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Transylvanian Identities in the Modern Epoch

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Crossing Gender Boundaries. The trial of Andrew Ungvári (1712)

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Abstract: *Crossing Gender Boundaries. The trial of Andrew Ungvári (1712).* This essay presents the trial of a cross-dresser female sodomite from 1712, as it is revealed in the legal documents of Court Protocols from the town Cluj. The article would like to disclose some rhetoric's on female deviance analyzing the trial record produced by the male authorities on the case of the so called Andrew Ungvári, document which in our reading contains moral, legal and sexual elements of a male discourse on female sodomy.

Keywords: gender identity, deviance, female sodomy, cross-dressing, Cluj, trial records, early modern Transylvania

Rezumat: *Peste identitățile de gen. Procesul lui Andrei Ungvári (1712).* Acest studiu prezintă procesul unui travestit practicant al "sodomiei feminine", desfășurat în anul 1712, așa cum este înfățișat în protocoalele Curții judiciare din Cluj. Studiul evidențiază retorica referitoare la devianța sexuală feminină, prin intermediul dosarului judiciar elaborat de magistrați, dintr-o perspectivă masculină, în cazul așa-numitului "Andrei Ungvári". Acest document vehiculează teme de natură morală, legală și sexuală ale unui discurs masculin referitor la "sodomia feminină".

Cuvinte-cheie: identitate de gen, devianță, sodomie feminină, travestire, Cluj, dosare judiciare, Transilvania în epoca modernă timpurie

A few years ago, while making our research on 18th century ego-documents, consisting mostly of memoirs, autobiographies and diaries written by the male elite from Transylvania, an unusual record caught our attention. We found this paragraph in the diary of the physician George Bereczk (Briccius) Vízaknai¹: "Anno 1712. A miserable case

¹ György Bereczk of Vízakna (1668?-1720) was one of the few diarists in Cluj from the 18th century, he was a member of the Saxon nation, but he wrote his diary both in Hungarian and Latin. He recorded past events of his life, and of the town, in a small book, which includes also experiences from his journey to the University, notes on his courses, poems and drawings. After finishing his studies in the Netherlands, he returned in 1698 and worked as the town's doctor. After 1711, Bereczk performed other functions such as: requisitor in the Cluj-Mănăștur (Hungarian:

happened. A girl from Ujhorod [Uzshorod, Ukraine], dressed as a man came into Transylvania from Hungary, where she was living a long time in courts, finally got married and her wife had two children, later this wife of hers died, she still married another one, with whom she lived some time, the woman [wife] claimed her business and she [Ungvári] got caught. Her male instrument, made by herself from a piece of leather, was hanged in the court room, so as to be seen by all, after that, hanged on her neck and they were burned together.”²

Curiously, the diary of Bereczk had several editions, from the late 19th century until the last decades, but none of the editors, or further readers had the *inquisitiveness* to reach beyond this particular story, most of them presenting the case of the so called Andrew Ungvári only as a footnote³, or at the most, in one phrase⁴. This could be somehow explained on the one hand by the source editing and publishing orientation of the Transylvanian Hungarian historians, and on the other hand by the lack of interest in the new historical currents, since the Hungarian historical writing in Transylvania is still marked by historicism, characterized mostly by a persistent interest in the history of the elite, institutions and politics. Therefore, we will try to build from a footnote a coherent story by presenting the trial of a cross-dresser, a

Kolozsmonostor) place of authentication, physician, royal judge (*judex regius*), hospital master (*magistri hospitalis*) and curator of the church. These functions allowed him to be very well informed on matters regarding the town of Cluj. We believe that the details mentioned by him, which, as we will see, differ from those presented in the court protocols, emerged from his involvement as a physician and assessor in this case.

The book, which contains the Diary, is now preserved in the “Lucian Blaga” Central University Library (Romanian: Biblioteca Centrală Universitară “Lucian Blaga”) in Cluj-Napoca, Department of Special Collections, Mss. 693. The parts which include the years 1693-1717 have been published several times.

² György Bereczk Vízaknai, *Diary*, 146v.

³ *Kolozsvári Emlékirók* (Memoir writers from Cluj), eds. József Bálint, József Pataki (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1990), 330.

⁴ Emese Bálint, “A nyilvános büntetések társadalmi háttere a kora újkori Kolozsváron” (Public Punishments and their Social Background in Sixteenth-Century Cluj/Kolozsvár), *Erdélyi Múzeum*, no.3-4 (2001): 66-82. The reduction of this case to one phrase could be, of course, explained by the interest of the author for earlier cases of deviant behavior. Nevertheless, Emese Bálint did not explore the Court Protocols, and we think that the paragraphs she mentioned in her article are taken from the Historical dictionary of Transylvanian Hungarian vocabulary: *Erdélyi Magyar Szótörténeti Tár*, (henceforth: SZT) ed. Attila T. Szabó (12 volumes, Bucharest: Akadémiai; Cluj: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 1975-), vol. 2 (Cs-Elsz), 56, vol. 4 (Fém-Ha), 64.

female sodomite from 1712, as it is revealed in the legal documents of Court Protocols from the town Cluj (Hungarian: Kolozsvár, German: Klausenburg).

The “silent sin”⁵, as it is referred to, female homoeroticism generated in the past decades several studies and, as a natural course, this research was accompanied by a theoretical debate on issues of terminology. We are aware of the fact that there is a risk in using modern terms to describe realities of the past, in a historical context in which they could not have existed, and we admit that this could naturally lead to criticism. Our case is even more complicated, because we are about to present not just simply a romantic friendship, a female same sex relationship, but the case of a cross-dresser, of a woman who dressed and behaved like a man. So, beside the historiographical issues we also have to consider other factors such as sex and gender. To avoid the use of anachronistic terminology, in our paper we shall omit the use of terms such as bisexual, lesbian or transsexual, because as Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol pointed out, this “include meanings and connotations which simply did not exist at the time”⁶. These authors seem to prefer the term tribade⁷ (lat. tribas), just as Thomas Laqueur, who used the term to describe a woman who plays the role of a man⁸. Other historians of sexuality use the terms of hermaphrodite and Sapphic⁹, and still others insist on the use of terms such as “lesbian” or “lesbian-like”¹⁰. Even if we admit and assume, as Judith Bennett did, that “the past illumines the present and the present illumines the past”, we cannot accept that the omission of modern terms, especially that of “lesbian”, for past realities is “unnecessary and counterproductive”¹¹, and that historians who prefer to rather use terms that existed at a certain time, and which are quite clear to today’s researchers, and describe unequivocally the

⁵ Emma Donoghue, *Passions between Women. British Lesbian Culture 1668-1801* (London: Scarlett Press, 1993).

⁶ Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism in early modern Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 47.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁸ Thomas Laqueur, *Making sex: Body and Gender from the Greek to Freud* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1990), 53.

⁹ Holly Devor, *FTM: Female-to-male transsexuals in society* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997), 12.

¹⁰ Judith M. Bennett, “Lesbian-Like” and the Social History of Lesbianism”, *Journal of History of Sexuality*, vol. 9, no. 1-2 (2000).

¹¹ *Ibid.*: 11.

phenomenon they refer to, “promotes heteronormative misconceptions of the past”¹².

We confess that we are cautious to admit that Ungvári was someone who we would call a lesbian today. The term is in our opinion quite problematic and confusing, therefore we do not think that, since Ungvári was a cross-dresser, who dressed, behaved and lived as a man, so she wanted to be a man, and she was much more than a woman who was just simply attracted to other women, should be call a lesbian, or that she had a lesbian like behavior. We would rather say that Ungvári impersonated a male not only socially but sexually as well. Therefore if we have to choose a proper term to describe Ungvári’s situation, we could use for sure the tribade, but we prefer that of “*female sodomy*”. The presence of this coinage in the historiographical discourse of female sexuality is associated with Helmuth Puff’s work, even if the term was used before him, as well (Dekker); he certainly is the first to motivate his invention “designed to resonate with medieval and Renaissance inscriptions of homoeroticism”¹³. We embrace this even more since the term of sodomy appears in the trial we shall present below.

The record of Bereczk caught our attention and we started our research with the examination of court protocols from Cluj. The court of the free royal town of Cluj, established at the end of the 16th century, had jurisdiction not only over its citizens, but as we can see, over foreign criminals too, whose crime had directly affected the public sphere of the town. The court had certain autonomy, since the town of Cluj had the privilege to “manage its affairs according to its own regulations”, and also had the right to apply capital punishment¹⁴. This situation, however, changed due to the historical events (the conquest of Oradea [Hungarian: Nagyvárad] by the ottomans in 1660), the town lost its free royal city privileges, so after 1665 its juridical status was altered¹⁵. Cluj had no more judges (*judex primarius*, *judex regius*), but a commander (*ductor primarius*) and instead of 12 senators it got assessors. The

¹² *Ibid.*: 12.

¹³ Helmut Puff, “Female Sodomy: The Trial of Katherina Hetzeldorfer (1477)”, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2000): 41.

¹⁴ László Pakó, “The Inquisitors in the Judicial Practice of Cluj at the End of the 16th Century”, *Transylvanian Review*, Supplement no.2 (2012): 181.

¹⁵ Cluj regained its privileges only in 1709 or, more precisely, in 1712. The first royal judge of this new/old judicial system was György Bereczk Vizaknai himself. He was elected in December 1712, and his annotations on this year contain only 3 entries, of which one concerns Ungvári’s case, while the other two entries refer to his elections as royal judge and hospital master.

members of the Court were not elected anymore only by the town's authorities, but by the county as well, and therefore some of its judicial cases must also have been presented in the court of the county, too¹⁶. But the town's court still existed (*sedes, sedria, judicatus, forum*), as it is referred to in several records, and Cluj had his own collection of protocols for this period. However, this power was shared between the County and the town, and it is not clear how this worked out in practice, as it was not clear even for these authorities.

The judicial archives of the town are only partly preserved, many of the court records have been lost, and therefore we cannot reconstitute this case properly since we have only the deliberation, without the testimony of the witnesses or of the accused. The document of the so-called Andrew Ungvári's trial is well elaborated, with 2 pages written in Hungarian, consisting of two separate records and containing only a few corrections, which offers us the criminal's story narrated by the scribe, and in particular the conclusions of the judges, a sort of a moral discourse based on the observations made during the investigation. Therefore these records contain moral, legal and sexual elements of a male discourse on female sodomy.

The first record of Ungvári's case is dated 1712, January the 6th¹⁷, which indicate that the lawyer (*procurator*) in charge of this case was George Keresztúri, and that the text documents we are going to analyze below, are dated by George Szűcs's (alias Brassai)¹⁸ lieutenantcy (ductor

¹⁶ Elek Jakab, *Kolozsvár története* (The History of Cluj) (Buda: Szab. Kir. Kolozsvár város közönsége, 1870), vol. 2, 759.

¹⁷ Romanian National Archives Cluj County Branch, Cluj-Napoca (Direcția Județeană Cluj a Arhivelor Naționale, Cluj-Napoca, hereafter cited as: Nat. Arch. Cluj), The Town Archive of Cluj (Arhiva Orașului Cluj, hereafter referred to as "TAC"), *Court Protocols* (Protocoale de judecată, hereafter cited as: CP), II/26: 64. 68-69 (These CPs are greatly damaged, so that today they could be studied only on microfilms. The year in question is on film No. 200, the passages which contain Ungvári's case are on capture 319, 321).

¹⁸ We find it quite unusual that in the Town's Account books, according to a record from 7th January 1712, the lieutenant is not George Brassai, but Joseph Kurtány. TAC. *Account Books* (Socotelile orașului Cluj, hereafter cited as: AB), II/45: 16. Microfilm No. 91/ capture 561. Since there are no studies concerning the history of Cluj in this period, we cannot grasp this particular situation, and we therefore will continue to presume that the lieutenant of the town was a person named in the Court Protocols, and he was in charge at the time of the trial.

primarius) and recorded by the town's scribe (notarius) John Handsáros¹⁹.

At this first session, Andrew Ungvári was not summoned alone in the Court, but with Anna Szilágyi, and they both had been already imprisoned. The court addressed Ungvári using her "male name", but every time specifying that this was the name "she liked to be called" (64). We found out that she was cited before the Court because "[she] was a woman" but "dressed in men's clothes and lived as a man". She apparently did not deny the charges, since she "confessed all her evil acts" (64).

Of course, we do not believe that Ungvári considered her behavior as a major crime, but her confession, the nature of her deviant behavior made the authorities to conclude this first entry already using some judgmental language (we would like to point out, that according to the unofficial records in Bereczk's diary, the case is regarded as an unfortunate event). The Court needed time to make preparations to find witnesses, to collect data that would make even more obvious or, as they said, "to be revealed better", "the rest of her evil actions", and mostly to find out the names of the persons the convicted had sinned with. She therefore was invited to meditate "to think in herself better" until the next session of the Court, to remember and "tell sincerely" with whom and what did she sinned, and to tell "everything she did not confessed yet" (64).

The second trial document, dated 25th January, is a well elaborated narrative of the scribe, which contains the *deliberatum* of the Court and gives many details regarding this case. The sentence was given against Andrew Ungvári, respecting her desire to address her as a man, although regarding this name the scribe specifies: "as she liked to be called to delude others, though her maiden name was Erzsók" (68) (a nickname for Elisabeth). We found out that she was living and dressing as a man, "against nature's law" for 14 years, as proven by "her tongue" and the testimony of witnesses. The terms used by the scribe, from the Latin *fassio* and *testimonium* do not exclude a physical examination of her real sex. We suspect that the Court did ask for a medical examination, since such an examination could be the sole method to tell for sure the

¹⁹ John Handsáros had been the scribe of the town for several years: 1708, 1709, 1711 and 1713. Moreover, after a few years he was elected as first or royal judge of Cluj, a function repeatedly filled in by him in: 1722, 1725, 1729 and 1732. Arch. Cluj, TAC, *Fascicules* (Acte Fasciculare, hereafter cited as *Fasc/II.*), microfilm No. 273; *CP*, microfilm No. 200, 201.

convicted's real sex. Since she lived so many years without raising any suspicion concerning her real nature, we suppose she was a very talented actor, possessing some male qualities. Unfortunately, the Court's deliberation did not contain the story of the 14 years, even if we know from Bereczk's diary that she lived in the Court of Hungary, and that her hometown was Ujhorod. This could explain also her name, since a direct translation of the name Ungvári could also mean *someone (original) from Ujhorod*.

The trial document continues by describing how the convicted confessed in *facie sedis* how she made herself "an abominable, direful male instrument", and "lived maliciously" with it, using it with women (we would mention that the document did not use the term *other* when it refers on sexual practices with women).

The existence of the *malicious instrument* seems, however, to be shadowed by the sin of "deceiving and scandalizing the holy congregation, the order of marriage and the common company [citizens of Cluj]", but mostly "marrying against the nature", pushing her wives into wanton acts (68). The document also gives us details on the first marriage, which lasted for 7 or 8 years, and again omits the fact that the first wife had two children, as we are informed by Bereczk. So, this would naturally mean that the first wife had knowledge of her husband's nature, and Ungvári did accept the adultery of her wife.

Furthermore, the records reveal more about the second wife even though her name is not mentioned by the authorities. She was alive at the time of the trial, and she was directly involved in the accusation of "her husband". Soon after this second marriage, this wife of Ungvári felt ill and got infirmed, "and she still is", (68) and so Ungvári wanted a divorce, in order to marry again. Her wife "could not tolerate the ugly and infernal wicked" (69) acts of hers, so she sent a letter to her relatives and told them that "she is a woman, not a man". The document turns into a protestant judging narrative, provoked again by the desire of Ungvári to get married: "which would be a wicked, disgusting act and against God's laws, horrible and unheard-of among Christians, but pagans as well" (69). The most frequently used term, among the pejorative epithets, are those related to the term "*against nature*". The instrument she made herself, and which "mocked God's work" is now described better: "she made herself some thick male genitals from leather" (just as Bereczk described in his diary), and "lived evil" with it, profaning the holy marriage, "infecting things given for holy purpose", but mainly "stealing young girls away from others" (69). The further accusations are reiterating those we already mentioned: deceiving and

scandalizing the holy congregation, the common company, living against nature's law and driving her wives into immoral acts that "pervert the union". The document continues with a description of her bad character and by listing a long line of evil attributes: lecherous, rogue, perfidious, imbecile, thief, drunk, liar, or fickle. And for all the misery enumerated above the plaintiffs decided to condemn her to "burn in fire", being charged according to the Biblical places "because she failed into the sin of sodomy" (69). Therefore, she received a penalty given until that time only to men. The simple act of burning was not enough for her guilt. As the document said, during her imprisonment she threatened her accomplices because "if she had to die than many others should, too". So the jury asked Ungvári to tell the names of those who "fornicated with her" and of those "she fornicated with" (69), and to confess what was the reason that determined her to choose this life, and to tell if anybody else had instruments like hers. Only in this case she could escape torture. The judges felt that there were more to know, so they frightened Ungvári with dripping by the executioner. We don't know if she confessed to anything, we only know that she was burned. Bereczk did not mention anything about torture, but the Protocols do not mention any further cases, so there were no other names involved in this case. One thing is sure: Ungvári was burned in the market of the town, with all her clothes, and with *her instrument* hanged in her neck, as we find out from the diary. The date when the execution took place is not mentioned either in the Court protocols, or in the Diary of Bereczk.

This is then the document produced by the lay court of Cluj, as a result of the investigation made by the inquisitors and judges, the intermediary through whom we have access to the case.

Hereinafter, we would like to give a possible interpretation on the case presented above, first focusing on the cross-dresser, and then on the female sodomite, finally trying to disclose some rhetoric's on female deviance.

Of the first court's records, we would like to draw attention to the case of the cross-dresser. It is hard for us to accept that there were times when the differences between gender (socio-cultural sex) and sex (biological sex) could be read only from appearances. Laqueur's work then makes us quite uncertain about these matters, since in his opinion the human body is inseparable of what we would call a certain society's cultural, social and scientific perception of the body²⁰. According to Laquer, until the 19th century the two genders had been seen as

²⁰ Thomas Laquer, *Making sex*, 12.

variations of one sex: male sex²¹. A person's sex was determined by the heat generated by one's body, so even in the 18th century people believed that sex may change during one's lifetime, although in Holly Devor's opinion "the stories which have been told and retold have been on gender rather than sex changes"²². Sex was determined based on physical facts, while gender was established based on clothing, behavior, in other words by sex-specific inner and external attitudes. The ultimate distinction was then made by the society, which embodied its citizens with gender specific roles, „readable“ codes, with the socio-cultural sex.

Researchers, however, think that cross-dressing was largely spread across Europe, but they drew attention only when these transvestites raised the interest of the authorities (for female transvestites because they courted or married other women). There were also some instances when this behavior was acceptable, like during carnivals or traveling²³, when temporary cross-dressing was not regarded as an attempt against human and divine laws, or in time of great political and military danger²⁴.

In Dekker/van de Pol's opinion cross-dressers were materially or emotionally motivated²⁵, and this "dramatic decision" was part of their social strategy for social and economical survival²⁶. The study of the Dutch cases highlighted that most of the cross-dressers were born outside the Republic²⁷, and this could also explain our case, since the accused was a woman from Ujhorod who lived her life far away from her home environment, in Hungary and Transylvania. From Bereczk's record we found out that she lived in the Courts, so we suppose she did not come from the lower classes, since she was able to move free from

²¹ Devor Holly, *FTM*, 17.

²² *Ibid.*, 7.

²³ Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, 6.

²⁴ In the Diary of the noble Stephen Wesselényi, we know that the Governor's wife, Claire Bethlen had a cook, a woman who was constantly wearing men's robe. Her name is also quite unusual Samu Kató [Samuel Catherin], but unfortunately we have no more information on her. Although her behavior was tolerated, since "she was a quite good cook". István Wesselényi, *Sanyarú világ* (Wretched World. Diary: 1703-1708), ed. András Magyari (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1983), vol. 1, 81. The same author noted that in the town of Sibiu two women (a Russian maiden and a German woman) were executed in 1703 because they provided women clothes for men, to disguise them in order to leave the town. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 423.

²⁵ Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, Chapter 3.

²⁶ Marjorie Garber, *Vested interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 30.

²⁷ Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, 10

Court to Court, probably as a servant. Unfortunately, the lack of sources did not allow us to determinate her social status; we have no testimonies regarding this dramatic gender change and we have no record on her attempt to vindicate her choice. Her cross-dressing, however, seems to be directly related to her marital state.

There is also the issue of clothes. In early modern Transylvania common people did not possessed a wardrobe, most of them having only a few clothes that effectively reflected their social status. Sumptuary laws were promulgated by cities or towns to regulate who wore what and on what occasion²⁸. If for most of the European countries the purpose was to regulate commerce or to support local industries and “to keep down social climbers, to keep the rising social groups in their sartorial place”,²⁹ in the protestant Transylvania the reason was a moral one and not necessarily an economic one. Not only the town regulations, but also the Transylvanian law corpus, the *Approbatae Constitutiones* stipulated who and what shall wear³⁰. Clothes were codes for class, status, rank and wealth: “The ideal scenario was one in which a person’s social status, social role, gender and other indicators in the world could be read, without ambiguity or uncertainty”³¹. The puritan and protestant town of Cluj was even more obsessive in keeping this tradition of a decent and *certain* dressing. The citizens’ clothing was restricted, as we have mentioned before, not only because of social but moral considerations, as well. The town’s council protested against luxury, even in the case of nobles, but condemned the lower social ranks for their inadequate dresses, as well. Even more, if cross-dressing was tolerated during carnivals in most European towns, in Cluj the situation was exactly the opposite. Since the 16th century, the town prohibited public celebrations before feast, especially mask-wearing, cross-dressing

²⁸ Gyöngy Kovács Kiss, “Adatok a viselet 18. századi szabályozásához” (Details on the regulation of clothing in the 18th century) in *Emlékkönyv Magyarai András 75. születésnapjára* (Festschrift on the 75th birthday of András Magyarai), eds. Judit Pál, Enikő Rüz-Fogarasi (Presa Universitară: Cluj, 2002), 41-47.

²⁹ Marjorie Garber, *Vested interests*, 25.

³⁰ Gyöngy Kovács Kiss, “Adatok a viselet szabályozásáról a XVI-XVII. századi Kolozsváron” (Details on the regulation of clothing in the 16th -17th Century Cluj) in *Kolozsvár ezer éve* (1000 years of Cluj), eds. Tibor Kálmán Dáné, Ákos Egyed, Gábor Sipos, Rudolf Wolf (Cluj: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület, 2001), 60.

³¹ Marjorie Garber, *Vested interests*, 26.

and dancing on the streets of the town³². Cross-dressing was not a simple curiosity, but a crime. Although the sin of transvestism appears to be less than the charge of sodomy, wearing clothes of the opposite sex was also punished and considered to be a social and moral deviance. The judges plead to the biblical injunction from Deuteronomy (22:5), the divinely ordained sumptuary law: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God"³³. According to Dekker/van de Pol this biblical prohibition was sufficient to regard cross-dressing as a "criminal offence". However, in Europe the judicial authorities rarely condemned simple transvestites whose gender change had no sexual connotation. For we have no knowledge of trials for cross-dressers in Transylvania, we cannot reconstitute the penal practice for these cases, but in Cluj it was certainly punished by whipping or expelling the convicted out of town, like in most of the deviance cases.

Changing clothes was only the beginning of the disguise; in impersonating men, women had to face some physical problems as well, as the lack of physical force, masculine gestures, male behavior and naturally several biological problems such as hiding their menstruation or the absence of masculine sex organs. From Puff's and Dekker/van de Pol's studies we know that some of these cross-dresser women used artificial male genitals in order to urinate³⁴ or to have sexual relations with women who had no knowledge on their real sex³⁵. However, our subject succeeded to manage these gender specific problems very well since she succeeded to behave like a male for a period of 14 years.

As we emphasized in several places above, Ungvári's gender choice had a strong sexual connotation. In her case, dressing and acting like a man made possible not only the existence of sexual relations with other women, but the legalization of them by marriage. And this is where we arrive to our second purpose, the story of the female sodomite.

³² András Kiss, "Farsangolás Kolozsvárt 1582-ben" (Carnival in Cluj in 1582) in Idem, *Források és értelmezések* (Sources and interpretation) (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1994), p. 103.

³³ The biblical text is from Marjorie Garber, *Vested interests*, 28, Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, 75.

³⁴ The case of Catharina Lincken from 1721 (Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, 16), and Katherina Hetzeldorfer (Helmut Puff, *Female Sodomy*, 45).

³⁵ However, the testimonies made in the courtroom have to be interpreted in the context they were made, the *seduced* women doing almost everything to reduce their crime and presenting themselves as victims.

The well-known Hungarian historian of medicine, Gyula Magyarikossa identifies sodomy in Hungary for the first time in the 14th century, in the officers' oath. During the Middle Ages the sin of sodomy was hardly mentioned, Magyarikossa's conclusions are based on *Jurisprudentia criminalis* (1751) of Mathias Bodó, which states that sodomy was a rare crime among Hungarian people, and that it was spread among them by foreigners. Other studies underlined that even if it was a rare crime, sodomy was present in the Hungarian law and it was punished by the same punishment for centuries, that is, death by fire, which could be executed while the convicted was still alive, or only after it was decapitated³⁶.

In Transylvania we have legal data dating back to 1685, when the authorities renewed the laws against sodomites each and every year. Initially the legislation ordered inquisitors to reach out for "those who live in sodomy", which "irritated His Majesty and horrifies Christian people", without determining the exact punishment³⁷. The inquisitors were required to identify sodomites in "the counties, seats, and provinces, even in our Court, in Colleges and in the Army". According to the regulation in force in 1685, the cases which involved sodomy could end only with physical punishment³⁸. In 1689 the authorities provided further explanations, according to which those who were found practicing this *crime* had to be trialed having the right only to one postponement, and forbidding one the right to ask for the prince's gratitude or indulgence³⁹. But on April 13th, 1697, a more elaborate version of this law was drawn up, which was designed to regulate future sodomite cases in Transylvania, forbidding the accused to buy its freedom with money or other goods, and condemned the criminal to death by fire⁴⁰.

The term of sodomy in these sources was used in a rather broad sense, and it encompassed a large scale of sexual deviances. Our lectures

³⁶ Ildikó M. Antalóczy, "Erdélyi bűncselekmények Debrecenben a XVIII. sz. közepén" (Moral crimes in Debrecen in the middle of the 18th century), *Debreceni Szemle*, no.1 (2000): 117.

³⁷ Sándor Szilágyi, ed., *Monumenta Comitalia Regni Trasylovaniae. Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek (1540-1699)* (21 volumes, Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1875-1898), (hereinafter: MCRT), vol. 18 (1683-1686), 35, 550; vol. 19 (1686-1688), 116 ; vol. 20 (1688-1691), 260.

³⁸ Gyula Magyarikossa, *Magyar Orvosi Emlékek* (Hungarian medical memories) (5 volumes, Budapest: Magyar Orvosi Könyvkiadó Társulat, 1940), vol. 3, 424.

³⁹ MCRT, vol. 20 (1688-1691), 260.

⁴⁰ MCRT, vol. 21 (1692-1699), 293.

suggest that in Transylvania sodomy could denote sexual contact between two men⁴¹, between human and animals⁴² and anal copulation, as well⁴³. No matter how strict the legislation was, the narrative sources, autobiographies and diaries we have studied also suggest that death penalty for sodomy could be avoided⁴⁴.

Nevertheless, we failed to find any female sodomite cases, and it seems that the actual situation was not so different in Western Europe, either. Somehow, same sex relations between women did not raise the interest of the authorities. This could be explained, as John Boswell argues, by the fact that intimacy between women did not have an impact on the bloodline⁴⁵, but it could also indicate that men believed the sexual

⁴¹ One of the greatest Transylvanian cases of sodomy was that of László Vajda, a nobleman from the Court of Michael Apaffy, which happened in 1684. It is, however, interesting that the first edict against sodomy was given only a year after the accusation of Vajda. According to the History of Michael Cserei, Vajda was a victim of the political ambition of two other nobles, and his case has nothing to do with sodomy. Mihály Cserei, *Históriája* (His history), ed. Gábor Kazinczy (Pest: Emich Gusztáv Könyvnyomdája, 1852), 148-149.

⁴² At the end of the 17th century, in the County of Turda three men were convicted to death by fire: in 1694 a boy named Simeon, for sinning with a mare; in 1696 Todor Ruszan was caught having intercourse with a steer and Prekup Todorucan with a cow. Veronka Dáné, "Az őnagysága széki így deliberála. Torda vármegye fejedelemségkori bírósági gyakorlata" ("His Highness' Court has deliberated it in such manner". The juridical activity in Turda County during the age of the Principality). Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek 259 (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem Történelmi Intézete, Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 2006), 147, 165-166. In the edited sources of the Transylvanian history, we have found only one record on sodomy before the 17th century, dating from 1590, but from the formulation used in the abstract we cannot tell for sure if the convicted (Christophe Szentmiklósi) had lost only his assets or his life, too. Tamás Fejér, Etelka Rácz, and Anikó Szász, eds., *Az erdélyi fejedelmek Királyi Könyvei* (The Libri regii of the Transylvanian princes), VII/3 Báthory Zsigmond Királyi Könyvei 1582-1602 (The Libri regii of Sigismund Báthory 1582-1602) (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 2005), 348 (reg. no. 1277).

⁴³ *SZT*, vol. 12 (Szák-Táv), 1683: A man was living with his wife "not according to the order of the Holy marriage, but in the forbidden sodomy", 542.

⁴⁴ "It was a sorry thing, and one deserving both of the judgment of God and of shame in the eyes of posterity, that the gubernium dispensed justice neither to the pious nor to the wicked [...] The law sodomite Laszlo Mikola gave his divorced wife and his estate to his ponce, whose name was Szilágyi, but the three of them then lived together [...] A thousand forints, fields, cattle and whatever, concealed the sodomy of David Horváth". Miklós Bethlen, *The Autobiography of Miklós Bethlen*, trans. Bernard Adams (London: Kegan Paul, 2004), 473-474.

⁴⁵ John Boswell, *Same-sex Unions in Premodern Europe* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), Introduction.

act between women to be senseless, because “no one suspected two women living together of sexual relations”⁴⁶ since “human sexuality was phallogocentric”⁴⁷. There are also researchers, as Karma Lochrie, Joan Cadden or Laqueur, who present female sodomy as having a strong relationship with power, and consider that the lack of sources or the lack of interest in these cases is a result of the fact that female sodomy was “less threatening to social order”⁴⁸ and that “the assigned passivity to women in sexual relations renders them both of lesser value and lesser concern”⁴⁹. In Laqueur’s opinion, the tribade/ female sodomites were dangerous not because their moral actions were questionable, and they deviated from natural heterosexuality, but because they assumed “culturally unacceptable” roles, that of *power* and *prestige* associated with masculinity⁵⁰. And when these cases came into the attention of the authorities, they were not simply judged as sexual deviances, but as menace to society and they are looked and judged through a masculine defender’s perspective.

In Ungvári’s case the sentence was that of sodomy, but curiously the trial did not mention anything about the law, and the jury gave its sentence according to the Bible, making reference to the rabbinic law, embraced then by Christians, and which was very strict on homosexuality. The Bible (Lev. 18.22, 20.13) prohibits sexual contact between men, and requires the death penalty for this sin. According to the Hebrew tradition, homosexuality was considered a crime for which the offenders deserve death by stoning. This law was then adopted in sodomite cases with one difference: changing the execution from stoning to death by fire. Only a year before Ungvári’s trial, a man from Sibiu received the same sentence for sodomy, but his death was eased by the fact that he was first decapitated and burned only after then⁵¹.

It is, however, curious that in Dekker/van de Pol’s opinion, “a great difference between this [sodomy] and the later notion of homosexuality is that sodomy was thought to concern incidental acts, and not one’s

⁴⁶ Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, 57.

⁴⁷ Judit Brown, *Immodest Acts: the Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Replica Books, 1986), 6.

⁴⁸ Karma Lochrie, *Covert operations: The Medieval Uses of Secrecy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1999), 197.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁵⁰ Laqueur, *Making sex*, 53.

⁵¹ Miklós Eszenyi, “Adalékok a homoszexualitás középkori történetéhez” (Contributions to the history of homosexuality in the Middle Ages), *Valóság*, no. 1 (1999): 55.

permanent sexual nature”⁵². This could be true for almost all types of sodomy, but not for our case. The two researchers’ conclusions may be based on the fact that the Dutch sources analyzed by these authors, concerning cross-dressing and female same sex relationships, were social escapades motivated by one’s social incapacity to integrate into the society as a woman and not a life-choice, a desire to impersonate a male both biologically and socially, as Ungvári did. In our case, however, the trial documents suggest and highlight the importance of marriage, which provoked and scandalized the authorities and the citizens of Cluj, as well. For these authorities, Ungvári was a symbol of aggressive masculinity, which deceived the society and pushed her wives into sin, she made overtures to women; at least this is what we could learn from the record. Therefore, for a woman to marry another woman was not only a wicked and disgusting act, but it represented a mocking both of the divine and the social law, too. It is obvious that assuming another social role, that of male, Ungvári had the freedom to choose, and to *steal young girls away from others*. One may believe, as Dekker/van de Pol did, that there is a psychological effect in the desire to bring their female relation closer to an acceptable heterosexual level, but the presumption that “If I love a woman I must be a man” it is very hard to accept⁵³. We have to admit that Ungvári had a strong, almost uncontrollable desire to be with other women. It is obvious that the reason for Ungvári’s wife to disclose her husband’s real nature was not a moral impulse, but she was rather motivated by anger and the desire to have her revenge. We also have to consider the distinction made in the trial record, that is, “fornicated with her” and “she fornicated with”, which could also lead us to some other conclusions. She might not be the only cross-dresser, or woman in a possession of a dildo, since the judges also had their suspicions on others having such *abominable instruments*, but for sure she was the only person condemned for this. So, unfortunately, the women Ungvári sinned with are *invisible* for us.

Ungvári’s crime was that to act against nature’s law and against all things that meant order, by perverting the union, not only on a physical level, of the sexual act, but on the moral level, too. It was then evident that she deserved the ultimate penalty. Our research suggests that the penalty given to Ungvári was the same given in the witchcraft trials⁵⁴,

⁵² Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The tradition of female transvestism*, 56.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁵⁴ The witchcraft trials ended usually in the same way, with torture, and than execution by fire: 1729 Elisabeth Ötvös (midwife accused of witchcraft) CP II/33:6-8.

although not all the witch trials ended with execution by fire⁵⁵, and it is certain that not all male sodomites ended up on flames, as we mentioned before. Therefore, the punishment that Ungvári received for her guilt is one of the most severe verdicts given by the court in the first half of the century. The Court of Cluj condemned women to death for major crimes such as adultery⁵⁶ (although, very rarely) and infanticide⁵⁷, but these women were “only” decapitated, and they were not tortured or burned. Many of the sins committed *contra naturam*, against nature, and mostly all forms of lust practiced by maidens or married women and men were punished by whipping by the executioner and by banishing the convicted out of the town. And there are cases when even leaving the town was not imposed. Death penalty could also be avoided with money, one could buy his/her life or freedom, and physical punishment could be also evaded for several reasons⁵⁸. We could only wonder how it is that Ungvári had no one to plead for her cause; it is certain that nobody wanted to be associated with her because of fear of death or public humiliation. But there is also quite obvious that even if someone paid for her, the Court would have not changed its sentence, because just as in 1704, in Sarah Katona’s case, they wanted to give an example to the citizens of Cluj and for anybody who dared to be against the existing social and moral rules of the town.

Microfilm No. 201/capture 304; 1734, Kata Kádár *CP* II/36: 3-4. Microfilm No. 201/capture 522-523; 1743 Judith Péntek *CP* II/41:119-120. Microfilm No. 202/capture 339-340.

⁵⁵ In 1725 Stephan Részeg accused Elisabeth Székely of witchcraft (*CP* II/29:154 Microfilm No. 201/capture 156.) One year later, in 1726, Elisabeth was condemned to death, but the judges changed their sentence and she was kept in prison for almost 3 years after which she was whipped by the executioner and expelled out of the city together with her husband. But she survived.

⁵⁶ In 1704 Sarah Katona, the wife of Daniel Pap, was condemned in Cluj to death because of inappropriate behavior, “*extraordinarias comportationes*”, outrageous conversations, nudity, adulterous life. Her execution was public in order to stand as an example for all citizens. *TAC*, *Fasc.* II/425. Microfilm No. 273/capture 0088.

⁵⁷ In 1723 a young girl Elisabeth Szatmári was condemned to death by the Court of Cluj because of infanticide. The punishment initially was quite severe, they wanted to fling her into a thorn bushes, but the judges changed their minds and changed the sentence to decapitation, and throw the body into a bush only after the execution. *CP*. II/29:22. Microfilm No. 201/capture 87.

⁵⁸ We have many references on husbands or wives who begged for their adulterous partner’s life, children who were sent to the Court to appeal to the judges emotions, crying on their knees for their condemned mothers, and as our records testify, they did succeed in several cases.

Even if “rhetoric is not our business”⁵⁹, we would adopt a positivist view if we simplify the relationship between deliberation and reality, since we are aware of the various possibilities of interpretation on this case, which certainly will not change the fact that a female sodomite and cross-dresser was executed in 1712 pursuant to the sentence given by the Court of Cluj. But we think that there is a number of perspectives that can be adopted on the same case since our two records, the Protocol and that of Bereczk are different, both in language and content, therefore we would like to emphasize that the record written by the town’s scribe includes some of his personal reflections on the case, as well. It would be more than wise to compare the different versions of the same examination, recorded by different scribes, but since this is not possible, we would like to present different examinations focusing mainly on the same crime.

The court records usually present all kinds of cases concerning persons who not conform society’s rules and were associated with deviance and disorder. The sources we have analyzed, however, had proved that one must not be engaged in same sex relations to be persecuted, convicted and isolated; it was enough to embrace an inappropriate sexual behavior. One could wonder why we did not present and explore better the case of the woman summoned by the court together with Ungvári. Anna Szilágyi’s role in this story is unrevealed. But the sentence the authorities gave her is the most common for female deviance during the first half of the 18th century. Anna Szilágyi probably was caught in the act with Ungvári; this could be a possible explanation for her presence. The second time she was summoned by the Court was on 14th of January, only a week after the first appeal. It seems that the charges against her did not require a long investigation. She was however cited as *puella* Anna, so she was not a married woman, she was just a maiden, probably a young one. The scribe noted that the testimony of the witnesses did not bring enough evidence against her, so she could not be condemned, but “there are some circumstances” (65) which made quite clear to the judges that she did some immoral acts, such as “drinking, eating and kissing with the Germans” [soldiers] (65), and because of these, in order to spare the town from her “scandalous behavior” she had to leave Cluj and she had to pay all the expenses of the advocates. She wasn’t exiled permanently, but she was forbidden to return to Cluj until “she didn’t prove her good

⁵⁹ Gizburg citing Momigliano. Carlo Ginzburg, “Checking the evidence: The Judge and the Historian”, *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 18, Autumn (1991): 91.

behavior”, because otherwise “her acts were written down, and she won’t escape severe punishment” (65). Based on Puff’s study, we could conclude that in this case, as it was in the German case too, women (Anna for example) plead as victims, since sexual activism, the initiative, all were attributed to men⁶⁰, or in this example to the women impersonating that male. The despair of Ungvári’s second wife, that of being abandoned for another, the jealousy but also the conviction that she would miss the death penalty for her guilt, make us very clear that people know well how to play their social roles, how to make their sin less or to pretend to be victims. Sexual activity was attributed to men, while women played the role of the passive part. These were stereotypes spread across all Europe, which “provided the female witnesses with an ultimately successful defense strategy”⁶¹. This mentality could partly explain the success of Anna, because our research proved that many women were accused or condemned, whether or not victims, and female deviance is much more present in the court of Cluj than male deviance⁶².

Therefore, in the few cases of women deviance, Handsáros used almost all the time the same description: *drinking and eating, hugging and kissing with strangers, spending time in suspicious places*. He is sometimes reformulating the phrase, but there is usually continuity in his narration. Peter Endes, the town’s scribe from 1722, had other customs; he usually marked his own reflections on the case, especially when he considered that the convicted get off light, for example: Anna Nagy was exiled from Cluj because being a drunk, constantly cursing and being deprave, in Endes’s opinion “she would deserved death”, but he noted that the judges were thinking of her children, and left her alive⁶³. In the case of Sara Medgyesi, he noted that the young girl deviated from the right path because she was surrounded by malicious persons who tempted her to evil life, and he considered that it was right for the judges to leave her alive, since she was too young, although married, but with a loving husband who begged for her life⁶⁴. His most impetuous narration is the

⁶⁰ Helmut Puff, “Female Sodomy”, 43.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶² Other researchers also proved that in the Court protocols female deviance is a considerably larger element than male deviance in the Hungarian territories. For the decade of 1740, Antalóczy’s study has revealed that of the 849 persons involved in the 571 trials held in Debrecen, 519 were against women. The study also emphasizes the great percent of strangers involved in these trials. Ildikó M. Antalóczy, “Erkölcsei bűncselekmények Debrecenben”, 102.

⁶³ 1722 2nd of May CP II/28:75. Microfilm No. 201/capture 46.

⁶⁴ 1722 5th of July CP II/28:92-93. Microfilm No. 201/capture 56.

record of Elisabeth Szatmári's infanticide; the narration contains brackets, personal judgment against the *direful woman who acted against her mother duties*, killing the *fine and healthy boy* she gave birth to⁶⁵. The jurist was just as strict to men, since he noted that, in his opinion, Michael Kovásznai's body should have been mutilated because he was a male deprave who *constantly prepared location for people to fornicate*⁶⁶. However, Endes is a very unique case, since we did not find any other scribe who expressed his personal attitude so obviously and we can only wonder how Ungvári's case would have been preserved if recorded from his passionate perspective. But neither Handsáros, nor Endes described sexual practices in the way George Füzéry did, who liked to give details such as *shameless paddling one's genitals*, or that some women *did not desire their husband not their soul nor their body*, and he liked to let convicted voices to be heard in sentences such as *I would never looked on strangers if God would gave me a better husband*⁶⁷. These are only a few examples of how trial documents with the same plot, can vary from scribe to scribe.

Ginzburg compared trial records and the documentation collected by the anthropologist in his field. For sure, we would ask different questions, which had no significance for the judges, or we would like to hear the story of the defendants and witnesses not from the scribe but from themselves. As Ginzburg concluded, this is "not just a question of cultural distance, but of different objectives"⁶⁸. The two accounts of the event, on which this essay rely upon, were both written by male authorities, representatives of order, law and justice, a jurist scribe and a physician, and it is common for them that the case of a cross-dresser female sodomite is an unheard-of novelty, "even among pagans", but unfortunately in both cases the narration is too short and deficient in details. Due to the lack of sources, our essay is full of "perhaps"-es and "may have been"-s, not only because the evidence is "inadequate or perplexing" but because we fail to reach the historical possibilities which could hide in this story. We looked inevitably for similar situations which could help to reconstruct this story, but unlike other researchers we did not find similarities with our case. There are no essays or books on 18th century people of modest birth from

⁶⁵ See footnote 55.

⁶⁶ 1723 28th of July CP II/29:59. Microfilm No. 201/capture 106.

⁶⁷ 1725 5th of March CP. II/29:162-163. Microfilm No. 201/capture 162.

⁶⁸ Carlo Ginzburg, "Proofs and Possibilities: Postscript to Natalie Zemon Davis, The Return of Martin Guere" In *Threads and Traces/ True, False, Fictive*, trans. Anne C. Tedeschi and John Tedeschi (California University Press, 2012), 56.

Transylvania, there are only a few voices and, unfortunately, most of them are damned to silence in the archives, of which many have been lost⁶⁹.

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Constructing Gender in Romanian Proverbs

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Abstract: *Constructing Gender in Romanian Proverbs.* In Romanian proverbs, the woman is evil, lazy, shrewed, weak, talkative, but she can also be beautiful, diligent, good, honest and still she is not like a man. Anyway she does, the woman stays in a man's shadow, even if she reaches the superior limits of her abilities, this will only mean the inferior limits of men's abilities, all these proverbs seem to be transmitting to us through time. They undoubtedly come from a past reality – most of them were gathered and published in collections at the end of 19th century – though it is impossible to find a period of origin. More important is the fact that they prove some valability today and this denotes a too little or no change at all regarding the attitude towards woman and her perception in society.

Keywords: gender identity, male discourse, proverbs, Modern Epoch, Romanian folklore

Rezumat: *Construirea genului în proverbele românești.* În proverbele românești, femeia este rea, leneșă, vicleană, slabă, guralivă, dar poate să fie și frumoasă, muncitoare, cuminte, cinstită. Totuși, ea nu este ca un bărbat. Orice ar face, femeia este mereu în umbra bărbatului. Chiar dacă atinge limita superioară a posibilităților sale, aceasta înseamnă de-abia atingerea limitei inferioare a capacităților masculine – ne spun toate aceste proverbe. Chiar dacă vin dintr-o realitate trecută, majoritatea fiind culese și publicate în colecții de folclor din secolul al XIX-lea, este imposibil să le datăm cu exactitate. Mai important este însă faptul că ele își dovedesc valabilitatea și astăzi, ceea ce denotă o schimbare foarte redusă în ceea ce privește atitudinea față de femeie și percepția ei în societate.

Cuvinte-cheie: identitate de gen, discurs masculin, proverbe, epoca modernă, folclor românesc

Building the identities for masculine and feminine categories in Romanian traditional society is an old concern, and so far we have studied in the field how this process is developed. In fact most of the material refers especially to the image of the woman in Romanian traditional society as it comes out from the proverbs and the sayings.

First of all we may think that the proverbs and the saying are referring to a long time ago reality, still by the use of the present tense they situate in a sort of eternal present, the idea that is the more valid the more the image of the woman did not change much in the past century.

On the other hand we cannot talk about a richness of the genre regarding the subject that we are interested in, as even though there are few folklore collections - „the one whose work comes closer to a folklore collection is the *vornic* Iordache Golescu (1768-1848), who left a massive manuscript of 854 pages. *Pilde, povăţuiri și cuvinte adevărate și povești* gathered by..., done in 1845. Here the proverbs and sayings make the chapters I (*Pilde și tâlcuirea lor*) and II (*Pilde despre povăţuire și tâlcuirea lor*), totalizing 78 pages, but most of them are translated in other literatures. Also *Povestea vorbii* (1847) by Anton Pann is based mostly on Turkish and Greek repertory of proverbs, the author being more of a translator, at the second edition (1852-1853) changing visibly the physiognomy of the Romanian ones by expressing them in lines. Through the popularization books (calendars etc.) but especially through school and school books, some proverbs, translated from other languages have naturalized through the autochthonous ones, sometimes hard to make a difference.”¹ - the number of proverbs referring to woman is quite small.

There are still in use, clichés, stereotypes that maintain a certain image of woman, more or less true that we find in proverbs that - we think - were created by and for a masculine public. Few are the proverbs - in the topic area - where the discourse is a feminine one as opposed to the masculine one. The tackling of the subject started of course from the key word - woman - then we took into account the terms directly linked to it: *fată* (girl), *muiere*, *nevastă* (wife), *babă* (old woman), *mumă* (old hag), and then we took into consideration terms less obviously linked to the term *woman* but that were referred as associated terms to the idea of feminine: *bariș* (scarf), *cuptor* (oven), *bărbat* (man), *catrință* (apron), *casă* (house), *batistă* (handkerchief) etc.

There have been studied in the Archive² the proverbs from 34 terms and we may conclude that the image of woman as it comes from proverbs and sayings is a mostly negative one, both from the features as also the facts she is 'committing'. It is like the woman was born with all these negative features - in most of the proverbs this is said explicitly - and there are few chances for her to correct something and become a positive character. Conclusion: the woman, as a weak element, obedient and negative, needs a powerful leading and positive element: the man.

