

# STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEȘ-BOLYAI

## Historia

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Volume 57, Number 2, December 2012

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Semestrial Review edited by  
The "Babeș-Bolyai" University  
Cluj-Napoca, România

# Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Historia

Volume 57, Number 2, December 2012

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# Professing Domestic Orientalism. Representing the Gypsy as *Musikant* in the Transylvanian Saxons' Writings of the Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century

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**Abstract:** *Professing Domestic Orientalism. Representing the Gypsy as Musikant in the Transylvanian Saxons' writings of the long 19<sup>th</sup> century.* Although it may appear as a forced import, researching Gypsies in the paradigm of Orientalism is motivated in a twofold manner. Firstly, such an approach is legitimised by the Gypsies' Indian origin that was enounced at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and amply discussed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the German area. Secondly, the Occidentals' view which places the epicentre of the European Gypsy communities in the Transylvanian area also validates such an approach. Combined, these two elements are the main pillars of the Saxons' contribution to Orientalism, a contribution that had a typical expression because it was determined by the lack of a colonial empire and by an east-European focus of research. The statements describing the Gypsies as exponents of primitivism often mentioned their involvement in niche activities such as musical performer. This discussion is not at all irrelevant because it is related to certain internal hierarchies that existed within the structures of European art, which found itself in a transformation process with effects beyond its specific purely aesthetic or technical boundaries. The results of these mutations can be discovered in the sphere of the European and Transylvanian Saxon cultural discourse alike. This discourse was infused with Herder's ideas and *domestic orientalism*, as typified by the Gypsy musicians, demonstrates the Saxons' receptivity towards a viewpoint specific to the German-speaking central-European area. And within this musical cultural perimeter, apparently predisposed to universalist-egalitarian judgements, the stakes were not other than separating their own culture, as consumers of certain performances, from the one of the performers.

**Keywords:** domestic Orientalism, Gypsies, Transylvanian Saxons, music, stereotypes

**Rezumat:** *Orientalismul de acasă și reprezentarea țiganului Musikant în scrierile sașilor transilvăneni în lungul secol al XIX-lea.* Deși poate părea un import forțat, cercetarea țiganilor în paradigma orientalismului este dublu fondată. O dată, e legitimă datorită originilor indiene ale țiganilor enunțate exact la finele veacului XVIII și amply dezbătute pe parcursul secolului XIX în spațiul german, apoi, datorită opticii occidentalilor de a privi zona transilvăneană ca un epicentru al țigănimii europene. Acestea două subsumate se regăsesc ca piloni relevanți pentru contribuția particulară a germanilor la orientalism, ce a căpătat o expresie

particulară fiindcă a fost determinată de lipsa imperiului colonial și orientarea cercetării spre spațiul est-european. În afirmațiile legate de poziționarea țiganilor ca exponenți ai primitivismului s-a făcut adesea pomenire despre implicarea lor în activitățile de nișă printre care și cea de performer muzical. Discuția nu e deloc irelevantă, ea fiind legată de ierarhii interne survenite în chiar structurile artei europene, ea însăși în proces de transformare și cu efect dincolo de granițele pur estetice sau tehnice specifice. Efectele acestor mutații pot fi depistate în sfera discursului cultural european și al sașilor deopotrivă. Acesta a fost infuzat de ideile herderiene, iar *orientalismul de acasă*, profesat față de muzicanții țigani, trădează acomodarea sașilor la un discurs frecventat în spațiul central european germanofon. Și în acest perimetru cultural – al muzicii –, aparent predispus la judecăți universalist-egalitariste, mizele nu erau altele decât departajarea propriei culturi față de cea prestatoare.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** orientalismul de acasă, țigani, sași, muzică, stereotipii

### **A paradigm's reception and its resources in the study of musical cultures**

In order to maintain any social relevance, after the ascent and the internal innovation within the field of social sciences and other humanities, historical writing had/has to show any kind of response to the paradigm changes underwent within these disciplines. Instead refusing to acknowledge contributions originating in these scientific fields, mostly of cognitive relevance, historians had/have to outline these paradigms' strong, as well as, weak points, thus, embarking the trail of criticism as active thinkers around the subject, not simply as passive spectators. The postcolonial studies are a relevant subject matter which cannot leave the historians untouched or, even worse, indifferent. Given the diachronic involvements of such a paradigm, one would expect that it had been immediately met with enthusiasm by everyone. Undeniably, the responsiveness depends on the cultural traditions within historical writing as well as on the contemporary political environment and their impact within different national historiographies.

Although this paradigm was first enounced in a volume published by Edward Said in 1978<sup>1</sup>, and historians "serving" within

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\* This paper was supported by the National Research Council - CNCS, Project PN-II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0841, Contract Nr. 220/31.10.2011, title Crossing Borders: Insights into the Cultural and Intellectual History of Transylvania (1848-1948)/Dincolo de frontiere: aspecte ale istoriei culturale și intelectuale a Transilvaniei (1848-1948).

<sup>1</sup> First published in 1978, the book was last reedited with a new preface in 2003. See: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin Books, 2003.

various European national cultures may have come across it, not rarely, one may notice the manifestation of passive resistance, if not, reticence to such an approach within their own historical reconstitutions. A kind of timidity may be motivated by the personal limits in abstracting the results of Said's path-breaking enterprise. No less convincing may have been the lack of courage to embrace an interdisciplinary reading of domestic nationalized history.

For the Eastern European national historiographies it might have seem appealing to seriously consider such a paradigm, particularly, as it provided the historians with a helpful tool to criticize the imperialism of the previous or contemporary empires. Instead of exploiting/denouncing the mutilating effect of the colonialist representations, historians remained though shy in approaching their (father)land history from such a perspective. Luckily, things have recently changed. The book was translated in different languages and was pinned in the university curricula, both facts that demonstrate the open mindedness of a category of young historians who understood the "resources" of such an inquiry. Moreover, the dictate of the compulsory and fertile practice of interdisciplinarity, obligatory determined historians pay more attention to Said's work.

Surprisingly, this diffident destiny of a book's reception is not to be identified within the Eastern European historiographies only. Except a volume dealing with the recent theoretical debates by Jürgen Osterhammel<sup>2</sup>, until recently, German historiography - significantly better connected to other Western cultures-, seems very much timid in considering and applying these ideas to their research topics. This is indeed paradoxical if one considers the fact that Germany's recent past registers the unmediated/concrete experience of imperialism and overseas colonies. Not to say that, with all this late coming among the major European colonizing powers, Germans showed an early appetite for the orientalist paradigm practiced as an allegedly scientific but actually an highly ideologized discourse. Making a distinct contribution to this debate was considered important for the Germans' intellectual elite in their patriotic attempt to search for an auspicious position within the gallery of respectable European nations. Therefore, the visit of this paradigm was not a simple intellectual exercise restricted to the self-pleasing and/or narcissistic impulses of some individuals, but bore a

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<sup>2</sup> Jürgen Osterhammel, *Geschichtswissenschaft jenseits des Nationalstaats. Studien zu Beziehungsgeschichte und Zivilisationsvergleich*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001.

collective identity agenda in mind. In the context of political fragmentation it did play a compensatory role of macro-social influence. In certain ways, the cultivation of this academic interest may be located within the preoccupation with the Germans' self-definition as a nation. Generally, these accents seem poignant in the discourses regarding the pan-national movements that often acted by challenging one another, and could be regarded as a reaction to imperialism and, why not, in specific cases, a diffuse impetus to it. The vicinity with the Eastern Europe along with the more or less old waves of immigration of the Germans to these lands must be also considered in their readiness to develop and practice an orientalist discourse.

However, in absence of some consistent contributions to validate or insist on the limits of this paradigm accommodated to the German cultural and historical *Sonderweg*, one can notice that the gap came to be filled by people active in the *Auslandgermanistik*. Unsurprisingly, thanks to a plethora of studies inspired by Said's much debated approach, most of the contributions originate in the English speaking world<sup>3</sup>.

Slowly, with all the resistance to trendy paradigms and topics, German scholars have accommodated their researches to this paradigm considering it in different chapters of different areas of study that can come under the umbrella of cultural history. As their Orientalism was chiefly exercised in relation to the Eastern Europe, it is not surprising to see that the paradigm found appeal to the initiators of a professional site such as "Kakanien", self - entitled "a platform for interdisciplinary research and networking". Its declared mission is to provide open access to contributions dedicated to the east-central European cultures in relation to the former ruling empires that dominated the area<sup>4</sup>. Therefore the initiators do encourage the postcolonial critic.

Although having been a subject of strong relevance, in the context in which the songs did received "a central position in the writings offering generalized theories of the origins of language and society" , moreover, "acting as a nexus of the emergent disciplines of

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<sup>3</sup> To name but a few, see: Todd Curtis Kontje, *German orientalism*, Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 2004; Susanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire, Religion, Race and Scholarship*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009; Robert Cowan, *The Indo-German Identification. Reconciling South Asian Origins and European Destinies, 1765-1885*, Rochester, New York, Camden House, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.kakanien.ac.at/>.

ethnography and historiography"<sup>5</sup>, only recently, music histories and musicologist in general did show major interest to understand the relation between Orientalism and the construction of Otherness in the musical works and other socio-cultural contexts. However, orientalist and exotic tropes are constitutive to the postcolonial analysis being productive<sup>6</sup> in understanding the manipulated representation of the Orient, be it more or less spatially or temporarily remote. It was not only the past Easterners that were indicated as the primitives *par excellence*, but also, the contemporary descendants of the classical ancient cultures<sup>7</sup>. German intellectuals together with the musical critics and historians saw themselves charmed by the music as the most transcendental art they cultivated, allegedly at the higher level<sup>8</sup>, and therefore, joined the derogatory orientalist discourse with nonchalance, even when they had to review works that, basically, intended to emancipate the Oriental subject from the often biased "orientalist gaze"<sup>9</sup>.

Generally speaking, orientalism overbid the conviction in the cultural stagnation if not regress of the Orient<sup>10</sup> versus the European progressive path. This allowed the Germans to imagine themselves as the supreme *Musiker* and claim the prestige this collocation might bring to them<sup>11</sup>. This view confirms what Marcello Sorce Keller said in a recent book. According to him, "«the Euro-Western tradition» in music and

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<sup>5</sup> Gary Tomlinson, "Musicology, Anthropology, History", in Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, Richard Middleton (eds.), *Cultural Study of Music. A critical introduction*, New York and London, Routledge, 2003, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, "On Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music. Postcolonial Analysis and Music Studies", in Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (eds.), *Western Music and Its Others Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2000, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> David Gramit, *Cultivating Music. The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2002, p. 57.

<sup>8</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth - Century Music*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1989, p. 31, 237; Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 3; Marcello Sorce Keller, *What Makes Music European, Looking beyond Sound*, Lanham, Toronto, Plymouth, UK, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2012, p. 115; Antje Pieper, *Music and the Making of Middle-Class Culture. A Comparative History of Nineteenth Century Leipzig and Birmingham*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 40, 61, 75; James Garratt, *Music, Culture and Social Reform in the Age of Wagner*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 27, 52.

<sup>9</sup> Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, p. 29.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 59.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 32.



musicking derived from the Romantic thoughts and ideals that met a Hegelian vision of history which held that, wherever else in the world musical instruments or ideas - even sounds and repertoires - may have originated, their trajectory inevitably led them to Europe. Music was thus fully formed along the line of march from East to West, from the Orient to the Occident<sup>12</sup> reaching in the West its full aesthetic accomplishment. The intellectualist bourgeois exclusivism behind this conceptualization operated discriminatory, being unable to admit that each individual can be multi-musical<sup>13</sup>. For the sake of the strength of their ideological construct bourgeoisie culture operated within a pattern built on the binary elements serious / popular music, high/low brow musical performances, etc.<sup>14</sup>.

The new aesthetic steadily shared by the bourgeoisie classes following more or less closely the directives of the musicological critics<sup>15</sup> was meant to ascertain the "European uniqueness in the world history"<sup>16</sup>. By establishing a relation between nature and music they operated in orientalist fashion, compiling the musical materials of other cultures so that they would confirm an sense of Otherness. Furthermore, unable to absorb the folkloric elements of their own culture in this allegedly superior European notational system, they treat it as a primitive form, from which, selectively, composers could eventually extract inspiration<sup>17</sup>. Centers, namely the literate European nations, undeniably, the founders of the professional musical institutions as we know them<sup>18</sup> were imagined in antithesis with the preliterate peoples who relayed on oral tradition with no highly professionalized "art musician" (*Tonkünstler*)<sup>19</sup>. Notably, at semantic level some important differentiations were introduced. For example, *Tonkunst* was used in Germany in opposition with the term *Musik* in order to state the

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<sup>12</sup> Philip V. Bohlman and Martin Stokes, "Series Editors' Foreword", in Sorce Keller, *op. cit.*, pp. vii-viii.

<sup>13</sup> Sorce Keller, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>14</sup> Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 36, 312, 315; Sorce Keller, *op. cit.*, p. 89, 98, 192, 253, 254; Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 81.

<sup>15</sup> William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class. The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna between 1830 and 1848*, Ashgate, Second Edition, 2004, p. 2; Pieper, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>16</sup> Tomlinson, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music" Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 124.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 226.

<sup>19</sup> Born and Hesmondhalgh, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

difference and the superiority of the “classical music”<sup>20</sup>. Consequently, even the peasants’ traditions from Europe came to be exoticized and, therefore, samples taken from their folkloric “natural” pool of sound could constitute primary substance to be introduced in the works of art that would satisfy the bourgeois tastes<sup>21</sup>. The “orientalism at home”, or what I chose to call “domestic orientalism”<sup>22</sup> put the Easterner in the circumstance of preserver of antique times and practices<sup>23</sup> and this association of the peasantry culture to the natural primitive world would encourage the elaboration of an intellectual discourses that, in orientalist fashion, recreates a world highly fetishized and exoticized<sup>24</sup>. In other words, the major wickedness of the Orientalism is that beyond a “genuine desire to understand a foreign culture, it appears to conclude that the result is effectively to control and maintain a sense of difference and political imbalance”<sup>25</sup> reached by referring to a geopolitical reality of the contemporaries which entirely manipulates the aesthetic, sociological, historical, philological representations<sup>26</sup>. Henceforth, it is reasonable to say that the “orientalist gaze” was an 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries’ cultural discourse that was primarily meant to bring confirmation to the stereotypes and prejudices previously shared towards the social and ethnic aliens, non-Westerners, non-bourgeois cultures<sup>27</sup>.

The introduction of the exotics and the peripheral Others into the musical landscape of the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries was not entirely subordinated to a unique drive to dominate the Otherness of the Easterners but had also been assigned with some different roles and attributes in the composers’ audience culture<sup>28</sup>. One can reckon an array of operatic works that were thought to illustrate the Exotics. Still, there was not at

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<sup>20</sup> Sorce Keller, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>21</sup> Benjamin Curtis, *Music Makes The Nation. Nationalist Composers and Nation Building in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Amherst, New York, Cambria Press, 2008, p. 34; Vanessa Agnew, *Enlightenment Orpheus. The Power of Music in Other Worlds*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 32.

<sup>22</sup> Gabriel Piterberg, “Domestic Orientalism: The Representation of 'Oriental' Jews in Zionist/Israeli Historiography”, in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Nov., 1996), pp. 125-145.

<sup>23</sup> Gelbart, *op.cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 114.

<sup>25</sup> “Orientalism”, in Jonathan Harris, *Art History: The Key Concepts*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p. 95.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 95.

<sup>27</sup> Bennett Zon, *Representing Non-Western Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Rochester, University of Rochester Press, p. 4; Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

<sup>28</sup> “Race” in Harris, *op.cit.*, p. 97.

all a unique stance and aim in which this taste for exoticism manifested. As Philip Bohlman demonstrated, in certain cultural and imperial contexts, exotic presence could play different roles. Their presence was meant to keep up with the tradition of a multicultural empire. As a result, Orientalism was manifest in Central - Eastern Europe as a concession the Viennese center had to make to the cultures originating in the peripheries of the empire. Operettas, for instance, nostalgically allowed in figures representing the Others associated with Eastern Europe, among them, the Gypsies being a vivid presence<sup>29</sup>.

As Franz Liszt's monograph dedicated to the music of the Gypsies in Hungary proves, despite professing a rhetoric betraying an un-dissimulated racialized and essentialist tone, the purpose of the author - whose celebrity at the time, certainly, gained some readership to his book -, was not at all to subordinate the Gypsies' performances to the European "classical" music (*Tonkunst*) or to put it in a developmental historical pathway<sup>30</sup>. On the contrary, their stereotypically attributed primitiveness was relatively positively validated as it was regarded by Liszt as an additional resource to achieve access to the ancestral roots of the Gypsies. The Gypsies' essentialized musical expression, idealistically imagined as "genuine", had to be scientifically accounted for by comparative methods. *"As useless as it may seem, the conjunctures that tell about the state of music in the very remote lands from which the Rommy came from and the immemorial times when they used to sing it in their homes, so it was tried to irresistibly show that their music is to be considered as the highest form, the ideal of all music reported by the travellers about the oriental Arabian or Indian music. To our knowledge, the similarities and the affinities were not yet scientifically studied, the principles, the endings, origins, modulations, meters and rhythms of the music of the Gypsies and that from Hindustan, in what they might reside, so as it had been done with the language"*<sup>31</sup>. Comparative studies in the philological domain that located the Indo-Arians at the origins of German culture are also encouraged in the field of musicology, thus, suggesting that despite sharing wide spread racial stereotypes, Liszt kept being a stubborn remonstrant to the one-sided "Orientalist gaze" that downgraded non-Western, non-literate music

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<sup>29</sup> Philip V. Bohlman, *Focus: Music, Nationalism, and the Making of the New Europe*, Second Edition, London and New York, Routledge, 2011, p. 146.

<sup>30</sup> Nicholas Saul, *Gypsies and Orientalism in German Literature and Anthropology of the Long Nineteenth Century*, Oxford, Legenda, 2007, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> Franz Liszt, *Zigeuner und ihre Musik in Ungarn*, Deutsch bearbeitet Peter Cornelius, Pesth Verlag von Gustav Heckast, 1861, p. 195.

making just because it simply did not fit comfortably to the progressive vision of the Western “classicism” in music.

Without venturing too deep into the topic, particularly because comparative remarks would occur explicitly further on, for the moment, I have only intended to outline the way discourses about music and Orientalism intermingled in the long 19<sup>th</sup> century. The outstanding cultural historian Peter Burke also insisted in a recent book on the relevance of Orientalism in analyzing the representation of music and of its practitioners in the past as well as in the present<sup>32</sup>. Hopefully, this summary visitation of the topic will not only introduce the reader with the key issues of a field only recently seriously dealt with in the Western historiography and the cultural studies, but, will, definitely, represent a guide for my empirical demonstration.

### **The Transylvanian Saxon culture and the social and ethnic markers in building the *Musikant Gypsy***

The American ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman recently suggested that “Transylvania symbolized the East [...]. It was also the land of the exotic and the uncivilized «Other» a place of orientalist fantasy [...] Transylvania was the land where peoples from many nations converged, mixing languages, cultures, religions, and music, and turning borders inside out”<sup>33</sup>. This Western discourse had also been appropriated by the Transylvanian Saxons. Indeed, they perpetuated it in writings which beyond their domestic agenda were often destined to familiarize the Western readers with this border province and its specific issues. The Transylvanian Saxon elites imagined themselves as the missionary of the Western values in the Eastern European area and, therefore, they found the orientalist discourse very appealing. Consequently, it became recurrent in their writings. This tendency was even more prevailing as, very soon, it came to be understood as a symbolic compensation for the lost privileges of the *estate natio* and could be useful to the attempt to build the Transylvanian Saxons’ identity around the project of *ethnic* and *cultural nation*. To put it straight, Saxons’ Orientalism was, like in the Germans’ case, subordinated to the national project. Life in the vicinity of the Hungarians, Romanians and other ethnic groups, themselves obsessed with their national agenda, encouraged the Transylvanian Saxons to assume an outstanding superior position legitimized by specific terms of reference such as: a

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<sup>32</sup> Peter Burke, *What is cultural history*, Oxford, Polity Press, 2006, p. 47.

<sup>33</sup> Bohlman, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

past Western descent and correspondingly on its historicized allocated attributes. Any contention that might efficiently keep the Others at bay and perpetuate a hegemonic discourse was considered as a useful discursive tool. As for the Gypsies, an ethnic group perpetually marginalized and voiceless both from the perspective of their historical state or from the point of view of an essentialized disinterest for self-affirmation around a unitary national project, things had been significantly easier to deal with.

Irrespective of the ethnic descent chosen by the Saxon authors, Gypsies' origins were primarily and perpetually oriental. Nonetheless, with the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Indian origins - resulting from the comparative philological studies - came to be largely acknowledged. The direct source of inspiration which prepared the receptivity to a new scientifically demonstrated paradigm resided exactly in the German cultural milieu, habitually frequented by the Saxons elite members for their university studies. It is also well known that from social point of view, the Gypsies occupied an inferior register of occupations in both Eastern and Western Europe. They also provided for the entire normative communities where and when niches had been left at hand by the dominant estates. Among various activities often disparaged because of their symbolic "uncleanness"<sup>34</sup>, the practice of music for the sake of entertainment had been often mentioned<sup>35</sup>. Therefore, music as played by the Gypsies and consumed by the normative ethnic communities in Transylvania had been a niche activity, a backup at which Gypsies resorted to, as was identified as an alternative sources for their survival. With all these, there is not surprising to see some of the Gypsies becoming reputed and even be in craze during certain periods of time. It may be very well right to say that "of countless Romani musicians very few were composers"<sup>36</sup>, or even go into denial stating that the "Romani

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<sup>34</sup> See: Anton Blok, *Honour and Violence*, Oxford and Cambridge, Polity Press, 2001, passim.

<sup>35</sup> Donald Kenrick, *Historical Dictionary of the Gypsies (Romanies)*, Second Edition, The Scarecrow Press, Inc. Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Plymouth, UK, 2007, pp. xxxviii, 159, 173, 186. The entry dedicated to the music states: "There is probably no such thing as Gypsy music – that is to say, relics of the music brought from India – except, some would claim, in Albania. But there is a Gypsy style of playing that is often improvised and always dramatic.", p. 173; Ronald Lee, „Roma in Europe “Gypsy” Myth and Romani Reality – New Evidence for Romani History”, in Valentina Glăjar and Domnica Rădulescu (eds.), *“Gypsies” in European Literature and Culture Studies in European Culture and History*, Pgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 9, 21.

<sup>36</sup> John Corbett, “Experimental Oriental: New Music and Other Others”, in Born, Hesmondhalgh (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 387.

folk music does exist but it is generally different in each country, and displays many features in common with local folk music"<sup>37</sup>. However, what really matters is, the undeniable impact they had, not only thanks to their talents but, mostly, in relation to the "historical circumstances of their" performing<sup>38</sup>.

Their profile as music makers came more visibly at stage in the age of Romanticism as it is illustrated by the literary trend designated as *Zigeunerromantik*<sup>39</sup>. This was, indeed, a time of major social changes when the music became a form of art that reclaimed unique status<sup>40</sup>, when the artist was put on a pedestal<sup>41</sup>, when through musical education one could negotiate for themselves a respectable social status<sup>42</sup>. Therefore, an implicit preoccupation of my study is whether, given the disposition to reclaim them to humanity by offering them the chance to self-expression through music and the attribution of an oriental descent, the effect of this trope over the exoticized Gypsies portrait had been smother or, on the contrary, rougher.

Definitely, their social identity remained marginal. What really concerns me now is the way in which, in the context of the new national and orientalist paradigms, it did influence the manner of processing and decoding of a centuries old representation.

In Transylvania, a borderland region of the Habsburgs' empire well connected to the Western intellectual world and, consequently, apt to transfer knowledge and paradigms at first hand from European cultures, progressively, the image of the Gypsies as music maker gained outstanding contour. This fact is certified both by literary, iconographic, ethnographic productions. Sharing the credo of musical education that could improve human beings, largely debated in the musicological and profane world since 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>43</sup>, in some authors' writings this posture provided the opportunity to exercise a sort of subtyping strategy which

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<sup>37</sup> Ibidem, p. 384.

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>39</sup> David Malvinni. *The Gypsy Caravan: From Real Roma to Imaginary Gypsies in Western Music*, New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 23.

<sup>40</sup> Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>41</sup> Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius. Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792 - 1803*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1995 p. 37, 142, Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. 59; Sorce Keller, *op.cit.*, pp.234, 237-238, 258; Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>42</sup> Weber, *Music and the Middle Class*, p. 9, 44, 66; Derek B. Scott, *Sounds of the Metropolis. The Nineteenth-Century Popular Music Revolution in London, New York, Paris, and Vienna*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 16 , 99.

<sup>43</sup> Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 10, 93-118.

materialized in expressing the conviction that, at least, those Gypsies involved in the process of musicking would be more easily assimilated in the normative societies. However, the limits of subtyping are intrinsic to the cognitive process itself, even those cases mentioned as promising in the process of disciplining, ultimately, remaining nothing else but a part of an essentialized and highly stigmatized Gypsy world<sup>44</sup>. More appealing seemed the reference to the background prejudices derived from the categorization process inherent to the hegemonic cultural discourse of the domestic orientalism<sup>45</sup>.

The potential emancipating and inclusive prospects developed around this trope has to be correlated to the specific cultural and historical contexts in which it had been brought about. As the long 19<sup>th</sup> century cultural productions show the results were uneven. The advance of anthropological writing and ethnomusicology did refine the social debates in many ways but for the Gypsies it did not necessarily have a definite positive effect. Most German authors preferred to keep it on an old road suggesting or explicitly enouncing the trope in relation with the traditional forms of social anomie<sup>46</sup>. Against the (post) Enlightened prospects that music would have a transformative effect on people, frequently, the Gypsy music makers continued to be seen in a traditional manner as musical muggers permanently avoiding honest work. This happened because their musical performances were not seen as works of art as in the case of serious classical music<sup>47</sup> and therefore could not be qualified as toil<sup>48</sup>. On the background of national awakening in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the professing of the *orientalism at home* to which the Gypsies had been subdued, beyond their will and possibility to answer back, made the stigmatizing tendency of the discourse around this trope gain additional substance.<sup>49</sup>

Most of the information available for the general public with respect to the Gypsies mentioned that "*in Transylvania and Hungary there*

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<sup>44</sup> Marian Zăloagă, „Nomad, leneș, muzicant. Despre stereotipul țigan în Transilvania secolelor XVIII-XIX”, in Andi Mihalache, Silvia Marin Barutchieff (coord.), *De la fictiv la real. Imaginea, imaginarul, imagologia*, Iași, Editura Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2010, pp. 283-301.

<sup>45</sup> Malvinni, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>46</sup> Guenter Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2000.

<sup>47</sup> Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 393; Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 5, 6, 20-21, Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 41; De Nora, *op. cit.*, p. xii, 3, 9-10, 12-18.

<sup>48</sup> Gelbart, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>49</sup> Malvini, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

are lots of Gypsies most of them blacksmiths and Musikanten, but certainly they are allowed to practice those disreputable activities"<sup>50</sup>. Such a synthetic remark formulated in an 18<sup>th</sup> century lexicon addresses the much debated difference between art and occupation (*Gewerbe*). Music as practiced by the Gypsies could not be emancipated from the lower status, being, consequently, far from the ideal of transcendental unquantifiable idea of art but an uneven performance at the disposal of uninstructed popular cultures. It was imagined in contrast with what musical critics and musicians in the Western canon agreed to cultivate as "serious" music<sup>51</sup>. Gypsies as *Musikanten* were entirely different from the category of *Musiker*, a key distinction that was operated at the level of semantics in German<sup>52</sup>. Such niche or alternative lucrative activities in the service of the popular cultures of the normative cultures made the Gypsy representation be listed among other services<sup>53</sup> that would complete the portrait of the peripatetics involved in the so - called service nomadism<sup>54</sup>.

The Enlightenment intellectuals looked at this activity in a traditional manner associating it with local disturbances and particularly with the infamous practice of begging. *Bettelmusikanten*<sup>55</sup> were a presence at that time and the Gypsies' stereotypically attributed laziness did nothing else but to confirm the infamy and justify the worries and the

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<sup>50</sup> Johann Hübner, *Neu vermehrtes und verbessertes reales Staats-Zeitungs- und Conversations-Lexikon*, Wien, 1780, p. 1508.

<sup>51</sup> Scott, *op. cit.* p. 6; Gelbart, *op. cit.*, p. 15, 260-262.

<sup>52</sup> Bruno Nettl, "Ethnicity and Musical Identity in the Czech Lands: A Group of Vignettes", in Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (eds.), *Music and German National Identity*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2002, p. 273; Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 13-14, 14-16.

<sup>53</sup> György Szabó, *Die Roma in Ungarn. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte einer Minderheit in Ost und Mitteleuropa*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang Verlag, 1991, p. 119; Eva Krekovicová, *Zwischen Toleranz und Barrieren. Das Bild der Zigeuner und Juden in der slowakischen Folklore*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang Verlag, 1998, p. 306.

<sup>54</sup> Malvinni, *op. cit.*, p. 54, 61; Lozanka Peycheva & Ventsislav Dimov, "The Gypsy Music and Gypsy Musicians' Market in Bulgaria", in *Mitteilungen des SFB 586, Differenz und Integration* 6, la <http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~diffint/index.php/diffint/article/viewPDFInterstitial/86/57>, p. 189 (Last accessed 29.08.2012); Marian Zăloagă, "Depricating Gypsy Work. Normative Discourses and Varieties of Mobility in 17<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> centuries Transylvania", in *Anuarul Institutului de cercetări socio-umane "Gheorghe Șincai"*, Târgu - Mureș, XIII, 2010, pp. 208-234.

<sup>55</sup> Ralf Heimrath, "Wandermusikanten", in Hermann Heidrich, Ralf Heimrath, Otto Kettemann, Martin Ortmeier und Ariane Weidlich (Hrgs.), *Fremde auf dem Land*, Bad Windsheim, Verlag Fränkisches Freilandmuseum, 2000, p. 146.



banning interventions of the authorities with regard to these lucrative practices<sup>56</sup>.

Gypsies' involvement in music was thought as absolutely in opposition with the in-building social and aesthetic canon that was on the way of elaboration during the long 19<sup>th</sup> century. The observers refused the Gypsies any kind of discipline necessary for superior achievements in arts even if they, circumstantially, admitted some kind of "geniality" highly essentialized but without ennobling effect on the creative potential of the race<sup>57</sup>.

The venerated ethnographical volume of Heinrich von Grellmann - well known and often quoted in the Saxons' subsequent writings in detriment of the first hand observations-, shows at best a definite adherence to a transferred Western paradigm that was nurturing a distinct orientalist discourse. Within its pages, the author also hovered on this identity layer of the generic Gypsy. By minutely describing the instruments in use, Grellmann implied an irreconcilable differentiation of the Gypsies as music makers and the Western musical stage canon. He insists to situate this practice among the lucrative activities in service of the lower classes in the normative cultures. "*By their music they cheer people up, men and women alike. One of their customary instruments is the so called cymbal which consists of some cords stretched over a resonant wooden body, which is often nothing more than a baseboard. These chords are stricken with tow wattles and are accompanied by fiddles*<sup>58</sup> [...] *Among them one can number plenty of music players but a things remains certain, many of them are bunglers. Generally, these are those who learned the art by themselves or from other bunglers [and who] wander with their dancing girls or become the peasants' Musikanten*"<sup>59</sup>. Such remarks made clear Grellmann's belonging to the bourgeoisie's culture within which the difference between serious art and entertainment was more and more radical<sup>60</sup>, in subsidiary, proving how the notion "culture" acted as an indicator for establishing not only aesthetic but also socio-cultural hierarchies. Here the corollary

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<sup>56</sup> Viorel Achim, *Țigani in istoria României*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1998, p. 70.

<sup>57</sup> Gelbart, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>58</sup> Heinrich Moritz G. Grellmann, *Historische Versuch über die Zigeuner*, 2 Auflage, Göttingen, 1787, p. 103.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 104.

<sup>60</sup> William Weber, *The Great transformation of musical taste*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 92-93, 105, 130, Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. xii, 39, 61, 107; Gramit, *op.cit.*, p. 2, 16, 141, 154; Garrat, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

of the *orientalism at home* betrays its reductive power affecting both the performer as well as the consumer.

The same authority in the field of “Gypsology”, itself a subfield of cultural anthropology, operated a firm distinction that, theoretically, could be established among these performers. Referring exactly to the Transylvanian periphery, often credited as the epicenter of Gypsiness in the Central – Eastern Europe, Grellmann wrote that excluding the aforementioned groups servicing for the “*unpretentious tastes*” of the peasants, “*other thousands of virtuosi exist in Klausenburg and Hermannstadt, [and that] they even had the honor to concert before the emperor Joseph II when he travelled here; [...] Their efforts proved beneficial because besides the presents [the Gypsies] gained a special esteem*”<sup>61</sup>. However, Grellmann’s account of the instruments reveals itself as an exercise of orientalist discourse. Particularly, the precarious instruments like the cymbal and the fiddle are in subtext the antithesis of the piano which entered also in the domestic world of the bourgeoisies, its possession and playing conveying both intellectual refinement and economic status<sup>62</sup>.

Except these observations compiled by the Göttingen armchair anthropologist without specifying anything about the credibility of his heterogeneously gathered information, remarks concerning the Gypsies and, particularly, their enrolling in the music making activities were also common place within Saxon authors’ contributions. In the preamble of its collection of riddles and etiological stories collected from among the Saxons, Joseph Haltrich - a worthy follower of Grimm Brothers -, puts in the mouth of a generic Gypsies the following allegedly self-defining statement: “*«Being lazy is my worry, and it is not at all wearisome!» This is the moral principle of the Gypsy. His leaning to the sweet laziness buries his talent to music. The popular music makers playing the fiddle, cymbal or the clarinet, singing all around Hungary and Transylvania are, without any doubt, Gypsies – a good reason that in some premises Musikant and Gypsies came to be identical notions – and, among them, there are some naturally virtuosi, some even being poetically extoled by Lenau in «Mischka an der Theiß und an der Marosch»*”<sup>63</sup>. Such words confirm the influence of the domestic orientalism. The crumbly constructed consensus between the references taken is implied by considering both the ideological cultural background

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<sup>61</sup> Grellmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>62</sup> Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*. Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath, Fontana Press, London, 1977, p.149; Alan C. Turley, „Max Weber and the Sociology of Music”, in *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Dec., 2001), p. 641.

<sup>63</sup> Josef Haltrich, *Zur Volkskunde der Siebenbürger Sachsen. Kleinere Schriften*. In neuer Bearbeitung herausgegeben von J. Wolff, Wien, 1885, p. 108.

of a reputed poet in the German Romantic literary world which is confronted with locally collected convictions in the anomie of the radical Other from the proximity. Such ambiguous constructions also certify the different possible outturns of the orientalist discourse that was professed differently in relation to the audience culture.

The label role of this designation in the Saxon culture was (re)stated openly in a press essays published in 1855. Its author wrote: *“At the margins of every Saxon locality, separately, in crooked huts live several Gypsies. Mostly, they are blacksmiths, kettle menders and Musikant, in some places these tasks being their exclusive work field; therefore, the name Gypsy is synonymously used for blacksmith, cobbler and Musikant”*<sup>64</sup>. This passage conveys not only the marginal and, at the same time, complementary role of the Gypsies in the Saxon culture but also the treatment of music as a trade, as an entertainment activity for the sake of the normative cultures, in other words, imply a discretionary hierarchical relation. This ability to exchange between tasks in order to gain acceptance and ultimately profits contradicted the agenda of the 19<sup>th</sup> century “serious” musician ideally imagined as independent of the worldly revenues and highly and voluntarily dedicated to his transcendental art that will guarantee elevation and a respectable social status. Notice that the “Gypsy” concept could turn into an ethnophaulism<sup>65</sup> which adds to the non-flattering attitude towards those gathered under the designation of *Musikant*.

More convincing for the categorical and derogatory attitude towards the practice of music the way the Gypsies was thought to be doing it, is the association of this niche activity with an allegedly leaning to laziness attributed to the Gypsies in all their labor undertakings. On the one hand, in Romantic vein the Gypsy was attributed an essentialized inclination to music traceable since childhood. In 1849 an essayist considered the topic in the following hypothetical and, at the same time, critical reasoning: *“Let’s take for instance the first naked Gypsy lad missing any education. He will certainly show skillfulness at almost everything and not the disposition to ordure and other cattish arts, but skillfulness to everything he vouchsafes to do or he imitates. The imitation, the exploitation of the minor (mitgeringen) advantages and of the surprisingly means of support, explain the excellent achievements of the Gypsies who sing,*

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<sup>64</sup> „Der Zigeuner“, in *Transsilvania. Beiblatt zum Siebenbürger Boten*, Nr. 9, 27 August 1855, p. 36.

<sup>65</sup> Zăloagă, *Ethnic Defaming and the Historical Research. On the Case of Gypsies’ Designation in Transylvanian Saxons Culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*”, in *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai - Studia Europaea* 1/2011, p. 51.

*dance, ironmonger being adjusted to their talents they display with giddiness and handiness; the perfection and accuracy they achieve are apt to make us consider that their spiritual and bodily aptitudes are righteous and excellent in many other affairs like agriculture, crafts, commerce, arts and sciences*"<sup>66</sup>. Apparently encouraging and overenthusiastic, this account betrays a particular stance of post-enlightenment discourse for which all the niche activities embraced by the Gypsies that deliberately escape the agricultural practice - mentioned on the first position in the succession above - are meant to testify about a culture, allegedly, unwilling to work and constantly embracing an easy, irresponsible life. Still, the usefulness of such niche activities, music making included, although basically scorned because they were associated with these ethnic and socially disparaged marginal groups, are not always so one sided. In certain judgments, they could be mitigated which may explain the buffered and sympathetic effect of the domestic orientalist discourse<sup>67</sup>. This does not mean that the hierarchical and dominating attitude has been done away with, on the contrary, it perpetuates as an intrinsic manifestation of orientalism. The appeal to an infantile case in point displaying all the innate potentialities - circumstantially spoiled by their lack of formal education - , suggests, that if correctly guided - therefore professing an interventionist agenda- , the subjects would be turned into a benefit for the society. Moreover, the accent on imitation professed by the Gypsies in-group, dodging themselves to the institutionalized standard education with its proven achievements, complete the concomitantly process of infantilization, thus, betraying an enlightened alongside with an orientalist reasoning as well as the power relations within the discourse about an exoticized Other from proximity.

One should not forget that all these orientalist judgments were the catchphrases of a bourgeoisie intellectualist class which, in building its cultural identity, professed a type of condescendence in relation to other social strata and, particularly, to the rural people. Rural cultures could, eventually, be "cleansed" in order to be worth becoming a source of inspiration for the bourgeois artist. Promoting a nationalist agenda, this class had to find ways to accommodate these rural ethnic artifacts into a mold able to attract as many consciences on an orbit that would sustain the imagined communities' project<sup>68</sup>. Exogenous elements were

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<sup>66</sup> „Ein Wort über die Zigeuner“, in *Blätter für Geist, Gemuth und Vaterlandeskunde*, Nr. 5, Montag, 1 Februar 1847, p. 36.

<sup>67</sup> Szábo, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>68</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflection on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London and New York, Verso, 2003, p. 141.

to be identified and, as much as, possible be refuted access to the new project. Even those forms of entertainment usually provided by ethnically heterogeneously groups became denounced as exotic, therefore, foreign and contaminating to the project, a fact also manifest in (ethno)musicological writing<sup>69</sup>. In Transylvania, the Saxons underwent this process much earlier than other neighboring cultures. This effort was consciously made by their elites in an attempt to demarcate themselves from the Others, to self-represent themselves as sharing the Western model in all aspects of life including in the aesthetic musical tastes. Their exclusivist discourse touched the musical performances of the Gypsies, therefore, a proper occasion to concomitantly profess both a domestic as well as an internal orientalism. “Low brow” rural social groups were charged with developing a taste for the Gypsies musical performances: *“Look at these Gypsies in Hungary and Transylvania as well as in the neighboring Wallachia, a big extent of these people uneasy to confront pain, even nowadays is not willing to toil the land, consequently, the music makers (Musici) descend from among them. They start playing the instruments since childhood and have no other preoccupation; hence, they reach an artfulness that is regarded by the other inhabitants of the country as a nature’s gift. They are entirely ignorant to any musical note, despite any effort, showing an unselfconscious disdain to learn anything except from their uneven music (unregelmässige Musik), which consists of dances, marches, and other short tunes that would assure them with the daily bread and the necessary support. Unfortunately, this music finds great appetite among the rabble and the land’s inhabitants that is far higher than that for the cultivated music”*<sup>70</sup>. For the Transylvanian Saxon elites, such occurrences noticed within their own in- and also out-group was equated with the “primitivism”. This discourse was professed not only with regard to the outsiders as identified performers but was also impinged upon the rural audience which by its preference could undermine the national project as they contradicted the key coordinates imagined and cultivated by the upper classes representatives. Accordingly, the distinguished musical critic and historian Carl Dahlhaus was right when he stated that exoticism and folklorism were introduced in the musical debate to outline the way their

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<sup>69</sup> Julie Brown „Bartok, the Gypsies and hybridity in Music” in Born and Hesmondhalgh (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 119-142.

