and the cities. The second part of this first theme unit explores those features that, it was considered, gave an identity to the Hungarian space. Specifically, it is taken into account the Asian origin of the Hungarians, the Hungarians' hospitality, the physiognomic features of the Hungarians, the characteristics of the female gender, the specificity of the Hungarian cuisine, but also the religious diversity or the strong patriotic feeling characteristic to the Hungarians, expressed also through the attachment to the symbol of the holy king Stephen's crown. The third part of this first chapter mentions travellers' impressions about non-Hungarian ethnicities and nationalities.

The second chapter of the book insists on the way in which different French travellers appreciated the evolution of the localities that from 1873 were to unite under the name of Budapest. Firstly, there were

the differences in the living standards and civilization which were higher in Pest more than in Buda, the latter being metaphorically called "the sleeping beauty." After the end of the Napoleonic wars, systematic efforts are being made towards urban development, especially in Pest, so that it can compete with the capital of the Habsburg Empire, but also with other European metropolises. This was the reason why most travellers note the development of urbanization, infrastructure and services (but not those concerning leisure) offered by Hungary's most important city, but also its accelerated Magyarization, including by the attraction of inhabitants in the surrounding areas. The second part of this chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the importance that the national exhibition from 1885 and the celebration of a Hungarian millennium from 1895 had had on the stimulation of the direct familiarity of this space by the French (and not only), but also on the flourishing of arts and culture in general. The third part of this chapter focuses on the obvious signs of Budapest's modernization in the second half of the nineteenth century, reflected in the urban area, technical progress and economic advance.

The third chapter deals with the way in which the political, social and, above all, national problems are reflected in the travel literature, problems that have affected the relations between the Hungarians and the non-Hungarians, especially since the second half of the nineteenth century. French travellers, lucid observers of these realities, noted in their writings the similarities between the French and the Hungarians through the civilization role assumed by both nations, the figures of the great Hungarian state men, the reforms promoted by them, but also the reactions of the cohabiting peoples who saw in those measures the instruments of Magyarization, which encouraged them to develop their own national projects, separated from the Hungarian nation.

At the end of this short presentation of Catherine Horel's book, we can appreciate the abundance of information that it offers to today's reader about the impressions of travels of some French people in the space inhabited or ruled by the Hungarians throughout the nineteenth century and the beginning of the following century. The analysis of these notes is convincing on how the folkloric and ethnographic images and clichés that the French had about the Hungarians have transformed over the period under consideration into a more truthful knowledge of the reference points of the Hungarian culture and civilization. At the same time, the information also convincingly illustrates the differences existing between the French and Hungarian values, which gives an even

greater intellectual attraction to the inexhaustible game of identity-alterity relations and its historical knowledge.

Lucian Turcu  
Babeş-Bolyai University

**Silvia Marton, „Republica de la Ploieşti” și începuturile parlamentarismului în România [“Ploieşti Republic” and the beginning of the parliamentarism in Romania],** Bucureşti, Humanitas, 2016, 307 p., ISBN: 978-973-50-5160-0

Tracing its origins back to ancient times, the republic, as a form of government, remerged once again in Renaissance, although its modern form developed notably only after the French Revolution, whose ideas played an essential role in the construction of the modern states. Being seen as the older “sister” of Romania, due to their common Latin roots, France played the role of an influencer in the transformation of the two Principalities of Moldova and Walachia in the united and autonomous and then independent state of Romania. Although during the second half of the nineteenth century France and Romania followed different ways in what concerns the form of government, the first – an empire and, then republic, and the second – principality and, then monarchy, the idea of republic, borrowed from the French political culture, started to be promoted as a solution to the crises that the principality on the Danube was facing around 1870. The breaking point of this was the proclamation of the “Ploieşti Republic” (August 8, 1870), launched by the radical-liberal political faction of the time. Despite being no more than a failed and ridiculous attempt of regime change, its symbolic meaning in the process of modernization of Romania remain undeniable, fully justifying the research proposed by Silvia Marton in her new book, in which she emphasises the roots, the unfolding and the consequences of this hazardous political venture.

The author is associate professor at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Political Sciences and alumna of New Europe College (Bucharest) and Wissenschaftskolleg (Berlin). She is well known for her books and papers focusing on the nineteenth century Romanian political life and political culture.

“Republica de la Ploieşti” și începuturile parlamentarismului în România, published in 2016, at Humanitas, is an essay about the ideas

and actions of the politicians who were related to this failed coup, especially of the radical-liberals, avid supporters of republican, antimonarchical and democratic ideas. Its purpose, as stated in the *Argument*, is to provide a better understanding of the political ideas of the radical-liberal politicians and the role that the Parliament played in the constitutional crises that took place at the end of 1860s. The book is comprised, aside of the *Argument*, Prologue and Epilogue, of two main parts, divided in chapters and sub-chapters. In the Prologue, the author presents an overview of the political system, factions, ideas and the main problems that Romania was facing between 1866 and 1871. This overview helps to a better comprehension of the following bodies of the book, that are more focused on details of some specific events, actions or political speeches.

The first part of the book, called "Ploiești Republic", is divided into five chapters. It begins with a presentation of the events that took place on August 8, 1870, when in Ploiești, the fourth city in Romania in what concerns economics and trade, it was announced that the monarchy was abolished, and in its place the republic was proclaimed. This was actually only a step in a larger plan, which due to misinformation started earlier in Ploiești, leading to the failure of a general revolution aiming at a regime change, that was supposed to take place in several important cities from Romania. The republic was short-lived: after a "glorious" day, the governmental authorities managed to suppress the revolt, and the politicians involved were filed with the court.

Following the chain of historical events, Silvia Marton analyses the prosecution's and the defence's speeches in the court trial, aiming not only to emphasize how the latter won the process, but also to highlight some of the ideas reflected in these speeches of the liberal-radicals, the main organisers of the failed coup. The author also draws profiles of some of the political personalities that were involved in this case, such as Alexandru Popescu-Candiano, Constantin A. Rosetti, Eugeniu Carada – the main actors of the "revolution", from the radical-liberal faction, but also some from the free and independent and from the conservative factions. Information on their education, experiences and political views helps building a group profile and understanding their reasons for joining in the event.