¹ Ovidiu Bârlea, *Folclorul românesc*, vol.II, Ed. Minerva, București, 1983, p. 314-315.

² Proverbs are taken from the Arhiva de Folclor "Ion Mușlea", that has a corpus very well organized, thematically, including even proverbs from the collections of Iordache Golescu, I. A. Candrea etc.

It would be worth mentioning that the image is general for all three provinces, fact explained through the multitude of variants – function to region – of some proverbs.

The most suitable starting point would be the presentation of the woman's features as they refer to the „given condition” of woman, something she is born with and she could change it or not. Since the discourse is – as I mentioned above – a masculine one, it remains valid especially the second situation, where the woman cannot change this „given”.

And so we reached to find that the woman is weak, without vigor and stupid:

To be a woman. To be powerless. (Vâlcea)

No matter how strong the woman, still half a man. (I. Golescu)

Women will have mind/When the butt has teeth. (Suceava)

Woman is half a cross, the Romanian(man) is a whole cross. (Gr. Jipescu)

Woman gets cold at head. (Argeş)

Woman like a thin vessel that easily breaks. (I. Golescu)

Thus, lack of vigor and weakness refer both to physical as also spiritual categories. All these differences want to show that even the worse man is better than a woman:

Better a man of straw than a golden woman. (Argeş)

The method of defining is the comparison, and the elements chosen are extremes gold – straw. What is certain is that it departs from a physical weakness to reach in many proverbs to an intellectual one.

Interesting is the following proverb:

Woman as the the most fruitful land, without watering nothing will bear fruits. (I. Golescu)

This has also the explanation “that is without man” and this strengthens the general idea that the woman is the passive element, having a potential and the man is the active element that actions upon this feminine potential.

Another negative feature of woman is the evilness that surpasses that of the man. Besides, any negative feature is amplified in the case of woman contrasting with the positive features that are amplified in the case of man, by making him a kind of victim of the woman.

Woman makes you flee in the world. (Argeş)

Even the Devil flees from the evil woman. (I. Golescu)

You avoid the evil woman like a pest house. (I. Golescu)

Woman is the Devil's sister. (Bucureşti)

Woman is the Devil's horse. (Argeş)

Woman is more than Devil. (Olt)

Woman makes Devil old. (Iași)

We see that the the evilness of woman is expressed in an absolute superlative, by comparison with an evil character – the Devil. She is either a relative of him or an object or animal at his service. Another set of proverbs though, present the woman's evilness in comparison with other – usually two – things or animals, perceived to be so evil that gets the man out of his house. In the case of the woman, getting out the house can go from a temporary exist until the rage of woman passes till a rupture of marriage, as the house, we will see later is equivalent in the proverbs with marriage.

We know that the Romanian traditional house was roofed with straw, shingles and later with tiles, thing that might explain the fact that the resistance of a roof could proove often flimsy. Another element of comparison present in proverbs coming from a practical reality is the smoke, as the stoves or better said the peasant heating devices had a system of directing the smoke out of the room only to the level of ceiling which was often partial and made the smoke spread in all the house.³

Three things get you out of your house: the drop(rain), smoke and evil woman. (I. Golescu)

Three things get you out of your house: rain, smoke and evil woman. (Roman)

Beware of the smoke in the houe and the evil woman. (București)

Also from a „given” belongs the shrewedness which again surpasses that of the Devil, character evil by definition, and who like this is tricking the man, and as the proverbs say even the Devil himself. Practically, the border between evilness and shrewdness becomes uncertain, in each case Devil being taken as a measure and so it becomes difficult to say when the target is the woman's shrewdness and when it is her evilness.

The woman judges the Devil and makes him endebted. (Suceava)

Woman made devil old. (Argeș)

Woman has the Devil's thought like him to throw you where he shouldn't. (Dolj)

In the same negative note, this time of unfaithfulness, a great number of proverbs are dedicated to woman. This unfaithfulness is perceived either generally or as direct reference to a sexual

³ A. Tița, „Sisteme pentru prepararea hranei și încălzire în interioarele țărănești din Muzeul Etnografic al Transilvaniei”, în *Anuarul Muzeului Etnografic al Transilvaniei*, vol.X, Cluj, 1978, p. 147-183.

unfaithfulness. This time again we have variants with triplets, where the woman is associated to other two things that are unfaithful to the man. The unfaithfulness of the woman – voluntary act, is associated with that of some pets – which is an involuntary act in fact.

Don't trust the woman and the horse. (Botoșani)

Don't trust the woman and the dog. (Covurlui)

Don't take for granted the woman's faith or that of the dog. (Mehedinți)

Don't trust the woman, the rifle and the horse. (Argeș)

For this reason – unfaithfulness – these three things are not to lent:

The rifle, the horse and the woman are not to lent. (Suceava)

Don't lent the horse and the woman. (Tutova)

Don't let on anyone's hands the horse and the woman. (Suceava)

You don't lent three things: the horse, the rifle and the woman. (Roman)

Practically these proverbs do not offer to woman but the status of an object, and if we notice that they come from the same geographical area, we may think they have or had a regional significance.

Woman are talking too much. Either they annoy their husband or go and gossip in the village or talk when they meet, one thing is extremely obvious: women are talking all the time, they are defined through the action of talking. That it is so, we are convinced by the explanation [facts are men and talks are women] given by Iordache Golescu to the proverb:

Women keep talking and the man are doing. (I. Golescu)

Hence, their comparison with geese – in the rural area – the noisiest of the poultry:

When three women meet, more than one hundred geese are gagging. (Suceava)

Talkative woman, her mouth made to talk. (I. Golescu)

And from here the popular glibness:

The man deaf, not good, the woman dumb, much, much better. (I. Golescu)

The insatiability of woman is also a subject for proverbs and not an unimportant one. On the one hand it is about a general insatiability, of material origin, where is not specified what exactly she wants, only the fact that she wants is stressed, and from here this is associated with things impossible to offer: „turkey cheese”, „cuckoo's milk”.

Woman has nine mouths and even if you fill them all she is still greedy. (Gr. Jipescu)

Woman is bag without bottom. (Argeș)

Woman wants turkey cheese and cuckoo's milk. (P. Ispirescu)

Woman swallow an entire ocean. (I. Golescu)

Woman's nature is greedy. (I. Golescu)

On the other hand this insatiability of the woman is referring to sexual desire. From this point of view the woman is assimilated to the horse from a legend gathered by Elena Niculiță-Voronca: "of all animals the horse is cursed to be satiable as long as he crosses the path. So is the woman cursed not to have satiablity but with a different meaning"⁴.

Woman when has a bed she stopd thinking at anything else. (I. Golescu)

See the devil woman/as you give she still asks for it/as it woud be a shot gun. (Prahova)

Man like a fire, woman a fire. (I. Golescu)

Fire is always the element to compare the sexual desire as it comes out from the proverb above, when the man is *like* a fire and the woman is the fire itself.⁵

In the same direction the proverbs saying that woman can't be guarded are quite interesting. Could it be here a greater voluntarism then man's? Again by comparison terms we notice that the woman is at the extreme – that is she can't be guarded.

One can guard a bag of fleas, a herd of rabbits but not a woman. (Suceava)

It is easier to guard a herd of rabbits than a woman. (Covurlui)

Is it here regarding these subjects, of unfaithfulness, of the inability to be guarded, the fact that there still is the belief generally spread (even today) that the woman should be battered to have fear from the man? As if for all her faults, or especially for some, the only weapon of a man would be the battering. Or maybe it is the only way a man could impose his domination upon woman.⁶

Woman runs from the club not from bread. (Covurlui)

Woman not battered like the horse uncurried. (Olt)

Woman not battered like the open mill. (Argeș; Mehedinți)

Woman uncombed[unbattered] like the open mill. (Suceava)

Women not admonished[unbattered]/ like unsalted food. (Suceava)

⁴ Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinile și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică*, apud. C. Bărbulescu, *Târcolitul viei – un rit de fertilitate*, BA dissertation, 1994.

⁵ C. Bărbulescu, *Târcolitul viei – un rit de fertilitate*, BA dissertation, Faculty of History and Philosophy, 1994.

⁶ Florentina Cățoiu, "Violența conjugală – caracteristici cantitative și factori etiologici în județul Brăila", in *Romanian Sociological Review*, new series, year VIII, no. 1-2, p. 55-67.

We understand from the last proverb the obligativity of battering, as a sine qua non condition of the couple's essence. Another thing worthy of mentioning is the fact that women do not get along, compared to men of course, who are on the positive pole again:

Two women in one place/ they not live but quarrel. (A. Pann)

Two man can live in one place but two women in one house not. (Argeş)

To continue here with the negative register of the image of woman in proverbs we will enumerate few proverbs saying that woman is the one that scatter all that the man gather.

Beautiful woman/ damage to the house. (Olt)

Man brings with the bag, woman throws with the needles, everything ends. (Candrea)

The first proverb makes a connection between scatter and the woman's coquetry – all those things a woman buy to maintain beauty – where from the connection between woman's beauty and scatter. We will see in the proverbs referring to *girl* that the scatter was linked to fortune division through the dowry given to the girl.

Beyond all these negative elements that compose an image not to envy for a woman, there is also a series of proverbs that seem to be like a masculine discourse for a masculine public, but still give credit to the sayings and especially to the mental abilities of a woman:

Woman see even when the man barely see. (Argeş)

Listen from ten words one from the woman. (Argeş; Mehedinţi)

A woman's advice is useful. (Argeş)

There is also a set of proverbs that support the possibility of transcending this inferior position of the woman compared to man, understood by us as an implied conditional in the logic of the proverb.

Honest woman is the man's wreath. (Romaniaţi)

The diligent woman is her husband's wreath. (Botoşani)

The faithful woman, the honesty of the house. (I. Golescu)

The honest woman, jewel of your house. (I. Golescu)

Strong woman, the wealth of the house. (Botoşani)

All that the image of the woman gets from these proverbs is a positive aspect but not equality – we are talking about an equality in difference – with the man. The status she can reach is at most that of a prize – „wreath” – of the man.

It is also stressed in many proverbs that the woman cannot live without the man, and the comparison is done in a plastic way with words that are really doublets, concrete objects that cannot exist or action but together:

Woman without a man, like nail without hammer. (I. Golescu)

Woman without a man like waggon without forked drawbar. (I. Golescu)

Woman without a man like the house without foundation. (I. Golescu)

Woman without a man, like shovel without handle. (I. Golescu)

Woman without a man, like distaff without spindle. (I. Golescu)

We did find also at term man two proverbs holding to the same idea, of existence in a couple.

A man without a woman like he would be taken by bad fairies. (I. Golescu)

A man without a woman like half a scissors, that would not cut but scratch. (I. Golescu)

Another quite numerous category of proverbs is the one from the term *girl*. Most of them treat the subject of marriage. Of course the aim of a girl in a traditional society is to marry. The girl was the one that spinned and wove cloth for her own trousseau and she was the one to give hard time to her father, especially if she was not beautiful, because she made him offer a bigger dowry from the family wealth. Marriage, compulsory for the girl, is expressed in proverbs as a passage from father possession to husband possession, passage mostly felt as a burden for the father, a difficult task to solve. For this reason girls married under their social, economical, even intellectual status, if we think at the proverbs where the future husband is designated through a “donkey”, “garbage”, or “bear”:

Big girls only bears won't marry. (Suceava)

At a house with a big girl even a donkey shouts at the door. (Argeş)

At the big girl even a donkey roars. (Vâlcea, Mehedinţi)

Who has many daughters, marries a lot of donkeys. (Argeş)

The big girls is a stone in the house. (Roman)

Girls are stones in a man's house. (Vâlcea)

Many girls, poor house. (Vâlcea)

You have girls you collect garbage. (Tutova)

On the other hand it was unconceivable for a girl to remain unmarried. Marriage, I have said, was the ultimate goal of the girl. Outside of it the girl is subjected to public contempt: either because she didn't marry and she is a spinster, a burden for the family,

If a girl gets old/ burn her in the fire. (S. Fl. Marian)

After the sweets[period before Lent] the girls stay like turkey hens. (Vâlcea)

“Sweet” is the term that designates to food of animal origin that is forbidden during Lent. The longest Lent is that before Easter. During

Lent there are no weddings. Hence the proverb that explains clearly that once the Lent begun, the chances to marriage for a girl for that year is gone.

Not beam outside the string no gril unmarried. (Argeş)

Forty years it seems/ since I am a spinster. (Vâlcea)

Don't keep the old girl on the stove, cause she is not for the stove. (I. Golescu)

The proverbs above show clearly the exclusive role of the girl, but also that the time for it is limited, that there is a limit until this thing can be done. Or that by not marrying she was spoiled and so lost her virginity:

She is neither girl nor wife. (Bucureşti)

She is virgin like my mother. (Mehedinţi)

She is girl with a baby. (Vâlcea)

The shame of a girl, the floer of beauty. (I. Golescu)

She is girl in the head. (Vâlcea)

The gril passed the heaven. (Roman)

The priest has seven girls, all awaiting children. (Vâlcea)

There are many proverbs linked to the "honesty" of the girl and this shows the importance given by the peasant community to such a thing. Besides, in the south of Romania, during interwar period was still practiced the custom of "dancing the shirt", and in the situation when the girl was not virgin, she was sent back with her parents.⁷

There are also some proverbs referring to the laziness of the girls, but since we met the same idea expressed in proverbs to the term *sister-in-law* for example, we think it is referring to the laziness of the women married or not, especially when there are many in one place, by leaving the job one to the other:

The house with two girls, the cats die of thirst. (Bucureşti)

The house with two girls and well by the wall, the dog dies of thirst. (Vâlcea)

Playful mother's girl, with the garbage by the door. (Botoşani)

Where ther are two sisters-in-law/ the rooms are unswept. (Sibiu)

Where there are two sisters-in-law/the dishes are not cleaned. (Bihor)

In fact the critique to the laziness of the girls seems to be more like a ritual of preparing the girl as a future wife. The woman should be diligent as another proverb puts it:

⁷ S. Fl. Marian, *Nunta la români*, Tip. Carol Göbl, Bucureşti, 1890, p. 731; Elena O. Sevastos, *Nunta la români*, Tip. Carol Göbl, Bucureşti, 1889, p. 314-315.

A woman who is a woman, is diligent, beautiful, pleasant and unfeared. (Maramureș) – otherwise she is not a woman. On the other hand, if she is not diligent, the chances to find a man are decreased.

Being a mother is a quality that brings appreciation in rural world – actually is the second compulsory situation for the women – the cases of sterility being condemned and attributed to the magic done by another woman⁸, and we found a small number of proverbs having both positive and negative connotations:

She is like the mother of rain. (Mehedinți) [ugly]

Like a step mother. (I. Golescu) [mean]

The good mother does not ask the children if they are hungry.

Basically only one of the proverbs has positive connotations and not totally: “the good mother” makes us think that there is also a “bad mother”

Even if for real once the years have passed, the woman gains appreciation especially from her children – thus as a result of being a mother – *the old woman* or *the hag* is seen in a double perspective, like a holder of the magic, by spreading the evilness and envy through magic upon young women, or like a woman who, even if she grows old, she is still „tormented” by sexual desire.

Normally, the traditional society has exact boundaries, established for each situation: there is an age for marriage, an age for having children etc., everything goes according to unwritten rules but known by everyone. That is why whatever is not obeying to these norms, do not get into that “the way it is” is criticised and severely judged:

Where the hag makes magic/the devils does not mingle. (Buzău)

What the woman [old – is written in the explanation] ties, the devil does not untie. (Argeș)

No matter how old the woman awaits every week. (Vaslui)

Old hag doesn't scare of a thick club. (Argeș, Mehedinți)

The older the woman grows the envious is of young women. (I. Golescu)

Woman get old but her desires not. (I. Golescu)

Woman getting old and nobody looks at her, she thinks of chain loop. (I. Golescu)

There are a few proverbs without variants that give a definition to the woman by comparison not with the man but with an object or animal:

⁸ Idem, *Nașterea la români*, Ed. Grai și suflet – Cultura națională, București, 1995, cap. I, p. 7-12.

A woman is like the shadow: if you run from it it comes to you, if you run for it, she runs away from you. (Romanați)

Woman is the cat of the house, guarding it from mice. (I. Golescu)

Woman is a dog, barks but does not bite. (Teleorman)

A woman has nine souls, like cats. (Argeș, Roman)

There is always a connection between the woman and the cat. Probably because the cat is one of the animals the Devil is supposed to incarnate, and we already saw the connections between Devil and the woman, and then we reach to the relation woman-cat-Devil. On the other hand this proverb sends our thought to what an old woman told us when interviewed years ago about the division of spaces between woman and man in the peasant household: *The man stays out like the dog and the woman next to the stove like the cat.*⁹ In fact, this saying brings another limitation: the man - outside and the woman-inside, fact very well explained by a proverb found at the term *house*:

The house without a man is visible on the outside and the one without a woman is visible on the inside. (Bihor)

Another proverb that caught our attention, again without variants, is the following: You know a woman after her teeth. I. Golescu actually gives the explanation for this proverb: "It is shameful at Romanians for a woman to show her teeth. That is why, women in the countryside keep their palms in front of their mouths when they are in front of somebody they consider superior, as a sign of respect and modesty." Well this rule still applies. On the occasion of the fieldresearches done so far we noticed that the women kept their palms or a corner of scarf in front of their mouths when they talked to us. I did not ask and did not realize this until I read this explanation. Unfortunately, drawing a conclusion is sad and puts the woman in a status of inferiority towards many interlocutors.

Another connection is the triangle woman-wine-money. These are the three vices corrupting the man:

Three things are not letting the man alone: wine, woman and money. (Roman)

The good wine and the beautiful wife are two sweet poisons for a man. (Argeș)

The woman looks at the hand. (Tutova)

The woman's eyes are at the money bag. (Iași, Olt)

There are many variants of the proverb:

⁹ Elena Bărbulescu, "Spațiul feminin în gospodăria țărănească din Munții Apuseni", in *Identitate și alteritate. Studii de imagologie*, II, Lugoj, 1998.

Don't buy woman or cloth at the candlelight, because either one is cheating you. (I. Golescu) and transforms the woman in a merchandise, in a good to be invested in. The terms are economical and the woman is like a good to be sold or bought.

We took into consideration for this work also the term *man*, as it seemed interesting the fact that though all proverbs have as component the word *man*, the reference is done to the woman again, in most of cases transforming the man into a victim of the woman:

Oh, my man/He works and I drink. (Mehedinți)

Till her husband died/She took another one. (Putna)

Poor husband, last night you died and I could not forget you. (Banat)

Eat you people...because tomorrow is one year since my husband died, and the day after tomorrow, is two years since I took another one. (Covurlui)

I take my husband from Easter to Easter and the lover from week to week. (Suceava)

All these proverbs can join perfectly those that presented the woman as being unfaithful and lazy. Interesting were three proverbs that seems to have a feminine discourse for a feminine public:

Pity from man/like the leaf of a dried pear-tree/when you search for shawwow/ You get sunburnt. (Basarabia)

Pity from man like the shadow from a fence. (Banat)

Why God didn't let that women beat men at least once a year. (Vâlcea).

Besides these proverbs, we also took into consideration the proverbs from terms sending us indirectly to the idea of feminine or that are used to characterize a woman.

For the term *house*, most references are done to marriage, but there are also other meanings:

The house without a bell is bad. (Tutova)[without wife]

The house without curtains like the woman without eyebrows. (Suceava) [dying the eyebrows – says the explanation of the proverb]

To find her home. (P. Ispirescu, S. Fl. Marian)

For the term head: to tie her head. (Olt) [to get married]

In all Romanian provinces, after marriage, the woman has to wear a scarf on her head. At the wedding night the bridal wreath is changed with a “bridal *conci*[tied hair]”¹⁰, and in many areas even the way the hair is done is changed. It would be indecent for a married woman to walk with her hair uncovered. The rule still applies for Sunday when going to the church, where I could notice a code of the colors of scarves: light and red shades for young wives, and gradually,

¹⁰ S. Fl. Marian, *Nunta*, ed.cit., p. 712.

function to age the scarves have darker shades till black in the case of widows, even beyond the usual period of mourning.

For the term goat:

Where the goat jumps, her young goat jumps too. (Laurian & Maxim)

The goat jumps over the table, the young goat over the house. (Ilfov)

The explanation given is referring to the debauched women, and even more, this is something hereditary, the couple mother-daughter being easily recognizable in the couple goat-young goat. Still to debauchery are referring the proverbs from the term *bitch* and they want to say that the entire fault of the sin is the woman's as she is the initiator of it:

Until the bitch doesn't raise the tail, the dogs don't smell. (Buzău)

Until the bitch doesn't wonder through the neighborhood/the dogs don't follow. (Dorohoi)

There are a lot of connections done between woman and fire (by extension: *hearth, stove, oven*). In fact the activity of a woman is next to the stove; then the connection woman-fire has always sexual connotations; at the term *oven* we found proverbs referring to the evilness of women:

To the warm oven you need little wood. (București)

To be mouth of an oven. (Vaslui) [to be quarreled by women]

In conclusion, the woman is evil, lazy, shrewed, weak, talkative etc. but she can also be beautiful, diligent, good, honest and still *she is not like a man*. Anyway she does, the woman stays in a man's shadow, even if she reaches the superior limits of her abilities, this will only mean the inferior limits of men's abilities, all these proverbs seem to be transmitting to us through time. They undoubtedly come from a past reality – most of them were gathered and published in collections at the end of 19th century – though it is impossible to find a period of origin. More important is the fact that they prove some valability today and this denotes a too little or no change at all regarding the attitude towards woman and her perception in society. The gender identity is constructed verbally through a series of oppositions where woman becomes the negative pole or she is made equal with negative categories. Further more she is objectified and merchandised. We could have seen so far a whole world of metaphors put to hard work just to prove how unworthy of a man, a woman is. Her identity is constructing in a reversed manner, to serve the purpose of a world build by pairs. There is no third option, no grey zones¹¹.

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Transylvanian Identities: Swedish travellers' observations for the 17th – 19th centuries realities

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Abstract: *Transylvanian identities: Swedish travellers' observations for the 17th – 19th centuries realities.* Swedish travellers' observations regarding Transylvania's peoples represent a pertinent external view on the complex relationship between ethnicity, confession and nationality in 17th – 18th centuries, religious beliefs shared by the distinct ethnic communities they encountered in this area being one of the most important markers of identity. Moreover, these notes offer a number of plausible historical explanations for the changes which occurred during the 19th century in the ways that national identity was conceived by the Hungarian, Saxon and Romanian elites, this process taking place especially after the 1848-1849 Revolution and until the dissolution of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire in 1918.

Keywords: collective identities, Transylvania, religion and nationality, Swedish travellers, 17th – 19th centuries

Rezumat: *Identități transilvane: observațiile călătorilor suedezi din secolele XVII-XVIII.* Observațiile călătorilor străini privind popoarele transilvănene reprezintă o opinie externă pertinentă asupra relației complexe dintre etnicitate, confesiune și naționalitate în secolele XVII-XVIII, credințele religioase împărtășite de comunitățile etnice distincte pe care le-au întâlnit în această zonă fiind unul dintre cei mai importanți factori identitari. Mai mult chiar, aceste note oferă un număr de explicații istorice plauzibile pentru schimbările care au avut loc în secolul al XIX-lea în modul în care identitatea națională a fost concepută de către elitele maghiare, săsești și românești, acest proces având loc mai ales după revoluția de la 1848-1849 și până la destrămarea Imperiului Austro-Ungar în 1918.

Cuvinte-cheie: identități colective, Transylvania, religie și naționalitate, călători suedezi, secolele XVII-XIX

Introduction

Transylvanian identities were forged over the centuries through a series of friendly and inimical contacts with the proximate *Other* (or *Others*), through a gradual acknowledgement of the “nations” common and specific characteristics and through a series of mirroring games played with the representatives of other ethnicities from religious, linguistic, social, cultural and political viewpoints. In this complex process, four methods of defining oneself and others in relation to a

certain geographical area emerge: "ethnicising" the space, essentialising and naturalising certain traits, promoting valorising tropisms and constructing historical genealogies.¹ These types of "procedures" were observed and attentively noted by the Swedish travellers who passed through the area during the 17th - 18th centuries and more or less consciously put into action by the Transylvanian intellectuals of the 19th century.

As the travellers' remarks regarding the locals' confessional identities tend to be extensive, it should be mentioned that before the religious Reformation, the official religion in Transylvania was Catholicism, which was shared by the Hungarians, the Transylvanian Saxons and the Szeklers. After the 16th century the members of these privileged groups became Lutherans, Calvinists or Unitarian, while the Romanians' Orthodoxy remained unrecognized as an accepted (i.e. official) religion. In fact, in practice things went even further as Romanians were not always considered true Christians.² And the confessional aspects were related to other ethnic, linguistic, cultural and social alterities,³ such as the Romanians' almost complete identification with the Transylvanian peasants, an analogy pertaining both to the Hungarian 19th century intellectuals as to the Romanian ones,⁴ but also to the Transylvanian Saxons' mentality.⁵

In an attempt to put an end to such a treatment and to gain some political rights, a part of the Transylvanian Romanians united with the Church of Rome at the turn of the 18th century.⁶ Romanians now became separated, from a religious point of view, into Orthodox believers and

¹ Sorin Mitu, "De la 'Imaginea Celuilalt' la geografiile simbolice: trasee metodologice". In *Identitate și alteritate 3: Studii de istorie politică și culturală. Omagiu profesorului Liviu Maior*, edited by Nicolae Bocșan, Sorin Mitu, and Toader Nicoară, 9-21, (Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2002), 17.

² Ioan-Aurel Pop, "A Documentary Source on the Religious Situation of the Transylvanian Romanians in 1629", *Transylvanian Review* IX no. 4 (2000): 32-33.

³ Toader Nicoară, "Românii din Transilvania în imaginarul aristocratic maghiar în secolul al XVIII-lea". In *Identitate și alteritate II: Studii de imagologie*, edited by Nicolae Bocșan, Sorin Mitu, and Toader Nicoară, 123-135, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1998), 130-131.

⁴ Mitu Ildikó Melinda, and Sorin Mitu, "Românii văzuți de maghiari: geneza unei imagini etnice moderne". In *Identitate și alteritate I: Studii de imagologie*, edited by Nicolae Bocșan, and Valeriu Leu, 52-63, (Reșița: Banatica, 1996), 53.

⁵ Toader Nicoară, "Românii în sensibilitatea săsească și austriacă la sfârșitul sec. XVII și în sec. XVIII: clișee și stereotipuri". In *Identitate și alteritate I: Studii de imagologie*, edited by Nicolae Bocșan, and Valeriu Leu, 34-51, (Reșița: Banatica, 1996), 38.

⁶ Pop, "A Documentary Source", 32.

those belonging to the newly created Greek-Catholic (or Uniate) church. Until the 19th century, these two Romanian denominations started to play a game of cooperation (needed in order to try to gain political rights for the entire Romanian nation) and open conflict (when it came to gaining believers in the detriment of the other faith).⁷ Apparently, at least in the case of these two churches, Romanians' confessional identity appears to have been rather fluid in the second half of the 19th century: people could change their religion rather easily.⁸

As mentioned before, religious identities closely followed ethnic ones. Therefore, this study analyses in detail the Swedish travellers' references to ethnicity, to confession and to the national issue. Moreover, their observations were scrutinised with regard to their accuracy when compared to 19th century relations between Transylvania's nationalities, as the following pages will show.

Ethnic identities in Transylvania

The Swedish pastor and diplomat Conrad Iacob Hildebrandt passed several times through Transylvania at the middle of the 17th century (more exactly, between 1656 and 1658) and provided valuable data about the people he encountered and the events he witnessed. Being interested in ethnic matters, he meticulously informed himself about the history of such issues in Transylvania.⁹ Although he did not always choose the best sources, his curiosity was genuine and his desire to inform his readers was not connected to any harmful intentions. This is why, whenever available to him, he offered information about the names of localities in Latin, Romanian, Hungarian and German, but the explanations mentioned for the origin of these toponyms were often fabulous.¹⁰

Being aware of the province's multitude of ethnicities, Hildebrandt provides information about all of them. After stating that "In Transylvania inhabit four kinds of people: 1) Germans, 2) Hungarians, 3)

⁷ Mihaela Bedecan, "Alterități confesionale în Transilvania reflectate în presa românească (1865-1873)". In *Identitate și alteritate 5: Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, edited by Constantin Bărbulescu, Ioana Bonda, Cecilia Cârja, Ion Cârja, and Ana Victoria Sima, 83-91, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011), 83.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 86-91.

⁹ Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Paul Cernovodeanu, eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, Vol. V, (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1973), 549.

¹⁰ See, for instance, the alleged origin of the names "Alba Iulia", "Sebeș", "Sibiu" or "Brașov". *Ibid.*, 566-567, 576, 582, 588.

Szeklers, 4) Romanians",¹¹ Hildebrandt proceeds to thoroughly describing these ethnicities gathering details about their social status, occupations, "national" character, religion, clothing, military uniforms and weapons, language, and even eating habits.¹² The valuable facts he notes, especially in the case of clothing, leave the impression that he had a number of these ethnicities' representatives pose in front of him, like they would have done if he was a painter, while he managed to note all the aspects he was interested in. Of course, we have no proof that something like this actually happened, but we can nevertheless observe and admire the manner in which he uses words to create lively portraits of German townspeople, of Hungarians who had various ranks and occupations or of Romanian peasants.

Unlike other data provided by Hildebrandt, the information about the Transylvanian Saxons is mostly false. On the basis of erroneous sources, the Swedish pastor alleges that the Transylvanian Saxons, a "people or nation of inhabitants from Transylvania", "for a few hundreds of years, they had their own kingdom in Transylvania [but] eventually they were defeated by the king of the Huns Attila".¹³ About their language, Hildebrandt notes that although it is a German language it has an odd pronunciation (which explains why he did not understand much of what was preached in the Transylvanian Saxons' church of Sebeş) and that there are not any books written in this dialect: "The books that they use are printed in the literary German language, and they read them and pray from them in their common dialect; and the sermons must be delivered exclusively in this language and not in another one".¹⁴ Being partly Magyarised (at least in what concerns clothing and the preference for a hairless scalp - with the exception of clerics who wear their hair long), the Transylvanian Saxons despise and ridicule Germans. As for their occupations, at least in Sibiu they seem to be mostly drapers, while in Braşov they live from commerce and from tending taverns.¹⁵

Probably because they mostly interacted with Hungarians and Transylvanian Saxons, the Swedish travellers fail to mention their rather unimpressive percentages within the total Transylvanian population (especially in the case of the latter), although at one point Hildebrandt

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 550. Unless otherwise noted, all translations pertain to the author of this study.

¹² *Ibid.*, 550-554, 577-583, 584-587, 589-591.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 577.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 578.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 583, 588.

notes that “They [i.e. the Romanians] are so many in the Maramureş [region] from Transylvania, that they almost overwhelm with their number the Hungarians and the Germans”.¹⁶ On the other hand, the Transylvanian Saxons’ poor demographic state became a well acknowledged fact by the first half of the 19th century,¹⁷ when, in the context of constructing their nationality, members of the Saxon intellectuality bemoaned their minority status and condemned the perceived tendency of limiting the births to two children per Saxon family.¹⁸ In the same manner, although in an inverse direction, demography also influenced the Romanian elite of the 19th century. The 1848-1849 Revolution clearly indicated the intellectuals’ faith in the nation, a faith based upon the fact that they belonged to the most numerous Transylvanian ethnicity.¹⁹

As for Hungarians, Hildebrandt observes that they usually use foreign merchandise and clothes, especially because they dress like Turks.²⁰ Their language is Hungarian, written with Latin characters.²¹ Clas Brorsson Rålbamb, a Swedish diplomat who travelled through Transylvania in 1657, offers further details regarding the language spoken at an official level. Unfortunately his appreciations are not very positive as he cannot find a single Hungarian from the princess’s entourage who can speak Latin, despite the fact that this was the *lingua franca* of the 17th century and the official language of the country.²² His observation testifies to the fact that this was the period in which vernacular languages started to replace Latin even in administration, but mostly on a cultural level, a process closely related to the religious Reformation and representing an important part in adding a “national” character to the Hungarian Transylvanian nobility.²³

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 585.

¹⁷ Nicoară, “Românii în sensibilitatea săsească și austriacă”, 40.

¹⁸ Bogdan Crăciun, “The Saxon Family Between Ideology and Demography”, *Transylvanian Review* XII no. 4 (2003): 45-46.

¹⁹ Ioan Bolovan, “Romanians and Hungarians in the Revolution of 1848 in Transylvania (Contributions to the Study of the Social Imaginary)”, *Transylvanian Review* VII no. 2 (1998): 170.

²⁰ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 551, 567.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 554.

²² George Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi în spațiul românesc (secolele XVII-XX)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2007), 32.

²³ Ionuț Costea, “Language and Identity: The Nobility of Pre-modern Transylvania”, *Transylvanian Review* XIII no. 1 (2004): 69-88.

Still speaking about the Hungarians, Hildebrandt assures his readers that they are haughty²⁴, not very polite²⁵ and also cruel, especially towards their serfs, "whom they sell together with their wives and children".²⁶ Rålamb concurs with Hildebrandt in what concerns these appreciations: "most of them [i.e. the Hungarians] are haughty, irrational and ill-bred, slighting others and underestimating any thing as compared to their own lifestyle..."²⁷ Besides, "Most of the Hungarians bear an utter aversion and a great impulse against the Germans",²⁸ a consequence of the privileges held by the Transylvanian Saxons, as Rålamb asserts.²⁹

Opposed to what was previously stated, if one was to believe what Hildebrandt found out from the English teacher in Alba Iulia, at the middle of the 17th century many Hungarians were poor. According to the professor's testimony, this was the reason which forced large numbers of students to abandon schooling before graduating in order to become priests or at least to occupy any given position in the schools and churches of the countryside.³⁰ But the Swedish pastor notes other occupations as well: most of the Hungarians of Târgu Mureş are craftsmen or soldiers.³¹ And another Swede, Johann Wendel Bardili, travelling at the beginning of the 18th century, met some Hungarian merchants while crossing the mountains from Moldavia to Transylvania.³²

About the Szeklers, one of the "populations" that he encountered in Transylvania, Hildebrandt provides the same mixture of historical truth and fabulous construction, a combination typical for the paragraphs in which he used such sources as David Frölich or Johann Tröster. Therefore it is not surprising that he believes the Szeklers to be

²⁴ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 581.

²⁵ See, for instance, Hildebrandt's comments about the treatment received by the Swedish emissaries at Alba Iulia. *Ibid.*, 561-562.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 551.

²⁷ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 32.

²⁸ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 550.

²⁹ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 33.

³⁰ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 569.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 603.

³² Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Paul Cernovodeanu, eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, Vol. VIII, (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983), 281.

“the oldest Hungarians of Transylvania, who came ever since A.D. 373, together with Attila, from Scythia to Europe. [...] So the name of Szeklers comes from the Hungarian word ‘szék’, that is chair: ‘sedes’, because the 3,000 men divided themselves into three chairs, like as a matter of fact the entire Transylvania is divided at the Germans and Hungarians into chairs or ‘sedes’”.³³ The Szeklers’ language and clothing is no different than those of the Hungarians and, moreover, according to Hildebrandt, they enjoy absolute freedom, are considered noblemen and do not pay any taxes; their only obligation towards the Transylvanian prince is that of accompanying him to war.³⁴ It must be noted that these long-lasting privileges granted to the Szeklers were based on a series of myths (for example, those of the race, of the conquest or of the sacred crown) that subsequently served as a basis for the province’s legislative corpus.³⁵

Râmb also mentions some locals who had military duties and whom he labels brigands (*haiduci*). These brigands work for the Transylvanian prince, they are “in total about 40,000 and live in market towns, that they call towns, together with the other citizens: 1,000, 2,000 or even 4,000 in a locality. They are free from any taxes or imposition and their only duty, in exchange, is to serve the prince in his wars, wherever he might have them. They are divided into regiments, each town having one [regiment], with a colonel leading, whom they call ‘capitaneus’. Each regiment has probably the same number of participants, and above all [regiments, there is] a general, who in that time was called Baccus Gabor.”³⁶

Apparently, Romanians were at least as violent as these brigands, because one of their “ethnic” characteristics is the use of clubs and hatchets.³⁷ Moreover, certain Romanians are also “present” weekly on the gallows in the centre of Alba Iulia and Hildebrandt cannot refrain himself from connecting the punishment to which these villains are condemned with their religious beliefs: “Romanians gladly endure such ordeals, saying that their Saviour was also hanged on the cross, just that they are not impaled, a very usual thing in Transylvania, where one can find at the entrance to almost every village or market town such impaled

³³ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 590.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Nicoară, “Românii din Transilvania”, 123-125.

³⁶ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 31.

³⁷ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 560, 586.

poor sinners".³⁸ Naturally, such harsh punishments could only be applied to members of a people whose lower strata are "inclined towards theft and robbery".³⁹

But Rålamb seems to invalidate such an overgeneralization when he notes that Wallachian (i.e. Romanian) peasants sometimes functioned as guards, because otherwise "nobody could circulate on these roads".⁴⁰ This happened at least near the village Tăut and apparently, the ruler rewarded the Romanians for the services they rendered by exempting them from paying taxes. The presence of robbers on the Transylvanian roads is also documented by Bardili, who is nevertheless relieved to find out that such incidents were fewer than before due to the fact that some of these brigands were caught and executed.⁴¹ Unfortunately, he does not provide any other details, so that the bandits' ethnicity cannot be ascertained. On the other hand, officer Erasmus Heinrich Schneider von Weismantel affirms that the robberies which occurred rather frequently in Maramureş at the beginning of the 18th century were committed by Ruthenians.⁴²

The Swedish travellers also make detailed observations in what concerns the Romanians' language. For Hildebrandt it is simply "the old Roman language",⁴³ while Bardili compares the utterances he heard in Maramureş to those of northern Moldavia. He arrives at the conclusion that "People in this locality [i.e. Borşa] speak a language that they call Romanian, but that is different from that that I heard in Moldavia [...], because these people's language resembles more to the Italian language, while the other [resembles] more to Polish. Namely these people use to say: 'frumoasă casă' ['beautiful house'], 'lapte dulce' ['sweet milk'], 'apă de la fântână' ['water from the well'], etc. How did this language get here, I leave it to those who study the peoples' migrations to say."⁴⁴

³⁸ Ibid., 567.

³⁹ Ibid., 585.

⁴⁰ Alf Lombard, „Les Terres Roumaines vues par un voyageur suédois en 1657”, *Revue des études sud-est européennes* XII no. 4 (1974): 554.

⁴¹ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 282.

⁴² Nicolae Iorga, "O nouă descriere a Moldovei în secolul al XVIII-lea, de un suedez", *Revista Istorică: Dări de seamă, documente și notițe* XVI (1930): 1-2.

⁴³ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 587.

⁴⁴ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 284.

It is interesting to note that the Roman ancestry, a reality documented by foreign travellers at least from the middle of the 17th century, was one of the most powerful arguments invoked by the Romanian elite in favour of their independency with the occasion of the 1848-1849 Revolution.⁴⁵ Moreover, it was well-acknowledged even by the other Transylvanian ethnicities, most of all by Saxon historians.⁴⁶ Almost the same can be said about the Romanians' national dance, the *hora*, which Hildebrandt seems to appreciate, as he describes it in detail:⁴⁷ over time, in the second part of the 19th century, Transylvanian intellectuals considered traditional music, dances and clothing to be important markers of the Romanian identity.⁴⁸

Besides Transylvanian Saxons, Hungarians, Szeklers, and Romanians, Gypsy groups represented an attraction for foreign travellers, usually unaccustomed to such an apparently unrestricted existence. Nevertheless, Swedish travellers' habitually criticize such an itinerant lifestyle. For instance, Hildebrandt notes: "These rifferaff Gypsies often roam Hungary, Transylvania and Turkey. They live from theft and from horse trade; and they are especially artisan blacksmiths; they load on a donkey their children and tools and move from village to village; they settle in front of boyars' manor houses, they swiftly make a fireplace from clay, they place their bellows behind the clay mound and cheerfully beat with the hammers. These people do not have stable settlements but wander from country to country".⁴⁹ Gypsies are also worthy of contempt because in Hungary and Transylvania they usually fulfil the role of executioners,⁵⁰ although Rămb documents another occupation attributable to Gypsies, that of collecting gold from Transylvanian rivers, in this case, the Mureș river.⁵¹ From the information gathered by Bardili, most Gypsies were farriers, at least in the Sighet region. Bardili also notes that Gypsies "are forbidden to settle

⁴⁵ Bolovan, "Romanians and Hungarians", 171.

⁴⁶ Nicoară, "Românii în sensibilitatea săsească și austriacă", 41-42.

⁴⁷ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 587.

⁴⁸ Sanda Luminița Ignat-Coman, "Identitatea națională în opera lui Valeriu Braniște". In *Identitate și alteritate 5: Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, edited by Constantin Bărbulescu, Ioana Bonda, Cecilia Cârja, Ion Cârja, and Ana Victoria Sima, 285-293, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011), 289.

⁴⁹ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 547.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 570.

⁵¹ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 32.

and live in towns and villages, nevertheless they are not prevented from building huts in an open space, where to attend to their craft".⁵²

Generally, interethnic relations in Transylvania were rather good and representatives of different ethnicities cohabited in a number of towns. As Hildebrandt discovered, Alba Iulia was not the only multiethnic town in Transylvania. Aiud also fitted such a description at the middle of the 17th century: "Aiud is a Hungarian town, which formerly was also German; [nowadays] it is inhabited only by few Germans. [...] In the fortress there is the [secondary] school and the Lutheran and German church, together with the Calvinist-Hungarian one which is under the same roof..."⁵³ Braşov is another Transylvanian town which has "large suburbs, that are inhabited by different peoples, such as Hungarians, Romanians and Germans",⁵⁴ and the latter can be rightfully considered, at least by Rålamb, "the protectors of the [Transylvanian] Saxons' freedoms".⁵⁵ The Swedish secretary Hyltéén notes that in 1713 the head of the Braşov post office was a Greek who had some influence in Wallachia,⁵⁶ so that it appears that at least this important Transylvanian town attracted other nationalities in addition to the ones aforementioned by the other Swedish travellers. On the other hand, some towns were apparently inhabited by a singly ethnicity: Hildebrandt notes that Sebeş "is the first pure Transylvanian Saxon town that we encountered, and the oldest after Mediaş" and Sibiu is "the capital and the most important town of the Transylvanian Saxons".⁵⁷ Târgu Mureş is labelled by the same traveller as "an entirely Hungarian town", although "the Transylvanian Saxon [sic!] youth is sent to the high school here, to learn the Hungarian language".⁵⁸ In the same manner,

⁵² Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 285.

⁵³ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 576.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 587. Rålamb makes an almost identical observation. See Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 33. With another occasion, Hildebrandt also mentions the Szeklers among the inhabitants of Braşov. For details, see Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 589.

⁵⁵ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 33.

⁵⁶ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 611.

⁵⁷ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 576, 582.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 603.

Erasmus Heinrich Schneider von Weismantel considers Râșnov to be “a German village” in 1712.⁵⁹

Transylvanian confessional identities

A series of elements (faith, rituals, traditions, history, relationships to other churches, etc.) are incorporated into the larger confessional identity⁶⁰ and this type of affiliation maintains and partly defines the believers’ national identity.⁶¹ Therefore, the Swedish travellers’ observations regarding the religions and denominations they encountered in Transylvania (Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, Orthodox, or even Judaic, Anabaptist or Arian) influenced their opinions on the ethnicities with which they interacted.

Confessional issues are one of the topics of interest for the Swedish pastor Conrad Iacob Hildebrandt, who, due to his prolonged stay in Transylvania, could provide his readers with such information as the fact that the Hungarian bishop had his residence at Alba Iulia or that there existed a preference from the part of theological students with regard to the places where they finalised their studies. Apparently, Hungarian students “go to England or to other places, where Calvinism flourishes, just as the sons of the German Saxons of Transylvania go to Wittenberg and to other German universities, seeking to assimilate there Luther’s true doctrine”.⁶² Moreover, he does not fail to mention some historical details about the religious buildings he encounters, as the fact that St. Martin’s monastery of Oradea was built by “Ștefan the Saint”.⁶³ Another old Romanian monastery is that of the village Peri,⁶⁴ but unfortunately Weismantel only notes its existence and not the impression it left on him.

⁵⁹ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 325.

⁶⁰ Ciprian Ghișa, “Aspecte ale identității confesionale la începutul mileniului III. Studiu de caz: Biserica Greco-Catolică din România”. In *Identitate și alteritate 5: Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, edited by Constantin Bărbulescu, Ioana Bonda, Cecilia Cârja, Ion Cârja, and Ana Victoria Sima, 156-172, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011), 156.

⁶¹ Eugen Glück, “Contributions to the History of the Romanian Orthodox Parishes in Hungary (1793-1848)”, *Transylvanian Review* V no. 3 (1996): 122.

⁶² Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 570.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 545.

⁶⁴ Iorga, “O nouă descriere”, 1.

Although on the road, Hildebrandt fulfilled his duties as a pastor, at least for the Swedish delegation of which he was a part.⁶⁵ Perhaps this is why he seems so affected by the disastrous effects of war on the Romanians' religious life, at least in mid-17th century Oradea: "Instead of churches, the inhabitants are compelled to take use of a large and wide square, with a short roof because the beautiful churches and monasteries from before, as well as the entire bishopric were ruined and devastated by war".⁶⁶ Unfortunately, the destruction of churches was not an event attributable only to more distant epochs as it also took place during the 19th and even the 20th centuries. For instance, during the 1848-1849 Revolution, the Hungarians destroyed a number of bells taken from Romanian churches as these "were guilty of having incited [the Romanians] to rebellion".⁶⁷ Moreover, transforming the bells into cannons deeply wounded the Romanians' confessional identity, most likely a desirable effect in such abnormal circumstances from the part of the Hungarians who were, for a few centuries already, mostly Calvinists, with only some Catholic representatives.⁶⁸

On the other hand, it seems that in the 17th century the relations between Orthodox believers and Calvinists were not as belligerent as one might believe and that Calvinism had a certain influence on the creation of archpriest districts among the Transylvanian Romanians.⁶⁹ Furthermore, at the middle of the 18th century some Hungarians inhabiting in Darvaş and Apateu were Orthodox believers, while in the Karczag parish, around the 1848-1849 Revolution, the Hungarian language was used while officiating an Orthodox religious service, due to "an advanced process of assimilation".⁷⁰

Besides Calvinists, 17th century Transylvania also had strong Catholic communities, one of these being that depicted by Hildebrandt in the Cluj-Mănăştur area. Apparently, these Catholics could take pride in

⁶⁵ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 547, 577.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 545.

⁶⁷ Elena Crinela Holom, "La fonction identitaire des cloches: Un modèle de sensibilité collective dans le monde rural roumain moderne et contemporain", *Transylvanian Review* XVII no. 2 (2008): 82.

⁶⁸ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 551.

⁶⁹ Ana Dumitran, "The Relationship Between Orthodoxy and Calvinism at Archpriest Office Level in 17th Century Transylvania", *Transylvanian Review* III no. 3 (1994): 55-68.