<sup>70</sup> „Musikpflege in Siebenbürgen um 1800. Nach ein Handschrift aus dem Jahre 1804”. Vor- und Nachwort von Gottlieb Brandsch, Hermannstadt. Anmerkungen von Richard Weisskircher, Hermannstadt, in *Siebenbürgische Vierteljahresschrift*, 64, 1941, p. 137.

practitioners and their audience “differed from European art music” and show how they “deviate from the European norm”<sup>71</sup>.

The treatment of the musical performances entirely as a trade in the traditional sense, passed from father to son, shows the same divorce between the music as imagined by the elites and the way it was practiced within the Gypsies’ exoticized culture. Schwicker remarked in 1883 that if it happened that the father would be a *Musikant* and the son showed some talent he was given up to music from early youth and was immediately inserted in the band. The same author reiterated the informal and un-institutionalized manner this initiation into the musical practice used to be achieved: “*The musical art is learned by the Gypsy from early youth; often without any special guidance. For that, he only banks on his hearing sense and this primitive path (naturalistischen Wege) is brought to an unimaginable skillfulness*”<sup>72</sup>. Not only that this statement overstresses the difference between the institutionalized music-teaching processes, moreover, by qualifying the training as “natural” in other words “primitive”, the author shows how in his mind primordialist and orientalist stances could complete each other in establishing what exact attributed aesthetic and spiritual achievements were “innate” to an exoticized ethnic group.

Within the cultural anthropological discourse, that was elaborated in Central - Eastern Europe on the bases of primordialist nationalist ideas, attributed irremovable ethnic traits jotted down in different humanist intellectuals’ writings met the charting process underwent within the natural sciences, themselves in a rapid progress during that time. Both spoke about inborn or natural qualities and this organicist discourse was so contagious that it spread largely among the music critics and, thus, generated some essentialization that would be not only influential but often difficult to resist. As I will show, similar observations were frequented by other Saxon authors in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Schwicker’s contemporary, the folklorist Heinrich von Wislocki understood the musical talent attributed to the Gypsies as a mark of primitiveness and original ancestral authenticity. He conceptualized it in harmony with the opinions visited within the field of (ethno)musicology during the *fin de siècle* epoch. In many respects, this was a revisit of the Herderian ideas who stated that the songs were worth to be collected

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<sup>71</sup> Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

<sup>72</sup> Johann Heinrich Schwicker, *Die Zigeuner in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen. Ethnographische und culturhistorische Schilderungen*, Wien und Teschen, 1883, p. 159.

and studied as they would provide access to the spiritual “essence” of the peoples<sup>73</sup>. Now the music of the primitive peoples (*Naturvölker*) continued to be regarded as a path to the original “character” of the group where /when other the historical evidences could provide no cognitive support<sup>74</sup>. Wlislöcki thought that the Gypsies “are inspired by the musical bars like a genius of nature which, not infrequently, may be traced among the primitives (*Naturmenschen*) which only expects for an occasion to bloom”<sup>75</sup>. Philanthropically but not entirely emancipated by an orientalist gaze, Wlislöcki encouraged the reconfiguration of the Gypsies image by mentioning these essentialized artistic potential of “familiar primitive” at the brinks of Europe.

Nevertheless, Heinrich von Wlislöcki was not alone in sharing similar ideas. As some other authors remarked, the “regenerative” potentialities of a vaguely defined *Gypsy music* made possible the positive reception of their performances even among the connoisseurs. “Music connoisseurs admire the vivid genius, the warm feelings which reigns even into the most primitive Gypsy music. Indeed, Gypsy music permeates the limbs like an electrical impulse, in turn, stirring or appeasing the inner souls!”<sup>76</sup>. These remarks reveal the inner tension within the Romanticism. On the one hand, Romanticism encouraged the liberty of artistic expression by encouraging non-canonic manifestations in arts<sup>77</sup>. On the other hand, through the Romantic epoch Europeans tried to mark in the history of music a “point of discontinuity in Western cultural history” by pronouncing the uniqueness of the institutionalized canon of the West and posing it in “antithesis with all its anthropological «Others»”<sup>78</sup>. The references to the Gypsy musical achievements did not solve the issue, on the contrary, only makes this tension more conspicuous.

Particularly, the liberties the Gypsies took by playing without a sheet music, therefore, leaving room for unexpected improvisation, brings their practice near the popularly acclaimed model of virtuoso who was within the European canon of the 19<sup>th</sup> century music under the

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<sup>73</sup> Gelbart, *op. cit.*, p. 80; Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>74</sup> Alexander Rehding, „The Quest for the Origins of Music in Germany circa 1900”, in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Summer, 2000), pp. 356-357.

<sup>75</sup> Heinrich von Wlislöcki, *Von wandernden Zigeunervölke. Bilder aus dem Leben der Siebenbürger Zigeuner Geschichtliches, Ethnologisches, Sprache und Poesie*, Hamburg, 1890, p. 352.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 225.

<sup>77</sup> Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38; Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. 40, 89.

<sup>78</sup> Sorce Keller, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

harsh judgments of the critics<sup>79</sup>. As far as the Gypsies performances were concerned the opinions shared an ambiguity tone: *“To make use of the musical notes was a shame for the Gypsies [...] Indeed, among the Gypsies the power and fidelity in memorizing music is abundantly outstanding. Of this is aware the cunning Roma son (schlaue Rom-Söhne). If they have engagement outside Hungary they never forget to mention on the playbill: «They sing everything without notes»”*<sup>80</sup>. This (self-)promoting strategy shows that despite sustained efforts of the musical critics - who turned into a professional caste that directed the bourgeoisie consumerism and elevate intellects - , the taste for non-canonical and highly exotic performances as those performed by the Easterner “Others” did not cease. This confirms, anew that, irrespective of the ethnic belonging of the subject, “the attraction of the exotic often seems to lie in a distinctive combination of similarity and difference, rather than in difference alone”<sup>81</sup>, in other words, that Orientalism manifested itself as a combination of contempt and desire.

It was Liszt who turned the tables on and who, despite practicing an orientalist discourse, made this change of opinion possible and perceptible in the ethnographical and the literary productions about/with Gypsies. As Nicholas Saul demonstrated in a recent book, Liszt saw music as the path to the “authentic voice” of the Gypsies and the chance to give them an honorable place in the “gallery of humanity”<sup>82</sup>. His reading of the Liszt’s book consisted in turning the music making into a key collective identity marker, by considering art as the “highest expression of human spirit” that might, also, represent the “basis for the redemption of Romany cultural dignity”<sup>83</sup>. Saul convincingly explains that Liszt’s attempt was to *“recuperate the authentic Gypsy voice in that other, freer, non-verbal medium, (instrumental) music”*<sup>84</sup> adding that *“despite their infantilization and cultural oppression, despite their reactive silence and willed separatism, despite their animalistic closeness to nature, despite their oriental otherness, the Gypsies are like us”*<sup>85</sup>.

In opposition to the bourgeoisie project within which the gifted individual was to be celebrated for his genius and benefit from this in its social life, Karin Iulia Pătruț also understood Liszt’s work as an attempt

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<sup>79</sup> Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p. 138; Gramit, *op. cit.*, p. 6,15, 25.

<sup>80</sup> Schwicker, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>81</sup> Peter Burke, *Cultural Hybridity*, Oxford, Polity Press, 2009, p. 25.

<sup>82</sup> Saul, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>83</sup> Ibidem, p. 11.

<sup>84</sup> Ibidem, p. 13.

<sup>85</sup> Ibidem, p. 14.



to emancipate a collective defamed ethnicized artist<sup>86</sup> by praising their outstanding artistic achievements grasped as an alternative way to the strictures predicated by the bourgeoisie modern culture<sup>87</sup>. Liszt succeeded to follow his agenda even if he continued to place the Gypsies on an juvenile stage of humanity<sup>88</sup>, in which he saw much potential illustrated by the Gypsies' leaning to improvisation in music.

Certainly, these recent post-structuralist readings did not coincide with the Transylvanian Saxons' view. Some Saxons had, definitely, come across Liszt's book but chose to insist on other aspects that would provide them with consistent arguments in claiming their own conformity to the elitist European cultural ideals and, therefore, affirm superiority in a province itself imagined as the last outpost of the modern civilization. Consequently, the orientalist discourse could be adopted and necessarily adapted, acting fairly different in various European cultures, as it had to accommodate to micro-cultural agendas different in space and time.

Accordingly, on this subject matter, Transylvanian Saxons deliberately chose to insist on the aesthetic-ideologically noticed national hybridity proposed by Franz Liszt. The choice to patchwork the discourse on this coordinates is based on the Saxons' intentionality to outline this process of cultural hybridity that would be instrumentalized in a discourse with local political meaning. It was supposed to work as an undermining answer to the political and cultural impositions of the officially hegemonic Magyar side.

One of the few studies dedicated exclusively to the topic of Gypsy music from Transylvania was written by Alexander Czeke. His comparative method in approaching the subject referred both to the stylistic forms as well as to the performances as staged by the Gypsies. His entire demonstration represented an attempt to confirm the ties between the Hungarian and the Gypsies' musical expression. Gypsy music appears as the most elaborate expression of the Hungarian music. It is to be traced in the examination of folk songs: *"All over the Earth there are but a few nations whose folk songs and the national music deriving directly from these, have evinced so many ties to the folk life as was the case of the*

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<sup>86</sup> Iulia-Karin Pătruț, „«Zigeuner» und die Kunst. Wissensproduktion und Literatur am Beispiel von Franz Liszt und Wilhelm Raabe“, in *Germanistische Beiträge*, Band 22/I - Sonderhefte - Europa und seine ‚Zigeuner‘. Literatur - und kulturgeschichtliche Studien, Sibiu, Universitätsverlag Sibiu/Hermannstadt, 2007, p. 215.

<sup>87</sup> Dahlhaus, op. cit., p. 81

<sup>88</sup> Pătruț, op cit, p. 212, 215; Malvinni, op. cit., p. 9.

*Hungarian melodies, from their early beginnings to the various ornaments of the Gypsies. Similarly to the language and the Hungarian folk costume, they reveal an oriental type, and they knew to preserve their originality [in comparison to other European cultures despite leaving between many nationalities] exactly in the manner in which the Hungarian music designates a characterial trait that would be in vain searched for in the folk songs of the Germans, Swiss, French, Scots, Italians, Slavs, and so on, in a way just narrowly fully accomplished*<sup>89</sup>. In Czeke's view, what led to this state of hybridity were the common oriental roots<sup>90</sup>. One can easily recognize the Herderian ideas at work and the search for "authenticity" and of the solution for its preservation. Nevertheless, one cannot dodge noticing that Czeke reminds of the arguments once used within his classic synthesis by Grellmann. Sharing a perennialist conviction Grellmann wrote "*In its leaning to music the Gypsy resemble those (ancient Indians) form Shudra caste*"<sup>91</sup>.

Basically, similar believes had been widely shared in the mid - 19<sup>th</sup> century before the publication of Listz's book. In a feuilleton published in the 1852 in a major German speaking press periodical from Transylvania, an anonymous author also related the philological arguments and the ethno-musicological observations in a construct that could provide consistency to the argument of an ethnically oriental and socially inferior descent of the Gypsies: "*The language of the Gypsies is filled with Indian words and even their predilection to music and dance, cleanness and horses seem to provide hints that they descend from the so - called Shudra caste from their Urheimat*"<sup>92</sup>. Here Grellmann's bias to place the Gypsies' present and former occupations, including that of musical performers, within the lowest reputed position is literarily followed. In opposition to these accounts but, without totally being immune to orientalist reveries, Czecke refrained himself from stating any hierarchy and only mentioned the affinity between the two oriental cultures (i.e.

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<sup>89</sup> Alexander Czeke, „Über ungarische Musik und Zigeuner“, in *Blätter für Geist, Gemuth und Vaterlandeskunde*, Nr. 47, XVI Jahrgang, Samstag, den 27 November 1858, pp. 178-179.

<sup>90</sup> At the same time, in Austria, the Hungarian Gypsies' compositions were also regarded as primitive performances that would express the tastes of the popular culture, therefore, only indirectly subjected to domestic orientalism. See: Catherine Mayes, „Reconsidering an early exoticism: Viennese adaptations of Hungarian-Gypsy music around 1800“, in *Eighteenth-Century Music*, Volume 6/Issue 2, 2009, p.168.

<sup>91</sup> Grellmann, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

<sup>92</sup> „Weltchronik“, in *Der Siebenbürger Bote. Zeitung für vaterländische Interessen, Geschichte und Landeskunde*, Nr. 163, 13 Oktober 1852, p. 811.

Hungarian and Gypsy). He chose to insist on some specific technicalities that comparatively dealt with would explain the hybridity beyond the subjectivities specific to any other condescending discourse.

Assuming such a stand point, namely, to empirically slice up some specific aspects of the Gypsy culture, Czecke had anticipated Wlislöcki who also noted in his meticulous research studies dedicated to the nomad Gypsies in Transylvania that: *“That they must have carried along with them the knack to music, this is certified by the fact that this artistic skill, to say so, occupies a place in the national character of the Gypsies and they all, with very few exceptions, are gifted with a fine ear for music”*<sup>93</sup>. In essentialist terms, Gypsies’ talents are seen as innate and collectively characteristic to the race. Observations of this sort confirm the effect of a recently recognized relation between race and musicological discourse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century musicology<sup>94</sup>, it having certain effects in imagining the Otherness of the previously primitivized forms of art<sup>95</sup>.

Embarking a debate that was often frequented at the time and, certainly, regionally of immediate relevance, Wlislöcki tried to throw light over the hybrid “Hungarian - Gypsy music”. In his vast monograph from 1890 he tried to clarify the issue: *“It is a mistake to believe that the Gypsies learned the music from the Hungarians. In Hungary they had only found the perfect soil where they could develop their art to the most elevated and beautiful expression and it remains uncertain if, if there was no Hungary their art would have reached the accomplishment level to which we are familiar. One may consider, for instance, the overemphasized opinion of the popular piano virtuoso Franz Liszt who, as it is well known, gave out the hypothesis that at the origins, the Hungarians had no national music and that it was first provided by the Gypsies, or on the contrary to follow the opinion of Prof. S. Brassai or Stefan Bartalus, a thing remains certain, that from primordial times music was at home among the Gypsies. But when it comes talking about the form and manner, this issues could not be ever plainly and completely clarified”*<sup>96</sup>. Foreign from any xenophobic feelings, Wlislöcki emphasized the creative function of this hybrid ethnic relation, certainly, going beyond any stigmatizing effect specific to a first level of domestic orientalism generally practiced by the Transylvanian Saxons and not only by them alone.

However, the exoticism concerning the peoples inhabiting the Eastern Europe was difficult to entirely drop out. This stereotypical

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<sup>93</sup> Wlislöcki, *op.cit.*, pp. 216-217.

<sup>94</sup> “Race” in Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 95; Zon, p. 14.

<sup>95</sup> Born and Hesmondhalgh, “On Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music. Postcolonial Analysis and Music Studies, p. 11.

<sup>96</sup> Wlislöcki, *Vom wandernden Zigeuner*, p. 217.

reading was, particularly, reserved to the multiethnic Hungary where the musical performances of the Gypsies were what today one would call a country brand<sup>97</sup>. As Schwicker testifies, in the mental mapping of an average Westerner living in 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hungary was designated - thanks to the vast number of Gypsy music makers - , as "The land of the Gypsies". To make his point, he omitted the semantic difference between *Musiker* and *Musikant*, established within the German language, as Schwicker seems more interested than in anything else to outline the oriental and essentialist feature of this hybrid cultural outcome: "*In Europe the Gypsies appear to be the musicians in Turkey, in Rumania and mostly in Hungary, that nowadays these countries cannot be thought at without the «Gypsy music», so that, a shallow French tourist which commence to tastelessness, may very well designate this land as «the Land of the Gypsies». Indeed in Hungary the customary Musikantenthum is so much linked with the Gypsy people that here every Musikant is called a «Gypsy» and, in the common language, to call for or bring over the «Gypsy» always means to call or bring a «Musikbande»*"<sup>98</sup>.

Undeniably, this exotic representation was familiar to the Western Europeans and its echoes reached even overseas in America. Ridiculing such a vision of the outsiders but, in the same time, intending to demonstrate the influence to which this hybrid cultural representation reached, in 1898, the editors of *Siebenbürgisch - Deutsches Tageblatt* reported to their mostly Saxon readers about the presence of some Gypsy bands in United States of America. Their outstanding performance raised the enthusiasm of the American audience which was fetched by their presence. The hybrid (self-)representation that would also satisfy the expectancies of the American audience was conveyed through external references. The bands' ethnic identity was to be expressed by the Hungarian costumes the performers chose to wear, which, together with the performance would create a sense of oriental music. The most ludicrous situation, on which the editors of the newspaper chose to insist, regarded the revenues the New York cultural institutions had to pay for these performances. In such delicate circumstance "*the administration of the Eden Museum, a beloved delectation site in New York, employed an «authentic» Gypsy band. It remained to be decided whether the Gypsy musical performers had to be rewarded according to the US laws or simply on the bases of a contract. In the last case the doors of the*

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<sup>97</sup> Stefani Kugler, *Kunst-Zigeuner. Konstruktion des "Zigeuners" in der deutschen Literatur der ersten Hälfte des 19 Jahrhunderts*, Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, Trier, 2004, pp. 221-222.

<sup>98</sup> Schwicker, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

much lavished America would remain close in front of the brown sons of the Pusta (braunen Puſtasöhne). The importers set forth that every fiddler is a Paganini. But as they had not been artists it was impossible that Ms. Helen Gould to pay 500 Dollars, respectively, Vanderbilt would spend even 1000 Dollars for a Gypsy concert. Mr. Bremer who was called out as an evaluator had an entirely different opinion. He pretended that the member of the most "Hungarian bands" were to be mentioned with Hungarian names in the program, while, in reality, they could be very well authentic Germans. Genuinely Hungarian had to be the uniform only. If Ms. Helen Gould and Mr. Vanderbilt were so willing to pay so much money, in exchange they could get quality Gypsy music performed by Germans. During the World Exhibition only in Chicago were founded 300 «Gypsy German bands». This number would have been exceeded if the number of uniforms would have allowed".<sup>99</sup> Comical as it might seem, this narrative reveals the end 19<sup>th</sup> century craze for the musical performances of the "Eastern European Orientals" promoted even in the concert programs from different Western musical centers. This kind of indulging with the charms of the Orient, be it in mimicked form, in order to seem the "real thing", "the authentic" performer from the Eastern Europe also proves the effect of the marketing strategies<sup>100</sup> of some agents interested in recruiting Gypsy bands and selling their performances to the Western public. Entrepreneurship was a key dimension of the artistic profession and the artists had to invent a *persona* to attract the public. Gypsies as exotics, not artists in the "classical" 19<sup>th</sup> century canonic sense of the word, succeeded in this market strategy very well. In a sense, I may say, without being ever central to the concert stage, Gypsies' eccentricity and readiness to let themselves instrumentalized for the sake of revenues, anticipates the progressive changes on European musical stage and the new possibilities for the artists in the conditions of democratization<sup>101</sup> of the musical performances and consume. Having nothing to do with the "real Gypsy" practice in the Eastern Europe, the trope of the Gypsy musician was self-

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<sup>99</sup> „Etnhüllungen über das Wesen der Zigeunermusik“, in *Siebenbürgisch - Deutsches Tageblatt*, Nr. 7547, 13 Oktober 1898, p. 1079.

<sup>100</sup> Malvinni, *op. cit.*, p. 18, 40, 62; Mayes, *op. cit.*, p. 180; Victor Alexandru Stoichiță, „O fanfară adevărată. Ordine și improvizație în practica muzicienilor țigani din România“, in *Interstitio. East European Review of Historical Anthropology*, Volume II, Number 2(4), December, 2010, p.121.

<sup>101</sup> There is an ongoing debate on the topic of democratization of art. The idea is shared by T. C. W. Blanning, *The Oxford History of Modern Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p.139, 222, 225, 226 or Benjamin Curtis, *op. cit.*, p. 43, 81. On the other hand, others consider it as an ideal only partially achieved, see: Garratt, *op. cit* p. 6, 53.

sufficient to fulfill the chimerical expectancies of a Western public. What Roland Barthes called “the reality effect”<sup>102</sup> was at work in this narrative and, as seen, it had been attained by means of simple manipulations of the requisite such as the costumes. This confirms that it was not so much the essence, namely, the musical content that was at stake in selling an exotic(-ized) musical product but the external appearances that convincingly might provide the auditory with the emotions derived from intersection with Otherness. Ultimately, this game with the confusing external terms of reference buttresses the strength of the hybridization between the Hungarian and the Gypsy musical performances. In its subtext, this narrative betrays a more or less hidden denunciation of an orientalised Hungarian culture which, at that time, through the politics of Magyarisation strongly agitated the spirits of the Saxons.

Hungarians were aware that the Germans - and the Transylvanian Saxons made no exception at all - used this discourse to camouflage their intent to question the significance of Hungarian culture by recalling its openly shared oriental descent. This topic turned into a *locus* in the symbolical national battles between the two main rulers in Habsburg and later Austro-Hungarian Empire. This subversive discursive strategy was occasionally felt like a stigma and, as expected, it did not leave the musical field untouched. In some cases, Hungarians replied to this condescending and exoticizing attitude, delimiting from the pristine oriental asset and by extensively emphasizing the Hungarians voluntarily assumed hegemony of the German culture. “*We stick close to Germany and among all the peoples in Europe we bow chiefly before the German culture, in our schools as well as in other regards concerning our existence, we read and write German. From German we translate, we imitate the Germans in every custom, in sciences and arts, now we aim towards the same goal [...]. These may be very well so, and yet, the Germans show no gratefulness to us, but stick to an tacit conviction, pretty much the same we do, that the Gypsy sings the Hungarian way*”<sup>103</sup>. Obviously, the axiological link that was translated in a cultural stereotype was therefore felt in a pejorative manner, exactly as it was intended by the German/Saxon rival. Not even the cultural mimetic attempts, openly acknowledged here, do not emancipate from the prejudiced effects of this cultural hybrid construct that was shared widely beyond the borders of Transylvania or Hungary. No surprise then, to see this Gypsy - Hungarian hybrid as a sensitive national issue

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<sup>102</sup> Agnew, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>103</sup> *Siebenbürgisch - Deutsches Tageblatt*, Nr. 5087, 31 August 1890, p. 871.

that was felt like a stigma and was referred to in the musicological theory by Bartok Bela, in the early stage of his career, in terms of “contamination”<sup>104</sup>.

### Conclusions

Although an object of the hegemonic discourses of the West, which nowadays came to be critically scrutinized, Transylvanian cultures of the long 19<sup>th</sup> century proved ready to transfer and profess them as they could be adaptable to domestic topics. In some respects, a paradigm such as the domestic orientalism seemed exceptionally stimulating since it was understood as complementary to the former hegemonic discourses or, simply, fitted to the new reconfigurations underwent by the Transylvanian cultures. As I hope I could demonstrate, the existing multi-cultural material available in the province, its border position and, not ultimately, attributed and occasionally acknowledged backwardness in relation to some Western centers, provided fertile ground for the reception and professing of such a paradigm. Besides this readiness, one cannot deny, as I have insisted, on the selective and particular manner in which it had been taken into consideration. If at a primary level, Transylvanian Saxons simply put the old pre-ethnographical information in a new mold, at a secondary stage, they exploited the topic in a highly contextualized and selective manner. Consequently, the Gypsy *Musikant* trope was re-read the way it would suggest the discourse producers’ adherence to new musical canons both from the aesthetic and social point of view. The primitiveness of the instruments and the artistic achievements were both the perfect occasion to express both domestic orientalism towards the Gypsies as out-group members, as well as, the internal orientalism towards the rural classes that consumed their performances. On the other hand, the Otherness and the exoticism of the Gypsies is emphasized both independently in organicist Herderian terms, as well as, by revealing the hybrid outcomes derived from the association with the Hungarian culture, who openly build upon its national identity around its oriental roots.

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<sup>104</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-130.

# The Media, the Idea of German Affiliation and the Transylvanian Saxons in the 1860s

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**Abstract:** *The media, the idea of German affiliation and the Transylvanian Saxons in the 1860s.* This article is an analysis of the national identity of the Transylvanian Saxons in the mid- nineteenth century. Loss of privileged nation status and minority status within a Hungarian unitary state caused the intellectual elite to emphasize the idea of the Saxons belonging to the great German nation. Articles in the press of the time expressed these desiderata, Otto von Bismarck's Germany being perceived as a protective element. The idea of belonging to the German nation would mark the destiny of the Transylvanian Saxons until their emigration from Transylvania in the late twentieth century.

**Keywords:** Transylvanian Saxons, identity, nationality, minority, media, Germany, Transylvania, Hungary

**Rezumat:** *Presa, ideea apartenenței germane și sașii transilvăneni în anii 1860.* Acest articol oferă o analiză a identității naționale a sașilor ardeleni, la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea. Pierderea statutului de națiune privilegiată și dobândirea statutului de minoritate în cadrul statului unitar maghiar a determinat elita intelectuală să sească să accentueze ideea apartenenței sașilor la marea națiune germană. Articolele din presa vremii exprimau aceste deziderate, Germania lui Otto von Bismarck fiind percepută ca un element protector. Ideea apartenenței la națiunea germană va marca destinul sașilor ardeleni până la emigrarea lor din Transilvania, la sfârșitul secolului al XX-lea.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** sași, identitate, naționalitate, minoritate, media, Germania, Transilvania, Ungaria

Sharp political disputes, the bleak future of the Transylvanian Saxons' autonomy and implicitly of their national existence in a national unitary Hungarian state prompted the intellectual elite to emphasize the issue of the Transylvanian Saxons' appartenance to the Germanic idea\*.

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\* Research co-financed through the Socio-humanistic sciences in the context of globalized evolution – the development and implementation of postdoctoral research and study program project, contract code: POSTDRU/89/1.5/S/61104, project co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Program Human Resources Development 2007-2013.



But what was the model? Did they relate to the idea of Great Germany which encompassed all German speakers in Europe, or to the idea of German Austria, which was set west of the Leitha or to the idea of the German Reich which was starting to take shape?

We believe that the idea of appurtenance was projected at this time. Links between Saxon cities and the German space were clearly established mainly through the great number of young Transylvanian Saxons, who went to study at German Protestant universities, and the journeymen's wanderings in one direction or another.

There was also a particular religious affiliation with Protestant Germany, which was becoming increasingly powerful through Prussia, Wilhelm I and Otto von Bismarck. We believe that this was the Saxon elites' line of thinking when they spoke of their Germanic appurtenance.

We do not think they had any connection with the idea of German Austria because there they found no support. It was a purely Catholic Austria, an Austria with which they had, as shown by the famous historian Harald Heppner, merely a contractual relationship which they only resorted to when the Hungarian political class wanted to restrict their privileges and which they renounced as soon as the Austrian centralism became unbearable.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the modern idea of nation was closely related to the recognition of the moral and cultural individuality of the nation, which led to the idea of diversity, of separation and reference to other nations through external distinguishing marks or its soul. In this context, individualizations occur, achieved through natural geographic factors. In time the geographical element loses its importance, while continuing to be used. It is replaced by other factors such as historical tradition, moral, political, religious issues, as well as traditional costumes and customs.<sup>2</sup>

The Transylvanian Saxons were a German island in a large Romanian and Hungarian mass. The geographic factor played a significant part in creating a symbolic geography as an element in the formation of the modern nation. That was *Fundus Regius*, which was defined more and more as a Saxon island during that period, becoming the national arena. It is identified more and more with the idea of Saxon Country (*Sachsenland*), as it appears in contemporary documents.

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<sup>1</sup> See here: Harald Heppner *Contribuții la Istoria României și a românilor*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, pp. 65-78.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolae Bocșan *Ideea de națiune la românii din Transilvania și Banat (secolul al XIX-lea)*, Presa Universitară Clujeană - Banatica, Reșița, 1997, p. 23.

The geographic element became increasingly complicated for the Transylvanian Saxons. They had a clearly delimited territory, as shown above, with a number of islands outside. The political trend of the Saxon Intelligentsia in the mid-nineteenth century was to incorporate, under the name of Saxon country ( Sachsenland ), all the Saxon inhabitants of Transylvania.

On the other hand, as shown in the Diploma Andreana, the Saxons were in a contractual relationship with the Hungarian Crown. In return for tax and military contribution they enjoyed wide autonomy. This automatically led to a sense of belonging to a State, to the Crown. To all of this shall be added, as shown above, the consciousness of belonging to the great German nation. All three elements: national territory, appurtenance to a state, consciousness of language solidarity created a complicated symbolic geography for Transylvanian Saxons.

Thus, there is the term *Heimat*, i.e. country of origin, native place, where the individual identified himself first, his place of origin in the narrow sense and more broadly, the Saxon country.

Then there is the *Vaterland*, identified with the homeland, the country where you live and to which you must be loyal. It is the country in which you are a taxpayer and you enjoy all freedoms and all obligations as all other citizens.

Last but not least, there is the *Mutterland*, the motherland, the sense of belonging to a large linguistic mass and hence affiliation to a certain mentality, certain traditions and customs.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, in times of trouble for the nation, the idea of *Mutterland*, of German affiliation, gains more and more ground. The myth of German affiliation, as we have seen, was clearly outlined as early as the neo absolutist period, being one of the key parts of the collective mentality in that period. We are dealing with attempts at defining that identity in the early 60's.

A self-image, which in addition to the myth of German affiliation, also brings into the equation the German-Protestant issue; a significant element in establishing the identity of the Transylvanian Saxons, regarding which there had been an increasing concern as early as the neo absolutist period. For a nation as that of the Saxons, with so many internal dissensions, faith and the Evangelical Church represented a genuine bond.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Lorand Madly, "Mentalități și percepții politice reflectate în poezii, cântece și pamflete ale sașilor ardeleni în perioada neoabsolutistă în perioada 1849-1860", în

We can say that restricting Saxon collective rights resulted in increased preoccupations regarding the preservation of Saxon identity. This element is specific not only to Saxons, but also Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania, due to the concern for the preservation of a specific national culture.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of German affiliation, of belonging to the Germanic culture was emerging more and more during this restless period. In the media of the 60s an increasing number of articles spoke of the Hohenzollerns Court in Berlin, Otto von Bismarck, Prussia and the actions taken by them in domestic or international affairs.

A conclusive example in this respect is an article in the *Krönstadter Zeitung* of June 26, 1868 entitled suggestively: *"We want to be and remain German"*: *"It must be said to all who are not Germans. I wish to explain thoroughly, in life and being, what it is to be non-German. Being non-German in the current situation of the peasantry is the spiritless defense of the land (...) of the agricultural order (...) Non-German is the corruption of the nation in a too sedate system, a corruption of our root language, a consequence of the three-year comradely economy that brought the support of the earth under an equal mass which peasants settle for by force (...) Non-German is the dominant aristocratic small peasantry (...) non-German is the crude pastoral economy (...) non-German is the condition of our handicrafts. Germans all over the world bring the spirit of time, the link between science and the art of craft, by means of association, through diligence and peace, through universality and craftsmanship, through skillful trade, which satisfies a neighboring nation. (...) Non-German is on these lands and these roads the poorly fulfilled national activities of Romanians, Jews and Armenians, which leaves open the Saxon national life."*<sup>5</sup>

We have here an appeal to fairness, to achieving national goals by adopting a life pattern, a cliché that characterizes German life in general, elements that will lead to preservation of the national being. The idea of German affiliation appears in an article in the spring of 1869, entitled *Saxons in Transylvania, a colony?* On this occasion, on the basis of a legal report by deputy of Cincu, Michael Binder on the future of Imperial Land it brings into question the idea of the colonization of this territory. We are dealing with nuances and different positions on the idea of German affiliation.

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*Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "George Barițiu" din Cluj-Napoca*, XLVI, Series Historica, 2007, pp. 160-161.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 163.

<sup>5</sup> *Kronstädter Zeitung*, nr. 99, Freitag, den 26. Juni 1868, p. 303.

Against this concept it is shown: *“The colony must make an exception. It achieves one service only in life.”* Binder wants to avoid suspicion of “state within a state” talking about it to others using the phrase “the status of a colony”. *It activates within as an indigestible, medieval legal relationship in a modern state-Let's try the idea of this colony on the territory of that State and not applied within the same modern nations such as Switzerland, Belgium, North America or England. These countries have put in place a definite settlement, while everywhere else countries such as medieval France with its sovereign provinces and Germany with its old independent towns and agricultures, (...) have long claimed (their existence n.n)”*<sup>6</sup>

The Saxons must have resented this because the term colony often involves pejorative connotations; the Saxons are basically second-class citizens. They take on a clear German identity, but they are citizens of a different state and they must respect it. An attitude of “real Politik” is obvious. Let the text speak: *“In the relationships of state science “The colony” does not suit Transylvanian Saxons, we are linguistically and culturally a German colony, but politically we are through the immigration from Germany to Hungary Hungarian citizens. We are a German planning by the Hungarian legislation and not by the German nation (...) Germany has no colonies (see here: Roschers <Untersuchungen über das Kolonialwesen>, in Archiv für pole. Ökonomie von 1847 und 1848)”*<sup>7</sup>

Also related to the idea of German affiliation, in May 1869, the newspaper editorial made an analysis of German newspapers in Hungary. Now the idea of German affiliation is an element of solidarity between different ethnic groups in Hungary. The article shows, for example, that most publications appear in Pest and Ofen, places where German is spoken widely.

Furthermore, it reveals that there is a significant number of Germans in the country, about a million and a half. To all these add 60,000 Hebrew who reported German as their mother tongue. Thus: *“...the German-language, which is specified in the law of nationalities in order to be acknowledged as a language of the country next to the Hungarian state language.”* Unfortunately, *“... fanatics of Hungarian as the language of the state find it intolerable”,* because: *“... particularly in the areas of representation, it just wants to play the part of a national language”.* The author wants to assure everyone that there is no danger. Moreover, German in Hungary: *“... helps promote culture and booming craft.”*<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Idem, nr. 38, Montag, den, 8 März 1869.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>8</sup> Idem, nr. 82, Montag, den 24. Mai 1869.

The national issue will be addressed by the *Hermannstädter Zeitung*. There the relationship state-community, nation-state raises a new problem, namely whether in Transylvania there is one political nation or several nations. We will analyze further the article entitled *Nation or nations in Transylvania*. The text shows the extensive legal knowledge of the editor-in-chief of the newspaper and at the same time his view on the national issue: "If Transylvanians continue to use in their political and legal relationship the concept of <nation> in relation to the importance and the science of the current state, they will face a variety of obstacles (...) I want to try to explain the word <nation>."

*It comes from Latin. Natio means birth, in subsequent uses as nation, not only for humans but also for certain classes of people and breeds of animals. The Romans called peoples Nationes as part of the Gens, the State. Hence, they will be in legal relationship with the state, under that reference they are named in Latin jus gentium. New peoples are called the same in international law (...) It speaks of nations such as Switzerland, North America and so on, although they form a motley mix of different peoples. (...) Why? - Because, the core of nationality, civic relationships, not just the natural state of the place of birth, race, origins of language, occupies the rest of state and social relations, under which people are born and live in the state, generally we know that people as citizens of the state are made up of not only natural but also cultural elements. Man is born and will live in a citizen community which state issues, laws, trade and social relationships surround and influence strongly."*<sup>9</sup>

We see here clearly articulated elements related to the German herderian conception on nation. Language, origin, culture are defining elements of national affiliation. They are subordinated to the idea of citizen, state, but also a mix of heterogeneous elements such as Austria: "They are rightfully called a nation, where almost all society factors are common, (...) Austria (...) communications and civil liberties have not developed as much as they have in the West European area, the crude racial spirit, must be seen as outdated and tedious spiritual and political factors of common state life must open up to a common political nationality. Notably, if we look at the Kingdom of Hungary and Croatia we see a zealous dominant status of each community. Transylvania also oscillates between old forms and old national privileges and a progressive need for unity within the empire in order to achieve a political nation".<sup>10</sup>

Beyond those constitutional issues, what shines through is the idea of nationality: "The nation is the communion of language, the foundation of culture and a common moral direction, where a mass of people come together

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<sup>9</sup> *Hermannstädter Zeitung*, nr. 140, Hermannstadt, Dienstag, am 14 Juni 1864, p. 524.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*.

to achieve their goal" and: "the state is an institution that is constituted by a high power over all peoples, it is the right, the support and the formation on which the people is founded and supported."<sup>11</sup>

We are dealing here with one of the most beautiful definitions of the concept of nation. We find specific elements of the political romanticism of the time. The herderian concept is also present, according to which a nation is an ethnic community based on common language and culture. Furthermore, the state is an instrument in the hands of the nation which is found in the center of things.

This inquiry into the constitutional future of Transylvania, of the nation and its role within the state proves once again the mark of Heinrich Schmidt. The author or authors of these articles show extensive legal training, which reveals the possibility that the legal practitioners around Sibiu Law Academy were present in the newspaper editorial staff.

The central idea dominating the *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Wochenblatt* and which constituted the essence of the political philosophy expressed by the newspaper, was the Germanic affiliation of the Transylvanian Saxons. This means that they looked for support in their national struggle; the idea of German affiliation offered an important boost to the national movement and at the same time it was a guarantee that the future of the Transylvanian Saxons in a Great Hungary would not be endangered. Let the text speak: "We are Germans, like you and we want to remain Germans! Germany! - Great word! Germany, mother of our parents, of our mother tongue (...) of our formation! Germany! How much this word delights us! And then he is warning their national opponents: "... and let no one forget that we are not just Saxons, we are German and we all (belong) to the great state."<sup>12</sup>

He expressed the political objectives of the publication, which, as we shall see, will overlap with the Old Saxon political ideology, imbued with obvious political conservatism and realism in which the idea of revolution is meaningless. A Saxon autonomy with a solid foundation in the old privileges and rights, leading to organic growth and not leaps of society, in communion with the other Transylvanian nations: "We want to preserve on this land ancient equal citizenship rights for all inhabitants (...) we preserve the sacred rights of all faiths and freedoms of conscience. We want to keep the (...) self-awareness and self-representation for

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<sup>11</sup> Idem, nr. 264, Hermannstadt, Dienstag, am 6. November 1866, p. 1061.

<sup>12</sup> *Siebenbürgisch-Deutsches Wochenblatt*, Probenummer, Hermannstadt, den 3. Juni 1868, p. 1.

*all domestic issues through free communities to free communities - (...) nuanced as localities, circles and all communities. - to legal representatives in all communities, to Saxon national University, and the first Saxon people's leader. We want to keep the right of the German language to be used in official documents, in church and school. (...) With all nationalities and all churches we want to live in harmony and peace. The peace of nationalities is the fruit of righteousness ... ".<sup>13</sup>*

We have here the clear expression of the interpretation of "nation", according to which every man's purpose is humanity, and one can not work unless they are part of the nation. Here in this harmony between individual and nation, language plays a major role, which is an expression of national character, of the manner of thinking of a people. Each nation is an organism, a world, a spirit that has its own traditions, ideas, thinking; hence, the idea of Volkstum as foundation of nationality.<sup>14</sup>

A different attitude regarding the idea of a German nation is to be found in the *Siebenbürgische Blätter*, which introduced in the Saxon written press the use of harsh language against the opposition. They are pamphleteers, highly engaged in the political struggle. Apart from this, unlike other central Saxon newspapers, it had a moderate stance regarding the Transylvanian Saxons' affiliation to the great German nation. Thus, in the article entitled *The Transylvanian Saxons and the Germans* the newspaper showed, in an organic concept, the specificity and uniqueness of the Saxon people and the differences from the German people: "*The Saxon people - like any other people - has a specific character, which becomes known and imposed in being and existence through a process which is specific and which differentiates them from other people. This has been imprinted for centuries through specific realities in which they lived and it is not reversible, through changes from the outside, but is a natural given that sprang from the known factors and is therefore valid and original.*"<sup>15</sup>

But some people want "... to approach and to mingle with foreigners. And within our small Saxon community we have noticed it lately". We see here, elements related to the so-called theory of forms without substance. The editor of the article accuses the fact that institutions and customs were imposed on the Saxon nation from the outside, which: "*unnatural, they are not organic and hence a caricatured association is being made (...) they are not for Saxons, (...) Transylvania is a genuine land, it is here that our self awareness and our specific nature must revive. See how, for instance, the*

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>14</sup> Nicolae Bocșan, *op. cit.* pp. 30-31.

<sup>15</sup> *Siebenbürgische Blätter*, nr. 22. Hermannstadt, den 23. September 1867.