The second part, "How the Regime Worked", is comprised of two larger chapters, in which the author tries to explain how the regime was functioning. In the first chapter, she gives a detailed review on the five rounds of parliamentary elections that took place since the enthronement of Carol until the elections before the August 8, 1870 incident. Each

government had the power to control the parliamentary elections and what were the practices used in order for the supportive factions (usually those that the members of the government came from) to win the elections. This chapter's purpose is to highlight how the radical-liberals, who supported the enthronement of a foreign prince on the throne of Romania and also the politics of Carol in the first years of his reign, came to be part of or at least to back-up the movement against Carol between 1869 and 1871.

The second chapter brings to the attention of the reader the parliamentary conflicts of the factions, with a focus on the events after 1869, when Carol preferred not to name any new radical-liberals government, thus sending them to opposition. The radical-liberals' attacks towards the new governments, and also towards Carol, as the government was responsible both for its actions and the prince's, intensified with the starting of the hostilities between France and Prussia and with Strousberg Affair occurrence. The author also provides a concise analysis over these tensions, which were caused, to her opinion, beside the refusal of the prince to form any new radical-liberal government, by two main factors: the Prussian origins of Carol, which was in opposition with the Romanians sympathy towards France, and the fear that the prince could start an authoritarian reign, as Alexandru Ioan Cuza did in 1864.

As emphasized in the epilogue of the book, the strong republican views of the radical-liberals diminished with time, their place being taken by parliamentarism, whose roots grew stronger in this unstable period. The epilogue is actually an overview of how the radical-liberal faction, the later National-Liberal Party, evolved until the First World War, and of the transformation of the liberals from a group with anti-dynastic views in a pro-monarchic party. Last, but not least, Silvia Marton also outlines that, with the time, the anti-dynasticism didn't disappear, but it was used in the electoral campaigns as a form of pressure towards the monarch by all the parties and factions.

Taking a critical stance, the book is constructed in a complex way, in the means that it builds on a simple and somehow hilarious event in order to emphasize the radical-liberals' political views and their future metamorphoses, and also the early stages of Romania as a modern state. In what concerns the strengths of this work, it has all the elements required from a solid history research. Firstly, the book is built on unpublished historical sources from the National Archives of Romania, and also on the nineteenth century press. Secondly, the author gives a multifaceted perspective over the topic of each chapter, always with a

critical eye. Finally, yet importantly, the subject that Silvia Marton addressed is quite original, as the “Ploiești Republic” and the republican ideas in the modern history of Romania are usually overlooked or treated in a synthetic way by Romanian historiography. In regarding the drawbacks, they are not too obvious, but stronger conclusions would have been welcome. In addition, some sub-chapters abound in details, making it hard for the less-advised reader to follow some of the ideas or actions being explained. However, overall, the book is recommended by its innovative way of defining the political views of the time, especially for the radical-liberals faction, and also for the overview of the Romania’s political system at the beginning of its existence as a *de facto* independent state.

Diana Georgiana Lutz  
Babeș-Bolyai University

**Marius Turda, *Eugenism și modernitate. Națiune, rasă și biopolitică în Europa (1870-1950)* [Eugenicism and Modernity. Nation, Race and Biopolitics in Europe (1870-1950)],** Iași, Polirom, 2014, 152 p., ISBN: 978-973-46-4886-3

Marius Turda's book, *Eugenicism and Modernity: Nation, Race and Biopolitics in Europe (1870-1950)* appeared in Romanian edition at Polirom Publishing House in 2014 under the translation of Răzvan Pârâianu from the original version, published in 2010, in English at Palgrave Publishing House Macmillan. Professor of Biomedicine History at Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom, Marius Turda is a specialist in the research of the history of eugenics, racism and nationalist ideologies in Central and South Eastern Europe, contributing through his works and through the exhibitions on *Science and Ethnicity* in drawing guidelines on European eugenics with an explicit teaching purpose: to educate the general public and the younger generation about the history of anthropology, seen as the aureolar way to complete the social image of the interwar period. The present book is divided into five chapters, which contain, in turn, four to five subchapters: *Scientific ethos, War: the only eugenicist of the world, Eugenic technologies of national perfection, Biopolitics and racism, Conclusions*. With an *Introduction* built to familiarize the reader with the overall plan of the work, the first impression of the beginning pages strengthens the interdisciplinary character of the book

and the subject itself: born from the fusion of pragmatism and the philosophical idealism of both precise and human sciences, eugenic studies are shaped as an identity philosophy with biological-medical foundations, to which are added literary, historical, sociological, anthropological and religious contents.

The author conceptually delimitates the frame of manifestation of eugenic and national-regenerative theories, being philosophical superstructures capable of transgressing the statal, religious, geographic and political barriers, despite their subsequent national customization. There is a need for some clarification: eugenism is itself a heterogeneity of visions, a system of polysemantic thinking that is not limited to the ideological clichés of race, class or gender. It has been adapted to the political discourse and social practices in a European space that has undergone profound territorial, social and national transformations, to which significant political metamorphoses followed: from empires to nations, from democracies to authoritarianisms, fascism, or communism, all forms of authority have used the rhetoric of *health of the nation*, scientifically shaped. Combining the vigor and protection of the nation with the modernization process, eugenism has a plurality of perspectives, starting with the idealization of the rural world in Southeastern Europe, where the peasantry embodies racial fertility and moral verticality, continuing with proper techniques of hygiene and medical protection, then with particularities of blood, where “Latin eugenics” differed from the “northern” one, much more racist, and ending at its peak by biologizing the national affiliation and putting into practice racial social engineering. All these manifestations originate in the proliferation of the *organic* concept: with biblical roots in the Epistle to the Romans of the Apostle Paul, national *organicity* manifests itself as an all-encompassing generalization around the abstract idea of a *total community* that sums up the entire population of a certain ethnicity. It is a new ideological perspective to look at the *community* - uniform and indivisible, with the structure of a differentiated and unitary body at the same time, where the individual fulfills his personal and national obligations, each working for each and everyone contributing to national *becoming*. From a biological point of view, Marius Turda explains how the nation became perceived as a living organism in which the laws of biology thrive and incorporates a distinct genetic heritage, a sum of the racial virtues transmitted from generation to generation. Like any organism, it is born, it grows, ages and dies, which is why it must be cared for, purified, preserved and supervised. All actions of *eternalizing* the nation's body through birth, in opposition to the individual's

finitude, were to be undertaken by the state, intervening to improve its social body through eugenic measures. The biopolitics theorists legitimized the interference of the state even in the private sphere of the individual, in the name of an ideal considered more noble and human, that of collective health. According to the author, "the border between the private and the public spheres was gradually eliminated due to the idea of public accountability to the nation".