⁷⁰ Glück, "Contributions to the History", 127.

the fact that their food was better and cheaper than that of other religious communities, although the Swedish pastor's opinion on this matter might have been influenced by the fact that this was one of the few places where he could find quality beer.⁷¹ This magic potion seems to have been responsible also for Hildebrandt's recovery after a serious disease, especially as it was provided by Transylvanian Saxon students of the Alba [Iulia] school.⁷²

Speaking about this town, it could be mentioned that its Catholic church did not go unnoticed by the same Swedish traveller, although he did not depict it in detail, as he did, for instance, with the edifice which belonged to the Hungarians. About this later one he notes that it was "a beautiful church with two towers and with a pendulum. In the church one found various monuments of kings and princes and in it they sang Lobwasser's psalms in Hungarian and lyrics translated by Molnár..."⁷³ Moreover, the Nordic traveller offers further information about the town's confessional structure: "Besides this beautiful Hungarian church, the Catholics also had a church in town, as they are tolerated in the country, except the Jesuits; Jews as well had their synagogue, and the Greeks also had a church of their own; these later ones call the believers, in certain places, by beating with wooden hammers into a long oak board⁷⁴ [...]; in this church there were bells and a large iron *toacă*. Therefore in this town, Alba Iulia, Hungarians, Calvinists, Catholics, Greeks, Jews worshiped God, in their churches, each in his own way".⁷⁵

This happened because one could speak of a genuine confessional mosaic characteristic at least for the Hungarians and the Szeklers. For instance, the latter "are mostly Reformists or Calvinists like the other Hungarians",⁷⁶ but the chapels Hildebrandt sees in the mountains of the Ciuc area led him to believe that there are also some Catholics amongst them. Moreover, in the Three Chairs (*Trei Scaune*) district he also encountered a number of Arians.⁷⁷ Johann Wendel Bardili as well had the chance to interact with a number of different believers

⁷¹ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 556, 559. He also enjoys the beer made from wheat (!) that he receives in Codlea; see *Ibid.*, 584.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 565-566.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 569.

⁷⁴ This wooden board is called *toacă*, as Hildebrandt also mentions.

⁷⁵ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 570.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 590.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

and his religious convictions leave a mark on his observations: after travelling with a Turk, some Moldavians and a Jew, the group from which Bardili was a part is accompanied by a number of supporters of the rebellious Francisc Rákóczy, whom the Swede labels as "Christians" due to the fact that they were Lutherans.⁷⁸ On the other hand, Hildebrandt does not have such a good opinion about the Hungarians, because he hints that some of them might profess a series of heresies alongside the dominant denominations, as "in Transylvania there was such a great mixture of religions, that almost every day you saw how foreign divinities were being honoured".⁷⁹

If his own religion influenced the laic Bardili in his appreciations, such an effect was clearly greater in the case of Hildebrandt, who was a Lutheran pastor. For example, after he praises Cluj's size and commercial life, Hildebrandt does not miss the occasion to make a value judgement: "But God's pure word is the most difficult to encounter there, because the Arians have their typography, church and school and have attracted almost half of the townsmen, while the leading preacher Michael Baumgart, a learned man and a very good orator, converts many Lutheran journeymen, simple people, attracted only by the sake of the Hungarian language, turning them into gross Arians. The Calvinists have the other part of the town, with a beautiful church and a school, and between these two religions, the Lutherans were obliged to be satisfied with less".⁸⁰ These notes testify to the fact that even in the 17th century the clergy played a fundamental role in shaping confessional identities based on a series of means provided by the intellectual elite,⁸¹ most important of these being in this case the language used in Church and the manner of preaching.

Not even Judaism escapes the pastor's curious eye and apparently, at the middle of the 17th century, Alba Iulia hosted a large number of Jews, who traded Turkish merchandise and had a synagogue.⁸² In fact, this multi-centennial Jewish presence in Transylvania served as a basis in the Jews' fight for political rights in the

⁷⁸ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 285.

⁷⁹ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 551.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 556.

⁸¹ Ghișa, "Aspecte ale identității confesionale", 156.

⁸² Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 567.

19th century.⁸³ In this respect, the Transylvanian Jewish emancipation movement resembled the Romanian one, with which it had a number of elements in common, at least until the 1860s when competitive interests started to prevail. The Dualism's establishment brought about the granting of civil rights for the Jewish inhabitants of Transylvania, a measure which wanted to prove the new regime's liberal character.⁸⁴ Romanians, on the other hand, received most of their political rights only after the dissolution of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy.

Hiltebrandt applies the same critical manner of depiction he used for the other Transylvanian denominations to the rather powerful Anabaptist community of Vinț. He documents in fairly positive shades the ways in which they implant the desire to work in their children and adolescents and their craftsmanship in manufacturing knives and pots.⁸⁵ However, their untrue faith leaves marks on their souls: "No matter how much these hypocrites preach that they own all [things] in common, each owns gladly something <only> his own, just that they are not allowed to say <it>".⁸⁶

Nevertheless, after presenting all the confessions he encountered in Transylvania with their positive aspects and their faults, Hiltebrandt is compelled to admire the fact that "these religions behave in such a manner among them that each of them can be freely and unhinderingly followed and confessed by its adepts".⁸⁷ This assertion receives further proof with the occasion of a treaty signed by the Swedish emissaries and Gheorghe Rákóczy II, the Transylvanian ruler, as the negotiations ensured an efficient dialog between a Lutheran, a Catholic, a Calvinist and an Arian.⁸⁸ Apparently, the rate of inter-confessional conflicts remained low until the first half of the 19th century,⁸⁹ a fact which clearly changed after the 1848-1849 Revolution.

Identities and the national issue

After Michael the Brave's incursion in Transylvania at the turn of the 17th century, the Hungarian nobility made every effort necessary to

⁸³ Ladislau Gyémánt, "The Formation of the Transylvanian Jewish and Romanian Identities (A Comparative View)", *Transylvanian Review* XI no. 1 (2002): 99.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 104-105.

⁸⁵ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 544. These products, especially the knives, are highly appreciated by the Hungarians. See *Ibid.*, 551.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 544.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 556.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 566.

⁸⁹ Glück, "Contributions to the History", 131.

deny the Romanians' access to the province's administrative functions.⁹⁰ This decisive moment strengthened the force of the reciprocal Romanian - Hungarian negative images, as well as the Hungarians' and the Transylvanian Saxons' fear of the Romanians' preponderance,⁹¹ two elements which guided the country's interethnic relations for the next three centuries.

The Swedish travellers repeatedly document these large social disparities existent in Transylvania at the moment of their visits. For example, as Hildebrandt notices, most of the Transylvanian Hungarians are noblemen, "because there the quality of [being a] nobleman is very widespread, even the craftsmen, some <of them>: like furriers, glassblowers, bootmakers and others, belong to the nobility"; moreover, "they had great power in the country".⁹² The fact that the Hungarians were the actual rulers of Transylvania is also mentioned by Clas Brorsson Rålamb, although indirectly, when he mentions that the ambassador who accompanied him to Constantinople was "Hungarian",⁹³ and not "Transylvanian", for instance.

As for the Transylvanian Saxons, they are, according to Hildebrandt, either a people or a nation, especially as "they have their own national statutes, that Ștefan Báthory confirmed in the year 1583".⁹⁴ Among the Saxon's privileges, the Swede mentions the fact that they can even deny a Hungarian, irrespective if he is a nobleman or not, the possibility to buy a house situated within the walls of their communities, therefore preventing Hungarians from becoming burghers.⁹⁵ Moreover, it might be added that these rights and privileges were held almost unhinderingly until the 1848-1849 Revolution, when the national interests of Hungarians, on the one hand, and of Romanians and Transylvanian Saxons, on the other hand, clashed. It was in this decisive moment that the Saxons, conscious of their numerical liability, chose to side with the Romanians against the Hungarians and in support of the

⁹⁰ For details, see Ioan-Aurel Pop, "Identity and Alterity in Transylvania during the Confrontations of 1599-1601", *Transylvanian Review* IV no. 4 (1995): 171-178.

⁹¹ Nicoară, "Românii din Transilvania", 126, 130.

⁹² Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 551.

⁹³ C. J. Karadža, "Un ambasador suedez la curtea lui Constantin Șerban", *Revista Istorică: Dări de seamă, documente și notițe* VI no. 10-12 (1920): 209.

⁹⁴ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 581.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 582.

Austrian imperial family.⁹⁶ Unfortunately for them, when the turmoil was over, the Austrian officials limited the rights of the Saxon University, in spite of the Transylvanian Saxons' loyalty during the revolutionary events. This measure left the Evangelical Church as the only institution through which the Transylvanian Saxons could demand political rights,⁹⁷ a fact which tremendously increased religion's importance as a marker of identity. Besides this evolution towards confessionalising the relations between Transylvania's various populations, ethnic imagery and ideology also influenced Romanians' opinions about the Transylvanian Saxons at the end of the revolution: the former felt that the fruits of the movement had been robbed by the latter.⁹⁸

On the other hand, during the 17th century, Transylvanian Saxons' condition might not have been as positive as Hildebrandt presented it at first, for it seems that at least some of them were servants. The example given by the Swedish pastor is that of the English director (he calls him "rector") of the school built by Gheorghe Rákóczy II in Alba Iulia who had two servants, a Transylvanian Saxon and an Englishman.⁹⁹ But the task which belonged almost entirely to the Transylvanian Saxons, if one gives credit to Hildebrandt's notes, was that of providing the horses for transporting the travellers' belongings. Moreover, the Swedish pastor praises the Transylvanian Saxons for their "liberality and hospitality" as they are usually compelled to provide food and fodder for the Hungarians who are travelling with a "passport" from the prince and who usually "reward" the former with a few whip strokes.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, the Transylvanian Saxons continue to be hospitable towards foreigners (although their beds are not very comfortable), a fact which grants them Hildebrandt's appreciation. Clas Brorsson Rålamb also mentions that while in the Bihor region he was guided and

⁹⁶ Ela Cosma, "L'attitude des Saxons à l'égard de l'union de la Transylvanie à la Hongrie", *Transylvanian Review* VII no. 2 (1998): 82-91.

⁹⁷ Loránd Mádly, "Eforturile sașilor transilvăneni pentru afirmarea și păstrarea identității în perioada neoabsolutismului (1849-1860) și rolul Bisericii Evanghelice". In *Identitate și alteritate 4: Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, edited by Constantin Bărbulescu, Luminița Dumănescu, Sorin Mitu, and Vlad Popovici, 119-124, (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2007), 119-121.

⁹⁸ Sorin Mitu, "Thèmes de l'imaginaire social roumain dans la révolution de 1848", *Transylvanian Review* VII no. 2 (1998): 183.

⁹⁹ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 568.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 571, 581.

accompanied by groups of locals "who changed in every town, each [group] having their flags and colours that I saw from the distance when they came to meet me".¹⁰¹

Romanians (also called Wallachians) are considered by Hildebrandt another "nation" inhabiting Transylvania. The data he offers is once again a mixture of accurate and erroneous information taken from other sources, as the following paragraph will show: "This people is today so little taken into consideration in the country, that it is not even counted among the country's estates, neither does it have a town, a fortress or even a locality of its own but just huts, <being spread> everywhere in the mountains that surround the country, or tolerated as subjects on the territory of German and Hungarian towns and market towns. But by their origin they are the well renowned border guards of the noble Roman people and they are, after the Germans, the oldest inhabitants of the country, who were brought here by the emperor Trajan in the year A. D. 100, when he defeated the German [!] king Decebalus, and conquered his royal residence Sarmizegetusa (which is now a small village, inside the Iron Gate), occupied it with Roman colonists and gave it the name of Ulpia Traiana".¹⁰²

The Swedish pastor further emphasises that "In Transylvania they have no class privileges, but are all shepherds or day-labourers. In their language they call themselves Romanians or Romans".¹⁰³ Rålamb concurs with Hildebrandt on the professions mostly exercised by Romanians at the middle of the 17th century: "These Wallachians are poor people, because here in the mountains they do not have fields of wheat. They live solely from their sheep and their cattle, and from the fact that they transport in Hungary salt from Transylvania".¹⁰⁴ With another occasion, the Swedish diplomat considers that cattle trade also represented an important income source for the locals: usually, they sold "200-300 bulls in a year, [bulls] that were bought by Hungarian merchants and that these [merchants] sell further to Italy and Austria".¹⁰⁵ A few decades later, in 1709, another Swede, Johann Wendel Bardili describes a sheepfold he encountered while crossing the mountains from Moldavia, noting that this was the place where shepherds preserve and

¹⁰¹ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 31.

¹⁰² Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. V, 585.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Lombard, „Les Terres Roumaines”, 554.

¹⁰⁵ Cristea, *Regi și diplomați suedezi*, 31.

process milk and cheese.¹⁰⁶ Weismantel also spent a night in such a wattle sheepfold built by the peasants who pastured their sheep in the mountainous areas of Transylvania.¹⁰⁷

The fact that Romanians had no political rights in the first half of the 18th century can be indirectly acknowledged from a detail provided by Weismantel, namely that, with a certain occasion, Rákóczy held a speech in four languages, none of which was Romanian.¹⁰⁸ The reformative measures adopted by Maria Theresa and by Joseph II in the second half of the 18th century eliminated some of the medieval privileges held by the dominant ethnicities in Transylvania and improved up to a certain extent the Romanians' condition. As a consequence of these Enlightenment reforms, the Romanian language was recognized as an official language,¹⁰⁹ but the centuries of servitude had left deep scars: in 1840 approximately 98.8% of Romanians were still illiterate.¹¹⁰ The same reformist desire also had as an effect the acceptance of Orthodoxy among the official religions of Transylvania in 1791,¹¹¹ almost a century after a part of the Transylvanian Romanian clergy adhered to some of the dogmas of the Western church in an attempt to gain political rights.¹¹² This latter action functioned at least partly, as the Viennese court sought to strengthen the Transylvanian Uniate church in the detriment of the province's multiple Protestant denominations all throughout the 18th century,¹¹³ a measure which had long-lasting effects: it served to consolidate the Hungarian - Romanian alterity up to the second half of the 19th century.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ Holban, Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, and Cernovodeanu, *Călători străini*, Vol. VIII, 281-282.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 324.

¹⁰⁸ Iorga, "O nouă descriere", 1. The four languages were French, German, Polish and Hungarian.

¹⁰⁹ Ladislau Gyémánt, "Reformism and nation in Transylvania in the second half of the XVIIIth century", *Revue de Transylvanie Nouvelle série* I no. 1 (1991): 49.

¹¹⁰ Marius Rotar, and Iacob Mârza, "The Polymath Vasile Popp or the Temptation of Change: On the first Romanian Doctoral Thesis in Medicine (1817)", *Transylvanian Review* XIX no. 3 (2010): 17-18.

¹¹¹ Glück, "Contributions to the History", 130.

¹¹² Pop, "A Documentary Source", 32.

¹¹³ Mihai Săsăujan, "Imaginea românilor ortodocși din Transilvania în rapoartele miniștrilor imperiali austrieci, la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea". In *Identitate și alteritate II: Studii de imagologie*, edited by Nicolae Bocșan, Sorin Mitu, and Toader Nicoară, 86-94, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1998), 86.

¹¹⁴ Nicolae Bocșan, "Altérités dans les relations inter-confessionnelles de la Transylvanie", *Transylvanian Review* V no. 3 (1996): 88. See also Nicolae Bocșan, "The

A full clash of national interests took place during the 1848-1849 Revolution, an event which caused the resurfacing of a series of stereotypical images regarding the *Other*. For example, the myth of the conspiracy functioned both among the Romanians and the Hungarians.¹¹⁵ Other such mythological constructions which emerged during the Revolution were the saviour, the golden age and the unity,¹¹⁶ or the Romanians' self-presentation as victims of strangers and history.¹¹⁷ The latter could be done easily, if one takes into consideration the structure of Transylvania's population.

In fact, demography was one of the most powerful factors which impacted upon the country's interethnic relations, especially during the 19th century, when nations demanded their rights with a strong voice. But demographic realities and politics did not always concur and Transylvania stands out as a perfect example for this statement with its aggrieved Romanian population: in 1818 the country had approximately 1,569,000 inhabitants, 53% of them being Romanians,¹¹⁸ while the data provided by the 1850 census shows that Romanians had reached 59.5% of Transylvania's population. On the other hand, at this latter census Hungarians counted for 25% of the total population, Germans for 9.3% and the other ethnic groups present in the province (Gipsies, Jews, Armenians, etc.) for the remaining 5.2%.¹¹⁹ The population count organized in 1910 showed that, in spite of a population growth of approximately 47.4% between 1850 and 1910 (from 3,454,293 to 5,225,618 people),¹²⁰ the Magyarisation process seemed successful: although still majoritarian, Romanians now represented only 53.7%, while the Hungarian population had increased to 31.6%.¹²¹ Nevertheless, the state language was known by only 38% of the Romanian pupils,¹²² in spite of

image of the Romanian-Catholic Church with the Greek Catholic Romanians (The Congress for the Autonomy of the Hungarian Catholic Church)", *Transylvanian Review* VI no. 2 (1997): 156, 167.

¹¹⁵ Bolovan, "Romanians and Hungarians", 162-163.

¹¹⁶ For details, see *Ibid.*, 160-181. Some of these myths and stereotypical images also functioned after Michael the Brave's incursion in Transylvania. See Pop, "Identity and Alterity", 173-175.

¹¹⁷ Mitu, "Thèmes de l'imaginaire social", 182.

¹¹⁸ Rotar, and Mârza, "The Polymath Vasile Popp", 17.

¹¹⁹ Ioan Bolovan, "On the demographic situation in Transylvania between 1850-1910", *Transylvanian Review* III no. 1 (1994): 96.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹²² Petru Weber, "The Nationalities and the Millenium in Dualist Hungary", *Transylvanian Review* VI no. 4 (1997): 100.

the fact that ever since the 19th century one of the school's most important roles was that of fostering good citizens.¹²³ This apparent failure of the assimilation policy stands as further proof to the fact that the Romanian national consciousness was extremely strong at the turn of the 20th century.

Concluding remarks

One of the most important markers of identity in the pre-modern and modern epochs was religion. In Transylvania, confessional identities had an even more relevant role in defining oneself as they were strongly connected with ethnicity and political rights. In fact, even beginning with the 16th century, Transylvanian identities already had strong ethnic, linguistic, religious and social components.¹²⁴ Hungarians and Szeklers displayed an exacerbated pride related to their nobility, Transylvanian Saxons mainly populated the towns, while the countryside belonged almost entirely to the Romanians.¹²⁵ Perhaps these striking differences between the country's ethnicities motivated almost all of the Swedish travellers' who had a chance to witness the Transylvanian realities of the 17th and 18th centuries to make extensive notes regarding religious aspects and their relation with other types of affiliation.

It should be mentioned that at the beginning of the modern epoch, the term "nation" designated two distinct types of solidarities: an ethnic one, which referred to a group of people with the same origin, and a political one, relating to sovereignty.¹²⁶ Of course, ethnic images are always related to a number of cultural and political factors and perform important functions in the course of defining one's identity¹²⁷ and having taken that into consideration, one could even say that "The nation might be an *intellectual invention*, but the nationality is a *historic reality*, the practical expression of that theoretical formula".¹²⁸

¹²³ Rodica Ianoș Toadere, "Rolul educației școlare în crearea unei identități multiple în Transilvania secolului al XIX-lea". In *Identitate și alteritate 5: Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, edited by Constantin Bărbulescu, Ioana Bonda, Cecilia Cârja, Ion Cârja, and Ana Victoria Sima, 173-189, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011), 183.

¹²⁴ Pop, "Identity and Alterity", 178.

¹²⁵ Nicoară, "Românii în sensibilitatea săsească și austriacă", 37.

¹²⁶ Mihaela Grancea, and Alexandru Sonoc, "Considerații cu privire la procesul de formare a identităților naționale". In *Identitate și alteritate II: Studii de imagologie*, edited by Nicolae Bocșan, Sorin Mitu, and Toader Nicoară, 7-20, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1998), 9.

¹²⁷ Mitu, "De la 'Imaginea Celuilalt'", 17, 20.

¹²⁸ Gheorghe Platon, "La contribution de la Transylvanie à la formation de l'esprit identitaire roumain", *Transylvanian Review* XI no. 1 (2002): 6, original emphasis. See

On this strong basis, the process of creating modern national identities started at the end of the 18th century¹²⁹ and became ever more important in the next decades. As already noted, religion played a decisive role in this process, as it was one of collective identities' most important catalysers. The superposing of confessional and national solidarities led to a series of tensions and confrontations in Transylvania,¹³⁰ most of which were correctly observed by the Swedish travellers through the region.

The Transylvanian School played a very important role in the elaboration of a national ideology,¹³¹ through numerous historical writings and translations, through the use of the Latin alphabet, and through the elaboration of the first Romanian grammar.¹³² The 1848-1849 Revolution clearly indicated that a national consciousness, based both on a cultural identity and on a confessional one, existed among the Transylvanian Romanians.¹³³ And in what could retrospectively be called a "natural process", at least some of the other Transylvanian "nations" seemed ready to accept the Romanian nation's existence in the second half of the 19th century: prefaced by the Saxon University's decision to recognise the Romanians among the "state nations" in 1862,¹³⁴ the Diet which met at Sibiu in 1863 granted religious freedom to all Transylvanians and stipulated that all individuals were equal, irrespective of their nationality and religion.¹³⁵ Unfortunately, these decisions were never put into practice due to the Dualism's establishment in 1867. The rest of the 19th century was defined by the Transylvanian nationalities' fight against Magyarisation, a struggle which became highly visible at the Millennium's celebration.¹³⁶ Unfortunately, it took a World War and the dissolution of the Austrian-

also Ioan-Aurel Pop, "A Documentary Source on the Religious Situation of the Transylvanian Romanians in 1629", *Transylvanian Review* IX no. 4 (2000): 38.

¹²⁹ Grancea, and Sonoc, "Considerații cu privire la procesul de formare", 7.

¹³⁰ Nicolae Boșan, and Ioan Popovici, "Identitate și alteritate în biserica ortodoxă din Imperiul habsburgic. Separația ierarhică a bisericii românești de biserica sârbească". In *Identitate și alteritate II: Studii de imagologie*, edited by Nicolae Boșan, Sorin Mitu, and Toader Nicoară, 136-147, (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1998), 136.

¹³¹ Platon, "La contribution de la Transylvanie", 8.

¹³² Grancea, and Sonoc, "Considerații cu privire la procesul de formare", 18.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹³⁴ Simion Retegan, "The Recognition of the Political Equality of the Transylvanian Romanian Nation by the Transylvanian Saxon University in 1862", *Transylvanian Review* X no. 3 (2011), 50.

¹³⁵ Gyémánt, "The Formation", 104-105.

¹³⁶ For details, see Weber, "The Nationalities and the Millenium", 97-105.

Hungarian Empire for the non-Hungarian nationalities of Transylvania to receive a series of rights.

The Swedish travellers of the 17th – 18th centuries offer a pertinent external view on the period's Transylvanian identities. Moreover, their notes often preface a series of political events which occurred during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, conferring a prophetic character to the Swedes' observations. And although the Swedish travellers never straightforwardly demanded political rights for the Romanian people (perhaps because that epoch had not arrived yet), their notes regarding the Romanians' number and the poor treatment they received from the part of the other Transylvanian nationalities seem to motivate the changes which occurred after 1918¹³⁷.

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Transylvanian Romanians and Transylvania's Provincial Identity in the 19th Century

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Abstract: *Transylvanian Romanians and Transylvania's provincial identity in the 19th century.* For the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals, the problem of concretising a national political project opened up a very large set of options. From a motherland for several nationalities, the Transylvania they imagined would become, above all, a motherland for Romanians. Once this was established, the nationalist project of ensuring a congruency between state and nation could follow its course, which was interrupted only by the competing identity projects that edified, in a similar manner, a Hungarian Transylvania. This type of representation, according to which Transylvania's provincial identity was defined by its overwhelmingly Romanian ethnic composition, would remain a constant in the Romanian identity discourse during the following two centuries.

Keywords: national identity, ethnicity, local identity, Transylvania, Modern Epoch

Rezumat: *Românii ardeleni și identitatea provincială a Transilvaniei în secolul al XIX-lea.* Pentru intelectualii români din Transilvania, problema concretizării unui proiect politic național a deschis un set foarte larg de opțiuni. De la o patrie a câtorva naționalități, Transilvania pe care ei o imaginau va deveni, mai presus de toate, o patrie a românilor. O dată stabilit, proiectul naționalist de asigurare a congruenței dintre stat și națiune își va urma cursul, care nu va fi întrerupt decât de proiectele identitare concurente ale maghiarilor. Acest tip de reprezentare, potrivit căruia identitatea provincială a Transilvaniei era definită de majoritatea ei etnică românească, va rămâne o constantă în discursul identitar românesc din următoarele două secole.

Cuvinte-cheie: identitate națională, etnicitate, identitate locală, Transilvania, epoca modernă

Until the 19th century, the self-representation mechanisms of the communities from Transylvania did not prioritise the concept of nationhood. The communities' social identity made reference, firstly, to social condition, religious denomination, local identities and political loyalties. The new national collective identity, that we see triumphant in the 19th century, included in its composition fragments of all these

premodern solidarities and configured them in a new formula. In the present study, I will analyse this process by using the case of Transylvania's representation in Transylvanian Romanians' self-consciousness in the period in which these new collective solidarities were formed.

At the end of the 18th century the premodern solidarities' dissolution process began also in the case of Transylvania's Romanian society. Gradually, during the next century, the social, political and cultural ties that held together the traditional society ruptured, being replaced by new forms of social cohesion. Instead of the peasant subsistence economy, a market economy, opened to industrialisation, appeared; instead of the folk, oral culture, a written culture, based on schooling, gained ground; instead of the traditional social and political hierarchies, an egalitarian, democratic society came to life, a society in which all its members were alike from the point of view of both political rights and freedoms and the unanimously recognised affiliation to the same national community. Finally, the place of sacred space, of ritual and celebration, of a universe put into order by an omnipresent God was taken by a secularised, profane world, that could be rationally explained and from which divinity was exiled into a remote and approximate celestial space¹.

In the vacuum created as a result of the traditional social cohesion factors' destruction, nationalism, the new principle of setting the social reality in order, inserted itself. It appeared on the ruins of the traditional ethnic, cultural, social and religious identities, which were based, as Benedict Anderson shows, on the direct, personal contact of each individual with the members of the affiliating community². But especially in Eastern Europe, as Anthony D. Smith believes, modern nationalisms were built by fully using the elements provided by premodern ethnic identities³. Starting from these elements, in the 19th century nations were constructed and invented where they had not yet existed.

Intellectuals were the ones that gave an expression to the identity crises by forging a nation that was afterwards offered to the society in

¹ For the evolution of mentalities and rural society in Transylvania, see Toader Nicoară, *Transilvania la începuturile timpurilor moderne. 1680-1800*, Cluj, PUC, 1997.

² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1991, p. 1-12.

³ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1995, p. 153-174. The general frame of eastern nationalism's evolution is also presented by Guy Hermet, *Histoire des nations et du nationalisme en Europe*, Paris, Seuil, 1996.

order for the latter to make use of it. For this nation they built a history that was as convincing as possible, a common literary language that was grammatically codified and they identified a metaphysical and spiritual content that was discovered in a distorted folkloric tradition⁴. Finally, they associated the nation with a political project, which represented the nationalist effort's essence: the creation of a state that overlaps the nation and whose purpose is the protection of a homogenous national culture⁵. According to the nationalists, the ones who rule and the ones who are ruled must form a homogenous cultural entity.

For the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals, the problem of concretising a national political project opened up a very large set of options. Premodern cultural identities and political loyalties, on the ruins of which the nation and its state roof could be built, offered an extremely heterogeneous construction material and the uneven terrain on which the foundation was laid also provided several possibilities for such an establishment. Above all, the Transylvanian Romanians' *motherland*, meant to ensure shelter for their nation, was the one that represented a controversial subject and was difficult to delimit.

Transylvanian Romanians had at their disposal, as a first alternative, the territorial and political-administrative frame provided by the Grand Principality of Transylvania, a component of the Habsburg Empire, a frame that also benefited from a consistent historical dimension, which was essential for the epoch's mentalities. Obviously, Transylvania was their proximal motherland. But, as a shelter for a modern nation, Transylvania could also be imagined in three possible reorganisation variants.

A first such variant was the one of a multinational Transylvania, which would take into consideration the ethnic diversity and the historical tradition of the political representation in the Diet of several relatively autonomous entities. As a consequence, Romanians were to be only one of the constitutive elements of such a multinational motherland. A second variant was the one of a Romanian Transylvania, in which Romanians would hold the role of rulers, having as justifying arguments both their numerical majority and a historical construction based on the ideas of priority and continuity. Finally, a third variant was the one of a

⁴ The process of manipulating folk tradition by Eastern-European intellectuals is analysed in Claude Karnoouh's book, *L'invention du peuple. Chroniques de Roumanie. Essai*, Paris, Arcantère, 1990.

⁵ According to Ernest Gellner's definition, given in *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1983.

Hungarian Transylvania. It was also grounded on a historical argument, the fact that Transylvania belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary, but on a modern one as well, namely the Hungarian national project, elaborated by Széchenyi and Kossuth and based on the contiguity of the Hungarian nation throughout its entire historical territory. For the Romanians, this last variant represented not only a foreign, unwanted version, imposed from the direction of the Hungarian national project, but it could also have positive implications on the Romanians from the eastern parts of Hungary, who were almost as numerous as the Transylvanian Romanians and who, according to the political-administrative criteria of the epoch, did not consider themselves citizens of Transylvania, but inhabitants of Hungary.

A second alternative for a potential motherland for the Transylvanian Romanians was the Austrian Empire. From the perspective of traditional political loyalties, the Habsburg dynasty represented for the Romanians from Transylvania the only source of state sovereignty and authority. Besides, the political ideology of modern conservatism offered suitable legitimising grounds for such an attitude. Nevertheless, some tension arose from the fact that the Habsburg Empire was, above all, a multinational construction and therefore a less appropriate frame for a national political project. In order to harmonise their state loyalty with the one towards the nation, Transylvanian Romanians continuously solicited the empire's transformation into a political roof that was adequate for their national construction.

Lastly, a third motherland proposed by the Transylvanian intellectuals to their compatriots was constituted by the ensemble of territories inhabited by the Romanian demographic element. This geographical representation delimited the Romanians' territorial "hearth" through natural frontiers and minimised the ethnic discontinuities that appeared on the map only as insignificant islands, surrounded by the homogenous mass of Romanians. But such a motherland was just a symbolic one, lacking a political dimension. From a political point of view, the Danubian Principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia, although a part of the Romanian ethnic "hearth", were however seen, by reference to Transylvania, as merely other "motherlands" inhabited by Romanians. Naturally, they were seen as Romanian "motherlands" having the attributes of a national statehood. But even in the moments of maximally living the 1848 utopia, Transylvanian Romanians did not imagine accomplishing their national political project otherwise than by the Principalities' entrance under the aegis of the House of Austria and not by transforming the space

inhabited by Romanians into a political construction having as a source of sovereignty the Principalities' existent statehood.

In the first half of the 19th century, Transylvanians clearly distinguished between "motherland" and "nation". The two concepts did not overlap, as it will later be the case, in the 20th century, when the motherland will represent the nation's territorial dimension. At the beginning of the 19th century, the motherland had a strict territorial meaning and in it several nations could cohabit, whilst the nation had an ethnic sense. It is true that the tendency to associate the nation with a territorial dimension, with a "hearth" of its own had already appeared and this territory was seen both as a "motherland of origin" for the Romanians and as an area presently inhabited by the nation. But this territorial attribute of the nation was not identified with the "motherland". The "motherland" referred above all to an area delimited in a historical, administrative and juridical sense, to a province, a country that had a historical past and whose inhabitants obeyed the same laws and the same government. The motherland most often invoked by the Transylvanian Romanians was Transylvania, and not the Empire, which shows that the respective notion inherited a great deal of the old medieval regional solidarities, which were directed more towards a province (a *pays*, as in France) and not towards a globalising, inadequately centralised state.

I will further analyse a few texts meant to render evident the different "motherlands" imagined by the Transylvanian intellectuals.

In 1839, Nicolae Pauleti, a student at the Greek Catholic Seminary of Blaj, wrote the sonnet *Dragostea patriotică (Patriotic love)*, whose verses illustrated the existing tension between the commitment towards the "motherland" - which included several nations - and the one towards one's own ethnic community. Pauleti accredited the identity version of a multinational Transylvanian motherland in such a manner: "Advance amongst mankind,/With serene steps, you, beautiful love!/Spread your wings in an union,/With your morning dew soften hearts of stone./Subdue tribes in daily union,/Obscure the stain of painful hatred,/Let the world be ruled by universal agreement,/To the Romanian nation give zealous spirits"⁶.

The patriotic sentiment, Pauleti wants to say, must soften the stony hearts, insensitive to common interest's requirements. Moreover, envy (ethnic envy, as implied by the subtext) must disappear. Unlike nationalism, which places the accent on the differences between

⁶ Nicolae Pauleti, *Scrieri*, Bucharest, Minerva, 1980, p. 154.

ethnicities, the feeling invoked by Pauleti urges nations to seek union, to surpass the differences that divide them. He gives the upper hand to elements of similarity, to protecting common interests and values. A “motherland” is a space that creates such common interests and values, for all its inhabitants, regardless of ethnicity.

In his verses, Pauleti refers to Transylvania. In a multinational motherland, “patriotic love” means love towards all of the country’s inhabitants, irrespective of ethnicity. Without directly contraposing love towards one’s own nation, the respective sentiment is nevertheless something else, because it addresses itself to several ethnicities. This is, in fact, the sense of Pauleti’s poem. Love for one’s motherland assumes, solicits even, surpassing feelings of love towards one’s own nation, subordinating them to, or at least contextualising them by reference to, the “motherland’s” collective interests, the interests of all its inhabitants, regardless of ethnicity.

Of course, the importance of such a type of “Transylvanian” solidarity, as the one confessed by Pauleti, is not to be overestimated, especially in an age of nationalism and Romanticism. But the powerful Transylvanian Enlightenment traditions of cosmopolitanism and tolerance, associated with the Empire’s multiethnic reality, nevertheless give it a certain prominence. In the “motherlands” in which several ethnicities coexisted, the principles of tolerance, underlined by Enlightenment scholars, had a powerful echo. The most important Romanian journalist of the epoch, George Bariț, had the same idea in view when he compared Transylvania to Switzerland. In 1847 he wrote the following: “Fate throws for so many centuries in this beautiful motherland – that is dear to all of us – so many nations and denominations one next to the other. Why still embitter one another’s days? Why shouldn’t we all live together as sons of the same mother? Who to blame because the Hungarian, the Szekler, the Transylvanian Saxon, the Romanian, the Armenian and others are born under the same climate, on the same valley, in the same mountain, near the same river?”⁷

The dialectic of the relation “motherland – nation” may also be encountered in the speech given by the Orthodox bishop Andrei Șaguna with the occasion of the revolutionary political reunion of Sibiu in 28 December 1848: “The liberal sentiment is the aspiration towards the free development of state and civic references; and the national one is the special sympathy towards all those who are of the same kind, nation or language. The liberal-national feeling now dominates all peoples, girdles

⁷ George Bariț, „Transilvania”, in *Gazeta de Transilvania*, X, 1847, no. 100, p. 397.

them all with a tight bond and animates them with fiery zeal. Therefore, I dare to glorify the liberal and national feeling only when it is based on morality and is guided by love for the motherland. This is what we, Romanians, also deserve, that for our nationality's glory we emulate the other nationalities, and in the battle with the enemies of the motherland and of our very merciful monarch we form only together with them a Transylvanian-Austrian people. From this follows that each citizen has the duty to strive with all the zeal for his nation's welfare and that, when something lacks, he must be ready to sacrifice himself for the common social interests"⁸.

Another text written during the revolution, the memorial addressed to the imperial government by the Romanian delegation to Vienna in 5 March 1849, emphasises the solution of an Austrian Romania. The national autonomy solicited in this document had in view the creation of a virtual motherland, which lacked a territory of its own and whose only binder would be ethnicity: "The petition's first point states the following: 'Uniting all Romanians of the Austrian state in a single freestanding nation under the sceptre of Austria, as a replenishing part of the Monarchy'. But in order not to give occasion to distortions, we must declare that we understand this independence only with regard to internal administration and towards the other nations. The Romanian nation leans the hope of fulfilling this desire on the principle of lawful equality for all nationalities. If we apply this principle to the various peoples of the Monarchy and especially to the countries that once pertained to the Crown of Hungary and of the Grand Principality of Transylvania, we see that establishing equal rights for all the nationalities could barely be accomplished towards the contentment of all in another manner than this, by allowing each nation the right to form a centre of its own, independent in its relations to the other nations, without taking into consideration the former provincial decisions and overall without much minding the territory, and then the nations constituted in this manner will unite as members of a large whole, through eternal ties to the centre of the entire Monarchy"⁹.

This political organisation of the nation, released from every connection to a certain territory, had as a declared purpose finding a solution that would attenuate the tensions generated by the region's variegated ethnographic map. On the other hand, Romanians were

⁸ Teodor V. Păcățian, *Cartea de aur sau luptele politice naționale ale românilor de sub coroana ungară*, Vol. I, Sibiu, Marschall, 1904, p. 503-505.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 536-538.

aware that only through such a non-territorial formula would they be able to persuade Vienna to unite Romanians from such different provinces under the same political umbrella.

Another motherland conceived by Transylvanian Romanians was the one that the Greek-Catholic canon Timotei Cipariu thought of, in the spring of 1848: a liberal and multinational Hungary. In his series of articles that pleaded in favour of uniting Transylvania with Hungary, Cipariu wrote: "By cutting Transylvania away from Hungary, we, those on this side of the Carpathians, who until then were a single people, have split ourselves up in two, and after the discontent regarding the results expected from the religious Union, we have as a result slit ourselves in four. This separation, entirely hazardous, is a public calamity of the nation. From it derive, for the most part, all the political calamities that greeted this people from Transylvania's separation from Hungary"¹⁰.

Cipariu brought forward a series of arguments in favour of Transylvania's union with Hungary. Firstly, a bigger and stronger state advantaged its citizens. Secondly, in Transylvania, Romanians suffered from national rivalries, from social privileges and from various discriminations. In this political frame, they could not hope for an improvement of their status. On the other hand, in a modern Hungary, based on liberal principles, the Romanians' status would also benefit. The projected union would gather together the three million Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary, which would strengthen the Romanians' nationality as well. Moreover, through the union with Hungary, the Romanians would even be "closer" to the Danubian Principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia, because these would tightly ally a liberal Hungary in order to counteract the peril of Russian expansionism.

In this manner, Cipariu harmonised all the Romanian desiderata with the idea of a union with Hungary. One may notice the fact that exactly the same arguments were used in order to justify the projects of a national rejoining of the Romanians in the following year, 1849, but this time under the sceptre of Austria and not that of Hungary. Including the insistence with which the idea that Romanians were reunited under the aegis of a liberal Austria, and not a reactionary one, was perfectly symmetrical with respect to Cipariu's pro-Hungarian arguments.

Cipariu had therefore renounced, with remarkable easiness, Transylvania's state "specificity", in the same way that it would also be

¹⁰ Timotei Cipariu, "Uniunea", in *Organul luminării*, 1848, no. 67, p. 381.

put aside by the authors of the projects of the year 1849 for unifying the Romanians from the Monarchy under the Austrian sceptre. The identity crisis caused by the revolution and the weakening of the attachment towards Transylvania's historical construction were thus rendered evident. This commitment was shaken by the conviction that, with the revolution, all could be reconfigured, especially as the Romanians had had an unfavourable situation in the old construction, so they had nothing to lose by its disappearance.

On the other hand, in May 1848, with the occasion of the great Romanian popular gathering convoked at Blaj, the revolution's political leader, Simion Bărnuțiu, was in favour of maintaining Transylvania's political specificity, but not so much due to an attachment towards the province's identity, as in order to reject in this manner the union with Hungary. For Bărnuțiu, an autonomous Transylvania was desirable only to the extent that it would be ruled by Romanians, which would allow the preservation of their nationality and placing an emphasis on their numerical superiority¹¹.

This idea would most clearly be expressed after the revolution, through the voice of the radical activist Alexandru Papiu Ilarian, who wrote the following: "A Romanian nationalist and patriot, in Transylvania mean the exact same thing, because the axiom in Transylvania's politics is that its happiness depends solely upon Romanians' happiness"¹².

If until then "patriot" had meant an inhabitant of Transylvania, regardless of ethnicity, from now on the notion of "patriot" overlapped that of Romanian, because, as Papiu Ilarian believed, only the Romanians were the ones who expressed Transylvania's fundamental interests.

Papiu Ilarian's sentences thus opened the way to the identity formula that would be adopted, in the end, by the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals with regard to their "motherland". From a motherland for several nationalities, the Transylvania they imagined would become, above all, a motherland for Romanians. Once this was established, the nationalist project of ensuring a congruency between state and nation could follow its course, which was interrupted only by

¹¹ Simion Bărnuțiu, *Raporturile românilor cu ungurii și principiile libertății naționale*, Vienna, Gerold, 1852.

¹² Al. Papiu Ilarian, *Istoria românilor din Dacia Superioară*, Tome II, Vienna, Gerold, 1852, p. 106.

the competing identity projects that edified, in a similar manner, a Hungarian Transylvania.

This type of representation, according to which Transylvania's provincial identity was defined by its overwhelmingly Romanian ethnic composition, would remain a constant in the Romanian identity discourse during the following two centuries¹³.

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The Ethnographic Image of the Transylvanian Romanians in the 19th Century

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Abstract: *The Ethnographic Image of the Transylvanian Romanians in the 19th Century.* The present article is divided into two parts: the first focuses on folklore and customs, while the second on traditions in Transylvania. The sources for the research are ethnographic works, but I laid special emphasis on articles published in the main gazettes of the time. Authors usually approach this topic not only from the perspective of personal experience or memory, but also from a scientific perspective, based on thorough research. One can find detailed descriptions of customs accompanying Christian and non-Christian holidays, as well as fascinating data on the folklore, music and dances of Transylvanian Romanians. As for the nineteenth-century Transylvanian society, customs and traditions can be viewed as primary among the modalities of identity reconstruction.

Keywords: ethnography, national image, national identity, Transylvania, Modern Epoch

Rezumat: *Imaginea etnografică a românilor ardeleni în secolul al XIX-lea.* Articolul de față are două părți. Prima se concentrează asupra folclorului și obiceiurilor, iar cea de-a doua asupra tradițiilor din Transilvania. Sursele folosite sunt lucrări etnografice de epocă, precum și articole din presa vremii. De obicei, autorii acestora nu abordează subiectul doar din perspectiva experienței personale, ci și dintr-un punct de vedere științific, bazat pe cercetări consistente. În aceste texte se regăsesc descrieri detaliate ale sărbătorilor creștine sau de tradiție pre-creștină, precum și informații cu privire la folclorul, dansul și muzica românilor ardeleni. Pentru secolul al XIX-lea, obiceiurile și tradițiile pot fi considerate modalități de bază ale construcției identitare.

Cuvinte-cheie: etnografie, imagine națională, identitate națională, Transilvania, epoca modernă

Folklore, traditions and customs are essential identity elements. Because they are deeply embedded in society, preserved and passed down from generation to generation, they ensure the conservation of specificity. In a traditional and mostly rural society such as nineteenth-century Transylvania, customs and traditions can be considered identity markers of the province. They represent one of the distinct features of

nationality and act as depositories of the past, intermingling with history. Additionally, they play a connective role between past and future.

The present article is divided into two parts: the first focuses on folklore and customs, while the second on traditions in Transylvania. The sources for the research are ethnographic works, but I laid special emphasis on articles published in the main gazettes of the time. Authors usually approach this topic not only from the perspective of personal experience or memory, but also from a scientific perspective, based on thorough research. One can find detailed descriptions of customs accompanying Christian and non-Christian holidays, as well as fascinating data on the folklore, music and dances of Transylvanian Romanians. As for the nineteenth-century Transylvanian society, customs and traditions can be viewed as primary among the modalities of identity reconstruction.

Folklore and customs

A series of customs accompanying the major Christian or non-Christian holidays became characteristic of the province. The most significant customs observed during Christian holidays and feasts were caroling (*colindatul*), the dances called *capra* (the Goat Dance), *țurca* or *brezaia*, the *Irozii* (a folk drama depicting the Nativity) and Star songs (*cântece de stea*). As for the customs accompanying non-Christian holidays, most authors mention the *paparugă* songs, wedding songs, incantations, lamentations, etc. Most of these customs have been preserved and are still alive today, and their description evokes and resurrects an archaic atmosphere.

Two major holidays distinguish themselves and set Transylvania apart due to the customs and traditions that accompany them: Christmas or the Nativity of Jesus and Easter or the Resurrection of Jesus. Although both are Christian holidays, the customs and traditions that Romanians observe during them reveal a combination of Christian and pagan elements. The sacred and the profane intertwine at this level in accordance with the magical thinking of a given community.

The celebration of Christmas is associated with a number of habits, customs and traditions. The best known, the above-mentioned tradition of caroling, is observed individually or in group, carolers being usually rewarded with gifts. This tradition gives a zest to Christmas celebrations and particularizes them. Additionally, it is one of the most typical and longest-standing traditions of this type. According to an early twentieth-century article on carols “their use and the people's piety canonized them. I listened to them as a child. I grew up with them and

we now listen to them with tender piety in our homes, at the door, and even in church."¹ Carols are associated with the Nativity of Jesus and their lyrics recount this event, being "sung and glorified".² As "one of the most important genres of our folk poetry," the value and significance of our carols is connected to their poetic content and mainly to their ancient character.³ The alternatives to carols were the walking of the Star or the Magi (*mersul cu steaua sau cu magii*), the *Irozii* and the *Viflaim* (a folk drama depicting the Nativity specific to the region of Maramureş).

Another custom accompanying the Christmas celebrations is the so-called "feast of the village young men" (*ospăţ al feciorilor de la sate*) also known as *berea*. This custom is widespread in certain parts of Bukovina, but it is quite popular in Transylvania as well. This tradition is considered "less significant, but quite important to our origin."⁴ This tradition involved the celebration of Christmas by the village youth in a special way, with traditional music and dances. Additionally, the parents of young women are all invited and gifts are given.⁵ Another practice that has become tradition is the slaughtering of the pig in each household shortly before Christmas, on St. Ignatius' Day (*Sf. Ignat*).⁶

A series of customs that set certain areas of Transylvania apart were followed during another major Christian holiday, namely Easter. Thus, the newspapers of the time describe the customs from the area of Braşov, which made the celebration of Easter in this part of the province "unique in its way." Over seven days, a number of rituals took place. In the first day, "the young men" went to the "most prominent households" and especially to those houses where young women lived singing "Christ resurrected!" They were rewarded with Easter eggs that they later divided among themselves. The evening was reserved to partying in various places, but dance was forbidden. The interdiction was lifted the second day when "the young men together with the young women and many families" went to "the so-called garden of Zimmer" where they danced into the night in front of a large audience. On the third day, they celebrated in the same fashion, only for the celebrations to reach the peak on the fourth day, practically considered the most important. On this day, people watched from their windows the parade

¹ *Unirea. Foaie bisericească-politică*, 3 (1902): 26.

² "Obiceiuri de Crăciun la români", in *Tribuna Poporului*, 245 (1897): 127.

³ "Colindele și himnele vedice", in *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, 227 (1892): 1.

⁴ Simeonu Fl. Marianu, "Datinele poporului român", in *Familia. Beleturistică, Științe, Arte, Viață socială, Modă*, 37 (1870): 433.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ Silvestru Moldovan, "Povestea lui Ignat", in *Tribuna*, 35 (1885): 138.

of “young men on horseback.” The remaining three days, namely the fifth, sixth and seventh, followed a similar script as the first one. All these celebrations are characteristic of the region of Brașov⁷. However, similar customs are presently observed in other Transylvanian villages as well.