*German literary language, which has enjoyed two decades of accumulation, at least in our great Saxon town, as you know, is unknown.*"<sup>16</sup>

It is a corrupt language, which makes a stranger not understand what a bourgeois citizen from Sibiu speaks. Even more than that, it evokes grimaces or smiles. For this reprehensible situation, he accuses those intellectuals who rage about the idea of Germany and the journalist is wondering: *"We would like to ask ourselves (...) why should we have an overall German self awareness, in which we feel in opposition to our specific Transylvanian self awareness"* He continues the debate on the question of German identity in an article entitled: *Saxon or German* in which he speaks of the differences between a German and a Saxon: *"I'm speaking of the differences between being a Saxon or a German. We should be concerned about that which we were recently given by Mr. Neugeboren or <Siebenbürger Bote>."* He says: *"... a Transylvanian Saxon is first of all different from a Transylvanian German and then from a German in Germany. Our Saxon, has, I understand, more than one difficult word and was given more than one judgment of this issue and hence it was not intended that the Saxon render special his characteristic properties and holy morals .. "* He deplores this Germanophile trend and accuses: *"... theft of our being ..."*<sup>17</sup>

This is too bad because others call them Saxons, not German: *"These Saxons are called by Hungarians strikingly and objectively in their papers szasz, and never Nemeti ..."* Moreover, *"...they call our documents written by Germans szasz Nemeti and not Lapok and we are pleased that our Siebenbürgische Blatter is an Erdely lap szasz, an original Saxon spreadsheet, not Siebenbürger Boten, that wants to appear as an enemy of Saxon originality and possibly not be successful."*<sup>18</sup>

The uncertain situation at the political and administrative level results in a series of inquiries into the status of the Germans in Austria and their role in the development of dual monarchy: *"The Germans in Austria are the remaining erroneous part there, that the decision on the German question was given in 1866, which will be decided by the Peace of Prague, but as <dualism> with Hungary, which was ratified honorably , so it is desired that the unique interventions at the foundations of the state law not be shaken."*

But at the same time: *"Who has not noticed that without the so-called interested Austrian nationalities, more recently the Poles and then the Czechs, the Slovaks, still more the Romanian and German Tyrolean, the Austrian national consciousness is reborn..."*<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, nr. 13. Hermannstadt, den 27 Februar 1867.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>19</sup> *Idem*, nr. 22, Hermannstadt, den 1 Juni 1870, p. 338



As shown above, confronted with a rather gloomy future with regard to their national existence, Transylvanian Saxons promote the idea of Pan German solidarity. Germany represents now the only support they can turn to in this confusing situation. Transylvanian Saxons increasingly confronted with the idea of a minority in a Hungarian national State, with loss of privileges and their national territory appeal more and more to the support of their blood brothers.

An appeal caused by fear of losing their national identity and often carried out by the Evangelical Church, which after 1876 became the only major national institution for Transylvanian Saxons. However, before the ideas that promoted affiliation to the great German nation the advocates of autochthony will appear. Grouped around the newspaper *Siebenbürgische Blätter* they were against adopting the German model *grosso modo* and drew attention to the originality of Transylvanian Saxon culture and civilization.

Danger of losing their national identity along with their medieval privileges would mark the existence of Transylvanian Saxons, who would henceforth relate to Germany. In fact, Germany, seen as the motherland, would cause profound changes in the national consciousness of the Transylvanian Saxons and this, corroborated with the lack of perspective in Transylvania, would eventually lead to massive emigration in the late twentieth century.

# On the Eastern Identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *On the Eastern Identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century.* For the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, whose ecclesiastical identity consists of elements of Eastern tradition combined with aspects taken from the Catholic confessional identity, the second half of the nineteenth century was a decisive period of constitutional organisation, which had an impact on several levels: dogmatic, institutional and disciplinary. Throughout this process of organisation and innovation of unprecedented scale in the history of this church, marked by momentous events like the establishment of the metropolitan see and of two new dioceses in 1853, the achievement of full canonical autonomy, the participation of the Romanian Greek-Catholic episcopate in the First Vatican Council, the organisation of three provincial synods, followed by a series of diocesan synods, the identity of Romanian Greek-Catholicism grew in complexity, in the sense that it acquired new identitarian elements from the patrimony of Latin-Rite Catholicism. The ecclesial and cultural context of the entire Catholic Church at that time evinced, in fact, the tendency to develop standardising policies, which eventually led to the Eastern-Rite Catholics' getting closer to the Latin paradigm of Catholicism. Our article aims to inventory the elements of Eastern extraction in Romanian Greek-Catholicism during this period of transformations, by reference to the context that inevitably brought about the rapprochement between this church and Rome and also entailed its becoming more distanced from its original tradition of Byzantine descent.

**Keywords:** The Greek-Catholic Church, confessional identity, tradition, Latinisation, synod, bishop

**Rezumat:** *Despre identitatea răsăriteană a Bisericii greco-catolice române în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea.* Având o identitate ecleziastică alcătuită din elemente ale tradiției răsăritene combinate cu aspecte preluate dinspre identitatea confesională catolică, Biserica Română Unită traversează în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea o perioadă hotărâtoare, de organizarea constituțională, cu impact pe mai multe nivele: dogmatic, instituțional, disciplinar. Pe durata acestui demers de organizare și inovare de o amploare fără precedent în istoria acestei

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<sup>1</sup> This work was possible through financial support of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project number POSDRU 89/1.5/S/60189 with the title "Postdoctoral Programs for Sustainable Development in a Knowledge Based Society".

biserici, jalonat de momente precum înființarea mitropoliei și a doua episcopii noi în 1853, obținerea deplinei autonomii în plan canonic, participarea episcopatului român unit la conciliul Vatican I, organizarea a trei sinoade provinciale urmate de o serie de sinoade diecezane, identitatea greco-catolicismului românesc crește în complexitate, în sensul în care achiziționează noi elemente identitare din patrimoniul catolicismului de rit latin. Contextul eclezial și cultural în care se mișca întreaga Biserică catolică din epocă, predispunea de altfel la politici de uniformizare, care au dus într-un final la apropierea catolicilor de rit răsăritean de paradigma latină a catolicismului. Articolul nostru dorește să inventarieze elementele de factură răsăriteană ale greco-catolicismului românesc în această perioadă de transformări, prin raportare la contextul care a determinat în mod inevitabil o certă apropiere de Roma a acestei Biserici și o îndepărtare totodată de tradiția sa originară de factură bizantină.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Biserica greco-catolică, identitate confesională, tradiție, latinizare, sinod, episcop

Ever since its inception, the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church has assumed two fundamental identities: one pertaining to its spiritual heritage, which derives from Orthodoxy, and the other representing the identity it received upon entry into the communion of faith with the Church of Rome, at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Throughout its entire historical existence, this Church has aspired to maintain these two identities in a relation of cohabitation, this rapport marking, in time, the specific coordinates of Romanian Greek Catholicism. The Greek-Catholic confessional identity was gradually integrated into the broader spectrum of the Romanian national identity. For the Romanians in the Austrian Empire, which became a dual monarchy in 1867, the confessional dimension served as an ethnic identification factor until well into the early twentieth century, which reveals the ever growing complexity of the problem of Romanian identity.

Over the course of the one century and a half that had lapsed from the Romanians' union with Rome, in 1700, until the establishment of the metropolitan institution (1853), the Romanian Church continuously developed its own identity,<sup>2</sup> and few are periods that have witnessed such a density of changes and transformations as the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. The founding of the metropolitan province with two new dioceses, at Gherla

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<sup>2</sup> Ciprian Ghișa, *Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania (1700-1850). Elaborarea discursului identitar*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2006.

and Lugoj (1853), and its removal, therefore, from the jurisdiction of the Roman-Catholic Archdiocese of Esztergom, the participation of the Romanian episcopate in the First Vatican Council (1869-1870), the regulation of its constitutional organisation by the three provincial synods (1872, 1882, 1900) and by a series of diocesan synods, the project of the Hungarian "Catholic Autonomy," and the establishment of the Hungarian Diocese of Hajdudorogh in 1912: all these represented events that profoundly transformed the identitarian physiognomy of Romanian Greek Catholicism.<sup>3</sup> An Eastern Church in terms of its rite and faith, and with a Catholic "superstratum" on a dogmatic level, the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church experienced, during the period under analysis here, an unprecedented dialectics between the old and the new and a regrouping of the components of its identity that eventually brought it closer to the Latin paradigm of Catholicism.

The document the vicarial synod of Năsăud sent to Metropolitan Ioan Vancea on 22 April 1872 stated that the mission of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church was to reconcile "Orientalism" and "Occidentalism" on the grounds of ecclesiastical life.<sup>4</sup> The rhetoric here highlights the complex and composite character of Transylvanian Greek Catholicism, which is also one of many possible ways of defining its identity. In areas of cultural and religious diversity, such as Transylvania and Austria-Hungary during this period, the Greek-Catholic confessional identity was defined in relation to a multitude of reference points. Identity always tends to be defined, historically, by delineation and dissociation from the "other," from alterity. History itself represents,

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<sup>3</sup> Referring to these aspects, see the following works: Ana Victoria Sima, *Vizitele nunțiilor apostolici vienezi în Transilvania (1855-1868)*, I-II, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2003; Ioana Mihaela Bonda, *Mitropolia Română Unită în timpul păstoririi lui Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu (1853-1867)*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2009; Nicolae Bocșan, Ion Cârja, *Biserica Română Unită la Conciliul Ecumenic Vatican I (1869-1870)*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2001; Ion Cârja, *Biserica și societate în Transilvania în perioada păstoririi mitropolitului Ioan Vancea (1869-1892)*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2007; Gabriel Adriányi, "Lo stato ungherese ed il Vaticano (1848-1918)," in Pál Cséfalvay, Maria Antonietta de Angelis (eds.), *Mille anni di cristianesimo in Ungheria*, Budapest, Hungarian Bishops' Conference, 2001, pp. 114; Cecilia Cârja (ed.), *Românii greco-catolici și episcopia de Hajdudorogh (1912). Contribuții documentare*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2009; Nicolae Bocșan, Ana Victoria Sima, Ion Cârja (eds.), *Identități profesionale în Europa Central-Orientală (secolele XVII-XXI). Lucrările colocviului internațional din 14-17 noiembrie 2007*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2009, pp. 393-404.

<sup>4</sup> I. Cârja, *Biserica și societate în Transilvania în perioada păstoririi mitropolitului Ioan Vancea*, p. 223.

as Helene Ahrweiler's inspired phrase suggests, "the field of the - conflicting or confident - encounter between Self and Other." Against the background of historical becoming, identity and otherness are dynamic attributes, alterity being regarded as a mirror of otherness, or as the identity of the other. Assuming and synthesising a complex historical experience, identity remains a unifying and securing phenomenon, which tends to remove all the perturbing elements from its field.<sup>5</sup>

These considerations explain very well the functioning of identitarian mechanisms at the level of macro-groups, as are, for instance, religious or national communities. As regards the Greek-Catholic confessional identity during the pastorate of Ioan Vancea, one may consider here the existence of a game of relating the self to multiple forms of alterity. The first hypostasis of otherness for the Transylvanian Greek-Catholic community was the Orthodox Church, with which it shared its rite, the Eastern ecclesiastical tradition, as well as elements of institutional organisation and functioning, of discipline and canon law. The difference between these two Romanian denominations, their specific and individualising characteristics entailed from their belonging to two distinct spheres of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which also accounted for their dogmatic, constitutional and disciplinary peculiarities.

A second segment of otherness insofar as the Greek Catholics were concerned was Catholicism of the Latin rite, which manifested itself in three ways: the relation with the papal See, the rapports with the Latin-rite Catholic hierarchy in Hungary, and the on-going contact between the believers at the level of the community life. The differences between Latin Catholicism and the Romanian Greek-Catholic model were augmented vertically, starting from hierarchy to the local communities. In the period under study here, it was through standardisation and the Latinising influences promoted by the Holy See that Latin Catholicism transferred new identity features to Greek-Catholicism in Transylvania; one could speak, in other words, about a superordinate (Latin-Catholic) identity and several other distinct identities, represented by the communities of Oriental rite. In addition to the confessional divide, the national split entailed the configuration of two alterities, themselves dissociated to the point of antagonism: "Greek Catholic" *v.* "Roman Catholic."<sup>6</sup> The repertory of confessions functioning

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<sup>5</sup> Helene Ahrweiler, "Imaginea celuilalt și mecanismele alterității," in Toader Nicoară (ed.), *Introducere în istoria mentalităților colective*, Cluj-Napoca, s. n., 1995, pp. 132-139.

<sup>6</sup> For a more comprehensive analysis, see the study signed by Nicolae Bocșan, "Alterități în relațiile interconfesionale din Transilvania în a doua jumătate a

as even more distinct alterities in relation to Greek Catholicism also comprised the reformed religions of Transylvania: Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Unitarianism.

Last but not least, it must be said that the identity of the Greek-Catholic Church itself was not unique and consistent: its structural identity was, rather, multiform and fragmented. The first level of identity was that developed by the elite and then transmitted to the local structures of the Church, as normative statutes adopted at the provincial and diocesan synods, through resolutions issued by the consistory, through circular letters, etc. At the level of the higher Greek-Catholic clergy in the archdiocese, but not limited to it, identitarian discourse reveals the existence of two major strands: one type of discourse which was anchored in the need to integrate the Greek-Catholic Church in the structures of Catholicism, as fully as possible, in compliance with Rome's directives, and another type of discourse which privileged the importance of identity elements of Eastern extraction, which intersected with the national movement in the Church. Then there was the level of the local structures: archpresbyteriates, parishes, and communities, where identity was also composite, evincing a strong attachment to the rite, a variable set of Eastern practices, to which were added practices, customs, usages, and so on, adopted *via* a Catholic channel (such as the Rosary, the cult of St. Anthony, etc.), as well as elements imposed by the elites' strategies of identity standardisation, to the extent to which these were assumed in the communities' current religious life. The local Greek-Catholic construct of identity also included non-Christian practices, superstitions, and folklore elements, which were repeatedly targeted by the purifying action of mass devotion promoted by the elites, and which pertain to the history of popular culture and the *longue durée* of collective mentalities.

In the various historical provinces over which its jurisdiction extended, the Greek-Catholic Church also had a variety of identities, reflected in its constitutional organisation, in the conduct of its relations with the state, with society and the other Churches in the Empire, and in the communities' religious life. Thus, while the metropolitan diocese was closer to the Eastern tradition, in the dioceses from the Western Parts, especially in Oradea, there functioned customs and rules of law and organisation adopted from the Latin Church. The Diocese of Gherla presented the greatest diversity in terms of its ecclesiastical identity,

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secolului al XIX-lea (romano-catolic-greco-catolic)," in Nicolae Bocşan, Valeriu Leu (eds.), *Identitate și alteritate. Studii de imagologie*, Reșița, 1996, pp. 96-110.

which reflected the specific characteristics of the archpresbyteriates inherited from the old Diocese of Făgăraș (29), to which were added the parishes taken from the Ruthenian Diocese of Munkács.

It should be added that the Romanian confessional identities, "Greek Catholic" and "Greek Oriental" alike, were under the constant pressure of the discourse of the laity, the intellectuals, the "intelligentsia" from the national movement. This was very well reflected in the media debates of the time, in the sense that the intention was to subsume and incorporate these identities within the general Romanian identity as a superordinate paradigm. In spite of modernisation and secularisation, Confession and the Church continued to represent, for the Romanians, a factor of ethnic-national identification and delineation, or a veritable "pillar of the nation."<sup>7</sup> In the period between the 1848 Revolution and World War I, the relationship between confessional identities and the Romanian national identity was, thus, polemical and competitive.

In the context in which the identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church underwent significant transformations during the second half of the nineteenth century, it is interesting to follow more closely what happened to the elements of Eastern origin of this ecclesiastical identity. For the entire period, the sources indicate the existence of a vigorous Eastern component of Transylvanian Greek Catholicism, despite the Latinising influences that inevitably affected its identity. Thus, the visits of the two pontifical delegations to Blaj in the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, and especially that from 1858, detected the wide persistence of Eastern elements in the ecclesiastical life of the Greek-Catholic Romanians, and a certain attachment to the Oriental traditions which sometimes did not comply with the manner in which Rome understood the Christian Orient and the practice of such church traditions. Aspects such as: the marriage and remarriage of the priests; the rather weak consideration granted to the doctrine of matrimonial indissolubility and, consequently, the much too great flexibility of the Greek-Catholic Church in accepting divorce; and the visible presence, at the level of the legal practices, of rules pertaining to the canon law of Byzantine expression, such as the *Pravila* or the *Pidalion* (*The Rudder*), left a negative impression upon the members of the aforesaid delegations, who would have expected to find the Romanian Greek Catholics more thoroughly grounded in the spirit of the Catholic religion. To these were added the excessively Orientalising conduct of

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<sup>7</sup> Alexandru Dușu, "Sacru și profan în sud-estul european. Secolele XVII-XIX," in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie din Cluj*, XXXI, 1992, p 43 sq.

Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu, who was defined by one of the rapporteurs of the 1858 delegation as an “ambitious and conniving metropolitan,” who did not hesitate to enter Orthodox churches on the occasion of the canonical visits he undertook.<sup>8</sup>

From among the testimonies of the period that revealed the Eastern dimension of the Greek-Catholic ecclesiastical identity, what is particularly suggestive is the list of the 10 points adopted on 10 August 1868, in view of the electoral synod that was to be held in Blaj the next day. These points, which have been defined by Constantin G. Patelos as a “clear and simple” statement of the “principles of Eastern Catholicism,” included: the restoration of the constitutional autonomy of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church; its exclusively dogmatic union with Rome, as stipulated by the four points adopted by the Synod of Ferrara-Florence; the dependence of the Romanian hierarchy upon the Holy See within the limits laid down by the Florentine Synod; the election of the prospective candidates to episcopal positions in the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church by a synod comprising both laity and clergy; the participation of the laity with a deliberative vote in the church administration; the annual convening of the diocesan synod by the bishop, etc. The 10 points indicate the stage reached in constructing its identity in relation to several essential landmarks: the Latinising pressure coming from Rome and the Roman-Catholic hierarchies in the empire; the official ecclesiastical policy adopted towards the Greek Catholics in the empire during the post-Concordat period; and last but not least, Orthodoxy, which was robust and well organised, given the reactivation of the metropolitan see in Transylvania (1864) and the promulgation of the *Organic Statute* (1868), with which Blaj shared common identity elements and from which it also distinguished itself at the same time. This statement of principles meant to assert the “constitutional bases of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church” was, according to the opinion of the same Patelos, among others, a project that had been visibly influenced by Orthodox ecclesiology. It caused the Nunciature and various imperial authorities in Vienna to experience significant anxiety and concern, deserving, from a Roman perspective, to be formally denounced on the grounds of its purportedly “schismatic” spirit.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> A. V. Sima, *Vizitele nunțiilor apostolici vienezi în Transilvania*, I, pp. 65-285.

<sup>9</sup> Constantin G. Patelos, *Vatican I et les évêques uniates. Une étape éclairante de la politique romaine à l'égard des orientaux (1867-1870)*, Louvain, Bibliothèque de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, Fascicule 65, 1981, p. 226.



Although he was appreciated at that time, in certain Romanian circles, as a promoter of Latinisation policies, Metropolitan Ioan Vancea repeatedly emphasised aspects of the Eastern identity of the Church he pastored. Thus, during the works of the First Vatican Council, he pleaded constantly in favour of maintaining the canon law and the institutions of the "Greek Church" unaltered. In the same context, at the request of the American Bishop James Gibbons, Vancea conceived a material presenting the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. On this occasion, the Romanian bishop drew up an essentialised portrait of the Eastern identity of Transylvanian Greek Catholicism, listing among the relevant features in this sense: the Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Greek rite "followed" by the Romanians since time immemorial, their ecclesiastical discipline and their calendar. In the texts prepared and submitted to various officials during the time of the council, as well as to the pope himself, there are references to elements of ecclesiastical life specific to the "Greek Church," preserved in the religious practices of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. The expression itself, the "Greek Church," frequently present in the identitarian self-definition of the Romanian Greek-Catholic elites of the time had, in our opinion, a generic significance; it was a way of showing certain aspects of Eastern identity in the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, or it had the value of a euphemism that attempted to avoid another denomination under which Eastern Christianity was known, namely the "Orthodox" denomination.

Along the Eastern dimension of its identity, which was evidently manifest in the life of the Greek-Catholic Church throughout the period under consideration here, several other important identitarian alignments were imposed upon it from Rome, in the context of the Latinisation policy or of the Holy See's efforts to bring the Greek Catholics closer to the Latin paradigm of Catholicism. The most eloquent proof that on a dogmatic level, the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church complied with the canon of identitarian orthodoxy stipulated by Rome is found in the decrees of the First Provincial Synod of 1872. The adoption, in these resolutions, of the dogma of papal primacy and infallibility, as pronounced by the First Vatican Council and mentioned *expresis verbis* in the Romanian synodal decrees, and then the insertion of the Immaculate Conception dogma in the same synodal decisions clearly suggest that the Greek-Catholic ecclesiastical identity had been moulded upon the canon imposed by the Holy See.<sup>10</sup> In other words, what had been included in

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<sup>10</sup> N. Bocşan, I. Cârja, *Biserica Română Unită la Conciliul Ecumenic Vatican I*, pp. 259-286; Olivier Raquez, "Riflessioni sul primo Sinodo Provinciale della Chiesa greco-

the Greek-Catholic patrimony were certain dogma-related innovations that had inevitably derived, after all, from the communion with Rome that the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church had assumed and practised.

The First Vatican Council and its ensuing Latinising innovations at the level of ecclesiastical life in the Transylvanian Greek-Catholic Church amounted to a more advanced stage of a process that Rome had envisaged and begun with the Greek-Catholic Romanians ever since the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, shortly after the elevation of their Church to the rank of a metropolitan see. In addition to this transfer of elements of ecclesiastical identity of Latin extraction onto the Greek-Catholic Romanians, the Holy See had its own vision of how they were to take stock of and practise their own Eastern tradition. Thus, after the visit to Blaj of the 1858 delegation and in the debates that were staged thereafter at the Nunciature and the Propaganda Fide Congregation, discussions focused, to a considerable extent, on the manner in which the Greek-Catholic Romanians had to profess the Eastern identity of their Church. Rome asked, for instance, that certain sources of Byzantine ecclesiastical law should be used by the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church in editions approved by the Holy See. Other specifically Eastern aspects of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church about which Rome issued recommendations and directives to be followed were: the priests' marriage, the functioning of justice courts in the Church (particularly the matrimonial tribunals), the election of bishops, and so on. In the efforts to know and organise the young province of Alba Iulia and Făgăraş that were made in the 1850s and 1860s, the Holy See wanted to ensure that the Greek-Catholic Romanians carried out an ecclesiastical life free from errors of dogma, discipline and organisation; in other words, that the elements of Eastern identity that characterised them did not expose them to a deviation towards what the Catholic terminology of the time called a "schism" (the "Greeks' schism") and to a weakening of the ecclesial bases of their adherence to Catholicism.

What appears to be evident is the fact that the debate of the time regarding the Eastern component of the Greek-Catholic Romanians' ecclesiastical and spiritual identity lends itself to manifold analytical and comprehension perspectives, two being essential from our point of view. The first one would consider Eastern identity at the level of the concrete reality, as it was assumed and practised on the quotidian level of

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cattolica di Transilvania, tenuto a Blaj nel 1872," in Ion Cârja (ed.), *I Romeni e la Santa Sede. Miscellanea di studi di storia ecclesiastica*, Bucharest-Rome, Scriptorium Publishing House, 2004, pp. 139-147.

religious life throughout the metropolitan province of Alba Iulia and Făgăraş. Closely related to this is the second level, of self-representations, of the self-perception of identity. The identitarian elements of Eastern extraction characterising Romanian Greek Catholicism were unevenly and variably distributed at the community and territorial levels. This subject has not benefited from systematic research yet; hence, our findings will not exceed a certain level of generality, with the possibility, however, of being furthered thereafter. However, it is evident that in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the metropolitan diocese (archdiocese) the elements of Eastern origin that pertained to the Greek-Catholic confessional identity were broader, more vigorous and more palpable. The nature of ecclesiastical life in the archdiocese was closer to that of Eastern Christianity, since the elements maintained here from the Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Orthodoxy it had stemmed from appeared to be more evident than in the Greek-Catholic communities that had experienced a more proximate cohabitation with Latin-rite Catholicism (the Diocese of Oradea). These elements of Eastern expression were visible, in the period selected for study, both at the institutional level (for instance, the election of the bishop in the archdiocese, whereas in the suffragan dioceses, bishops were appointed by the emperor and validated, in canonical terms, by the pope, according to the Roman-Catholic model practised at that time throughout the Austrian and, later, the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and at the level of religious, community life, which still evinced strong similarities with that of the Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania. The consciousness of this Eastern heritage, of belonging to the large family of the Oriental Churches was stronger here, and its sources were more easy to detect and ascertain. In the suffragan dioceses, located in the western and northern parts of the Romanian block in the empire - we refer here to the Diocese of Oradea and the Maramureş parishes taken from the Ruthenian eparchy of Munkács and included in the Diocese of Gherla when the latter was established - the transfer of elements of ecclesiastical organisation and religious life from the Roman-Catholic model led to the confessional identity of the Greek-Catholic Romanians drawing closer to Latin-rite Catholicism, while also, at the same time, preserving an Eastern component. The Romanians in these regions lived in closer proximity to the Roman-Catholic communities, of primarily Hungarian ethnicity; contamination with this ecclesial model could be noticed both at the level of the institutional organisation (the appointment of the bishop, the presence of the archdeaconry as a form of church organisation) and at the level of religious life (the presence of typically

“Latin” devotional forms: the cult of certain saints of the Catholic Church, the prayer of the Rosary, etc.). The presence to this day, in the previously Greek-Catholic villages of Maramureş, of the greeting *Praised be Jesus Christ!* is a clear sign of the influence exerted upon the Greek-Catholic Romanians in the area by the Roman-Catholic religious and cultural model (*Laudetur Iesus Christus!*).

Both in that period and in the historiography produced subsequently, there were discussions revolving around the phenomenon of Latinisation to which the Greek Catholics had been subjected, which was seen as an expression of the Holy See’s desire to bring the Eastern-rite communities in communion with Rome closer to the Latin or Roman model of Catholicism. Even though this was not a systematic, deliberate, or programmatically assumed policy, the phenomenon was nonetheless real and resulted in an increase of identitarian elements of Roman-Catholic (“Latin”) extraction in the ecclesiastical life of the Greek-Catholic communities, especially after the First Vatican Council, as noted above. Older or more recent international historiography is not unanimous in accepting such a qualifier, and, in this respect, there are rather categorical views expressed by historians such as Constantin G. Patelos, who speaks of “the projects of Latinising the Greek Catholics” both before the First Vatican Council and during the conciliar works.<sup>11</sup> There are also more nuanced views that argue that the Latinisation process was not an official programme Rome targeted at the Greek Catholics, but the expression of certain zealous Latin milieus, being largely the result of the West’s lack of familiarity with the traditions of Eastern Christianity, and of a cultural blockage that prevented the Holy See from acquiring substantial and profound information about the Greek-Catholic Churches in Central Europe and the Near East.<sup>12</sup> However, as regards the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, after the creation of the metropolitan see in 1853, the next step that the Holy See considered to be imperative was organising it primarily on a constitutional level; throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, Metropolitan Ioan Vancea brought a substantial contribution to this project. This organisation process was perceived by the more Orientalising milieus in the archdiocese and, partially, by the secular intellectuals of Greek-Catholic confession as an attempt at “Latinisation,” a lessening of the traditional dimension of the Greek-Catholic

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<sup>11</sup> Constantin G. Patelos, *Vatican I et les évêques uniates*, pp. 142-220.

<sup>12</sup> See in this sense Rosario F. Esposito, *Leone XIII e l’Oriente cristiano. Studio storico-sistemico*, Milan, Edizioni Paoline, 1961, pp. 499-517.

ecclesiastical life. The fact is that with the establishment and organisation of the metropolitan province of the Greek-Catholic Romanians in the mid-nineteenth century, many "Latin" innovations were introduced in the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, as demonstrated by a recent analysis.<sup>13</sup> In the northern and western segments of Romanian Greek Catholicism, the multicultural and pluri-confessional atmosphere was naturally conducive to "Latinisation"; inter-community cohabitation resulted in the transfer and adoption of elements of ecclesiastical identity from the "others." Beyond the diversity of interpretations and entry channels (official/ institutional or communitarian), in the second half of the nineteenth century there unquestionably occurred a certain expansion of the Roman-Catholic identity model, which was to limit the expressiveness and the visibility of the Eastern identitarian dimension of Romanian Greek Catholicism.

Starting from its being practised in the concrete, quotidian reality of religious life, the Eastern identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church was formulated in a specific manner at the level of the self-perception of identity, in the self-consciousness of this Church. Its awareness that it was an Eastern Church is evident in the discursive production of the Romanian Greek Catholicism of the time, present in various sources: the resolutions of the provincial synods, the Greek-Catholic press, in a dialogue with the Holy See and the Latin-rite Catholicism from Austria-Hungary. Identity discourse has, in effect, the function of conveying to the outside world and, especially, to certain confessional alterities, the image of a solid Eastern component pertaining to Romanian Greek Catholicism. The Eastern dimension of the Greek-Catholic confessional identity acted as an identitarian boundary with Latin-rite Catholicism, being consistently emphasised by the Romanian Greek-Catholic elites whenever it was necessary to assert the specificity of Romanian Greek Catholicism. The Romanian bishops' oral and written positions expressed at the works of the First Vatican Council represented one example in this sense, attesting to the manner in which the Romanian Greek-Catholic elites wanted to convey a certain self-image, and to bring the Eastern strand of its ecclesiastical identity to the awareness of the Holy See and the Catholic episcopate attending the council. Eastern in terms of its rite, customs, and, largely, discipline and

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<sup>13</sup> Ana Victoria Sima, "Despre inovațiile latine introduse în Biserica română Unită la jumătatea secolului al XIX-lea," in Constantin Bărbulescu et al. (eds.), *Identitate și alteritate 5. Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2011, pp. 72-82.

yet Catholic, nonetheless, on the grounds of its communion of faith with Rome: this is how the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church wanted to portray itself in the second half of the nineteenth century and beyond. The fact that the discourse promoted by the elites highlighted the Eastern identity component had the role of a securing factor, meant to avoid absorption or incorporation into the Roman-Catholic model.

Romanian bi-confessionalism in the Austrian (Austro-Hungarian) Empire reveals the existence of two Churches, "Greek-Oriental"<sup>14</sup> and "Greek-Catholic," for whose identity the Eastern component was fundamental. These were two ecclesiastical structures for whose self-image the spiritual treasure of Eastern Christianity represented a common identitarian reference. Obviously, at the level of the relation between the two Churches, the authenticity of the Oriental tradition was a disputed issue, an object of controversy; thus, while the Orthodox considered that because of its adherence to Catholicism, the Greek-Catholic Church had alienated itself from the Eastern tradition, which it had only preserved in an altered form, the Greek-Catholic milieu deemed that the Orthodox Church was "schismatic," in the sense that it belonged to those Eastern communities marked by the "Greeks' schism," which had removed themselves from communion with the Apostolic Roman See when the great Schism of 1054 had occurred. It must be said here that this expression, "schismatic," was not used by the Greek Catholics in their direct, institutional relations with the Transylvanian Orthodox Church or in the references it made to the latter; as we have noted elsewhere, this appellation belonged to the terminology used in the Roman milieu to designate the Christians of Orthodox faith. The elites of the Greek-Catholic Romanians used such an expression only in their communication with the pontifical milieu and with Central European Catholicism.<sup>15</sup>

Also, the references of the Greek-Catholic discourse to the Eastern tradition were not devoid of certain time- and content-related connotations: thus, the mentions and the allusions the Romanian Greek-

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<sup>14</sup> Referring to the denomination "Greek-Oriental," which was used in the period with regard to the Orthodox Church of Transylvania, see Mihai Săsăujan, "Biserică greco-neunită sau Biserică greco-răsăriteană? Considerații istorice și eclesiologice ale episcopului Andrei Șaguna la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea," in *Tabor*, II, 2009, no. 11, February, pp. 47-55.

<sup>15</sup> Ion Cârja, *Biserică și societate în Transilvania în perioada păstoririi mitropolitului Ioan Vancea*, pp. 225-246 *passim*; Ion Cârja, "Aspects of the image of the Orthodox with the Greek-Catholics in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century," in *Annuario dell'Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica di Venezia*, IX, 2007, pp. 247-254.

Catholic elites made on various occasions to the theology, spirituality and ecclesiastical life of the East concerned the Oriental Christianity of the first millennium and not the period after 1054. Speaking thus about the “traditions of the Greek Church” that were abundantly found in his Church, Metropolitan Vancea referred to the Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Church from before the Great Schism in his contributions to the debates of the First Vatican Council. The first Christian millennium with its seven ecumenical councils represented, in fact, in the nineteenth century, as it does now too, an identitarian basis and a wealth of faith that both Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Catholicism have equally assumed.

Last but not least, what also contributed, during this period, to the more blatant or more discrete affirmation of the two identitarian components of Transylvanian Greek Catholicism (Byzantine and Catholic) was the orientation of the episcopate, and the manner in which the bishops saw fit to make visible the identity portrait of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. The high prelate with the most acute pro-Eastern orientation during the second half of the nineteenth century was, undoubtedly, the first metropolitan, Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu (1853-1867), whose Orthodox inclinations and options vexed the representatives of the papacy and the Catholic episcopate in the empire. It was also interesting, in terms of the desire to promote a particular segment of ecclesiastical identity, how Metropolitan Victor Mihályi of Apșa (1895-1918) used the episcopal garments typical of the Eastern bishops, as shown in several photographic images from the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup> Other Romanian Greek-Catholic bishops had an ecclesiastical attitude and policy that positioned them closer to the Catholic identitarian component of their Church, as was the case, for example, of the Bishop of Oradea, Iosif Papp Szilágyi, who was much more open to the theses of the Roman Curia regarding the pope’s prerogatives, expressed in the works of the First Vatican Council, than his immediate superior, Metropolitan Ioan Vancea.<sup>17</sup> The Bishop of

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<sup>16</sup> See the images published in *Șematismul Veneratului cler al Arhiepiscopiei Metropolitane Greco-Catolice române de Alba-Iulia și Făgăraș pre anul Domnului 1900, de la Sfânta Unire 200*, Blaj, 1900, pp. 43-51.

<sup>17</sup> The two Romanian hierarchs’ positions expressed at the council are presented in: N. Bocșan, I. Cârja, *Biserica Română Unită la Conciliul Ecumenic Vatican I*, pp. 149-226; see also: Nicolae Bocșan, Ion Cârja, “La partecipazione del vescovato greco-cattolico romeno al Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano I° 1869-1870,” in Cristian Luca, Gianluca Masi, Andrea Piccardi (eds.), *L’Italia e l’Europa Centro-Orientale attraverso i secoli. Miscellanea di studi di storia politico-diplomatica, economica e culturale*, Brăila-Venezia,

Gherla, Ioan Szabó (1878-1911), also evinced a more pronounced pro-Catholic ecclesiastical orientation, intending, among others, to start a Jesuit Order branch of the Eastern rite in the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>18</sup>

The expression and valorisation of the identitarian components of Greek Catholicism belonged to the sphere of preoccupations of the elites of this Church; the prevalently rural communities, devoid of a religious and theological cultural background, obviously did not have access to highbrow approaches to identity construction. The believers were nonetheless attached to customs and usages, as well as to common practices of religious life, which were also essential for defining an ecclesiastical identity at the community level. What was by no means irrelevant, in this century of the modern nations' assertion, both for the elites and for the communities of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, was the convergence between the confessional and the national identities, in a co-founding relation which meant that until late, well into the twentieth century, confession served as a factor of ethnic-national identification and delineation in Austro-Hungary. What mattered, therefore, within the context of a more widespread self-perception, was the fact that, besides the Orthodox Church, the Greek-Catholic Church was also and above all a Romanian Church.

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Istros Publishing House of the Museum of Brăila, 2004, pp. 405-427; Idem, "A la recherche de l'identité. L'Église gréco-catholique roumaine au premier Concile de Vatican (1869-1870)," in *Nouvelles Études d'Histoire*, XI, publiées à l'occasion du XX-e Congrès International des Sciences Historiques, Sydney 2005, Bucharest, Academia Română Publishing House, 2005, pp. 191-205.

<sup>18</sup> *Episcopul Ioan Szabó și Sfântul Scaun. Corespondență (1874-1910)*, edited, introductory study and notes by Ion Cârja, Daniel Sularea, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2007, pp. 105-109.



# The Greek-Catholic Discourse of Identity in the Inter-War Period: The Relation between the Nation and People's Religious Confession

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**Abstract:** *The Greek-Catholic Discourse of Identity in the Inter-War Period: The Relation between the Nation and People's Religious Confession.* This paper aims to analyze the question of the confessional identity, focusing on one of its main constitutive elements: the relation between the nation and people's religious confession. The national identity and the confessional one have numerous common characteristics, influencing each other more or less depending on the historical evolution of events. These aspects are more profound in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-confessional environment, as otherness is one of the strongest factors that defines and strengthens the confessional as well as the national identity. This was also the case of the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania, in the inter-war period, taking into consideration its new status after the Union of 1918: a minority church in a country with an Orthodox majority. Its relation of otherness with the Romanian Orthodox Church also influenced its relation with the state and therefore it determined also the structure and the intensity of its discourse of identity. Among the most important themes of this discourse we can mention: the Greek-Catholic Church is the church of the forefathers; this Church, its faith and its believers are Romanian; the Union with Rome brought the Romanian people a lot of benefices – to all the Romanians and not only to those from Transylvania; the Greek-Catholic Church is a victim and is persecuted by the Orthodox Church and by the state authorities; the preservation of the Catholic faith will ensure the deliverance, but will also protect the nation and its unity; the national unity will be strengthened by the realization of the religious union of the Catholic and Orthodox, but this must be done by the union of the Orthodox Church with the Church of Rome, having the Uniates as a model, and following the principles established by the Council in Florence.

**Keywords:** confession, identity, nation, inter-confessional, otherness

**Rezumat:** *Discursul identitar greco-catolic în perioada interbelică: relația dintre confesiune și națiune.* Acest articol analizează problema identității confesionale, concentrându-se asupra unuia dintre principalele sale elemente constitutive: relația dintre națiune și confesiune. Identitatea națională și cea confesională au numeroase caracteristici comune, influențându-se reciproc, în funcție de evoluția evenimentelor istorice. Aceste aspecte sunt și mai intense într-un mediu multi-ethnic, multi-cultural și multi-confesional, de vreme ce alteritatea este unul din cei mai puternici factori care definesc și întăresc atât identitatea confesională cât și pe cea națională. Acesta a fost și cazul Bisericii Greco-Catolice din România în

perioada interbelică, luând în considerare noul său statut de după 1918: o biserică minoritară, într-un stat cu o majoritate ortodoxă. Relația sa de alteritate cu Biserica Ortodoxă Română a influențat și relația sa cu statul și a determinat și structura și intensitatea discursului său identitar. Printre cele mai importante teme ale acestui discurs putem aminti: Biserica Greco-Catolică este biserica strămoșească; această biserică, credința și credincioșii ei sunt români; Unirea cu Roma a adus numeroase beneficii românilor, în general; Biserica Unită este o victimă și este persecutată de Biserica Ortodoxă și de autoritățile de stat; păstrarea credinței catolice va asigura și calea spre mântuire, dar va proteja și națiunea și unitatea sa; unitatea națională va fi întărită prin unirea religioasă a catolicilor și ortodocșilor, însă aceasta trebuie să se facă prin unirea Bisericii Ortodoxe cu Biserica Romei, avându-i pe uniți ca model și urmând principiile Conciliului de la Florența.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** confesiune, identitate, națiune, inter-confesional, alteritate

### **1. Preliminary considerations**

This paper<sup>1</sup> aims to analyze the question of the confessional identity, focusing on one of its main constitutive elements: the relation between the nation and people's religious confession. A local ecclesial community evolves generally inside a smaller or larger part of a nation, sharing with it a series of values, which, in a considerable amount, are transferred to the ethnic element exactly from the religious confession that it embraces. Thus, the national identity, and the confessional one have numerous common characteristics, influencing each other more or less depending on the historical evolution of events. These aspects are more profound in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-confessional environment, as otherness is one of the strongest factors that defines and strengthens the confessional as well as the national identity.

In my present research, I will approach the case of the Greek-Catholic Church in inter-war Romania, taking into consideration the fact that the issue of its confessional identity has been less researched so far. The Uniate Church was a Romanian church facing a totally new context after Transylvania's unification with Romania, at the end of 1918<sup>2</sup>. First

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<sup>1</sup> The present study was realized as a result of a research financed through the programme *Programul Operațional Sectorial Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007-2013*, cofinanced through the European Social Fund, in the POSDRU project/ 60189 - *"Programe postdoctorale pentru dezvoltare durabilă într-o societate bazată pe cunoaștere"*.

<sup>2</sup> The future bishop Alexandru Rusu described in an article entitled *"The New Era and our Church"*, published at the end of 1918, this new context in which the Uniate Church found itself after Transylvania's union with Romania. He approached the main directions of change: the seize of the right of patronage held until that time by

of all, it became a minority church, in a state with a very large Orthodox majority. Nevertheless, it was not a small church either (one and a half million believers), almost half of the Transylvanian Romanians being Greek-Catholics, having also a significant number of faithful in the extra-Carpathian areas, due to the constant movement of people in the southern parts of the country and mostly in Bucharest. On the other hand, also because of population movements, Uniate parishes were formed in more remote areas as Bessarabia.