Far from wanting to make a systematic presentation of this book, at least the pursuit of an eventually ascendant thread of the idea of eugenics is required: from the struggle between *nature* and *culture* in Lamarck, Darwin and Mendel's theories, where environmental factors played an overwhelming role in the mechanism of natural selection, to Francis Galton's theory that some hereditary characteristics were not determined by those of the parents but were transmitted unaltered from generation to generation along with its inherent talents, to the emergence of serology demonstrating that blood groups were inherited according to the laws of heredity formulated by Mendel, to the demands of institutionalizing eugenics and considering it a new secular religion, the new hygienic science appeared as a necessary solution to the survival of the Western civilization, which was considered to be, at that moment, in full degeneration and decadence. This time, the "saving" came from science. The need of national regeneration has intensified since the end of World War I, an event seen as an *educator of the national spirit*, generating a collective catharsis. At that time, the ideas of the racial inferiority of the enemy, its pathology, and the biopolitical power of the state have begun to emerge, constantly evolving until the outbreak of the Second World War. In Nazi Germany, the eugenics succeed in building a bridge between science and politics, where racial identity is bounded by the borders between natives and foreigners, internal and external enemies. The apogee of eugenics "is the appeal to the rational imaginary to justify how the (eugenicists) have biologized their national identity". Euthanasia, sterilization of physically or mentally disabled persons and the mass extermination of the Jews were means of demonstrating a new vision of governing society, called *biopolitics*, but with the particularities of the German space. The total state that controls a nation that is vigorous from the point of view of racial health has become a desirable eugenic ideal in European space, but with adverse effects for the defense of human integrity, seen as non-value in *the insularity of existence*. The trap of the supposed *scientific character* of racial purity required the monopolization of a universally valid truth in virtue of mathematical accuracy and palpable discoveries in the field, to legitimize the social

engineering known in history. But the expansion of heredity at the level of moral, economic, political inclinations transmitter proved in fact the absolute *irrational* dose that this trend has developed. From spiritual to scientific, the evolution of the idea of human categorization involves a series of collective justifications that encouraged the interference of state authority in the private sphere, in the name of individual sacrifice for a cause superior to the "egocentric self".

The novelty of the book is the *modernity* mentioned in the title of the work, to which are added the concepts of *nation, race and biopolitics*. Although the latter are in line with the general scientific spirit of the eugenic period, they identify a strong point in the mentality of that era and the understanding of that present by appealing to a new way of defining modernity. Marius Turda points out how the relationship between modernity and eugenics is rooted in the Enlightenment myth of human perfection and the hereditary concepts associated with the Darwinian and Mendelian revolution in natural sciences. Moreover, the conceptualization of the nation, the individual and the collectivities are purely modern. Eugenic theories are contemporary and simultaneously applied with other modern economic, political, social and cultural theories. Judging from the perspective of the present, the modernity of racist eugenics lacks all the elements that would legitimize it to be called so: human rights, liberty, individualism, private initiative, universalism, humanitarianism etc. The paradigm of understanding the modernity evolved, after the end of World War II, from *closure* to *openness*, from preservation through state coercion to preservation by establishing the rule of law and the abstract principles upon which it is based, but defending the individual as a value in itself. Post-eugenic modernity is that period whose scientific knowledge no longer shapes the form of social and cultural imagery. Pluralism will no longer be perceived as a factor of social corrosion, but of virtue immanent to human diversity. With the abandon of racial science the individual spirit rose; spirit that transcends matter, color, origin, and establishes, through a genuine return to nature, a meritocratic competition, undetermined by ideological regrouping in categories with common mentalities (and therefore culpabilities). The utopia of the organic society from which social distinctions and those between the individual and the collectivity should have been eliminated has collapsed under the exact quantification of what is fundamentally unquantifiable: the man.

Marius Turda's book is original, academic and concise. The 150 pages condense the intellectual evolution of eugenic theory and practice over a period of 80 years, forming an overview of the new scientific

modernity, but also a customized one, with emphasis on the domestic eugenic theories of Italy, Germany, Romania, Portugal, Spain, France etc. For a work of introduction into eugenics, the book gains the status of universality and methodological exhaustion, combining in a pleasant way the accuracy of data and medical discoveries with the political rise of racial ideas and the rationale of implementing regenerative national programs. The work has a double symbolic value for a historian: to capture the diversity of eugenics, thus refusing a sterile reductible generalization to the idea of racism, and implicitly defining the failure of the spenglerian and hegelian philosophy of the birth, maturity and death of a civilizations. This book opens the door to future research in the field; a domain damned by the brutality of history, marginalized and almost neglected even by specialists. Forced to hide behind the masks of new post-modern appearances, eugenics still survives through the health system, which detects the nation's social and biological problems, through *in vitro* fertilization, pro- or anti-natal campaigns, social care, hygiene and genetics. The end of the paper invites the researcher to deepen and engage: "By analyzing the eugenic models of modernity, we stressed the need for a new approach to the history of eugenics, taking into account both the radical variety of contexts and the complex processes of ideological transmission and reception. Comparative research and substantial analytical efforts are still needed to stimulate the historiographic interest in these subjects from a comparative international perspective".

Andrei Dălălău  
Babeş-Bolyai University

**Jana Osterkamp (Hg.), *Kooperatives Imperium. Politische Zusammenarbeit in der späten Habsburgermonarchie*, München, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018, 336 p., ISBN: 978-3-525-37069-8**

The volume *Kooperatives Imperium. Politische Zusammenarbeit in der späten Habsburgermonarchie*, recently edited by Jana Osterkamp, brings together a series of scientific papers presented at the Conference organized by the Collegium Carolinum and the Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR held in Bad Wiessee from 10 to 13 November 2016, and which had as its central point the highlighting of the internal cooperative tendencies and processes within the Habsburg Monarchy. Jana Osterkamp is an

historian and researcher within the Collegium Carolinum, her fields of interest being the political, social and imperial history of the Habsburg Monarchy, the history of federalism in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as constitutional history in Czechoslovakia.

Imperial histories were generally embedded in templates that followed their evolution on the growth-decadence-fall axis. The same research paradigm has constantly overvalued the role of nationalism and national conflicts in the collapse of empires. Emphasizing both the idea of empire and the idea of national conflicts, historiography outlined the stereotype of the empire as a centralizing political entity with clear intentions to strictly impose political control and cultural uniformity within its boundaries. In the same form, the idea of a nation, opposed to that of the empire, appears as the main factor of the latter's collapse. In the particular case of the Habsburg Monarchy, the new historical research seeks to overcome the perspective of the Empire-Nation dichotomy and to highlight not the limits of the functioning of a multiethnic and multi-religious empire, but the ways that made its long existence possible. Also included in this framework are the contributions of this volume, which depict various particular aspects of the Habsburg Monarchy's political, social and economic history in its attempt to adapt to modernization and globalization specific to the nineteenth century. The essence of the paper is given by the idea of cooperation, highlighting the internal binders of the Empire, which developed along the vertical axis linking the center and the provinces, but also horizontally between the provinces of the monarchy or inside them, between public or private actors.