Easter is a holiday with special significance, alluding to the idea of resurrection and regeneration. Furthermore, it is also associated to spring. At the time, two Easter customs were especially popular across the province: Easter eggs and kissing. Easter eggs were divided among acquaintances, mainly among children, and signified happiness.⁸ The custom of kissing, meaning love and harmony, was observed in the family, between couples and acquaintances or upon exit from church.⁹

Transylvanian Romanians did not organize their lives spontaneously. They alternated Christian and non-Christian feasts, the sacred and the profane, many customs they observed being connected to them. The same can be argued about certain holidays in the calendar, such as St. Parascheva's Day (*Sf. Paraschiva*). Many Romanian authors, such as Valeriu Braniște, consider her the patron saint of the Romanian people. This major religious holiday typifies the mixture of Christian and non-Christian traditions.¹⁰

A sum of customs specific to the area betray the archaic beliefs of the people. These superstitions have a visible picturesque character and are associated to certain seasons and holidays. At this point, we can mention the customs associated to St. George's Day (*Sfântul Gheorghe*) or to the *Sânziene* (Midsummer) as well as others linked to certain meteorological phenomena (to prevent and banish storms and hail).

Several newspaper editorials from the epoch discuss the significance of rituals to the identity of Transylvanian Romanians: “Customs play a major role among Romanians. They emanate from our Romanian character, and they emerged not only through the natural impetus, but also through the laws of tradition as heritage from our ancestors.”¹¹ Thus is outlined an archetype of the Romanian community which, despite the context, has a rich existence, flavoring the sacred and the profane with a considerable dose of picturesque. In conclusion,

⁷ Ieronim Barițiu, “Datinile poporului român XIV. Sărbătoarea St. Paști la Brașov”, in *Familia. Foia enciclopedică și beletristică cu ilustrațiuni*, 21 (1867): 253.

⁸ Alesandru, “Paștele”, in *Ibidem*, 16 (1875):184.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Valeriu Braniște, *Pagini reslețe*, (Lugoj, 1910), 3.

¹¹ “Obiceiurile naționale”, in *Tribuna Poporului*, 26 (1897):119.

Transylvania reveals itself as an authentic area, rich in customs that distinguish it and confer its uniqueness.

Traditions. Marriage

Within the conservative and traditionalist area of Transylvania in the Dualist period, family acquired special prestige as a type of solidarity meant to create social cohesion. The idea of family was frequently associated to morality. In a predominantly rural society, the attachment to this type of solidarity become evident: "All across the country one cannot find a national community more attached to family and the native village than Romanians."¹² The idea of family is associated with intransigence, intolerance and a certain spirit of mistrust linked to the exigence of preserving ethnic purity. Concerning marriage, one can note a degree of behavioral excess which is rooted in this type of exigence, according to which mixing with foreigners provided the perspective of altering ethnic purity. Marriage to foreigners was the equivalent of alienation: "alienated men and women who marry foreign blood."¹³ Alienation prompted ridicule in the native place that, at the time, represented the entire world.¹⁴ Men who did not marry were also subjected to ridicule within the community, being mocked as *borlaci* (confirmed bachelors).¹⁵

Nineteenth-century sources mention marriage as an especially relevant custom to ethnography. As a landmark in the life of every person within the Transylvanian Romanian community, marriage involved a series of norms and rules that had to be strictly followed: a tent had to be set up, the bride had to be danced with, gifts were given, and the wedding had to last for three days. The region inhabited by the *Moți* distinguished itself because of the famous fairs organized here. The first one was the "Maiden Fair" on Mount Găina and the second one the "Kiss Fair" at Hălmaj. Both fairs necessarily preceded the marriage ceremony and set the region apart.

The writer Ioan Slavici describes the traditions connected to the "Maiden Fair" on Mount Găina, revealing norms and customs relevant to the closing of a marriage in Transylvania. The "Maiden Fair" was organized around a major Christian holiday, namely the first Sunday

¹² Ioan Russu Șirianu, *Româniile de peste Carpați*, (Bucharest: Institutul de Arte Grafice Carol Gobl, 1908), 61.

¹³ *Idem*, *Româniile din statul ungar (statistică etnografică)*, (Editura Autorului, 1904), 255.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, 61.

¹⁵ Ștefan Buzilă, "Nunta la țăranul român din jurul Năsăudului", in *Tribuna*, 199 (1890): 793.

after St. Peter's Day (*Sân Petru*).¹⁶ This tradition is still alive, but the Fair is currently organized around another important religious feast, namely St. Elijah's Day (*Sf. Ilie*). A few clarifications on the date it took place reveal vagueness regarding the manner of setting the date of the event: "In case St. Peter's Day falls on a Sunday or is in the first half of the week, then the Fair must be held the next Sunday [...] which is not completely clear even to the *Moși*."¹⁷ The events that took place here culminated in the conclusion of the engagement or betrothal (*încredințare*) as it was called here. Young unwed women attended the Fair after thorough preparations that could last even up to a few years, because it was necessary for them to bring the dowry. Young men arrived accompanied by their families or their sponsors, the Fair being also a good opportunity for them to display their best clothes, for instance a beautiful belt adorned with silver and gold. The official betrothal was concluded in front of the inhabitants of Mount Găina and it was followed by fun, music and dance. A specific aspect was that engagement rings were replaced with pieces of cloth embroidered with the names of the betrothed couple as symbols of their betrothal.¹⁸

The "Kiss Fair" at Hălmașiu was, in a way, an extension of the "Maiden Fair" on Mount Găina. Also known as the *Buciu de la Hălmașiu*, it took place during Easter, more precisely on Easter Saturday. Basically, it involved that the young brides-to-be who had celebrated their betrothal on Mount Găina arrived dressed as brides and kissed any respectable man who crossed their path.¹⁹

Beyond their picturesque aspect, these customs and traditions speak volumes about the social life of the community, incorporating a set of beliefs and practices carefully passed down from generation to generation and representing elements of specificity and identity.

A series of articles published in the *Tribuna* magazine discuss marriage and the customs associated to it in the region of Năsăud. They focus on revealing the similarities between the marriage customs typical of this region and those specific to Romanians living in other areas. The articles describe the string of customs that mark this major event in three distinct stages: the habits and beliefs from the period leading to the betrothal, those from before the wedding day as well as those typical of

¹⁶ Teofil Frâncu și George Candrea, *Românii din Munții Apuseni (Moși)*, (Bucharest: Tipografia Modernă Gr. Luis, 1888), 69.

¹⁷ Târgul de fete din Găina" în *Telegraful Român*, 5 (1885): 18.

¹⁸ Ioan Slavici, "Românii din Ungaria, Transilvania și Bucovina", in *Opere XIII*, (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 713-714.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 715.

the wedding day and beyond. Although they mention that these customs were mostly characteristic of the area of Năsăud, some of them were widespread, being observed even today in many Transylvanian villages.

Thus, the initial stage involved conveniences related to the careful preparation of the event. Special emphasis was laid on certain aspects such as the setting of the date, the degree of relatedness between the bride and the groom, their ethnicity as well as the age when they started to form a couple. The date of the event, which was usually set by the groom and bride together with their families, depended on several religious criteria. For instance, an optimal date for such an event was the interval between the two Orthodox fasts (*Câșlegi*), when people were less busy with work in the field. On the other hand, it was strictly forbidden to organize such events “on a Sunday or during a feast.”²⁰ To the Transylvanian Romanian peasant, it was extremely important that the bride and groom were not related. According to popular belief, not even distant relatives could form a couple, not even in the case of a dispensation.²¹ As for the nationality of the future spouses, it was imperative that they belonged to the same ethnicity. Thus, it was excluded for the daughter of an ethnic Romanian peasant to marry a Hungarian, Gypsy, Jew, etc., namely a foreigner.²² This well-known norm was accompanied by another one, somewhat deriving from it, according to which the prestige of the families within the community was paramount. For example, it was very important to know who the mother was, especially in the case of the future bride. The relevance of this situation was conveyed by and concentrated into the saying “the kid will follow in the she-goat's footsteps” (*pe unde sare capra, pe acolo sare și iada*). More important was the economic aspect, the wealth of the families that would become related: “one can say that only one percent does not make this the first condition, and then this is why there are so many unhappy marriages.”²³ As for the age when most marriages were concluded, it was situated between 23 and 26 for young men and between 18 and 23 for young women. The following saying related to this aspect was very popular at the time: “early marriage and early breakfast are highly rewarding” (*însuratul de cu vreme și mâncarea de dimineată aduc mult folos în viață*). Another family tradition was that, in

²⁰ Ștefan Buzilă, “Nunta la țăranul...”, in *Tribuna*, 199 (1890), 793.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ *Ibidem*.

case there were several daughters, the youngest one was never supposed to marry before the oldest.²⁴

As for the second stage, the wedding proper, the customs and traditions are related to the church ceremony and the party that followed. Thus, according to the rule, the wedding ceremony had to take place in the afternoon (it was very rare that it took place before noon). The so-called flag-bearer took the flag and led the groom to the church in a great procession. After he left the groom at the church, he went to fetch the bride. Then, the inviters went for the godparents. This custom of bringing the protagonists to the wedding was flexible, varying in accordance with the location of the groom and bride's houses. Therefore, this was not always the way events unfolded. The wedding ceremony took place at the church and was followed by a feast either at the godparents' place, also called "the godfather's lunch" (*prândul nănașului*), which was not compulsory, or straight at the bride's house which was "tidied and adorned" especially for this event.²⁵ A specific aspect of the wedding was that the inviter from the bride's side sang a specially-dedicated song to her, called *gogea*.²⁶ The peak of the wedding was the bride's dance. It meant that all male guests had to dance with the bride in exchange for money, and the groom had to buy her back from the last one to dance with her, usually by doubling the sum he normally offered.²⁷ Commonly, the following morning they went to the groom's house to continue with the party. However, sometimes it resumed only the next evening due to the participants' need for a respite. This was also the last stage of a wedding.²⁸

The core of the wedding-related customs were common to most areas of Transylvania. However, there was slight variation according to the specificity of a given region. The above-described customs were generally valid for most regions, but they were mainly specific to the region of Năsăud in this form.

Within the Transylvanian Romanian community from the Dualist period, marriage was viewed as a factor that created solidarity and strengthened the ethnicity. As I emphasized above, the essential requirement was that marriage should occur exclusively within the community. Therefore, the institution of marriage was supposed to

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ *Idem*, in *Tribuna*, 204 (1890): 815.

²⁶ *Idem*, in *Tribuna*, 203 (1890): 811.

²⁷ *Idem*, in *Tribuna*, 205 (1890): 819.

²⁸ *Idem*, in *Tribuna*, 206 (1890): 823.

preserve ethnic purity, which meant that marriages with foreigners had to be avoided. Women were especially condemned for such a decision, even though this type of alienation was prohibited for both sexes: "In the opinion of the majority of Romanians, the Romanian man who marries a foreign woman stops being a Romanian and takes upon himself the responsibility of his impurity. More severely are reprehended [Romanian] women who marry a foreigner; it is as if her marital relations were illegal."²⁹

As for the tendency to start a family, Transylvanian Romanians were on the second place according to statistics. Regarding divorce, they started to become more frequent beginning with 1895. According to the same statistical data, widowhood was frequent among Romanians.³⁰

Concerning morality, which is another significant aspect, Romanians were well situated in comparison to their neighbors. Their vigorous and solid moral structure allowed them to make a clear distinction between what was proper and what was improper. Morality within the community was shaped and regulated by public opinion: "There is nothing more important to Romanians than public opinion, the voice of the village, the voice of the world."³¹ Moreover, their permanent reference to the Church and religion was meant to preserve moral values and reference points. Morality was closely connected to their strong religious feeling and was pivotal to their national resilience: "Their admirable tenacity and patience, which have made them brave in front of suffering, became rooted in Romanians' character through morality. This virtue also made them wise [...] and endowed them with the courage to remove from their throat the enemy's sword that was ready to extinguish their life."³²

Modern civilization was perceived as an attempt on traditional morality, and it was deemed "harmful to the moral order." According to the ideas promoted by the contemporary literature, the weakening of moral values automatically led to the weakening of national resistance, especially given that the preservation of morality equated with the survival of the nation.³³

The contemporary press also discussed the role of women in the family and society. Within the Transylvanian Romanian community,

²⁹ Slavici, *op.cit.*, 716-717.

³⁰ Șirianu, *Românii de peste ...*,64-65.

³¹ Slavici, *Românii din Ungaria...*,740.

³² "De sub cetatea de piatră ", in *Gazeta Transilvaniei* 12 (1867) : 46.

³³ Slavici, *Românii din Ardeal* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1910), 67-77.

women fulfilled traditional roles and were dissociated from the feminist current that started to gain more ground in other regions at the time. Their main role was that of mothers and housewives. The arguments brought in press articles extolled the importance of this role and rejected the idea of feminine emancipation, thus emphasizing the conservatism of the community. Thus, the role of women was reduced to the shaping of the future generations given that family was a stronghold of education in the traditional way and in the national spirit. It also played the role of vehicle for the passing of traditions from generation to generation.³⁴ Consequently, women as mothers were assigned a crucial role in the preservation of nationality.

The above-described customs and traditions present Transylvania as a traditional and rural society with a picturesque everyday existence. The same as language and history, traditions are essential identity elements, because they reveal the spirit and manifestations of Transylvanian Romanians. Their identity is illustrated by their customs and traditions, many of them being still alive today³⁵.

³⁴ I. Lapedatu, "Femeia română", in *Familia. Beletistică, Științe, Artă, Viață socială, Modă*, 44 (1870): 517-519.

³⁵ This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0081.

The Hungarian school and language as seen by the Transylvanian Romanians in the Dualist period

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Abstract: *The Hungarian school and language as seen by the Transylvanian Romanians in the Dualist period.* The present study propounds a manner of grasping Transylvanian Romanians' attitude towards the Hungarian language and the characteristics that were attributed to the latter. Therefore, the Hungarian's image in the context of school life (as a member of the school's staff and as a classmate) is of interest, as are also the general characterization of the Hungarian education system and the reactions provoked by the Hungarian governments' education policy. The first part of the study outlines the main measures taken by the Hungarian governments in the field of education during the Dualist period. In the second part of the study, the traits attributed to the Hungarian and his language are presented, in the ways that they appeared in evocations of school life in memoirs and literature, but also in the articles concerning educational issues which appeared in the epoch's newspapers.

Keywords: national identity, national images, Transylvania, Hungary, Modern Epoch

Rezumat: *Imaginea sistemului școlar ungar și a limbii maghiare la românii ardeleni în perioada dualistă.* Studiul de față își propune surprinderea atitudinii românilor ardeleni față de limba maghiară, a caracteristicilor atribuite acestei limbi. De asemenea, prezintă interes imaginea maghiarului în contextul vieții școlare (a personalului școlii și al colegilor), dar și caracterizarea sistemului de învățământ ungar în ansamblul ei și reacțiile stârnite de politica școlară a guvernelor maghiare. Prima parte a studiului conține o scurtă trecere în revistă a principalelor măsuri luate de guvernele maghiare în domeniul școlar în perioada dualistă. În a doua parte sunt prezentate trăsăturile atribuite maghiarului și limbii sale, așa cum apar ele în evocări ale vieții școlare din memorialistică și din operele literare, dar și în articolele referitoare la problematica școlară din presa vremii.

Cuvinte-cheie: identitate națională, imagini naționale, Transilvania, Ungaria, epoca modernă

In the Transylvanian social landscape, the reciprocal Romanian-Hungarian images occupy an important place. Joint history, marked by the conflict between two competing national ideologies, has led to formulating categorical attitudes and intense sentiments, the political

divergences determining the accentuation of the negative aspects pertaining to the "Other's" image. In describing the national Hungarian "specificities", Transylvanian Romanians grant a special importance to the Hungarian language, perceiving it especially as a main denationalising instrument. Therefore, the official language of the Hungarian state, as well as the state school as an institution meant to ensure this language's assimilation by the nationalities, have a prevailing negative image.

The present study propounds a manner of grasping Transylvanian Romanians' attitude towards the Hungarian language and the characteristics that were attributed to the latter. Therefore, the Hungarian's image in the context of school life (as a member of the school's staff and as a classmate) is of interest, as are also the general characterization of the Hungarian education system and the reactions provoked by the Hungarian governments' education policy. The first part of the study outlines the main measures taken by the Hungarian governments in the field of education during the Dualist period. In the second part of the study, the traits attributed to the Hungarian and his language are presented, in the ways that they appeared in evocations of school life in memoirs and literature, but also in the articles concerning educational issues which appeared in the epoch's newspapers.

In the political discourse of the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals, the accusations of chauvinism and forced Magyarisation were the main points, being present in almost every writing with a political tint. And, from all the domains in which the denationalising policy led by the Hungarian governments made its presence felt in an accentuated way, the education system occupied a leading place.

The most important step in the Magyarisation process, according to the Hungarian political discourse, was the assimilation of the Hungarian language that could take place through an education system in which teaching took place in this language. Therefore, although the Nationalities Law of 1868 granted non-Hungarians of Hungary the right to primary and secondary education in their mother tongues, this law was not respected, and, in the following decades, the Hungarian governments have adopted a series of education laws through which the Hungarian language was imposed at all levels of education.

The Nationalities Law of 1868, amongst whose authors were Francisc Deák and Iosif Eötvös, distinguished itself through a liberalism that was surprising for its epoch. Although it stipulated the existence of a unitary Hungarian political nation, and the Hungarian language was considered the official language of administration, justice and higher

education, the law also pronounced equal rights for all citizens, irrespective of their nationality. Non-Hungarian nationalities received the right to use their mother tongues at certain administrative levels, in the Court of first instance and in primary and partially secondary education; the nationalities were granted the right to establish cultural and economic associations, the autonomy of the nationalities' churches was recognised (this was also the case of the Romanian Orthodox Church of Transylvania). Moreover, if a minority represented a minimum of 20% of a community, then it had the right to propose a second or third language for that particular community¹. However, the law's preamble specified that the provisions regarding the right to use the nationalities' mother tongues could be modified if the Hungarian state's interests required it. And this wording opened up the possibility that the law was used for purposes that were totally incongruous with the spirit which governed its creation². Of course, most of the Hungarian elite considered that this law was incompatible with the fundamental idea of the Hungarian nationalist discourse, that of a unitary Hungarian national state. Even some representatives of the nationalities shared this opinion. This was also the case of Romanian Grigorie Moldovan, who did not condemn the Hungarian governments for not applying the law, as it was formulated in such a way that its application would have diminished the state's sovereignty and, for this exact reason, he considered the law to be a major political mistake, as it promised something it could not grant³.

The Nationalities Law and the Primary Schools Law of the same year 1868 (which instituted the compulsory character of primary education) were the essential pieces of the Dualist system's education legislation. Especially after 1875, the Hungarian governments emitted a series of laws which sought to Magyarise the confessional and private schools. The Trefort Law of 1879⁴, the laws of 1883⁵ and 1891⁶, and

¹ Paul Lendvai, *Ungurii: timp de un mileniu învingători în înfrângeri*, Bucharest, Humanitas, p. 304-306.

² *Ibid.*

³ Moldovan Gergely, *Magyarok, Románok*, Kolozsvár, 1894, p. 11.

⁴ The law of 1879 obligated children to learn Hungarian in primary schools from the age of 6.

⁵ The Hungarian language is introduced into secondary schools.

⁶ This law stipulates the establishment of Hungarian kindergartens even in the non-Hungarian villages.

especially the Apponyi Laws of 1907⁷ created the necessary framework for the Magyarisation of the Romanian confessional schools. The education laws had in view the necessity of modernising the education system, of providing a compatible infrastructure and qualified and well-paid personnel, but they were formulated in such a way that they disadvantaged the nationalities' schools. The law regarding the elementary teachers' remuneration imposed a minimum wage, which, most of the times, could not be provided by the poor Romanian parishes. And, in exchange for the state's help, the Hungarian authorities received the right to intervene in what concerned choosing the teacher and the establishment of the curriculum. Moreover, knowing the Hungarian language became compulsory for all teachers, and children had to satisfyingly know this language until they finished the fourth grade. For studying it, the laws stipulated a number of hours per week, and some subjects (the country's history and geography, arithmetic, geometry, the Hungarian constitution) had to be studied in Hungarian. The school building had to meet certain standards. Without a qualified teacher and an adequate building, the state had the right to close down the confessional school and establish a state school, which had Hungarian as a teaching language. These measures had as a consequence the closing down of many Romanian confessional schools. Thus, from approximately 3,000 Romanian confessional schools in Transylvania in 1907, in 1911 only 2,439 remained⁸. But it must be mentioned that applying this law was also facilitated by the deficient organisation of the Romanian confessional schools, whose modernisation was postponed and delayed by the ecclesiastical authorities. Therefore, in order not to destabilise the education system, the authorities were forced to elude the law and accept the functioning of some inadequate Romanian confessional schools (348 Orthodox ones and 146 Uniate ones)⁹.

Essentially, modernising the educational infrastructure and ensuring qualified personnel are logical and necessary measures, but they were applied for Romanians with a price. They knew that if they cannot guarantee their children's education through their own means, they will lose the right to establish the way in which this education was

⁷ They contain stipulations regarding the qualification and minimum salary of the elementary teacher, the state of the school building, etc.

⁸ Valeria Soroşţineanu, *Şcoala confesională românească din arhiepiscopia ortodoxă a Transilvaniei (1899-1916)*, Editura Universităţii Lucian Blaga din Sibiu, 2007, p. 9-13.

⁹ Paul Brusonowski, *Învăţământul confesional ortodox din Transilvania între anii 1848-1918. Între exigenţele statului centralizat şi principiile autonomiei bisericeşti*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2005, p. 589-594.

conducted. The Hungarian state schools did not provide education in their mother tongue for non-Hungarian children, which is perhaps not surprising for that epoch.

A large part of the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals who were formed during the Dualist system attended their secondary studies in Hungarian state schools, but even in the few Romanian high schools, theological seminaries and pedagogic schools (*preparandii*) studying the Hungarian language was imposed through the above-mentioned education legislation. In addition to the difficulties met while learning Hungarian, young Romanians also had to deal with the burden of an education conducted "in a Hungarian spirit", as phrased by G. Sima, the author of a study regarding the history of the Romanian education in Transylvania published in 1915¹⁰. This author signals the fact that, in Hungarian state schools, the main purpose of education is surpassed, as the education provided sought not only to form competent citizens, but also good Hungarians.

The Romanian students' experiences in the Hungarian state schools are well illustrated in the Transylvanian Romanian literature and memoirs. From the school years' evocation results the attitude of the Romanian intellectuals towards the Hungarian schooling system, towards their Hungarian professors and classmates, but also towards the Hungarian language.

Relations between children of different nationalities in the mixed villages varied, as Ioan Slavici recalls. He started his studies in the Romanian school of Șiria, a multiethnic village. Group interaction was absent, dissimilarities being felt not only at the linguistic level (the "Other's" language being assimilated most of the times, due to an adjoining existence), but most of all in what concerns religion and cultural traditions. But, despite his mother's warnings, who urged him to stay away from foreigners, Slavici had connections with the Hungarian neighbours' children, from whom he learned Hungarian. Nevertheless, in the case of children of different ethnicities, group interactions were rare and consisted almost entirely of exchanging insults. Thus, as a student of the Romanian school, when he and his classmates passed by the German school of the village, where the Hungarian children also studied, not only did they say to the Romanians "rumun munca fun" (a corrupted manner of saying "Romanians eat hay"), and the Romanians replied by calling them "ungur brungur" (a meaningless, but rhyming

¹⁰ G. Sima, *Școala românească din Transilvania și Ungaria. Dezvoltarea ei istorică și situația ei actuală*, Bucharest, 1915, p. 38-40.

expression, equivalent to “Hungarian Brungarian”) and “neamț cotofleanț” (another meaningless and rhyming phrase that can be translated as “German Pretzelman”), “but we would also throw stones at each other”¹¹. But when he was alone, Slavici spent his time enjoyably with the neighbouring Hungarian children.

In 1859 Slavici enrolled in the Hungarian high school of Arad, where he did not hesitate to make friends with some Hungarian classmates, for which he was blamed by many of his Romanian peers who proved to be just as chauvinistic as some Hungarians, considering friendship towards any member of the other nationality as a betrayal of one’s people. Amongst the young students, the problem of language and of the attitude towards those of another ethnicity is a subject of discussion often present. Slavici evokes one of these discussions, stating his opinion that any mother tongue deserves respect and when it comes to choosing (as in the case of mixed marriages), then not the pecuniary interest, but common sense requirements should be respected. Slavici’s Romanian friends do not meet these requirements when they accept without any problems the marriage of a Romanian to a Serbian woman, to a Greek woman or to a Russian one, but feel indignation when a Romanian marries a German or a Hungarian woman, considering that such a marriage is a betrayal of your own people, and from Slavici’s phrasing it becomes obvious that this alleged mismatch does not have only religious connotations¹².

Valeriu Braniște attended the Sibiu gymnasium, where classes were taught in the Hungarian language, and he later recalled the poor professional skills of the teachers. This happened because, due to the Magyarisation of the state schools, the number of Hungarian teachers became insufficient, especially as “the genuine Hungarians today also only reluctantly dedicate themselves to a teaching career. The study towards which they have a predilection is law, which opens up to them the most career possibilities and purposes in life, the offices multiplying unceasingly as the sand of the sea”¹³. Valeriu Braniște voices here a trait that was present also in the Hungarian identity discourse: the predilection of the Hungarian (the one who had to choose a profession, i.e. the nobleman) towards certain professions that were worthy of his

¹¹ Ioan Slavici, *Lumea prin care am trecut. Memorialistică. Publicistică*, Bucharest, Editura Institutului Cultural Român, 2004, p. 113.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹³ Valeriu Braniște, *Amintiri din închisoare. Însemnări contimporane și autobiografice*, Bucharest, Tritonic, 2002, p. 85.

nobility, amongst which were the military career, the ecclesiastical one, the political one and the judicial one. This “medieval” conception persisted for a long time in the Hungarians’ conscience. The Hungarian’s lack of inclination towards sciences is also rendered evident by Ioan Slavici in his line of articles dedicated to the Hungarians, published in *Convorbiri literare*: “The Hungarian’s stormy nature, arrogance and antipathy towards the European spirit has [have] concentrated all the nation’s powers on the political realm; faced with the sciences, the Hungarian is ignorant; for him the under-sheriff is a more respected person than the university teacher. Journalists, deputies, ministers and lord lieutenants are to be found amongst Hungarians, they must ask others for teachers”¹⁴.

The figures of professors from the Deva pedagogical school evoked by Ioan Pop Reteganul are likable. Director Koos and inspector Szeremlei also spoke Romanian and both of them, as well as housemaster Tájcsék, who spoke only Hungarian, were amiable towards the young Romanian who wanted to enrol in that institution¹⁵.

Ion Agârbiceanu, in his novel with an autobiographical tint *Licean... odinioară* (1939), narrates the studies pursued in the Romanian schools of Blaj by Ionică Albu, a talented child from the countryside. Ionică is accepted as a servant in the house of the old professor Ion Pascu, in exchange for food and accommodation in Blaj. When the boy reveals to the professor that he knows Hungarian the latter gets mad and considers that it would have been best if Ionică would not have assimilated this language, even if “the race and offspring of this barbarian language would have dried out”. The nationalist old professor is profoundly discontented by the Hungarian language’s introduction even in the popular schools. Ionică does not understand the professor’s anger, but he admits that it was difficult for him to learn to read and especially to pronounce the words. To conciliate the professor, Ionică says that he forgot almost all of what he had learned. The old professor admits that he had refused on principle to learn Hungarian, “a Tartarian language” that “is not a part of the noble family from which our language originates”, a language made only for “curse words”, “Tuhutum’s language”¹⁶.

¹⁴ Ioan Slavici, *Individualitatea maghiară*, in *Convorbiri literare*, Jassy, no. 19, 1 December 1871, p. 299-308.

¹⁵ Ioan Pop-Reteganul, *Amintirile unui școlar de altădată*, Cluj-Napoca, Eikon, 2006, p. 70-71.

¹⁶ Ion Agârbiceanu, *Licean... odinioară*, Craiova, Scrisul Românesc, 1994, p. 55-56.

At the schools of Blaj, the young Ionică Albu discovers his national sentiments and becomes aware of the fact that he is a part of a nation whose rights are trampled upon, his nationalism becoming a militant one. Professor Pascu expresses in front of his favourite student his hostile attitude towards Hungarians: "they are robbers, as they were ever since Asia's wasteland bred them and hurled them westwards. From abductions they lived, from plundering another man's belongings"¹⁷. The old professor cannot be otherwise but satisfied when Ionică commits his first act of protest and defiance of the Hungarian authorities: when the day of 3/15 May was celebrated, the young man hoisted Romanian tricoloured flags on the Cathedral and in other two locations in Blaj. For his nationalist manifestations, Ionică Albu is denied access to all superior schools in Hungary. Eventually, Ionică defies "the Hungarian haughtiness" and crosses the border to Romania, accompanied by two of his friends¹⁸.

The novel *Budulea Taichii*, written by Ioan Slavici, treats the evolution of a character from the rural environment who, although he is not very talented, manages to pass through the Hungarian education system and pursue a clerical career. Teacher Clăiță, Huțu Budulea's first schoolteacher, in his native village, wanted the boy to become a teacher and does not approve of Huțu going to a state school and learning Hungarian, because that language is "Calvinistic and popish and as soon as you learn it, you get confused". The Hungarian language is, therefore, a language extremely foreign to the Romanian tradition (an aspect which was emphasised also by professor Pascu, in Ion Agărbiceanu's novel), but this was not the main reason of the Romanian teacher's reticence towards learning this language, because "us Romanians must know Romanian and if we learn Hungarian, we become Hungarians and are no longer proper Romanians. This even stands [written] in the gazettes. And for that, if the teacher knows Hungarian, he also teaches the children and spoils their minds"¹⁹. Teacher Clăiță, a literary image of the Romanian elite from the countryside, voices a fear frequently mentioned in the Transylvanian Romanian national discourse: denationalising through the assimilation of the Hungarian language and culture. Huțu's father, although a simple illiterate peasant, expresses with regard to the Hungarian language a much more reasonable attitude, as Slavici offers

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

¹⁹ Ioan Slavici, *Budulea Taichii*, in *Novele*, Vol. I, Bucharest, Socecu & COMP, 1892, p. 161.

through the words of this character a sample of popular wisdom: "... the man, how many languages he knows, that many times he is human"²⁰. Huțu manages, eventually, to make himself loved also by his Hungarian teachers (one of them even lodges him in his house) and graduates the state school without actually having learnt Hungarian (he learnt it mechanically). Budulea's case symbolises the extremely slim chances of Magyarising the Romanians through school, the Hungarian governments' efforts to elaborate and apply education laws that were disadvantageous to the nationalities having no way of leading to the anticipated effect.

Ioan Slavici illustrates the inefficiency of Magyarising through schooling through his very own example, as he attended the Hungarian high school of Arad and law classes at the University of Budapest. Slavici himself admits in his memoirs that in his youth, as a notary assistant at Cumlăuș, it was easier for him to draw up official papers in Hungarian, because he knew the technical terms better in this language; however, this did not stop him not even for a moment from militating in favour of the Romanians' right of using their language in justice²¹.

Ștefan Octavian Iosif, forced to move from Brașov to Sibiu, narrates in his correspondence with his friend and former classmate from Brașov, Aurel C. Popp, his experience in the Hungarian state high school of Sibiu. The biggest difficulties encountered by him concern studying the Hungarian language, and he finished the first semester "like one who does not know more Hungarian than a Hungarian forgot". But, learning three times as much than in Brașov, the young Romanian does much better the next semester²². Young Iosif complains about the "persecution" to which Romanians are subjected by the Hungarians, but shows that things were not always like this: "From the [secondary] school's library I took an illustrated [news]paper *Magyarság és a Nagyvilág*. I like to read [it] because it tells a lot of good things about Romanians also, you see that then (the newspaper is from 1874) Hungarians were not as crazy as they are now. You must know that they persecute us. It is not enough that they mock us with the names 'dah'*,

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Id.*, *Lumea prin care am trecut...*, p. 140.

²² From a letter addressed by Ștefan Octavian Iosif to Aurel C. Popp, dated Sibiu, 8 May 1890, in Șt. O. Iosif, Dimitrie Anghel, Natalia Neagu, M. Sadoveanu, N. Iorga, C. Sandu-Aldea, Virgil Cioflec, Ilarie Chendi, *Correspondență* (Edition tended, Notes and Foreword by Horia Oprescu), Bucharest, Editura pentru Literatură, 1969, p. 7.

* A corrupted form for "Dacian" (translator's note).

‘szoros nyelvi’²³, ‘hazda rulo’²⁴, etc., etc.; but ever since the ‘national conference’ was held here in Sibiu they do not regard us well at all’²⁵. But one important specification imposes itself: “I do not say, there are also professors worthy of all esteem, who do not have such ‘national’ feelings as the others”²⁶.

The difficulty of learning Hungarian is also mentioned by Valeriu Braniște, who, studying at the Hungarian high school of Sibiu, admits that he hated this language and only in his fourth year of high school he started familiarising with it: until then he learnt mechanically²⁷. The hatred towards the Hungarian language of the young Braniște must be placed in relation to the pecuniary difficulties met with by his numerous family just because his father, as a functionary, did not know Hungarian well enough to be able to advance in the functions’ hierarchy.

Octavian Goga depicts school life in sombre shades in the article *Generația nouă* (which appeared originally in *Tribuna* in 1911), reaching to the conclusion that the Hungarian school does not succeed in denationalising the Romanian child, but, on the contrary, it implants in his soul the hatred towards the Hungarians. The Romanian children who get into “Hungarian” schools “... sit with their hands on the school benches, scattered amongst the Hungarian pupils and they shyly listen to the incomprehensible words [coming] from the teacher’s chair. They torment themselves, they break their tongue with the difficult words... They stretch their mouth, they unfold their lips, they draw them together: they are reading from the book in Hungarian”. In addition to the difficulties of learning the Hungarian language, Romanian children also have to face the hardships of living in lodgings, four-five of them crowded in the same room. Little by little, they succeed in understanding the teacher’s “not at all friendly words”. As the help they receive from home thins down, they support themselves by helping others, namely just their Hungarian classmates, “who bear for years in a row at school their haughty laziness that is not severely punished”²⁸. School is, in Goga’s opinion, a microcosm which accurately mirrors the

²³ The correct form is “szőrös nyelvű” (literary, with a “hairy tongue”).

²⁴ The correct form is “haza áruló” (traitor to one’s country).

²⁵ From a letter addressed by Ștefan Octavian Iosif to Aurel C. Popp, dated Sibiu, 11 November 1890, in Șt. O. Iosif..., *Correspondență...*, p. 10.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Valeriu Braniște, *Amintiri din închisoare...*, p. 54-64.

²⁸ Octavian Goga, *Generația nouă*, in *Naționalism dezrobitor. Permanența ideii naționale*, Bucharest, Albatros, 1998, p. 34.

Transylvanian social realities. "The spirit of getting rich without working, the privileges at every turn which accompany the Hungarian compatriots for all their life, can be discerned fairly well on the school's benches. The Hungarian students are the eupatrids of this country. Raised in a pride strengthened daily by the teacher's advice, they see in their Romanian classmates only the neighbour good for giving a helping hand to a translation from Salust. In their conscience of superiority towards the Walachian depicted with such mockery by professor so-and-so, they consider they are entitled to disdainfully regard these neighbours, who speak to each other in a different language"²⁹.

A gap deeper and deeper is being created between the Hungarian and Romanian students, who split up in two sides more and more hostile to each other. Thus, the young Romanians live in utter "spiritual isolation", the Hungarian ideas and ideals do not touch their soul and "with all the foreign school, they end up forming a Romanian style from the readings... their conscience as Romanians hardens every day and flinches in the torment of a spiritual unrest, when history professor so-and-so mocks their people. Gradually even protesting murmurs break off, harassments start, bold throws of words amongst the young men of the two worlds. Many times the books are left aside, so that the heated discussion, in which the revulsion of the offended dignity is made clear, starts. All faith between the two sides is lost"³⁰. The final examination (*bacalaureat*) and the end of the school years are equivalent to a true emancipation for the Romanian young man. Then the professor appears as the "powerless tyrant" and the Hungarian classmate as the enemy with which he is ready to fight openly. In this manner, the Hungarian school not only does not succeed in denationalising the Romanians, but implants "fierce hatred" between two peoples³¹. In Budapest, where the young Romanian usually ends up for university studies, he feels even more estranged, awakening in a "Jewishised" city, a "hasty formicary" with "motley people". He spends here four years sitting in the same school bench with a "freckled red-haired little Jew" without exchanging a word. "In the same time that their Hungarian classmates pass in groups on the streets singing Kossuth's hymn, when neophyte so-and-so beats his breast on the pedestal of Petőfi's statue,

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

these foreign boys sing their forefathers' *doinas* and taste sour wine in some little room of the Swabians' inns from the outskirts of the city"³².

For this article, Goga was sued. In his defence speech at the press lawsuit, Goga affirmed that this article was inspired by his own experience in the Hungarian school of Sibiu, where fanatical teachers implanted hatred in the hearts of the Romanian students through their haughtiness and contempt with which they treated them, and in the hearts of the Hungarian students contempt towards the Romanian whom they called savage and traitor. His personal experience as a student in the Hungarian schools was an unpleasant one; the professors are depicted in a negative light, as they placed education in a Hungarian spirit above their duty to impart knowledge to the students. But these very attempts of forced Magyarisation had the effect of awakening and strengthening the Romanian national conscience, but they also represented an impulse towards mutual national "hatred". Although he mentioned that some of his Hungarian classmates sided with him when he was apostrophised for his opposition towards Magyarisation, he also expressed the great probability that when they matured they could have been conquered by the system³³.

Even if it does not succeed in denationalising the Romanians, the Hungarian school system nevertheless has, in Goga's opinion, a significant influence on young Romanians: they involuntarily assimilate the specifically Hungarian means of expression. In this sense, a telling incident is the one narrated by Goga in the article entitled *Două mentalități: Budapesta-București* that appeared in 1910 in *Tribuna*. In Arad, a friend of his from Bucharest saw a meeting in the course of which Hungarian flags were waved and the crowd listened to a passionate speaker, this being the first "Hungarian gathering" seen by that friend who, afterwards, affirmed that a people's way of being is reflected in its gesticulation and manner of behaviour. Thus, the manifestations of the "Turanian violence" were very clear in the shouts of the riotous crowd or even in the knitting of the speaker's eyebrows and in his entire specifically Hungarian mimicry. The friend from Bucharest was therefore shocked to find out that the speaker was actually the Romanian Ștefan Cicio-Pop, and the crowd was, in fact, composed of Romanians. The influence of the Hungarian culture, acquired in the foreign schools and involuntarily assimilated by the Transylvanian Romanians, was a recurrent theme in Goga's writings. The friend from Bucharest

³² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³³ *Id.*, *Naționalism dezrobitor...*, p. 40-53.

acknowledged a “large gap” between the “Hungarian soul”, with a “Turanian” outburst and “the contemplative and dreamy kindness” of the Romanian peasants. The Hungarian school had the paradoxical consequence of making the Transylvanian Romanian intellectual express his Romanianness with “Hungarian spiritual means”³⁴.

The same influence that the Hungarian school exerts, not over the convictions, but over the manner of exteriorising sentiments and patterns of thought, is also remarked by Ioan Slavici in a line of articles published in *Tribuna*'s leaflet in 1886³⁵. This line of articles was meant to contest the affirmations of Grigorie Moldovan (who was then appointed professor of Romanian language and literature at the University of Cluj, although Slavici repeatedly emphasised that both the lack of an adequate academic training and his friendly attitude towards the Hungarians recommended him as a highly unsuited candidate for this position) regarding the Transylvanian writers' “corruption” of the Romanian language. Grigorie Moldovan uses Titu Maiorescu's authority in order to validate this affirmation. But Slavici intends to demonstrate that Moldovan understood Titu Maiorescu wrongly. Indeed, the Hungarian influence can be felt in the Transylvanian Romanians' way of writing and also in their opinions on certain things. Maiorescu condemned Cipariu not because he was a detractor of the language, but for his Latinistic exaggerations. And these exaggerations could happen only because of the Hungarian language. If the Hungarians raised their authors to the rank of “national classics” and sat them at the same level with Voltaire, Shakespeare or Dante, the Romanians had the tendency of doing the same with their own authors. Maiorescu drew attention to the fact that these authors have worked hard and usefully, but their creation represents just a beginning, that must be refined by others in the future. If the Hungarians, in their megalomania, have denatured history in order to seek proofs of glory for their nation, the Transylvanian Romanians had the tendency to follow this example, and Maiorescu urged them to seek historical truth. The Romanian writers of Transylvania cannot write “beautifully in Romanian” as long as they are under the influence of a people who, although has barely just started to civilise itself, has already reached the stage of decadence³⁶. Therefore, all the defects that Titu Maiorescu had to reproach to the Transylvanian

³⁴ *Id.*, ... *aceeași luptă: Budapesta-București, Cluj-Napoca, Casa de Editură Sedan, 1997*, p. 11-18.

³⁵ *Tribuna*, Sibiu, no. 232, 9/21 October 1886, p. 1-2, column “Foiță”.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Romanian writers (Latinistic exaggerations, distorting the historical truth, a Romanian language filled with mistakes, etc.) derive, in Slavici's opinion, from the negative influence that the Hungarian culture exerts on the Romanians, this influence being acquired through the state schools and through contact with the Hungarian intellectuals.

Ioan Slavici declared he was disappointed by the experiences he had at the University of Pesta. He starts narrating the time spent in Pesta by confessing that not a thing that he had encountered here could have pleased him. Many of the teachers, being of a German origin, spoke the Hungarian language corruptively. And his Hungarian classmates were delighted that their teachers were obligated to give their lectures in this language, being unaware of the fact that those foreigners, whom "they force to take part in their national life, corrupt their language and spoil their cultural purposes"³⁷. And the students, losing their interest towards their studies, spent their time in coffee shops and gambling, in the company of women of a doubtful morality and amongst political talks.

By forcing the Hungarian language and culture upon the nationalities, the promoters of this conduct become in the eyes of most Romanians not only "rascals", but also "stupid", as they do not realise that a culture cannot be forcibly developed and enriched. To Slavici, a telling opinion is the one of his highly respected friend, Eminescu, who, although a Moldavian, lived for a long time in Transylvania and who "... did not hate, but despised the Hungarians as fools and mocked the so-called irredentists, and also the Frenchifieds, who paraded an inspirited nationalism"³⁸.

The experiences of these Romanians in the Hungarian state schools, although not entirely negative, have common elements, amongst which distinguishable are the difficulties met when learning the Hungarian language, but also the national conscience's birth and strengthening, as they acknowledge the contempt of their Hungarian classmates, and sometimes of their teachers, towards the Romanian language and nationality. Also, the favouritism of Hungarians in school, but also in accessing functions in the state's institutions fed the Romanians' frustration. Significant in this sense is the confession of Grigorie Moldovan, a Romanian with a friendly attitude towards the Hungarians, who chose to integrate himself into the system and declare himself a loyal supporter of the idea of a Hungarian state, even at the cost of being despised by his compatriots. Although he condemns most

³⁷ Ioan Slavici, *Lumea prin care am trecut...*, p. 136.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

Romanians' hostile attitude, Grigorie Moldovan places this attitude in relation to the Hungarians' disdain towards the Romanians, to unfounded accusations of Dacian-Romanianism and irredentism, but also to Romanians' disadvantaging when conferring public offices. This last reality personally affects Grigorie Moldovan, who, displaying an obvious frustration, shows how in Transylvania the Hungarians, even after so much time and so many of history's teachings, consider it necessary to hold the bridles of public administration with the same aristocratic haughtiness, conferring offices on a criterion that most of the times has nothing else as a foundation than being born in a renowned family. Or the fact that in "the century of modernity" offices are granted exclusively on the basis of being born in a noble family seems an aberration to Grigorie Moldovan. The Hungarians are wrong when they treat the Romanians even beginning from school as foreigners and inferior, because in this way school will never Magyarise the Romanian³⁹.

The idea of forcing Romanians to learn Hungarian, as a main premise of Magyarisation, is that more blameworthy as the Hungarians themselves despise their compatriots who do not know well nor love their language, as Onisifor Ghibu shows in the 1912 "Asociațiunii" calendar of Sibiu. That Hungarian who does not love his mother tongue would be "a vile man and would not even be worthy of God's forgiveness, because it would mean that he had derided His saint laws"⁴⁰. Therefore, the Hungarian education system is not only unjust, but straightforwardly cruel, because it does not respect and does not ensure the nationalities' right of cultivating their own language.

The Romanian intellectuals generally manifest their "hatred" towards the Hungarian language, although most of them get to master it fairly well. This revulsion has as a foundation the forced character of learning the language, but also its symbol within the framework of the national ideology. As a main instrument of denationalising, the Hungarian language is perceived as a real threat to the very national existence of the Romanians. Also, the Hungarian language is the language of the "oppressor" in a state in which the Transylvanian Romanians feel strongly disadvantaged and impinged on their political-national rights. Therefore, we find exaggerated expressions of a militant nationalism in the Romanian literature. Thus, professor Pascu in

³⁹ Moldovan Gergely, *Magyarok, Románok*, p. 33.

⁴⁰ *Calendarul „Asociațiunii” pe anul de la Christos 1912*, Sibiu, Editura „Asociațiunii”, 1911, p. 75-79.

Agărbiceanu's novel totally disregards the Hungarian language, does not have anything else but depreciatory words regarding the Hungarians themselves and, like teacher Clăiță in Slavici's short story, considers that the Romanians should not assimilate this language at all. The countryside teacher, Clăiță, is even convinced of the fact that assimilating the Hungarian language inevitably leads to Magyarisation.

Young Romanians from the Hungarian state schools have to face, alongside the difficulties of studying the Hungarian language, the scornful attitude of some of their Hungarian professors and classmates, who manifest even in this context their "Turanian haughtiness". Therefore, as Goga's and Slavici's personal experiences reveal, the tendencies of forceful Magyarisation through school, together with the lack of respect towards the Romanian language and ethnicity, have contrary effects than anticipated by the Hungarian authorities; the young Romanian who often came from the countryside discovers his national sentiments and transforms himself into a militant for his people's rights.

But the Hungarian schools can also have another kind of influence, highly noxious to the young Romanians: as students at Budapest they end up destroying themselves and squandering away their parents' fortune because they adopt the superficial and irresponsible lifestyle of the young Hungarian noblemen. This reality is literary illustrated by Ion Agărbiceanu in the novel *Arhanghelii* (1914). Young Ungureanu is the type of the "eternal student", whom his father, a simple man with considerable revenues due to the fact that he owned a percentage of a gold mine, finances for studying law at the University of Budapest. But the young man does not seem to be interested in his studies, spends his time with careless Hungarian young noblemen, leading a profligate life. Ungureanu will never finish his studies, and after the gold mine dries out and old Ungureanu becomes completely impoverished because all the money he gained were squandered away by his son, the latter returns home and becomes an alcoholic⁴¹. This theme is also treated by Agărbiceanu in the literary sketch *Școala străină*. Ilie Presecanu, a leading figure in his village and mayor for a number of years, had the dissatisfaction of not being able to communicate with higher ranking functionaries, as those did not speak the Romanian language and he did not understand the "foreign" language (i.e. the Hungarian language). Therefore, the Romanian decided to send his son to foreign schools, until the latter became an agronomical engineer and was hired by a Hungarian count (*grof*) on a large estate from the

⁴¹ Ion Agărbiceanu, *Arhanghelii*, Bucharest, Editura 100+1 GRAMAR, 1998.

Hungarian steppe. Here he entered the wrong entourage and accustomed himself with the lifestyle of the noble and rich, he started drinking heavily and gambling until he ruined his father and got himself fired. And old Ilie Presecaru died of sadness⁴².