It was not the only Romanian church. As I mentioned before, the church of the majority of the Romanians was the Orthodox Church, which passed through a process of reorganization after 1918 as well, of institutional consolidation, enjoying a new status and a greater prestige after its rise to the rank of patriarchy in 1925. It was a church that reasserted its role inside the world Orthodoxy, as one of the most powerful and active Eastern churches, a position that was of an even greater importance considering the tragic situation of the Russian Orthodox Church after the political and military victory of the Bolsheviks and the formation of the Soviet Union. Thus, it is significant to mention the fact that in 1921, the Metropolitan Miron Cristea suggested that the 8<sup>th</sup> ecumenical synod of the church should be organized in Bucharest, having the support of the government and the accept of the patriarchs from Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem<sup>3</sup>; or the church's growing involvement in the world ecumenical movement, in a very intense dialogue especially with the Anglican Church, the Movement of the Old Catholics from Germany or with the ecumenical

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the king of Hungary; the change of the role of the church regarding the national problem - the church will be able to focus more on the spiritual matters (see also below); the change of the relation with the Orthodox Church which had the majority of the believers - eight times more than the Uniates; the government in Bucharest has a negative attitude towards the Greek-Catholic Church - the Uniates have a bad image in Bucharest, although there were many politicians that belonged to this confession; the relation with the government will depend also on the way in which the new provinces will be organized. He concluded: "A situation not exactly positive", but not desperate, and the author saw the perspective for improvement. Al. Rusu, *Noua eră și biserica noastră*, in *Cultura Creștină*, 1918, year VII, no. 17-20, p. 336-339.

<sup>3</sup> See a Greek-Catholic comment on the topic, signed by V. Macaveiu, in *Cultura Creștină*, 1921, year X, no. 10-11, p. 251-254.

organizations Life and Work and Faith and Order, that established, later, in 1948, the basis for the Ecumenical Council of Churches<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, the Greek-Catholic Church found itself in a situation of profound otherness, considering the fact that its relation to the Orthodox Church had always been very tense, with a lot of difficult moments in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This otherness manifested at the level of the hierarchies but also at the local level, in the parishes and church districts, with conflicts that affected the life of the rural or urban communities. The problems were of diverse nature, issues regarding properties, cemeteries, church buildings, conversions, mixed marriages, confessional schools, local traditions and customs. This situation led both sides to strengthen their discourse of identity that had always had a very important component of otherness. The message was often very offensive, sometimes insulting, sometimes defensive, both discourses having a lot in common, being, in fact, very similar. A large part of the concepts, images and stereotypes were not new, being used in the polemic literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Therefore, there are enough elements of continuity that formed the framework of the discourses of identity of the two Romanian traditional churches in the inter-war period.

One should also consider the fact that after 1918, another fundamental factor that determines the existence and evolution of a church changed: the state - church relation. Between 1700 (mostly after 1740) and 1861 (the beginning of the liberal regime in the political evolution of the Austrian Empire), the Greek-Catholic Church benefited of the large and open support of the state<sup>5</sup>. Later on, during the dualist

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<sup>4</sup> I.-V. Leb, *Ortodoxie și Vechi-Catolicism*, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană 1996, p. 67-150; Al. Moraru, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română între anii 1885-2000. Biserică. Națiune. Cultură*, vol. III, tom II, București 2006, p. 235-298.

<sup>5</sup> It is enough to mention the state support for the opening of confessional schools; granting of properties to the parish priests (*portio canonica*), which was very important in spite of all the difficulties, delays and the problems in putting this into practice; the reaction of the state institutions to stop and to reduce the effects of the anti-Union movements led by Visarion Sarai or Sofronie from Cioara; the resolution of many local problems in favour of the Uniates; the maintaining of the vacancy of the Orthodox Episcopal see for a very long time, from the death of bishop Gherasim Adamovici in 1796 and the election of Vasile Moga in 1811; the usage of the army in order to fight against "the danger" represented by the actions of Orthodox monks come from the south to take stand against the Union in the region of Hateg - 1828-1833; the foundation of the metropolitan see in 1853 and the delay in granting the same position to the Orthodox Church in Transylvania until 1864, in spite of all efforts and connections of Andrei Șaguna, bishop of Sibiu. See: G. M. Miron, *Biserica*

Austro-Hungarian regime, in spite of a modified situation, the Uniate Church still enjoyed a better position than the Orthodox one, as it maintained direct links with the Catholic hierarchy in Hungary, as well as with Rome<sup>6</sup>, and the number of its believers was quite close to the one of the Orthodox Romanians in Hungary. After 1918, the relation to the state was determined by the fact that the state was ruled by a newly Orthodox baptized king and by a government based in Bucharest.

Nevertheless, there are a few elements that ensured a satisfactory cooperation between the Uniate Church and the state authorities: there were quite many ministers and high rank officials that were Greek-Catholics (let's mention only Alexandru Vaida Voievod, Iuliu Maniu or Ștefan Cicio-Pop); the interest of the Romanian state to negotiate a Concordat with Rome led to the strengthening of the general position of Catholicism in Romania – Rome “negotiated” the Concordat having a global and uniform perspective over the whole Catholicism in the country – a Catholic Church with three rites, Latin, Greek and Armenian, with Romanian, Hungarian, German, Armenian, Ruthenian or Slovak believers<sup>7</sup>; the Greek-Catholic bishops were senators *de jure*, alongside the Orthodox hierarchs; and locally, especially in Transylvania, there were a lot of local officials that embraced the Greek-Catholic confession.

On the other hand, one must not forget another fundamental element for the evolution of the Uniate Church in the inter-war period: the way in which it defined its place inside the universal Catholicism. I repeat the fact that the Greek-Catholic Church was a local church,

*greco-catolică din Transilvania. Cler și enoriași (1697-1782)*, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană 2004; D. Dumitran, *Un timp al reformelor. Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania sub conducerea episcopului Ioan Bob (1782-1830)*, București: Ed. Scriptorium 2005; C. Ghișa, *Episcopia Greco-Catolică de Făgăraș în timpul păstoririi lui Ioan Lemeni 1832-1850*, vol. I, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Argonaut 2008; I. Bonda, *Mitropolia Română Unită în timpul păstoririi lui Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu (1853-1867)*, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană 2008.

<sup>6</sup> For the relation between the Uniate hierarchy in Transylvania and the Hungarian bishops, respectively Rome, see: I. Bonda, *op. cit.*; A. V. Sima, *Vizitele nunțiilor apostolice vienezi în Transilvania 1855-1868*. vol. 1-2, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană 2003.

<sup>7</sup> For the question of the Concordat, see: I. M. Bucur, *Din istoria Bisericii Greco-Catolice Române (1918-1953)*, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Accent 2003, p. 48-60; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 3, București: 1981, p. 389-405; I. M. Bucur, C. Păiușan, I. Popescu, D. Preda, *România – Vatican. Relații diplomatice*, vol. 1, 1920-1950, București: Ed. Enciclopedică 2003, p. 32-44; C. Ghișa, *Întărind vechi alterități, ridicând noi frontiere: Concordatul dintre România și Vatican – 1929*, in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Theologia Catholica*, 2010, tom LV, no. 4, p. 43-56.

enjoying a certain degree of internal autonomy inside the Catholic Church, preserving its own forms of institutional and hierarchical organization, but also of rite and tradition. The church had already shaped a very particular profile of identity in which its Eastern, Greek, tradition at the level of doctrine, ritual, discipline, canon and church institutions, received in time numerous and various Latin influences<sup>8</sup>. In the inter-war period, the consciousness of this church of belonging to the universal community of Catholicism was very much accentuated, which led to the deepening of the Catholic dimension of the Greek-Catholic identity<sup>9</sup>. Here is a very eloquent example. In the section of "Catechesis" published in the journal *Curierul Creștin*, from Gherla, the children were taught that the Christians that "had always been one" and maintained the true faith since the time of Jesus Christ, were called "Catholic Christians"<sup>10</sup>; then, at the question: "To whom do you have to thank for being a Catholic Christian?", the answer was: "To Jesus Christ Himself"<sup>11</sup>. Thus, they were Catholic believers, belonging to the great Catholic family. That was on the first place and only then it was specified that "we attend the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church, because we are Greek-Catholic Romanians. Or, we follow the Romanian Greek-Catholic law!"<sup>12</sup>.

The status of religious minority and the relation of otherness to the Romanian Orthodox Church are two of the most important elements that determined the profile of identity of the Greek-Catholic Church in

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<sup>8</sup> See: C. Ghișa, *Aspecte ale identității confesionale la începutul mileniului III. Studiu de caz: Biserica Greco-Catolică din România*, in vol. *Identitate și Alteritate. Studii de istorie politică și culturală*, vol. 5, edited by: C. Bărbulescu, I. Bonda, C. Cârja, I. Cârja, A. V. Sima, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană 2011, p. 156-158.

<sup>9</sup> A few defining elements that led to the strengthening of a general Catholic identity of the Romanian Greek-Catholic community were: the intensive and constant promotion of the image of the pope in front of the believers; promotion of the image of Rome as the source of the Catholic but also Romanian spirituality (see also below); promotion of several elements of Latin rite – The Passions of Christ, the Rosary, the Eucharistic cult, frequent mentions of the Latin saints in sermons and so on; promotion of lay and spiritual associations according to the line defined by the Catholic Action; organization of pilgrimages to Rome; usage in the press, sermons or catechisms of a vocabulary that made direct reference to the fact that the Greek-Catholics were "Catholics" and not a section of Catholicism, respectively, that the true and redemptory church was the "Catholic Church". See for instance: N. Brînzeu, *Catehism pentru clasele III-VI ale școlii primare*, Blaj: 1924, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, Gherla, 1923, year V, no. 6, p. 33.

<sup>11</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 8, p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 6, p. 33.

inter-war Romania. The third one was, naturally, the relation that the church constructed with the nation and the new national state. The evolution of this relation as well as the way in which the Greek-Catholic discourse of identity referring to these aspects was elaborated can be understood only in the framework defined by the abovementioned general context.

Describing the new situation of the Uniate Church after 1918, Alexandru Rusu, the future bishop of Maramureș, made a very relevant comment: "The situation of our church has been changed also in relation to its approach on our national problem. In the time when its faithful suffered deeply under the oppression of the government in Budapest, the church had to defend by all means the Romanian character of its institutions. That was the only way to preserve the Romanian soul of the believers [...] Its attitude of Romanian strong resistance (ready to sacrifice all for this ideal) was naturally required not only by national reasons but also by religious ones. Therefore, our church – as well as the Non-Uniate one from Sibiu – became a true shield and watch tower for the strength of our ethnical character. This is how it had been so far. Today on the other hand, the situation has changed and it will be totally different as the political status of the country will consolidate completely. The national idea must not, and more precisely, will have not to be protected by the church in the sense that it has been until now. This role belongs to the state, and thus, the church will focus on its natural and primordial role as care taker – of course also in a Romanian fashion – of the more strict religious part of the soul of its believers"<sup>13</sup>. A change in roles was predicted. And indeed, the church activity in the "national" field modified. But, if the church did no longer have to protect the nation against the desnationalization tendencies supported by a state ruled by a foreign ethnical majority, it will find itself involved in another type of struggle, in which the key-word was: the loyalty towards its own nation / state. It was a new problem and utterly unexpected. The Uniate Church was put in the situation to get involved with energy in a very different kind of debate, whose central stake was to demonstrate its loyalty towards the state, and to defend the idea that it represented the Romanian nation, and that it was a national church.

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<sup>13</sup> Al. Rusu, *Noua eră și biserica noastră*, in *Cultura Creștină*, 1918, year VII, no. 17-20, p. 336-337.

## 2. Are the Greek-Catholics “good Romanians”?

Discussing on the relation between the confession and the nation, I will mention from the very beginning, that the inter-war Greek-Catholic discourse on the nation was not extremist. One can find enough anti-Nazism and anti-racism positions of the Greek-Catholic authors of the time<sup>14</sup>. There were voices that spoke with admiration about Mussolini, but these kinds of attitudes were largely present amongst the political or cultural class in Romania<sup>15</sup>. Thus, they can not be considered as pro-fascist positions in the profound sense of the term.

The Greek-Catholic discourse insisted a lot on the idea that the church, with its clergy, believers and faith, was “Romanian”. Look again over the formula used in the “Catechetic” section of the journal *Curierul Creștin*, mentioned above. In 1924, when the exclusion from the Church of father Ioan Pașca, the spiritual conductor of the theological seminary from Gherla, because of his conversion to Orthodoxy, was made public, one of the reasons invoked was: that “he abjured our Romanian Uniate faith and its church”<sup>16</sup>. During the inter-war years, the priests would sign on different books or documents with the following expressions: “The Romanian Greek-Catholic Church”, respectively “Romanian Greek-Catholic priest”. On a Gospel from 1765, it was written in 1928 as follows: “this Holy Gospel was used in the Romanian Uniate Greek-Catholic church from Muncel, Sălaj county”<sup>17</sup>.

Why were these specifications necessary? They insisted on these identifications and made a lot of assertions with obvious patriotic connotations, precisely to underline the link between this church and the Romanian nation. Opening the works of the diocesan synod from 1923, bishop Iuliu Hossu said that all that was to be decided and put into

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<sup>14</sup> See for instance: A. Popa, *Religia sângelui. Puncte de orientare în problema rasistă*, in *Cultura creștină*, 1938, year XVIII, no. 8-9, p. 521-535; and in no. 10-11, p. 674-689.

<sup>15</sup> During the discussions from the Romanian Senate in 1924 regarding the issue of the confessional schools, the name of the „great man”, Mussolini, was used with admiration rather often, including by bishop Iuliu Hossu, that noted his success in Italy for the rising of the prestige of the monarchy, for the defense of the Church and for the celebration of the national heroes. Hossu’s remarks were accepted with enthusiasm by the senators. See: *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 21, p. 111.

<sup>16</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 4, p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> I. Oros, *Circulația în Sălaj a cărții vechi românești de Blaj (1753-1830)*, in *Apulum*, XXXIX, 2002, p. 374. For the way in which the names given by the Greek-Catholics to their own church evolved during the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century and for the way in which the Uniates identified themselves, see: C. Ghișa, *Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania. 1700-1850. Elaborarea discursului identitar*, Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Presa Universitară Clujeană 2006, p. 76-90, 96-110.



practice, would be “for the flourishing of the Church and the happiness of the people”<sup>18</sup>. Obviously, these two elements are directly connected. The same Iuliu Hossu, defending in front of the Senate the existence of the confessional schools, also said: “The voice of our grief hasn’t been heard very much in these last five years. Why? Because we haven’t wanted to give the impression that we continue the fight with the State, which is us, whom we love, for whom we are ready to sacrifice ourselves, with whom we identify our whole life, in whose service we wish to put all the energies of our souls so it flourishes”<sup>19</sup>.

There was a discourse of the Uniate Church with patriotic message that was intensified in the moments when the main events from the history of the nation were commemorated. Announcing the participation of the metropolitan and the Uniate bishops to the festivities dedicated to Avram Iancu in 1924, it was said that these occasions were perfect opportunities to celebrate “the Romanianism” and to honour the national heroes that paid a great personal tribute in the revolutionary events from 1848-1849, “amongst who, our church can mention with legitimate pride an entire series of its sons”<sup>20</sup>. Besides, the 1848 Revolution was an event celebrated annually with great pomp in Blaj, precisely because of the central role played by many Uniate personalities in the events from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>21</sup>. In 1922, with the occasion of the 3/15 May celebrations, there were organized in Blaj: solemn liturgies, ceremonies in the places with historical value, official speeches, sportive events, artistic moments on the Field of Liberty, fanfare, choir and orchestra concerts, an official banquet<sup>22</sup>. Festivities like this were supposed to prove and to strengthen once more “the genuine and deeply Christian Romanian spirit that exists in our Blaj and in our schools”<sup>23</sup>. It was underlined like this the important and decisive role played by the Uniate Church and its clergy in the development of the people during its history. In the Greek-Catholic press, one can easily find expressions like: “our clergy that had always had the lion’s share in all the movements that led to the enlightenment and the happiness of the Romanian people”<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 9-10, p. 52.

<sup>19</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 18-19, p. 94.

<sup>20</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 16bis, p. 83.

<sup>21</sup> See the article of Ioan Coltor, *3/15 Maiu*, in *Unirea*, Blaj, 1922, year XXXII, no. 19, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> See the schedule of the festivities, in *Unirea*, 1922, no. 19, p. 1-2; no. 20, p. 2-3.

<sup>23</sup> *Unirea*, 1922, no. 20, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 17, p. 86.

Why was it so necessary to insist that much on this issue? Of course, the patriotic rhetoric was common and often used in the political discourse of the time. The Uniate hierarchs used it to defend the interests of the church in front of the state institutions. On the other hand, the Greek-Catholics were forced to repeat these declarations of loyalty and continuous attachment to the national cause in order to counter-balance two types of negative propaganda: first, the idea that being Catholics in Transylvania, the Uniates were in fact Hungarians – or, that they were not “good Romanians”; respectively, the accusation of being loyal to the internationalist cause of the universal and imperialist Catholicism, formulated by the Orthodox voices, especially in the context of the very tense debate on the signing of the Concordat between Vatican and Romania, in 1929.

The fact that a Hungarian Roman-Catholic Church existed in Romania at the time, and that the relation between Romania and Hungary after the Treaty of Trianon was glacial, created a context in which the polemic discussion over the presumed doubtful loyalty of the Catholic citizens in Romania, Hungarian or Romanian, towards the state, to be very strong<sup>25</sup>. The image of the Greek-Catholics was directly affected by the accusations or the negative insinuations expressed in the lay or Orthodox press, such as those that started from the analysis of different opinions published in the journals from Hungary. An example from 1922 is relevant in this matter. The Romanian journals reacted harshly to the publication in Budapest of a point of view of the Catholic military bishop Istvan Zadavec, who said: “Catholicism would be the only driving power of the integrity of the Hungarian Kingdom”. Well, considering that this would also imply Transylvania, it is easily understandable why there were articles in the Orthodox press supporting once again the idea that Orthodoxy is the religion of the Romanians and that it is strictly connected to Romanianism. The accusations of disloyalty towards the state brought to the Greek-Catholics were, in this context, almost natural and were encouraged also by the fact that exactly during that time, the Uniate hierarchy did not

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<sup>25</sup> In the Orthodox press of the time, circulated, for instance, the idea that it was a very tight link between Hungary and Vatican, and that Rome traditionally granted protection to the Hungarians “against us” (Romanians – n.n.), because “the Hungarian clergy is a very vigorous element of propaganda”; thus, the popes strengthened the Church in Hungary in order to support the expansion in Transylvania. See: *Glasul Monahilor*, București, 1924, year I, no. 13, p. 3-4, article „În cheștiunea Concordatului. Interesante declarații făcute de un fruntaș al Bisericii noastre. Influența papistașismului”.

take part to the religious service held in the cathedral from Alba Iulia on the occasion of the crowning of the king and the queen (see also below)<sup>26</sup>.

For the first type of accusation, it is interesting to mention an episode from 1927, when, during a debate in the Senate regarding the reorganization of the parishes, bishop Iuliu Hossu protested openly against the fact that the Uniate hierarchs were repeatedly put to sit alongside the “minorities”. He insisted on the fact that his protest had nothing to do with any anti-Hungarian feelings, but to the necessity to contest the wrong perception according to which the Uniates would be “Hungarians”<sup>27</sup>.

The Easter pastoral letter from 1932 of bishop Alexandru Rusu referred to “an attack” launched by the patriarch of the “Non-Uniate with the Rome of the Saint Peter Church, Church nowadays known as Orthodox”, who had apparently invoked the non-existence of a link between the Romanian nation and Greek-Catholicism. Bishop Rusu said: “A new attack started in the past days, refreshing an old story, aiming to take the sons of our church out of the body of the Romanian people, whose fundamentals of unity have been constructed by them with such lightened stones”<sup>28</sup>.

In the Christmas pastoral letter from 1935, asking for the collection of money meant to help the Romanians from seven counties from the Eastern part of the country affected by drought, the bishop of Maramureș, Alexandru Rusu, specified the fact that this gesture had to be done also by the Greek-Catholic believers “because, although we are Catholics from the borderland, we are as Romanian as any Orthodox from the heart of the country”<sup>29</sup>. The expression “although Catholics” says a lot about the need to underline as often as possible the idea that

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<sup>26</sup> See the Uniate comments on this situation in *Unirea*, 1922, no. 43, p. 1-2; no. 44, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1927, year IX, no. 3-4, p. 23.

<sup>28</sup> The texts of the pastoral letters of bishop Alexandru Rusu were collected by dr. Ioan Timbuș, who analyzed them in a material entitled *Abordări problematice în pastoralele episcopului Alexandru Rusu în perioada 1931-1945*, which is under print. The documents were found in the fund *Protopopiatul Greco-Catolic Baia Mare*, folder no. 142, from the National Archives' Branch from Baia Mare, Maramureș. In the inter-war period, they were published in *Buletinul Oficial al Diecezei de Maramureș*, or in the journal *Cronica* from Baia Mare. In the text of pr. Timbuș, the Easter pastoral letter from 1932 is the pastoral letter no. 5.

<sup>29</sup> I. Timbuș, *Abordări problematice în pastoralele episcopului Alexandru Rusu în perioada 1931-1945*, pastoral letter no. 15.

belonging to Catholicism did not implicitly mean the abandon of one's nationality.

In the journal *Cultura Creștină*, in 1937, an article protested against the fact that during another debate in the Senate around a scandal caused by the takeover by the state authorities of a church of Uniate Ruthenians from Suceava in order to give it to the Orthodox community, one of the arguments used as justification was the assertion that the Greek-Catholic Ruthenian believers were not "good Romanians". The Greek-Catholic point of view was defended by the bishop Alexandru Rusu. The articles mentioned that: "the senators shouted that they were Romanians, whereas the Ruthenians from Bucovina were not 'good' Romanians. Even more, they dared to teach lessons of Romanianism to the bishop (Rusu - n.n.), who, through blood, feelings and the act of a whole life dedicated to the people, is more Romanian than all the horde of the 'nationalist' profiteers with a problematic Romanian name and past"<sup>30</sup>.

It was also a need to fight against another perspective shared by some important politicians, mostly from the southern part of the country, regarding the Uniate church: the idea that although being a Romanian church, because of its belonging to the Catholic universe (the external perspective), the Uniate Church could harm the national interests of the state. It was exactly the message that the journal *Unirea* disputed in 1922, commenting on an article from *Adevărul* that referred to the political convictions of I. I. Brătianu, the leader of the National Liberal Party, regarding the Uniates<sup>31</sup>.

The suspicions and the accusations expressed by certain politicians and by a part of the press regarding the lack of loyalty of the Uniate Church towards the new Romanian state were supported and inflamed by the attitude of the Greek-Catholic hierarchs during the ceremony of crowning of king Ferdinand I and queen Mary, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1922: the bishops celebrated a separate *Te Deum*, in the Greek-Catholic church from Alba Iulia, in the honour of the event and did not enter the Orthodox cathedral to take part to the official religious service, assisting afterwards to the ceremony of crowning alongside the other Catholic bishops - Hungarian, of course. The articles from *Unirea*, from the days close to the event itself, signalized and criticized the fact that the religious part of the ceremony was "taken over" by the Orthodox,

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<sup>30</sup> Augustin Popa, *Abuzuri „patriotice”*, in *Cultura Creștină*, 1937, year XVII, no. 1, p. 51-54.

<sup>31</sup> *Unirea*, 1922, no. 27, p. 1.

arguing that the Catholic bishops could not possibly have attended this service because of “dogmatic” reasons<sup>32</sup>. Described by politicians like Nicolae Iorga as “an unforgivable mistake”, the gesture of the Uniate hierarchy inflated the spirits and the polemic both in the lay and religious environment. It is relevant that in the Orthodox journal issued in Oradea, *Legea Românească*, it was published an article starting from this “scandal” with a title that needs no additional comments: “Romanians or Uniates?”<sup>33</sup> Officially, the attitude of the hierarchs was explained by Alexandru Nicolescu, bishop of Lugoj, in a press interview, in which he insisted precisely on the idea that the relation with Rome was not a barrier against the love for the nation<sup>34</sup>.

Of course, it is most obvious that the Greek-Catholic authors of the time saw a great benefit in the universal character of Catholicism, starting from the argument that it can combat “the intolerant nationalism”<sup>35</sup>. Following this logic, it is not surprising that the Uniates accused the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of supporting a dangerous type of nationalism<sup>36</sup>. As argued by sociologists Inger Furseth and Pal Repstadt, the basic principles of the universal religions do not match with the fundamental characteristics of nationalism<sup>37</sup>. A religion as Catholicism creates a double loyalty for its believers, an internal one, centred on the national feelings, and an external one connecting the individual to the general space of the Catholic world and to its Roman centre.

In spite of all these, the representatives of the Greek-Catholic elite from the inter-war Romania believed in a Catholicism that would contain also a nationalistic orientation, understood as love for the people and as everyone’s fulfilment of duties towards the nation. In the article “Catholicism and Nationality. The Political Sense of the Catholic Nationalism”, published by Eugen Stroescu in *Unirea*, it was argued: “The eternal moral demands (for the Christians – n.n.): love your people! On top of the commandments regarding our fellows, God put the duty towards the family, which extends with necessity over the large family, over the nation, in which He wanted for each of us to be born in. [...] As Catholics aware of the divine law, for us, nationalism is not a facultative

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<sup>32</sup> See: *Unirea*, 1922, no. 41, p. 1; no. 42, p. 1; no. 43, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Legea Românească*, Oradea, 1923, year III, no. 9, p. 5-6.

<sup>34</sup> See: *Unirea*, 1922, no. 46, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> See, for instance, an article from *Curierul Creștin*, 1927, year IX, no. 11, p. 79.

<sup>36</sup> See: *Curierul Creștin*, 1926, year VIII, no. 5, p. 29.

<sup>37</sup> I. Furseth, P. Repstad, *An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion*, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited 2006, p. 106.

Evangelical advice from which we can restrain, but a command that we can not deny without committing a sin"<sup>38</sup>. So, nationalism is an Evangelical law! Then, Stroescu continued in the following issue of the journal: "National and international are relatively modern terms. Catholic has a broader sphere of meaning which contains both but means so much more"<sup>39</sup>. Applied to the Catholic world, these terms are not contradictory because they combine harmoniously in the unity of the universal Catholicism coordinated by a single head – obviously, the pope in Rome. The local values are thus saved, and the extremist and fundamentalist phenomenon is not allowed. This type of Catholic nationalism can be focused also on the national values that it needs to protect as well, but it also has an opening towards the exterior, in a framework regulated by an universal institution. Stroescu argues: "Only a blind nationalism without the notion of an international coordination or a nationalism fascinated by the shining of its own imperialism can deny the need for the guidance from an extra-national organism. This organism exists ..."<sup>40</sup>.

The Greek-Catholics perceived Rome exactly as a source for the strengthening of "Romanianism", of the feelings of loyalty towards the nation, of their own patriotism. Rome supported their motivations to fight for the nation and for its ideals. This is the meaning of the words said by bishop Alexandru Nicolescu: "From Rome, my thoughts bring me spontaneously to my people. Only Rome itself gives me the most classic and beautiful example of how one should love his people"<sup>41</sup>.

This was also the message of the following lines published in *Curierul Creștin*: "In the warm bosom of this *Alma Mater* (the Propaganda Fide Congregation in Rome – n.n.), the long line of Uniate priests had been raised, starting with Cotorea, Caliani, Grigore Maior and onwards to those who today sit on our bishop sees. And here, they did not learn only the theological sciences, but even more, they earned a deep love for their people and the feeling of national pride. [...] This feeling of national dignity was the source of all changes in the history of our people since 1700"<sup>42</sup>. Or, the message of the poem entitled "Doina unui român din Roma" (The Song of a Romanian from Rome), published in 1936: "And

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<sup>38</sup> *Unirea*, Blaj, 1922, no. 6, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, no. 7, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, no. 7, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, no. 25, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1927, year IX, no. 11, p. 80. See similar opinions regarding the festivities organized in the honour of the Congregation Propaganda Fide, in *Unirea*, 1922, no. 22, p. 3.

from the old Rome / Mother of Romanianism / [...] You have the blood of Traian / And the Roman Soul / You have the faith of the ancestors / Come to your good Mother"<sup>43</sup>.

Of course, there are numerous examples in the Orthodox discourse as well insisting on the deep relation between the nation and Orthodoxy, a theme that was very much approached in the inter-war period. I shall give only two illustrative examples for this issue. First, an article signed by Nicolae Teianu, published in 1934, in the journal *Frăția Ortodoxă Română* from Craiova, entitled "I will defend the Orthodoxy of my people with my speech and my act". He argued: "Our people is more connected to its Orthodoxy than any other". The people preserved its faith through difficult times and resisted to all hardships thanks to the Orthodox faith. The culture and the idea of the national unity were born also in the Orthodox ecclesiastical environment<sup>44</sup>. And secondly, an article from 1933, published by prof. N. Stoicescu in the journal *Ortodoxia*, having the following title: "Our Orthodoxy". He argued: "Orthodoxy is an integrated part of the being of our people and is its true mother, who gave it birth, raised it, gave it comfort through hardships and cared for it with the love of God for innocent creatures"<sup>45</sup>.

### 3. An element of discourse: "The Faith / Law / Church of the Forefathers"

Reading the abovementioned examples, one can understand the efforts made by the Greek-Catholics to remind constantly to all that they were "Romanians", belonging to a "Romanian church" and that they were loyal to the state. Another question rises: how "new" is this faith / church? The search for an answer brings in discussion another series of expressions such as "the faith of the forefathers" or "the law of the forefathers", which are some of the most powerful expressions in the discourse of identity of a church. It is interesting to notice that both Romanian churches used them referring to their own faith / law<sup>46</sup>. The words "faith" and "law" are not semantically equal, the first referring to

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<sup>43</sup> *Doina unui român din Roma*, in *Almanahul Revistei Populare Catolice Viața*, Roman, 1936, p. 73-74.

<sup>44</sup> N. Teianu, *Voi apăra cu vorba și cu fapta ortodoxia neamului meu*, in *Frăția Ortodoxă Română*, Craiova, 1934, no. 3-4, p. 5-7.

<sup>45</sup> *Ortodoxia*, București, 1933, year I, no. 7, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Expressions such as "the faith of the forefathers", "the church of the forefathers", "the old Orthodox faith of our fathers and forefathers" are easily found in the Orthodox discourse of identity of the time. See: *Apostolul*, București, 1924, year I, no. 3, p. 23; *Apostolul*, 1924, year I, no. 16-18, p. 141; *Apostolul*, 1928, year V, no. 7, p. 107.

the doctrine, whereas the second has a broader sense that covers the ensemble consisting of elements of faith, beliefs, rite and rituals that determines the religion of a community. In their totality, all these aspects can be discovered inside the term “church”.

On the other hand, “the forefathers”, “the ancestors” are of different types: the more distant ones (in time), the old ones, those who lived in the time of the formation, of the birth of the Romanian people; respectively, the more recent ones, those who had a more direct and personal impact on the lives of the contemporary believers – they are their direct ancestors, members of the family, grandparents and great-grandparents, those who built the local communities, the local building of the church, and whose mentioning can raise deep personal feelings for the faithful.

In his Catechism published in 1939, Nicolae Brânzeu showed that the Romanian people “was born Christian” once the Romans conquered Dacia, as they were, partially, already Christians. He mentioned also St. Niceta of Remesiana and the existence on the right side of the Danube of several bishoprics that were under Rome’s jurisdiction. He argued that Christianity was preached to Romanians in Latin and the liturgies and other services were celebrated also in Latin. Therefore, Brânzeu concluded: “the law of the forefathers of the Romanians was the Latin Catholic religion”<sup>47</sup>. This “faith of the first centuries” was kept in the soul “of our people”, it was also written in the pastoral letter of bishop Iuliu Hossu issued for the New Year of 1927<sup>48</sup>. These were the “forefathers” from the first category.

The more “recent forefathers” were mentioned by bishop Iuliu Hossu in a sermon dedicated to the believers in the village of Ocoliș, in 1923, whom he congratulated because they preserved the faith: “The souls of you all are in peace today. The cherished ash of your forefathers lies in peace in the tombs around their church, as the faith given to you as the dearest inheritance was not changed in your souls” [...] “Be assured, that as our parents worked with this faith in their hearts for the deliverance of this people which we are happy to be part of, thus, with the same faith of the forefathers, we will be able to take our part of fruitful work and holy sacrifice done for the progress and happiness of

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<sup>47</sup> N. Brânzeu, *Catehism (Despre credință) cu Istoria bisericească pentru clasa VII primară*, Lugoj: 1939, p. 59.

<sup>48</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1927, year IX, no. 1, p. 3.



this people and for the strengthening of the country that is so dear to our soul"<sup>49</sup>.

The "faith of the forefathers" appears also in the Christmas pastoral letter from 1924 of bishop Hossu, referring to the case of the believers from Leșmir, whom he praises for their resistance to the temptation of converting to the new-Protestant cults<sup>50</sup>. The same bishop spoke about the "faith of the ancestors" also during the canonical visitation in Ocna Dej, whereas the believers from the village of Codor listened to a message regarding the "law of the forefathers"<sup>51</sup>. "The law inherited from the parents" must be preserved and protected against the propaganda of the new-Protestants, said also bishop Alexandru Rusu in his pastoral letter from 1931, immediately after his appointment in office<sup>52</sup>.

#### **4. The benefices brought to the Romanian nation by the Union with Rome**

Therefore, the Greek-Catholic authors from the inter-war period aimed to show that the Uniate Church was "Romanian", that its faithful were "good Romanians", and that its law was the law of the "forefathers". I have already mentioned the fact that on various occasions, the bishops and other representatives of the clergy insisted on the special role played by this church in the history of the Romanian people. From this point, another important theme evolves as a constitutive part of the discourse of identity: "the benefices" brought by the Union with Rome to the Romanian nation. It assumes a comparison between the situation of the nation before 1700 and the one after this moment, thus forming two opposing discourses, one totally negative and the second absolutely positive. The Romanian people found itself in the time prior to the Union, in a very severe condition. This conclusion was put in balance with all the accomplishments of the Uniate Church as institution and of its representatives after 1700, thus leading to the progress of the entire nation.

This was not a new topic, one being able to find it in the Greek-Catholic literature starting with the very beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was approached by authors like Dimitrie Vaida, in his work from 1813

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<sup>49</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 2, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 23-24, p. 117.

<sup>51</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1926, year VIII, no. 16-17, p. 85.

<sup>52</sup> The text of this first pastoral letter of bishop Alexandru Rusu was published in the printing house of the seminar from Blaj, in 1931.

dedicated to bishop Ioan Bob, like Ioan Lemeni, in his text published in 1831, dedicated to the same hierarch, like Timotei Cipariu, in the historical introduction to the 1842 *Schematismus*, or like Iosif Pop Sălăjean, in his work from 1845, entitled *Scurtă istorie a credinței românilor* (Short History of the Faith of the Romanians)<sup>53</sup>.

Iosif Pop Sălăjean made a synthesis of the benefices brought by the Union with Rome. He turned back to the Latin origin of the people, language and faith. He said: "Latin, the mother of our language, is the language of the union of the church"<sup>54</sup>. Thus, Romanians have always been united "in their hearts with the See of Rome". The chance for the reestablishment of the effective union was offered once Transylvania was conquered by the Habsburg Empire. Emperor Leopold I gave the Uniate Romanians the privileges that opened the way to "the enlightenment and happiness of the people"<sup>55</sup>. Thus, rights for the clergy were granted. Emperor Charles VI awarded the title of baron and other material means to the bishops in Blaj. They used these means for the benefit of the people: Petru Pavel Aron founded the printing house, removed the "Russian or Serbian" language from the liturgical service and from the schools, opened the theological seminary from where "the most famous Romanian writers emerged, the immortal Șincai, Klein, Koloși and Maior". Foundations were created for the improvement of the situation of the clergy. Thus, "the Uniates opened the eyes of the people"<sup>56</sup>. Then he concluded: "the benefices of the holy Union are the return to the primordial source, to Rome, from where life and truth emerge, a better knowledge of the law and of the faith, greater pleasure and gifts from God, thus resulting awakening, enlightenment, culture, morality, holiness, redemption, unity of the people, the love of the Romanians for one another, their peace and happiness, help and relief, new Romanian bishops, theological seminaries, cultivated clergy, Romanian metropolitan see, and from all these, the progress, the rise of the people, fame and dignity"<sup>57</sup>.

Through the Union with the Church of Rome, the "spiritual deliverance" of the people was ensured, and those who embraced it became, from that moment on, "true Romanians"! These are the

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<sup>53</sup> See an analysis of the content of these works, in: C. Ghișa, *Biserica Greco-Catolică din Transilvania. 1700-1850. Elaborarea discursului identitar*, p. 361-364.

<sup>54</sup> I. Pop Sălăjean, *Scurtă istorie a credinței românilor*, Blaj: Tipografia Seminarului 1845, p. 64.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 65-66.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 66-72, 88.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 90-91.

benefices brought by the Union as mentioned by bishop of Oradea, Vasile Erdelyi, in a sermon from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century presented in front of a community that had just converted to Greek-Catholicism. He told these new believers: "Deliverance has been given to this village because you received the Holy Union"<sup>58</sup>. And towards the end, he added: "Now, you are true Romanians, you are Sons of the Motherland. Now you can tell everyone that you come from the Romans, now you can hope that your sons will study and will flourish. So be it!"<sup>59</sup>

These are the benefices of the Union. It opened the path for redemption, strengthened the awareness of the Latin origins, and offered the opportunities for study and economical, political and social progress. All these aspects were constantly repeated and presented to the believers through sermons, press, catechisms and other types of printouts.

In 1927, for instance, in a presentation that had as purpose the recalling of the Latin origin of the Romanian people and its Christianity, it was argued: the people "became attached with all its heart to Catholicism, not because it was the religion of the Habsburgs, but because the religious Union meant a rapprochement to the Rome of its origin. Oh, blessed act of religious Union that gave us the father of the Romanian nationalism (Inochentie Micu - n.n.), opened the schools of Rome for us, created the Latinist trend with the stars of the Romanian literature; from the schools of the Little Rome (Blaj - n.n.) emerged devoted teachers, creators of a new religion: the religion of love for the Romanian people. In this religion of nationalism all Romanians became brothers: Orthodox and Catholics. This new spirit made our Orthodox brothers free from the slavery of the Serbian Church. The teachers from Blaj, crossing the Carpathians, awoke there the latent national energies as well. They trained a new generation that broke the remains of the Greek supremacy, accomplished the unification of the Romanian principalities, the independence, the Kingdom, and lastly, the dream of the forefathers: the political union of all Romanians. This is the role of our Church in the fulfilment of our national ideal. And we are proud of the blessed work of this church"<sup>60</sup>. The text is eloquent and clear.

Another good example can be found in the Catechism of Nicolae Brânzeu from 1939: "(before the Union - n.n.) the Romanian Church was completely in slavery, mastered by the foreigners. The Liturgy and the

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<sup>58</sup> See the collection of Romanian manuscripts from the Library of the Romanian Academy, the Cluj Branch, Ms. rom. 271, f. 61v.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 64v.

<sup>60</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1927, year IX, no. 9-10, p. 72.

holy services were celebrated in Slavonic, and the same language was spoken and written at the courts of the princes; the bishops were in large number Greeks or Bulgarians. Exactly like the large number of monks that lived out of the richness of the Romanian land" [...] "In that time, Romanians from Transylvania lived in great misery. The priests had the same status as the peasants, uneducated and barely able to read; they had to work the land and worked also the land of the landlords. They did not preach, and there were no schools. Romanians had no right to attend foreign schools either"<sup>61</sup>. The Union is to be thanked for the "revival of the Romanian people not only in Transylvania, but in all the regions lived by Romanians"; Romanians "escaped the slavery of Calvinism and entered in contact with Rome, which is our source of life"; the young men could attend the schools from the West and became the "apostles of the people" – there, their "eyes were opened", becoming, once returned home, "the most fearless fighters of the people, using their writing and their speech; from bishop Inochentie Micu until the Union in 1918, the Uniate Church had always led the national struggle; from Transylvania, the national consciousness crossed over the Carpathians, the men who opened there the first schools came from here"; the schools from Blaj enlightened the people – "from the beginning, hundreds of young Romanians ran to Blaj to be fed from these sources of learning" [...] "among the students and professors of the schools in Blaj, a large number of writers, national fighters and great leaders of the people emerged". He concluded: "The Romanian Uniate Church made all possible efforts to awake the people and to maintain alive the Romanian consciousness until the time when the people got out of slavery"<sup>62</sup>.

All these were possible once the links with Rome had been re-established, links that are natural for Romanians. In an article on the organization of the 1925 Jubilee in Rome, it was said: "Rome, the eternal city and the cradle of our origin and faith"<sup>63</sup>. This constant emphasis on the links between Romanians and Rome aimed to draw attention on several aspects: the Latin origin of the people and its language; the idea of a general progress of the people and of its cultural links; the continuity over time of the spiritual link between the people and Rome; the belonging of the Uniate Romanians to the great family of Catholicism. In other words, these formulas can be considered as real synthesis of the discourse of identity of the Greek-Catholic Romanians.

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<sup>61</sup> N. Brânzeu, *Catehism*, 1939, p. 65-66.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 69-72.