The volume is composed of seventeen studies, the first and the last being considered as a preface and afterword, dedicated to introducing the new historiography of the problem of imperialism and describing the concept of cooperative empire. From the first pages, Jana Osterkamp explains the new research paradigm that underpinned the scientific approach and implicitly the volume. The Habsburg Empire, initially marginalized in studies of imperial histories, partly due to the lack of a policy on colonial expansionism, has recently become the focus of studies regarding the integration performance of different ethnicities and confessions. In view of this premises, the volume insists on the need to recover the forms of cooperation and collaboration developed within the monarchy, in contrast to the approach and the interpretative model of traditional historiography, which catalogs the empire as exclusively centralizing and standardizing. As the author explains, the term *cooperative empire* must be understood as a form of *contradictio in adiecto* that opens the dispute over claims and what, in fact, resulted in imperial rule.

Peter Becker's contribution on this volume focuses on how the various social structures have been integrated and mobilized for the benefit of the state. As an important element in the process of political and social integration, he identifies the existence of a collaboration between *state and non-state actors*. Relevant examples are the creation of the Community code of laws (*Gemeindegeseztz*) and the implementation of new social and insurance policies. Thus, the cooperation between these different structures gives the measure of the level of responding of the different communities to the state interest.

Uwe Müller performs an analysis of the level of cooperation and collaboration within the monarchy from an economic perspective. The economic advance recorded by the Austro-Hungarian Empire between 1867-1914 speaks for itself about the existent status of an integrating state in this respect. The cooperation between the state and the economic agents was institutionalized through the creation of the Industrial Council (*Industrierat*) and the Chambers of Commerce. In the light of these realities, the terms empire and national state lose their absolute meaning, recent research showing that, at least economically, the empire proved to be quite viable, and some of its characteristics survived after its collapse. The matter of cooperation on economic and industry issues is further analyzed in Franz Adlgasser's study, which follows the increasing number of representatives of various economic interest groups that penetrate parliamentary positions, particularly in the last years of the Habsburg Monarchy.

Peter Urbanitsch's contribution is focused on the educational system in the empire. Considered by the local and regional interferences in this field, the legislation on education and the way it was applied in the territory was an area of action of the elements of collaboration and cooperation. Further, the way in which the recognition and integration of citizens in the noble and military sectors served as a cooperative element in the empire, is the subject of the studies of Jan Županič and Serhiy Choliy.

The existence of formal, high-level cooperation is the subject of the study by Martin Klečacký. The research is based on a history of the relations between the ministers of different nationalities (*Landsmanminister*) and the central parliamentary authorities, but also with the ethnic groups they represented. Another way of evaluating the collaboration between local and central authorities is also proposed by Pavel Kladiwa's research, this time through the mirror of organizing and conducting state or private censuses. The existence of vertical and horizontal cooperation in this respect, as well as the ability of different

nationalities to organize private censuses, can be considered as proof of the existence of a civil society developed in the empire. Judith Brehmer puts the issue of collaboration in terms of feminism and women's associations working in Bohemia. The boundaries of a collaboration with Austrian feminists were, however, outlined by the national goals of the other movements of this kind that were active in the empire.

The contribution signed by Judit Pál and Vlad Popovici follows the implications of the construction of local railways at the level of political networks and cooperation within three separate counties. The study looks at the actions of three key figures that have succeeded in harmonizing the interests of all parties involved and which would have had direct or indirect benefits from the construction of the respective railway infrastructure sectors. The way in which the three have used their relationships and resources to reconcile competing interests serves as an example both for the measure and for the limits of cooperation in Transylvania.

Ségolène Plyer analyzes the policy of central and local government in the context of crisis or calamity (famine of 1876-1877 or floods in the summer of 1897). What emerges from this analysis is a *controlled participatory model* that derives from the coexistence of liberalism with interventionism. The research of Martina Niedhammer also concerns the various forms of social assistance. It explores the extent to which the problem of Jewish immigrants in the eastern regions has led to the creation of various social institutions around which collaborations and cooperations have been born. Further, the paradigm of the collaborative empire is superimposed on the multiethnic and multiconfessional situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The forms that cooperation has taken in this province relate to how religions have been instrumentalized and institutionalized in order to represent a participatory sector of public life and are analyzed in detail in the study of Heiner Grunert.

John C. Swanson follows the way in which the Hungarian authorities attempted to impose the Hungarian language on the other nationalities of Transleithania, taking as a case study the Swabian German-speaking community. In order to define the relations between the two parties in this respect, the author uses the term *negotiation*, which leaves room for a certain type of collaboration at this level as well. Further, Péter Techet reassesses the importance of nationalist policies and conflicts in the fall of the empire. He argues the invalidity of the traditional paradigm by the fact that citizen identification with a certain nationality would not harm the integrity of an empire formed on the

idea of loyalty rather than ethnicity. His study is based on the analysis of Italian-speaking Catholics' attitudes in Trieste.

The last study, signed by Pieter Judson, explains the new paradigms and concepts that underlie imperial history research. Recent date historiography tends to consider the two concepts - nation and empire - as entities that have developed binary, one depending on the other, and 1918 is no longer necessarily considered the year of a new beginning. The radicalism of this assertion that fed nationalist historiographies for almost a century is tangible by identifying the elements of continuity within the successor states of the Dualist Monarchy, socially, economically, civic, collective etc.

In its wholeness, the volume examines the main areas where historical research has confirmed the existence of cooperative and collaborative relations in empire leadership mechanisms at different levels (central, provincial, local). Whether it is the political, economic, social or cultural sector, all have been the subject of attempts to implement policies, sometimes participatory, and often integrative. Last but not least, at the conceptual level, it remains relevant how the volume and the historiographic stream they represent can manage to shade the traditional meaning of the concepts of empire and nation.