The “revulsion” towards the Hungarian language is also fuelled by the authorities’ tendency of Magyarising the Romanian names. In a short story signed Busuioc, published in a calendar from Caransebeș, the author narrates in a tragic-comical manner the difficulties he encountered in choosing a name for his newborn son. The author would have wanted for his son a genuine Romanian name, untranslatable into Hungarian, which was a difficult task as the Hungarian Academy had no restraints in Magyarising even such names as Dimitrie (Döme, Dömötör), Constantin (Szilárd), but also Claudiu (Kolos) and Aurora (Hajnalka). He eventually finds a name whose correspondent in Hungarian is not registered: Bujor. And the Hungarian notary who was about to register the birth is deceived by being told that Bujor is a Hungarian name, the name of a captain from Tuhutum’s army who had been extremely brave in the fights against the Turks at Segesvár⁴³. This episode, alongside the Romanians’ frustration generated by the names’ Magyarisation, also underlines the Hungarian functionary’s lack of culture, as he did not see any inadvertency between Tuhutum and the Turks.

The problem of the Hungarian language and of the consequences of forcing its adoption by the non-Hungarian nationalities of Hungary was also discussed in the press. The Apponyi Law of 1907 stipulated 13 hours a week for studying the Hungarian language. *Telegraful* considered that such a measure had as an effect a “disgust of the teachers towards their career”, and the children, in their endeavour of expressing their thoughts in the “Hungarian manner”, “could not express themselves correctly either in Romanian, nor in Hungarian” and nobody had become a “better patriot”⁴⁴. Vasile Goldiș emphasised in a discourse held in the Hungarian Parliament that “forcing [the adoption of] the Hungarian language will hold this language in abhorrence”⁴⁵. The same Vasile Goldiș considered that the Apponyi Law sought to divide

⁴² *Id.*, *De la sate*, Sibiu, Editura „Asociațiunii”, 1914, p. 13-87.

⁴³ *Calendarul românului pe anul comun dela Christos 1902*, Caransebeș, Editura și tiparul tipografiei și librăriei diecesane, 1901, p. 116-120.

⁴⁴ *Telegraful român*, 25 January/7 February 1914, no. 9, p. 32-33, the article “Limba maghiară în școlile noastre profesionale”.

⁴⁵ *Id.*, 17/30 April 1907, no. 41, p. 166, the article “Vorbirea deputatului Vasile Goldiș în ședința din 5 aprilie a dietei ungare”.

Hungary's citizens in two classes, first rank citizens being considered those who spoke the Hungarian language, the nationalities being from the beginning catalogued as citizens of the second rank. According to such a logic, considers Goldiș, "even the Hungarians could be asked to learn German". To the Romanian political man, forcing the citizens who do not have a direct contact with the Hungarian authorities or who do not live near Hungarians to learn the Hungarian language seems useless: "Who wants to live from knowing languages, should learn them on his own expense, not on the back of the village who does not lack any other language than its own. In the Romanian villages which are neighbouring the Hungarian ones, the Romanian people learns Hungarian anyway, and the Hungarian one learns Romanian so that they can understand each other"⁴⁶. *Ungaria*, a friendly newspaper towards the Hungarians spoke in a very different manner about the relation of the Romanian language with the state language. The newspaper's editor admitted that "every state has the right to spread its language, to support its authority and [so that] the citizen does not live mutely on the territory that feeds him"⁴⁷. Grigorie Moldovan acknowledged the national states' right to expand their language on the ruled territory and, therefore, he considered that there is no "Magyarisation" in the Hungarian state, because "in the Hungarian state all [things] are Hungarian, just like in Romania all [things] are Romanian"⁴⁸. The same editor of *Ungaria* showed that in the regions in which the Romanians live next to the Hungarians, the Romanian language was influenced in such a manner by the Hungarian one that someone who does not know Hungarian cannot understand the speech of the Romanians from those regions.

But Grigorie Moldovan's attitude was clearly dissonant with what most Transylvanian Romanian men of letters have revealed in their writings about the sentiments and attitude towards the Hungarian language. In an article published in 1894 by *Dreptatea*, a newspaper from Timișoara (whose editor in chief at that moment was Valeriu Braniște and behind which was a group that included the most notable representatives of the Romanians from the Banat area, led by Alexandru Mocsonyi), school life is depicted in a sombre light, in a manner extremely similar to that used later on by Octavian Goga in his article from *Tribuna*. Ever since he entered school, the young Romanian was badly regarded both by his professors, and his Hungarian classmates.

⁴⁶ *Id.*, 17/30 April 1907, no. 43, p. 174, the continuation of Vasile Goldiș's discourse.

⁴⁷ *Ungaria*, 12 October 1907, no. 1, p. 2, the article "Limba noastră și limba de stat".

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

“The boy searches for 4, 8 or 12 years the Hungarian school and in all this time he does not hear one good word about the people from which he originated. In the history of the ‘Motherland’, whose constitutive part are also the Romanians, there is not a single word about the Romanians, as makers and supporters of the state, but only about the Wallachian ‘thieves’, ‘robbers’ and ‘savages’, who kill helpless women and innocent children”. The article’s author gave the example of a manual of the country’s history, approved by the Ministry of Cults, in which the term “Romanian” was only used three times: once when Basarab’s “treachery” almost killed the noble Carol Robert, the second time when Mircea the Elder’s “betrayal” helped Bayezid win and the third time when the “captain of bandits” Michael killed the noble Báthory. But all these were nothing compared to the fiery speech of the professor, who strewed only attributes like “traitors”, “perfidious”, “robbers” in the phrases about the Romanians and illustrated his words through the example of such modern “robbers” as Horea, Iancu, Axente. And the result of such a “patriotic education” cannot be but one: “in the Hungarian pupils unrestrained hatred towards everything that is Romanian, because it is natural that for a people of robbers and killers you cannot have any sympathies. In the Romanian pupils hatred towards everything that is Hungarian, because towards those who defile your sacred traditions and your people’s reputation, you cannot have sympathy”⁴⁹.

The education system of Hungary and the Hungarian language were themes with a special importance in the political discourse, but also in the practical life of the Transylvanian Romanians. The writings with an autobiographical character, the literary works, but also the press articles generally offered a negative image of the Hungarian state school, and the attitude towards the Hungarian language was an inimical one. School, which in the Romanians’ opinion, was considered as a main instrument of Magyarisation by the Hungarians, had, eventually, an effect that is contrary to the expected one: it strengthened young Romanians in their attachment towards their own nationality. And this happened exactly because the education process took place “in a Hungarian spirit” and cultivated contempt towards everything that is Romanian. The Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals condemned also in this domain the Hungarians because they did not want to regard the Hungarian state as a multiethnic and multilinguistic one, promoting an

⁴⁹ *Dreptatea*, Timișoara, no. 208, 24 September/6 October 1894, p. 1.

education system that tended to have as a basis the “national Hungarian” education.

In the context of evoking school life, the stereotypes attributed to the Hungarians as classmates were haughtiness, superficiality, laziness, contempt towards those of a different nationality, and the Hungarian professors were blamed of chauvinism, a trait that they attempted to transmit to their students. The Hungarian language was, in the same context, a rough language, without any musicality, “barbarian”, extremely difficult to digest by the Romanians who were proud of their language with a Latin origin. Press articles, starting from their polemic purpose, were more vehement in their critics of the education system, while belletristic writings and memoirs offered a certain nuanced image of the Hungarian; in them we also encounter figures of kind-hearted Hungarian professors, of Hungarian students who, outside school, can be good playmates, and knowing the Hungarian language was sometimes acknowledged as a fact.

The analysis of the Transylvanian Romanians’ attitude towards the Hungarian school system and towards the Hungarian language demonstrates, once more, that the Hungarian’s image, at least in the manner in which it appears in the official discourse, is strongly influenced by the epoch’s realities, but most of all by its political ideologies. This image was not created in the Dualist period, it is the result of long centuries of living together (in conflict, but also peacefully). But the specific political context determines the exacerbation of those traits that come to sustain the Transylvanian Romanians’ national ideology, and literature, being written by intellectuals who assume a resolute position in the national problem, could not have been spared from this influence⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0081.

The Confessional Identity of the Transylvanian Saxons (1848-1920)

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Abstract: *The Confessional Identity of the Transylvanian Saxons (1848-1920).* The article examines the trusted historiographical idea that in the time between the Revolution of 1848-1849 and the First World War, the vital factor of the national, cultural, educational, social and religious life of the community of Transylvanian Saxons has been the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession. In fulfilling our purpose we present and analyse how the Saxon cultural and ecclesiastical elite, through its most relevant statements and publications, defined and redefined the identity of this Transylvanian community in the second half of the XIXth century. These confessional and political ideas were diffused to the large Saxon population through the institutional body of their Lutheran Church. By the adoption of the Church Constitution (Kirchenverfassung) of 1861, the Evangelical Church of the Transylvanian Saxons asserted its independent and autonomous character in relation to the state, and its national character in relation to its own people. According to the constitutional provisions the laymen were part of all administrative, executive and legislative organisms of the Church with equal representation to the clergymen; hence the laity became an active factor in managing all churchly affairs. Through the fact that it controlled much of the nation's landed and financial assets and it managed the educational school system and most of the people's associations, the Evangelical Church played a special part in forming the opinions, the mentality and the German national character of the Transylvanian Saxons. The paper concludes that taking it upon itself to defend their nationality, religion and German culture, the Evangelical Church of A.C. of Transylvania became a national church, whose identity was invested and defined with a clear German national nuance, from the ethnical standpoint, and with a Protestant, Evangelic-Lutheran, one from the denominational viewpoint.

Keywords: Evangelical Church of A.C. in Transylvania, religion and nationality, Georg Daniel Teutsch, Friedrich Teutsch, Jakob Rannicher, Adolf Schullerus

Rezumat: *Identitatea confesională a saşilor (1848-1920).* Articolul de faţă examinează ideea istoriografică care a acreditat faptul că în perioada cuprinsă între Revoluţia paşoptistă şi Primul Război Mondial factorul principal al vieţii naţionale, culturale, şcolare, sociale şi religioase a comunităţii saşilor ardeleni a fost Biserica Evanghelică C.A. din Transilvania. Pentru a duce la îndeplinire scopul nostru am prezentat şi analizat modul în care elita culturală şi ecleziastică săsească a definit şi redefinit identitatea acestei comunităţi transilvane prin intermediul operelor sale bibliografice cele mai reprezentative. S-a observat aşadar

faptul că aceste concepte și idei novatoare au fost difuzate în rândul masei largi a populației săsești prin intermediul pârghiilor instituționale ale Bisericii luterane. Prin adoptarea Constituției bisericești din anul 1861, biserica sașilor și-a afirmat caracterul independent și autonom în raport cu statul, și cel național în raport cu propriul popor. Conform prevederilor constituționale laicii au făcut parte din toate organele administrative, executive și legislative ale bisericii în chip paritar cu clericii, laicatul devenind astfel factor activ în gestionarea tuturor afacerilor bisericești. Controlând mare parte din patrimoniul funciar și financiar al națiunii, având în propria gestionare învățământul elementar, mediu și gimnazial, precum și majoritatea asociațiilor populare, biserica evanghelică a jucat un rol cu totul deosebit în formarea opiniilor, mentalităților și a caracterului național german al sașilor transilvăneni. Concluzia studiului nostru evidențiază faptul că Biserica Evanghelică C.A. din Transilvania a devenit în această perioadă o biserică națională care și-a asumat funcția de protectoare a naționalității, religiei și a culturii sașilor ardeleni, definindu-se deopotrivă prin elementul confesional și cel național, și conferindu-i astfel identității comunitare săsești din Transilvania o culoare națională germană din punct de vedere etnic, și protestantă, de nuanță evanghelic-luterană, din punct de vedere confesional.

Cuvinte-cheie: Biserica Evanghelică C.A. din Transilvania, religie și naționalitate, Georg Daniel Teutsch, Friedrich Teutsch, Jakob Rannicher, Adolf Schullerus

Preliminaries

During the course of its history of over 800 years, the church of the Transylvanian Saxons has been the foremost institutional organism that was almost completely identified with the Saxon community in Transylvania. The Saxon church bore various titles depending on the spirit of the times and the part it played in the spiritual, social, national and political development of this small nation within the Transylvanian geographical space, as well as in the historical evolution and the denominational configuration of the principality. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the way in which the confessional-ecclesiastic identity of the Transylvanian Saxons was reconfigured in the period between the Revolution of 1848 and the First World War, a historical phase marked by a range of national-political and social-administrative transformations which also reverberated in the conscience of the Evangelical C.A. Church of Transylvania. The redefinition of their confessional identity occurred together with a revival of the national sense of the Saxons' '*Germanness*' (*Deutschheit*) and with a reorientation of this sense towards Berlin, the new capital of the German Reich, after they had been 'abandoned' at the mercy of the Magyarisation policy

endorsed by the Budapest governments, following the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867¹. The main promoters of this confessional and national identity redefinition were the foremost figures of the Saxon elite around 1848, lead by lawyers, historians and clergymen, who were actively involved in the constitutional reinvigoration of the Saxon church. Through their actions and their works they were able to clearly outline the Transylvanian Saxons' cultural, national and confessional identity, circumscribing it to a clear German sphere of notions, from the standpoint of their ethnicity, and to a Lutheran Protestant one, with respect to their denomination. In addition to this, they were the ones who structured the Saxons' struggle for their language and autonomy by continuously resorting to the memory of history for justification and self-legitimizing, by the means of documentary and historiographical sources which showcased the juridical statute of the Saxon nation and the Saxon church - and implicitly their secular rights - sanctioned by the medieval constitutions (Latin: *Approbatæ et Compilatæ Constitutiones*) of the Transylvanian Principality².

Saxon ecclesiastical identity in the Middle Ages and after embracing the Reformation

Beginning with the Middle Ages, due to the fact that the Hungarian kings and the Papacy had bestowed a series of political, social and churchly privileges onto the Saxons, *Ecclesia Theutonicorum Ultrasilvanorum* - as the Saxon Church is designated in a document issued by the chancellery of Pope Celestin III on December 20th 1191 - proves to have had a very particular history within the Catholic Church of Hungary as a whole, and more particularly within that of Transylvania³. 'The free royal provostship of St.Ladislaus' (*Die freie königliche St. Ladislaus-Propstei in Hermannstadt*) of Sibiu, was established

¹ For details on the topic see Hans Beyer, 'Geschichtsbewußtsein und Nationalprogramm der Siebenbürger Sachsen', in Paul Philippi (ed.), *Studien zur Geschichtsschreibung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Graz, 1967, p. 56-113.

² Andreas Möckel, 'Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein bei den Siebenbürger Sachsen', in Paul Philippi (ed.), *Studien zur Geschichtsschreibung...*, p. 4-15.

³ Cristoph Klein, 'Cuvînt înainte' [Foreword], in Thomas Nägler (ed.), *Muzeul Bruckenthal, Sibiu, România, Catalogul expoziției 800 de ani. Biserica Germanilor din Transilvania* [*The Bruckenthal Museum, Sibiu, Romania. The catalogue of the exhibition '800 years. The Church of the Germans of Transylvania*], Wort und Welt Verlag, Thaur bei Innsbruck, s.a., p. 7.

by the papal document and had under its direct authority the territory of three deaneries – ecclesiastic administrative districts – of the Saxon colonies in Transylvania, which were not under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Bishopric of Transylvania in Alba Iulia. The element connecting this provostship (German: *Propstei*, Latin: *Praepositura*) to Rome was the Archbishop of *Strigonium* (Esztergom), under whose authority the provostship will eventually fall during the 13th century⁴. Although it did not encompass all the Saxon colonists of Transylvania, this ecclesiastic administrative unit largely contributed to the ‘creation of a feeling of solidarity among those who would later be called, as a whole, the «Transylvanian Saxons»’⁵. According to the written sources, the two deans of the colonists of Sibiu-Hermannstadt and Țara Bârsei-Burzenland bore the title ‘*nullius dioceseos*’ and thus had a series of ‘quasi-episcopal’ rights they exercised within the jurisdiction of Strigonium. This way their autonomy with regard to the Bishopric of Transylvania was guaranteed and this fact would have a decisive contribution to the emergence of an autonomous ecclesial self-awareness⁶. Another determining factor in outlining the different ecclesiastic identity of the Saxon colonists was the 1224 Diploma of Andrew II, King of Hungary. Also known as *Andreanum*, the deed sanctioned the rights of the colonists’ communities to choose their own priests, who in their turn were granted the right to collect the tithe (church tax) from their parishioners, ceding a quarter thereof to their bishop. For that period this right was a true privilege, seen as the Catholic feudal tradition stipulated that all the ecclesiastic communes has to pay the tithe directly to the bishop, because he was the one designating the local clergymen and paying them with a quarter of the tithe⁷.

This particularity lead to the emergence of a solid local and communitarian ecclesiastic identity which sometimes generated a series of open conflicts with the ecclesiastic authority of the Alba Iulia bishop, when he attempted to encroach on the rights sanctioned by the

⁴ Paul Lucian Brusanowski, *Pagini din Istoria Bisericească a Sibiului Medieval* [Pages from the ecclesiastic history of mediaeval Sibiu], Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 35.

⁵ Paul Philippi, *Land des Segens? Fragen an die Geschichte Siebenbürgens und seiner Sachsen*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2008, p. 4.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

⁷ Thomas Nögler, ‘Transylvania between 900 and 1300’, in Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Nögler (coord.), *The History of Transylvania, vol. I (until 1541)*, Romanian Cultural Institute, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, p. 223-224.

privileges the Saxons had gained. Analysing how the Church of the Saxon colonists was organised during the Middle Ages, the Saxon historiography has identified a generalisation of the 'private ownership of churches' (*Eigenkirchenrecht*) motivated by the colonists' German origin: they had brought along with them the institution of patronage over their churches – a principle according to which the feudal lord who had built the church was also entitled to decide who becomes the provost – on the one hand, but most importantly by the action of the *Andreanum* decree which impeded the coagulation and the formation of a feudal aristocracy in *Fundus Regius* (*Königsboden* – Royal lands), on the other hand⁸. On the grounds of their privileges, the Saxon communities built their own churches and elected their priests. For this reason the post-war historiography has consecrated the notion of 'corporate church' (*Genossenschaftskirche*) which developed the ability to self-administer, managed by the 'parish councillors' (*Kirchenväter*) who assisted the provost and administered the church's assets⁹.

Thus, the well known contemporary Saxon theologian, Paul Philippi concludes that the role of the church within the local Saxon communities has been far more significant than in the other Catholic communes, as 'many social decisions which would elsewhere have passed directly under the care of a bishop, were kept here within the boundaries of the communities' autonomous responsibility'¹⁰. Historiography has strived to highlight the way in which the Saxon colonists employed the privileges they had been given, transforming the church in the church of their community, which beginning with the 19th century has been called 'the people's church' (*Volkskirche*)¹¹.

The ideas of the Lutheran Reformation found their way into Transylvania with the help of the Saxon merchants and students coming from the German areas, but mostly due to the humanist Johannes Honterus of Braşov; they were espoused by the entire Saxon community through the decision of 1544 of its central organism, the Saxon University (*Universitas Saxonum*). Three years later it drafted 'The church order for all Germans in Transylvania' which was supposed to regulate the

⁸ Paul Philippi, *Land des Segens?...*, p. 10-11.

⁹ Paul Lucian Brusanowski, *Pagini din Istoria Bisericească...*, p. 33-34.

¹⁰ Paul Philippi, *Land des Segens?...*, p. 11.

¹¹ For an overview of this concept see Krista Zach, 'Religiöse Toleranz und Stereotypenbildung in einer multikulturellen Region, Volkskirchen in Siebenbürgen', in Konrad Gündisch, Wolfgang Höpken, Michael Markel (ed), *Das Bild des Anderen in Siebenbürgen. Stereotype in einer multiethnischen Region*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln- Weimar-Wien, 1998, p. 109-114.

Reformed movement and would later become the norm in all the Saxon communities within the principality¹². The new ecclesiastic configuration crystallised over the following decades. The first step was the jurisdictional separation of the Saxon communities from the Catholic Church by ceasing to pay the annual census due to Strigonium and the dissolution of the Alba Iulia Bishopric. The second decisive step in the materialization of the new confessional identity has been the election of the provost of Sibiu, Paul Wiener, as the first bishop of the Saxon Protestant church by a council of clergymen, on February 6th 1553. On March 22nd of that same year he was the one to perform the first ordination of Evangelical clergymen in the Saxon church. During the service of his successor the Transylvanian Diet assembled in Turda in 1557 legislated the equality of rights between Lutheranism and Catholicism, the former subsequently becoming the second 'accepted religion' (*religio recepta*) in Transylvania¹³.

The new religion, designated in 1557 as *Ecclesia Dei Nationis Saxonicae* - God's Church of the Saxon Nation, presented its confession of faith *Formula pii consensus inter pastores ecclesiarum Saxonicarum* during the Mediaş council of June 22nd 1572. This document defined the entire Christendom as being comprised within the Church of Christ, but it also concretely circumscribed the ecclesiastic borders of the church of the Saxon nation within the territory administered by one of the 'three political nations of Transylvania'¹⁴. Towards the end of the 16th century this church defined itself as the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession¹⁵. In this respect, it would be interesting to notice the way in

¹² Edit Szegedi, 'Reforma in Transilvania. Constituirea identităților confesionale' [Reformation in Transylvania. The formation of denominational identities], in Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Năgler, Magyari András (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei, Vol. II (de la 1541 până la 1711)* [The History of Transylvania, vol.II (from 1541 to 1711)], Institutul Cultural Român, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, p. 238-239.

¹³ Paul Lucian Brusanowski, *Pagini din Istoria Bisericească...*, p. 113-121.

¹⁴ Hermann Pitters, 'Das Kirchen- und Gemeindeverständnis in der Confessio Augustana und in der Lehrüberlieferung unserer Kirche im Reformationsjahrhundert', in Christoph Klein, Hermann Pitters (ed), *Ordnung und Verantwortung, Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Bischof D. Albert Klein*, Sibiu-Hermannstadt, 1996, p. 88-91.

¹⁵ Ludwig Binder, 'Tendințe și sarcini ale istoriografiei bisericesti transilvănene' [Tendencies and obligations of the Transylvanian ecclesiastic historiography], in *Transilvania și sașii ardeleni in istoriografie. Din publicațiile Asociației de Studii Transilvane Heidelberg* [Transylvania and the Transylvanian Saxons in Historiography. From the publications of the Heidelberg Association for Transylvanian Studies], Editura Hora, Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde e. V. Heidelberg, Sibiu, 2001, p. 24-28.

which Bishop Friedrich Teutsch entitled and structured his work 'The History of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Transylvania' by employing two subtitles without any hesitation: 'Volume I. 1150-1599'¹⁶ and 'Volume II. 1700-1917'¹⁷. The explanation provided by Paul Philippi for the way the Saxon bishop defined the Saxon church in its eight centuries of existence is far from conventional and it is based on the identity awareness of the Saxons' church which in Philippi's view 'was not born of the Reformation, as our author did not believe the Reformation had lead to the transformation of this identity. The church remained the same - or the church of the same people - built from "1150" onwards, namely from their settlement under Geza, a church which chose the Reformation while preserving its identity.

This transition devoid of discontinuities left its mark on many characteristics of the para-liturgical traditions of the Evangelical Church of Transylvania up until present times'¹⁸. Therefore, for Paul Philippi, the suggestive identity definition given by Bishop Friedrich Teutsch explains the unitary ecclesiological development of the Saxons' church in its entire existence. On closer analysis, Philippi's exegesis only intends to justify the thesis according to which the Saxon church - seen under its communitarian aspects - prior to the Reformation is one and the same as that after the implementation of the Reformation, a fact also pointed out by the title he has chosen for one of his anniversary excurses: '800 years "*Ecclesia Theutonicorum Ultrasilvanorum*"'¹⁹. This thesis is also based on a series of studies²⁰ which have revealed that the separation from the Catholic tradition took place 'at a very slow pace' primarily in the local Evangelical communities in the rural areas, but also generally, in the practice of religious life. The Lutheran missals, the song books, the devotional practices, the rhythm of spiritual life and the saints' calendar - which has been preserved in the Saxon Lutheran milieu as a chronological reference until the 19th century - clearly attest to the

¹⁶ Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen, Band I. 1150-1599*, W. Krafft Verlag, Hermannstadt, 1921.

¹⁷ Idem, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen, Band II. 1700-1917*, W. Krafft Verlag, Hermannstadt, 1922.

¹⁸ Paul Philippi, *Land des Segens?...*, p. 8.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 1-31.

²⁰ Erich Roth, *Die Geschichte des Gottesdienstes der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1954; Christoph Klein, *Die Beichte in der evangelisch-sächsischen Kirche Siebenbürgens*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1980.

survival of this Catholic heritage in the life of the Evangelical Church A.C. of Transylvania²¹.

The confessional identity of the Transylvanian Evangelical Church A.C. between 1848 and 1920

In the previous sections we could notice how the birth of the Saxon church of Transylvania and its identity had been initially marked by the joined forces of the secular power – the Hungarian royalty – and the Church – papal chancellery, the primate of Hungary and the Bishopric of Transylvania – and in a second phase, by the spreading and the adoption of Protestant religious Reformation, namely the Lutheran. The reforms promoted by the House of Habsburg and the nationalism throughout the 18th and 19th centuries had been the main factors determining the ecclesiastic identity of the Transylvanian Saxons. In order to grasp the essence of the identity transformations the Saxon ecclesial organism went through in this period we will first turn to the internal factors which synthesised them, namely the four foremost figures of the period: lawyer Jakob Rannicher, the priest Adolf Schullerus and the two bishops of the Teutsch family, Georg Daniel and Friedrich Martin.

First of all it is necessary that we clarify some concepts referring to the conventional titles given to the Saxon church throughout this period. Keeping with the 8th article of ‘Confessio Augustana’, ‘The Augsburg Confession’ – the fundamental document of the Lutheran stem of the Reformation – the Lutheran Church can have four types of organisation: ‘State Church’ (*Staatskirche*) as in the Scandinavian countries, ‘regional church’ (*Landeskirche*) organised according to the various lands as in Germany, ‘church of the people’ (*Volkskirche*), as in the case of Transylvania, and ‘free church’ (*Freikirche*), free from any state authority, as in the case of the USA. These principles are explained by the indissoluble connection between a particular political territory under the authority of a sovereign and the church of that geographical area. This ecclesiastic system was developed in Europe following the 1555 Peace of Augsburg which introduced the norm of ‘*cuius regio, eius religio*’ that simply stipulated that the religion of the sovereign would be

²¹ Edit Szegedi, ‘Confesionalizarea’ [Confessionalisation], in Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Nägler, Magyari András (coord), *Istoria Transilvaniei...*, p. 260-261; Martin Armgart, ‘«Von den sondern feiertagen, so man im jar halten soll». Evangelische Feiertage bei Sachsen und Ungarn im 16. Jahrhundert’, in *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 33, 2010, Heft 2, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Weimar-Wien, p. 121-140.

embraced by his subjects, becoming in effect a state religion. This explains the fact that within the German Empire, the ecclesiastic territorial organisation coincided almost perfectly with the political one up until the 19th century, and that this situation in Germany – which the Saxons considered their ‘motherland’ – was copied in a very particular fashion by the Evangelical Church A.C. of Transylvania²². Beginning with the 19th century, the specificity of the Saxon historiography has resided in the parallel use of the two terms of ‘*Landeskirche*’ and ‘*Volkskirche*’, the former being connected with the institutional and national aspects and the jurisdiction of the church, whereas the latter with the organic and communitarian aspects²³.

The first figure who left its mark on the history and the evolution of the Saxon church over the second half of the 19th century was the lawyer Jakob Rannicher. Born in Sibiu on November 7th 1823, he later proved to be one of the most profound connoisseurs of the Protestant churches’ civil and canon rights in the Austrian Empire. A student of the famed professor J.A.Zimmermann (1810-1897) of the Law Academy in Sibiu²⁴, Rannicher held a series of public and political offices, serving the Saxon national and churchly interests; he was also elected secretary of the Evangelical Church A.C. of Transylvania and a member of its territorial Consistory²⁵. In the middle of the neo-absolutist decade, as a result of the numerous memoirs addressed to the Imperial Court by the Saxon bishop Georg Paul Binder (1843-1867) and thanks to the strong lobbying of J.A. Zimmermann with Emperor Franz Joseph, Vienna agreed to re-launch the debates concerning the drafting of a new Constitution for the church of the Saxons in Transylvania. J. Rannicher

²² Marc van Wijnkoop Lüthi, ‘Biserica Evanghelică C.A./Die Evangelische Kirche A.B.’, in Marc van Wijnkoop Lüthi, Paul Brusanowski (ed), *Creștinismul în Sibiu. Ghid al confesiunilor și al lăcașurilor de cult/Christentum in Hermannstadt. Wegweiser zu Konfessionen und Kirchen*, Editura hora Sibiu/hora Verlag Hermannstadt, 2002, p. 49-51.

²³ Thomas Pitters, ‘Die Entwicklung des Kirchenverständnisses in unserer Kirche im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert’, in Christoph Klein, Hermann Pitters (ed.), *Ordnung und Verantwortung...*, p. 182-185.

²⁴ A short presentation of J.A.Zimmermann’s life and activity in Karl Schwarz, ‘«Providus et circumspectus» Der siebenbürgisch-sächsischer Kirchenrechtspraktiker Joseph Andreas Zimmermann’, in Zsolt K.Lengyel, Ulrich A. Wien, *Siebenbürgen in der Habsburgermonarchie. Vom Leopoldinum bis zum Ausgleich*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Weimar-Wien, 1999, p. 181-206.

²⁵ Friedrich Teutsch, *Jakob Rannicher. Ein Lebens- und Zeitbild aus dem Kampf der Sachsen um ihr Recht, Sonderausdruck aus ‘Deutsche Politische Hefte aus Großrumänien’*, Druck der Ostdeutschen Druckerei und Verlags A.G., Hermannstadt, 1922.

was among the very few Saxons who were fully committed to this extremely important ecclesiastic issue, bringing his substantial contribution to the reorganisation of his church²⁶. His effort was channelled towards restructuring it, from the base to the top, based on the modern law and the ideas of European liberalism, as he aimed at regaining the church's autonomy from the state; this autonomy had been lost in 1807 when the octroi rule²⁷ of 'The High Instruction approved for the Consistories of the faithful of the Augsburg Confession in Transylvania' was enforced - its main provision stipulated the monarch's right of '*Supremum arbitrium*' which gave the political factor the legal possibility to interfere with church matters²⁸.

Rannicher expressed his personal vision on this issue in two works on canon law published in Sibiu, putting them at the disposal of those preoccupied with solving this problem urgently. The first work published in Sibiu in the winter of 1856 and reprinted the following spring with a legislative annex²⁹, issued by the Viennese Ministry of Cults in August 1856³⁰ was called 'The New Constitution of the Territorial Evangelical Church A.C. in Transylvania'³¹ and was intended

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

²⁷ The *octroi* is a juridical term no longer in use today, which was massively employed throughout the 19th century during the struggles of the Bourgeoisie to eliminate feudal absolutism and to institute representative democracy. The German term means 'to enforce, to compel' and comes from the French noun *octroi* meaning 'granting a warranty, a favour'. In its judicial acceptance of the 19th century, *octroi* meant the unilateral enforcement by the sovereign of an unconstitutional law that did not abide by the principle of representation and was enforced against the will of the Representative Assembly of a nation. The 19th century law books distinguished between 'the representative constitution' and the 'octroi constitution' imposed by the sovereign. See Paul Bruszanowski, *Reforma constituțională din Biserica Ortodoxă a Transilvaniei între 1850-1925* [The constitutional reform of the Orthodox Church of Transylvania between 1850 and 1925], Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 13-14, note 2.

²⁸ For details see Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen, Band I...*, p. 278-282.

²⁹ *Idem*, *Jakob Rannicher...*, p. 15.

³⁰ K. W. Schwarz, 'Verfassungsbemühungen nach 1848', in Ulrich A. Wien, Karl W. Schwarz (ed), *Die Kirchenordnungen der Evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Weimar-Wien, p. 112.

³¹ Jakob Rannicher, *Die neue Verfassung der evangelischen Landeskirche Augsburger Bekenntnisses in Siebenbürgen auf Grundlage ämtlicher Quellen. Zweite vermehrte Auflage, mit einem Anhang, enthaltend die Darstellung des 'Entwurfes zu einem Gesetze über die Vertretung und Verwaltung der Kirchen angelegenheiten der Evangelischen beider Bekenntnisse im Königreich Ungarn, der serbischen Woiwodschafft und dem Temescher Banate'*, Druck und Verlag Theodor Steinhausen, Hermannstadt, 1857.

as the canonical fundament in the Saxons' effort to structure the project of the new Constitution. Besides the historical considerations regarding the development of the Protestant canon law within the community of the Transylvanian Saxons and the principles that regulated the relationships between the state and the Church, this work was based on Rannicher's personal belief that the faith and the church are the Saxons' most prized treasure, unchangeable assets only the most trustworthy men are called upon to cultivate and preserve. Furthermore, this book contained one of the leitmotifs frequently used by the Saxon church historiography of that time, namely the invocation of education and science, perceived as intrinsic perennial values of the Evangelical Church. To that effect, Rannicher wrote the following: 'School, education and science are the substantial elements of the Evangelical Church; it cannot be deprived of these rays of light'³². In a political period marked by the Austrian neo-absolutism which tended to control the entire society and thus to restrict any liberal movement, the young lawyer from Sibiu believed it was necessary to widen his church's sphere of activity: by circumscribing the people's culture and education to its missionary endeavours he simply appropriated the role the Reformation and the modern times had bestowed upon the Church in general, and especially the Protestant Church.

Rannicher's second work, published in 1859, is a genuine textbook of Evangelical canon law with special references to the situation of the Transylvanian Saxon church³³ and, in fact, it represents the ecclesiological basis the author wished the church would be reorganised on. The work put forward not only a simple judicial renewal in the spirit of its time, but also a major theological renewal meant to come into effect from the base to the top, from the parochial community to the bishop³⁴.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 45.

³³ *Idem*, *Handbuch des evangelischen Kirchenrechtes mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die evangelische Landeskirche Augsburger Bekenntnisses in Siebenbürgen, Erstes Heft, die Einleitung enthaltend*, Hermannstadt, Druck und Verlag Theodor Steinhaussen, 1859.

³⁴ The original project of this manual had been designed by Rannicher to be published in six separate booklets on 1) the Evangelical teaching about the church; 2) the sources of church law; 3) the church constitution; 4) the ecclesiastic administration; 5) church life and matrimonial law; 6) property law. For reasons that are poorly known, he only succeeded in printing the first volume. Rannicher shared his vision with his friend G.D. Teutsch in a letter dated December 30th 1857. See *Jakob Rannicher an Georg Daniel Teutsch, Hermannstadt am 30. December 1857*, in *Jakob Rannicher im Zeichen seiner Zeit. Briefe und Reden (1846-1874), 1 Teil*, Herausgegeben von Monica Vlaicu, mit einer Einleitung von Thomas Nägler, Honterus Verlag, Sibiu/Hermannstadt, 2008, p. 248-251.

A comparative analysis of this paper with the texts and the works of two other contemporary Saxon bishops, rationalist G. P. Binder and historian G. D. Teutsch, proves that Rannicher was in fact 'the actual theologian' of the Transylvanian Lutheran Saxons in the second half of the 19th century³⁵. The two bishops of the Evangelical Church A.C. of Transylvania did not develop their own systematic theological thinking and their works and message are restricted to the sermons held during different liturgical ceremonies and on various national-ecclesiastical occasions³⁶.

They were especially concerned with the major problems that had troubled the Saxon church in those times: the church donations, the compensations of the tithe, the issue of the denominational primary schools and of the Saxon secondary schools, having to confront the denationalisation policy of the dualist period; their battle was waged chiefly in the spheres of policy, law, education and historiography. Instead, the 'Manual of church law' of J. Rannicher, a layman without academic theological education, supported a Christological ecclesiology³⁷ based on 'the Holy Scriptures' and the 'Lutheran confessions of faith', completed with ideas drawn from the modern theological works of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), 'The Christian Faith'; Karl August Hase (1800-1890), 'Manual of Evangelical dogma' and Ludwig Ämilius Richter (1808-1864), 'Manual of Catholic and Evangelical church law'³⁸.

Therefore, Rannicher was in stark opposition to both bishop Binder, educated in the spirit of German theological rationalism –which believed that Jesus Christ had been sent as 'God's envoy', a mere 'superior, endowed man full of grace who had guided the people

³⁵ See to this respect the chapter 'Die Nicht-Theologie des Bischofs G.D. Teutsch in seiner Predigt vom 17. Februar 1870 und die Theologie des Rechtsgelehrten Jakob Rannicher in seinem Handbuch des Evang. Kirchenrechts', in the typed Ph.D. dissertation of Thomas Pitters, *Das Kirchenverständnis der Evangelischen Kirche A. B. in Siebenbürgen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Hermannstadt/Linz, 1998, p. 105-115.

³⁶ Georg Paul Binder, *Zwei Reden gehalten in der Kronstädter evang. Kathedrale im Jahr 1845*, Kronstadt, Druck von Johann Gött, 1845; Idem, *Zwei Vorträge zur feierlichen Eröffnung der ersten und zweiten Versammlung der evang. Landeskirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen gehalten in Hermannstadt am 12 April 1861 und am 17 September 1862*, Hermannstadt, 1862, Druck von S. Filtsch; Friedrich Teutsch (ed), *Predigten und Reden von Georg Daniel Teutsch, Bischof der evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen*, Druck und Verlag von Breitkopf und Härtel, Leipzig, 1894.

³⁷ Jakob Rannicher, *Handbuch des evangelischen Kirchenrechtes...*, p. 1-35.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, passim.

towards heights they eventually had to climb on their own³⁹, and to bishop Teutsch, a passionate historian. It may have been that Rannicher had opposed precisely this rationalism bishop Binder preached among the Saxon Evangelical clergy, ever since his installation at Biertan in 1843. The fact that this exaggerated theological rationalism had harmed the Saxon priests and left a visible mark both on their character and on the various expressions of religious life, resulting in a diminished popular piety and in the priests' receiving a poorer theological education⁴⁰, was also apparent in the fact that Rannicher did not try to hide his convictions but he openly manifested his dislike with regard to the 'mediocre theological education of the gentlemen of the clergy' of his church. Thus for instance, in a letter addressed to G.D. Teutsch, at that time the head master of the *Gymnasium* in Sighișoara, in which he informed him of the objections expressed by deputy Konrad Schmidt regarding his 'Manual' and the fact that it was not 'popular enough' – because the clergymen wouldn't even understand it – Rannicher was as plain as possible: 'I wouldn't be amazed that they didn't understand; I do not write for those for whom theology is a cow providing them with milk and butter; I find it impossible to ignore the standpoint of scientific research on church law in Germany; I do not wish to produce a mere compilation of laws and empty names, a simple summary to be consulted at ease, without requiring any cognitive capacities. I would dearly wish to stimulate thinking, self-examination in my intelligent readers and even to stir contradiction'⁴¹. A third book Rannicher edited was published in 1861 as a 'memoir' addressed to the Imperial Court, which was meant to correct and define the provisory regulations that had come into effect in 1855⁴². This memoir had been debated and drafted in August 1st-31st 1860 by the commission of the Saxon 'trustworthy men' composed of eight members, charged by the Consistory to write the final version of the constitution. Despite all their

³⁹ Hermann Jekeli, *Die Bischöfe der Evangelischen Kirche A. B. in Siebenbürgen, I. Teil: Die Bischöfe der Jahre 1553-1867. Mit einem Vorwort von Paul Philippi*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln.Wien, 1978, p. 279-280.

⁴⁰ Cf. Elemér Gyárfás, 'Die Siebenbürger Sachsen und der Katholizismus', in Joachim Bahlcke, Krista Zach (ed), *Kirche-Staat-Nation, Eine Geschichte der katholischen Kirche Siebenbürgens vom Mittelalter bis zum frühen 20. Jahrhundert*, IKGS Verlag, München, 2007, p. 212-213.

⁴¹ *Jakob Rannicher an G.D. Teutsch, 8. Februar 1860*, in Friedrich Teutsch, *Jakob Rannicher...*, p. 17-18.

⁴² *Jakob Rannicher, Denkschrift über die Angelegenheit der Verfassung der evangelischen Landeskirche Augsburger Bekenntnisses in Siebenbürgen*, Hermannstadt, 1861.

disagreements and different visions with respect to the original project, the memoir was forwarded to Minister Leo Thun, in its version negotiated and conceived by Teutsch, Rannicher and Zimmermann⁴³.

The second figure we will refer to was a clergyman, Adolf Schullerus. Born on March 7th 1864 in the family of the Evangelical priest Gustav Adolf Schullerus, he studied in Sibiu, Bern, Leipzig, and Budapest. He was the rector of the Trades school in Agnita, then German professor at the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary in Sibiu and Evangelical priest in the township of Cincu. In 1907 he was elected provost of Sibiu and in 1922 vicar of the Evangelical Church A.C. in Transylvania. A strong character with a wide cultural horizon, Schullerus was active in a variety of fields: education, linguistics, ethnography, folklore, writing, and theology, occupying an important place in the culture of the Transylvanian Saxons⁴⁴. At the end of the 19th century while teaching at the Saxon Evangelical Seminary on Sibiu, A. Schullerus published the text of a conference he had held before his students on 'Our people's church' (*Unsere Volkskirche*)⁴⁵. His starting point was the following thesis: 'We uphold the idea that the inner life of the people finds its vital all-encompassing expression in our people's church, and that in it the soul of our people is manifested in its clearest and most complete form and expression. To this end, we ask ourselves: What is and what does the church of our people mean to us? And we answer: 1. Our people's church is the outer form of the unity of our people - our people's organisation. 2. Our people's church is the inner form of the determination of our people - our people's duty'⁴⁶. Starting with this statement, the Saxon clergyman developed his own view on the identity of the church he was serving, to whose community he belonged and which he considered the institutional expression and the main representative organism of the whole Saxon nation of Transylvania.

⁴³ K. W. Schwarz, 'Verfassungsbemühungen nach 1848...', p. 118-119.

⁴⁴ For his bio-bibliography see: *Adolf Schullerus 1864-1928. Zum frommen Gedächtnis*, Honterus Buchdruckerei, Hermannstadt, s.a.; Carl Göllner, *Adolf Schullerus. Sein Leben und Wirken in Wort und Bild*, Kriterion Verlag, Bukarest, 1986; Walter Myß (ed), *Lexikon der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, Wort und Welt Verlag, Thaur bei Innsbruck, 1993, p. 446-447.

⁴⁵ Friedrich Teutsch, 'Vorwort', in Adolf Schullerus, *Unsere Volkskirche*, 2. vermehrte Auflage, Verlag der Krafft & Drotleff, Hermannstadt, 1928, p. 3-4. The first edition of this conference was published under the title 'Die evang. Landeskirche', in Friedrich Teutsch (ed), *Bilder aus der vaterländischen Geschichte, Zweiter Band*, Hermannstadt, Druck und Verlag von W. Krafft, 1899, p. 492-516.

⁴⁶ Adolf Schullerus, *Unsere Volkskirche...*, p. 5.

Although he notes that the birth 'of our people's church is a result of the Reformation'⁴⁷ Schullerus identifies its roots in the *Andreanum*, bringing the two constituent notions together - 'church' and 'people' - by overcoming the clear mediaeval distinction between the notions of '*natio*' - understood as 'political nation' represented in the Diet - and 'nation' - understood as 'ethnos' or 'people'.

Breaking free from the Catholic Church by adopting a new confession of faith and creating its own new 'church order', Schullerus believed the Lutheran Reformation created a new ecclesiastic community, which in the case of the Saxons made it possible to achieve the unity of political and churchly organisms due to the fact that the political nation - created through the mediaeval privileges - overlapped with the ethnical one; in the first stage, this led to the formation of the 'regional church'. In the second stage, beginning roughly after 1848, with the progressive dissolution of the political nation's autonomy and the disbanding of the Saxon University in 1876, a process occurring simultaneously with the strengthening of Lutheran confessional awareness, and that of the common German linguistic conscience - in all the organizational-administrative levels - the 'people's church' was born; Schullerus defines it briefly by making use of the Latin expression '*unus sit populus*'⁴⁸. In the second section of his speech Schullerus elaborates a Lutheran ecclesiological discourse first, defining the church as 'a community of saints' whose purpose is to unite the people and to form God's kingdom here on earth, thus creating man's spiritual union with God, by means of preaching the Gospels. In a second phase of this discourse, Schullerus gives this illuminating action of the Christian mission - within the Lutheran denominational framework - a precise purpose: 'building cultural life in the light of eternity' through these two 'steps preceding religion: education and propriety'⁴⁹. The Saxon priest identifies these two elements with the propagation of German Lutheranism, whose immediate visible effects had led to the introduction of the vernacular in the religious services, in the case of the Saxon Church of Transylvania. This step was seen as 'a return from church formalism to the religious diffusion of the cultural and national life' which contributed decisively to strengthening the people's character; for that reason it was inferred that Protestantism and the

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

⁴⁸ 'In one single nation'. *Ibidem*, p. 17-23.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 23-27.

nation's German character were effectively akin⁵⁰. Making an explicit reference to the components of the 'people's church', Schullerus asserts that it was 'the church of the laymen' (*Laienkirche*); thus the neo-testamentary biblical principle of the general priesthood of all Christians was nowhere more valid than 'in this church built on the foundation of the people'. Naturally, even in this context the author still resorts to a series of quotes belonging to the father of Lutheranism, Martin Luther, whose reforming endeavours he interpreted not only from a theological perspective, but he also emphasised a profound German nationalist character of emancipation from both the jurisdictional tutelage of Rome and from the standardising pressure of Latin⁵¹. Scanning the transformations undergone by the Transylvanian society and the Saxon community, Schullerus dwelt upon the task and the role the Church had and has to play in this context and concluded the following: 'all these traits of the spirit of our people, the Saxon language, economy, and art, as well as the Saxon law and school are reunited in our Saxon Evangelical faith, whose exterior image is precisely our Saxon people's church'⁵².

In 1926 Schullerus published in Leipzig one of the fundamental works for Saxon ethnography and folklore. Entitled 'Short treatise on the ethnography of the Saxons of Transylvania' the book was the first attempt at synthesising the traditional civilisation of the Transylvanian Saxons⁵³. Presenting the traditional Saxon society the author noted a series of vital pieces of information referring to the various aspects of the religious experience, of the people's religious piety and their Christian traditions. In the two chapters dedicated to the 'life of the community' and 'spiritual life' Schullerus stressed the profound connection the people had with their church, the single communities and the Saxon community as a whole with the Evangelical ecclesial organism. According to him, this deep connection created a symbiosis of the 'Saxon nation' and 'the people's Evangelical church, by adding the "Evangelical" attribute to that of "Saxon"'⁵⁴. Therefore, it can be noticed that in the author's view, 'the people's church' encompassed a community that could be defined with reference to the common ethnolinguistic, folkloric and denominational features of all of its members.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 30-31.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 32-33.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 34.

⁵³ Adolf Schullerus, *Siebenbürgisch-sächsische Volkskunde im Umriss*, Verlag von Quelle & Meyer, Leipzig, 1926.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 171-172.

The intimate relationship between the individual and the community it belonged to and that of the community with the whole Church was born once the sacrament of Baptism was performed, seen as the new-born no longer belonged exclusively to its family, but to the entire community, in whose presence the sacrament was performed⁵⁵.

The communitarian and ecclesial feeling was also strengthened on a second level represented by the 'brotherhood' (*Bruderschaft*) and the 'neighbourhood' (*Nachbarschaft*)⁵⁶ associations which received an official status in the Church Constitution adopted in 1861 and through the norms drafted by the regional Consistory following the suggestions of Bishop G.D. Teutsch. Schullerus mentioned that these associations had an explicit ecclesial character, being comprised of all the young and adult Saxons, with no exceptions, who were members of a community of Evangelical faithful. According to the statute of the district of Braşov, written in 1894, 'the brotherhoods are unions abiding by the religious and moral ideas, established in order to put to work the living Christianity and the spirit of the Church, of the warm love for our country and the moral communitarian spirit, in view of educating proper people and encouraging distinguished social assemblies'. The statute of the 'neighbourhood' associations also included the preservation of the ideals of communitarian spirit and the transmission of moral-religious values. The purpose of these small local solidarities comprising 5 to 10 families in the rural areas was to provide mutual help among the neighbours, nurture brotherly understanding, exhort to honest living 'as good Evangelical Christians and to keep untainted the sound Saxon customs among the members of the community, awaking and preserving the pride and joy for the legacy of the forefathers and for being part of the community of the Saxon people, the Church and the homeland'⁵⁷.