<sup>63</sup> In *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 11, p. 50.

### 5. An ungrateful state

The measures taken by the Romanian state regarding important problems concerning the church life often led to discontent, frustration, outrage sometimes and disillusion for the Uniate hierarchy and clergy. Let's mention only a few great problems of the time: the status of the officially recognized churches in Romania – the Greek-Catholic Church tried to oppose granting the status of “dominant Church” to the Orthodox Church – nevertheless, the Constitution in 1923 confirmed this attribute to the majority church<sup>64</sup> – and supported the equality of all official churches according to the principle of “parity”<sup>65</sup> – but failed; the salaries of the priests and confessional school teachers; the conditions required for the opening of a new parish; the existence of the confessional schools; the impossibility to open a faculty of Catholic theology. Out of this kind of situations, another discourse was formulated, focusing on several main themes: the Uniate Church had and has an essential role in the evolution of the Romanian nation; the great successes obtained by Romanians in their national and cultural rise were possible due to the contribution of the Uniate Church; the state should be grateful for all these things, but, through its measures, becomes a persecutor and a supporter of injustice.

In 1922, an article was published in *Unirea* as a response to a point of view presented in the Sibiu journal *Revista Teologică*. Showing that the Uniate Church had always been put under pressure and had always been forced to self defence, it argued: „All that we have done and will do from now on is merely self defence against the attacks started against our church. They come and have come mostly from the institutions, more or less official, of the Orthodox Church, but the state organisms haven't been uninvolved either, as we regretfully have to say”<sup>66</sup>.

In 1924, bishop Iuliu Hossu defended in front of the Senate the maintenance of the confessional schools, threatened to be closed by the new law project for the reorganization of the primary education. The Uniate hierarch spoke in his discourse about the great efforts made by the Romanian churches in the past in order to protect “Romanianism” and the culture of the people by sustaining with great difficulty the

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<sup>64</sup> S. Trîncă, *Constituția din 1923 și Biserica Ortodoxă*, in *Anuarul Facultății de Teologie Ortodoxă din cadrul Universității Babeș-Bolyai Cluj-Napoca*, tom VII (2002-2004), p. 144-151.

<sup>65</sup> See *Unirea*, 1922, no. 26, p. 1; no. 27, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup> *Unirea*, 1922, no. 23, p. 1.

schools, especially against the decisions of a Hungarian oppressive government. Starting from this point, Hossu expressed his feelings of consternation regarding the fact that in the new Romanian state, the church is put in a similar situation, being in danger of losing a very precious institution, essential for the existence of the people and for the preservation of its spiritual purity. Hossu argued that the church was thus experiencing another time of "martyrdom"<sup>67</sup>.

The theme of "the injustice" suffered from the part of the state is directly connected to the image of "victim" of constant persecutions coordinated by the Orthodox Church against the Uniates, with the obvious support of the state. In 1922, in an article dedicated to the election of the new pope, Pius XI, the board of the journal *Unirea* made the following remark: "In front of the pure and shining throne of Pius XI, we humbly present the flag of our Romanian Uniate Church that is blamed and mocked even today"<sup>68</sup>. Or, we can mention the accusation formulated in 1932 by bishop Alexandru Rusu, who suggested that the salaries of the priests were cut by two thirds in that year by the state as a result of the pressure put by the Orthodox Church<sup>69</sup>. About "abuses" and "the deeply unjust involvement of the state authorities" spoke also the article from 1937 referring to the case of the Ruthenian church from Suceava<sup>70</sup>.

Although it is not my intention to insist on this aspect in the present study, I must mention the fact that the association between the image as victim and the Romanian Greek-Catholicism, made by the important representatives of this church, is a part of a discourse that aimed to strengthen the confessional identity of the believers. Sociologist Michael Jensen argued that the image of victim situates that particular group or community in a position of moral superiority in relation to the "persecutor"<sup>71</sup>. This leads to the deepening of the separation between the two sides and sharpens the otherness, and therefore, their own identity. In the same time, the theme of the persecution by a more powerful

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<sup>67</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 18-19, p. 92-94; no. 20, p. 100.

<sup>68</sup> *Unirea*, 1922, no. 6, p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> I. Tîmbuș, *Abordări problematice în pastoralele episcopului Alexandru Rusu în perioada 1931-1945*, pastoral letter no. 5. See another referring to "persecutions" caused by the Romanian Orthodox Church to the Uniates, in the Christmas pastoral letter of bishop Alexandru Rusu, in 1937. *Unirea*, 1937, year XLVII, no. 52, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup> *Cultura Creștină*, 1937, year XVII, no. 1, p. 52-53,

<sup>71</sup> M. P. Jensen, *Martyrdom and Identity. The Self on Trial*, London: T&T Clark International 2010, p. 30-31.

“other” which is not in the possession of the redemptory truth, is a constant part of the discourses of identity of various confessions<sup>72</sup>.

On the other hand, the theme of the “ungrateful state” was very present in the Orthodox discourse of the time as well. The Orthodox Church accused the state of taking measures that caused it injustice. For instance: the existence in Romania of a high number of Catholic bishoprics, in spite of the smaller number of parishes included in their jurisdiction<sup>73</sup>; unsatisfactory budgets, especially as compared to those offered to the Catholics<sup>74</sup>; and so on. The words of the patriarch Miron Cristea, spoken in the Romanian Senate, are eloquent: “Our Church is the one who has the pride to have given during the whole duration of the Old Kingdom, all the fundamentals and the martyrs on whose shoulders the mere existence of our state resides, because its believers were identical with the citizens of the country”. “But, if we think to the past and wonder who did the reunification of the Romanian state, I am very proud to answer that it was the believers of our Orthodox Church” [...] “Therefore, it would be somehow logic and all natural that now, when our common mother, our country, Romania, is giving its richness from its treasury to various cults, the Orthodox Church to receive the lion’s cut or – if not more than others – at least an equal and satisfying part. In spite of all these, senators, it is not like that”<sup>75</sup>. We end this small chapter with a question asked by father V. Gh. Filiuță, in his article entitled “The Pawns of Orthodoxy”, from 1934: “Is there any institution that is less neglected in the Romanian state than the Orthodox Church regarding the possibilities of material existence?” And he gave also the answer: “Obviously there is none”<sup>76</sup>.

## **6. The preservation of the faith of the forefathers means the protection of nationality**

One of the great problems confronting a religious community is the loss of its believers, by conversion to other confessions with which it is in competition. For the Greek-Catholics in Romania, this “danger” came from Orthodoxy, but also from the new Protestant cults, which

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<sup>72</sup> See: G. S. Evans, *The Church and the Churches*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1994, p. 135.

<sup>73</sup> Article *O nedreptate ce trebuie îndreptată*, in *Apostolul*, 1924, year I, no. 1, p. 8.

<sup>74</sup> See the discourse of patriarch Miron Cristea, from the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1930, on the occasion of the response given to the king’s speech, in *Apostolul*, 1930, year VII, no. 24, p. 371-377.

<sup>75</sup> *Apostolul*, 1930, no. 24, p. 374.

<sup>76</sup> In *Ortodoxia*, 1934, year II, no. 10, p. 2-3.

were increasingly active after 1900. Obviously, the church had a strong discourse against this phenomenon, seen as a temptation of Satan, who encourages the separations from the true and redemptory church. The Uniate faithful were cautioned: "Beware of those who cause separation and disputes in the parishes! Beware of those who consider their Mother, the Catholic Church, as enemy and convert to another! The punishing arm of God is above their heads, families and fortune!"<sup>77</sup>

The greatest danger was considered to come from the new Protestant cults, against which the Uniate bishops and priests took an immediate and determined attitude (the situation is similar in the case of the Orthodox clergy and hierarchy<sup>78</sup>). Which is, let's say, natural. It is interesting though the fact that this discourse contains also the idea that the conversion to a new Protestant cult meant spiritual but also national degradation – a Romanian could not do that without threatening the mere idea of national unity. By this type of conversions, obscure interests are encouraged, which aim to destabilize the nation and endanger all the successes obtained by the people after 1918, its ideals and purposes.

In 1922, it was published a sermon of father Ioan Rusu from Firminiș, who argued: "my soul is astonished to know that a Romanian could degrade so much that he leaves the true law that can give us deliverance. I am frightened when I think that a man would degrade up to the point of becoming an animal, up to the level of a beast!"<sup>79</sup> He continued asserting that the new Protestants came in "our beautiful Romania [...] and their purpose was to de-Christianize and denationalize us. To make us fight one against another, to hate each other in order to be easier to be annihilated"<sup>80</sup>. And then he said: "Rise your forehead high with pride because you are a Romanian and belong to the Church that was founded by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself!"<sup>81</sup>.

In 1923, in the abovementioned sermon of bishop Iuliu Hossu addressed to the believers from Ocoliș, it was argued that "everyone who puts the seeds of unrest and disunity is the enemy of the welfare of the people". The ones who troubled the peace of the people in Ocoliș acted against the people (they were the representatives of the new Protestants). "The trouble between brothers is useless and tormenting. It

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<sup>77</sup> *Calendarul Bunului Creștin*, Mănăstirea Bixad, 1936, year IV, p. 17.

<sup>78</sup> See for instance: *Ortodoxia*, 1933, year I, no. 7, p.1; 1934, year II, no. 26, p. 5; 1934, year II, no. 10, p. 1; 1937, year IV, no. 17, p. 1; *Misionarul*, Chișinău, 1929, year I, no. 1, p. 21.

<sup>79</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1922, year IV, no. 20, p. 113.

<sup>80</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 3, p. 18.

<sup>81</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 4, p. 20.



leads to the dissipation of the spiritual strength, which could heal many painful wounds that make the tormented soul of the nation bleed"<sup>82</sup>. Of course, this type of message can be used to oppose any kind of "disunity", of conversions to "the other".

Titus Mălai, the coordinator of the missionary activity inside the diocese of Gherla, expressed clearly these ideas as he was addressing at the end of 1923 to the missionary priests of the bishopric: "Be that through the hard work of our missionary priests, our forces will grow stronger, in order to be able to lead with full dignity of our Christian and Romanian consciousness the hard struggle against the immoral and destructive sects' elements, that under the deceiving mask of pseudo-nationalism, encourage the dispute and disunity amongst the brothers of the same blood, the true sons of the eternal Rome"<sup>83</sup>.

Thus, the two traditional Romanian churches were facing a common adversary. "The assault of the sects" was put also in a broader context, in which the authors took into consideration the general evolution of society in the sense of its modernization. But, modernization can bring other "moral dangers" and complicate things even more. And from this point, surprisingly or not, the idea of cooperation, or of necessity for closeness, was born.

The Uniate priest Nicolae Franco published in 1926 and 1927 a series of articles in *Curierul Creștin* from Gherla, under the title: "The Defence of Christianity through the Union of Churches". He argued: "Free-masons, Judaism, Socialism, Anarchism, radical and republican politicians such as Combes, rationalists and hyper-critiques in sciences and letters, modernists, Bolsheviks, extremist demagogues and new Protestants, who pretend to be profound Christians and even Catholics, all these shake the fundamentals of Christianity"<sup>84</sup>. And the "attack" is led under the mask of liberty. Catholics and Orthodox are affected in the same way. Of course, the final aim of these articles was to sustain the idea of the union between the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches, demonstrating the superiority of the Catholic side, but it is worth mentioning one aspect: the dialogue and the closeness between the two sides must begin and strengthen exactly because of the dangers brought by the modern world. The danger is even greater, said father Franco, as the new Protestants "attacked" on four directions: attracting new members; encouraging the separation between the state and the church,

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<sup>82</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1923, year V, no. 2, p. 9.

<sup>83</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1924, year VI, no. 13, p. 60.

<sup>84</sup> *Curierul Creștin*, 1926, year VIII, no. 1, p. 3.

that leads to the diminishing of the material support for the church; attraction of intellectuals using the principles of rationalism; pushing the other Orthodox and Protestant churches, diverse and separated on national criteria, against Catholicism<sup>85</sup>. And from this point on up to the idea of the necessity for the realization of the church unity is just another little step to be made.

### **7. The Union of the Romanian churches and the strengthening of the national unity**

The restoring of the unity of the Romanian churches was one of the most important themes in the inter-confessional debate in the inter-war period<sup>86</sup>, being, obviously, understood in different and opposite ways by the representatives of the two sides. An article from *Unirea*, from 1922, analyzing these aspects, made a clear synthesis of the two perspectives: "Our Church (Greek-Catholic - n.n.) understands the religious union as follows: an integration of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the universal Church of the papal Rome; whereas the Orthodox Church understands the termination of our Church's links with Rome and its complete nationalization". The author shows then that the Romanian church that was closer to the one "Romanian Church of the forefathers" was the Church of Rome, precisely because it was the church of the Romanians before the beginning of the Slavonic influence<sup>87</sup>.

One can easily notice the similarities in the polemical vocabulary, the fact that both sides used exactly the same concepts. Besides, the abovementioned article cited a text published in the journal *Lumina satelor* from Sibiu, analyzing the exact same topic, promoting the Orthodox perspective: "Yes, we unite, but only in the Romanian law,

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 6.

<sup>86</sup> This issue was raised immediately after the end of the World War I. In his article referring to the new context in which the Uniate Church was at the end of 1918, Alexandru Rusu mentioned the launching moment of the debate on the realization of the religious union of the Romanians. One of the first steps was made by the journal *Telegraful Român* from Sibiu, which asked the Uniates to cut their link with Rome, to unite with the Romanian Orthodox and to establish only one metropolitan see in Transylvania. Rusu argued against, saying that then it was not the time to have this kind of discussions. Al. Rusu, *Noua eră și biserica noastră*, in *Cultura Creștină*, 1918, year VII, no. 17-20, p. 334-335.

<sup>87</sup> *Unirea*, 1922, no. 10, p. 1.

that we have from the beginning of the Romanian people and this law is the Orthodox one"<sup>88</sup>.

The Orthodox side insisted at that time on the fact that the Union with the Church of Rome caused disunity among the Romanian people, and that it was the result of the action and interests of the foreigners, enemies of our nation. That is why, the realization of the church reunification through the return of the Uniates to Orthodoxy, would lead to the consolidation of the nation, severely affected by the act from 1700. The realization of the national ideals is strictly connected to this return, as the Orthodox argued. In 1924, in the journal *Apostolul*, it was announced the fact that dr. Ioan Pașca, professor at the theological academy from Gherla, "who returned in the church of the forefathers" by his conversion to Orthodoxy, motivated his choice to his former bishop, Iuliu Hossu, saying that he could no longer continue to consider himself a Greek-Catholic as he had realized that national disunity was the effect of the Union with Rome. Then, he addressed to his new bishop of Cluj, Nicolae Bălan: "for the realization of the national ideals, it is necessary to re-establish the religious unity that was broken by foreigners through terror and privileges. The disunity made by the foreigners was meant to destroy us and, if it was harmful in the past, today it is a real disaster in the context of the manifestation of a growing rivalry between the Romanian churches that would fatally lead to the weakening and annihilation of the religious soul of the people"<sup>89</sup>. Whereas in 1925, in another article that mentioned passages of Greek-Catholics to Orthodoxy, it was argued that this process was the "natural way of reunification of the Romanian people in one mind, in one faith and in one purpose"<sup>90</sup>.

The Greek-Catholic side rejected these "offers" for union, sustaining its own call for church reunification, accomplishable through the return of the Orthodox to the Church of Rome, according to the principles formulated by the Council in Ferrara – Florence. Of course, the idea was not new, as it was present in the Uniate literature since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Father Nicolae Franco, discussing on the idea of the union of the two churches, showed that "the Catholic bishoprics of Eastern rite, although they are an insignificant minority in comparison to the churches of the same rite separated from the Holy See, are a model, an

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 1.

<sup>89</sup> Article „Toate cum e'n fire se'ntorc la matca lor", in *Apostolul*, 1924, year I, no. 3, p. 23.

<sup>90</sup> *Apostolul*, 1925, year II, no. 1-2, p. 6.

example for what the Orthodox Churches would be once they unite with the Holy See"<sup>91</sup>. Therefore, the Uniate Church is a model for the Orthodox Churches, showing how they would evolve after the union with Rome. The author mentioned the Council in Florence and the fact that the Orthodox could preserve the rite and internal autonomy<sup>92</sup>.

The Easter pastoral letter of bishop Alexandru Rusu from 1939, approached the issue of the unity of the faith. He argued: "A union on the religious level will make the process of national unity complete"; he showed that the Orthodox perspective on the union included the necessity for the Uniates to cut the links with Rome, which was unacceptable; there were also personalities on both sides that were able to see the great benefit of an Union with Rome and the fact that through the union, the loyalty towards the nation of the believers was not affected in any way, on the contrary<sup>93</sup>. Therefore, in his opinion, the completion of the national unity can be done only through the realization of the religious unity between Orthodox and Greek-Catholics. But the union must be done through the return of the Orthodox to Rome.

## **8. Conclusions**

The Uniate Church in Romania, in the inter-war period was in the situation to develop and to deepen its discourse of identity, as its position inside the new Romanian state was more difficult as its representatives realized from the very beginning. Facing a majority Orthodox Church and a state that was not always positive in its attitude towards it, the Greek-Catholic Church focused its discourse on the emphasis of several major themes: the Greek-Catholic Church is the church of the forefathers / its faith is the faith of the forefathers / its law is the law of the forefathers; this Church, its faith and its believers are Romanian; being a part of the Catholic Church, the Uniate Church ensured redemption to its believers – and thus, it brought the main benefice to the people; the Union with Rome brought the Romanian people a lot of benefices – to all the Romanians and not only to those from Transylvania; the Greek-Catholic Church is a victim and is persecuted by the Orthodox Church and by the state authorities; the preservation of the Catholic faith will ensure the deliverance, but will also protect the nation and its unity; the national unity will be strengthen

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<sup>91</sup> În *Curierul Creștin*, 1926, an VIII, nr. 6-7, p. 35.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, nr. 9, p. 47.

<sup>93</sup> I. Timbuș, *Abordări problematice în pastoralele episcopului Alexandru Rusu în perioada 1931-1945*, pastorală nr. 29.

by the realization of the religious union of the Catholic and Orthodox, but this must be done by the union of the Orthodox Church with the Church of Rome, having the Uniates as a model, and following the principles established by the Council in Florence. The importance and the complexity of the discourse of the church in relation to the issues connecting with the nation / and the state, because it was strictly connected to the inter-confessional relation with the Romanian Orthodox Church, shows the high degree of otherness that influenced the environment in which the Uniate Church in Romania evolved in the inter-war period. But this led only to the strengthening of its confessional identity.

# How Did Baia Mare Become the See of the Greek-Catholic Bishopric of Maramureș?

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**Abstract:** *How did Baia Mare become the see of the Greek-Catholic bishopric of Maramureș?* The idea to create a bishopric in the region of Maramureș was deeply rooted in the Greek-Catholic laic and ecclesiastic milieus but it could only become a reality in the middle of the interwar period. There have been many causes for this delay: in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the project took shape, the Ruthenian hierarchy of the Munkács diocese (to which the faithful of Maramureș were canonically submitted) strongly opposed the completion of this plan. Without much success, the idea re-emerged in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in a context in which the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church was going through major canonical and institutional changes. This is how the actual steps for fulfilling this aspiration could only be taken after the creation of the Greater Romania. After Transylvania was united with the Romanian Kingdom, the idea to create an eparchy with a see in the north of the country returned even stronger, demanded by ecclesiastical and national imperatives. Despite this fact, reinstating the Maramureș eparchy had to be sanctioned by the Romanian authorities and the Holy See: this occurred relatively late, with the Concordat signed in 1927 and ratified two years later. This study presents for the first time the debates held by the Romanian clergy and episcopate in order to designate the see of the new Greek-Catholic eparchy. The advantages and the disadvantages of each option are analysed, as well as the lobbying for each of the two towns (Sighet and Baia Mare) and the intrusion of the political factor in this issue. Finally, it considers the attitude of the officials of the Catholic Church with regard to this matter.

**Keywords:** Holy See, Concordat, reorganisation, Baia Mare, Sighet, bishopric, reports

**Rezumat:** *Cum a ajuns Baia Mare scaunul episcopiei greco-catolice de Maramureș?* Ideea înființării unei episcopii în regiunea Maramureșului a fost înrădăcinată adânc în mediile laice și ecleziastice greco-catolice, dar nu a putut fi transpusă în realitate decât la mijlocul perioadei interbelice. Au existat numeroase cauze care au determinat această întârziere. În secolul al XVIII-lea, când proiectul a fost schițat, ierarhia ruteană a diecezei de Muncaci (căreia îi erau subordonați din punct de vedere canonic credincioșii din Maramureș) s-a opus cu putere acestui plan. Fără mai mult succes, ideea a renăscut la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea, într-un context în care Biserica Română Unită trecea prin transformări canonice și instituționale majore. Din asemenea motive, pașii hotărâtori pentru împlinirea acestei aspirații nu au putut fi parcurși decât după crearea României Mari. După ce Transilvania s-a unit cu Regatul României, ideea creării unei

eparhii cu sediul în nordul țării a revenit cu și mai mare putere, cerută de imperative eclesiastice și naționale. În pofida acestui fapt, reinstaurarea eparhiei de Maramureș trebuia recunoscută de autoritățile românești, ca și de Sfântul Scaun. Acestea s-au produs relativ târziu, odată cu Concordatul semnat în 1927 și ratificat doi ani mai târziu. Acest studiu prezintă pentru prima oară demersurile întreprinse de clerul și episcopatul român în vederea desemnării sediului noii eparhii greco-catolice. Sunt analizate avantajele și dezavantajele fiecărei opțiuni, intervențiile în favoarea celor două orașe candidate (Sighet și Baia Mare), precum și intruziunile factorilor politici în respectiva chestiune. În sfârșit, este abordată atitudinea oficialităților Bisericii Catolice în această problemă.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Sfântul Scaun, Concordat, reorganizare, Baia Mare, Sighet, episcopie, rapoarte

When minister Constantin Banu was asked to give his assent to the establishment of a new eparchy for the Greek-Catholics in the northern areas of the Kingdom, the corps of bishops had already voiced its unanimous approval at the conference held in Blaj on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1923<sup>\*1</sup>. The letter sent to the dignitary emphasised the interest the Church had expressed ‘immediately after the joyous unification of all Romanian provinces’ in view of attaining this purpose. However, the idea of creating a diocese in that region had far deeper origins, dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>2</sup>. The first time this plan had surfaced was in the context in which the modernising interests of the

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\* This work was possible with the financial support of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project number POSDRU/107/1.5/S/76841 with the title ‘Modern Doctoral Studies: Internationalisation and Interdisciplinarity’.

<sup>1</sup> Arhivele Naționale, Serviciul Județean Alba [National Archives, Alba County Office], *Funds Mitropolia greco-catolică română de Alba Iulia-Făgăraș, Blaj. Acte inregistrate* [The Romanian Greek-Catholic Metropolis of Alba Iulia-Făgăraș, Blaj. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 69r.

<sup>2</sup> N. Bocșan, ‘Națiune și confesiune în Transilvania în secolul al XIX-lea: cazul mitropoliei române’ [Nation and denomination in Transylvania in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the case of the Romanian metropolis], in Nicolae Bocșan, Ioan Lumperdean, Ioan-Aurel Pop ed., *Etnie și confesiune în Transilvania. Secolele XIII-XIX* [Ethnos and denomination in Transylvania. 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries], Fundația ‘Cele Trei Crișuri’, Oradea, 1994, p. 123-125; L. Gyémánt, *Mișcarea națională a românilor din Transilvania în tre ani 1790 și 1848* [The national movement of the Romanians in Transylvania between 1790 and 1848], Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1986, p. 160-161.

Viennese Court<sup>3</sup> partially overlapped with the intention of certain churchly circles to increase the functionality of ecclesiastical structures that covered large territories and had a compound ethno-cultural profile, in terms of the faithful they served (this was the case of the Munkács diocese in Upper Hungary)<sup>4</sup>; nevertheless, it had always been met with partial solutions that were far from producing the intended result. For instance, this is what happened during the debates held in view creating the eparchy of Oradea Mare, when the proposal to establish an intermediary diocese between those of Munkács and Făgăraș resulted in the creation of a vicariate – initially at Carei and then at Satu Mare – in 1776, for the Romanians living in Maramureș, Sătmar and the other districts of the Ruthenian diocese<sup>5</sup>. However, this resolution was unable to fulfil the ever more vocally expressed claims of the local Romanian clergy<sup>6</sup>, who subsequently carried on with their demands throughout the following period. Among the numerous projects that were drawn up, the idea to organise the predominantly Romanian parochial communities in a distinct episcopate, other than the Ruthenian diocese, had always been

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<sup>3</sup> For the Austrian illuminist policy regarding the traditional churches of the Empire see J. Bahlcke, *Ungarischer Episkopat und österreichische Monarchie. Von einer Partnerschaft zur Konfrontation*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2005, *passim*; D. Beales, *Enlightenment and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, I. B. Taurius, London-New York, 2005, p. 155-255.

<sup>4</sup> The denominational geography of the Munkács eparchy in *Encyclopedia of Rusyn history and culture*, edited by P. R. Magocsi and I. Pop, revised and expanded edition, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2005, p. 147.

<sup>5</sup> O Ghitta, 'Din antecedentele înființării provinciei mitropolitane greco-catolice: crearea vicariatului pentru «vlahii» din dieceza de Muncaci (1776)' [The previous history of the establishment of the Greek-Catholic metropolitan province: the creation of the vicariate for the 'Wlachs' of the Munkács diocese (1776)], in *Biserica română unită cu Roma, greco-catolică: Istorie și spiritualitate. 150 de ani de la înființarea mitropoliei române unite cu Roma, greco-catolică, la Blaj*, [The Romanian Greek-Catholic Church: History and Spirituality. 150 years from the establishment of the Romanian Greek-Catholic metropolis in Blaj] Editura 'Buna Vestire', f.l., 2003, p. 290-293; *Idem*, 'Cum au ajuns să se separe de Muncaci primele parohii greco-catolice sătmărene?' [How did the first Greek-Catholic parishes from Satu Mare get to be separated from Munkács], in *Studii de istorie medioevală și premodernă. Omagiului profesorului Nicolae Edroiu, membru corespondent al Academiei Române* [Studies in mediaeval and pre-modern history. Homage to prof. Nicolae Edroiu, correspondent member of the Romanian Academy], Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, p. 359-361.

<sup>6</sup> Ath. B. Pekar, *The History of the Church in Carpathian Rus'*, translated by M. Skorupsky, bio-bibliography by E. Kasinec and R. Renoff, New York, 1992, p. 69-71.



supported, although it may have come in different forms<sup>7</sup>. These efforts were always hindered by the fierce dissent of the Uzhgorod bishopric which in 1824 was finally forced to accept the transfer of 72 communities found south of the upper course of the river Someș, from under its authority to the one of the bishop of Oradea Mare. Around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church underwent a series of fundamental institutional and canonical changes<sup>8</sup>, the initiative to establish the see of one of the two dioceses taking shape *in terra Maramorosiensis* could not overcome the argument that promoted maintaining a balance between the eparchies situated outside of Transylvania (Oradea-Mare and Lugoj) and those inside the principality (Făgăraș-Alba Iulia and Gherla). According to the principles that guided the reconfiguration of the Transylvanian denominational landscape at that time, the eparchy of Armenopolis was supposed to play the same role that had been attributed to the diocese of Oradea 25 years before, namely to encompass parishes with a predominantly Romanian population that up until then had obeyed the bishop of Munkács. There were 94 congregations which in addition to the over 500 communities that had been transferred from the archdiocese to the same Transylvanian bishopric, made the diocese of Gherla the institutional structure with the highest number of parishes and faithful in the entire Romanian Greek-Catholic Church<sup>9</sup>.

The petitioners wanted to convey to the dignitary to whom they wrote their confidence that if that had been possible back then, now, when for the first time since its creation the Greek-Catholic Church was functioning within the boundaries of a Romanian state, it was unimaginable that their project would not be completed. The distance separating the faithful of the northern area of the Kingdom, a compact Greek-Catholic zone, from their spiritual leader at Gherla remained a strong argument even after 1918. Other just as important reasons

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<sup>7</sup> For a survey of these projects see N. Bocșan, *Națiune și confesiune* [Nation and denomination], 123-124.

<sup>8</sup> For an overview see N. Bocșan, A. V. Sima, 'Fondation et organisation de la Métropole gréco-catholique roumaine', in *Transylvanian Review*, XIII, 1/2004, p. 18-33. A detailed presentation is given in O. Bârlea, 'Metropolia Bisericii române unite proclamată în 1855 la Blaj' [The Romanian Greek-Catholic Metropolis proclaimed in 1855 at Blaj], in *Perspective*, X, nr. 37-38, 1987.

<sup>9</sup> *Siematismul veneratului cler a nou-in ființatei dieceze greco-catolice a Gherlei pre anulu de la Christosu MDCCCLXVII*, [The schematism of the esteemed clergy of the newly establishes Greek-Catholic diocese of Gherla for the year MDCCCLXVII from Christ], Cu Tipariulu diecezanu, Gherla, 1867, p. IV.

completed the compelling plea sent to the minister. One of these reasons regarded the Church's primordial mission: caring for the souls of the believers and protecting them from the ever stronger heterodox currents: 'in our time and day it is no longer enough to carry out pastoration by the means of directives, circular letters or even pastoral letters; instead it is necessary that the flock be guided on the path of truth and virtue by its archpriests through direct words. This way alone will the teachings contrary to our faith be impeded and rebutted...'<sup>10</sup>. The hierarchs of the Greek-Catholic Church demanded that they'd be treated equally to the denomination holding the majority - in a short amount of time the Orthodox Church had achieved a spectacular institutional growth<sup>11</sup> by creating two new eparchies in Oradea and Cluj and by planning a third one in Timișoara - according to the principles the recently adopted Constitution stipulated, and they expressed their assurance that 'no one will challenge the need to multiply the Romanian Greek-Catholic bishoprics in those very territories'<sup>12</sup>. Nevertheless, the creation of a diocese in Maramureș was not considered only in view of the ecclesiastical benefits it would have brought. Alongside the churchly grounds that have already been mentioned, the Romanian bishops also took the national advantages into consideration. Sătmar and Maramureș in particular, were deemed the weak links in the western half of the country's northern borders due to the significant presence of Hungarian and Ruthenian populations. Likewise, the fact that Maramureș abutted on Bukovina, another multi-ethnic province with a considerable number of Greek-Catholics, could facilitate turning them into subjects of the new bishop. The letter did not hesitate to outline a preliminary profile of the future diocese: those 'some 250' parishes planned to be comprised in the new eparchy would be taken from the counties of Maramureș, Ugocea, Sătmar, Sălaj, 'as well as Bistrița-Năsăud and eventually Solnoc-Dăbâca', with approximately 300000 believers, all pertaining to the Gherla bishopric at that time. To compensate for the

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<sup>10</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 69r.

<sup>11</sup> Șt. Meteș, 'Biserica ortodoxă română din Transilvania in cei din urmă zece ani' [The Romanian Orthodox Church of Transylvania in the last ten years], in *Transilvania, Banatul, Crișana, Maramureșul 1918-1928*, vol. II, Cultura Națională, București, 1929, p. 771-773; M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române* [The History of the Romanian Orthodox Church], vol. 3 (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries), Editura EIMBOR, București, 1994, p. 439-440.

<sup>12</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 69r.

losses, the Gherla eparchy would be given 'some 130 parishes, with 90-100000 souls from the counties of Sălaj, Cojocna and Solnoc-Dăbâca' to administer. The new balanced denominational map would have the following configuration: the archdiocese in Blaj would administer 570 parishes with 340000 faithful, and the Gherla diocese, whose see was intended to be transferred to Cluj, would be in charge of 320000 believers in 360 parishes<sup>13</sup>. Still, in order to materialise this entire programme of territorial reconfiguration of the Greek-Catholic Church it was necessary to have the assent of the state, but also its dedicated support. For this reason the minister of Cults and Arts was being asked to intercede so that the Kingdom's government 'would deign to take from the country's budget the sums necessary to endow the new eparchy and the necessary institutions of a bishopric'<sup>14</sup>.

Although the papal officials were aware of the previous history of this project, they were brought up to date with the latest developments in the matter. Writing to Cardinal Giovanni Tacci, the secretary of the young Congregation for Oriental Churches<sup>15</sup>, metropolitan Vasile Suciuc stressed the danger posed to the Greek-Catholics by the expansion of the network of Orthodox bishoprics in Transylvania<sup>16</sup> and asked that the Roman Curia unequivocally support the creation of the diocese in Maramureş, even more so then, when the negotiations held in the previous days for signing a concordat between the Kingdom of Romania and the Holy See, considered the alternative to increase the number of Greek-Catholic eparchies. Just as the letter addressed to the Romanian minister, the one sent to Rome drew up the approximate profile of the much desired new ecclesiastical structure<sup>17</sup>.

The clerical elite, engaged in an arduous, not necessarily disinterested, effort to reshape ecclesiastical geography, assisted by the laity, minded another key point that was as important as it was difficult to settle: appointing the actual see of the new bishopric. There were two contenders for this title, each found in different administrative units:

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 69v-70r.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, f 70r.

<sup>15</sup> The document recording the creation of this Roman dicastery, its purpose and original organisation, in *Motu Proprio Dei Providentis di Sua Santità Benedetto XV*, from 1<sup>st</sup> May 1917:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xv/motu\\_proprio/documents/hf\\_be-n-xv\\_motu-proprio\\_19170501\\_dei-providentis\\_lt.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xv/motu_proprio/documents/hf_be-n-xv_motu-proprio_19170501_dei-providentis_lt.html).

<sup>16</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 68r.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 68v.

Sighet (the government seat of the county of Maramureș) and Baia Mare (one of the three urban townships of the county of Satu Mare)<sup>18</sup>. The two towns were a constant presence in the long series of concordat projects negotiated between the Romanian and the papal officials, up until the moment when the last Romanian negotiator, Vasile Goldiș, suggested to the emissaries of the Holy See that the text of the convention should not explicitly designate either towns, because otherwise 'the prestige of the Romanian government is intruded upon'<sup>19</sup>. In fact, the Romanian minister had tried at first to convince the Pope's envoys of the uselessness of creating a new Greek-Catholic eparchy, and had put forward the option to transfer the seat of the Gherla bishopric to one of the two towns mentioned. Faced with the categorical disagreement of his negotiations partners, the Romanian official conceded and accepted the establishment of the new diocese, vaguely situated in the 'north', whose seat was to be designated by both parts; in this matter the Romanian bishop had a mere advisory part to play<sup>20</sup>.

Being contingent upon the interest, often secondary, shown by the Romanian authorities with regard to successfully ending the negotiations and signing the concordat with the Holy Apostolic See<sup>21</sup>, founding the new diocese has been slowed down although the signals sent by the population were in stark contrast to the tardiness of the actions taken at the higher levels of the state's bureaucratic pyramid. The atmosphere of uncertainty affected not only the political circles, but those ranking highest in the Greek-Catholic Church who had to come up with a proposal for the perfect seat of the future bishopric. The thing that had generated this situation was the vigorous involvement of local decision makers who wanted to influence this difficult choice in their favour. People sided with one centre or the other at all levels: from the

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<sup>18</sup> *Recensământul din 1930. Transilvania* [The 1930 census. Transylvania], Traian Rotariu - coordonator, Maria Semeniuc, Mezei Elemér, Presa Universitară Clujeană, f.l., 2011, p. 648, 658.

<sup>19</sup> V. Goldiș, *Concordatul* [The Concordate], Tiparul Tipografiei diecezane, Arad, f.a., p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*. See the official version of the Concordat, in *Monitorul Oficial, partea I-a. Legi, decrete, jurnale ale Consiliului de miniștri, comunicate, anunțuri judiciare de interes general* [The Official Gazette, Part I. Laws, decrees, journals of the Council of Ministers, press, judicial announcements of general interest], 126/1929, p. 4478-4489.

<sup>21</sup> The signing of the Concordat took place in Vatican, on May the 10<sup>th</sup> 1927, and it was ratified on July 7<sup>th</sup> 1929, by the signatures of Cardinal, Pietro Gasparri, Secretary of state, and the extraordinary ambassador and plenipotentiary minister with the Holy See, Caius S. Brediceanu: *România-Vatican. Relații diplomatice* [Romania-Vatican. Diplomatic relations], I, 1920-1950, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2003, p. 43.

believers to the higher state authorities and their far from neutral opinions betrayed both indispensable long-term development strategies for the Greek-Catholic Church and personal ambitions and affinities.

The fact that the idea to found a new eparchy centred in Maramureş was deeply rooted is also proven by the energetic actions undertaken by the local elite from the very end of the Great War. Even under fire, this proposition always made it to the list of priorities of the recently established local and regional authorities. The project's spokesperson seems to have been Vasile Filipesuk who wrote petitions even in the first part of 1919 and addressed them both to political circles (the department for cults in the Directory Council) and to the ecclesiastical hierarchy<sup>22</sup>. In a similar fashion, the councils held by the archpriests were all in favour of making this project real. In the autumn of the same troubled year, the Romanian National Party's local leaders from Maramureş introduced this project on their political agenda and promised to harness their entire political capital in order to accomplish it.

Mobilising the interest for the project of the new diocese often took the form of extended deliberations; the number of those present was in itself an argument in favour of choosing one of those two towns as the bishopric's see. This was the case at Sighet, for instance, on April 21<sup>st</sup> 1922, where the Greek-Catholics from that town and the surrounding area gathered for such a meeting. On that occasion, 'an organising commission of 100 people and an executive committee of 28'<sup>23</sup> were chosen from among those present; the two organisms were supposed to advocate in favour of their town becoming the see of the new Greek-Catholic bishopric. 'The full-fledged delegates of the people of Maramureş' (among whom there were Ilarie Boroş, vicar forane; Titu Doroş, secretary of the Maramureş Bar; Alexandru Lazăr, chief-president of the Maramureş Court of Law) decided to issue a 'memorandum' requesting 'the reinstatement of the holiest institution of the Romanian people in Maramureş: the ancient bishopric of Maramureş, with the see in Sighetul Marmaţiei, the location claimed by the needs of our century'<sup>24</sup>. It is clear from this example that the past would play a

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<sup>22</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică*. *Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 75v.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*; *Unirea* [The Union], XXXII, nr. 21/1922, p. 2 (unlike the unpublished document, the paper puts forward the number of 20 members for the action committee).

<sup>24</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică*. *Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 73r.

decisive part in this matter. The petitioners are intent on openly reminding the readers of the religious history, which for that county's faithful had been rather grim throughout the centuries. Therefore, bestowing the dignity of episcopal see on the town situated on the junction of rivers Tisa and Iza, would be a well-deserved compensation. In addition to this, the area had a series of advantages which visibly diminished the chances of the contending town: first of all, the region was a *triplex confinium*, which provided the possibility to be in charge of the faithful left outside the Romanian state 'by the unnatural and unjust frontiers established in 1920 between Romania and Czechoslovakia'<sup>25</sup>. For this reason the town of Sighet was perceived not only as a point around which the large mass of Greek-Catholic believers of the Gherla diocese encompassing the northern part of Transylvania gravitated, but also as a centre of gravity for the Romanians cut off from their fellow countrymen by the boundaries of the Czechoslovakian state, due to the decisions made during the peace negotiations. But the petitioners did not only take into account the ecclesiastical benefits; they also highlighted the economical and cultural strong points of their town and the fact that its ethnical structure could in fact encourage the presence of a high ranking ecclesiastical institution there. Driven by the impulses of revanchist nationalism, the petitioners specified in great detail the contents of the future diocese's patrimony. The schools of the Calvinist minority were particularly taken into consideration, yet the generosity of the local believers was not overlooked, because it could count a great deal in accumulating more goods for the young bishopric's endowment. Last but not least, the prospective development of the regional infrastructure was also put on the scales: 'railway lines have been planned to connect Borșa-Iacobieni and Bukovina, Moisei-Salva with Bistrița-Năsăud, making Sighet the most important geographical point on the border of an [allied] state'<sup>26</sup>.

Given the collateral implications of creating a new eparchy, especially those related to outlining the new jurisdictional limits, as well as the difficulty of designating one of the two towns as the seat of the new bishopric, during the hierarchs' conference of the 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July 1923 in Blaj, a decision was made to form an organism destined to find the

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<sup>25</sup> For the negotiations concerning the determination of the frontiers between the two countries, see V. V. Tilea, *Acțiunea diplomatică a României, nov. 1919 - martie 1920* [Romania's diplomatic action, November 1919 - March 1920], Tipografia Poporului, Sibiu, 1925, p. 149-154.