Luminița Popescu  
Babeș-Bolyai University

**Hrvoje Baričević, Danijela Marjanić (coords.), *Prvi Svjetski Rat. Vodič kroz fondove i zbirke Hrvatskoga državnog arhiva* [The First World War. The guidebook of funds and collections from the State Archive of Croatia, Zagreb], Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2016, 830 p., ISBN: 9789537659424**

This book is one of the most recent editorial publications under the aegis of the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb, in the series of publications commemorating the centennial of the First World War. It is also the first comprehensive archive guidebook on funds and collections across Croatia that contains First World War material and the period that follows. The volume, written in Croatian but with a summary in English, is the product of the collective effort of a large number of scholars, of

which we can name Filip Hameršak<sup>3</sup> and Vida Pavliček. Recently, the book also entered the collections of the “Lucian Blaga” Central University Library in Cluj-Napoca (The Library of Modern History), which is why we bibliographically signal its presence. Although the book and most of the archival material are in Croatian, we considered that the work deserves to be presented, both as a methodological model as well as because of the fact that some of the archive information that is contained can be related to the history of Romania as part of Austro-Hungary history and as a state that took part in the First World War, and it may also be of interest for the Romanian historians.

The work is made up of an Introduction (pp. 13-18), seventeen chapters thematically ordered and dedicated to the presentation of various funds (pp. 19-784), list of abbreviations (pp. 785-790), an abstract in English (pp. 791-800), the onomastic index (p. 801-818) and the toponymic index (pp. 819-830). The text is complemented by a large number of documents illustrations and reproductions that visually increase the relationship between the reader and the volume.

The introduction is structured in three parts, dedicated to the selection of funds and collections, presentation of the structure of the guidebook and the descriptive elements used. An analysis of the typology of funds containing materials related to the theme indicates that the most numerous are personal and family funds (49), followed by administrative funds (40), individual and institutional collections (30), military funds (20), legal funds (8), funds belonging to some companies (7), banks and economic institutions' funds (6), photographic libraries (6) and Croatian Film Archives funds (5). On the opposite side, less information has been identified in funds in the fields of culture, science and information (4), education, health care and social welfare institutions, political parties and trade unions as well as religious institutions. All archival materials and sources mentioned in this guide are accessible to researchers, provided they respect some laws such as the Archives and Archives Material Law, the Protection of Personal Information Law, the Confidentiality and Information Security Law.

The first chapter is entitled “Administration and Public Services” (pp. 19-196) and its content is divided into three chronological periods (1848-1924, 1918-1941 and 1944-1990). The documents referred to are

---

<sup>3</sup> Author of a valuable work about the autobiographical writings in Croatian during the First World War: Filip Hameršak, *Tamna Marsa party: hrvatska autobiografija i Prvi svjetski rat* [The Dark Side of Mars. Croatian Autobiography and the First World War], Zagreb, Nakl. Ljevak, 2013.

from the official mailing list, staff appointments and official resolutions, financial support for soldiers, promotions, retirements, interpellations addressed to the Ban of Croatia etc. The second chapter, "Jurisdiction" (pp. 197-256), includes acts on representation before the court, civil and criminal procedures, wills and registers of inheritances and registers of lands. The chapter "Army" (pp. 257-293) includes archives of military units (radio station No. 18, the department of military telegraph No. 25), troop position in Italy and Austro-Hungarian invasion plans before the war, information regarding the army institutions, the fortifications and barrages of the marine infantry of the Austro-Hungarian army, high-treason trials and South Slavic propaganda of the military (among others, the name of the politician Ante Trumbić appears), disciplinary procedures against officers and soldiers, the position of the troops and supply on the Italian front, First World War photography collection etc. "Education and Schooling" is the title of the fourth chapter (pp. 315-320). This fund group contains useful student information, exams, and exams for wartime specialists. "Culture, Science and Information" (pp. 323-336) is the title of chapter 5, which presents the funds containing information on scientific research, institutional correspondence of archives, labour, emigration and work abroad. The sixth chapter, "Health and Social Welfare Institutions" includes information on health care and assistance during the war. The seventh chapter "Economy and Banks" gathers various information about business and financial transactions, requisitions, war financial emissions, stocks and supply of troops, including the costs for cavalry units. Chapter 8, "Political Parties, Socio-Political Organizations and Trade Unions" (pp. 367-372) provides an overview of the archives of political life during the war, including the acts of some political gatherings, extracts from Croatian newspapers and, very interestingly, audio recordings with Croatian soldiers taken prisoners during the Brusilov offensive in the summer of 1916. "Societies, Associations" (pp. 375-409) is the title of the ninth chapter. The funds it presents contain information on the liquidation of some law offices, the status of legal offices, information on cultural-scientific associations such as "The Association of the Croatian Brothers' Dragon" (Družba Braće Hrvatskog Zmaja), "The Association of Croatian Volunteers for Freeing Međimurje, Zagreb Central Branch" (Društvo hrvatskih domobranaca za oslobođenje Međimurja 1918-1919, Glavni Zagreb (1935.-1945.) etc. Chapter 10 is entitled "Noble Houses" and it contains information on three funds regarding the Croatian noble families and their properties of Northwest Croatia. The eleventh chapter, entitled "Family Funds" (pp. 435-488), includes collections of sources

about families that played an important role in the country's public life during the war. The twelfth chapter, "Personal Funds" (pp. 491-600), presents personal correspondence, manuscripts, journals, among which the most important are the notes and remarks of General Maximilian Čičerić during the Brest-Litovsk peace talks. The chapter "Religious Institutions" (pp. 603-606) includes the presentation of a single fund containing information about the financial support given to priests, copies of royal statutes, acts of church meetings etc. The fourteenth chapter, "Original Archival Material Collections and Adjacent Copies" (pp. 607-706), presents postcards from the front and various other acts such as citations for bravery from the competent Hungarian ministry, as well as the documents of the meetings of the Chamber of Commerce in 1915. The fifteenth chapter, "Photography Library", includes photographs of officers and soldiers from various fronts of battle, image testimonies of everyday life during the conflagration. The sixteenth chapter, "The Croatian Film Archive", describes world cinema collections of archival records in Croatia. These include both films by some local directors as well as productions of well-known names from international post-war cinema, such as Peter Weir, Sergej Eisenstein, or Charlie Chaplin. The last chapter, entitled "The Library", contains the bibliography underlying the work, including books, newspapers, periodicals, and official papers.

The guidebook ends with the sections dedicated to the onomastic and toponymic indices, preceded by a summary in English.

The structure and dimensions of the guidebook make it a very useful research tool for researchers, but also for students in History. The paper gives an overview and very thorough details about the topic on which it focuses, approaching a wide variety of subjects, from the classic war historiography to correspondence, social life, oral history, the activity of associative forms and many others. The manner of fund classification provides flexibility in the orientation. The extensive bibliographic list associated with the presentation of funds is, in turn, an aid to the researcher in his work of identifying and exploring sources.