In one of his last public conferences, held on October 28th 1926 in Braşov, for the meeting of the association of the Evangelical women, A. Schullerus reshaped and synthesised all his previous ideas regarding the identity particularity of the Saxon Evangelical Church and developed the

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 96-97.

⁵⁶ For details on the institution of neighbourhoods and the history of this type of associations of the Transylvanian Saxons see Hans-Achim Schubert, *Nachbarschaft und Modernisierung. Eine historische Soziologie traditionaler Lokalgruppen am Beispiel Siebenbürgens*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Wien, 1980.

⁵⁷ Adolf Schullerus, *Siebenbürgisch-sächsische Volkskunde...*, p. 146-147. Also see Oskar Wittstock 'Die Nachbarschaft', in Friedrich Teutsch (ed), *Bilder aus der vaterländischen Geschichte. Zweiter Band...*, p. 271-276.

notion of 'Saxon Christianity' (*Sächsisches Christentum*)⁵⁸. He created this concept by merging the two terms, Evangelical and Saxon, and stated firmly that 'we have our own Christianity, with a particular, allogeneous, Saxon nuance and we are convinced that in this way we do not betray Christ's work of salvation, but we fulfil it in our lives. We have a Saxon Christianity not only in the outer organisation of our Church as a people's church, but in all that makes the ensemble of our religious life. This isn't recent: we have had this ever since that first moment when we realised that we formed a Saxon nation'⁵⁹. To support his claims, Schullerus used the entire structure of the present realities of religious life as well as his people's long history: he invoked the sum of traditional Saxon characteristic elements – the traditional costume, the dialects, the customs marking the life's rhythm, taking part in the Church's liturgical life – adding to these another three historical images: the liturgical documents prior to the Reformation, which expound on the special mission of the colonists in this territory; the illustrious figure of Johannes Honterus, an apostle to the ideas of the Lutheran Reformation in Transylvanian society, and the introduction of modern constitutionalism through the acceptance of the Church Constitution of 1861, which created the necessary auspices for the 'resurrection of our nation, by the union of the church and the people [...] of the faith and the nation'⁶⁰.

Thus, the Evangelical vicar of Sibiu believed that 'religion is a fundamental feature of the life of our people and the nation is a fundamental characteristic of our religion. Religion becomes the vital contents of our nation, and our nation finds its origin and ultimate purpose in religion'⁶¹. In order to explain even better this osmosis between religion and nation, between Lutheran Christianity and the Saxon people, Schullerus talked about the existence of a profound content of 'this Saxon-Evangelical faith' he described to be 'the nation's soul'. This 'soul' is visibly manifested throughout the 'Saxon land' at the heart of the devotional practice of the *lex orandi*, namely of the Lord's Prayer which he called the 'Saxon Our father' (*sächsisches Vaterunser*) known to and practiced by all the members of the ecclesial organism, both in their private spheres as well as in the community⁶². A refined

⁵⁸ Adolf Schullerus, „Sächsisches Christentum“, in Idem, *Unsere Volkskirche...*, p. 67-80.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 68.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 68-77.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p. 80.

⁶² Adolf Schullerus, *Unsere Volkskirche...*, p. 39.

scholar, passionately studying the Saxon dialect and the Transylvanian realities, A. Schullerus did not employ this notion of '*sächsisches Vaterunser*' haphazardly, not even at a time when the Transylvanian Saxons emphasised the German character of their language and of their people, prompted by the desire to underline the fact that they belonged to the great German nation and to highlight the religious filiation to Protestant Germany which had become a powerful state through the policy of Otto von Bismark. The explanation for this choice is found in the Treatise of ethnography where he stressed that 'the Saxon of Transylvania called his dialect Saxon' – although he is aware that his language belongs to the common stem of the German language – so that he may be distinguished as an ethno-linguistic and denominational entity different from the second German speaking segment in Transylvania, namely the representants of the Catholic Austrian state apparatus, by the means of which Vienna had put constant pressure in view of implementing social-political modernization and denominational uniformity – by its endorsement of Counterreformation – within the Transylvanian society⁶³. To conclude, it is easily noticeable how Adolf Schullerus's texts outline the identity definition of the Saxon church as being the community of all the faithful who share a set of common values: the same Lutheran confession of faith, the same German ethno-linguistic traits; the church had a consistent historical evolution, was kept together by common traditions and was oriented towards consensus, according to the biblical expression 'one flock and one shepherd'.

If undoubtedly the flock was comprised of the entire 'people's church', created by the profound unity of the people and the church, according to Schullerus's views, then the model of the good shepherd, of the national and ecclesiastical leader, had to have been bishop G. D. Teutsch⁶⁴.

Born on December 12th 1817 in Sighișoara, Georg Daniel Teutsch studied at the *Gymnasium* of his native town, at the Faculty for Evangelical Theology in Vienna and at the Berlin University, where he attended the courses of the well known German historian, Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886), who had a great influence on his later development. Beginning with 1842 he teaches at the Sighișoara *Gymnasium*, an institution he would later direct as head master in 1850-1863. In 1861 he

⁶³ See chapter 'Die Sprache des siebenbürgisch-sächsischen Volkes' in Idem, *Siebenbürgisch-sächsische Volkskunde...*, p. 80-91.

⁶⁴ Idem, *Unsere Volkskirche...*, p. 72.

was elected member of the regional Consistory and of the Saxon University and on the 21st of April 1863, he was elected presbyter of the Lutheran community of Agnita. On September 19th 1867 'The Assembly of the Regional Church' (*Landeskirchenversammlung*) elected him bishop of the Evangelical Church A.C. in Transylvania⁶⁵. In his speech held at his investiture, G.D. Teutsch proved from the most important cathedra that he was the factor and the foremost representative of the new mission the church had taken it upon itself to accomplish within the Saxon nation. Invoking the church's and the nation's bright past he asserted that he felt entitled to look confidently towards the future, although the political events of that year already announced the hard times to come⁶⁶. Teutsch saw the church as 'the mother and the nurturer and the protector of the eternal divine goods which gives the real value of people's life and that of the individual' and he voiced his conviction that as the whole life of the church is under 'the protection of the law', 'it is based on the word of God, inseparably connected to the spirit's freedom and progress' and it was supported by 'the faithful collaboration of the community', its future was safe⁶⁷.

His programme was based on his own belief with which through his service and dignity he was able to inspire the whole corpus of Saxon clergymen and teachers, as they were more and more intimately linked to the Evangelical church over the course of his office. Essentially, Teutsch theorised the three main coordinates of his life: the faith in God and the freedom provided by the Lutheran Evangelical spirit; the use of education and German progress; and the communitarian ethos of the Saxon nation. The lever and the coagulant factor of these three coordinates are identified in the very churchly institutional framework which embraces the entire Saxon society, thus including alongside the religious aspects, the cultural, didactic, social, national and political spheres.

⁶⁵ The most thorough biography of G.D. Teutsch, comprising numerous fragments of his personal journal, letters, as well as a series of excerpts of his official discourses, sermons and occasional speeches, was published by his son Friedrich Teutsch, in the year 1909, in Sibiu. See Friedrich Teutsch, *Georg Daniel Teutsch: Geschichte seines Lebens*, Hermannstadt, Druck und Verlag von W. Kraft, 1909.

⁶⁶ G.D. Teutsch, *Unsere Zuversicht auf die Zukunft unserer Kirche. Festpredigt zu seiner feierlichen Einführung in Amt und Würde gehalten in der evangelischen Pfarrkirche in Hermannstadt am 12. November 1868*, Buchdruckerei des Josef Drotleff, Verlag von Fr. Michaelis, Hermannstadt, 1868, p. 4-6.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 6-10.

A clear explication of these ideas is primarily found in his sermons given on the occasion of the ordination ceremonies of the new Evangelical priests, held every year in the Sibiu cathedral. Bishop G.D. Teutsch laid down for the new clergymen the three major directions of the mission they were called for: 1) preaching the word of God for the salvation of the faithful, transmitting and renewing the religious and moral values of the Reformation; 2) placing the Holy Scripture and the Person of Jesus Christ, 'the spring of light and the way to salvation', at the very heart of the religious life of the Evangelical communities; 3) implementing the provisions of the Church Constitution of 1861 and cultivating the communitarian and national character of the Evangelical church, whose special trait was the fact that 'it has been and still is a church of the community (*Gemeindekirche*), which preserves within it our people and its unity'. Bishop Teutsch insists on emphasising the fact that the church is 'the keeper of the unity of the Saxon nation', an ecclesiastic as well as a national 'citadel', 'almost the only refuge where we can protect and cultivate our national life nowadays'⁶⁸. The exegetes of his works have noticed that he was the actual creator of the '*Volkskirche*' concept and the one who structured the Evangelical Saxon people's church, whose confessional identity he related to step of embracing the Reformation⁶⁹, a moment deemed the crucial reference point in the historical evolution and the identity configuration of the Saxon church of Transylvania⁷⁰. Though G.D. Teutsch had never explicitly employed the term '*sächsische Volkskirche*' he was the first authority to clearly outline the new cultural, social and national duties of the Evangelical church in the context of the 1848 and dualist social-political changes. A careful consideration of his works reveals the fact that by invoking the glorious past Daniel Teutsch pleaded for a transformation and a deepening of his fellow men's self-awareness⁷¹.

⁶⁸ Friedrich Teutsch, *Georg Daniel Teutsch...*, p. 374-386.

⁶⁹ Ludwig Binder, *Die Kirche der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, Martin Luther Verlag, Erlangen, 1982, p. 56-66.

⁷⁰ In his work 'The Reformation in the Transylvanian Saxon land' G.D. Teutsch wrote the following: 'For almost four centuries after coming from Germany to Transylvania [...] our forefathers have lived as members of the Roman-catholic Church. Their separation from it has been the most significant event in the entire 16th century Saxon history.' See Georg Daniel Teutsch, *Die Reformation im siebenbürgischen Sachsenland*, Siebente Auflage von Fr. Teutsch, Verlag von Fr. Michaelis, Hermannstadt, 1917, p. 5.

⁷¹ It should be noted how Teutsch entitled his book: '*Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen für das sächsische Volk*' I-VI, Verlag von Johann Gött, Kronstadt, 1852-1856. He doesn't use the terms 'nation' (Nation) or 'tribe' (Stamm) that could have been understood as the privileged mediaeval nation and would have referred exclusively

Alert to the realities of his time and aware of all the ideas circulating in Germany, Georg Daniel Teutsch facilitated the transition from the mediaeval identity paradigm of the Saxon community – one based on the cohesion of the people enjoying the same rights, who constitute the nation – to a new, modern feeling of identity built around the solidarity of a common language, faith and historical conscience⁷². Elements of his era's political Romanticism surface in his writings, more precisely Herder's view of the nation being an ethnic community based on a common language and culture; Teutsch had become acquainted with these ideas during his days as a student at the Berlin University and during his journeys to the cities of Germany. To this respect, a year after his death, Friedrich Teutsch – the person with the most profound knowledge of G.D.Teutsch's works and philosophy – noted in the first monograph dedicated to his father that at the time of his birth in 1817 'our people had no common national conscience, the idea that they all belonged together was nowhere to be found; but by the time he died, the national conscience had become an undying asset of our people'⁷³.

This pro-German action and attitude which also included a firm opposition against the Magyarisation policy was endorsed by G.D.Teutsch in view of fostering the national identity and for the confessional renewal of the community of Transylvanian Saxons and it eventually irritated the political elite of Budapest. In the central newspaper *Pesti Napló* of 1885, the Hungarian Minister of Education August Tréfort gave the following description of the Saxon superintendent of Sibiu: 'G. Teutsch, the Lutheran bishop, is the Saxons' idol; he is the leader of the German national protest against the Hungarian state, the head of the Saxon opposition against the Hungarian constitution, state organization, culture, society, and to put in briefly, all that is Hungarian'⁷⁴. The fact that to a certain sense this portrait hadn't been entirely unjustified was made apparent during the festivities organised for the anniversary of Teutsch's seventieth birthday, on December 12th 1887, when 'all the people and the whole church' of the Saxons of Transylvania proved that their bishop was the symbol of their

to the Saxons living in the Royal lands; instead he used a middle word: 'people' (Volk), thus designating the transition from a nation with constitutional status within a certain territory, to a nation based on its ethnic and linguistic constituents.

⁷² Andreas Möckel, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein...*, p. 9-11.

⁷³ Friedrich Teutsch, *Bischof Georg Daniel Teutsch*, Druck und Verlag von W. Krafft, Hermannstadt, 1894, p. 61.

⁷⁴ Idem, *Georg Daniel Teutsch...*, p. 336.

national unity and that the church itself embodied the guarantee and the stronghold of its religious and ethno-linguistic identity⁷⁵.

Bishop G.D. Teutsch himself had played the key role in the process of spreading this feeling among the Saxons of Transylvania. His initiative to visit all 270 Lutheran parishes forming the Evangelical Bishopric A.C. in Transylvania during the period of 1870-1888, had been the event which on one hand awakened a deep respect and a feeling of veneration towards the person of the first bishop who had taken it upon himself to accomplish a full cycle of canonical visitations, and on the other hand, it proved to be the optimal occasion for the bishop to encourage the people himself and to strengthen the conscience of his subjects' confessional and ethnic unity, within the framework of the ecclesiastic institutional organism⁷⁶.

The author of a vast historical work dominated by the era's positivist history, bishop Daniel Teutsch is considered to be the most significant historian of the Transylvanian Saxons in the 19th century⁷⁷. The Saxon historiography praised his life and work, picturing him as a hero defending his people's *Germanness* (Deutschtum), its glorious history and the 'living unity binding the people and the faith' (sächsische Volkskirchlichkeit); he proved to be a noteworthy figure who dedicated himself completely to the Saxon church and education, on which he left a clear mark⁷⁸. A collective public expression of the recognition of his

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 500-508; Idem, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen, Band II...*, p. 479-480.

⁷⁶ Idem, 'Georg Daniel Teutsch 1817-1893', in Idem (ed), *Bilder aus der vaterländischen Geschichte*, Hermannstadt, Druck und Verlag von W. Krafft, 1895, p. 328-330. The reports of the canonical visits writteh by G.D.Teutsch were published by the Evangelical Consistory in 1925; Paul Philippi reprinted them with a large foreword in 2001. See Georg Daniel Teutsch, *Die Gesamtkirchenvisitation der evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen (1870-1888). Nachdruck der Ausgabe Hermannstadt 1925. Mit einer Einführung von Paul Philippi. Herausgegeben und mit Register versehen von Harald Roth*, Köln-Weimar-Wien, Böhlau Verlag, 2001.

⁷⁷ Rudolf Gräf, Thomas Nägler, 'Cultura săsească' [Saxon culture], in Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Nägler, Magyari András (coord), *Istoria Transilvaniei vol. III (de la 1711 până la 1918)* [The History of Transylvania, vol.III (from 1711 to 1918)], Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 588; Ioan Lupuş, *Istoria bisericească a românilor ardeleni, introducere, note și comentarii de Doru Radosav, ediția a III-a*, [Church History of Transylvanian Romanians, introduction, notes and commentaries by Doru Radosav, third edition], Editura Dacia XXI, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, p. 285.

⁷⁸ Friedrich Teutsch, *Georg Daniel Teutsch...*, passim; Ludwig Binder, Josef Scheerer, *Die Bischöfe der Evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen. II. Teil: Die Bischöfe der Jahre 1867-1969*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Wien, 1980, p. 3-37; Carl Göllner, *Siebenbürgisch-*

merits and his importance for the culture and the civilisation of the Transylvanian Saxons has been the August 19th 1899 sumptuous inauguration of the monumental bronze statue of Bishop G.D.Teutsch in the courtyard of the Evangelical cathedral of Sibiu⁷⁹ which to this day dominates that pedestrian area. A number of honoured guests from the German Universities were invited to this important event in the life of the whole Saxon community. The impressions they recorded and later published plainly convey the image of the identity of the Transylvanian Saxon community at the turn of the 19th century. The eminent Lutheran theologians Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923) and Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930) were obviously deeply impressed by both the sound organisation of the Transylvanian Lutheran Church, and especially by the fact that it is completely one with the nation, playing the major national role within the society of the Transylvanian Saxons⁸⁰.

Troeltsch wrote the following: 'The Church became that stronghold in which the national goods have taken refuge, within which they can be autonomously administered and from where the struggle for preservation can be sustained and planned [...]. The question of a colleague of mine, whether the celebration would be more national or churchly in character, has been thus answered: "Those things are one and the same to us" [...] Thus every man, regardless of how religious he is, can plainly see that the church is the custodian of *Saxondom* (*Sachsentum*). One says "church" and *Sachsentum* is understood'⁸¹. Nevertheless, it was Harnack's words that best illustrated the identity image of the Transylvanian Saxons: 'They live and speak in a perfect accord of their *Germannes*, Evangelical faith, German science and knowledge. These three things are so intertwined that not even they know where one begins and the other one ends'⁸².

sächsische Persönlichkeiten. Porträts, Politischer Verlag, Bukarest, 1981, p. 115-125; Walter Roth, 'Der Ausbau des Deutsch-evangelischen Schulwesens durch Georg Daniel Teutsch', in Walter König (ed), *Beiträge zur Siebenbürgischen Schulgeschichte*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Weimar-Wien, 1996, p. 257-271.

⁷⁹ Emil Sigerus, *Chronik der Stadt Hermannstadt 1100-1929. Mit 7 Abbildungen und 5 Stadtpläne aus verschiedenen Jahrhunderten*, 4. Auflage, Honterus Druckerei, Hermannstadt/Sibiu, 2005, p. 63.

⁸⁰ Thomas Wolfes, 'Adolf Harnack und Ernst Troeltsch in Siebenbürgen. Zur Reise deutscher Wissenschaftler nach Hermannstadt anlässlich der Enthüllung des G.D. Teutsch-Denkmal 1899', in *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 27, 2004, Heft 2, Böhlau Verlag, Köln-Weimar-Wien, p. 143-154.

⁸¹ Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen, Band II...*, p. 579-580.

⁸² *Ibidem*, p. 581.

The coordinates of this conscience of common identity had been laid down by Bishop G.D. Teutsch and carried on by his successors, Friedrich Müller and Friedrich Teutsch, by their actions and their works. The three paid special attention to the reunions and all the forms of association which were meant to nurture the feeling of solidarity within the Saxon community and strengthen the self awareness – belonging to a nation of German culture (*Kulturnation*) and to the German speaking Lutheran confessional community. Spearheading this idea, the ‘Gustav Adolf Association’ – established in Mediaş in 1861, first as a subordinate branch of the homonymous Lutheran association in Germany and later as its autonomous entity in Transylvania – was meant to provide spiritual, cultural and material support for all the Lutheran communities of the Central Europe⁸³.

Bishop G.D. Teutsch was elected president of the Transylvanian association in 1883 and for nine years he participated in the general assembly of the German forum, seizing the opportunity to inform ‘the brethren in the motherland’ (*Mutterland*) on the every-day realities and the history of the German speaking Lutheran population of Transylvania. The 1899 overview of the association’s activity revealed the fact that the ‘Gustav Adolf Association’ of the Evangelical Church A.C. in Transylvania had become a true ‘nation’s association’, as it had found its way into the inferior ecclesiastical strata and counted ten district branches and 253 local ones in the entire Saxon church, with a total of 52.000 official members. The overall quantum of the financial help it had given the Saxon church, ever since 1861, from its general budget reached the amount of 350.000 Florins⁸⁴. In his work, ‘The History of the Evangelical Church in Transylvania’, Friedrich Teutsch noted that the ‘Gustav Adolf Association’ succeeded through the religious, social, cultural and educational activities it had organised locally and in the districts, to bring its significant contribution to

⁸³ The significance of this confessional association of the Transylvanian Saxons had also been understood by the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna, who did not hesitate to mention the part it played and to give it as a worthy example to his own faithful. See Andrei Baron von Schaguna, *Anthorismos oder berichtigende Erörterung über die Broschüre „Die Wünsche des rechtgläubidenden Klerus aus der Bukovina in Betreff der kanonischen Organisation der Diöcese und ihrer hierarchischen Stellung im Organismus der orthodox-orientalischen Kirche in Österreich, ins Deutsche übersetzt von mehreren orthodoxen Christen romanischer Nationalität aus der Bukovina*, Druck der Diöcesan Buchdruckerei, Hermannstadt, 1863, p. 127-131.

⁸⁴ Rudolf Briebrecher, ‘Unsere Vereine’, in Friedrich Teutsch (ed), *Bilder aus der vaterländischen Geschichte. Zweiter Band...*, p. 482-485.

cultivating and enriching the Saxon-Evangelical conscience of the overwhelming majority of the members of the Saxon national church⁸⁵, and it even give birth to an 'Gustav Adolf Spirit' (Gustav Adolf-Geist) that characterised the Saxon community until the middle of the 20th century⁸⁶.

Elected bishop of the Evangelical Church A.C. in Transylvania in 1906, Friedrich Teutsch⁸⁷ took over and carried on the legacy of his father. To him the history of the Saxons had been 'a permanent struggle for their [German] ethnic specificity and [Evangelical] church' (*Im Kampf für Volkstum und Kirche*)⁸⁸, the duties of the 'people's church' from 1867 to 1919 had been political – outside the community – and cultural within it. Just like to his father, for Friedrich Teutsch the church's closeness to the nation, the ties between the national ideas and the church organisation were all the more necessary as the new political and individual evolutions taking place within the society had shattered the old cohesive forces of the customs and the tradition, so that at the beginning of the 1920's the equivalence of the German Lutheran Church of Transylvania and the Saxon people still remained a matter of course⁸⁹.

Conclusions

The fundamental idea emerging from the facts presented above is that in the time between the Revolution of 1848 and the First World War, the vital factor of the national, cultural, educational, social and religious life of the community of Transylvanian Saxons has been the Evangelical Church A.C. As a result of the endeavours of the Saxon cultural and ecclesiastical elite, the identity of this Transylvanian community – which according to their statistics comprised 230.000 people on December 31st 1910⁹⁰ – was invested with a German national

⁸⁵ Friedrich Teutsch, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Siebenbürgen, Band II...*, p. 408-410.

⁸⁶ For details see Paul Philippi, *Siebenbürgisch-sächsischer Gustav-Adolf-Geist? Ein Vortrag*, München, 1962.

⁸⁷ See a brief biography of bishop Fr. Teutsch in Walter Myß (ed), *Lexikon der Siebenbürger Sachsen...*, p. 520; Dieter Drotleff (ed), *Taten und Gestalten. Bilder aus der Vergangenheit der Rumäniendeutschen II. Band*, Hora Verlag, Hermannstadt/Sibiu, 2002, p. 116-119.

⁸⁸ Idem, *Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen für das sächsische Volk, IV. Band: 1868-1919. Unter dem Dualismus*, Druck und Verlag von W. Krafft, Hermannstadt, 1926, p. XII, p. 314-324.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 325, 330; Idem, *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Verlag von K. F. Roehler, Leipzig, 1916, p. 323.

⁹⁰ Idem, *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart...*, p. 350.

nuance, from the ethnical standpoint, and with a Protestant, Evangelic-Lutheran, one from the denominational viewpoint. By the adoption of the Church Constitution of 1861, the Evangelical Church of the Transylvanian Saxons asserted its independent and autonomous character in relation to the state, and its national character in relation to its own people. Its supreme governing organism was the Assembly of the Regional Church (*Landeskirchenversammlung*) whose executive organism was the Territorial Consistory (*Landeskonsistorium*) chaired by the bishop. According to the constitutional provisions the laymen were part of all administrative, executive and legislative organisms of the Church with equal representation to the clergymen; hence the laity became an active factor in managing all churchly affairs⁹¹. The role of the Evangelical Church became even more significant after the Saxon University was dissolved as a political organism, since in 1876 it practically took over the University's political representation appointment and opposed the policy of assimilation endorsed by the Hungarian governments after 1867. Seen as it controlled much of the nation's landed and financial assets and as it managed the primary and secondary schools and most of the people's associations, the Evangelical Church played a special part in forming the opinions, the mentality and the German national character of the Transylvanian Saxons. Taking it upon itself to defend their nationality, religion and German culture, the Evangelical Church A.C. of Transylvania became a national church, whose identity was defined by its confessional and its national features alike⁹².

⁹¹ Friedrich Gottas, 'Die Geschichte der Protestantismus in der Habsburgermonarchie', in Adam Wandruszka und Peter Urbanitsch (ed), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, Band IV: Die Konfessionen*, Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2. Auflage, Wien, 1995, p. 509.

⁹² This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0081.

The Transylvanian Jewish Identity's Avatars in the Epoch of Emancipation

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Abstract: *The Transylvanian Jewish Identity's Avatars in the Epoch of Emancipation.* The result of the Jewish identity's evolutions in the 18th-19th centuries was a rupture of the Jewish society from Hungary, including Transylvania, between a so-called neologist or congressional orientation, and an orthodox orientation, respectively, which strictly respects tradition and maintains communal autonomy. Between the two options, the one of the so-called *status-quo ante* communities also inserts itself, these communities remaining on the grounds of the organisation system anterior to the rupture, with a combination of traditionalist elements with moderate renewal tendencies. Certain specific aspects are added to this general picture by the existence of the Hasidic communities, which represented a popular mysticism, also opaque to the modernising alienation from tradition, as well as by the Sephardic communities, representatives of an orthodoxy attached to a tradition with its considerable particular traits in cultic practice.

Keywords: Jewish identity, Jewish emancipation, Transylvania, Modern Epoch

Rezumat: *Avatarele identităţii evreieşti din Transilvania în epoca emancipării.* Rezultatul evoluţiei identităţii evreieşti în secolele XVIII-XIX a fost o scindare a societăţii evreieşti din Ungaria, inclusiv Transilvania, într-o orientare așa-zis neologă sau congresistă, respectiv cea ortodoxă, de strictă respectare a tradiţiei și de menținere a autonomiei comunitare. Între cele două opțiuni se inserează și cea a comunităților așa-zis *status-quo ante*, care rămân pe temeiul sistemului de organizare anterior sciziunii, cu o îmbinare a elementelor tradiționaliste cu moderate tendințe de înnoire. Anumite aspecte specifice adaugă la acest tablou general existența comunităților hasidice, reprezentante ale unui misticism popular, opac și acesta în fața îndepărtării modernizatoare față de tradiție, ca și a celor sefarde, reprezentante ale unei ortodoxii atașate de o tradiție cu sensibile nuanțe proprii în practica de cult.

Cuvinte-cheie: identitate evreiască, emanciparea evreilor, Transilvania, epoca modernă

The Jewish presence in Transylvania, sporadic and individual in the 14th - 16th centuries, acquires a juridically crystallised structure over a

number of outlines established through the Privilege granted by Prince Gabriel Bethlen in the year 1623 and through the provisions of the legal code *Approbatæ Constitutiones* introduced at the middle of the 17th century and still in force even after the instauration of the Austrian rule at the end of the same century. According to these provisions, the Jews receive the right to settle exclusively at Alba Iulia, the princes' residence and afterwards, in the Habsburg period, of the Catholic bishop, who held the patronage over the Jewish communities, and the free exercise of their economic activities is restricted by the obligation of respecting the rights and privileges of Transylvania's legally recognised nations.¹

Within this relatively permissive framework, although not lacking restrictive elements, in the 18th century a Transylvanian Jewish society numerically small and with a simple institutional structure develops, having in its centre a chief-rabbi or a "national rabbi" with his residence at Alba Iulia and with attributions relating exclusively to religious matters, such as celebrating marriages and pronouncing divorces, naming cult officiants, judging causes between Jews. At the head of the Alba Iulia community, the only one legally recognised, there was a committee elected annually through the majority of the members' votes and confirmed by the Catholic bishop. In an atmosphere dominated by tradition, education finds its acknowledged place in the Jewish world, an educational inspector, who was a member of the community's committee, leading an entirely religious schooling system, assured through teachers hired by the community.²

A more diversified structure develops in the western parts of Transylvania (the counties Arad, Bihor, Maramureş, Satu Mare) and in the Banat, with chief-rabbis at Timișoara, Arad, Oradea, Carei, Sighetu Marmăției, with communities, synagogues, Sacred Confraternities with the purpose of charitable assistance and of organising funerals, with administrative and juridical communal institutions.³ The rabbinical elite makes its presence felt through a response literature, including hundreds of reactions to the believers' questions and to the daily or practical problems of the cultic life, which, taken together, offer the image of a society still strongly anchored in the strict limits of tradition. Rabbis from Timișoara such as Levi Jerusalmi, Eliezer Lipman, Josef

¹ *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (hereinafter IMER), Vol. I, Second edition, edited by Victor Eskenasy, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1995), 102-105.

² Moshe Carmilly, "Spanish (Sephardi) Communities in Transylvania and Banat in the XVIIth - XIXth Centuries", *Studia Judaica* I (1991): 47-48.

³ IMER, Vol. III/1, edited by Ladislau Gyémánt, and Lya Benjamin, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 111-113.

Leipnik leave manuscript works, known today only by their titles, which were part of a Talmudic or cabalistic exegesis, bearing the same distinctive marks of traditionalism.⁴

In the conditions of significant demographic evolutions, caused by the wave of immigration particularly from the direction of Galicia and Bucovina, which become a part of the Habsburg Empire in the second half of the 18th century, but also due to the social-economic and especially political changes brought on by the Austrian reformism, particularly during the rule of Joseph II, this stagnation at the level of the tradition's monolithic unity suffers its first fissures also in Transylvania, concomitantly with the great wave of modernisation triggered in the Jewish world by Moses Mendelssohn's philosophy. The main stimulus in this sense is the external one, represented by the politics of the reformist emperor Joseph II, who, under the sign of the idea of tolerance, proposes himself to integrate the Jews from the empire into a society which they would serve as good tax payers and loyal subjects. Eliminating the anachronistic and humiliating restrictions from the way of the Jewish economic activities, opening the access to studying and practicing trades and other productive activities and also to the educational institutions of all degrees were going to be joined with the Jews' own adaptation effort through the assimilation and utilisation of the country's official languages, through the adoption of family names with a German resonance and especially through the establishment of a school system of their own with a preponderantly lay character and similar in what concerns the curriculum and the manuals with the homologous state institutions, such a system being considered as a universal panacea by a reformist vision profoundly impregnated by the Enlightenment philosophy.⁵

Benefiting from the positive effects of the elimination of some restrictions in the economic, social and even cultic domains (the interdiction of baptising the Jewish babies at birth by the Christian midwives, the approval of the houses of prayer's functioning next to the few existent synagogues),⁶ the Transylvanian Jewish society proved to be, in general, refractory to the still modest changes brought to the traditional status-quo. When at Alba Iulia, in 1783, Rabbi Moses Jacob

⁴ Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *Istoria evreilor din Transilvania (1623-1944)*, (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1994), 109-110.

⁵ Ladislau Gyémánt, *Eveii din Transilvania. Destin istoric*, (Cluj-Napoca: Institutul Cultural Român. Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2004), 31-33.

⁶ Angelika Schaser, "Die Juden Siebenbürgens vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert", *Südost-Forschungen* (1990): 57-94.

Coon, coming from Prague, launches the initiative of a normal school with German as a teaching language in order to bring the Jews “closer to the clean light of healthy reason”, the community’s reaction is trenchant, invoking, together with the penury of material resources for this purpose and the absence of adequate teachers, especially the lack of students who would require such an educational institution.⁷ More concrete results are noted in the western parts, where Jewish schools with German as a teaching language are established at Carei, Oradea and Sighetu Marmăției, but their existence proves to be ephemeral, ceasing together with the reformist emperor’s disappearance at the beginning of the year 1790.⁸

The first sign of a major change in the previously dominant mentality, which was strictly attached to tradition, makes its presence felt through the activity of the chief-rabbi of Arad, Aaron Chorin, who for over half of a century (1789-1844) becomes a promoter of European resonance of the Jewish society’s direction of modernisation in what regards communital and cultic life, education, mentalities. The programme of reforms, crystallised in his works and put into practice, at least in part, at Arad, sought changes in the synagogal service (reducing its length, replacing some prayers that were not suitable to modern times, eliminating the mystical, cabalistic elements, utilising the organ and the choir), in the holidays’ regime, in the modality of officiating marriages, in respecting the traditional mourning period, in the rules regarding the Sabbath, in alimentary prescriptions, in the language of preaching (the introduction at Arad of the German language). He supported the right of the rabbinical courts to bring modifications to the religious norms and envisaged the convocation of a representative body (Sanhedrin or synod) which would say its authorised word in all the problems regarding communital, cultic and educational organisation. He had in view an education system opened towards modernity, which would assure the Jewish world’s reorientation towards productive occupations, towards sciences and arts. He involved himself in the propagation and support of these ideas at a European level, being among the supporters of the reformist initiatives from Berlin, Hamburg and Breslau, greeting, at the dusk of his life, in 1844, the first rabbinical

⁷ Arhivele Naționale Maghiare [National Hungarian Archives], Budapest (hereinafter ANM), Arhiva Cancelariei aulice a Transilvaniei [The Archive of Transylvania’s Aulic Chancellery], B2, no. 270/1783.

⁸ Mandl Bernát, “A magyarországi zsidó iskolák állapota a XIX. században”, *IMIT Évkönyv* (1990): 167-199.

conference held at Brunswick, a moment of major reference in the programmatic crystallisation of reform in Judaism.

Despite the resistance of an important part of his community, stimulated by the traditionalist rabbi from Hungary who exerted pressures on Chorin in order for him to withdraw his ideas, the latter managed, through a remarkable steadiness, to realise a number of his objectives through the synagogal statutes introduced at Arad and especially through the modern school, opened in 1832, which becomes a true model in the matter.⁹ His successor to the function, Jacob Steinhardt, continued this orientation, being, among others, the first to hold a sermon in the Hungarian language at the Arad synagogue. The influence of the reformist centre of Arad was also felt in other communities of the western area and not only there, the rabbi of Şimand, Abraham Friedman, afterwards chief-rabbi of Transylvania, being a convinced disciple of Chorin, and at Oradea an Association for the promotion of reform being established in the years before the 1848 Revolution, this association being headed by Adolf Rosenthal and communal secretary Leopold Rokonstein. In the revolution's favourable context, still from Oradea, in the spirit of Chorin's ideas, the demand for the convocation of the "Jewish synod" was initiated, a synod which would "crush the weeds which have unnoticeably covered, during dark times, the scented garden of Mosaism".¹⁰

Much harder does the direction towards renewal imposes itself in the Great Principality of Transylvania, where in the first decades of the 19th century the attachment towards tradition continues to clearly dominate, with an education maintained in strictly religious patterns, in Hebrew, with teachers mostly hired from outside the Principality and in which the only element of progress is the quantitative one, marked by the increase in the number of teachers and localities in which their activity is noted. Only after 1840 do Jewish town schools appear at Făgăraş, Cluj and Alba Iulia, schools in which lay disciplines as well as the languages used in Transylvania are also taught.¹¹ The dominant preoccupations regarding obtaining access to towns, enlarging the possibilities of exercising their own economic activities, unrestrictedly

⁹ Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*, (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1995), 158-159. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, "The Jewish Reform Movement in Transylvania and Banat: Rabbi Aaron Chorin", *Studia Judaica* V (1996): 13-60.

¹⁰ IMER, Vol. III/1, 115. IMER, Vol. III/2, 477-479.

¹¹ Ladislau Gyémánt, "Învăţămîntul evreiesc din Transilvania. Tradiţie istorică", *Lingua. B. Cultură şi civilizaţie* I (2002): 129-130.

practicing the cultic life are gradually replaced only after 1830 by some tendencies of emancipation, of acquiring a position of citizens equal with that of the other inhabitants of the country, in the conditions in which the demographic growth, the broadening of the area inhabited by Jews in the entire Principality and the consolidation of their own institutional structures allow the crystallisation of an elite capable of coherently and validly expressing a comprehensive programme of solicitations on the behalf of the entire community.¹²

The first programmatic document in this sense is formulated in the circles around chief-rabbi Ezekiel Paneth, being forwarded for solving to the Sibiu and Cluj diets of the years 1837-1838 and 1841-1843, respectively. Although the style of the document, written with a large probability by the chief-rabbi himself, still betrays powerful connections with tradition, among others also through the numerous biblical references and quotes, the influence of the new "spirit of the century" is obvious in the memorial's philosophical and pragmatic argumentation which invokes the idea of tolerance opposed to religious fanaticism ("the believers of our epoch know - says the memorial's author - that until now the blamed and disregarded people of the Jews elevate their daily prayers to the same Benefactor, who is everyone's Father and who did not create neither Jews, nor Turks, nor Christians, but only people"), the one of natural right, especially of freedom as "an innate right of the man", because "God created man in freedom and freedom is not something that you can grant as a reward for merits", of the necessary concordance between rights, benefits and duties, of the destructive and malignant effects of injustice and centuries old oppression over a people's character. The memorial pleads against generalising some individual faults in order to make responsible an entire community. It emphasises the Jews' social utility through the public duties that they bear and through the economic activities that they carry on. As an indication of egressing traditional provincial isolation and as an obvious proof of the new possibilities of obtaining information, possibilities provided by the proliferation of periodical press also in Transylvania, the memorial invokes at length the positive effects of emancipation in various European countries and expresses the desire of integration into the surrounding society, including through the adoption of the cultural and linguistic instruments that such an integration requires.¹³

¹² Id., *Eveii din Transilvania în epoca emancipării 1790-1867*, (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2000), 99-173.

¹³ IMER, Vol. III/2, 280-290.

What was lacking from such an argumentative panoply which coincided in a great measure with the plea for rights of other peoples from the same central-south-eastern-European area that were in the stage of modern national rebirth (for instance, the *Supplex* and the other claiming Romanian memorials of the epoch)¹⁴ was the resort to their own history. In the conditions in which historical right represented an indispensable element both from the point of view of affirming one's own identity, and as a main element of the mentality of the conservative decisional factors from the local and central level, the Transylvanian Jewish elite makes an appeal to this argument also, addressing in 1846, in a press organ from Braşov, an appeal to the epoch's most celebrated Transylvanian historian, count Joseph Kemény. He was solicited to research and reveal the proofs and testimonies of the Transylvanian Jews' oldness and historical endurance, they being "the oldest people in universal history", present, according to tradition, in Roman Dacia, beneficers during the Middle Ages of a favourable status that they afterwards lost without being guilty of deeds that would justify this destiny. They desire, in a moment in which "all the nations are trying to bring their history to light", "an impartial judgement /.../ which would guard them from their forebears' mistakes and offer a direction for the future", so that they would "enter with prudence and reason among the European peoples".¹⁵

The Transylvanian Jewish society's diversification, in the conditions of the demographic expansion and of the growing economic-social role of the Jews in the Principality's life, finds its expression in the years immediately preceding the 1848 Revolution in the heated disputes regarding the succession of chief-rabbi Ezekiel Paneth, disappeared in 1845. In the communal elite's stands, which are more and more visible in the pages of a press that gradually frees itself of censorship's bonds, two orientations concerning the emancipation objectives and the possible ways of achieving them are contoured, orientations which reflect different visions also in the fundamental matters of redefining one's own identity. A group, marked by the names of the leaders Izrael Grün and Benyamin Naftali, which accomplishes the organization of a gathering of the communal representatives at Cluj in 1846, militates in favour of a

¹⁴ Ladislau Gyémánt, "The Formation of the Transylvanian Jewish and Romanian Identity. A Comparative View". In *Istoria ca experiență intelectuală*, (Oradea, 2001), 190-197.

¹⁵ *Blätter für Geist, Gemüth und Vaterlandskunde* (Braşov), 1846 no. 5: 29-30. See also IMER, Vol. III/2, 412-416.

chief-rabbi elected among the local personalities and who is capable of combining tradition with the necessary innovation, sound religious culture with lay and political ones, representing the community's interests before the authorities and promoting the much needed reforms in their own communal and educational organisation. The opposing opinion, sustained by the Alba Iulia community which was eager to keep the exclusive traditional right of electing its chief-rabbi, but also by communities such as those of Braşov, Făgăraş and Sfântu Gheorghe, incline on the other hand towards bringing a chief-rabbi from outside the Principality, who knows well the Hungarian and German languages and is capable of supporting the cause of emancipation in exchange of promoting culture in the Hungarian language among the Transylvanian Jews. The upper hand is acquired, with the support of the provincial authorities dominated by the nobility that promoted the Magyarisation idea, by the candidature of the rabbi of Şimand, Abraham Friedman, which however opens a conflict that will mark the local Jewish society in the following two decades.¹⁶

After the 1848-1849 Revolution brought instead of the hoped for emancipation a wave of anti-Jewish persecutions in the towns of Hungary and Transylvania, and afterwards, in the conditions of the civil war between the Hungarian revolution and the Austrian-Tsarist coalition, the latter being also supported by Romanians, the attack, maltreatment, robbing and extortion of the Jews from both sides,¹⁷ the neo-absolutist epoch of the next decade establishes new opportunities through the proclamation of the equality of the Empire's citizens in the face of the law and through the regulation of the agrarian relations which introduces the agricultural goods' freedom of circulation by the abrogation of the restrictions that originated in medieval times and that excluded Jews from this essential domain of Transylvania's economy. The attempts to limit the positive effects of these changes coming from the part of the local town authorities, that availed themselves of the provisions of the provisional communal law of 1849 that left it to them to accept the settling of foreigners, occasions the elaboration of the second fundamental programmatic document of the Transylvanian Jews' emancipation movement, in the form of a memorial in the German language addressed to the Vienna government in 1851 and printed at Pesta in the following year.¹⁸

¹⁶ Gyémánt, *Evreii din Transilvania*, 49-54.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 173-179.

¹⁸ *Bittgesuch der Israeliten an das hohe Gesamtministerium*, Pesta, 1852.

In the conservative atmosphere that dominated after the defeat of the revolution, an atmosphere impregnated by a historicism in which the idea of historical right prevailed, the authors of the memorial place the accent this time on the arguments provided by their own history, invoking the testimonies of some German language authors prestigious in the epoch (Lebrecht, Schwartner, Marienburg) in order to support the idea that Jews are “the oldest inhabitants of the country”, present here since before the Christianity’s apparition (from the period of the wars between Dacians and Romans), who during the medieval Hungarian rule benefitted from the right to property and to a respectable social status, and on the eve of the religious Reformation their confession was, together with the Roman-Catholic and the Greek Oriental ones, a recognised component of the “national religions” system of the Principality. Besides oldness and the rights’ tradition, the authors then invoke the pragmatic arguments of the considerable Jewish contribution in the domains of commerce, crafts, factory industry, allowing “the attraction of thousands of diligent hands in commerce, crafts and agriculture, of capitals for raising the local economy, in the treasury’s benefit”. Through this true manifest of the consciousness of an identity fed both by the conservative idea of oldness and historical tradition that generates rights in contemporary times, and by the pragmatic utility of a community which supports the economic liberalisation promoted by officials, the Transylvanian Jews obtain the upper hand, the Court annulling the onerous restrictions and therefore opening their access to all rural and urban communities of the Principality.

In the conditions in which the Jewish communities proliferate, their number doubling from 1850 to 1866,¹⁹ endowed with synagogues, rabbis, communal institutions of cult, education and social assistance, the problem of internal reforms of their own society becomes essential, the confrontation of ideas regarding the paths to realise those reforms contributing to identity crystallisations on the line of competing visions. The neo-absolutist regime, in the spirit of the centralist conception that dominates its political solutions, resorts to the convocation, in the purpose of regulating the institutional organisation of the Transylvanian Jewish society, of a gathering of the communities’ representatives at Alba Iulia in 1852, under the presidency of chief-rabbi Abraham Friedman, who consolidated his position through his pro-imperialist attitude from the period of the revolution.

¹⁹ *Ben Chananja* (Seghedin), 1867 no. I: 25-26.

The regulation project presented by the chief-rabbi bears the imprint of an obvious modernisation tendency, meant to institute the principle that each Transylvanian Jew belongs to a cultic community endowed with the institutions indispensable to fulfilling its religious, educational and charitable purposes. The clear establishment of the communities' structure of leadership and administration, of the attributions and rights of the cult officiants, of the chief-rabbi, the replacement of private education, which was preponderant until then, with community schools in which one could find both the traditional subject matters and lay matters as in state schools, thereby eliminating the anachronistic and counterproductive contraposition of school education and religion reflect the directions of a reform directed towards bringing into concordance the structures of their own society with modernisation's requirements, which were ever more obviously felt and of which they were ever more conscious.²⁰

However, these tendencies meet a resistance by no means negligible, inspired by a traditionalism that takes the shape of orthodoxy opposed to any modernising reforms, but also by the communities' desire to keep a complete autonomy in the face of the centralising tendencies sustained by the chief-rabbi who was contested ever since his investiture which took place through the decisive intervention of the officials. The most flagrant expression of such a position is recorded at Cluj, where the community establishes in 1852 the first rabbi of its history, in the person of the ex-rabbi of Marghita, Hillel Liechtenstein, a disciple of the famed chief-rabbi of Bratislava, Moshe Sofer, the incontestable leader of the orthodox vision contrary to any renewal. Abraham Friedman's previsions, according to which the new rabbi was a representative of "obscurantism" and "darkness" that will bring "the moral death of the community", are soon confirmed by his measures of closing the communal school, declared as a "killer of religion", proclaiming that learning other languages except Hebrew is "the road to Hell". The newly introduced institution of legal status registration is also hindered on the grounds that writing them in the German language contravenes religious precepts. Hillel Liechtenstein's eventual expulsion from Cluj in 1854 delays by nearly a decade the institutionalisation of its own rabbi in this community, therefore reflecting the considerable

²⁰ ANM, Arhiva Guberniului Transilvaniei [The Archive of Transylvania's Government], F 259, Pack 349, Fasc. 39, No. 9405/848/1852.

resources that the local traditionalist resistance had in the Transylvanian Jewish society.²¹

The meanders of the neo-absolutist period's official politics, in which the reinstatement of certain economic, social and juridical restrictions were interwoven with the Catholic bishopric's claims of authority over Jewish education, as an effect of the 1855 Concordat between the Empire and the Papacy, hinder the application of the reforms supported by the chief-rabbi, the regulations proposed in 1852 remaining without the official approval necessary for their implementation. The new situation created in 1859, as a result of the grave defeats suffered by the Austrian Empire in Italy and of the neo-absolutist regime's fall which leaves the place to a short liberal period, brings the elimination of all the still persistent restrictions regarding the economic, social and juridical status of the Jews, also opening the perspective of their political integration through the obtainment of electoral rights, for the time being in what concerns the local administration.²²

Acknowledging the favourable moment for the realisation of the emancipation ideal pursued for a few decades, the Transylvanian Jews adopt a series of initiatives which have implications both on their political commitment favourable to the liberalisation tendency, and on their identity affirmation according to the commandments and conditions of those of whom the practical realisation of these aspirations depended upon. At the proposal of the first Jewish advocate from the Principality's history, Ludovic Fischer, as well as of the already well-known local leader Izrael Grün, an association for promoting the Hungarian language in the communal, familial and daily life of the Jews is constituted at Cluj in 1860, with the mention that it will not damage "the essence of the Mosaic religion's dogmas". The election of communal leaders who are capable of regulating their specific problems "in a modern spirit" is proposed. As first concrete actions, donations are collected for a statue of poet Petőfi, synagogal commemoration services are organised for count Stephan Széchenyi and for Ladislau Teleki, the elaboration of a history of the Jews from

²¹ Gyémánt, *Eveii din Transilvania*, 56-59.