<sup>26</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 75r.

best solutions to these problems. The commission formed within the churchly province consisted of one representative from every eparchy and was placed under the authority of a president, the canon priest Ioan Boroş<sup>27</sup>. Yet, shortly after being initiated, this way of dealing with the matter was met with its fair share of objections. Iacob Radu, a canon priest from Oradea, questioned the individual capacity of each member of the commission to come up with viable projects because of the little information they had about the other dioceses. Since the data recorded in the schematism were not brought up to date, they could not be a good starting point for 'such substantial a work', Iacob Radu suggested that 'every member of the commission should revise the issue from his diocese's point of view... and count how many parishes can be given to the new diocese and which parishes are to be asked for in exchange'<sup>28</sup>. Once the principles guiding the reconfiguration of each individual diocese were established, the members of the commission could identify the common interests of the Church as a whole more easily. One of the promptest propositions came from the diocese of Gherla. The plan submitted by the canon Grigore Pop outlined a structure that was manifestly simpler and consequently easier to administer, and with no further ado it designated Baia Mare as the seat of the new bishopric<sup>29</sup>. Although he had at first regarded the entire process with suspicion, the same official of the Oradea diocese, succeeded in writing a coherent project which completely changed the configuration of the Greek-Catholic metropolitan province<sup>30</sup>. Unfortunately he lacked the same determination with regard to actually designating the seat of the future eparchy of Maramureş; instead he resorted to an elusive formula: '...either Sighetul Marmatiei or Baia Mare'.

The fact that the negotiations for finalising the Concordat between the Romanian Kingdom and the Holy See were being delayed, also appeased the tensions surrounding the decision regarding the future centre of episcopal power. Slightly alarmed appeals, such as the one made by the prefect of Maramureş at the beginning of 1926, were not powerful enough to have a decisive influence on the situation of uncertainty reigning at the higher levels of the Church, as long as the treaty being negotiated in those days - admittedly, at a slow pace - with the pontifical envoys included the stipulation that a new Greek-Catholic

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 77r; 78r.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 90r.

<sup>29</sup> The project's detailed content is found in *Ibidem*, f. 88r-89r.

<sup>30</sup> See the detailed plan in *Ibidem*, f. 92r-93v.

diocese was to be created; however, the explicit designation of its seat was not a compulsory element thereof. Let us consider the strategy used to raise the stakes, enclosed in the letter addressed by the government's delegate to metropolitan Vasile Suciu<sup>31</sup>. Overtly expressing his preference for Sighet as the adequate seat for the future eparchy, the local dignitary brought it to the prelate's attention that he should not pass the opportunity to acquire more assets for the patrimony of his Church, seeing as in the spring of that same year the local office of the Forest Directory was transferred to Oradea. Reiterating some of the arguments employed by his fellow towns-people in the extensive report drawn up almost four years ago, the head of the political administration of Maramureș county emphasised the danger threatening the 'good faithful' in that area, if making the final decision was to be delayed any longer. Furthermore, the fragile points in reconfiguring the Greek-Catholic denominational geography became apparent, as it had been justly pointed out from the very beginning. This type of delicate rapports could be noticed between the diocese of Gherla and that of Oradea Mare: the two suspected each other of being dishonest and biased with regard to the plans of reorganization they had put forward<sup>32</sup>. A proof of the complications that appeared during this process was the fact that certain members who were directly involved abandoned it, and one of these was Iosif Hossu, the president of the commission in charge of the project within the archdiocese<sup>33</sup>.

Yet another testimony to just how difficult solving the issue of reorganizing and designating the seat of the projected bishopric of Maramureș could be, was the initiative to find 'fortunate' solutions to the two major problems during the meetings held by those at the top of the hierarchy. Thus, the episcopal conferences became the framework for debating these burning topics. On the occasion of such a reunion which took place at Blaj on April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 1929, the canon priest Alexandru Rusu presented the report bishop Iuliu Hossu had received on September 29<sup>th</sup> 1928 from '60 intellectuals from Maramureș', a paper that pleaded in favour of Sighet's becoming the centre of the new diocese<sup>34</sup>. It was ultimately the same account given by representatives of the local faithful six years earlier to the ecclesiastical and political decision-

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 95r-96r.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 103r-104v.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 105r.

<sup>34</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică română de Alba Iulia-Făgăraș, Blaj. Arhiva generală. Documente neinregistrate* [The Romanian Greek-Catholic Metropolis of Alba Iulia-Făgăraș, Blaj. Unrecorded documents], dos. 1/1928, f. 11v.



making circles. Without making any promise with regard to how that petition would actually be solved, the Gherla bishop reminded his colleagues of the 'communication difficulties' they had with the other eparchial centre, as well as of the fact that Baia Mare was yet another contender worth serious consideration<sup>35</sup>. The same meeting recorded another report, this time one that had been written by the Orthodox, pleading for 'the reestablishment of the old Romanian Orthodox bishopric in the land of the ancient Waivodas'<sup>36</sup>. Combining nationalist rhetoric with the praise of the Orthodox Church 'of the East' – which was credited for being 'the support and the fundament upon which the Romanian Nation was built and existed' – the report proposed the same town near the Czechoslovakian border as the see of the envisaged Orthodox bishopric. Although it was threatened by such ambitions, the Greek-Catholic higher clergy did not hasten to solve the pressing issue of the future diocesan residence, just as it postponed another problem with major implications for the entire Church, one made on the same occasion – namely the transfer of the metropolitan seat from Blaj to Cluj<sup>37</sup> – until 'a future conference'.

But the true battle was just about to start. In May 1929, the mayor of Baia Mare, speaking on behalf of the Greek-Catholics in the city, made the episcopal corps an offer hard to refuse. Even during those times of harsh economical crisis, the local administration offered a donation of 5 million lei, providing the hierarchs agreed to designate its city as the future see of the bishopric<sup>38</sup>. The local official did not shy away from suggesting how the money could adequately be spent: he proposed the Church bought the properties belonging to the Order of Friars Minor from Baia Mare and Seini, which could fittingly accommodate the needs of the newly created episcopal see. On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Committee of the Association for the culture of the Romanian people of Maramureş<sup>39</sup>,

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>36</sup> See the entire text in AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 129r-130r.

<sup>37</sup> On this topic see L. Turcu, 'Cluj – oraşul în care ar fi putut rezida mitropolitul greco-catolic acum 80 de ani' [Cluj – the city where the Greek-Catholic metropolitan could have resided 80 years ago], submitted to *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Theologia Catholica*.

<sup>38</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 131r.

<sup>39</sup> Established on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1861, having its regulations approved and acknowledged by the Hungarian state only in 1868, this organisation was placed under the patronage of the bishop of Gherla, and its executive committee had an equal number of lay- and clergymen. It made it its express purpose to found a

through the sanction of its president, Florentin Mihali, made public its decision to donate all of its assets, consisting of properties, terrains, a printing press, bookshops etc. to the future churchly institution, if Sighet, the seat of this organization, was designated as the see of the new diocese<sup>40</sup>. Less than a week later, the mayor of Sighet, Paul Cziplé, addressed the following letter to the Gherla bishopric: 'The Council of Sighet, in its meeting of June 6<sup>th</sup>, donated the building of the 'Central' Hotel, worth about 3 million lei, to be used by the North Romanian Greek-Catholic bishopric, its seat will be here.'<sup>41</sup>

Under these favourable auspices, the conference of the Greek-Catholic bishops held at Blaj on June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1929, carefully weighed the material propositions made by the two communities<sup>42</sup>. The decision swayed categorically in favour of the offer made by the municipality of Sighet, along with the rich local cultural organisation, even more so that on the generous list of goods donated to the Church, they had recently added the building of the Cultural Palace of the Maramureş county; this raised the total amount of the donation to about 50-60 million lei. Given this promising start for the future bishopric, the hierarchs did not hesitate to put together their recommendation for the government in Bucharest, that the see of the diocese of Maramureş be the town of Sighet<sup>43</sup>. The political sphere was involved making this momentous decision by the intervention of the representative I. Bilțiu Dancuș in the Assembly of the legislative forum<sup>44</sup>. His interpellation addressed to the minister of Cults employed chiefly historical arguments and requested the official designation 'bishopric of Maramureş' be instated and that its seat must be set at Sighet.

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College of Education in Sighet, a purpose they achieved in 1862. After this educational institution was closed in 1870, the Association focused its activity on cultural actions and succeeded to acquire a substantial patrimony, mostly from donations, in a relatively short amount of time.

<sup>40</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte înregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 139r, 141r. The record of the proceedings of the general assembly of the Association, which provides a detailed list of its patrimony, including one of the annual statements of account can be found in *Ibidem*, f. 149r-158r.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 136r, 138r.

<sup>42</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia. Arhiva generală. Documente neînregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Unrecorded documents], dos. 1/1928, f. 12v.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>44</sup> See the complete text of the declaration, in AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte înregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 163r-165r.

The episcopal conference organised in the fall of the same year in Blaj, provided the greater prelates with the occasion to ponder more upon this issue. Since the still unsolved problem of determining the new perimeters of episcopal authority was still on the agenda of the reunion, the hierarchs were once again preoccupied with choosing the optimal seat for the new diocese. One day before the conference was opened, while Bishop Iului Hossu participated at the religious ceremony of the consecration of the church in Medieşul Aurit, he was approached by a large delegation lead by the prefect of the Satu Mare county, Andrei Doboşi, who on behalf of the local administration reaffirmed the previous offer and added a series of other facilities if Baia Mare was to be chosen as the see of the future bishopric<sup>45</sup>. During the important meeting in Blaj, the metropolis received a telegram from the 'party for Baia Mare' which completed the previous offer with the following goods and benefits: the civil school for girls was offered to be the bishop's residence; an annual quantity of 200 cubic metres of fire wood would be provided to meet the needs of the institution along with 1.5 million lei for each of the first 5 years since its establishment as an aid from the county administration and the faithful in that region; in addition to that, the Church was also offered one of the city's public printing presses<sup>46</sup>. The same message, signed by local ecclesiastical, political and cultural figures<sup>47</sup> announced they would present a report by September 8<sup>th</sup> of the same year in which they would further advocate their cause by expounding on the arguments. In his turn, the Archpriest Alexandru Breban, on behalf of the clergymen of the Satu Mare county, whose hierarchy was dependent both on the Gherla and the Oradea-Mare diocese, ceremoniously requested metropolitan Vasile Suciú that the see of the new bishopric 'be only Baia Mare'<sup>48</sup>. 'After a long debate on where to place the seat of the new bishopric, a debate in which most of the

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<sup>45</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia. Arhiva generală. Documente neinregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Unrecorded documents], dos. 1/1928, f. 14v-15r.

<sup>46</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 194r.

<sup>47</sup> Among those who signed were: Andrei Doboşi, the prefect of Satu Mare county; Carol Barbul, former prefect; Alexandru F. Racoşi, former prefect and president of the county council; Alexandru Breban, protopope, deputy and president of the county council; Mihai Pop, deputy; Victor Marin, deputy; Victor Pop, the mayor of Baia Mare; Francisc Erdossi, president of the Court of Law; Alexandru Nemeş, senator.

<sup>48</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 193r.

members take part, some believing it should be decided today, others that the decision should be postponed for the next conference – they namely see it fit to chose a commission that will look into the matter and prepare a detailed and well motivated report – it is decided that the esteemed chapters are to make their opinions known, so that the episcopal corps will be able to formulate its proposal’ – this was recorded by the ordinary notary Iuniu Brut Micu, who was present at these meetings<sup>49</sup>.

It did not take long for the promised report to be presented. Structured as a replica of the similar documents forwarded by the supporters of the contending town, the text in question developed a series of ‘strong ideas’ worth mentioning here. The starting point was to reflect the religious life that characterised the area, all in the light of exemplarity: ‘...considering our unwavering stance in the hardest times of Orthodox plotting, considering that our forefathers have organised and disciplined their parishes and parochial services so that throughout the metropolitan province and almost exclusively in this part, matins and vespers were always celebrated on Saturdays and Sundays, and that sermons were held regularly on Sundays and feast days, the creation of this bishopric seems to be a good opportunity to reward the faith and discipline of these faithful’<sup>50</sup>. Nevertheless, the main part of the document dedicated to refuting the arguments in favour of having the bishopric’s see in Sighet. The four types of ideas (‘1.historical; 2.financial; 3.especially Catholic and 4.national’) came under direct scrutiny and harsh yet necessary criticism. With regard to the first set of issues, the historical ones, it is noted that ‘Sighet has never been an episcopal see and what’s more, there hasn’t been a bishop in Peri either, as he was just an archimandrite... the vicar of Maramureş himself didn’t reside in Sighet, but in Sat-Şugatag; the town didn’t even have a local parish priest until Ioan Ivaşco and only after he was moved as canon priest to Gherla did vicar Tit Bud move his residence to Sighet’<sup>51</sup>. Under these circumstances, giving the title of ‘bishopric of Maramureş’ was in the opinion of the petitioners a more than sufficient concession. They also questioned the supposed rich endowment the bishopric would have received, had it accepted ‘Sighet’s offer’: ‘the brethren of Sighet offer

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<sup>49</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia*. *Arhiva generală. Documente neinregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Unrecorded documents], dos. 1/1928, f. 15r.

<sup>50</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 196r.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*.

many things that do not even belong to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but to other ministries. That is something we could do too. With regard to the assets of the Association they offer to the bishopric, we have to notice that the ultimate decision belongs to the general assembly of 'Astra' in Sibiu, where they have already protested against this issue'. Actually, the creed of those who signed the document was that a cultural institution which had acquired indisputable merits during the last fifty years should not be suppressed just for the sake of making the offer of one of the contenders more attractive. Put together, the goods offered by the faithful of Sighet 'don't provide ... better conditions than Baia Mare, because they do not have a cathedral church and erecting one would consume most of the assets; besides, most of the buildings are rented for ten years and therefore a series of complications could arise from giving them up'. Compared to this whole context of incertitude, the supporters of Baia Mare want to remind with great detail the immediate, more than welcome benefits the Church would have by establishing the see of the new bishopric there. As for the interests of the Orthodox Church, the threat of turning Sighet into one of its centres was deemed improbable due to the small number of faithful belonging to that denomination. The petitioners firmly assessed that this threat was more probable in 'Satu Mare, where there are old parishes and archpriestships which might request to be reinstated'. Finally, they did not overlook the issue of the national involvement of the new ecclesiastical institution. The intention to 'Romanianise' the Ruthenians by establishing the episcopal centre at Sighet is evaluated to be a quite unsuccessful initiative. What could, however, significantly help achieve that goal would be a dense network of schools and an elevated, dynamic cultural atmosphere: 'we ask any objective person to answer whether it is easier to reach this result in a town where the Greek-Catholics are both in numbers and in assets a disappearing minority, or in the town where, among the Transylvanian towns of over 10000 inhabitants, the Greek-Catholic Romanians already form the absolute majority, such as Baia Mare?'. As it was to be expected, the document does not omit addressing the complications generated by the obscure railway infrastructure one was forced to use in order to get to Sighet at that time, were it to become the new episcopal seat: 'it is said that there will be a rout connecting Sighet and Baia Mare, but even our brothers from Maramureş know better that the construction works are meant for Sighet-Gâlgău-Cluj and Sighet-Bistriţa-Cluj railways, but no one intends to build a connection with Maramureş through Baia Mare. In this case the situation is absurd, because we would have to go all the way to the penultimate station from Gherla and then come back... until

we get to the bishop in Sighet'. The last part of the memoir also contains an explanation for the less ample and undoubtedly less loud campaign that was organised up to that time for the support of Baia Mare. The explanation betrays the careful approach its adherents aimed at: first, naming an apostolic vicar for the new bishopric and then advocating their cause before him<sup>52</sup>.

Shortly after this ample deployment of arguments, the opinions of the canon priests' corps from every diocese have also been made known, as it had been decided at the last episcopal conference. The list begun once again with the clerical elite of Oradea, which clarified its standpoint with regard to the issue of the new diocesan see during the meeting organised on August 31<sup>st</sup> 1929. The dialogue brought to the attention of the Greek-Catholic ecclesiastical environment yet another exciting proposition that was soon to be the object of heated debates: the transfer of the metropolitan residence from Blaj to Cluj. As to the town that was to house the seat of the future bishopric, the priests of Oradea pleaded convincingly in favour of Baia Mare. Here are some of their arguments worth mentioning: 'this town is the most suitable to be the centre of a Greek-Catholic bishopric: it has a concentric position, allowing for easy access from all parts, and it is set in the middle of a compact mass of Greek-Catholic Romanians; it has been a religious centre in the past as well, thanks to the presence and the activity of the Franciscans; it is also an artistic centre that could as such easily become a hub for ecclesiastical art; it is a resort that attracts many people who could thus be introduced to our Catholic faith in a more intuitive way; finally, the town is profoundly Greek-Catholic and thus it provides the perfect setting for the bishopric. Compared to these advantages held by Baia Mare, Sighetul Marmăției has a rather too peripheral situation: one can communicate with it only by passing through a foreign country; therefore all considerations point towards Baia Mare as the centre of the new bishopric'<sup>53</sup>. Canon priest Octavian Domine voiced the decision reached by the clergymen of the Gherla diocese. Relating their decision to the fact that the future episcopal centre had to be optimally situated within the newly reconfigured outlines of the Greek-Catholic denominational space, the canon priests' college in Gherla came to the conclusion that Baia Mare suitably fulfilled this requirement<sup>54</sup>. All the other arguments that were also to be found in the reasoning of the

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 197v.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 200r-v.

<sup>54</sup> See the complete argumentation in *Ibidem*, f. 207r-v.

Oradea canon priests were considered valid by the members of the Gherla chapter. Moreover, they felt it their obligation to articulate a favourable point of view regarding the idea generated by the same ecclesiastical milieu of Oradea, that the capitol of Romanian Oriental Catholicism be moved to Cluj<sup>55</sup>. The Lugoj chapter held a meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup> 1929 and presented its assessment of the issue on selecting the seat of the new bishopric<sup>56</sup>. Invoking a number of historical, national, economical and ecclesiastical arguments (that had been frequently employed by that time) the canon priests' college in Lugoj deemed Sighet as the most adequate seat for the Maramureş bishopric. With respect to the metropolitan's residence transfer to Cluj, they believed it was 'just and necessary' to carry it out without delay. Finally, the assembly of the canon priests serving in the metropolis gave their evaluation in the complicated matter of the future bishopric's see<sup>57</sup>. The canons' college in Blaj clearly stated that in light of their deliberations, 'the most adequate and appropriate seat' would be Baia Mare. Once more listing all the arguments that had already circulated in favour of this town, the canon priests did not hesitate to expound on the inner mechanism of their decision: 'it is true that as to the material advantages being offered to the new bishopric, Baia Mare may seem to lag behind Sighet; however, seeing as in this case we are not to consider material interests alone, on the one hand, and that on the other hand Sighet lays too close to the border of the new diocese... and that it has but one railway that can be used the whole year around and that this rout passes through the foreign territory of Czechoslovakia ... we believe that for these reasons Baia Mare is to be preferred to Sighet'. In the other matter on that day's agenda - moving the metropolitan residence to Cluj - the canons of Blaj unequivocally answered that 'we fully accept the opinion and the arguments of the esteemed chapter of Oradea...'

Despite the fact that at the episcopal conference of October 17<sup>th</sup> 1929 in Blaj the hierarchs' attention was focused on solving the problem of the transfer of the metropolitan see, they did decide to nominate Baia Mare as the location for the new Greek-Catholic diocesan see<sup>58</sup>. But shortly after this conference had taken place, Alexandru Nicolescu

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<sup>55</sup> See the response in *Ibidem*, f. 209r-v.

<sup>56</sup> See the decision along with the reasons behind it in *Ibidem*, f. 222r.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 223r-v.

<sup>58</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia. Arhiva generală. Documente neinregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Unrecorded documents], dos. 1/1928, f. 17r.

addressed a letter to metropolitan Vasile Suciu<sup>59</sup>; it displayed a serious tone from the very first lines. In fact, the hierarch of Lugoj announced that his Oradea colleague, Valeriu Traian Frențiu, had committed an intolerable mistake by failing to state at the episcopal conference that the opinion regarding the location of the new bishopric's seat had been revised by the canons' corps of Oradea. The one who provided this relevant piece of information was none other than Provost Iacob Radu, who motivated this change in attitude by the strong, mostly negative impressions he gathered while travelling for a few days through Maramureș. Here is what the bishop of Lugoj recorded in his message to the head of the Romanian Greek-Catholics: 'the situation is truly bitter. The Orthodox already have two parishes there [in Maramureș - A.N]. There is a deep chasm separating the people from the clergy... which will only become even deeper if we do not take more efficient measures, such as, moving the see to Sighet, of course, so that the hierarch will be closer and take urgent measures'. He goes on to say he was ignorant of the situation when he advocated for Baia Mare and that he was 'unsettled in his heart for the fate awaiting that part of the country, that not so long ago was purely Greek-Catholic, but was engulfed in the rage of the Orthodox assail'. Driven by a moral duty, bishop Nicolescu asked the metropolitan to order a new analysis of the decision that had been taken, because now they had a far better general perspective on the matter. Yet a new report was forwarded by the faithful of Maramureș, generously offering more details and more nuances of interpretation<sup>60</sup>. This document is a convincing proof for the virtuosity of argumentation and articulation of ideas given those who remained faithful to the plan that Sighet had to be the episcopal see of the future Greek-Catholic bishopric. Signed by people who were part of the higher mechanisms of local public and ecclesiastical administration, or by literati (Gavrilă Iuga, the prefect of Maramureș; Ilarie Boroș, Vicar of Maramureș; Florentin Mihali, the president of Association for the culture of the Romanian people of Maramureș; Titu Doroș, attorney of law, former prefect of the county; Alexandru Lazăr, chief-president of the Maramureș Court of Law), the substantial document was a reply to the opinions presented by the faithful of Baia Mare in the report they had made public at the beginning of the previous month. Making use of an ample argumentation, the report of the people of Sighet dismantled all the

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<sup>59</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 339r.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 353r - 362r.



'tendentious' claims of the Baia Mare supporters. From the point of view of its structure, the first part of the text addresses at length the already employed '1.historical; 2.financial; 3.especially Catholic and 4.national' arguments. Some of the corrections brought to the critique of the 'Baia Mare party' are worth mentioning here. First, the counterattack was aimed at the 'ill will' of denying Maramureş its episcopal tradition (and implicitly its episcopal calling): 'the obvious truths, such as the existence of the bishopric of Maramureş can be rendered trivial solely by those who are aware they uphold a cause that does not rest upon the truth' - a statement followed by a complex factual demonstration. In a similar manner the document contradicted the claim that the local vicariate was recent by listing the persons who held that office from the 18<sup>th</sup> century - when the bishopric had been disbanded - onward. Another significant part of their counterarguments targeted the statements referring to the endowments the Sighet faithful had promised to offer the new bishopric. The authors of the report believed that the need for an immediate rectification envisaged the clarification of the juridical situation of the Maramureş Association which had generously donated all of its assets to the new episcopal institution. They referred to the institutional independence of their organisation from 'Astra', which the report from Baia Mare presented as the tutelary society of the former, because they were discontent with the rich donation the Association had made to the Maramureş bishopric: 'the brethren of Baia Mare will assign the fact that they ignore this activity [of the Association - A/N] to the fact that we are separated by mountains, without functional roads; but we are more inclined to attribute this ignorance to their indifference of everything brotherly, denominational, national and cultural. Although they treat us with superiority, we forgive their indifference...'. In order to increase the credibility of just how profitable the infrastructure donated to the future bishopric was, the document indicated the exact income made by the printing press, the bookshop, the sums gained from renting the spaces belonging to the Association or the capital consigned in bank accounts, based on accounting documents. As to the alleged superior quality of religious life in Baia Mare's hinterland, this report brought credible proofs 'that the situation of Maramureş is by no means inferior to that of Baia Mare'. It gave the assurance that the property donations of public patrimony are irreversible: the Cultural Palace, 'Central' Hotel, as well as all the renting spaces of the Association. The concern for the Romanian Greek-Catholics left outside the state's borders was reaffirmed, and to this respect, Sighet's location in close proximity to the frontier was seen as an indisputable advantage: 'where from will these tried brethren of

ours receive more strength and spiritual support? From Baia Mare with its thermal springs, or will they rather feel the warmth and the radiance of an intense religious life from a place nearby? Or are we more interested in winning the painters of Baia Mare than we are of losing tens of thousands of our faithful?' – this was the acute question hidden in the document. The same geographical location made Sighet the better option due to the role it could have for the important Ruthenian community of Bukovina. After they've identified and refuted the 12 vulnerable points from the report written by the faithful in Baia Mare, in the end the petitioners insisted on the mission – considered to be one of utmost importance – which the future episcopal see would have: a good administration of the parishes and an intense pastoration among the believers. However, the town of Sighet could not escape the insuperable difficulties brought about by the lack of a suitable infrastructure of railways or roads. The document's authors could only voice their hopes that the state will see to it that the routes of communication are expanded in the region over the next years, so that the Romanians living near the country's northern border would be better connected to the localities situated in the inner territories.

In order to render these statements even more convincing, the report was accompanied by a series of papers, such as: a certificate issued by the Sighet Town Council, showing the route and the daily schedule of the busses to and from the town; a declaration of the vice-president of 'Astra', Octavian Russu, regarding the inexistence of any type of tutelary relationship between his organisation and the Association for the culture of the Romanian people of Maramureş<sup>61</sup>, as well as a message from the president of Astra's Maramureş Chapter which informed the hierarchs that the Cultural Palace of Sighet was rented (from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1928) by his organisation for a period of 12 years and that its spaces had already received clear purposes: 'we've installed a cinematograph which brings profit, a space with large rooms, a Romanian library. In the rooms of the ground floor, which are very suitable, we wish to establish a dispensary for the sick poor, on the first floor, an ethnographical museum and with time, we believe to be able to create a Romanian sports club and a musical society. The minorities have all these things and we [the Romanians – A/N] lack them... Nevertheless, everything depends on the way in which we will be able to work without being hindered!'<sup>62</sup>. Although he did admit that the

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 364r-v.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 368 r-v.

provisions made in the lease did allow for it to be later modified, the leader of the local 'Astra' section wanted to specify that if they had to evacuate the building of the Cultural Palace 'then all our accomplishments and our projects will have been for nothing'.

The new information compelled the Greek-Catholic episcopate to take an official stance. This happened during a conference held on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1929 at close quarters, with the metropolitan and the three sufragan bishops present<sup>63</sup>. As a matter of fact, the single purpose of the reunion was debating the issue of the new bishopric's seat. After archbishop V. T. Frențiu<sup>64</sup> gave an overview of the older and the more recent information related to the matter in question, 'after mature reflection, considering all the conditions of those regions and the entire ensemble of the problem [the episcopate - A/N] unanimously decides that the see of the new bishopric shall be Sighetul Marmației: 1. It offers a easier spiritual administration for the faithful of both Bukovina and Northern Bessarabia; 2. It provides the new bishopric with the material support and the possibility to immediately activate the energies in the administrative, religious and cultural fields, by the donations made to the new eparchy in Sighetul Marmației'. This decision, together with the recording of the conference's proceedings, has been brought to the notice of the Apostolic Nuntiature in Bucharest<sup>65</sup>. Actually, the diplomatic representative of the pontiff in Romania had in his turn been addressed several substantial reports, by the group advocating Sighet's cause. The last one, dated February 25<sup>th</sup> 1930 reprised the arguments of their plea and elegantly expressed the concern for the delay in taking a final decision in the matter of the new bishopric's see.

Under increasing pressure due to the Orthodox Church's plans to settle its own bishopric in Sighet, another episcopal conference was held in the Kingdom's capitol city, on June 30<sup>th</sup> 1930<sup>66</sup>. Once more, those taking part in it were exclusively hierarchs of the Greek-Catholic Church, lead by metropolitan Vasile Suciu. The prelates' reunion took place in the context in which the country's government, lead by the National Peasants' Party, had just ended its negotiations with the Holy See

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<sup>63</sup> SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia. Arhiva generală. Documente neinregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Unrecorded documents], dos. 1/1928, f. 24v.

<sup>64</sup> In 1927 a pontifical decision granted bishop Valeriu Traian Frențiu the right to wear a pallium, and made him archbishop: *Unirea* [The Union], XXXVII, nr. 21/1927, p. 5

<sup>65</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 373r - 377v.

<sup>66</sup> See the protocol of the conference in *Ibidem*, f. 403r-v.

designating Baia Mare as the centre of the new eparchy<sup>67</sup> and it analysed the consequences this decision, which disregarded the Romanian episcopate's recommendation, would have for the Church. The first question of the discussions voiced the concern of the episcopal corps with regard to the unilateral decision that had been made: 'Will it [the seat of the new eparchy - A/N] then be Baia Mare or Sighet?'. Without any hesitation, the answer to this question was born out of the unanimous consent of the participants. The hierarchs remained faithful the decision they had adopted during the conference of December 17<sup>th</sup> of the previous year, adding new topical arguments to those employed back then. First, there was the stir the 'agents of Orthodoxy' caused among the local Greek-Catholic believers, especially those of Sighet, whom the decision not to make their town the seat of the new bishopric could make vulnerable to the temptation to abandon their faith and their Church. A significant part in this aggressive campaign was believed to be played by new 'propaganda gazette' ('The country of the waivodas')<sup>68</sup> issued in Sighet under the patronage of the Orthodox bishop of Cluj, which enjoyed the collaboration of important figures of the majority Church, such as Ioan Lupaş, Silviu Dragomir sau Gheorghe Ciuhandu, and served the purpose of generating fractures in the relatively compact mass of Greek-Catholic faithful of the north. A measure anticipating the creation of an Orthodox bishopric in Sighet was considered to be the evacuation of the local buildings of the Forest Directorship (recently transferred to Cluj): it was suspected that those buildings would become part of the Orthodox Church's patrimony, along with the nearby terrain, where a cathedral church was supposed to be built, as the news had it. The one responsible for this turn of events was considered to be the country's prime-minister, Iuliu Maniu, who the Greek-Catholic bishops believed to be under the influence of certain members of the Synod of the Orthodox Church and of Patriarch Miron Cristea; this could have been the reason why the Holy See accepted a proposition the Greek-Catholic Church had not consented to. On this alarming note, the episcopate of the Greek-Catholic province addressed a letter to the Vatican, explaining the new internal context generated by the denominational tectonics, as well as stating that they believed the best location for the bishopric of

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<sup>67</sup> The text of the bull can be found in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, annus XXII, volumen XXII, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Romae MDCCCXXX, p. 381-386.

<sup>68</sup> The self entitled 'national, cultural and economical' gazette appeared until 1938 and was edited by protopope Tănase Puşca.

Maramureş to be the town of Sighet<sup>69</sup>. During the private conversations of metropolitan Suciú and the president of the Council of Ministers of June 20<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 1930, the hierarch had yet again tried to convince Iuliu Maniu to change the proposition the Government had made to the Holy See<sup>70</sup>. At the request of the Greek-Catholic episcopate, Nuncio Angelo M. Dolci had negotiated with the same Transylvanian politician but had not succeeded in convincing him of the advantages Sighet held as opposed to the town that had recently been nominated as the seat of the bishopric. Under these circumstances, the co-provincial bishops let it be known that they 'decline all responsibility and blame the disastrous consequences they foresee on the government'<sup>71</sup>.

The last phase of the process of designating the seat of the future bishop of the Maramureş diocese provided more than sufficient evidence of the major differences in vision between the hierarchy and the Government officials in charge of the matter, who were actually instrumental in making this significant decision, as it has been illustrated here. The prime minister's inflexibility in his support of Baia Mare as the see of the new bishopric generated a tense atmosphere between him and metropolitan Vasile Suciú, a tension which also transpired in the public sphere (unfortunately, the reasons invoked by Iuliu Maniu in his decision making remain unknown; we can only speculate he may have been influenced by the wide range of anti-Sighet arguments or that he simply did not attach much importance to the threat facing the Greek-Catholics, namely the creation of an Orthodox bishopric in that very same town). In the confidential documents the Greek-Catholic metropolitan forwarded Nuncio Angelo M. Dolci, in which he addressed the investiture of the new bishop and the people who deserved to be considered for this ecclesiastical rank, he harshly condemned the 'Josephiniste' attitude of Iuliu Maniu in the matter at hand<sup>72</sup>. Accusing him he had let himself be manipulated by groups of influence that had nothing to do with the interests of the Greek-Catholic Church or that through his decision he had intended to reward a group of clergymen who sympathised the National Peasants' Party, the hierarch expressed his outright disapproval of allowing militant politics penetrate the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church. For this reason, in the discussions

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<sup>69</sup> AN SJ Alba, Fond *Mitropolia greco-catolică. Acte inregistrate* [The Greek-Catholic Metropolis. Recorded documents], dos. 336/1931, f. 399r-v.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 404r.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 401r; 402r; 406r.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 409r-v.

which began in those days concerning the appointment of the future bishop, the metropolitan stated beyond a shadow of a doubt that 'les raisons d'ordre politique' are to be excluded from the start. One of the last attempts to change the seat of the Maramureş bishopric was when King Carol II intervened with the minister of Public Instruction and Cults, Nicolae Costăchescu, and with other state officials, but his intercession did not elicit a reconsideration of the decision<sup>73</sup>. Of all the emergency solutions put forward in those days, there was even one suggesting that Baia Mare remain *de jure* the seat of the new diocese, but that the bishop should reside *de facto* in Sighet<sup>74</sup>. The ingenious proposition came from the Nuncio who was deeply troubled by the initiative to create an Orthodox bishopric in Maramureş, as well as by the prospect of losing the rich donations the Greek-Catholics of Sighet had so generously offered the new bishopric.

Given the fact that the decision was irreversible – it had been sanctioned by *Constitutio Apostolica de nova circumscriptione et ordinatione hierarchica diocesium ritus tam latini tam graeci-rumeni in Romaniae Regno* issued on June the 5<sup>th</sup> 1930 – the following period was dedicated to carrying the provisions of that document into effect. As the executor of the papal bull, the diplomatic envoy of the Holy See in Romania issued 6 decrees, the last two of which concerned the new Greek-Catholic diocese directly: *Decretum de erectione nove Dioecesis Maramureşensis Rumenorum și Decretum de nominatione Administratoris Apostolici ad tempus novae Dioecesis Maramureşensis in persona Reverendissimi Episcopi Julii Hossu, cum facultate subdelegata eligendi Specialem Vicarium Generalem ad interim pro Ruthensis, scilicet usque dum proprio provideatur Pastore*<sup>75</sup>. According to the provisions of the pontifical document, the Maramureş diocese comprised 239 parishes that came from: the archdiocese (Boian), 31 from the diocese of Oradea Mare; 169 from the Gherla-Cluj diocese; 10 Ruthenian-Catholic parishes from the Hajdúdorogh bishopric; 11 more belonging to the Munkács diocese in Czechoslovakia and 17 from the Stanislaw eparchy in Poland<sup>76</sup>. The same official act stipulated that the seat of the new bishopric of Maramureş was the town of Baia Mare (*novae autem huius dioecesis sedem episcopalem in urbe Baia-Mare constituimus*), and the town's church of 'The Dormition of the Virgin' was to become the cathedral (*cathedram vero episcopalem in ecclesia Beatae Mariae Virgini in caelum*

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 411r.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 415r-v.

<sup>76</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, annus XXII, volumen XXII, p. 384-385.

*Assumptae dicata, in eadem urbe sita, erigimus*). It also stipulated the instatement of a special vicar general for the Ruthenians in the Maramureş diocese who was to be elected and remain submitted to the bishop of Maramureş. As to the hierarchical order, the new eparchy became a suffragan of the metropolis of Blaj, which formed one *unicam provinciam ecclesiasticam*<sup>77</sup> along with its four dioceses.

The configuration which had taken shape in the Greek-Catholic Church at the beginning of the 1930's had proven to be not only an expression of the need to adapt, by better setting up the institutional structures within the territory, but also the expression of the imperative to imprint a dynamic sense to the religious life of the faithful, by consolidating and multiplying the centres of ecclesiastical power. During the interwar period, the Greek-Catholic Church kept the geographical outline it had had within the boundaries of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, and through its foremost ecclesiastical and laic figures it was constantly looking for strategies to respond to the various denominational, pastoral or cultural challenges the previously mentioned era generated. The episode described here in detail eloquently illustrates to what extent the Greek-Catholic Church has been able to identify and bring into effect the best solutions.

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibidem*.

# Marin Vărzaru and Stoian Buruiană Cases. Medical Culture and Peasant Culture in the Middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Principalities<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *Marin Vărzaru and Stoian Buruiană Cases. Medical Culture and Peasant Culture in the Middle of the 19th Century in Principalities.* The paper analyzes the relations between the peasant and scholarly cultures during the second half in the nineteenth century. The analysis is done by using two case studies: the inquiries of the sanitary authorities upon the activities of two empirical healers - Marin Vărzaru (who claimed to heal rabies) and Stoian Buruiană (healing the mental alienation). The two case studies prove the complex and sometimes ambiguous relations between authorities and the folk healers because if Marin Vărzaru who surely did not heal rabies came to be rewarded by authorities with a consistent sum of money, Stoian Buruiană whose most patients declared healed, would lose the right to 'practice the profession'. By using these two case studies, and few others, we prove that the medicalization of Romanian society in the first decades after the middle of the nineteenth century was reduced only to the medical body.

**Keywords:** modernization, peasant culture, scholarly culture, medicalization

**Rezumat:** *Cazurile Marin Vărzaru și Stoian Buruiană. Cultură medicală și cultură țărănească la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea în Principate.* Studiul analizează raporturile dintre cultura țărănească și cultura savantă în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea. Analiza se face prin intermediul a două studii de caz: anchetele autorităților sanitare asupra activității a doi vindecători empirici: Marin Vărzaru (care pretindea că vindecă turbarea) și Stoian Buruiană (vindecă alienația mintală). Cele două studii de caz dovedesc relațiile complexe și uneori ambigue dintre autorități și vindecătorii populari pentru că dacă Marin Vărzaru care sigur nu vindeca turbarea ajunge să fie recompensat de autorități cu o sumă consistent de bani, Stoian Buruiană ai cărui pacienți se declară în marea lor majoritate vindecați, pierde dreptul de a mai "practica meseria". Prin intermediul acestor două studii de caz, dar și a altora prezentate, demonstrăm că medicalizarea societății românești în primele decenii de după mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea se rezumă doar la corpul medical.

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<sup>1</sup> Article done in the frame of a grant CNCS, type Idei, code 2588 with the title: *Medical Elite and the Process of Modernization of Rural Society in Romania (1859-1914).*



**Cuvinte-cheie:** modernizare, cultură țărănească, cultură savantă, medicalizare

During the night of 5 to 6 of January in Gaureni hamlet, Babele village from Vlasca district takes place an event pretty ordinary for the epoch: a rabid wolf enters the village and attacks people and animals... but we rather let the sub-administrator of Neajlov, C.I. Arion to tell us: '...and taking a fatty from the pigsty of an inhabitant called Oprea Radu, the wife jumped to save the fatty and when she showed the wolf let the fatty and came upon her, biting her hand and bottom; following her scream, the dwellers came and killed the wolf; they immediately asked an inhabitant of Roata-Catun village, a certain Marin Varzaru Catana, a man with knowledge to heal such disease, to watch that woman and also other five inhabitants and many cows that were rabid, and after the perseverance of that named man, those villagers and cows were healed'<sup>2</sup>. Until now, nothing strange for the middle of the 19th century: here we have a rabid wolf that makes damages in a village and a peasant that heals the rabies. What is new, is the interest of authorities for such a case, interest manifested through an inquiry of the sanitary administration and through some media popularization because the deeds of our healer reach together with robberies and accidents to 'miscellanea' column in the Official Monitor of the epoch: "In Gaureni village that belongs to Babele village, a rabid wolf entered and meeting a woman he jumped and bit her as also five other people from the same village, who jumped to save that woman from the rabid wolf's mouth. But all these people bitten by wolf as also the woman, escaped alive, because an empiricist peasant came immediately, a certain Marin Varzaru, a man with knowledge upon this disease and with skills to cure it, and through his perseverance and insistence he healed them all<sup>3</sup>."

Still in the first half of 1860, the sanitary authorities develop an inquiry upon a different peasant healer, Stoian Popa Ion Buruiana from Reda village, Romanati district, who would cure madness. His case is discovered by chance 'on the occasion of the census in Reda commune' where our healer already has some notoriety: 'From the insurance given by all the Commune, among were priests and considerate people this man has given a long time palpable evidence of his sublime knowledge

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<sup>2</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 2 f.

<sup>3</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 19 martie 1860, nr. 67, p. 272.

which is hereditary from his parents; the villagers say that people tied in chains came to him (...) even from Turkey and they got back healthy. The application of his medicines consists in some mystical herbs, whose salutary effect manifests soon; for those with heavier attacks it is said 20-30 days were enough<sup>4</sup>.

These cases are not interesting per se, but for the illustration of the relations between the dominant medical culture promoted by the modern state and the peasant culture of the epoch. This is because in the inquiries of the sanitary administration can be read in filigree the power relations that are woven between the two cultures. We cannot stop from thinking in this context at Giovanni Batista Chiesa, exorcist healer in the Piedmont of the end of the 17th century whose case is finely analyzed by Giovanni Levi<sup>5</sup>. In his case the documentation is infinitely richer. But, in essence, our approach is identical: on the basis of inquiries, this time administrative and sanitary, upon some peasant healers, we try in fact to look beyond the trauma of events because they are nothing else but a symptom of the transformations in Romanian society of the epoch that we generally label under the notion of 'modernization'; and because we have to deal with sanitary modernization we talk about 'medicalization'. But it would be better to define our terms: what do we understand through medicalization? Because the syntagm mentioned is met everywhere and almost never defined: it is one of the magical concepts of the human sciences whose success is assured in great deal for its ambiguity. Until now, in our academic environment only Lidia Trausan-Matu felt the need to define it: '*to medicalize* (...) the term covers the ensemble of the mechanism through which the state ensures the conditions of maintaining the health of population'<sup>6</sup>, including here both the curative medicine and the preventive one (hygiene). As we see in the above definition the medicalization would be the result of the state intervention; but even if the medicalization takes place more often through the care and intervention of the state, it can produce even in the absence of its action. But if it seems difficult to define *what is* medicalization, maybe more simple and efficient would be to see *what* medicalization *is not*.