Filip Katanić  
University of Zagreb

**Liviu Maior, *Doi ani mai devreme. Ardeleni, bucovineni și basarabeni în război, 1914-1916* [Two years earlier. Ardeleni, Bucovinians and Basarabians in the war, 1914-1916], Cluj-Napoca, Editura Școala Ardeleană, 2016, 290 p., ISBN: 606-8770-46-8**

The present volume, published in 2016 by the Școala Ardeleană Publishing House in Cluj-Napoca, represents, as the author himself affirms even from the first lines of his book, *an attempt-test*. Liviu Maior was a university professor of the Faculty of History and Philosophy within the Babeș-Bolyai University and, starting with the year 1996, professor of the Faculty of History of the University of Bucharest. Subsequently, he pursued a diplomatic career for a long period of time. Interested in the modern history of Romania, he has focused his attention particularly on the national emancipation movement of the Transylvanian Romanians from the second half of the nineteenth Century, and in the past fifteen years he has published several papers on the subject of the Romanian soldiers and officers within the Austrian and Austro-Hungarian armies.

His most recent work of social military history covers a chronologically narrow period, but intense from the point of view of the events that occurred during this time: the first two years of the Great War (1914-1916). The author's attention is primarily focused on the Romanians within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, however without neglecting the ones from the Old Kingdom. Undoubtedly, the choice of subject was also determined both by the context of the celebration of the centenary of the Great War, and by the significant quantity of documentary material related to it; it continues, however, the tradition of social military history works that the author has accustomed us with.

The first chapter, entitled "About the 'Great War' of historians. Several considerations", proposes a thorough analysis of the historiography of the theme, which has slowly and heavily detached itself from the ideological weight of the conflict. The great collections of post-war documents comprised at the initiative of the political authorities represented propagandistic justifications and gave birth to a conflict of historians. The culpability of Germany and the "politicization" of the war generated massive productions of document collections from each belligerent state, alongside with an extremely extensive specialty literature. The disintegration of the great empires and the reconfiguration of the political map of Europe also stimulated the massive flow of historic material that had at its base, in all successor states, the idea of legitimization. Surely enough, the Romanian

historiographical production did not make a discordant note, but rather it enlisted itself in the tone of the times. Brochures, monographs, records and memoirs that recalled and analyzed the war effort of the Romanians were published, but also personal records of the great personalities that were marked by the experience of the war. After a period of decline in interest, in our days, at the celebration of the centenary of the Great War takes place as it would be expected, a historiographical revival, but also a change of perspective. Beyond the politico-military aspects of the conflagration, historians are turning their attention also to the social aspects, towards *the home front*. Another subject that is brought back in the discussion, almost obsessively, is that of the origins of the conflict, which has stimulated and continues to stimulate interminable debates.

The second chapter analyzes the moment of the assassination in Sarajevo and its impact, not only at a general level but also in particular, over the Romanians from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The news of the assassination of the archduke aroused among their ranks the same reactions of indignation as in the case of the other nationalities, but with an enhanced intensity, because the political effects of the attack were different for them. The archduke Franz Ferdinand, a political figure intensely mediatized by Romanian publications and self-declared adversary of dualism, enjoyed significant popularity among the Romanians, who attributed him with their hopes of a reformation of the Empire on a federalist basis. His physical disappearance profoundly affected the dynastic loyalism among Romanians and the war did nothing else besides throwing the shadows of forgetfulness over his personality and his political project of federalization.

The reaction of the nationalities from Transylvania to the onset of the war and the dilemma in which the effects of the Sarajevo attack has placed the Romanians from Transylvania are analyzed in the third and fourth chapter. The Romanian public opinion, as well as those of the other nationalities, have massively and positively reacted to the call for mobilization, under the influence of dynastic loyalism, but as it became obvious that the war was going to be a lengthy one, the problem of Romania's position was raised more significantly. The political options of the neighbouring state threatened to place the Romanians from Hungary in the difficult situation of fighting against enemies of the same ethnicity, but then their positive response to the mobilization did not remove the skepticism and fears of the Hungarians and the Saxons. Transylvania's ethnic diversity was an element that perpetuated suspicion and hostility and stood at the basis of excesses and cleavages between nationalities, but also between the state and the citizens. In this

context, the decision of the Romanian Kingdom to keep its neutrality additionally fuelled this state of tension.

The fifth chapter directs the reader's attention towards the rural Transylvanian space, which suffered extraordinary prejudices, even when it was not a theatre of operations, given that the peasants formed the demographic majority of the Romanians within the Empire. The rural universe, secluded in the customs of traditional life, was disorganized and profoundly affected by the conflict, and the traditional institutions suffered radical transformations imposed by the massive mobilizations. The closing of a significant number of schools had as an effect an increase in the rate of illiteracy. The Church, in turn, was confronted both with the pressure coming from the authorities, which saw in it an agent of propaganda, and with the accentuation of the influence of sects, under the conditions of the collective and individual psychological traumas. Amid the loss of a large number of lives, religious sentiment became a dominant factor in the collective mentality and the role of the priests accentuated. On the front line, the inhumane conditions in the trenches led to the radicalization of religious values, religious doctrine becoming also a means of legitimization.

The force of propaganda and counterpropaganda in the years of war are the object of the sixth chapter. Propaganda was refined and accentuated through the appeal to the scientific progress of the time, and became a real weapon during the years of the war. The means employed were predominantly the written ones, which limited however their efficiency among Romanians, on the background of the high illiteracy rate.

The situation of the Romanians within the Austro-Hungarian army is, in turn, analyzed. The common denominator of the soldiers of diverse nationalities was represented by the dynastic loyalty even if, for the multitude of peasants enrolled, the motivation of the war remained extremely confusing. For the Romanian recruits, the majority of which belonged to the rural area, military service represented an important moment of their lives, even before the war. The army would form individuals through a system of literacy and through putting a basis of sanitary education. The major problem of the Romanian soldiers was represented by the linguistic impediment. The impossibility of understanding orders generated the caesura between officers and troops. Such situations were frequent on the front line and led to major losses of lives.