²² Ürmösy Lajos, *Tizenkét év Erdély történetéből*, Vol. I, (Timișoara, 1894), 222-278. Groszmann Zsigmond, *A magyar zsidók a XIX. század közepén*, (Budapest, 1917), 17-18.

Hungary and Transylvania on the basis of the documents kept in archives is decided.²³

Within the framework of a press campaign, the accessible political modalities of realising the objectives of integral civil emancipation are intensely debated, confronting the vision promoted by Ludovic Fischer of following the Hungarian liberalism, which, continuing the 1848 solutions, supported institutional autonomy in relation to Vienna, respectively the one presented by other leaders, such as Henrik Fischer of Deva, for whom the centralising formulas of the Court represented the sure guarantee of obtaining the solicited rights.²⁴ As a first remarkable accomplishment from a modern political literature generated by the Transylvanian Jewish world, the same Ludovic Fischer provided a preface for an 1861 translation into the Hungarian language of historian Macauley's stand in the British Parliament in favour of the Jews' emancipation, a preface in which he considers that the principles and arguments invoked by Macaulay are "valid to any country", the way towards solving the Jewish situation being the elimination of the prejudices that generate hostility.²⁵

Eventually, the confrontation between the Hungarian liberal nobility's autonomism and the Viennese centralist tendencies temporarily stops the tendencies of liberalising the Empire's political life, the country reverting to a provisional authoritarian formula, which for the time being also hinders the materialisation of the Transylvanian Jews' hopes of a rapid solution to the emancipation problem. But Vienna's attempt to rely on the Romanian and Saxon political forces of Transylvania in order to counterattack the centrifugal Hungarian tendencies generates a new opportunity through the convocation in 1863 of a diet elected through a qualification vote, without any national or confessional restrictions, which brings for the first time in the legislative forum gathered at Sibiu a non-Hungarian majority.²⁶

In this context, a new press debate brings those who remain on the position of expecting the solutions of emancipation from the part of the traditional alliance with the Hungarian liberalism face to face with

²³ *Korunk* (Cluj), December 1860 no. 2, 6, 16; April 1861 no. 85, 96; May 1861 no. 108. *Magyar Izraelita* (Pesta), January 1861 no. 2; February 1861 no. 7.

²⁴ *Korunk* (Cluj) December 1860 no. 14; January 1861 no. 30. *Magyar Izraelita* (Pesta) March 1861 no. 10, 12.

²⁵ *Macauley beszéde a zsidók egyenjogításáról* (Cluj, 1861).

²⁶ Simion Retegan, *Dieta românească a Transilvaniei (1863-1864)*, (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1979); Keith Hitchins, *Ortodoxie și naționalitate. Andrei Șaguna și românii din Transilvania 1846-1873*, (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 1995), 161-169.

those who, headed by the same Ludovic Fischer, now see the gaining in this purpose of the Romanian and Saxons deputies as possible. Inviting Izrael Grün, as a royalist, to the diet, the appreciative voices of the Transylvanian Saxon press regarding the institutional, educational and cultural progresses of the Transylvanian Jews, the apparition in the Romanian press of a necrology of doctor Iuliu Barasch in which “the evangelical tolerance of the Romanian people” is emphasised, the Jewish financial support for the Romanian pedagogical school of Năsăud are justified grounds of the hopes with which the supporters of emancipation await for the opening of the new diet.²⁷

But, this time also, these expectations proved to lack results, the diet, boycotted by the Hungarian deputies, bringing a sterile confrontation between the Romanian tendencies of an official recognition of its own nation and its confessions, respectively the Transylvanian Saxon opposition towards what was being considered as a return to the regime of Estates, increasing “the seven sins of the country with three more”. In these disputes, the Jewish problem appeared only as a rhetorical argument, invoked mainly by the Transylvanian Saxon deputies, who counterposed to the Romanian claims the idea of equal civil and political rights for all of the country’s inhabitants, irrespective of nationality and confession, arguing, among others, also that it is necessary to eliminate “the injustices caused to Jews by Christian intolerance”.²⁸ The upper hand was gained in the end by the position of the Romanian majority, the laws adopted by the diet of Sibiu do not bring the progresses hoped for by Jews in the cause of emancipation, a decisive modification in this sense appearing only at the moment in which the Empire’s crisis, accentuated by the grave defeat suffered in 1866 in the war with Bismarck’s Prussia, trigger the mechanism of rapprochement between Vienna and the Hungarian opposition, a rapprochement that will eventually materialise in the new system of the Austrian-Hungarian Dualism.

Until then, what is accomplished by the supporters of a renewal from within of the Transylvanian Jewish society through reforms in the direction of modernising both the institutional structures and its identity

²⁷ *Korunk* (Cluj), March 1863 no. 33; May 1863 no. 52, 54, 57, 59. *Transsilvania* (Sibiu), 1861 no. 12-13. *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* (Brașov), 1863 no. 19: 140-141. E. Boșca-Mălin, *Eoreii în Țara Năsăudului*, (Brașov, 1943), 47.

²⁸ Ladislau Gyémánt, „Die Beziehungen zwischen den Juden und den Sachsen in Siebenbürgen im Zeitalter der Emanzipation (1790-1867)”. In *Symbiose und Traditionsbruch*, edited by Hans Hecker, and Walter Engel, (Essen: Klartext, 2004), 33-46.

mentalities is the convocation of a new gathering of the Transylvanian Jewish communities' representatives in this purpose. Solicited even from the period of the liberal thaw of 1860, the meeting eventually gathers only in 1866 at Cluj, under the presidency of Izrael Grün, with the exclusion of the controversial chief-rabbi Abraham Friedman, no less than 66 communities being represented now, including 3,452 families and 16,734 people. The ones gathered propose themselves, on the grounds of a conscience of the Jewish historical presence in the Principality, which confers legitimacy, and of a comprehensive inventory of the institutional, cultural and cultic necessities of a community structured according to modern times' requirements, to elaborate the project of a statute that grants both communal autonomy and the concentration of existent efforts and resources towards a good organisation and functioning of the system of their own communal, religious, educational and charitable institutions.

After intense discussions, in which different projects confront one another, the formula that is reached is that of cultic communities endowed with all the necessary institutions (synagogue, school, cemetery, ritual bath) and with the personnel indispensable to these institutions' functioning (rabbis, school teachers, synagogal curators, cantors, ritual cutters), communities which would include all the Jews of Transylvania, with the right of electing and of being elected in the leadership structures and assuring through their contributions the necessary material basis. The autonomy of each community will be combined with the centralised system of a general Jewish Curia, with a rabbinical and lay membership at the same time, which will administer a national Fund constituted from the communities' contributions. This fund will assure the expenses related to the chief-rabbi's pay, as well as the functioning of 8 district schools, which will be added to the communal schools and in which religious education will be combined with teaching lay school matters, and of the superior Talmudic school headed by the chief-rabbi. This reform's application will be accomplished through the measures adopted by a provincial general assembly of the Jewish cult which will gather periodically and to which the project of an institute for training teachers for the Jewish schools will also be submitted.²⁹

But this statute, reflecting the incontestable progresses of a modern, pragmatic spirit which gradually imposes itself in the Transylvanian Jewish world, concomitantly with the preservation of a

²⁹ *Ben Chananja* (Seghedin), 1867 X: 17-30, 49-66.

fundamental attachment to their own values and traditions, inevitably falls a victim to the radical changes that occur in the conditions of the general political context's structural transformation. The annulment of the laws adopted by the diet of Sibiu, the vote of the new diet of Cluj, elected on the basis of the 1848 electoral laws which guaranteed a comfortable Hungarian majority, in favour of Transylvania's union to Hungary prefigure the decisive steps of the following years in the realisation of the Austrian-Hungarian dualist compromise. From now on, the essential Jewish problems of civil emancipation and of the structures of their own society's organisation are posed in the new conditions of certain general regulations which regard the entire Hungarian part of the Dualist Monarchy, Transylvania losing its previous status of autonomy.

Seeking to adapt to the new situation, an Association of the Hungarian Jews is established at Pesta, proposing itself, among others, the gratuitous education of Jews for the assimilation of the Hungarian language. At Cluj, a reformatory Jewish community is constituted under the leadership of Ludovic Fischer, with the support of the chief-rabbi Abraham Friedman, a community that inaugurates its own house of prayers in which the sermon was held in the Hungarian language, alongside Hebrew. An educational system that included the teaching of the Hungarian language and an increased proportion of lay school matters is suggested, renewals being also proposed in the synagogal ceremonial. The conclusion of the dualist pact is saluted by the chief-rabbi with a written adhesion, and in the synagogues of Transylvania solemn services are celebrated.³⁰

This enthusiasm is nevertheless far from being shared throughout the Jewish society, a gathering of 77 orthodox rabbis at Michalovce in 1865 pronouncing itself against any changes of the synagogal practices and of the ancestral customs, forbidding the sermon in a different language than Hebrew and entering into a reformist synagogue. The rabbi of Szikszó fought in his sermons against the use of the Hungarian and German languages in the Jewish religious service, threatening those who entered in contact with the reformist Jews with hell. In November 1867, a gathering of the orthodox rabbis formulated a

³⁰ *Korunk* (Cluj), May 1866 no. 59; August 1866 no. 102; November 1866 no. 137; January 1867 no. 4; March 1867 no. 29, 33, 37, 38; May 1867 no. 54, 55; June 1867 no. 69, 71, 73.

stand contrary to the emancipation in the name of no less than 120 communities.³¹

In spite of these oppositions, the new Hungarian Parliament adopted in December 1867 the law article XVII/1867 that brought for the Jews of this side of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, including those of Transylvania, the full exercise of civil and political rights, to which, over a few decades, through the law XLII/1895, the sanctioning of the equally justified legal statute of the Jewish religion was added.³²

The adaptation of the Jewish society's structures to the new situation imposed the acceptance of the Pesta community's proposal regarding the convocation of a Congress of the representatives of the Jewish communities from Hungary that would adopt the new institutional and educational system. After tumultuous debates, the idea of the Congress was accepted by the 120 communities that declared themselves orthodox, with the conditions that cultic problems are not addressed, retaining community autonomy in this domain, and that in the representation no distinction between rabbis and lay delegates is made. The position of the Transylvanian Jews, for whom 68 mandates to the Congress were reserved from the total of 220, was mainly situated on the line of a moderate orthodoxy, expressed publicly by Izrael Grün a few weeks before the sessions' inauguration. He pronounced himself in favour of surpassing a quarter of a century of internal conflicts caused especially by the problem of the chief-rabbi's function, of adopting communal statutes according to Judaism's fundamental principles, of the autonomy of communities and the exclusion of excessive centralisation, of a unitary regulation of religious schools regarding the curriculum, the teaching methods, the promotion of the youth's national and historical consciousness. He rejected the idea of a central rabbinical seminary, militating in favour of the candidates for rabbis' training in the existent traditional yeshivas.³³

The resolutions of the Congress, held in the period December 1868 – February 1869 at Pesta, were adopted after fierce controversies and the retreat, eventually, of the orthodox delegates in the direction of the reformist and centralist viewpoints. The creation of a hierarchical system was decided, having at its basis cultic communities unique in each locality, to which all the local Jews would belong, with a leadership

³¹ *Kolozsvári Közlöny* (Cluj), 1867 no. 96, 142. Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 194.

³² Venetiáner Lajos, *A magyar zsidóság története*, (Budapest, 1922), 315-364, 418-429.

³³ Izrael Grün, *Was hat bei der aufgeregten Stimmung der Parteien der jüdische Landes-Congress in aller erster Reihe anzustreben and was zu unterlassen?* (Cluj, 1868).

elected by the general assembly and endowed with the necessary institutions and cult officiants. The communities will be represented in district commissions and tribunals, and the presidents of these commissions will constitute a national office with the mission of administrating the National Fund and of periodically convoking the Congress. In what regards the educational system, constituting confessional schools in each community was decided, schools which would assure religious education and the teaching of lay subject matters according to a future educational state law. The Jewish students who attended secondary schools and high schools were to be provided with the possibility of religious instruction. The rabbis' training was to take place in a centralised rabbinical seminary which will be opened at Pesta.

These decisions provoked the protests of the orthodox communities, which invoked that the organisation statute was not grounded on the fundamental religious law and that their autonomy was not respected. Invoking the freedom of conscience principle, the Hungarian Parliament complied with these requests, allowing the orthodox communities to adopt their own organisation and functioning statutes.³⁴

The result of these evolutions was a rupture of the Jewish society from Hungary, including Transylvania, between a so-called neologist or congressional orientation, which adopts and applies the modernising and centralising decisions of the Congress, and an orthodox orientation, respectively, which strictly respects tradition and maintains communal autonomy. Between the two options, the one of the so-called *status-quo ante* communities also inserts itself, these communities remaining on the grounds of the organisation system anterior to the Congress and the rupture, with a combination of traditionalist elements with moderate renewal tendencies. Certain specific aspects are added to this general picture, which is maintained until the forced homogenisation which occurred during the period of the communist dictatorship, by the existence of the Hasidic communities, especially in Transylvania's northern parts, which represented a popular mysticism, also opaque to the modernising alienation from tradition, as well as by the Sephardic communities, representatives of an orthodoxy attached to a tradition with its considerable particular traits in cultic practice.

The disappointment produced in the following decades by the failure of the civil emancipation's role of universal panacea in what

³⁴ Groszman, *A magyar zsidók*, 97-136. Nathaniel Katzburg, "The Jewish Congress of Hungary 1868-1869", *Hungarian-Jewish Studies II* (1969): 1-33.

concerned the Jewish problem, the apparition and ascent of modern anti-Semitism with its racial ideological roots diversify even more this complex picture of the Jewish identity through seeking new solutions in the conditions in which the isolation in their own tradition promoted by orthodoxy, and, respectively, the cultural and not only cultural assimilation brought on by the modernising orientation prove to be incapable of preventing and annihilating the acute perils brought by the new unfavourable evolutions. Modern nationalism, in the form of political and cultural Zionism aiming at creating a Jewish society with its own state and national culture, and, respectively, the socialist and communist ideologies of a left and extreme left orientation, with their internationalist solutions, gain a part of the Jewish society also in Transylvania, especially after the First World War, offering, in the inter-war decades, an extremely diversified image of the Jewish identity's components. As the decisive trauma of the Holocaust physically destroyed a large part of this society, after a temporary and short period of vain hopes in the formulas of the new communist dictatorship from after the Second World War, for the majority of the Jews from this part of Central-Eastern Europe the solution of emigrating and integrating themselves in their own state constituted in 1948 will impose itself, therefore putting an end to an evolution in which the permanent trait was the confrontation between the attachment towards the traditional values and the natural tendencies of modernisation, evolution and renewal³⁵.

³⁵ This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0081.

Assimilation and Identity of the Transylvanian Armenians in the 19th Century

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Abstract: *Assimilation and Identity of the Transylvanian Armenians in the 19th Century.* This essay presents the process of integration and assimilation of Armenians in Transylvania. In regard to this, the study focuses on the change of their image, and also of the Armenian self-image and identity. Assimilation did not, however, mean denying of one's own roots: it seems that Armenians have managed to preserve a part of their identity until today. Besides, they remained faithful to the Hungarians also during the changes after World War I, and in their case no dissimilational process was observed.

Keywords: national identity, assimilation, Armenians, Transylvania, Modern Epoch

Rezumat: *Asimilare și identitate la armenii din Transilvania în secolul al XIX-lea.* Studiul de față prezintă procesul de integrare și asimilare al armenilor din Transilvania. Accentul este pus pe modificările suferite de imaginea de sine și identitatea armenilor. Asimilarea nu a însemnat, totuși, negarea rădăcinilor proprii. Armenii au reușit să își păstreze o parte din identitatea lor specifică până astăzi. Ei au rămas loiali maghiarilor și în perioada schimbărilor de după Primul Război Mondial, în cazul lor nefiind remarcat nici un proces de dezasimilare.

Cuvinte-cheie: identitate națională, asimilare, armeni, Transilvania, epoca modernă

In the last decades historical research, similarly to social psychology and cultural anthropology,¹ has displayed growing interest towards both the self-image of particular groups of peoples and the image they have of others. While researching the presence of anti-Semitism, the so called "middleman minorities theory" was developed. This theory sought for an answer to the question, how one or another minority fills in strategic gaps in the economical life of certain states, and why those minorities evoke hostile feelings of the majority population. A

¹ Researchers have been facing the theoretical problems and paradoxes of anthropological and ethnological embracing of foreignness already since the 1990s. See: Waldenfels 2004; Schiffauer 2004.

classical example of an embodiment of such type of minority are Jews, but I could enumerate similar examples from every part of the World. Characteristic of all these minorities is that they play a major role in the money circulation within the respective space, that is in the field of trade, while in the social plane they are positioned between the elites and the lower social strata. However, the economic role alone is not to be considered the due explanation of the prejudice and hostile attitude that has been developed towards them (Zenner 1987).

Subsequently, I will outline the process of integration and assimilation of Armenians in Transylvania. In regard to this, I will also shortly present the change of their image, and also of the Armenian self-image and identity.

Although the Transylvanian Armenians first appeared in the area as a middleman minority, they followed a slightly different path than their fellow sufferers. After their mass settling-down in Transylvania during the last three decades of the 17th century (Pál 1997, Pál 2006), integration evolved as a long process (for details see: Pál 1998; Pál 2000; Pál 2005; Pál 2007) conducting the assimilation of Armenians in the second half of the 19th century.

Enjoying the support of the central power, they took efforts to integrate with the dominating group, and at the same time they preserved their cultural identity. Seeking aid of the central power is usually a characteristic trace of middleman minorities. Since the integration of Transylvania into the Habsburg Monarchy, the privileges the Transylvanian Armenians had already received from the Transylvanian prince were not only preserved, but even broadened by the newly implemented Habsburg-power.

The results from the roles played in economic importance of Armenians is shown by the fact that they had obtained several important privileges, thus acquiring administrative and juridical autonomy. Finally, by the end of the 18th century two significant Armenian towns² –

² In the 18th century, larger numbers of Transylvanian Armenians inhabited four settlements – besides the mentioned towns also the located in Szeklerland Gheorgheni (Gyergyószentmiklós) and Frumoasa (Csíkszépviz). The town of Gherla was founded by the Armenians nearby the village of Gherla, next to the castle built in the 16th century by György Martinuzzi. The area was rented from the treasury. Similarly, on land belonging to the treasury, nearby the one-time Apafi estate called Ebesfalu Dumbrăveni was built. Both these settlements evolved into towns, and, what was a peculiarity in Transylvania, by the end of the 18th century both were granted the rank of free royal town. See: Pál 2005.

Gherla (Szamosújvár) and Dumbrăveni (Erzsébetváros) – were granted the rank of free royal towns.³

The Armenians very quickly adapted to the Transylvanian society and their integration was enhanced by multiple factors. A price that was paid for a successful assimilation was religious union. The Habsburgs supported the expansion of Catholicism which was of particular importance in the multiconfessional Transylvania where, beside that, the so called Diploma Leopoldinum⁴ theoretically forced them to accept the persistence of religious variegation. In practice, however, since there was no hope for a mass conversion of the Transylvanian political elites, the Habsburgs tried every possible means to increase the number of Catholics. An already tested method was to create fixed religious unions; while in the case of Romanians it was achieved only partially and with much difficulty. Transylvanian Armenians, whose religious leader, Oxendie Verzerescu, had been convinced to the religious union idea, recognized to a greater extent the opportunities it could bring them, but the process of unification was not completely smooth in the Armenian case (Kovács 2007). Shortly after settling down in Transylvania, the Armenians joined the Catholic Church. Similarly to the Greek Catholic Romanians or Rusyns, the Armenians were allowed to keep their ancient rites, and Armenian remained in use as liturgical language (Nagy 2011). Therefore, for a long time the Church remained the guard of the integrity and of ethnic identity persistence in the Transylvanian Armenian society, with an important role imposed on it as far as identity development was concerned. At the same time, the union with Catholics helped Armenians to acquire new privileges and to integrate with the Transylvanian class society. By taking advantage of the Union, Oxendie Verzerescu tried to win the official recognition of Armenians as the fourth political nation of Transylvania,⁵ but this attempt failed due to the resistance of the ruling classes (Trócsányi 1988: 264).

³ This, however, was recognized in Transylvania much later; therefore, the free royal towns could benefit from one of their privileges, namely from being represented at Diet sessions, only from 1841 on.

⁴ The issued in 1691 by Leopold I *Diploma Leopoldinum* regulated the Transylvanian public law until 1848.

⁵ In Transylvania, the so called system of “three political nations and four accepted religions” evolved in the times of principality and was confirmed by *Diploma Leopoldinum*. The system persisted until 1848: as it stated, the representatives of the three political nations (Hungarian, Szekler and Saxon elites), as well as of the four accepted religions (Catholicism, Calvinism, Lutheranism and Unitarianism) shared

In Transylvania, Armenians, similarly to other alike ethno-professional groups (Greeks, Macedoromanians or later Jews) filled an economical gap. The political elite, i.e. the Hungarian nobility regarded trade as a humiliating profession,⁶ while living circumstances hindered a large-scale participation of peasants in this economical branch. The Armenians made use of this so called "status gap" as means of their integration with the Transylvanian society, thus complementing a space by fitting in between the nobility and the peasantry. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Armenians constituted concurrency to one of the local elites, i.e. to the Saxon merchants, and soon found themselves in conflict with the latter who became the principal opponents of granting Armenians further privileges; similarly, the Armenians meant concurrency also to the artisans and merchants of all ethnicities who lived in towns.

In the predominantly agricultural Transylvanian society, the Armenians as merchants and artisans constituted a somewhat alien body. Therefore, at the beginning they were strangers both literally and symbolically. Not only were they alien by ethnicity, language⁷ and tradition: also their profession and mentality were considered outlandish. Their foreignness was suspect and evoked fear. Literature of the subject shows examples of hostility of traditional societies towards merchants who were seen as a non-working, non-producing, and generally not-doing-anything-useful group that just "made use of" the work of others. It can be said that the professional prestige of merchants was equally low in the eyes of both the nobility and the peasantry.

Were the merchants additionally allogeneous, like the Transylvanian Armenians, the tensions and conflicts might have been moved from the personal level to another dimension, and could therefore evolve into an interethnic conflict. Seen as an ethno-professional group Armenians remained in a complex relation with other peoples: not seldom was this relation burdened with conflict, and

the power, held offices etc. according to some complicated regulations. Those were, however, not "nations" in the modern sense of the word - they constituted privileged groups, the so called class or Feudal nations.

⁶ The Armenians dealt mostly with commerce (in the 18th century it was them who monopolized the most profit-generating commerce branch, i.e. the cattle commerce) and certain sectors of handicraft industry (very many of them were tanners, furriers, butchers). See: Pál 2006.

⁷ Since their principal activity was trade, very quickly did they learn the languages of Transylvania. Besides, since the majority of them came from Moldavia, at least the first generations already spoke Romanian.

the picture of Armenians changed depending on the condition of the mentioned relation.

Although “living together” can generally be called peaceful, at the beginning the Armenians were received with little trust. In the Transylvanian class society, the Armenians were considered strangers also because of their specific lifestyle. Moreover, because of their profession requiring a permanent movement, the Armenians were initially engaged in espionage, which, in turn, caused the labeling of Armenians as “suspects” by the “Aborigines” who hired them for providing useful information. Conflicts resulting from concurrency fights, and thus also the picture of Armenians are mentioned above all by sources from the first half of the 18th century. Both the description of Armenians as strangers and as merchants was just as negative as possible. If, even during the first three decades of the 19th century, the irritation caused by the economical success achieved by the Armenians contributed to the negative traces of their image, later on the situation gradually changed, resulting in the disappearing of the negative ethnic stereotypes.⁸ This new picture is well displayed in a mid-19th century description written by Balázs Orbán: “they had spread in every town of the country, and while Hungarians were agricultural folk who did not understand much of commerce and who therefore looked down on it, [the Armenians], having overtaken the commerce almost everywhere, became richer [...] and garnered a lot of sweet honey for their new fatherland; but let us not be jealous – we should rather be glad about their progress because this fraction of a nation has not been ingrateful towards this land; ...they are paying back what they owe to this land, for everytime they proved they deserved to be treated by this land as ist dear and beloved sons. They took up our language, our culture, they joined our common interest, and as such became our relatives.” (Orbán 1869: 75) Further Orbán named features characterizing Armenians: intelligence, responsiveness, puritanism, clear-headedness, that is, only positive features, together with high cultural niveau and support expressed for every noble issue (Orbán 1869: 75).

In the eyes of Hungarians, the Armenians had therefore lost all the negative features which would usually be attributed to the peoples engaged in trade. The reasons should be sought in the disintegration of the hermetic group the Armenians had until then constituted, the beginning of their assimilation, as well as in the fact that the liberal

⁸ A good presentation of ethnic stereotypes which does not, however, include smaller groups of peoples, like the Armenians: Vári 2006.

nobility and intelligentsia of the Reform Era saw in Armenians material to supplement the almost non-existent Hungarian bourgeoisie. As Auguste de Gerando, a French nobleman, noted during his Transylvanian journey in the mid-19th century, Armenians always behaved like good citizens because they understood there was a need for a union among the country's diverse nationalities. He mentioned that during the 1841-1843 Diet session where Gherla (Szamosújvár) was represented for the first time ever, the Armenian deputies stressed their love for the country and defined their principal preoccupation as living in concord with Hungarians (De Gerando 1845: 161-162).

At the same time, in the towns of Hungary there began as well the assimilation of the German bourgeoisie. In the Armenian case, the stress was moved from integration to assimilation. In Transylvania, where the leading political role was played by Hungarians, together with the spreading of new liberal and democratic ideas and since the Hungarians were actually a minority, the headcount became a burning question. That is why the Armenian assimilation was so well-received. The quoted positive picture drawn by Balázs Orbán is not a sporadically appearing one: actually it could be classified as common in the 19th century intelligentsia and other circles. Count Lajos Gyulay, repeatedly chosen as deputy to the Diet, in 1867, speaking of one Armenian woman, noted the following in his diary: "Cluj (Kolozsvar) has pretty Armenians: only their big hands and feet should be changed; apart from this they have gentle looks. Although it is common knowledge that there is not a single Armenian prince in the whole World, there are still so many merchants who look like one. At the same time, they have a Hungarian air. It means, they have assimilated with the Hungarians; most of the women do not even understand the Armenian language - Armenian men and women talk always Hungarian. They are just like real Hungarians, who pray, think and count in Hungarian."⁹ The quote displays very well the mixture of the old stereotypes and the new positive attitude.

This view prevailed in the Hungarian circles also in the following years. Speaking of the lawsuit regarding the estates of Gherla, in 1887 the prime minister-to-be, Lord-Lieutenant count Dezső Bánffy, said to the prime minister Kálmán Tisza: "The patriotism of Gherla (Szamosújvár) and its readiness to make sacrifices in the Hungarian issues deserve

⁹ Diary of Lajos Gyulay, June 27, 1867. Arhivele Naționale Române Filiala Județeană Cluj [Romanian National Archives, County Branch in Cluj]. F 351, Fond Gyulay-Kun, Fasc. 382, vol. 131.

recognition... As long as this land remains in the hands of Armenians, it remains Hungarian, but once taken away from the Armenians, it will no longer be Hungarian either!" (Szongott 1901, II: 433) A prominent 19th century Transylvanian historian, Elek Jakab wrote: "Gherla (Szamosújvár) and Dumbrăveni (Erzsébetváros) are two old cores of the Hungarian commerce! Had the Transylvanian Crown lands: Gilău (Gyalu), Gurghiu (Görgény), Deva (Déva), Hunedoara (Vajdahunyad) have been given in those hands a couple of years ago, how different they would be today and what richness would be displayed by our state power and our commercial balance! Who helped Cluj (Kolozsvár) and Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely), two apples of the Hungarian eye, become prominent, rich and of stable civil society? Isn't it that our Armenian compatriots who constitute the spine of those two prosperous cities?...Look around on the market places, go to the theater, follow attentively meetings, keep an eye on the lists of charity organizations, go to church or seek them in their houses, and everywhere you will find your true companions, your Eastern brethren..."¹⁰

There were several factors that contributed to the successful assimilation of the Armenians. The political domination of the Hungarian nation was just one of the circumstances - at that time, ethnic groups in similar positions followed different paths. In a German geographical work from early 19th century it was noted that, in contacts with other nationalities, the Greeks and the Serbs spoke Romanian, the Jews spoke German, but the Armenians used mostly Hungarian (Marienburg 1813: 81). Since the Armenian diaspora was relatively low in number,¹¹ the language shift happened within several generations. The Armenians of Szeklerland started using Hungarian within their community already as early as at the end of the 18th century. The use of the Armenian language persisted longer in Gherla and Dumbrăveni, but

¹⁰ An old feuilleton. In: *Armenia*, Szamosújvár - Gherla, II/1888, 273.

¹¹ According to census data, the headcount of Armenians in early 18th century can be estimated at 1200-1500. Their number grew systematically till the mid-18th century; later the number increase became slower. During the 1850 census, in Transylvania 7687 were noted, which made 0,4% of the population. See: Pál 1997. Later the number of Armenians diminishes, also due to their uncertain qualification - from 1880 on the censuses were based upon mother tongue and not upon nationality criterium. In 1880, 3523 persons declared Armenian as their mother tongue; the number of Armenian Catholics was 3223, but of course there were many more persons of Armenian origin, the majority of whom defined themselves as Hungarian.

since the beginning of the 19th century also there Hungarian was gaining more popularity.¹²

An important impulse was the official recognition of Armenians, to be precise - of two Armenian free royal towns - as part of the Hungarian nation during the 1791 session of the Transylvanian Diet. The *communitas* of Gherla, with regard to its merits, asked the Diet for recognition as Hungarian compatriots, for also their forefathers were admitted due to "the attempt to re-populate the country and to share the joy resulting from prosperous trade". Since there was no chance for them to obtain recognition as an autonomous nation, the Armenians asked to be linked to the Hungarian nation, "in whose lands we [the Armenians] are settled, whose virtues we try to follow, whose clothes we wear and according to whose laws we live".¹³ Similarly, an important factor was also religion, and starting from the beginning of the Hungarian Reform Era one should not forget the "readiness to receive" of the other party.

Social psychology has been dealing with a phenomenon of indisposition caused by belonging to a group of lower social prestige, where an individual wishes to change the situation so that the self-image is positively modified. The social identity is damaged if the in-group, according to important criteria, is defined as of lower rank than the out-group. In the case of Armenians, the situation was far more complicated than in the case of Jews who were marginalized over a long time. Not only were the Armenians in an advantageous economical situation, but they also had privileges which were considered basic in the society of those days. An advantage was also their Catholic religion, but in spite of all the mentioned factors they had to fight for recognition. According to the researchers of social identity, when a social comparison proves unfavorable for members of a group, they can choose diverse individual and collective strategies to improve their self-image. Individual strategies are put in the foreground mostly if the group considers the situation stable and legitime. If social mobility is at all possible in a given society, individuals who rate their situation as negative may choose to assimilate to the dominant group by adopting its cultural features and basic values (Bourhis-Gagnon-Moise 1994: 136). This, however, concerns

¹² Dumbrăveni lost its economical importance, and around 1850 its Armenian population started to decrease in number. Gherla remained the Armenian "fortress": despite that the language of instruction in the Armenian gymnasium became Hungarian, the Armenian language classes continued through the period of the Dual Monarchy; Hungarian, however, even though it happened later, also here became the "dominant" language.

¹³ Historical document collection. *Armenia*, I/1887, 252-256.

usually the most dynamic and mobile strata. As far as Armenians are concerned, the richest of them acquired Hungarian noble titles already in the 18th century (Tóth 2007: 133),¹⁴ and some bought as well estates.

Changes which took place in the first half of the 19th century led to the gradual economical decline of the Armenians whose market grew narrow and whose economical positions weakened. External trade would rather be replaced by internal commerce; the poorer Armenians moved out to villages, while the richer, who had already rented *puszta* in Bánság and the Great Hungarian Plain, having bought some estates, gradually moved over to Hungary. Many of them became nobility, thus choosing an individual way of self-realization, and assimilated to the dominate political group. Interestingly, as a response, the Armenians wanted to integrate exactly into the feudal structure which simultaneously advocated and blocked their economical activity. In 1807, as a manifestation of this double identity László Gorove, a Hungarian noble of Armenian background, invited the Hungarian Theater of Cluj to perform in Gherla. In order to get the Council's permission he referred to their patriotic feelings: "An equally great glory is brought onto our nation if it can keep Hungarian company in its bosom. There is no need to remind the Noble Council that we are Hungarian patriots..." (Szongott 1901, II: 391).

In any case, the mid-19th century was a turning point in the history of the Transylvanian Armenians. After 1848, (also) the Armenian community lost its group privileges which further hindered its emancipation. The events of 1848 played a major role in the forming of Hungarian Armenian identity. The integration, as well as the assimilation of the Armenians had started earlier, so that by 1848 the process was even partly complete. However, the year 1848 meant a key phase, a true turning point in this very process. By the end of the 19th century, on the occasion of a feast, in his speech the mayor of Gherla underlined the meaning of the years 1848–49: "In the glorious years 1848–1849, when the existence and independence of the Hungarian nation became uncertain, all the Armenians identified themselves with the fight of the Hungarian nation... and I can proudly say: thank God! – for there were victims of the saint issue among them, but not a single traitor. That is when the country's Armenians melted into the Hungarian nation forever, and now they can and want to fight whenever there is a need to defend the Hungarian culture in any part of the land." (Szongott

¹⁴ 53 families of Armenian origin were granted the rank of noblemen, and 5 families received the title of baron.

1901, III: 178) Before that, the Armenians integrated as part of the Hungarian nation into the specific Transylvanian system of three political nations and four officially recognized religions; the years 1848–49 let them experience the feeling of being a part of a common nation. That is why the keeping of the memory of the revolution, of its victims and of the Armenian heroes of the fight for independence as vivid as possible played such an important role for the Hungarian Armenian identity.

The integration slowly led to assimilation which became definitive by the end of the 19th century. In the second half of the 19th century, according to how Milton M. Gordon divided it, the cultural and structural assimilation was followed as well by assimilation within their identity. Transylvanian Armenians developed a feeling of Hungarian national affiliation, which at the same time resulted also in disappearance of the Armenian-related prejudice (Gordon 1964: 60–83).

However, the accelerated assimilation caused an identity crisis as well. As a response, in the second half of the 19th century a part of the Armenian intelligentsia, mostly the elites of Szamosújvár, initiated a movement for autonomy of the Armenian Catholic Church. The aim of the movement was the establishing of an Armenian bishopric. Actually, all the time they petitioned for the “restoration” of the Armenian bishopric: they referred to the case of Oxendie Verzerescu, stating that he was the bishop of the Transylvanian Armenians.¹⁵ The movement had partly been initiated even earlier. In 1831, the inhabitants of Gherla addressed the king “in the name of the community of the four Armenian towns in Transylvania”, since, as they put it, “the unfavorable times, the bad period in trade and the dispersal of our prominent personalities made us so much weaker that today even Lemberg seems to be just as distant and unreachable as Rome”, and so “the decline of religious education in the Armenian language” was also dangerous “for the national integrity” (Szongott 1901, III: 265–268). The movement intensified its activity after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. In 1868, referring to the petitions concerning the restoration of the Armenian bishopric, in a letter addressed to the Armenians of Frumoasa (Csíkszépvíz) the inhabitants of Gherla spoke about a common national issue (Szongott 1901, I: 328–329). Those of Frumoasa expressed their “deepest gratitude” to their “national, religious and language relatives, and merited citizens of the country”, and supported the petition

¹⁵ Oxendie Verzerescu was a titular bishop, but there was no title of a Transylvanian Armenian bishop.

(Szongott 1901, I: 335, 338). At the same time, the people of Dumbrăveni asked the Ministry of Religion and Public Education to “restore” the bishopric – they were referring to the fact that “now and then [they] have remained and proved faithful to the Throne and Country regardless of the good or bad circumstances, and see that the guaranteed by the Constitution political rights, the public liberty and the unviolated preserving of the unity of the country remain secured; that they have never had and will never have the idea of forming a politically separate nation, but from the depth of their souls stick to the idea of adherence to the Hungarian nation expressed in the Decree 61 issued by the Transylvanian Diet in 1791...” (Szongott 1901, I: 332). As the inhabitants of Gherla wrote in their petition, “none of the nations of the country can see it as a negative that we too want to live morally among and next to them, and that we want to preserve our language and traditional sermons at least in churches and schools! Because every and even the least ambitious nation has the right to a moral life, and it is even more true in the case of a part of a nation who already in Antiquity has played a major role in World history, and so are the Transylvanian Armenians too, who have never separated their interests from the well-understood interest of the Hungarian fatherland.” (Szongott 1901, I: 345) Still, the political atmosphere of those days was not particularly favorable for those attempts; besides, the low number of the Armenians, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, i.e. the counter-incentive of the Transylvanian bishopric contributed as well to the failure of the movement.

As a response to the identity crisis, in the second half of the 19th century, that is, when the Armenians were already almost completely Magyarized, a new ideology was born: with the help of Armenism, an intelligentsia group made an attempt to revive the Armenian national consciousness. Armenism was developed at the end of the 19th century by a group of intellectuals linked to *Armenia* – a magazine published in Gherla and edited by Kristóf Szongott; the ideology tried to define the self-identity of the Armenians of Hungary in two planes: in the political sense, the Armenians described themselves as part of the Hungarian nation, but in the cultural sense they wanted to remain Armenian. Through the mentioned ideology an attempt was made to both explain the exceptional role played by the Armenian people in the World history (the myth of Ararat and of Armenians as the first people to become Christian) and prove the absolute necessity of the Armenian presence in the Hungarian history (Nagy 1994–95). Having enumerated several sources of the Armenian pride, i.e. language, literature, the paradisiac rivers, Noah’s Ark or their ancient nation and statehood, says: “pride

comes from the knowledge that we are descendants of the nation that was first among all nations to become Christian" (Szongott 1901, I: 347). Somewhere else he wrote: "in this country, there is no people or nation that would be more religious and moral than the Armenians" (Szongott 1901, II: 367).

The ideologists of Armenism did have a difficult task. For it was not easy to insist on the Armenians' constituting the chosen people, to glorify the Armenian past and traditions, and at the same time to accept assimilation as a positive process. Finally, an attempt was made to link those issues using the duality of the concept of a nation.

In the cultural sense, they defined themselves as Armenians, politically, however, as even "more Hungarian than real Hungarians" part of the Hungarian nation. One of the Armenists, Gyula Merza, when asked what he understood by the Armenian-Hungarian ethnographic unity, answered that it meant "all our Armenians as a migrant nationality within the Hungarian society, just like the Szeklers or the Cumans, but who are more special due to their prominent group development on the Armenian national background" (Merza). Kristóf Szongott, the author of a three-volume monograph of Szamosújvár, wrote in the foreword to this book: "Finally, it is a duty of every good patriot to be familiar with the history of this town – the history that tells how these patriotic citizens became Magyarized, and how faithfully our forefathers fulfilled their obligations to God, the fatherland and the king!" (Szongott 1901: I, VIII).

In the Armenist picture of Armenians a major role was played by the features that could make Armenians likeable in the eyes of Hungarians. The key notions in the self-picture became their adaptation ability and their faithfulness – things that made possible the creation of a bond between the two communities. According to the new national characterology, the Armenians adapt easily, are religious, even pious, honest, as well as mobile, contriving, laborious, sparing but not stingy, even generous, puritan as far as family life is concerned, but are able to live prosperously and, last but not least, are true patriots. Some of the features are complementary with the Hungarian national characterology, while it is underlined that the Armenians are actually also better Hungarians. It is, by the way, a frequently recurrent topos in *Arménia*, but apparently its influence radius was broader than one could have supposed.

In 1889, on the occasion of an EMKE (*Erdélyi Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület* [Hungarian Cultural Society of Transylvania]) meeting in Szamosújvár, Antal Molnár published an editorial in *Arménia*:

in this article, the author stated that since its settling down in Transylvania, the Armenian nation produced a whole range of outstanding men, martyrs, scientists, artists and statesmen, and although they stuck to their ancient culture with piety, they also sympathized with the struggles of their brethren in Orient, while “in heart and soul they are already Hungarian citizens of their Hungarian fatherland” (Szongott 1901, III: 173–175). In his book, Szongott summarizes the active and passive parts of the Hungarian–Armenian relations in the following way: the Hungarians did not lavish their positive attitude and friendship on people who did not deserve it, “because the Hungarian nation offered the country to the stateless, but the Armenians never betrayed the fatherland that fed them: out of gratitude they learned the Hungarian language so that now there is not a single Armenian in the country who would not speak it; they took off their national suit and replaced it with a pretty Hungarian costume; they put on Hungarian mind, Hungarian way of thinking; that is, they became true Hungarians” (Szongott 1901, III: 31).

The ideology of Armenism could not, however, stop the process of assimilation which by the end of the 19th and in early 20th century was already considerably advanced. Although in the assimilation research there is still no adequate theory, and doubt is being cast on the notion itself by replacing it with terms like “acculturation”, “integration” or other, on the basis of empirical data we can assume that the assimilation of the Transylvanian Armenians was, despite some important differences, in a way similar to the much better researched assimilation of Jews.

For example, Viktor Karády describes the assimilation of Jews as an inseparable part of the modernization process. Assimilation meant a growing distance to one’s own traditional, hermetic culture, but not just because of the will to adopt another culture or language, but in such a process, the Jews wished to take part in the dynamics of modernization. A collective assimilation of Jews would not have been possible without the modernization of the whole society, for it gave the Jews a possibility of social mobility and of improving of their social status. According to Karády, the liberal Hungarian elites offered a so called “assimilation contract”, partly in order to increase the headcount of Hungarians, and partly to compensate the missing Hungarian bourgeoisie, so that adequate “cadre material” was secured for the needs of social, administrative, cultural and other modernization (See: Karády 2000: 59). The Armenian assimilation partly fits into the above described model, but it also has some peculiarities.

The integration, i.e. the assimilation of Armenians started earlier and was partly complete already before 1848, to which contributed their social status, their religion and their relatively low number. In the case of two settlements in Szeklerland, under the influence of a predominantly Hungarian milieu the language shift was complete by the end of the 18th century, just like in the case of scattered Armenian communities in Transylvania and in Hungary. In the case of Gherla and Dumbrăveni this process extended into the second half of the 19th century – the highest headcount, the local elites, as well as the Armenian schools contributed to the longer persistence of the Armenian language. The success of the integration is undoubtedly displayed by a great number of politicians, experts in economy and artists of Armenian background who pursued significant careers in the period of Dual Monarchy.¹⁶ One of them, the politician György Lukács reported the following on the Armenian assimilation in the interwar period: “Every nationality of the country has taken part, to a greater or to a smaller extent, in this healthy blood mixing. From most of the nationalities, however, only individuals or groups were drawn into the Hungarian nation. A fading of complete nationalities into the Hungarian nation is an exception, and such an exception is the Armenian nationality which, abandoning its temperament, its features and its inclinations, utterly and without afterthought melted into the Hungarian nation. There is no doubt that it made the Hungarians become richer in substance.” (Lukács 1936: 7).

Assimilation did not, however, mean denying of one’s own roots: it seems that Armenians have managed to preserve a part of their identity until today. Besides, they remained faithful to the Hungarians also during the changes after World War I, and in their case no dissimilational process was observed, as it took place e.g. among the Transylvanian Jews. As an epilogue¹⁷ we can remark that together with changes in political system both in Hungary and in Transylvania new attempts have been made to revive the “lost identity” in the spirit of a kind of “neo-Armenism”¹⁸.

¹⁶ Among them we can find ministers, ca. 50 National Assembly deputies, university teachers, artists etc.

¹⁷ Cf. writings of Kinga Kali and Ilka Veress. Kinga Kali while researching the contemporary Armenian identity called it positional identity because their self-definition is relative and it depends on the environment whether they define themselves as Hungarians or as Armenians. Kali 2007; Veress 2009.

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Book Reviews

The Politics of National Character. A study in Interwar East European Thought.

By Balázs Trencsényi.

Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2012.

Balázs Trencsényi's book *The Politics of National Character. A study in Interwar East European Thought* is one of the most recent publications dealing with the topic of national identity and specificity in Eastern Europe in the interwar period. The book is a comparative analysis of the narrative construction of specificity in Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria. By means of these three significant case-studies, the aim of the book is to emphasize the common traits as well as differences between identity discourses in this part of Europe. The book is presently available only in English to Romanian readers; it has not been translated into Romanian due to its recent publication at the Routledge publishing house in London. However, it should be an essential part of all biographies on the topic.

Balázs Trencsényi is a professor of history at the Central European University (CEU), but he has philosophical training doubled by his training and expertise as a historian, which is strongly reflected in his writings. He approaches topics from an interdisciplinary perspective, selecting mainly those related to modern intellectual history, comparative history, and the history of political ideas. However, most of his publications are centered around the topic of nationalism or national identity and specificity. Due to his frequent approach of such topics, Trencsényi becomes one of the most important authors in this research area as well as an expert in the investigation of topics related to national characterology and identity discourses in Eastern Europe.

His book *The Politics of National Character. A study in Interwar East European Thought* is a major reference point in this respect and an excellent comparative analysis of national identity and specificity in the three above-mentioned East European countries. This book is also an extensive piece of research that contextually reconstructs the debates on identity from the mid-nineteenth century until 1945. The book contributes to the discussions surrounding the issues of modernity and anti-modernity by discussing the responsibility of intellectuals in the emergence of the radical ideological framework. As the author explains, initially the book was limited to the comparison between Romania and Hungary, but the reason for introducing a third case-study in the analysis was to highlight the first two cases by revealing continuities and discontinuities, similarities and differences.

The originality of the work is visible at the level of methodology and content as well as sources and the rigorous documentation. Undoubtedly, from the

perspective of methodology (through the combination of sources) and interpretation, Trencsényi succeeds in innovating the historiographic discourse.

From a methodological standpoint, by considering identity as a context-dependent and dynamic concept, the book conjugates a few interpretative traditions that combine methodologies or theories pertaining to conceptual and discursive practices, the analysis of the identity discourse and the study of nationalism. As for the conceptual and discursive practices, the author resorts to "the history of political thought" (the Cambridge School) and the rise of the *Begriffsgeschichte* (conceptual history) in Germany and France as a result of the theories of the post-*Annales* school. According to Trencsényi, these methodologies are never divergent, having common features. The author's solution is their use "in a syncretic but consistent way in order to describe contexts, discursive practices and semantic structures characteristic of the political culture in question." (p.3) For the analysis of the temporal constructs of the identity discourse in Eastern Europe, the author's inspiration sources are the works of Reinhart Koselleck and J. G. A. Pocock as well as the literature dealing with the temporal construction of modernism. The study of nationalism in Central and South-Eastern Europe has a number of influential contributors such as Jenő Szűcs and Miroslav Hroch who localize nationalist projects within their respective social and cultural sectors. A major issue in this respect is the harmonization of the emergent discourse with the projects of modernity. Trencsényi opts for their analysis in the light of the "conservative revolution" (a term belonging to Armin Mohler, which reflects the provision of old traditions as new ways for the non-National Socialist Right in post-WWI Germany) and "political romanticism" (a term introduced by Carl Schmitt, which solves the problem of the *longue durée*, being useful in the explanation of discursive frameworks and which points to the deep roots of these ideas in the European cultural thought).

The content of the book reveals a structure centered around the analysis of the three cases: the Romanian, Hungarian and Bulgarian ones in this order and in a comparative perspective. The conclusions point out the regional similarities and differences, while the author underlines the fact that the three cases do not overlap perfectly.