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<sup>4</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 13 f.

<sup>5</sup> Giovanni Levi, *Le pouvoir au village. Histoire d'un exorciste dans le Piémont du XVIIe siècle*, Gallimard, Paris, 1989.

<sup>6</sup> Lidia Trăușan-Matu, *De la leac la rețetă. Medicalizarea societății românești în veacul al XIX-lea (1831-1869)*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2011, p. 356.

A typical example of a society where medicalization did not penetrate is exactly the pre-industrial European peasant societies that do not know the physician or the modern medicine. Of course we should not imagine that we talk about societies perfectly un-medicalized, at least in Europe: the peasant healing practices are more or less contaminated by the cult ones everywhere: the peasant society is not isolated from the ensemble it belongs. And a perfect medicalized society would be a future and utopia society where all its members resort along the illness-healing process to physician and modern medicine only. Or, as long as the medicine will not discover the secret of 'youth without oldness and life without death' this society will remain utopia.

Medicalization cannot be understood but through the opposition grid between dominant culture and subaltern one. And together with the birth of modernity, the peasant culture becomes and remains till today subaltern. I perceived modernization of society and thus medicalization as part of it, as a phenomenon of acculturation by which the cultural homogenization so much dreamed of the modern states is accomplished. Medicalization would be the process of internal acculturation through which in the modern states the official medical culture and the social practices deriving from it diffuse in the entire social body. And here we distinguish an institutional component, often highlighted in the histories of medicine, that stresses the creation and development of modern medical institutions: the hospital, institutions of medical education etc. but also a behavioral component, because nothing will force the peasant of the 19th century for example, to resort to the institutions and the characters that make the modern medical system. From Norbert Elias onwards, we know that in the 'process of civilization' the norms of behavior come in time to be incorporated an assumed individually and the social disciplination specific to modern societies transforms in self-disciplination<sup>7</sup>. From this point of view, in Principalities during the time of Marin Varzaru and Stoica Buruiana, the norm is to be imposed.

At the middle of 19th century in Romanian Principates illness and healing are the apantage of two categories of characters: on the one hand we have peasant healers, empiricists as the medical authorities call them, and on the other hand we have physicians, key characters of the new sanitary system organized by the state. We will look into the relations between these two big categories of healers in the present research. Let us present them in turn.

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<sup>7</sup> Norbert Elias, *Procesul civilizării. Cercetări sociogenetice și psihogenetice*, 2 vol., Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2002.

The peasant healers have always existed in pre-industrial peasant societies, and the Romanian villages are no exception. The peasant society fixed in its own way the ratio illness-healing-death. Before the apparition of modern physicians and medicine, that for the rural world in Principalities does not go *grosso modo* lower than 1862, the peasant communities solve the illness and healing problem by resorting to a series of characters specialized on different categories of affection, obvious defined after a nosology belonging to the peasant medical culture, if we may talk about such a thing. And I think we can<sup>8</sup>. Birth was assisted by the well-blamed in the medical culture of the epoch, the empirical midwives. There are also orthopedic specialists, peasant oculists and finally a multitude of healers specialized on different affections, as is Marin Catana that heals rabies or Stoica Buruiana that heals insanity. Along them, a great mass of enchanters and others specialists of the remedies against magic aggressions: priests, monks and wizards. Because the disease, according to the pre-modern peasant representations is not a disturbance of the bodily mechanism (umoral or physiological) but it is always either a divine punishment or the result of some magic agents<sup>9</sup>. For the peasant world these healers were omnipotent, in fact the only available. Doctor Severeanu<sup>10</sup>, child of a peasant, remembers his childhood times: 'Once I fought with another; he pushed my shoulder into some wood and the bone got out of my shoulder and a peasant wiseman put it back (...) I was sick of fever and hepatitis, and a man cured me by cutting me at the root of the nose. The old man said he cut with a *silver coin*, because the iron ones were rusty and made bad bumps. I had eye disease (catarrhal conjunctivitis) and an

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<sup>8</sup> We define the peasant medical culture as the totality of peasant knowledge and practices referring to illness and healing.

<sup>9</sup> Elena Bărbulescu, *At the edge of Modernity: Physicians, Priest and Healers (1940 - 1990)*, în „Philobiblon. Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary research in Humanities”, vol. XVI, no. 2, 2011, pp. 550-551.

<sup>10</sup> C.D. Severeanu (1840-1930), Romanian physician; begins medical studies in 1856 at Școala Națională de Medicină și Farmacie [National School of Medicine and Pharmacy] led by Carol Davila and in 1862 win a scholarship to continue studies in Paris. After two years he takes the Ph. D. From the faculty of Medicine in Paris. Return in the country he accomplishes a beautiful medical, didactic and political career. După Octavian Buda (coord.), *Despre regenerarea și... degenerarea unei națiuni. Discursuri inaugurale medicale în vremea lui Carol I, 1872-1912*, Ed. Tritonic, Bucureștin, 2009, pp. 304-305.

old man cured me, by scratching the conjunctiva, with a stick of wheat straw'<sup>11</sup>.

This pleiad of healing characters prove of an extreme vitality, because, to my surprise, even today one can gather in the field through oral inquiry, testimonies of their activity<sup>12</sup>. Or at least of some of them.

From the same category are the empirics that practiced in cities. Even in Bucharest at the end of the 19th century doctor Severeanu knows and considers worthy of mentioning in his memoirs those with 'broad clientele': *Mos Ratoi* (*Uncle Drake*), orthopedist that 'had in his bag tow, brick powder, few eggs and some rims of cloth. With these he fixed all the operations in bone breaks'<sup>13</sup>. And with him *dascălul Drăgoi* (*teacher Dragoi*) in Vacaresti. Or the famous *Mățăreasa* whose name came from her old work: washing bowels at the slaughter house and who 'getting tired with this job she started to do healing', becoming a specialist in curing the diphtheria after an old method: blowing in the neck of the sick person of some dog dried feces powder; furthermore she 'looked after dislocations and fractures'<sup>14</sup>.

Towards the middle of the 19th century on a medical realm everything was possible: overnight a Greek making donuts from Severin transforms in a physician after a trip in his homeland, metamorphosis described with a lot of humor by the same doctor Severeanu: 'In about 6 months, when he came back, Kir Tanase changed completely, he had only German clothes and he talked highly. Kirie Tanase no longer made donuts and I was so sorry (...) << Well, Kir Tanase why you have changed?>> And he answered: <<Well, you know I became a physician>> and to prove it he took me in his room and showed me a box, a kind of bag with compartments; from the box he took more bottle lets with liquids of different colors and small glasses; things there were

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<sup>11</sup> C. D. Severeanu, *Din amintirile mele (1853-1928)*, vol. I, Tipografia «Bucovina», I. E. Toroușiu, București, 1929, p. 23.

<sup>12</sup> See for this the article by Elena Bărbulescu, *At the edge of Modernity: Physicians, Priest and Healers (1940 - 1990)*, în „Philobiblon. Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary research in Humanities”, vol. XVI, no. 2, 2011, pp. 549-561 as also in the collections of field material: Elena Bărbulescu (coord.), Constantin Bărbulescu, Mihai Croitor, Ciprian Pavel Moldovan, Alexandru Onojescu, Alina Ioana Șuta, *Țărani, boli și vindecători în perioada comunistă. Mărturii orale*, vol. I, Ed. Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, 502 p.; Constantin Bărbulescu (coord.), Elena Bărbulescu, Mihai Croitor, Ciprian Pavel Moldovan, Alexandru Onojescu, *Țărani, boli și vindecători în perioada comunistă. Mărturii orale*, vol. II, Ed. Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, 299 p.

<sup>13</sup> C. D. Severeanu, *Din amintirile mele (1853-1928)*, vol. I, Tipografia «Bucovina», I. E. Toroușiu, București, 1929, p. 107.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

not to see in Severin and to prove he became a physician, he started to mix some liquids in a glass and the colors changed: he put two liquids like water and it formed a black, yellow or blue ones. Through these miracles he convinced me that indeed Kir Tanase the donut man made himself a physician. Kir Tanase took his bag on his back, like a soldier took his bag and went on the street shouting :<<Iatros-Kalos, Kalos-Iatros!>> and that is how he practiced medicine'<sup>15</sup>.

This type of character gets out from the empirics category and enters the one of 'charlatans': he does not have any academic title nor uses methods that medical science have validated in some way. In a hierarchy of healers done from the perspective of sanitary authorities, the empirics are at the top of hierarchy, under there are the charlatans and the magic medicine specialists: enchanters, priests, monks, wizards, witch that are not even mentioned – they do not exist as healers.

The second category of healers, the ones belonging to the dominant culture, is represented by physicians, creators of the sanitary system of the Principalities at the middle of the century. Their activity and status validates through university classes and the diplomas and titles attached to them<sup>16</sup>. From Organic Regulations onwards, officially on the territory of Principates and after of the Romanian Kingdom, it is only they who have the right to practice medicine and so they detain theoretically a monopoly on the art of healing. I say theoretically because in fact during the last decades of the 19th century their battle with the other categories of healers is not won, in fact the battle was at its beginnings; and the evolutions of the next century will prove resistance of the peasant medical culture and of the characters that practice it: it is enough to throw a look upon the huge ethnographic literature regarding the magical medicine or to recent researches, that prove fully that the enchanter, the priest, the witch or the empirics are characters that participate separately or together with the physicians in the process illness-healing of the inhabitants of the rural world, and also in the second half of the 20th century. I don't think I am wrong to say that even today the peasant medical culture as separate entity from the modern medical one, is extremely active despite a century of medicalization of the Romanian society.

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 35.

<sup>16</sup> For the status of the physician in the first half of the 19th century see Lidia Trăușan-Matu, *The Doctor and the patient. An Analysis of the Medical profession in the Romanian Society of the 19 th Century (1831-1869)*, în „Transylvanian Review”, vol. XX, supplement no. 2, vol. 2, 2011, pp. 465-474.

At the end of the 19th century even in cities, the empirics find their places next to physicians: doctor Severeanu has the occasion of meeting in Capital, at a 'good' family, that is Falcoianu family, with Matareasa, that cured the old Falcoianu lady of a fracture of radius<sup>17</sup> and in Caracal he is called at Mr. Stamatopulo, 'a great cereal exporter' to treat an open fracture of the shank after two physicians and two peasant empirics had failed: 'Two local physicians, one Greek and the other Italian, called two peasants. To consolidate the bones they poured in the ends of the bones, dog head bones powder(they said) mixed with oil; they made a tight knot; the gangrene started and the peasant got scared and ran away. When I reached Caracal, the gangrene has taken the shank till almost near the knee'<sup>18</sup>. In the end Mr. Stamatopulo is saved but he loses his shank.

Or, on the other side of the cultural barrier, which in the epoch was not hard to cross, we meet among the clients of Stoian Buruiana in Reda village, Romanati district who cured insanity, not only rurals but also ' Costache Prejbeanu's sister from Caracal' and even the 'wife of pasha Agi-Ali from Rahova'<sup>19</sup>. And in the same period mother Casandra, the famous herbalist of Iasi 'each Sunday was visited by the most distinguished ladies of the Iasi society' who bought herbs for baths, *năvalnic* and other weeds for virility. You could find everything at mother Casandra'<sup>20</sup>. And now I cannot but remind in this context the witch from my native village - Corlatel, Mehedinti County - upon which they said in the 1980s of the past century that she had clientele even from Serbia and who did tours in Severin and Craiova.

At the beginning of the 1860s of the 19th century Carol Davila, reorganizes the sanitary system of the United Principates and among its first initiatives is exactly the settling of the people who enter in the category of healers acknowledged by the state. Before 1860 there was any list of the physicians with diploma practicing in the Principates at the Sanitary Service Administration; according to Davila, between 1842 and 1854 there was no information upon the physicians settled in the

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<sup>17</sup> C. D. Severeanu, *Din amintirile mele (1853-1928)*, vol. I, Tipografia «Bucovina», I. E. Toroușiu, București, 1929, pp. 107-108.

<sup>18</sup> C. D. Severeanu, *Din amintirile mele (1853-1928)*, vol. II, Tipografia „Voința”, București, 1929, pp. 12-13.

<sup>19</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 31 v.

<sup>20</sup> N. Leon, *Amintiri*, partea a III-a, Viața Românească S. A., Iași, 1927, p. 32.

country<sup>21</sup>. At July 8th 1860, the water split occurred by publishing in the 'Official Monitor' the first 'picture of all medical personnel: physicians, magisters and patrons in surgery, veterinarians, stomatologists and midwives that are known to have got the right to practice their art in this Principality from the Government'<sup>22</sup>. In a word: official healers - the only healers. I think this is the act of birth of medical profession in the Principates. Should it be a happening that exactly between 1860 and 1862 we have kept most of the inquiries of sanitary administration regarding some empirics? I don't think so. At that date there were practicing in Romanian Country 96 physicians, 11 magisters in surgery, 18 patrons in surgery, 7 veterinarians, 5 stomatologists, 13 midwives with diplomas from abroad and 61 midwives who 'studied at the Institute of birth in Bucharest'<sup>23</sup>. The following year in the same official newspaper a new list is published, more complete, the number of physicians raising to 98, but the greatest growth we remark at the midwives with diplomas from the country: 78<sup>24</sup>; and after few months, after full union of the two Principates, we have the final list of physicians with the right to practice in the 'Romanian state'<sup>25</sup>.

As before 1875 there were no physicians with studies done in the country, the autochthonous sanitary authorities had to establish the criteria upon which a Romanian or foreign physician could obtain the right of free practice in the Principates. As I have mentioned above, the first condition was to obtain a diploma of doctor in medicine of a foreign university. It seems that at least for Moldavia, until 1836 the presentation of such a diploma to the Health Committee was enough in order to obtain the right for free practice. But this time following some irregularities, the Health Committee asks the right to examine the candidates<sup>26</sup>. We don't know if this right was granted or not. In principle in the first half of the 19th century, having a diploma of doctor in medicine assured the right for free practice. Along the past decades of

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<sup>21</sup> Supplement to Monitorul Oficial, 8 iulie 1860, nr. 160, p. 751. It is true that such lists of physicians from Principates existed since the fourth decade of the 19th century. Such practitioners from Romanian Principate are known in 1833, 1834, 1836, 1837 și 1838: V. Gomoiu, *Din Istoria medicinei și a învățământului medical în România (înainte de 1870)*, Tipografia „Cultura”, București, 1923, pp. 253-255, 263, 285-287, 301-302.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 752-753.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>24</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 4 octombrie 1861, nr. 218, pp. 871-872.

<sup>25</sup> Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial, 3 februarie 1863, nr. 25, p. 103.

<sup>26</sup> Vezi V. Gomoiu, *Op. cit.*, pp. 283-284.



the century the right for free practice was sometimes conditioned by an exam in front of a medical commission from the country. Thus, in 1862 when the leader of the Medical Council was Carol Davila, it is decided that 'physicians willing to practice medicine in this Principate' must held a public exam in front of a commission formed of five members of the didactic staff of the National School of Medicine and Pharmacy<sup>27</sup>. After 12 years only the Sanitary Law in 1874 gives up the exam and stipulated in art. 69: 'The right to practice medicine, pharmacy, veterinary and midwifery is got following the academic titles offered by Romanian medicine faculty, the titles will be endorsed by the ministry of public instruction as also following the diplomas offered by foreign universities and checked by the medicine school in the country'<sup>28</sup>. But the law is amended in 1885 and... Again the exam is introduced but this time only for physicians that got their titles at universities abroad<sup>29</sup>. In 1893 when the sanitary law is amended again, the exam is kept but the composition of the examination commissions is precised<sup>30</sup>.

But let us go back to the 1860 when all the branches of the medical sciences are regulated. In turn it is regulated the admission for free practice through exam for sub-surgeons<sup>31</sup>, for physicians with studies abroad but without diploma who are offered to become officers for health<sup>32</sup>, for assistants in pharmacies<sup>33</sup>, for midwives and stomatologists<sup>34</sup> and finally for different categories of veterinarians<sup>35</sup>. At the end of 1860 there were clear regulations for accepting to practice for the whole medical personnel both superior and inferior in the United Principates<sup>36</sup>. As I have mentioned above this is the moment when the dominant medical culture makes the distinction between the *true* and the *false* healers.

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<sup>27</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 18 mai 1860, nr. 115, p. 480.

<sup>28</sup> Alina Ioana Șuta, Oana Mihaela Tămaș, Alin Ciupală, Constantin Bărbulescu, Vlad Popovici, *Legislația sanitară în România modernă (1874-1910)*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 57.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 75, 81 (art. 22 și art. 70).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 111 (art. 105).

<sup>31</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 18 martie 1860, nr. 66, p. 268.

<sup>32</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 26 mai 1860, nr. 122, p. 508.

<sup>33</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 10 iunie 1860, nr. 135, pp. 559-560.

<sup>34</sup> Supliment la Monitorul Oficial, 8 iulie 1860, nr. 160, p. 751.

<sup>35</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 14 iunie 1860, nr. 139, p. 575.

<sup>36</sup> Regulations that will be codified in 1866 in a *Regulament pentru examinarea titlurilor și capacității medicilor, farmaciștilor, veterinarilor și moașelor din străinătate, care cer dreptul de a exercita în România*, în „Monitorul medical”, anul V, 1866, no. 21, pp. 171-174.

But not only are the characters important, but also their attributions; physicians are the holders of the knowledge of healing science, but also the remedies administered in healing: they see the ill person, establish a diagnostic and prescribe a treatment that sometimes means administration of drugs. These are taken from pharmacists, and in the epoch from bakers. The sanitary administration under the energetic lead of Carol Davila will regulate also the selling of drugs doing so a monopoly of pharmacists and so forbidding the selling of drugs by 'other privates'<sup>37</sup>. This way the professionals of healing will hold the monopoly of preparing and selling the drugs. The circle is thus closed.

Outside the circle remain Marin Varzaru, Stoian Buruiana and all their colleagues into healing. They come from a different world, with other diseases, other remedies and other criteria in validating the status of the healing characters. The sanitary authorities will never be kind to them, at most they will tolerate them, waiting for their natural disappearance, slowly but certain.

And now let us see which were the remedies they used, the result of the practice of the two peasant healers that I took as examples and in the end to see what was the attitude of sanitary authorities towards each of them because, as you can imagine, we didn't do it by chance.

Firstly, we must remark that both inquiries do not start from medical environment but for the administrative one, and the attitude of the first reporters is extremely positive towards the narrated facts: the sub-administrator of Neajlov who seem to have discovered Catana case, asks firstly the recompensation<sup>38</sup> of the healer and the ministry Ion Ghica sends to the general Inspector of the Sanitary Service, that is doctor Carol Davila, a copy of the report done by the sub-administrator of Neajlov, just for the popularization of the famous remedy: 'taking into consideration that the method of curing rabies is still unknown to medicine, I thought it is my duty to present you such a case, so important, so as to propagate it'<sup>39</sup>. In 1860 the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the United Principates really thinks that the peasant Marin Varzaru Catana cured rabies. His evaluation criteria, like of most of his non-physician contemporaries are the *efficacy* of the healing act. In other words, if the healing takes place, that automatically the used remedy is

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<sup>37</sup> Monitorul. Ziar Oficial al Țării Românești, 13 februarie 1860, nr. 35, p. 140.

<sup>38</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, pp. 2 f.-v.

<sup>39</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 1.

the right one. Nothing else is taken into consideration: little matters the status of the healer, his social environment or his level of education. Ion Ghica does not separate yet the two medical cultures, dominant and peasant, that we mentioned at the beginning of our research.

Buruiana case, is discovered by two census takers, who failing in finding the secret of the remedies used by the healer in curing insanity, reported to their superiors hoping that 'the real advantage that would bring to medicine such a salutary discovery that lies hidden from a long time in the corner of a village, to inform the government so that through their parenting measures to find a way to solve such a mystery'<sup>40</sup>. And the inquiry takes place.

Then follows the inquiry at the place of action done by the district physicians and the meeting between the peasant healers and their physician colleagues shows the therapeutic practices of the former but also the incompatibility of the two categories of characters. Physicians are not as enthusiastic as the members of administration. But let us see first what 'medicines' Marin Varzaru uses to cure rabies: it seems he uses plants and insects - 'the first is called the earth poison (*Rubis Gratiola*), Aaron's rod (*Verbatium*), bug lets (*Cantharides*) triturated with alcohol and made scars under the tongue'<sup>41</sup>. This inscribes very well in what we know about the peasant remedies against rabies: it seems that the peat bugs were a generally spread remedy against rabies - triturated, boiled and mixed with water or wine they were the basis for curing the people and cows bitten by rabid dogs<sup>42</sup>. The uses of the peat bugs, or the ash tree bugs in remedies against the rabies survived till today and we could find it in the field in 2010 in a locale from Cluj county: here to prevent rabies following a suspect bite they took five-six 'ash tree bugs', crushed, mixed with sugar and consumed one-two spoon

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<sup>40</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 13 f.

<sup>41</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 21 f. Transcription for this file was done by Nicu Mihai.

<sup>42</sup> See, N. Leon, *Istoria naturală medicală a poporului Român*, extras din „Analele Academiei Române”, *Memoriile Secțiunii Științifice*, seria II, tomul XXV, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Carol Göbl”, București, 1903, pp. 262-264; Gr. Grigoriu-Rigo, *Medicina poporului*, *Memoriul II: Boalele vitelor*, extras din „Analele Academiei Române”, *Memoriile Secțiunii Literare*, seria II, tom XXX, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Carol Göbl”, București, 1907, pp. 22-23.

lets per day<sup>43</sup>. Another peasant therapeutic method largely spread and practiced by our healer consisted in 'cutting the veins under the tongue' for preventing the apparition of 'puppies'<sup>44</sup>, also named 'rabies puppies'<sup>45</sup>.

We know more about Stoian Buruiana because the inquiry of the physician in Romanati district is extremely thoroughful. We know so that our healer inherited this 'profession' from his father who 'it is said to have healed those kind of sick people'<sup>46</sup> and his specialization is extreme - he confessed to have been curing only those insane with fury, those who make evil and tear their clothes' and those who have 'flyings, that is: they get up at night, he sends them to Uncle Mihail from Negresti, who knows the weeds for flying'<sup>47</sup>. The therapeutic used is complex and consists in administering of a decoction, fumigations and draconic diet, but we would better let him tell you through the intermediary of the district physician: 'he gives them three days in row three times a day 50 drams (*smallest dry measure*) of a decoction made from weeds boiled in wine; then nausea comes and diarrhea; the third day their mind is lighten, then falls into a deep rest till one week when he raises healthy. He guards the sick regarding the food and water, allowed only after three days strongly watched because water is harmful. Three times a day with the medicine he fumigate with other weeds covering the sick with a sheet'<sup>48</sup>. Concerning the plants used, our physician as his previous census colleagues didn't find much: decoction is made of roots from 'three species' and for fumigations uses a single plant and 'he doesn't know the name unless that you can find them in the woods and he knows them by the dried leaves that remain in winter and he digs them in march'. Obviously the physician cannot see them because 'he doesn't have them now'. It can be easily noticed that the

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<sup>43</sup> Constantin Bărbulescu (coord.), Elena Bărbulescu, Mihai Croitor, Ciprian Pavel Moldovan, Alexandru Onojescu, *Țărani, boli și vindecători în perioada comunistă. Mărturii orale*, vol. II, Ed. Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, p. 150.

<sup>44</sup> C. D. Severeanu, *Din amintirile mele (1853-1928)*, vol. II, Tipografia „Voința”, București, 1929, p. 179.

<sup>45</sup> I. Felix, *Istoria igienei în România în secolul al XIX-lea și la începutul secolului al XX-lea*, partea I, extras din „Analele Academiei Române”, Memoriile Secțiunii Științifice, seria II, tomul XXIII, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Carol Göbl”, București, 1901, p. 319.

<sup>46</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 39 f.

<sup>47</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 31 f. Negresti is in Dolj county.

<sup>48</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 31 f.

peasant does not trust the man in front of him: he doesn't give him even the folk names of the plants, that could have allowed their identification and on April 20th when the inquiry took place, he didn't have the plants that he should have gathered the previous month – hard to believe. It seems that the distrust was reciprocal: for Stoian Popa Ion Buruiana the physician's presence at his door was not a good omen! Even so he declared confident in his art and he is willing to go 'any time' in Bucharest at the Sanitary Administration 'to offer undoubtful proofs of his science'<sup>49</sup>.

The inquiry follows its course by moving local authorities to check the facts: the reports of sub-prefects are reaching the Sanitary Administration, from the villages where people were cured by Buruiana. Furthermore the primary district physician is making his own inquiries. In total appear 13 cases of sick people, where one could not be identified, another denied and a last case (the wife of pasha from Rahova) will not be inquired. Only 10 verified cases are left. Among these 8 ended with the healing of the patient and 2 could be considered failures. We have to confess that the ratio of healing is impressive! But to understand and analyze the phenomenon we must descend to a different level and see how the whole therapeutic process is developing and which are the parts involved. From the beginning we must notice that the majority of clientele is done by peasants like him and only in one case the sick person is of urban origin – the sister of Mr. Costache Prejbeanu from Caracal – who will deny knowing or resorting to the healer<sup>50</sup>. Nevertheless among the patients of Buruiana we will find a priest and the 'wife of Mr. Nicolae Provejanu' from Giorocelu village, Dolj district. This latter case, sign of the social status of the sick person the healer is taken to the bed of the ill: 'they sent to fetch him'<sup>51</sup>. In most cases though, function to the state and the distance, in front of Buruiana does not show the patients but their relatives: from the 10 patients only 2 seems to have met the healer. A husband, a father or simply 'people' bring the medicines with their instructions to the sick person and the treatment can begin. All patients confess that they used the same treatment, administered to all in the same manner, the one described by the healer to the district primary physician: a decoction of weeds boiled in wine

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<sup>49</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 31 v.

<sup>50</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 36 v.

<sup>51</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 33 v.

with a powerful vomitive and diuretically effect and fumigations with dried weeds. It would be to say that the majority of Buruiana's clientele is feminine: of the 13 sick people only 3 are men.

Regarding the symptomatology of the sickness cured, they seem according to descriptions in the reports of the administration, pretty diverse and could not be all framed in the category of mental illnesses even if we take into consideration the medical knowledge of the epoch. For example, the priest Ion in Macesu village, Dolj district, describes his sufferance : 'and sickness was only in the head, such as pain and nausea and blindness in the eye'<sup>52</sup> and the district physician at inquiring many cases of the villagers of Buruiana diagnosticates: a case of 'traumatic lesion of the spine', another of „coup de soleil" (insolation), another of „urticaria" and finally a last case of „febris lactea"<sup>53</sup>: not a single trace of mental affections!

In the report of the primary physician of the county appear only the empirical remedies of Stoian Buruiana, according to the medical culture of the reporter; all the other aspects of therapeutics are overlooked because, we suspect, were considered without real importance in the process of healing. We find from the reports of the sub-prefects, who could not be as attached to dominant medical culture as their physician counterparts, of a magical therapeutic practice recommended by Stoian - when the treatment begins, the sick person must bury the clothes he wore at the moment of illness.<sup>54</sup> And if using the report of the Mayor's office of Reda village we go deeper into the environment of the peasant culture where Stoian Buruiana lives and practices, we will discover new practices where the sacre is used in the therapy being mediated by the priest. Thus, in this last peasant version, the treatment consists of administration of „weeds three times a day, that is, in the morning, noon and evening at dusk, and at night together with the priest who is reading the *moliftas* of St. Basil, and each time 50 *dramuri* (smallest unit of measure) are boiled with wine and each time he is smoked with weeds. He follows with this weeds like this for two days and in the second evening a priest reads the *paraclisu'* where the weeds were given and the *moliftas* of St. Basil; and the pot where the weeds

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<sup>52</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 33 f.

<sup>53</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , pp. 36 f.-v.

<sup>54</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 33 f.- v.

were boiled he throws in a flowing water and then the third day he rests and takes unsalted bread and little water till one week"<sup>55</sup>.

We see how the therapeutically process cannot be reconstituted but with combining the descriptions of characters belonging to different cultural and social levels that made what historians call „Modern Romania”: at the top of hierarchy, impregnated by the dominant medical culture are the physicians, who as we have seen completely overlook the sacre and magical aspects of the therapeutic process; at intermediate level, the representatives of local and central administration frameble in an urban culture that seem to be not fully medicalized and that at the inferior level interferes actively with the peasant culture; and at the bottom, at the level of rural commune we find a strong autonomous peasant medical culture where the therapeutically process has empirical as also sacre/magical components.

Once the characters and events described, we are to see the reaction of the sanitary administration. We already suspect it. As we were saying the main character that is developing the inquiry is the district physician. He meets the both parties involved – healers and ill people – and exposes his opinion in a report addressed to the General Inspector of the Sanitary Service. From this moment the trial begins: the physician of Romanati district that inquire Stoian Buruiana case is ruthless: “From the above I assured that the person has no science in healing the mental disease, but it remains as a succession from his father who is said to have cured the same disease.”<sup>56</sup> The Medical Council discusses the case of our healer in December 1960, assumes the conclusions of the inquiry of the district physician and in the Minute concluded at that date a conclusion is reached: „ Stoian Popa Ion Buruiana not only that he not possesses any kind of science of healing the mental sick people but he still mistakens other physical maladies with mental alienation which is a psychical malady and so he proves a true ignorance or charlatanism and to the end this Council decides that Sanitary Administration to communicate to Ministry of Internal Affairs to stop this person in performing such abusive enterprise in the future, and in case of disobedience to be applied the penalty deserved according to the law, both to stop him and to show an example for

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<sup>55</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, pp. 40 f.-v.

<sup>56</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 39 f.

others.”<sup>57</sup> Here is a tough decision: despite the therapeutically success proved following the inquiry, the healer will be forbidden to practice his „profession”, because he does not use the concepts and taxonomy of diseases specific to modern medicine of the epoch. In conclusion – because he is an „ignorant”, or more serious maybe he is a „charlatan”. Interesting is that he is not reproached not having a diploma of doctor in medicine and that he does not have a right to free practice in Principates, as it happened two decades earlier another folk healer – Manolake or Rusii de Vede – who was forbidden to practice the „medicine craftery” on the grounds he „does not have medical knowledge nor a diploma, the only grounds to practice this craftery”. On the other hand, it is right that the patient of Manolake deceased during treatment and the victim was the wife of „sardar Gheorghe Turnavitul from South Teleorman” who would complain to the Quarantine Committee<sup>58</sup>.

If we analyze the situation, what is reproached to Stoian Buruiana is „ignorance” in the modern medicine, which could not have been invoked had he had a diploma of doctor in medicine: diploma is a sign of „science for healing” that cannot be obtained but in the faculties of medicine of some European universities. Or, Buruiana is not among the Chosen ones!

We don’t know if our healer gave up his „profession” or not. Most probably not.

The other case of the famous Marin Varzaru that healed rabies seems a happier one. We remember that the sub-administrator in Neajlov discovers the case and asks for a money reward for the healer. In this case, maybe because of the initial enthusiasm of the ministry of Internal Affairs the administration moves faster than the medical inquiry and so at the middle of February, 1860 the reward was already decided „five hundred lei were to be given to that Marin Varzaru Catana”<sup>59</sup>, in the epoch a considerable amount for a peasant.<sup>60</sup> Meanwhile at February

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<sup>57</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 37 f.

<sup>58</sup> V. Gomoiu, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-306.

<sup>59</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, , p. 9 f.

<sup>60</sup> To give an example, in 1862 when the district physicians are founded, the monthly payment of a physician (wage plus per diem) (salariu plus diurna) reach 500 lei. See „Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial al Principatelor Unite”, 31 martie 1862, nr. 73, p. 304. Or to calculate in value much closer to the peasant world, with 500 lei Marin Vărzaru could have bought from the fair „târgul oborului Capitalei” in January 2, 1862 five



9th, 1860 the Medical Council has a meeting and takes into discussion Varzaru case.

Not having all the data and the result of an inquiry at site, the Council can't but express the distrust in the abilities of the healer from Roata-Catunu: firstly:"in order to recognize such an invention of the peasant healer, we need a palpable proof that the wolf was indeed rabid"<sup>61</sup> because they knew that the incubation period could go up to three months and the Council meets at little more one month after events. Furthermore to pronounce in the case it would be „needed that the healer of hydrophobia to come and show his method of cure and also his medical means"<sup>62</sup>. In the end the Medical Council show distrust that the wolf was indeed rabid and that the bites could be perilous, which certainly was the case. The problem was that the wolf was killed during the events, and at administration where they rewarded with 6 lei the killing of each „wild beast" not even the ears and paws arrived on the grounds that the „wolf was rabid"<sup>63</sup>. As we can see we are in a vicious circle: the reward was given before the facts were proven. All to be done was an inquiry in the field done by the district physician and obtaining a formal „proof" from Babele commune that the wolf was really rabid and that Marin Varzaru cured the bitten ones. The proof from commune is released without problems. The district physician believes like his colleagues in the Medical Council, that the wolf was not rabid:" the undersigned thinks that the wolf was not rabid because it is well known that a rabid wolf does not wander through barns to steal animals; the medicines used are known and tried quite a lot by physicians"<sup>64</sup>, obviously without any result. And they were right. Certain is that Marin Varzaru gets the money and since we didn't find another minute of the Medical Council that would forbid formally practicing his „profession", we suspect he continued to cure rabies in the same manner.

If we look in the mirror the two cases analyzed above, we cannot but be surprised of the strangeness of the case: Stoian Buruiana that

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cows, each with its calf – a total of ten animals! After „Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial", 22 ianuarie 1862, nr. 17, p. 72.

<sup>61</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 4 f.

<sup>62</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 4 v.

<sup>63</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 2 v.

<sup>64</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 21 v.

cures insanity, though the administrative inquiry proves that 8 out of 10 patients declare themselves cured, is forbidden to practice while Marin Varzaru that cures rabies not only that he is not forbidden to practice but he will be rewarded with a considerable amount of money. It seems that still in 1860 the sanitary administration under Carol Davila is not fully mastering the situation and the order it tries to impose in the medical field is still negotiable. Besides, the publishing in 1860 of the first lists of physicians with right to practice in Principates is not accompanied by the formal interdiction for all the other categories of healers to practice their „crafts“. Only in 1862 the Sanitary Administration intervenes roughly and declares that „according to the laws nobody is able to heal and prescribe medicines if his name is not in the list published, and no pharmacist is able to give recipes to such people“<sup>65</sup>. To this end the initiative of multiplication of the list of physicians with a right to practice and its displaying in the pharmacies are taken.

Between 1860 and 1862 the documents show a continuous process of negotiation between Sanitary Administration and the different categories of healers that could not be written on the magic list of doctors in medicine and that before Carol Davila came to the leadership of Sanitary Administration could practice unbothered their „crafts“, at least so they said. Here we have two brothers that ask from Sanitary Administration the right to practice as „practical, special doctors, for rabies, right that they had before, asserted by the authorities of the past governments, from ruler Caragea till the present one as the Royal Documents and other governmental documents that we own as also testimonies from authorities where we healed people can prove“<sup>66</sup>. In order to recognize their previous rights, they ask for an exam that would consist in healing a sick person. We don't know if this has been done or not. Or, we have the case of Stoica Balanescu from Brosteni outskirts, the blue color(Bucuresti) who in June 1860 asks to be recognized by the sanitary authorities the right to cure epilepsy with his own method that he used since 1851 „till that day“<sup>67</sup>. The Medical Council, distrustful as usual, will ask him to prove his science by curing three sick people from Marcuta Institute, obviously under medical supervision<sup>68</sup>. Hence the

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<sup>65</sup> Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial, 3 februarie 1862, nr. 25, p. 102.

<sup>66</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 18 f.

<sup>67</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 42 f.

<sup>68</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 44 f.

things become complicated for Stoica Balanescu who tries to gain time and find new allies: the sick people are brought from Marcuta to Coltea hospital but the healer does not show up and asks that the sick people be moved to Brincoveanu hospital on the grounds that: „ I made a previous engagement to heal the sick people there”<sup>69</sup>. But the epileptic are not received at Brincoveanu hospital, and from this moment Stoica Balanescu no longer asks for his right alone but together with N. Apoloni who also cured epilepsy. In May 1861 the Medical Council takes into discussion the case Balanescu & associates who asked this time to be supervised in their practice not in a hospital but at their patients houses, fact considered impossible by the Council due to the specificity of the disease. Petitions keep on flowing and again in October 1861 the Medical Council is forced to take the case and to repeat that the demands of Stoica Balanescu cannot be fulfilled and „since the petitionary gentlemen do not obey to the conditions they should be considered as deceitful regarding the public health”<sup>70</sup>. We may think that this way the saga of Stoica Balanescu’s petitions ended. But it is not the case: in 1865 we find him with another empiricist – Panait Stoenescu who healed rabies – asking again, endlessly, to be recognized his right to practice. This time, in January 1866, the Medical Council cut the matter by decreeing: „ the claim of gentlemen Balanescu and Stoenescu is rejected as groundless and (...) since they are people without right to practice the medical art, on the one hand they should stopped in the future from such an abuse and on the other they should be tried for past criminal activity, by compensating all whose credulity was exploited by Mrs. Balanescu and Stoenescu”<sup>71</sup>. The strategy of Stoian Balanescu is different than that of the rurals Marin Varzaru and Stoian Buruiana. They are all empirics, specialized on a definite set of affections, but while the rural healers are discovered by authorities, Balanescu seem to approach them at his own initiative. We have here a combative character who tries all the possible strategies in order to be recognized officially as healer. It is clear that under the new conditions of regulating the practice of medicine in Principates, Stoian Balanescu tries to adapt and start a true petitionary war with the sanitary authorities: we have seen the results. But, on the other hand, it is right that the whole process takes six years while his

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<sup>69</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 59 f.

<sup>70</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 88 v.

<sup>71</sup> Monitorul Medical, anul V, 1866, nr. 6, p. 44.

practice is not formally forbidden by the Medical Council; so wouldn't have been more profitable to him to practice silently like most empiricists in the Bucharest of 1860s?

From now on it is clear that a principle of validation in the art of healing even in the absence of medical studies can be the proof of an efficient therapeutically method. The medical science of the epoch considered itself an art. Let us not forget that before the experimental medicine - approximately before 1870 - the multitude of medical doctrines, concurrential and often contradictory - so well studied by Lidia Trausan Matu in her recent book<sup>72</sup> - disarms the practician who has to dominate the nosological incoherence and to conciliate the diverse terapeutical catechisms, and who is forced to give importance to his flair fact that transforms him into a genial guesser<sup>73</sup>. Then why would not be possible to others outside the medical body to discover new remedies? The official medicine does not deny yet this possibility but it is more circumspect to such cases. I did not discover yet any case of a healer to succeed in proving to Dr. Carol Davila and his colleagues in the Medical Council that he discovered a new method of healing.

As I have mentioned above, after 1860 the Sanitary Administration under the rule of Carol Davila starts an offensive against all categories of non-physician healers. Only now they try in a real and concrete way the monopolization of healing art by the restraint group of doctors in medicine. All the other categories of healers, either rural or urban, empiricists, charlatans, orthopedists or empirical oculists etc., are put outside the system and become almost overnight from honorable people into outlaws. Sometimes these characters were integrated to the sanitary system, like Christea Ianotul from the village Alesii Ciocanesti from Ilfov district, who until 1859 was „civil servant with the former Sanitary Committee as oculist”<sup>74</sup> and who seemed to continue his practice after this date. He will be denounced to Sanitary Administration on the grounds by doctor Fiala (secondary physician at Coltea hospital, oculist) on the grounds „he is lacking any knowledge on anatomy and diseases of the eye and because of that and through his offensatory manner he produced damage to the eyes”<sup>75</sup> and consequently he is forbidden to practice. But, interesting, in argumenting the interdiction is

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<sup>72</sup> Lidia Trăușan-Matu, *De la leac la rețetă. Medicalizarea societății românești în veacul al XIX-lea (1831-1869)*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2011, pp. 119-216.

<sup>73</sup> Jacques Léonard, *La France médicale. Médecins et malades au XIXe siècle*, Gallimard, Paris, 1978, pp. 122-125.