The eighth chapter follows the impact that the war had over the population from the territories that became operation theatres: Serbia, Bukovina and Bessarabia. The Romanians from Bukovina had the most

to suffer, as Bukovina was placed even from the start of the war on the front line, but the situation was not easier even in the other provinces. The population displacements, requisitions or the impossibility of working the land have burdened the daily lives of the people. The frequent changes of the occupants accentuated the drama of the Romanians, who were also crushed by the perspective of fratricide, and the combative moments that took place between co-nationals situated in different camps were undoubtedly especially tragic.

The last chapter of the book concludes the exposition of the first two years of war with the moment of the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 1916. Romania's decision to give up its neutrality represented for the Romanians in the neighbouring states a moment of hope, but also of concern. The possibility of the achievement of a "Greater Romania" was finally preconfigured, even if the decision to enter the war has been late in relation to the expectations of the enthusiastic nationalists.

Although focused on a narrow chronological period, Liviu Maior's work represents a necessary and welcome scientific contribution, given that the Romanian historiography of the first two years of the war in the Austro-Hungarian Empire was, until not long ago, quantitatively reduced and thematically narrow. As his previous works, this one also has the merit of approaching military history from a social perspective, of proposing new research directions (some, such as the war propaganda, already materialized in more recent works signed by historians from Cluj), and of offering, both for specialists and for the public at large that is interested in history, a captivating immersion in a bygone world.

Timea Longaver  
Babeş-Bolyai University

**Florea Ioncioaia, Leonidas Rados (coord.), *Fragmente de pe un câmp de luptă: studii în istoria universităţii* [Fragments on a Field of Fighting: Studies in the History of the University], Iaşi, Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2018, 377 p., ISBN: 978-606-714-477-2.**

The collective volume is the result of a collective research of the historians from several Romanian university centers presenting a parallel between the past and the way in which the *university life* was represented throughout history, emphasizing the dichotomy of the

university's historiography as an institutional biography and the history of the university as problematic and reflective. The contributors try to emphasize in their proposed paper is that academic space is a sub-unit of society and should be perceived as a mirror of it, a space of tensions and the intersection of society's troubles.

The title of the paper, as mentioned by the coordinators, suggests that historians need to ask questions permanently on the subject of research in order to be in a permanent relationship with the subject of research because a certain interpretation of the information does not automatically lead to a historical truth and hence should be reviewed. The need for permanent update can also be perceived in the situation where we observe that over time, the University is in permanent reformation.

The book is organized in four sections that are chronologically distributed, the first (*Historiography, discussion, sources* - with contributions from Florea Ioncioaia, Dumitru Ivănescu) is comprising historiographical and methodological studies aimed to inventorize works and research that highlight the evolution and failures of the academic life and evolutions. The second part of the volume (*Historiography, discussion, sources* - contributors: Mihai Chiper, Dănuț Doboș, Mihai Dorin, Gabriel Mardare, Laurențiu Vlad) aims at highlighting the fundamental, both founding and threatening moments of the University, bringing together various works as methodological and interpretative perspectives. The third section (*Periphery, politics and university policies* - with contributions from Lucian Nastasă, Anca Filipovici, Dragoș Sdrobiș) includes a unitary research from a thematic point of view, researchers exposing the interwar world university politics and life that is considered to be often vulnerable to the political factor. The fourth section (*Experience of training, identity experiences* - contributors: Cornel Sigmirean, Leonidas Rados, Ana-Maria Stan) includes a series of researches that analyze the structure of the University and implicitly form the society, including the problems of intellectual formation and of the social reintegration of the Romanian students in the context of the internships and studies abroad.

The paper proposed for review shows us the reference works in the area of the research of the university life, the researchers admitting that the researches are often not methodologically approached historiographically, but rather are encyclopedic approaches often ahistorical, underlining the shortcomings of historiography. The comparison between the Romanian university and the Anglo-Saxon university life has the role of bringing back the need to apply the

historical model in Romanian historiography and the understanding that the distinction between the research techniques and their methods of interpretation makes possible a real historical research. We consider that the methodology of sociological origin used by the researchers in this volume should be noted, emphasizing the role of the university, which is often contradictory, on the one hand, favored social transformation being the main source of social emancipation, and on the other hand, it appears as a conservative agent, being considered as the breeding factor of the elites.

Through the historiographical approach, the researchers aimed to highlight in a historical way the evolutions and crises of university life, trying to avoid the tendencies of the German *Jubiläumsschriften* model of university historiography, which has the role of the self-celebrated institution under consideration (Florea Ioncioaia). Thus, the work is critical and analytical, taking into account the founding moments of the University, as well as those of the crisis that have altered the Romanian university life. We also believe that the diversity of researchers and researches that have come together to bring together these pages, which, in content, go beyond the institutional barriers (Mihai Chiper) specific to academic historical research, and which outline an autonomous historical domain.

Some aspects should attract the attention of any reader. First of all, how the work aims to benefit from the current intellectual context that allows the integration of academic history into a broad set of historical research. Secondly, how the historiographic analysis intersects with the sociological analysis as well as with the history of the educational practices. Putting the University into society as a scene of social, political and intellectual disruption should be an essential point because we encounter in this volume a historiographic repositioning of university life in relation to society. The role of ideas has become increasingly significant throughout history, and so the university is an integral part of society being an actor who cannot be neglected in relation to political society and powers.

In the proposed review paper, researchers are trying to overcome the classical boundaries of the study of university history, those that have attached to the history of the university a *pragmatic* function being grounded in the need to reform, and in return, they propose an overview of the specialized works on to the history of the university to reiterate the necessity of autonomy of academic history as an object of a historiographical approach, because although university history cannot be separated from the general history (Florea Ioncioaia), it may have its

own timeline. This volume is a theoretical reference for the study of the history of the University because it reconstructs the main moments of evolution of the University's historiography as a support for an analysis of the way it has been established as an autonomous field and exposes the important moments of the Romanian academic history.

The volume proposed for review does not innovate the study of the history of the university, but brings back to the debate the importance of scientific approaches of this kind by overcoming the classical self-celebrated institutional history.

Mădălina Elena Braeș  
Babeș-Bolyai University

**Martin Puchner, *Lumea scrisă. Povești care au schimbat oamenii, istoria și civilizația* [The written world. Stories that have changed people, history and civilization], Iași, Polirom, 2018, 306 p., ISBN: 9789734667758**

The passion for literature and the admiration for the creative power of man is shared with us by Martin Puchner, professor "Byron and Anita Wien" of English and compared literature at Harvard University. His various interests aimed at modernism, drama, literary theory and universal literature and his power of expertise in this field have generated consecrated books: the bestseller in six volumes "The Norton Anthology of World Literature" (2012), "The Drama of Ideas" (2010), "The Norton Anthology of Drama" (2009), "Modern Drama: Critical Concepts" (2008) etc., plus the courses of HarvardX MOOC (online open courses).