As the author argues, the Romanian characterological discourse, whose analysis opens the book, resides around two temporal axes (the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) which are then divided into stages according to the particularities of the identity discourse. Therefore, he emphasizes the metamorphoses of this discourse that he analyzes in separate stages, pointing out its dynamic character and its radicalization. Thus, he reveals the narrative construction of the Romanian identity from the consolidation of the models of national characterology (which was based more on the appeals to the ethnic element than on the institutional continuity characteristic of the beginning of twentieth century) to the a-historical turn (prepared by the previous discourse and characteristic of the interwar period). The author investigates the identity discourse within the Romanian intellectual tradition both in the Old Kingdom of

Romania and Transylvania (having different versions prior to 1918) and then in Greater Romania. Trencsényi innovates the historiographic discourse by including the discussion on Romanian Fascism in the context of the emergence process of the Romanian state and Romanian nation in the interwar period.

The second half of the eighteenth century and Dimitrie Cantemir's *Descriptio* as well as the references provided by foreign observers and Encyclopedists are the author's starting points in outlining the paradigm of the Romanian characterology. As for Transylvania from the same period, one can find the references pertaining to specificity in the oeuvre of the Greek-Catholic elite, in a discourse focused on the continuity of Romanians with the Roman colonists in Dacia.

Another significant stage in the discussions on identity covers the period 1830-40 when the characterological discourse was attributed a crucial importance once with the emergence of a new public sphere both in the Old Kingdom and Transylvania, namely political journalism, the cultural pamphlet, literary criticism and political theory. This period witnessed a consensus among intellectuals concerning the thesis that national history should be the basis for any project of national regeneration. The author notes the emergence of two distinctive narratives in 1840, namely the revolutionary narrative and the evolutionary one. Nicolae Bălcescu is the representative of the new historical narrative centered around the "Romanian people" and based on a vision of progress with special interest in folklore as the source of national history.

The revolutionary year 1848 was also characterized by modern debates on national specificity. They involved the participation of many notable intellectuals such as Mihail Kogălniceanu who proposed a similar program to that of Bălcescu and Ion Heliade Rădulescu. He was an ideologue of the nationalist-liberal generation from 1848 and a proponent of the imitation of external models. As for Heliade Rădulescu, he was the first to formulate the expression "national ontology" which would become crucial in the interwar period. In Transylvania, the most relevant discourse was that of Simeon Bărnuțiu who essentially underlined that the invasion of Hungarians represented the primordial evil in the province.

The identity discourse went through a new metamorphosis during the *Junimist* stage in 1860. The type of discourse promoted by the *Junimists* criticized the exaggerations of the Latinist School, the modern way of life and institutions which led, in their opinion, to the dissolution of the national character. Its main proponent was Titu Maiorescu. According to Trencsényi, the absolutely novel element in the *Junimist* discourse was the wide context which placed civilization under the aegis of organic evolution. Additionally, one can note the *Junimists'* profound criticism of 1848 as well as the progressive radicalization of their discourse in Mihai Eminescu's writings.

The next stage – the end of the nineteenth century – witnessed a reconfiguration of the identity discourse and the emergence of a new paradigm that represented the nation as an organic entity in contrast with the *Junimists*.

The most notable representatives of this stage are A. D. Xenopol, one of the first Romanian promoters of the *Völkerpsychologie* which coalesces with a theory of history focused on the issues of causality and seriality, and D. D. Drăghicescu who argued that character is entirely a product of history and people who do not have a history do not have a character. Nicolae Iorga distinguishes two competitive traditions in Romania, namely the boyar and peasant ones, as well as the coexistence of three nations, namely peasants, boyars and Jews. In his writings, he describes the nation in the terms of the physical type, moral character and intellectual abilities, the main conflict being that between natives and foreigners. One can note that this stage also witnessed a steady radicalization of the identity discourse not only in the Old Kingdom, where A. C. Cuza argued that the cultural crises of the society was generated by the population's exposure to Jewishness, but also in Transylvania, where Aurel C. Popovici insisted on the idea that racial purity was superior to the ethnic mixture resulting from the construction of the assimilating nation. One can note that this stage is characterized by the strong emphasis on ethnicity.

A distinct stage in the debates on specificity is the so-called "great debate" between autochthonism and modernism. The author includes among the autochthonists the so-called *Poporanist* movement whose aim was to reconcile political modernity with the cult of peasants. The most prominent representatives of this movement were Garabet Ibrăileanu and Mihail Ralea. Westernizers represented the opposite end, arguing that, in the case of the Romanian culture, imitative forms triggered the formation of Western structures of civilization. The main proponents of this thesis were Eugen Lovinescu and Ștefan Zeletin.

Such a departure is evident in the case of Lucian Blaga, but also other authors who are representative of this stage, such as Dumitru Stăniloae and Nae Ionescu. This is a stage in which radicalism became evident. Trencsényi notes that "the most spectacular cultural phenomenon of the interwar period in Romania was the emergence of a cohort of thinkers usually referred to as the young generation" (p.56) In political terms, he identifies three major groups: the extreme right, the neo-conservatives who shared a "diffuse nationalist spiritualism that was not necessarily pro-totalitarian, and the centrists who retained a few affinities with liberalism and the pro-communist left." (p.56) Within these groups, there were a few intellectuals who distinguished themselves. For instance, Constantin Noica developed a national ontology based on the contrast between the verbs "to be" and "to do", while Emil Cioran's endeavor was to deconstruct the usual discourse, underlining its essentially static nature by talking of the "Byzantine spiritual damnation," "the lack of a national destiny", "the lack of national prophecies" and a "self-deceiving traditionalism" - the only salvation being the fever of modernization. Mircea Eliade, a genuine leader of this generation, abandoned the social and economic categories, focusing on destiny and symbols instead. The author identifies four common points regarding the specificity discourse promoted by the young generation: "1) their attempt to reevaluate those features of the national

character which were considered negative by arguing that they were actually positive; 2) their claim that a culture can become historical only by developing a relationship with eternity; 3) their vision of a spiritual regeneration, underlining that collectivity was the emanation of the creative national genius of high culture; 4) their claim that a culture can become universal only through the cultivation of nationalism" (p.69).

In summary, by developing an ample context, Trencsényi indicates the manner in which the discourse of national specificity steadily metamorphosed: while in the nineteenth century its basis was historicity, continuity and the nativism vs. modernization conflict, the emphasis steadily shifted on the a-historical and supra-historical forms. Additionally, the radicalization of the discourse on identity coincides with the emergence of the Romanian national state.

Chapter II focuses on the Hungarian discourse on national characterology with certain comparisons to the Romanian case. The author's starting point is the pre-modern period. He argues that in this period, the most influential construct was the so-called Hungarian consciousness. It was based on the supra-ethnic and legal concept of the Hungarian consciousness of the noble community.

In the nineteenth century, Herder became very influential. In this context, language and customs became focal points within the discourse on national identity. On the other hand, there was a debate on the issue of the import of cultural creation and local production in the creation of the cultural nation. In this context, Johannes Csaplovics distinguished himself in the Hungarian milieu. He wrote a pioneering description of his country based on publications from the period prior to 1822. It was published in the *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* magazine in which a host of other articles on the national culture, inheritance and character were published in the period 1817-1822. These articles promoted a discourse on the national character which was specific of the late Enlightenment, the employed method being the *Statistik*. In 1820, national specificity gradually transcended the horizon of ethnographic and statistical descriptions, becoming a focal issue of intellectual debates.

During the 1830s, the issue of the relationship between originality and progress emerges as a major point within the Hungarian public sphere. István Széchenyi, whose first observations on the national character were formulated as early as 1810, later developed a program of national building which contained three basic assertions. The first involved "the domination of Hungarians within the political sphere, which did not contradict the national existence of other communities within the realm of Hungary" (p.77). The second claims that *de facto*, the primacy of Hungarians on the territory was compatible with the universal norms of the natural right (not exclusively justified for historical reasons, not only as a consequence of the past). The third identified the basic duality, claiming that Hungarians were backward, but had a crucial and active role.

In 1840, the issue of national building became a major source of division between various groups within the Hungarian literary life. In this stage, a

sophisticated theory was that provided by Jacint Roncy in *Jellenisme* (Characterology) which can be considered the first attempt to outline a social psychology of the typology of Hungarians. Another author, Gustav Szontagh, aimed at establishing a native Hungarian philosophical tradition at this stage.

The 1848 Revolution and war of independence provided a new turning point in the national discourse, as Trencsényi notes. At that moment, the issue of national building and the construction of the nation-state was mostly theoretical. The main representatives were Zsigmond Kemény, Józef Eötvös and János Erdély. The latter, in a pamphlet published in 1851, argued that the Hungarians' main treasure was their nationality. He defined the nation historically, going against its ethno-cultural understanding the same as Károly Szabó and Pál Hunfalvy.

Another stage identified by the author is the period before 1918. Béni Kállay distinguished himself in an atmosphere of general optimism which followed the *Ausgleich*. The year 1890 witnessed an intense propaganda campaign in favor of the liberal programs of assimilation. At the same time, it marked the nationalist turning point of the Habsburg element within the Independence Party. This development meant the end of the construction of the political nation and the emergence of new competitive and incompatible visions, of ethno-cultural projects. A crucial point within the political-cultural debates of the last two decades of the nineteenth century was whether Hungarian society, with non-Hungarians exceeding 50% of the total population, was able to transform the various nationalities into a homogeneous nation. The political nation was an ideal framework for the assimilation of newcomers. The most prominent figures of this stage were Zsolt Beöthy, who published the book *A magyar irodalom kis-tükre* (The Small Mirror of Hungarian Literature) in 1896, and Otto Hermann.

One can identify two approaches in the reformulation of the national discourse within the intellectual production of the years that followed the shock of the dissolution of historical Hungary. The first discourse, based on the idealization of the features of the Monarchy, was best represented by Gyula Szekfű, while the second discourse was best reflected in the writings of Dezső Szabó.

The end of the 1920-30s witnessed the emergence of a type of ideology that belonged neither to the right, nor to the left (which might have lead, however, to an extreme right position). The most prominent representative was László Németh who rejected not only the tradition of assimilation, but also the multi-ethnic tradition. Sándor Karácsony attempted to formulate a democratic ethno-pedagogy in the interwar period. In his opinion, the soul of Hungarians was the soul of Asia, and certain features that could be construed as negative were thenceforth seen as positive.

After 1918, the historiographic construct of the nineteenth century, as the author underline, became obsolete. Historians such as Bálint Homán and Gyula Szekfű managed to reformulate the discourse by putting forward methodological innovations which were reflected in the post-1918 national discourse. The Hungarian nation was no longer defined in ethno-cultural terms

but rather as a spiritual category. The new historiographic direction was formulated by Bálint Homán that in Trencsényi's view provided an innovative methodological framework for the outlining of the Hungarian characterology. The most ambitious project in this regard was the book of philosopher Lajos Prohászka which identified three basic aspects of the national character: life activity, affections and creativity. Albeit his texts were overcrowded with abstract terminology, his message was not complicated and in many respects it converged with that of Szekfű: Hungarians had to find their spiritual identity by assimilating cultural influences and by implementing the Western culture. Thus, he offers a number of alternative visions of history and proposes an ethnocentric approach.

At the end of the 1930s, two groups rose to prominence: the group led by Béla Zornai and Sándor Eckhardt as well as the group of *urbanite* intellectuals who continued the radicalizing trend from the turn-of-the-century, but in the anti-liberal atmosphere of the interwar period they proved incapable of gaining significant political ground. In the second half of the year 1930, the reformist generation was invalidated, most of its energies having been lost in previous struggles. The circle of Left intellectuals grouped around the *Szép Szó* magazine, which was a focal point of the *urbanite* group, published the volume of essays *Mai magyarok régi magyarokról* (Present Hungarians on Old Hungarians) following an effort to reconcile their political creed with the national discourse. The most prominent members of this circle were Attila József, Pál Ignótus and Ferenc (François) Fejtő. The text employs a generational discourse arguing for "a new Hungarian culture" and demanding the creation of a new Hungarian elite.

A second attempt to formulate a national *urbanite* discourse, which also originated from the circle grouped around the *Szép Szó* magazine, took the shape of the volume *Mi a magyar most?* (What Are Hungarians Today?), published in 1937. It focuses on the citizen and argues that only the creation of a bourgeois society can humanize social relations. Pál Ignótus formulated a theory of imitation as basis for modernization while he emphasized the local particularities of a given culture.

In the second half of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s, the dynamism of the debates on national identity and the possibility for the opening of populist intellectual influences, pushed the key figures of the populist group to reformulate their symbolic points not only in terms of symbolic geographies and social criticism, but also by going back to the official historical canon and by trying to formulate "an alternative historical nation."

István Bibó, in a programmatic writing from the 1940s, attempted to put the movement on the map of the literary crisis. His *Az európai egyensúlyról és békéről* (On the European Balance and Peace) reveals the roots of the redefinition of Bibó's characterology, represented by the specific concept of "collective psyche." Bibó's most detailed analysis regarding characterology can be found in his work *A magyarságtudomány problémája* (The Problem of Hungarology) from 1948. His arguments are strongly reminiscent of his past writings.

As in the case of Romanians, the author pointed out the radicalization of the characterological discourse and its particular features in each delineated stage.

Chapter III focuses on Bulgaria where, similarly to the Romanian and Hungarian cases, the debate on specificity played a crucial role in the nineteenth century. As Trencsényi argues, the narrative of the Bulgarian revival is that of “not yet” and “no any more” (p.121) which was relevant all across the twentieth century. An important type of narrative for the specificity discourse in his point of view is the protochronistic one which viewed Slavs (including the Bulgarians) as roots of civilized Europe.

As in the case of Romania and Hungarian, the author review some delineated stages and the features of identity discourse in a comparative manner with mentioned countries. A Bulgarian publicist belonging to the Bulgarian revival, Lyuben Karavelov, describes Bulgarians in contrast with the Turks. In his opinion, Bulgarians were barbarians, but potentially capable of becoming civilized if their were liberated from foreign oppression. The same as Karavelov, one of the most prominent Bulgarian poets, Hristo Botev, emphasized the inhuman character of Turks, concluding that the two races - Turks and Bulgarians - were incompatible. Moreover, he blamed the Byzantine spiritual domination for the alienation of the Bulgarian elite. Petko R. Slaveykov was interested in the absence of national solidarity. Therefore, he proposed nation-builders to extend family solidarity over the entire homeland. His son, Pencho P. Slaveykov, is mentioned as the creator of modern characterology, distinguishing himself as a prominent figure of the characterological discourse. He emphasizes that national character represents more of an esthetic problem and was indirectly connected to the issue of nation-building.

In the nineteenth century, unlike the Romanian and Hungarian cases, a significant factor in Bulgaria was the delay of national institutionalization. One of the most important problems at this stage was the establishment of the role of intellectuals. In this respect, Boyan Penev formulated a narrative on the normativity of the national tradition and the specific role of the intelligentsia. Todor Panov indicated that Bulgaria was a young nation with a young and unsophisticated culture, and argued that his compatriots, despite being heroic, were politically immature and therefore easily abused by the coward, but shrewd, enemies. His remarks were formulated during the Second Balkan War. That is why Panov claimed that intellectuals were supposed to defend the Bulgarian soul against foreign influences. As a result, he elaborated an ethno-cultural program similar to the *Sămănătorist* program in Romania.

After 1918, Bulgarians, as the author remark, had to face a social and political crisis as a result of the Second Balkan War. The work *An Outline for the Psychological Analysis of Our Social Life*, written by the physicist and psychologist Nikola Krastinov, is representative of this stage. This work is a good example for the expansion of the *narodnopsihologia*-discourse.

For the beginning of the 1930s, Trencsényi argue that characterology became a trend as well as a symbolic battleground between various meta-political concepts. The *narodnopsihologia*-discourse started to become more

compartmentalized. One of the most prominent representatives of this type of discourse was Konstant Galabov, who formulated a coherent vision in his work *The Creator of Nations*. Its main topic is the historical role of the elite that had to turn back to popular culture. Another major representative, Kazandriev, discussed the issue of historicity in the light of the apparently theoretical contradictions and the speculations of Western philosophy on the atrophy of historical knowledge in his work *History and Nation*.

The end of the decade witnessed the emergence of an authoritarian discourse, similar with the other cases. In Bulgaria, throughout the interwar period, intellectuals were obsessed, as the author argue, with the gap that existed between the protagonists of high culture and the bureaucratic elite following Bulgaria's independence. Similarly to the Hungarian case, Bulgaria was also experiencing a division between the three mass discourses. Representative in this regard is, according to Trencsényi not only Boris Jostov, a specialist in art history and literary studies, but also Peter Mutafchiev, a medievalist who published essays in cultural philosophy. Jostov promoted the return to the past as the star of hope. He viewed the task of the construction of characterology as an imperative of historical research. As for Mutafchiev, he indicated that Bulgarian history is marked by "a lack of continuity, consequences and gradualism in the political and spiritual life of the nation." This ideology was in line with the official rhetoric after 1934, which underlined the importance of "personal rules" and the normative functions of the "national elite", contrasting the national canon with "foreign influences." His aim was to outline a systematic canon of Bulgarianness. His work *The Book of Bulgarians* was meant to provide an historical narrative of the Bulgarian identity. The use of the bio-political vocabulary in the description of the Collective Self is attributed to Kiril Hristov.

In any case, the negotiation between the canon of official nationalism and the radical ideology of the extreme right has different interfaces. The most vocal ideologue of Bulgarian fascism, Lyubomir Vladikin, did not construct a national ideology capable of undermining the traditional nationalist discourse.

Naydew Sheytanov is another prominent figure of the interwar Bulgarian intelligentsia. It is not so much the agenda that makes his discourse unique, but rather the language he employs, Trencsényi argue. In the mid-1920s, Sheytanov produced a series of political essays on Bulgarianness, which continue the tradition of the *narodnopsihologia*. In the 1930s, he blended his magical collectivism with the cannon of official nationalism. A common point of these two registers was the interpretation of national education which creates an identity discourse that had to be instilled in the people. In his book *The Point of View of Greater Bulgaria*, he describes Bulgaria as a chosen nation and the Balkans as the heartland of Europe. His ideas neither succeeded in formulating the discourse on the Bulgarian identity, nor did they serve as an alternative to the extant discourse.

Janko Janev was a philosopher who earned a solid reputation in the 1930s. His thesis, synthesize Trencsényi, is that Bulgarians have nothing in common

either with the East or with the West. In his opinion, they are characterized a specific "in-betweenness" which was a spiritual deficiency, but promised a bright future nonetheless. His most important work is *Der Mythos auf dem Balkan* published in 1936. The introduction of the Balkans in his narrative meant a decisive turning point. Janev's oeuvre can be read as a complex dialogue between the Bulgarian characterological discourse and the National-Socialist ideology.

The tradition of the *narodnopsihologia* was ambivalent. The left wing aimed at redefining the national discourse as well. Its representatives focused on a set of social-political topics and did not really take part in the "main" cultural debates. The only exception to the rule, which Trencsényi notes, was the philosopher Dimitar Mihalchev who showed great interest not only in the biological trend, but also in the irrational and the lack of scientific clarity in thought.

Another representative figure of the Bulgarian intelligentsia is Ivan Hadzhiyski. The novelty of his approach was the moralizing perspective, as author pointed out. His main focus was the issue of Bulgaria's peripheral position, which resulted in the fact that the West's requests were imported as standards of living without the implementation of the Western production structures as well.

The conclusions of the book reveal the similarities and differences between the discourses on national characterologies in Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria. The most important refer to the fact that there is no complete overlap of the three discourses on national specificity given that the style and the content are different because they are conditioned by the different cultural background of the authors who "had to cook with the locally available ingredients." (p.172). The related elements of the characterological discourses refer to the fact that, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the question of ethnic alterity had become a focal point in all three countries. Additionally, one should point out the radical break with the pre-1918 political traditions and the radicalization of the discourse, an element of similarity being the manner in which intellectuals approached the issue of Westernism/Autochthonism and referred to the Western culture. The author's comparative approach of the use of characterology after 1945 reveals that, unlike in Romania and Hungary, in Bulgaria the ideological references to the interwar period were not central. Essentially, the author reveals the tragic character of the position of intellectuals who were focused on identity, which was similar in the three countries. They were "victims as well as perpetrators of the misery of small states in Eastern Europe".

The author uses a generous and varied array of sources from books to articles published in all major gazettes and magazines. Therefore, he read almost everything there is to read concerning the period under scrutiny.

Balázs Trencsényi's book is a remarkable analysis of the characterological discourse in Eastern Europe. The used methodology, the connection to the most recent historiographic currents, the sources as well as approached topics and their reassessment confer a high degree of originality to the book and provide new research direction to the historical analysis. Albeit it is primarily addressed

to experts, the book can also be a very stimulating read to the general public, raising questions and generating fascinating debates.

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Mai presus de naționalism. O istorie politică și socială a corpului de ofițeri habsburgici, 1848-1918 [Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848-1918].

By István Deák.

Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2009.

István Deák is a historian born in Hungary in 1926, from where he emigrated to Paris, in 1948, due to the communist regime's instauration. In 1956 he settled in New York and in 1964 he became a professor at Columbia University. His main domain of interest in research and teaching is Central and Central-Eastern Europe's history. His numerous books and articles have as subjects the Hungarian historiography, modern Germany, the 1848-1849 revolution, the First World War in Central Europe, the instauration of Fascism, collaborationism and resistance in Europe during the Second World War, etc.

The book *Mai presus de naționalism. O istorie politică și socială a corpului de ofițeri habsburgici, 1848-1918* [Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848-1918] was initially published in 1990, in English, but was afterwards translated in German, Hungarian, Italian, but also in Romanian, enjoying a vast critical appreciation and winning, among others, the Wayne S. Vucinich prize of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies.

In this monographic study, István Deák proposes an analysis of the Habsburg army's officer corps both from the perspective of its historical evolution and from the point of view of its social characteristics, taking into consideration the individual traits, but also the place and role of the officers' category in the Habsburg Monarchy's society, which was so ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous. The author examines the officers' social and ethnic origin, their professional development, their value system and lifestyle, their economic situation, social prestige, political and cultural role, and the impact of the 1848-1918 military reforms on the officer corps' development. All these factors contribute to the understanding of the functioning mode of a fundamental institution and political structure unique in its own way. The Habsburg army and the sovereign's persona, to which its subjects felt they were bound through dynastic loyalty, were the key elements which succeeded to maintain for a relatively long time the unity of an empire composed of economically unequal developed regions, peopled by diverse nationalities, who spoke different languages and had, most of the times, divergent national-political aspirations.

István Deák explains in his work the way in which this army, whose inner communication was seriously impaired by linguistic diversity, was able to successfully fulfil its duty of maintaining the Monarchy's unity, but he also addresses the causes of military failures and the officers' responsibility for the Monarchy's dissolution at the end of the First World War.

The main sources utilised by the author in this work were archival documents. The Habsburg army's bureaucracy, often accused of exaggerated meticulousness, left an enormous number of documents, the soldiers' life and activity being carefully registered ever since the 18th century. The most useful document for finding out some personal details about the officers was the "conduct list", called "qualification list" from 1870. This was a personal chart on every officer and contained information about his family, education and civil status, details about his children, but also an annual evaluation of his qualities and behaviour, his special abilities, state of health and others. Beside these lists, other important sources are the population censuses and military statistics, but also the military tribunals' decisions. In addition to archival documents, military magazines, memoirs and literature were also used, as they offer rich information on the life of an officer.

For the socio-demographic analysis of the officers' category, the author chose two representative samples from the group of career officers who had the rank of lieutenant in active service in 1870 and, respectively, in 1900, thus practically researching two generations and comparing the obtained results with the official statistical data, regularly issued by the army.

The first two chapters of the book chronologically sketch the history of the Habsburg army, with an accent on the 1848-1918 period. The 1848-1849 revolutions represented a major internal crisis, which was hardly dealt with by the army. In many instances the soldiers' and officers' confusion surfaced, as the differentiation between allies and enemies was difficult given the fact that most of the troops, both in the imperial army and in the Hungarian one, consisted of men of different nationalities forced to serve in the army. And although the newly created Hungarian troops had their own uniform, the imperial troops (from which approximately a third were placed, as a result of the agreement between the Hungarians and the emperor, as King of Hungary, under Hungarian authority) wore the old uniforms, although they fought on the same side as the Hungarians. Moreover, many soldiers, placed in the situation of fighting against their compatriots, decided to change sides. After the internal situation was stabilised, in 1859 and 1866 the Habsburg army suffered two devastating defeats from the part of France and Sardinia and, respectively, of Prussia, defeats that showed the army's shortcomings (among which chaos at the leadership level, bad supplies of armament) and demonstrated the necessity of reforms. The dualistic pact of 1867 brought a reorganisation of the army, this problem causing the most intense disputes in the course of the negotiations between the Austrians and the Hungarians. The laws of defence of 1868 stipulated the existence of a shared army and marine, placed under the leadership of an Imperial Ministry of War, but also three national armies: the

Austrian one, the Hungarian one and the Croatian-Slavonic one, although the law created only two Ministries of Defence, one Austrian and one Hungarian. The law established German as a commanding language of the shared army, and the officers were forced to know, beside German, the languages of the regiment which was assigned to them. Recruitment rules were also stipulated as, by the law of 1868, military service became compulsory. In the 1868-1897 period, a series of reforms were introduced in the direction of professionalization of the military service, improvements in armament supplies, building new barracks, increasing the soldiers' pay (which remained too low even with these improvements), regulating the officers' pension system and taking measures in order to protect their widows and orphans. A reserve corps was created, to which only instructed persons had access.

The next six chapters of the book treat in detail the various aspects of the officer life: education, day-by-day life at the regiment, the pay system, code of honour and morality, marriage and family life, pension system and the fate of the officers' widows and orphans, but also the sinuous process of advancing in the military hierarchy, as well as the importance given by the army to the officers' religion and ethnicity.

The future officers' education was carried out in specialised military schools, the first few of these being founded by Maria Theresa. After 1867, having graduated from a military school became a compulsory condition for those who wanted to enter the army's officer corps. The author analyses the social status of the families which provided students for the military schools, their ethnic origin, the curriculum, the schools' infrastructure, the strict rules which governed the academic activities. Although the curriculum stipulated the study of French and of the main languages spoken in the Monarchy, this aspect was not sufficiently stressed, and the officer freshly recruited to the regiment encountered, in many cases, difficulties in his communication with the soldiers, because he barely spoke their language. From an ideological point of view, the future officers' unconditional loyalty towards the sovereign and devotion towards the army were cultivated. At least formally, the army did not take into consideration the officers' ethnicity or religion. Nevertheless, the statistics reveal that the German officers' percentage was the highest and the Hungarian officers were second on the list, the number of officers pertaining to other nationalities being considerably smaller. This state of facts can be explained, beyond the ethnic preferences of the commissions who granted admittance to the military schools, by the provenance environments of the young men who generally opted for this career: families of officers and families from the educated middle-class, and these social categories were much better shaped amongst the Germans and Hungarians.

As for the pay of career officers, the advancement policy and the pension system, the Habsburg army lagged behind the German and French ones. An officer's pay, but also his pension were smaller than those of a functionary in the state administration, and the military reforms brought an insignificant increase. The advancement in rank followed strict rules and in times of peace required a

long period of waiting. A major disadvantage for the Habsburg army was also the insufficient practical training, the accent being often placed on the military parade.

The line of reforms introduced after 1848 and especially after 1867 transformed the Habsburg army into a professional one, led from the centre. The First World War nevertheless revealed important problems remained unsolved within an army trained rather for maintaining the peace, than for carrying on a war. In chapter 11, the author analyses the role of the Habsburg officers in the war, suggesting some explanations for Austria-Hungary losing the war and for the Monarchy's dissolution. One of the Habsburg army's main problems was the insufficient number of officers and contingents in active service (Austria-Hungary had a military budget inferior to those of Germany or France). Other serious problems were the inadequate supplies of modern armament and the deficient practical instruction. In addition to these, the communication problems within the regiments and neglecting, for a long time, the ethnic particularities of its soldiers and officers by the army also caused serious difficulties. The war started bad for Austria-Hungary, which by the end of 1914 recorded heavy losses among the soldiers in active service, the rest of the war being mostly carried by troops of reservists. The military failures, the war's prolongation and the draining of resources led to an intensification of ethnic conflicts, which made themselves felt also in the army, by increasing the number of desertions. In spite of all this and beyond the confusion in the army's leadership, the author concludes that the vast majority of Habsburg officers have fulfilled their duties during the war.

The book's Epilogue follows the fate of the Habsburg ex-officers in the new national states which were founded on the ruins of the ex-Monarchy. The author emphasises the officers' ideological confusion, as both monarchists and republicans, both extremist nationalists and social-democrats found followers among the ex-officers, due to the fact that the Habsburg army had no unifying political ideology: the army had to be an apolitical and supranational organism loyal to the sovereign and meant to maintain the Monarchy's unity.

István Deák's book is a complex scientific work and represents an important contribution to the Habsburg Monarchy's military history, as it analyses the army's institution both from a historical-political perspective and a social and psychological one. Based on a rich documentation and on an overarching vision attained in the course of a prestigious career in research, this book contributes to deciphering the functioning mechanisms of the special political construction that was the Habsburgs' Monarchy.

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**The Uses of the Middle Ages in Modern European States:
History, Nationhood and the Search for Origins.**

By R. J. W. Evans and Guy P. Marchal (eds).
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

This volume appeared as an outcome of the conference entitled "The Role of Medievalism in the Writing of National Histories" held at Oxford University in 2006, although some of the contributions included here were subsequently added. Sixteen authors affiliated to various European Universities and to two national academies are responsible for providing the book's fourteen chapters and its conclusion. Two of these authors are also the volume's editors, their competency being ensured by the positions they presently hold: R. J. W. Evans is Regius Professor of History at the University of Oxford and Guy P. Marchal is Emeritus Professor of Medieval History at the University of Lucerne.

The studies are grouped, depending upon the country to which they refer, into four geographical sections, although the inclusion of Italy and Switzerland into Central Europe is controversial. The *Introduction* signed by Guy P. Marchal establishes the fact that not only powerful nations glorified their medieval past. On the contrary, young states (those founded in the 19th or 20th centuries), political formations which lacked independency for a period of time (states that existed for a time in the medieval period, but afterwards lost their autonomy for a number of decades or even centuries), states which survived from the medieval period, but suffered some constitutional changes during the nineteenth century (such as Switzerland and Austria), and states that constantly needed to respond to a comparison with their Antiquity (as was the case of Italy, for example) all needed to carefully choose their symbols and heroes when inventing their nations during the 19th century.

The first part of the book, *Celts and Scandinavia*, comprises four studies referring to Ireland, Norway, Finland and Iceland. Bernadette Cunningham discusses the "Transmission and Translation of Medieval Irish Sources in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" and arrives at the conclusions that in the case of Ireland, especially early medieval history gained importance in the country's national construction and that the language of the sources was one of the most important elements in recovering gone epochs. Moreover, the attempt to rediscover a shared medieval past at the turn of the 20th century managed to bring together researchers with different religious and political creeds.

The third chapter of the book concerns "The 'Decline of Norway': Grief and Fascination in Norwegian Historiography on the Middle Ages". Jan Eivind Myhre's study has an anecdote as a starting point: "the Norwegian historian Johan Schreiner (1903-67) once uttered the following significant statement to his students: 'The older I get, the less I think about women and the more I think about the decline of Norway (*Norges nedgang*)'" (quotation taken from page 18). This amusing assertion proves the importance that the medieval past can have for contemporary researchers, especially when its relation to national consciousness is powerful. The study shows how in the 19th century 'the 400-

year-long night' of Norway's history (from 1319 or 1380 to 1814) was almost completely omitted in order to link the glorious pre-fourteenth century medieval past of the country to a national future which was hoped to be at least as bright and happy. As Derek Fewster demonstrates in his study, "'Braves Step out of the Night of the Barrows': Regenerating the Heritage of Early Medieval Finland", Finland was confronted with a set of similar problems. It too had to rediscover the essence of Finnishness, in spite of the fact that the country was subjected to foreign domination for a number of centuries. In order to achieve this, 19th-century historians utilised arguments and theoretical constructions which can be subsumed to the components of the general myth of descent identified by Anthony Smith.

Icelanders, on the other hand, did not need to (re)construct their own past in order to set the grounds for a bright future, as they had (or at least they claimed to have) proofs of their magnificent Middle Ages. As a consequence, the 19th and 20th centuries became witnesses to the battle between Denmark and Iceland for the assumed paternity and especially for the possession of the ancient manuscripts that are included in the general category of sagas. As Guðmundur Hálfánarson proves in the chapter entitled "Interpreting the Nordic Past: Icelandic Medieval Manuscripts and the Construction of a Modern Nation", this dispute was so fierce because it concerned aspects that were critical to Iceland's perception of its past (and present) and to (what were seen as) its national characteristics.

The second part of the book includes a study for each of the three countries comprising *Benelux*. Peter Raedts documents "A Serious Case of Amnesia: the Dutch and their Middle Ages" and shows that the Netherlands did not use the medieval period, but the 17th century as a basis for its national construction. This preference was easily motivated: this was the era when the Dutch reached greatness and, moreover, no territorial precursor of a Dutch state could be identified during the Middle Ages. In the study "Medieval Myths and the Building of National Identity: the Example of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg", Michel Margue and Pit Péporté document another attitude towards the more distant past. The historians who contributed to the invention of a national state during the 19th century developed the "idea of a *grand* medieval past of the *small* country in great detail" (page 93, original emphasis). In fact, these authors' ideas are better expressed in a more extensive work regarding this subject: Pit Péporté, Sonja Kmec, Benoît Majerus and Michel Margue, *Inventing Luxembourg: Representations of the Past, Space and Language from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, Leiden, Brill, 2010. Moreover, Pit Péporté has also written another book with a similar content: *Constructing the Middle Ages: Historiography, Collective Memory and Nation-Building in Luxembourg*, Leiden, Brill, 2011.

A series of myths were also employed in Belgium in order to prove the existence of "An Era of *Grandeur*. The Middle Ages in Belgian National Historiography, 1830-1914". As Jo Tollebeek shows, this expression of the 19th century Romanticist movement aimed at building a Belgian nation that would

suit the new territorial statute that the country obtained after 1830. Catholics and liberals initially joined forces in the name of national unity, but, after 1850, ideological conflict prevailed.

A number of interesting uses given to historical events could have been described in the third part of the book, concerning the *Balkans*, but, unfortunately, the authors only discuss in detail the cases of Greeks (in a wider context) and of Serbians. Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotidis asks "To Whom Does Byzantium Belong? Greeks, Turks and the Present of the Medieval Balkans" and concludes that "the true heir of the Byzantine Empire" (page 145) was the Orthodox Church, which also represents the "common denominator" of the peoples inhabiting the Balkan Peninsula. He also demonstrates how, because of its Ottoman past, Greece placed a strong emphasis on its Ancient times while carefully circumventing the Middle Ages and practising what could be called overt "anti-medievalism". According to the author, this path was also followed by Romania in its national construction. Serbians, on the other hand, chose to mould their medieval past in a manner that fitted the present and the chapter written by Marko Šuica, "The Image of the Battle of Kosovo (1389) Today: a Historic Event, a Moral Pattern, or the Tool of Political Manipulation", reveals some of the strategies employed by the state when instrumentalizing historical events.

The first study of the fourth part of the book, *Central Europe*, presents "Italy's Various Middle Ages". Mauro Moretti and Ilaria Porciani go beyond historiographic sources and discuss the characteristic features of employing other means (such as literature, visual arts, music, etc.) while constructing or inventing a nation. The same process becomes even more evident after Guy P. Marchal commences his study on "Medievalism, the Politics of Memory and Swiss National Identity" by noting the fact that Switzerland in its current form exists only since 1848. Nevertheless, in the second part of the 19th century, a "scientific myth" (the author uses this phrase at page 204) linked the modern Swiss Confederation with its corresponding medieval political entity. But, as Herwig Wolfram demonstrates, such nation building processes have also taken place in the 20th century. "The Public Instrumentalization of the Middle Ages in Austria since 1945" was considered a necessity in light of the country's post-war political condition. In a similar manner, the Czechs also "longed for a famous past; and since one was not available they had to create it" (quotation taken from page 245). In this final chapter of the book, "'Old Czechs Were Hefty Heroes': the Construction and Reconstruction of Czech National History in its Relationship to the 'Great' Medieval Past", František Šmahel enumerates the characteristics that 19th-century historians attributed to their forefathers. Apparently, even crass forgery of medieval documents was seen as a usable tool in the attempt to demonstrate the legitimacy of an independent future. Unfortunately, although medievalists proved the deceitful origin of the manuscripts as early as the last decades of the 19th century, the characters and the events praised by the false heroic songs had already penetrated the national conscience of the ordinary Czechs.

After reaching the final pages of the volume, R. J. W. Evans notes in the *Conclusion* that “medievalism yielded a vital set of themes for the national historiographies which came into vogue from the earlier nineteenth century onwards” (page 259). In addition to this sound statement, I can also add the fact that all the major viewpoints on nationalism (I am referring to the theories elaborated by Anthony D. Smith, Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm) are well represented in this volume. Moreover, the manners of instrumentalizing the past and the types of myths on which nations were built in the 19th century are also constructively emphasised by the book’s chapters. Partly, this is due to the fact that this volume is much more thematically homogenous than other such collections of studies and this helps the reader absorb more of the information provided.

A deficiency inherent to any book which gathers contributions from different researchers is the inappropriate coverage granted to some areas or topics in comparison to others. Actually, this lack is even acknowledged by the editors who mention that the national edifices of Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Wales, Scotland, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Croatia and Slovakia would have deserved more attention. For the readers interested in such topics, it might be helpful to note that a brief consideration of the cultural means used by the intellectuals in the Banat area in order to define their national identity is available in Alex Drace-Francis, “Cultural Currents and Political Choices: Romanian Intellectuals in the Banat to 1848”, in *Austrian History Yearbook*, 2005, Vol. 36, p. 65-93. Moreover, details about the nationalist movements of the peoples encompassed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire can be found in Gary B. Cohen, “Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914”, in *Central European History*, 2007, Vol. 40, p. 241-278.

The fact that both medievalists and modernists contributed to this volume ensures a proper, multifaceted image of the ways in which the 19th century used the medieval epoch in building nationalities. Moreover, the volume *The Uses of the Middle Ages in Modern European States: History, Nationhood and the Search for Origins* distinguishes itself by the large number of countries taken into consideration, by the complexity of the aspects treated when dealing with the construction of nations, by the fact that some of the chapters even consider the contemporary perspective on national issues and, last but not least, by the scientific quality of the studies.

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**Medicine Within and Between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires.
18th – 19th Centuries.**

By Teodora Daniela Sechel (ed.).
Bochum: Winkler Verlag, 2011.

This second volume of the International Series *The Eighteenth Century and the Habsburg Monarchy* gathers twelve contributions from thirteen researchers who hold positions at various prestigious European universities, such as University of Vienna, Oxford Brookes University, University of Graz or University of Warsaw. The volume's editor, Teodora Daniela Sechel, received her PhD title in 2008 at Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She also attended a postdoctoral programme at the University of Vienna and currently she is affiliated to Central European University, Budapest.

The studies included in this volume are uniformly distributed throughout the four sections of the book, being placed between an introduction and a concluding chapter. The *Introduction* signed by Karl Vocelka delimits chronologically and spatially the topics pertaining to the history of medicine which are detailed in this volume. After offering an overall image on the important progresses that took place in the 18th century, the chapter provides the reader with valuable information regarding the state of the fields of medicine and hygiene in the Austrian and Ottoman Empires until the First World War. The author also draws attention to the fact that this book achieves an extremely desirable outcome: shifting the researchers' interest from the scientific discourse of the centres to that of the peripheries.

The book's first section, *Intersecting Empires: Transferring Knowledge*, includes two studies that tackle one aspect of the relationship between centre and periphery, namely the different manners of appropriating the information emanating from the more advanced medical institutions. "Mr. Killingan's Empire: A Medical Man in Habsburg Lands", the study written by Steven A. King, documents the considerable amounts of time and money that were sometimes spent in order to acquire medical information and supplies from the regions perceived as more developed, thus offering an example of "medical tourism/interchange of medical personnel" in the 19th century (quotation taken from page 21). In the second chapter, entitled "The Vienna School of Medicine and Bulgarian Medicine and Health Care (the 1840s-1910s): Transfer of Knowledge", Georgeta Nazarska convincingly states that the modern Bulgarian health system owes much to the medical students who graduated in the capital of the Habsburgs' Empire. Therefore, the obvious conclusion of this section of the book is that in the 18th-19th centuries Viennese medicine was emulated both in the Northern parts of the continent and in the Southern ones.

It is not surprising then that the theories elaborated in Vienna had such a major impact on the health practices which were applied throughout Europe. As Daniela Sechel demonstrates in her study, "Contagion Theories in the Habsburg Empire (1770-1830)", one can count fervent supporters of both miasmatic and contagionist theories regarding the transmission of plague among the Viennese

doctors. Although usually not immune to political influences, these medical opinions shaped the decisions taken in the Austrian capital in a number of matters concerning the establishment and functioning of quarantine stations, foreign trade or even the movement of certain segments of the population. The influence quarantines had on commerce is treated in detail as “the goal of the provincial physicians was to protect both individual’s health and the liberty of commerce while introducing sufficient government regulations to prevent the spread of plague and to supervise the movement of population between Habsburgs’ provinces (Transylvania, Banat and Maramureş) and the Ottoman Empire” (page 58).

The other two studies of this second section entitled *Epidemics and Preventive Measures* also discuss the effects of the plague epidemics which swept over South-Eastern Europe in the 18th-19th centuries. Christian Promitzer offers further proof of the special relation which existed between politics and the measures taken when faced with plague. In his study, “Stimulating the Hidden Dispositions of South-Eastern Europe – The Plague in the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29 and the Introduction of Quarantine on the Lower Danube”, he demonstrates that, at least in the case of the Russian Empire, military needs sometimes decided if quarantine recommendations were respected or not. Nevertheless, some sanitary measures were applied as a precaution and, by the Adrianople Treaty of 1829, the Romanian Principalities were allowed to establish a line of quarantines on the Danube which had as an effect the disappearance of the plague in this region. But this progress did not come without a price. In the chapter “Black Death at the Outskirts of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires: The Epidemics in the Phanariot Bucharest (1711-1821)” Octavian Buda summarises the effects of some of the most deadly plagues which affected the Wallachian capital in the course of over a century. If one can name some positive results of such calamities, those would be related to the measures taken by some of Wallachia’s Phanariot rulers in the medical and sanitary fields, in spite of a number of obstacles related to the province’s subordination to the Ottomans.

The following section of the volume, *Interpreting Medicine: Practicing Health*, is composed of two studies which deal with another aspect of medical care, namely concern towards the welfare of pregnant women and their unborn children. Though treating two different countries, i.e. Poland and Turkey, the studies included in this section draw similar conclusions: at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, the relation between pregnant women and their doctors was a paternalistic one and, moreover, the female body was regarded as an instrument belonging to the state, in the latter’s attempt to increase its population. Still, there are some differences between the two studies. The chapter “From ‘Drop of Milk’ to Schools for Mothers – Infant Care and Visions of Medical Motherhood in the Early Twentieth Century Polish Part of the Habsburg Empire”, written by Sylwia Kuźma-Markowska, tackles the relation between breastfeeding conceptions and the period’s eugenic theories. In this context, doctors gradually imposed their influence on childrearing practices, especially in what concerned giving birth and nurturing the child, as they

considered that mothers needed to be educated and controlled in order to provide future healthy and capable members of the Polish nation. As Gülhan Balsoy shows in the study “Admonitions to Pregnant Women: Advice Books for Expectant Mothers and the Medicalization of Pregnancy in Late Nineteenth Century Ottoman Society”, similar aims were also followed by the Turkish doctors, although in a different manner: here, the accent was placed on educating future mothers through advice books which usually combined scientific arguments with religious and humanitarian information.

The last section of the book explores the connections between *Medicine and War*. The first of the three studies included in this chapter, authored by Silviu Hariton, concerns “Military Medicine and Conscription in Romania, 1860s-1900s” and points out the fact that in this period the army functioned as a civilizing institution. Using a number of sources (statistics, medical articles and textbooks, sanitary reports, etc.), the author is able to document the process of modernisation in the case of military medicine from the 18th century to the First World War. As in the case of the two previous chapters, the influence of the epoch’s theories is easily felt in the ways in which the doctors interpreted the realities with which they were confronted. For instance, the apparent drop in height from one generation to the next that was recorded as a result of the measurements required by the conscription of a large part of the male population were seen as a sign of the “degeneration of the race”, following the French medical conceptions of the period. Trachoma, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases, in addition to (what the doctors saw as) the nation’s excessive militarisation were also linked to this idea of degeneration.

But as Brigitte Fuchs’ study proves, the above-mentioned diseases were not the only ones that posed major problems to the army doctors at the beginning of the 20th century. Discussing the “Austro-Hungarian Public Health Policies in Occupied Serbia and Montenegro 1915-1918”, the author notes that the main diseases related to the war in this period were cholera, typhoid fever and malaria. Especially typhus proved to be extremely lethal to the Serbians and the measures taken by the Austro-Hungarian authorities did not compensate for the fact that the epidemic was actually spread by their own occupying forces. The following chapter, authored by Tamara Scheer and entitled “The Organisation of the ‘Health Front’: Austro-Hungarian Occupation Regimes in the Balkans (1915-1918)”, further enhances our knowledge on the subject, especially as it offers a different perspective than the previous study. If Brigitte Fuchs presented the effects of the typhus epidemic as a Serbian tragedy for which one could blame the Austro-Hungarians, Tamara Scheer focuses mainly on the cooperation between the Austro-Hungarian and Serbian doctors and nurses and on the sanitary progresses recorded by the Serbian sanitary system as a result of the Austro-Hungarian occupation.

The concluding chapter, “Journeying Across Empires: An Agenda for Future Research in Central and Southeastern European History of Medicine”, signed by Marius Turda and Steven A. King, emphasises the fact that the present volume utilises previously unknown archival data, thus offering a counter perspective to

former works of Western researchers. Moreover, a number of other sources contribute to a meaningful understanding of various aspects of medicine in the 18th-19th centuries, especially with regard to the transfer of medical knowledge between different areas, the evolution of epidemiological theories, the influence of military aims over medicine and of state ideology over demographic policies.

As the overview provided above has shown, the book edited by Teodora Daniela Sechel covers the entire area situated at the outskirts of three major empires of the modern period: the Austrian (and later Austro-Hungarian) one, the Russian one and the Ottoman one. In this context, the area inhabited by Romanians stands out as a space where the three empires met and influenced each other in what concerns medico-sanitary aspects. Unfortunately, from my point of view, the Russian contribution is not sufficiently emphasised, although every now and then the authors mention some Russian doctors and their opinions and writings or the Russian political scopes which motivated some of the sanitary measures later applied in the area. On the other hand, this minor shortcoming of the volume is compensated by the fact that the present collection of studies shows the manner in which doctors functioned as “messengers” between different cultural and civilizational areas, conveying medical knowledge and progress. In fact, the volume provides a series of “snapshots” of the modernising process which took place in medicine in the 18th and 19th centuries, including the rather long coexistence of empirical and scientific cures and the profound influence of the political decisions and aims on the manner in which doctors conceived and conducted their work.

The fact that the authors usually discuss the methodology they used and approach the topics in a manner which allows for a worthwhile reading even for a person who is not necessarily interested by the medical developments in Central and South-Eastern Europe in the 18th-19th centuries further enhances the book's value. In conclusion, *Medicine Within and Between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. 18th - 19th Centuries* represents a multifaceted analysis of the history of medicine carried out from the point of view of the periphery. Moreover, due to the quality of the information provided by the studies it gathers, the volume edited by Teodora Daniela Sechel recommends itself as an essential part of the documentation of any researcher interested in topics related to European medicine in the modern epoch.

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