<sup>74</sup> Supplement la Monitorul Oficial, 14 iulie 1860, no. 166, p. 778.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*.

introduced the notion of public utility of empiricists. In other words, the Sanitary Administration admits as useful the practice of empirics as long as there are no specialized medical personnel. In conclusion, even an empiricist is better than nothing. Once the doctors appear, their empiric competitor must withdraw quietly. It would be noted that the Sanitary Administration show interest only in the cases where the empiricists claimed to have found remedies to untreatable diseases in the epoch: rabies, epilepsy, insanity etc. Those who claim that cure diseases considered treatable by the medicine of the epoch have even smaller chances to have a gain of cause. It is the case of Teodora, the wife of Nedelcu Slobozeanu from Calarasi, Ialomita district who claims to know how to treat „anthrax”. To her misfortune, the Medical Council considers that the „medical art has medical means to control the anthrax and in that district there are two physicians, the district physician and the town physician, those in need could address to a more competent help without the need of an empirical and doubtful help”<sup>76</sup>. Physicians have the conscience of monopoly they haled and do not tolerate any competition. It is the time of the great hunt of empiricists and in this direction the attributions of the newer district physicians and that of the older district physicians in the vision of the central sanitary authorities are illustrative. The district physicians, creation of Carol Davila in 1862, have among their attributions „ to take measures against the spread of medical charlatanry in their district, and finding such deviations he will communicate them to the primary physician of the district”<sup>77</sup> and district physicians must veil so that „nobody would practice the medical or pharmaceutical art with all their branches(...) without authorization from General Direction”<sup>78</sup>. In the Sanitary Law from 1874 these attributions disappear: had the armistice concluded?

If physicians held the monopoly of healing, the pharmacists try to constitute their own monopoly regarding the preparation and releasing of drugs. Their competitors are the herbalists, druggists and bakers. And physicians are their allies. In the case of pharmacists the alliance with physicians is fragile for financial reasons: pharmacists release receipts signed by non-doctors, practice fight against by Sanitary Administration in 1862<sup>79</sup>. Besides, the problem of preparation and

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<sup>76</sup> Central Historical National Archiveses in Bucharest, Internal Affairs Fund. General Direction of the Sanitary Service, file 8/1860, p. 78 f.

<sup>77</sup> Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial al Principatelor-Unite, 2 aprilie 1862, nr. 74, p. 309.

<sup>78</sup> Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial al Principatelor-Unite, 9 noiembrie 1862, nr. 248, p. 1030.

<sup>79</sup> Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial, 3 februarie 1862, nr. 25, p. 102.

release of drugs could not be unimportant in a time when the bases of the modern sanitary system were founded. The central administration through the voice of the ministry of internal affairs Dimitrie Ghica, interferes and recommends the middle way: the Medical Council do not reject „absolutely” those who propose remedies that sometimes prove efficient but, „unfortunately it was noticed that with all recommendations done, there are still people that administer drugs without having any special knowledge and without thinking that they compromise the life of the trustful people”<sup>80</sup>. The latter will no longer be tolerated.

The central and sanitary administration menaces start to flow upon all characters that practice medicine illegally. We don't know in what measure these menaces were concretized in fines or days of prison. Anyway, when the first modern sanitary law will be elaborated(1874) article 77 will sanction „anybody who will exercise medicine, pharmacy or veterinary medicine against the prescriptions above, will be punished with fine from 100 till 1000 lei or with prison from 17 days till 6 months”<sup>81</sup>. Slowly but surely the efforts of sanitary Administration bear fruits: year after year the number of physician increase and that of empiricists' decrease, some specializations disappearing totally at the end of 19th century, as is the case of empirical oculists<sup>82</sup>. Or at least this is what dr. Iacob Felix thinks at the end of his career.

In conclusion, the medicalization of Romanian society at the middle of 19th century is just at its beginnings: truly medicalized is...only the medical elite. The lower we go in the social hierarchy the medicalization dilutes, even from the top of the superior level of the middle class. Even lower in the inferior side of the middle class, the medicalization does not even manifests. And for the peasant world the physician is just an exotic character an unloyal competitor of the rural healers. The first Romanian medical modernism that is defined by Lidia Trăușan-Matu<sup>83</sup> does not manifest at this level.

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<sup>80</sup> Monitorul. Jurnal Oficial al Țării Românești, 2 octombrie 1860, nr. 216, p. 853.

<sup>81</sup> Monitorul Oficial al României, 16 (28 iunie) 1874, nr. 131, p. 836.

<sup>82</sup> I. Felix, *Istoria igienei în România*, partea a II-a, extras din „Analele Academiei Române”, Memoriile Secțiunii Științifice, seria II, tomul XXIV, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Carol Göbl”, București, 1902, p. 54.

<sup>83</sup> Lidia Trăușan-Matu, *De la leac la rețetă. Medicalizarea societății românești în veacul al XIX-lea (1831-1869)*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2011, pp. 395-398.

## Book Reviews

**Didactica apartenenței. Istorii de uz școlar în România secolului XX** [The didactics of affiliation. Histories of educational use in 20<sup>th</sup> century Romania].

By Cătălina Mihalache.

Iași: Institutul European, 2012.

Cătălina Mihalache is a researcher at the "A. D. Xenopol" History Institute of the Romanian Academy and an associate lecturer at the History Faculty of "Al. I. Cuza" University of Jassy, her research domain being cultural history, with a focus on the history of education, history's didactics and identity representations. She is the author of *Școala și artizanatul. Interpretări culte ale artei populare* (School and handicraft. Cultured interpretations of folk art), 2007 and has co-edited, alongside Dumitru Ivănescu, the volume *Patrimoniul național și modernizare în societatea românească: instituții, actori, strategii* (National patrimony and modernisation in the Romanian society: institutions, actors, strategies), 2009.

The work *Didactica apartenenței. Istorii de uz școlar în România secolului XX* propounds an analysis of the history textbooks of the 20<sup>th</sup> century from the perspective of the role they hold in forming and moulding the collective memory, a historical consciousness and certain identity representations. The author unravels the manner in which the historical landmarks of the identity discourse have survived or have been reinvented after 1989 in order to offer social identity its most stable components. Textbooks therefore represent the study's main source, but not the only one, as other materials with similar functions are used for contextualisation: children's literature, patriotic festivities, mass media or some pupils' inner experiences.

The formative discourse provided by these sources is analysed from the viewpoint of the three main elements of historical writing: the actor, the event and the epoch. For each of these factors, the author chose extremely relevant examples for the Romanian identity universe: Stephen the Great, "the great union" of 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918 and the communist period, structuring her book in three chapters, according to these components.

The first chapter shows the way that the school activities' constituents (textbooks, teachers, pupils, the family, additional reading material with historical themes) have contributed to the imprinting on the collective memory and to the transformation into an identity landmark of a Romanian medieval historical character: Stephen the Great. By analysing the textbooks used in the '80s and the '90s, the author observes the remarkable constancy and consistency of the representations regarding the Moldavian ruler, depicted in the school discourse as an exemplary prince. Textbooks that appeared during the communist period, many of which being used in the first decade after the 1989 revolution as well, allocate ample spaces to describing Stephen the Great's reign, using legendary tones for the smaller pupils and a more discreet and "scientific"

language for high school students. These textbooks perpetuated the image of Moldavia's greatest ruler, a champion in the anti-Ottoman fight and a founder of monasteries. This representation is strengthened through the additional reading materials recommended to pupils, Dumitru Almaş's historical tales being the most widespread. Alternative textbooks that appeared beginning with the school year 1999-2000 temper the heroic tone and drastically limit the space granted to Stephen the Great's reign, a change due to the curriculum's modification.

Stephen the Great occupies a stable place in the national mythology, in the Romanians' historical consciousness, a fact proven by the fervour with which the public, in spite of having, in many cases, only summary and imprecise information about the ruler, has opposed the proposals for a critical re-evaluation of the historical character and of his deeds (in the context of the controversies brought about by the use of alternative textbooks starting with 1999-2000 or by the commemoration, in 2004, of 500 years since the ruler's death). The statute of a "national symbol" bestowed upon Stephen the Great has allowed that he be used for political and commercial purposes, his "cult" being supported, alongside the school discourse, by the mass media, by certain "places of memory" (patriotic festivities, museums, statues, commemorative places of some battles or the churches allegedly built by him), but also by the Orthodox Church, which proclaimed him a saint.

The second chapter analyses the moments when the "great national unification" was celebrated, this episode being emphasised in the Romanian historical consciousness by the decreeing, in 1990, of 1<sup>st</sup> December as Romania's national day. The author captures the manner in which textbooks have presented the chronology, accentuated, omitted, distorted the complex set of events of the year 1918 and of the First World War, usually by providing interpretations that were acceptable to the changing ideologies and political regimes. In the interwar period, the emphasis was placed on the "war for reuniting the nation", whose main protagonist was King Ferdinand and whose culmination was represented by the coronation ceremony (held at Alba Iulia in 15<sup>th</sup> October 1922) through which Ferdinand and Mary became sovereigns of Great Romania. In the first two decades of the communist regime, the importance of achieving territorial unity was drastically diminished, Bessarabia's and Bucovina's unions with the Romanian state being completely disregarded as these events had upset the "Soviet brother", and therefore the Bolshevik Revolution was considered the climax of the entire "imperialistic" war. Beginning with the '60s, the idea of national unity discretely reappears in textbooks and the national-communism of the '80s proclaims 1<sup>st</sup> December as an utter symbol of the complete realisation of the Romanian people's long sought-after "desire for unity", "the great national assembly" of Alba Iulia being the main character. In the effort to insert the myth of unity in the Romanians' historical consciousness, textbooks have benefited from the "help" of patriotic celebrations imposed through legislation. The theoretic role of these manifestations was that of emotionally mobilising the participants and the



public in a national spirit, but this goal was barely fulfilled, as the pupils' testimonies show.

In the author's opinion, the mythical connotations of 1<sup>st</sup> December were already deeply rooted in the collective memory in 1989 and hence choosing this date as post-communist Romania's national day is not surprising. While tracing the path followed by the official historical discourse in the search for a symbolical event that would represent the apotheosis of the "struggle" for achieving the supreme national desideratum, the author also analyses in this chapter the alternative solutions proposed in certain political contexts (for example, 10<sup>th</sup> May or 24<sup>th</sup> January). Transylvania's union with Romania on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918 was presented by the official discourse (reflected by textbooks) in a highly positive light, the controversies generated by the political-military context in which the event took place or the ethnic minorities' attitude being ignored.

The third chapter focuses on deciphering the identity sources in the representation of a recent epoch, namely communism. In this regard, the post-communist school culture is confronted with dissonant images offered by textbooks, on the one hand, and by direct narratives about the communist regime based on people's recent memory, on the other hand. Textbooks of the last decades present the communist period using an abstract language, hardly accessible to pupils, and place an emphasis on political-institutional history while neglecting facets related to daily life, socio-economic or cultural evolution. The information is simplified, chronologically defined and contains the basic concepts through which the public discourse characterises this regime. Unlike official, textbook writing, collective memory especially retained details about daily life and the pupil is therefore familiarised, through family members' memories, with the regime's actual functioning manner. The collective memory of historical characters and events from the distant past is shaped by the historiographic discourse, but in the case of the communist regime it has to face the alternative version of the "eyewitnesses" and the public has the tendency to provide a subjective image that differs considerably from the official representation. Thus the generations who have to deal with these competing images are subjected to confusion. The textbook, constrained by its very definition to provide information in a selective and impersonal manner, presents a communism that does not entirely coincide with people's recollections and that is nonetheless assimilated as a common past.

In order to offer a narrative alternative and in an attempt to discover the types of clichés about the "communist East", the author uses comparisons with textbooks from other ex-communist countries, but also from England and France, and manages to render evident the existence of multiple representations and interpretations of the communist period, beyond the persistence of the known stereotypes.

Cătălina Mihalache demonstrates that, by its text, but especially by its "mise-en-scène" and reverberations in the public consciousness, the history textbook holds an important role in identity formation. Alongside its main purpose of

transmitting information, the textbook and the history lesson are also meant to nurture the sense of belonging to a certain community.

Through its subject, methodology, pertinent conclusions and attractive style, Cătălina Mihalache's book represents a valuable contribution in the domain of cultural history.

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**Marea divergență. China, Europa și nașterea economiei mondiale moderne**  
 [The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy].

By *Kenneth Pomerantz*.  
 Iași: Polirom, 2012.

Kenneth Pomerantz is, from the summer of the year 2012, a professor of history at the University of Chicago, but he previously taught at the University of California, Irvine. His main research domain is the history of modern China, although he is also interested in universal and compared history. Of his works we can mention: *The Making of a Hinterland: State, Society, and Economy in Inland North China, 1853-1937* (1993) and *The World that Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400 to the present* (2005, in collaboration with Steven Topik).

The book *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* is an important contribution in the field of economic history due to the fact that it provides a new interpretation to an intensely debated issue: why did the industrial revolution take place for the first time in Western Europe and how can one explain the gap that can be acknowledged between the west of Europe and Eastern Asia with regard to their economic evolutions? The author aims at grasping the differences which appeared in the economic development of Western Europe in comparison to a certain part of Asia (especially China and Japan) by combining the comparative analysis of some local phenomena with a global, integrative approach. His desire is to surpass the "Europe-centred" standpoint that has characterised most of the historical approaches to the problem, by proposing a reciprocal comparison, instead of only seeking the differences between the Asian economies and the European model.

The author considers that by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century there have been many similarities between the economic realities of the two regions subjected to comparison, "the great rupture" taking place only after 1800, when Western Europe underwent a process of unprecedented development marked by an economic increase noticeable at the individual level, not only at a general one, while Eastern Asia started to lag behind. This rupture was mainly due to the convergence of two phenomena that have given an advantage to North-Western

Europe: the exploitation of the coal deposits, which covered the request for fuel generated by a growing industry, and the favourable international context, which allowed the New World to become a genuine reservoir of raw material and a market for finished goods, therefore solving such problems as overpopulation and the lack of arable land. Moreover, this constellation of factors allowed a greater specialisation in manufactures and a more intense use of the available industrial workforce.

In order to provide arguments for his theory, Kenneth Pomeranz has structured his ideas in three directions. The first part of the book (chapters 1 and 2) aims at demonstrating that even around 1750 there existed surprising similarities between the economic evolution of Western Europe and the one of Eastern Asia, the two regions that occupy similar positions in their respective continents. By comparing their population, capital accumulation, technological innovation, markets for arable lands, workforces, institutions and rural industry, the author reaches the conclusion that until around 1800 there were no significant differences between the standards of living in England, for instance, and the ones found in certain developed areas in the valley of the Yellow River. Moreover, in the case of the markets for arable lands most of China's regions were one step ahead. On the other hand, Western Europe had a certain advantage in technological innovation, but it was not sufficient in order to overpass the Malthusian constraints. And the constraints that generally affect preindustrial societies (population growth, an increased request for resources needed for survival) were more or less the same. Therefore, one cannot consider that Europe had a pre-existent economic or technological frame that was more favourable to the industrial revolution, as compared to Eastern Asia. The level of the accumulation of capital, the demographic models, the existence of markets for the arable lands are factors that were present under similar forms both in Western Europe and China or Japan, possibly in other areas as well. They cannot explain why "the great change" in the economy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century took place for the first time in Western Europe. The author thus contradicts many researchers who state that, prior to 1800, Europe benefited from an internal economic superiority, which fostered the industrial revolution.

The second part of the book (chapters 3 and 4) extends the comparison between the two regions by taking into consideration the diversification of consumer goods, as a result of a growth in the standards of living, but also the cultural and institutional changes generated by this reality. As for the supply and demand for "luxury" goods one can at the most speak about certain differences between Western Europe, China and Japan, on the one hand, and other areas of the Old World, on the other hand, but not about significant distinctions among the members of the first group. In chapter 4, the author discusses the manner in which capital, or a special European capitalism based, alongside internal commerce, on ever more intense commercial links with the exterior, has constituted the premise of the industrial revolution. It is hard to demonstrate that the capital market, although more efficient in Europe, has brought major changes in the rhythm of agricultural or proto-industrial

expansion. Nevertheless, the European financial institutions have had an important role in supporting the overseas colonial expansion and armed commerce. Although capital and labour force could create new arable lands by clearing woods or increase the productivity (albeit not significantly before agricultural mechanisation), they could not provide a solution for the ecological constraints generated by a lack of land and fuel, which inevitably occur alongside economic development. As the economic activity distanced itself from concentrating exclusively on producing goods that were necessary to survival, cultural and institutional differences appeared between Western Europe and Eastern Asia's economic centres, but one cannot state, in the author's opinion, that a capitalist economic system appeared and evolved only in Occidental Europe; moreover, such a view would not explain the large discrepancies documented for the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The third part of the book (chapters 5 and 6) proposes an analysis of the relationship between the internal and external factors that have caused the spectacular development of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter 5 details the problem of the ecological constraints which the most developed areas of the Old World were subjected to. As a result of dense peopling and increasing demands from the market, these "centres" were confronted with a lack of raw materials and fuel. Most of these flourishing economies tried to solve this problem by engaging in distance commerce with the "peripheral" areas of the Old World, less populated and poorly developed. But this was not a solution that could bring about salvation, because in these regions the demand for manufactured goods was not large enough to be able to sustain the basic exchange of raw materials and finished goods and, moreover, the costs of transportation were extremely high.

Chapter 6 analyses the manner in which, during the industrialisation period, Europe has benefited from a relaxation of the constraints related to the lack of land, which was a decisive factor in its subsequent economic development. The importance of replacing wood with coal is emphasised, this fact meaning that Europe was more relaxed in the face of the constraints generated by lack of fuel. But an even greater role in Europe's economic evolution was played by its relationship with the New World. Alongside the Americas' immense natural riches, a significant advantage was the nature of the commerce with this area, which allowed Europe to trade vast quantities of finished goods for even greater quantities of raw materials. The New World represented a "new type of periphery", in which production was mostly based on the slaves' forced labour and the imports were much larger than, for instance, in Oriental Europe or in Eastern Asia, where the locals produced the goods they needed in their own households and did not have money for foreign commodities.

On the rice plantations of inland China the workforce used was relatively free and with time the peripheries developed, a phenomenon indicated by population growth and by a rudimentary industry which allowed them to use the raw material formerly intended to be exported for manufacturing goods that covered their own necessities. All these factors led to a diminution of commerce

and therefore the complementariness between “centre” and “periphery” gradually disappeared. Thus, due to the fact that the peripheries developed in the absence of a significant technological progress, China experienced an economic deadlock.

On the other hand, Western Europe managed to maintain a flourishing Atlantic commerce during the entire 19<sup>th</sup> century, the continuous flux of raw materials from the New World, but also the growing demand for finished goods for export allowing an increasingly pronounced specialisation in the production of refined commodities and in the division of labour between the exporters of basic products and the ones who processed them. As a result, the foundations of the modern market economy were laid even before the technological revolution, its first “modern” centre being Western Europe while its first “modern” periphery was the New World. Nevertheless, beyond financial profit and capital accumulation, the transatlantic commerce’s importance to Europe lies foremost in the fact that it successfully eliminated the overwhelming pressure caused by the lack of land and energy resources, in the same manner in which England managed to free itself from the constraints generated by lack of fuel by using coal deposits on a large scale.

Kenneth Pomeranz’s book is richly documented and intelligently constructed. Being based on a solid knowledge of the problem’s historiography, the book presents a new theory that aims at explaining Western Europe’s unprecedented development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the “great divergence” which occurred in its economic evolution as compared to Eastern Asia (or, if we force a generalisation, between the West and the East), therefore representing a valuable study in the field of economic history.

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### **Civilizația. Vestul și Restul** [Civilization: The West and the Rest].

By *Niall Fergusson*.

Iași: Polirom, 2011.

Niall Fergusson (b. 18 April 1964) is a British historian specialised in the field of economic history, his career having an ascending path, as he holds the positions of history professor at Harvard University and Harvard Business School, Senior Research Fellow at Jesus College (Oxford University), Senior Fellow at Hoover Institution (Stanford University) and a professor of history and international relations at London School of Economics. Among the works that made his famous we would like to specify a few titles: *Paper and Iron: Hamburg Business and German Politics in the Era of Inflation 1897-1927* (1993), *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (1997), *The Pity of War: Explaining World War One* (1998), *The Cash Nexus: Money and Power in the Modern World, 1700-2000* (2001),

*Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (2003), *Colossus: The Rise And Fall Of The American Empire* (2004), and *The Ascent of Money: A Financial History of the World* (2008).

The present book review concerns Niall Ferguson's penultimate publication, *Civilization: The West and the Rest*, which originally appeared at The Penguin Press HC in 2011; we will consider the volume published in the same year at Polirom Publishing House, Iași, the work's translation being accomplished by Doris Mironescu and Andreea Mironescu.

This work is one of compared history of civilizations, and from this perspective it joins other more or less famous works, such as those written by: Oswald Spengler (*The Decline of the West*), Arnold Toynbee (*A Study of History*), Philip Bagby (*Culture and History*), Neagu Djuvara (*Civilizations and Historical Laws*), Samuel Huntington (*The Clash of Civilizations*) or Thierry Camous (*Orients/Occidents, 25 Centuries of Wars*).

The author intends in this work to answer to the question: "How did it happen that, beginning with the year 1500, a series of small states from the Western end of the Eurasian continent managed to dominate the rest of the world, including countries with a much larger population and, in certain regards, more sophisticated, from the Eastern Eurasia?" Another question to which the author wants to reply is: "Are we truly living the end of the Western world and the beginning of a new, oriental, epoch?"

The work is structured into six chapters, as follows: 'Competition', 'Science', 'Property Rights', 'Medicine', 'The Consumer Society' and 'The Work Ethic'. These parts are placed between an introduction ('Rasselas's Question') and a conclusion ('The Rivals').

In the introduction - 'Rasselas's Question' ("For what reasons (...) are the Europeans so strong?") - the author presents us his vision on the West. Niall Ferguson sees the West's transformation into a civilization of the first rank beginning with the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Still here, in the introduction, the author tries to give a definition to civilization: "A civilization, like the word's etymology suggests, revolves around its towns (...). Nevertheless, a town does not mean civilization. A civilization is the largest form of human organisation, higher, but more amorphous than an empire." Ferguson passes through several aspects in an attempt to give a definition for the term of civilization, without reaching a clear result of this undertaking. In this regard we prefer the definitions given by Neagu Djuvara and Fernand Braudel, these being much clearer. Neagu Djuvara gives the following definition: "(...) large ensembles of societies whose worldview, techniques, arts and institutions confer to the peoples who share them a special colouring, style and whose development in time follows a curve which, from one case to another, presents amazing similitudes", and Fernand Braudel defines civilization as being a cultural area, a society, an economy, collective mentalities, continuities, all of these bearing in their essence distinctive and, in the same time, dominant characteristics. Niall Ferguson continues this first part of his work by debating the idea that imperialism was a decisive factor in the Occident's ascension. But what were the

decisive factors? Geographic positioning? Institutions? Military and economic competition among the European states? Starting from these interrogations, the British historian proposes six decisive factors which led to the West's detachment from the Rest, factors which also give the names of the book's chapters; chapters that we will go over in what follows, without insisting too much on their content and therefore depriving the potential readers from the pleasure of discovering themselves the spell of this reading.

In the work's first chapter - Competition - the author makes a beautiful demonstration of the Rest's technological superiority over the West in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. During Emperor Yongle (1402-1424) China had every advantage over the Europe of Henry V, the king of England who defeated the French army at Agincourt. The question to which an answer must be given is: "Why did China regress, while Europe moved forwards?" Why did Admiral Zheng He's China loose in the face of Vasco da Gama's Europe?

The next chapter - Science - comes with an apology of the Arab world's knowledge at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium and the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium. Not just religious fervour elevated this civilization, but also scientific knowledge. The House of Wisdom, established in Harun al-Rashid's Bagdad, opens the Arab society to philosophic knowledge and scientific progress. Philosophy, medicine, algebra, the experimental method in sciences and even the first educational institution which might be called a University, all of these, even if they originate in the Greek antiquity, are the product of this Islamic civilization. The natural question is: "(...) how is it that the Muslim world remained behind the Occident on the realm of science?"

Chapter III of the book - Property Rights - discusses the dichotomy existent in the New World. The Americas belong to the West, but we still have a prosperous Nord and a peripheral South. "How and why did this happen?" In 1962, Mexico City had 100,000 inhabitants, Boston just 6,000. In the South there were 25 universities, and Santo Domingo University precedes Harvard by approximately a century. And still the future will bring the North's domination.

In chapter IV of the book - Medicine - Niall Ferguson specifies the fact that the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the epoch of empires and imperialism. In 1913, the West's empires dominated the world. Four fifths of the global economic production and 57% of the world's population were under their rule. And this domination was possible also because of one of the West's *killer applications*: modern medicine.

The penultimate chapter - The Consumer Society - comes with the perspective of importing and exporting civilization. "What makes our clothes irresistible to other peoples? Do they dress like us because they also want *to be like us*?" The industrial revolution created the consumerist society, and the worker also became a buyer. The entire world wanted to "download" this *killer application*.

Chapter VI and last - The Work Ethic - comes with the perspective according to which the occidental law system and, concomitantly, the political models derived from these laws, such as, for instance, democracy, have dislocated and

defeated the non-occidental competing models. A democratic wave crossed the globe after 1989. But after a short period of American hegemony, today we witness China's ascension, as it became the world's second economic power. The author's question is related to this reality: "Are we witnesses of the Occident's decline?"

In the conclusion - *The Rivals* - the author considers that he gives a better answer than philosopher Imlac at *Rasselas's* question. Therefore, the West managed to dominate the Rest because of six factors (*killer applications*): competition - Europe being politically divided, the states and the multitude of corporations created the space of a battlefield favourable to progress; the scientific revolution - Western Europe being the main actor on the scene of innovations; the rule of law and representative government - the tendency towards the liberalisation of the economy and the right to private property, together with the representation of proprietors in elected legislative bodies; modern medicine - it makes possible the colonisation of regions that were previously haunted by large epidemics; consumerist society - the industrial revolution appeared where there existed, concomitantly, both the technologies and the demand for many, good and cheap goods; and the work ethic - extensive and intensive, which allowed the accumulation of capital. As it is noticeable, the entire work bears the mark of liberal thought and is without a doubt a eulogy to liberalism.

It is clear that the author realises the effects of "globalisation". Thus, he enounces that he does not believe in the clash of civilizations according to Huntington's scenario (Occident, the Islamic world, Russia and China). China (even if it has made remarkable progress; for instance, in 2007 China surpassed Germany in the number of requests for new letters patents) lacks a series of the six decisive factors which have brought on the West's supremacy (as an example given by the author: China lacks political competition and freedom of the press). Anyway, Ferguson noticed that this time the Eastern competitive has real chances of acceding to the hegemony and that we no longer find ourselves in front of a novice. Moreover, the United States' and China's economies are in interdependency; the author even has a name for this phenomenon: Chinmerica. There are already dissensions between "a spender and a saver". It is hard to predict what is going to happen. The author's conclusion is the following: "Maybe the true threat to us is not China's or the Islam's ascension, nor the increase of carbon dioxide emissions, but our lack of confidence in the civilization that we inherited from our ancestors." But, in the book there is no raven choir that announces the Spenglerian end, the work is by no means a necrology of the Occident.

In conclusion, we consider this book as being an interesting and ambitious one, having its positive aspects and its shortcomings. The fact that it was recently published makes it a work of present interest, the large amount of data and theories enriching our perception on the moment's historical, economic and political reality, but also on the present geopolitical climate. Still a number of



unclear aspects (stemming from the work's introduction and conclusions) remain, which, in part, we would like to bring into debate in what follows:

a. the author, contrary to the enunciations accepted today by many historians, considers that civilizations have a sudden ending, die rapidly. But most of the case studies presented by the author (the British Empire, the Ottoman Empire) do not refer to civilizations per se, but just to belligerent kingdoms within the framework of much ampler civilizations, at least this is our perception. Neither does the Roman Empire die suddenly, without showing large signs of weakness, as Ferguson wants us to believe. Let us bring into the discussion the non-event theory. Historians Lucian Boia and Vlad Nistor accuse the falsifying of history, through the, entirely artificial, creation of an event where none took place, an action undertaken for the purpose of explaining and simplifying the access to history. Thus, the above-mentioned authors show that in the reality of the 476 moment, no one saw in the Rome of that year the fall of the empire, or the way out of Antiquity and the entrance to the Middle Ages (in the occidental part of Europe), respectively. Moreover, for the contemporaries who assisted at the events of 4 September, sending the imperial marks to Constantinople by Odovacar, who dethroned Romulus Augustulus, meant more a reunification of the empire under a single emperor in the person of Flavius Tarasicodissa Zenon (474-475; 476-491). Starting from this analysis, Vlad Nistor enunciates: "Didactical simplification, on the other hand, deforms scientific reality". Lucian Boia is not that drastic, he considers both theories to be valid: "Is or not significant the year 476? Is it a crucial event or a non-event? Let us admit that it only takes a minimum dose of professional ability in order to argue just as well the collapse of the Roman Empire at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century or, on the contrary, its survival (or, by choice, diverse solutions of compromise between the two variants)". We also mention that we are placed in front of two attempts to explain the past, both voices being equally important. On the one hand, in the year 476 the function of Caesar and Imperator disappears for ever at Rome (we do not discuss "Justinian's restoration" or other attempts of bringing back the ex-imperial capital within the surviving empire – the Eastern Roman Empire), and thus the Caesars' Rome slowly transformed itself into the Popes' Rome (both historians from Bucharest are right in what regards the inexistence of sudden fissures which separated an epoch from another – although there might also exist decisive moments, moments in which a sudden turn changes radically and irrevocably the course of events – these processes did not occur from one day to the next, Rome's fall started before the fatidic year 476 and the new world was tardy in appearing immediately, but this year is a well-chosen land mark because of the disappearance of a fundamental institution of the great city, an institution which raised its fame, i.e. the emperor), and instead of the empire appear the successoral states which announce a new epoch, other aspirations; on the other hand, life in Rome continued, the consuls carried on succeeding each other, the Senate did not close its doors, life went on without having fundamentally (or, better said, perceptively from that time's perspective) shaken the moment's society;

b. if the West is “more than a geographic expression”, why did not the Eastern Roman Empire become a component of “Occident 1.0”, a civilization which, according to the author’s enunciations, was born in the fertile half-moon, the Nile’s Valley and at the confluence of the Euphrates with the Tigris, and succumbed rapidly at 476. If the West also means institutions (Ferguson actually draws our attention to the fact that an essential difference between the West and the Rest is the institutional one), does not the Roman law (*Corpus Iuris Civilis*), inherited from Justinian, constitute the basis of the institution of law in Occidental Europe? Besides, the inclusion of the fertile half-moon, of the Ancient Egypt and of the Mesopotamian empires in the notion of Western civilizations is more than forced, it sounds as though the Neolithic Revolution was an occidental product;

c. where is the West vs. Rest dichotomy if the rest borrows and aspires to the western model? Is it possible to witness a clash of civilizations, or rather an epoch of competitive kingdoms within the same civilization (without yet having a total uniformisation)? We prefer the latter variant. Perhaps even the ambiguity or the lack of a clear definition of the term of civilization leaves us somewhat disoriented. For example, if China (as also all the countries of the world, including India and the Islamic world) is engaged on the occidental road of progress (both communism and capitalism being aspects of the West), how is it that it still is a component of the Rest? If everyone wants to be occidental, where is the clash of civilizations? All of us want money, cars, phones, internet. Just as all of us speak about human rights, freedom of speech, of the press and of the internet.

Which is, in these conditions, the “superbattle” of tomorrow? Is it Marx’s (class struggle), Huntington’s (the clash of civilizations) or Toffler’s (the conflict between the Second and, respectively, the Third Wave)? We still believe that these questions remain open.

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**De ce Vestul deține încă supremația și ce ne spune istoria despre viitor** [Why the West Rules – for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future].

By *Ian Morris*.  
 Iași: Polirom, 2012.

Symbolic (often resentful) geographies, which are best reflected in historiography by the compared history of civilisations, have reappeared, in the last few years, on the scene of historical writing. After Huntington broke a relative silence with its *Clash of Civilisations* at the beginning of the 90’s, recent years have brought other works that resume the topics opened to debate in the

first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the works *The Decline of the West* – Oswald Spengler and *A Study of History* – Arnold Toynbee. Unlike the book written by Niall Ferguson – *Civilization: The West and the Rest*, the one now had in the view, *Why the West Rules – for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future*, “directed” by historian and archaeologist Ian Morris, comes in opposition to the Spenglerian necrology (hope dies last!) only to some extent: Spengler announced, with the voice of a gravedigger, the decline of the Western civilisation. By not being a counter-discourse to Spengler’s thesis, as our “immersion” in Morris’s research will show, the British historian’s book eschews in a certain manner the perspective of globalisation (i.e. identifying the Occident with the globalising capitalism and therefore portending a triumph of the West – understood as the present industrial-consumerist society). On the contrary, the author’s geographical determinism further forces the cliché East vs. West.

Ian Matthew Morris is, as we have already mentioned, a British historian and archaeologist specialised in Mediterranean ancient history. He studied at the University of Birmingham and taught at important universities, such as Cambridge University, University of Chicago and Stanford University. He also worked on archaeological sites, both in the United States and Europe. Amongst his works we can mention: *Burial and Ancient Society* (1987), *Archaeology as Cultural History* (2000), *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires* (2009) – written in collaboration with Walter Scheidel, *Why the West Rules – for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future* (2010) etc.

The latter book appeared in the Romanian language in 2012 at the Polirom publishing house of Jassy in the “Historia” collection, translated by Irina Vaikovski-Mihai and Ioana Miruna Voiculescu after the original edition published in 2010 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

The work’s Introduction is pervaded by the theme of predestination (viewed in a Hegelian manner), the discourse being centred on the question: Is the Occident predestined for global rule? One can observe that, like in the case of Ferguson, the West is not clearly defined or the definition’s clarity does not reach a satisfying level because it is strongly related to a geographical determinism. The area comprising the West is larger than the ones defined in some already classical works on this subject, as those of Spengler and Toynbee, authors who saw the Occidental civilisation as both spirit and culture. Therefore they had in view a more recent type of civilisation, originating in Greek antiquity and Christianity, these two elements being sprinkled with the “spices” of *völkerwanderung*, which has “seasoned” Europe during the first millennium of our era. Within this framework of predestination, the author compares two schools of thought, one based on the “long-term lock-in” theory (stating that the West’s supremacy was predestined by its history) and the other professing the “short-term accident”.

The former theory was mainly influenced by Marx, who considered that the Eastern states’ centralism has “stopped the flow of history”; meanwhile, the West has progressed from slavery to feudalism and capitalism and thus the East’s lag is especially a political one. As a result, the theories about the West’s

superiority focused on cultural-technological aspects. On the other hand, Morris admits it was his intention to centre his discourse on geographical explanatory elements, despite the fact that such an approach could lead to erroneous statements. Nevertheless, in the British historian's opinion one cannot speak solely about predestination; on the contrary, the West has dominated the world only since approximately 1800, as until then the leading role was played by an Occident represented by the "Fertile Crescent". In this argument we can notice an exaggeration of the Occident almost identical with the one pertaining to Niall Ferguson, who also identified an Occident 1.0 in Mesopotamia and Egypt under the same clear geographical determinism. As for the theory of the "short-term accident", it was launched by the so-called "California School" and it was introduced into the historiographic circuit by Jack Goldstone, one of its main supporters.

In opposition to these two models ("long-term lock-in" and "short-term accident"), seen as generalised tendencies, Morris's discourse makes reference to three series of laws, which, through their interaction, give meaning to historical evolution. The first two series of laws are those of biology and sociology and they establish history's configuration at a global level, while the third one is related to geography, an element perceived as determinant for the differences between the East's and the West's parallel evolutions.

As we have already mentioned, the present work bears the marks of a certain Spenglerian pessimism and the following quotation exemplifies this affirmation: "The great question for our times is not whether the West will continue to rule. It is whether humanity as a whole will break through to an entirely new kind of existence before disaster strikes us down - permanently".

Ian Morris sees history as processual and positivist-dialectical (he even refers to predictive psychohistory and thus he sometimes uses a neo-positivism typical of social mathematics). Moreover, he is an adept of Braudel's *longue durée* and all these elements are subsumed under an interdisciplinary approach meant to respond to the work's main question: "Why does the West still rule?" As he admits, the author seeks for an answer in "brute material forces" and not in culture, values or great men.

The work is structured in three parts comprising in total twelve chapters. The first part (chapters 1 - 3) presents the theories and concepts that found the book's historiographic approach and, moreover, it searches for the beginnings of the two antagonist models of the West and the East. The second part (chapters 4 - 10) traces the emergence of these civilisation schemes, similarities and differences, Morris's scenario consisting in a series of situational overturns until the present Western victory following the Industrial Revolution. The book's last part (chapters 11 - 12) provides an answer to the study's core questions, by trying to predict the future.

As almost any of the Occidental historiography's works of the last years, which speculate on the resentful symbolic geographies, this book also represents a partial apology of the West (which in other works is obvious, but grounded from a number of perspectives). However this attitude is partly masked by the

acknowledgement of periods when a clear Eastern domination was visible, an admission due to the "short-term accident" theory. Besides, Ian Morris also resorts to the tools of physical geography, positing that there have existed two centres from which culture spread since the Neolithic period: the West – which "migrated" from the Fertile Crescent towards new centres of power – and the East – within which China usually represents the central pawn.

The work's geographical determinism forces the author to disregard in a certain way the process of globalisation: Is there still an East? This question can be posed especially if one has in view the process of internationalising the means of production and, with them, of the West itself, which has become an economy, as Marx observed. Moreover, is the West still similar to what it was 100 years ago or is it "Hellenising" itself in a Spenglerian sense? Is it becoming a half-breed between the Occident and the Orient? Can we still regard China and Japan today as belonging to the East, other than due to a cliché caused by a geographical perspective? Is China's model of expansion not a Western one? In a recent interview (in fact, his last interview, as he died on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012), historian Eric Hobsbawm has outlined the idea that capitalism is changing its clothes, mainly because it is expanding from Asia. If we see capitalism as an Occidental process (especially as this characteristic could be considered an essential one!), then we reach the conclusion that Asia has become the West's "spearhead" (now excluding Morris's geographical connotations!).

The work is also pervaded by counterfactual affirmations and, even if "professional historians" do not appreciate this method, it is nevertheless useful for experimenting. Everything is challenge and response, the cultural-technological factor being a product of this incessantly moving geography. In fact this is the Hegelian thesis strongly supported by Arnold Toynbee, who also brings faith into the discussion as an essential actor, that is to say the human factor and Nietzsche's and Spengler's vigour. On the other hand, this approach was contested by Fernand Braudel, who asked the following question: Why is it that certain geographical areas with approximately identical conditions do not reach similar results? But Toynbee actually discussed this aspect exactly by factoring in faith, the human element, when attempting to offer an answer to the geographical challenge.

Morris's final response is: "The West rules because of geography". The link between environment and progress is rendered obvious through the idea that: "Living on top of a coalfield meant very little two thousand years ago, but two hundred years ago it began meaning a lot. Tapping into coal drove social development up faster than ever before – so fast, in fact, that soon after 1900 new fuels began to displace coal. Everything changes, including the meaning of geography".

Nevertheless, the Arabs have petroleum deposits in their soil and yet the United States, China, Europe, India and Japan, to give only a few names, also gain from this fact. Ian Morris observes this rise of the East (in its geographical meaning), China threatening to replace the United States of America as global economy's hegemon. It is possible that with time, China would also pose a

military threat, although for now American technology is clearly superior in this segment. Europe's geographical fragmentation (due to the mountainous chains and to the hydrographical network that partition the Eurasian continent), which could be a possible factor in a European history of competing states, or the presence of certain resources in nearby or remote areas do not totally explain the birth, the ascent or the decline of different civilisations. However, these theories are more materialistic and can have an empirical-quantifiable demonstration, unlike the theories which involve spirit, will, etc. As for the relationship between the resources' positioning and the states' development, the presence or lack of "internal Americas" is not, as Immanuel Wallerstein theorised, entirely relevant: China has immense internal resources, but it was lethargic and not prone to adventure, despite the fact that the fleet commanded by Admiral Zeng He (1371-1433) was undoubtedly superior to the forms of navigation used by Mediterranean or Baltic Europe.

Ian Morris foresees a possible ending of the Western supremacy which would take place "at the latest" in 2103 and thus asks himself: "Will the West [...] reinvent itself in the twenty-first century and stay on top?" Any potential answer cannot be satisfying, without criticising the prophesying psychohistoric approach, regardless of its metaphysical or empirical standpoints. In general, feasible estimations do not take the "short-term accident" theory seriously: what social-economic mathematics or geographical determinism throw into relief today could be contradicted by human unforeseeableness, an aspect of which the British historian is perfectly aware. Nevertheless the researcher has a right to such imagination games, so we do not criticise the hypothetical scenarios but rather the approach, the internal contradictions or the overly courageous theories, in the sense of an excessive generalisation of a concept, without a convincing analysis.

We do not wish to expose too much of the work's complexity, especially in order not to suppress the potential readers' curiosity. The book is filled with information necessary to historians nowadays and the interpretations provided can be persuasive or not. The work can be subjected to a deconstruction process on the basis of a series of arguments. For example, as we have already shown, it suffers from the viewpoint of theorising the West, especially due to an obvious exaggeration of the time span. However, the model is coherent up to a point, in spite of a number of inconsistencies like the one related to the petroleum deposits of the Gulf: these do not necessarily increase their natural owners' wealth because they are not the de facto beneficiaries. As we are fond of the genre of compared history of civilisations, we cannot do otherwise than highly recommend this book, even if reading it requires vigilance, inasmuch as the discourses pertaining to the domain of symbolic geographies are highly ideologised and ideologising.

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