In the recent book of the professor, "The Written World: The Power of Stories to Shape People, History, Civilization", we distinguish the effort to present the essentialized overview of literature history, a complex image because of temporal and spatial inclusion as well as the wider significance of the notion of literature. Thus, Puchner removes literature from the template of fiction and adds to it the political texts (such as US Declaration of Independence) and the religious texts (Buddhist sutras, the Bible). The 16 fundamental texts subjected to analysis by the author are not picked at random, but they represent true cultural references, written stories with the highest impact in the history of mankind. They are defining texts, with power to shape the way in which different cultures highlight their origins and values.

The author pays attention to the story and the evolution of creative technologies. The episodes presented by him represent a combination of a text with a special significance with a major innovation. The innovations in writing, either whether they refer to the writing form, or the technological support, had the profound role to democratize the access to literature. The history of writing is about the moments of change, revolutions and improvements. Thus, the alphabet represents a triggering point in the written world, with an overwhelming spread, removing from circulation most of the old writing systems. Then, the rivalry between the library of Pergam and the library of Alexandria determined the appearance of parchment, an alternative text support to the traditional papyrus. Often, the parchment was combined with another invention of the Romans, the codex or book. Although the East-Asian area does not adopt the alphabet, it stands out by innovations even more particular: the paper and the print. With such a legacy, the role of Gutenberg is more regarded as a contractor, who founded a kind of industrial production process. Such changes do not remain without consequences: the print remodelled both the way in which the books were read and the readers; thus, the problem of the status of modern author appeared.

As for the digital present, when the Internet changes the way in which stories are written, read, distributed and almost anyone can become an author, Puchner confers optimism with some restraints. Finally, the present reflects both real changes and returns to the past (the similarity between the clay tablets and digital ones), and this chapter of the present, about to be written, can mean the second real explosion of literature after the revolution of the print. By penetrating with the agile eye of the initiate, the author shares with us an important lesson of literature history: the survival of literature is secured by the continuous use and education, more than the technology, will assure the future of literature. Each generation has the role to interiorize the learnings and feelings of the past, to enrich them and transmit them further.

Animated by the vision of Goethe regarding the ideal of a universal literature, Puchner traces a map and a chronology, real and symbolical tools which guide us. The literary reviewer extends his lecture from ancient civilizations, which produced the fundamental and sacred texts, to contemporary world, which invented the story of Harry Potter. Between these points in time, the author directs his gaze to the moments of development of new expression forms in writing of mankind.

The story of the first great novel in the world history is fascinating. Its early writing in the eleventh century Asia by a woman

signalled the more and more marking conscience of the cultural independence of Japan. The appearance of the first modern author is a reality of the European Area from the beginning of seventeenth century, a consequence of print perfection and the beginning of a mass production. The polemic writings or the new publication platforms, such as newspapers which attract more and more people in the exchange of ideas are fed by print.

Although Asia and Europe had an overwhelming role in the development of literature, Puchner does not neglect the other continents which gave us a valuable cultural inheritance. The Maya culture from the pre-Columbian American area gave us a second literary, independent tradition, which the Maya scribes tried to preserve when they collided with the European civilization. We are informed about the possibility of co-existing oral stories and literary cultures, by the example brought from the African space. Moreover, the postcolonial literature, which appeared as a result of the need for new nations of stories which outlined their identity, receives an honourable place in the book of great stories.

With the desire to emphasize the texts which modelled deeply the history, Puchner presents us the obverse and reverse of another episode. One of the most influential texts of modern age, the *Manifesto of Communist Party*, found passionate readers in revolutionaries who would change for a while the world configuration. But the consequences of this change were deeply felt also in the written world. The reaction against Communism took also the shape of literature.

The work also contains a travel diary of the author, his own odyssey. The travels are incited by the intellectual, but personal curiosities of the author. They represent keys of understanding the stories presented to us. For example, Alexander the Great is the key of understanding by the author to Homer, because Alexander was also a passionate reader of him. A justified reason to follow in the footsteps of the great conqueror.

Martin Puchner makes a careful selection of stories which reflect the most diversified ways in which mankind presents itself, the most profound questions related to its existence and the most important changes during its history as well as the mechanisms which propelled these stories in history. Puchner succeeded in making us look to the past in order to build our future.

Bianca Maria Glăvan  
Babeş-Bolyai University

## Contributors

PHILIPPE HENRI BLASEN is Ph.D. student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

IOAN BOLOVAN is Professor at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca and corresponding member of the Romanian Academy

MĂDĂLINA ELENA BRAEŞ is Ph.D. student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

ANDREI DĂLĂLĂU is BA student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

BIANCA MARIA GLĂVAN is MA student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

OVIDIU IUDEAN is Researcher at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

FILIP KATANIĆ is Lawyer and Ph.D. student at the University of Zagreb

TIMEA LONGAVER is MA student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

DIANA GEORGIANA LUTZ is MA student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

SEVER OANCEA is Ph.D. student at the University of Frankfurt

JUDIT PÁL is Professor at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

LUMINIŢA POPESCU is MA student at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

VLAD POPOVICI is Lecturer at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

LUCIAN TURCU is Lecturer at the Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

IONUŢ VIDA-SIMITI is Lawyer and Lecturer at the Iuliu Haţieganu University, Cluj-Napoca.

## Contents

IOAN BOLOVAN	<i>The Romanians' Ideals of Liberalism and Nationality in 1918</i>
OVIDIU IUDEAN	<i>Making the Man of Law in Dualist Hungary: Alexa David's Career Strategies and Personal Networks on the Eve of the Twentieth Century</i>
VLAD POPOVICI	<i>ASTRA's Membership in the Early 1900s</i>
JUDIT PÁL	<i>The System of Government Commissioners during the First World War and the organization of the Government High Commissioner's Office in Transylvania</i>
LUCIAN TURCU	<i>Dynastic Loyalism, Morality and Family Values among Romanians in Transylvania during the First World War</i>
PHILIPPE HENRI BLASEN	<i>De la nomination du cabinet Goga au coup d'État du roi Carol II (28 décembre 1937 - 10 février 1938)</i>
IONUȚ VIDA-SIMITI	<i>The arrest of the Basilians Atanasie Maxim and Gheorghe Marina in the attempt to incriminate the greek-catholic Bishop Alexandru Rusu</i>
BOOK REVIEWS	